



Guidance Note: Integrating Gender in Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs)

An Additional Help Document for ADS Chapter 201

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Gender requirements: [ADS Chapter 201](#) requires that a gender analysis shape strategies, projects (where applicable), and activities. The types of data that should be gathered, the types of questions that should frame the analysis (commonly referred to as “domains of analysis”) and the data gathering methods are described in detail in [ADS Chapter 205](#). In addition, regardless of solicitation method or type of award, design teams must reflect the findings of the gender analysis conducted for the project/activity in the different components of a resulting solicitation (see [ADS 205.3.6](#)).

Broad Agency Announcements (BAAs): This Guidance Note is intended to provide suggestions related to gender integration in BAAs, which are used to fulfill Research and Development (R&D) requirements for scientific study and experimentation directed toward advancing the state of the art or increasing knowledge or understanding of a topic. Federal regulations and mandatory Agency policy on BAAs are found in [FAR 35.016](#) and [ADS 300mat, Guidance for Broad Agency Announcements](#), respectively. BAAs may include co-creation, where USAID and selected partners explore solutions to a given development problem – often through a workshop, conference, or meeting. If co-creation is anticipated in the BAA solicitation, subsequent to the co-creation event, concept paper submissions are evaluated by a peer or scientific review board. BAAs can result in a contract or assistance award.

Questions have arisen about how to best ensure that gender is integrated throughout an award process that uses the BAA solicitation. The ADS 205 gender-related requirements apply to a BAA and the resulting award must reflect the gender issues and gaps identified in the gender analysis. However, the required gender analysis can serve as the starting point for the more thorough integration of gender equality issues throughout the award process.

Entry points for gender analysis and gender integration: The BAA process includes multiple steps during which gender can be considered. In general, the earlier this engagement begins, the more robust the outcome. Below is a list of steps that may occur during an award process that uses the BAA solicitation, although the exact process is highly variable. After each step, a series of suggested actions are listed that will help to ensure that gender is integrated from design to award¹.

1. Activity Planning

- a. **The Washington OU or Mission identifies a problem statement - plans the activity using either a project (see [ADS 201sam](#)) or standalone activity process (see [ADS 201](#)):**

¹ Note that although an Inclusive Development analysis is not required in a project or activity design, many Operating Units choose to conduct one or to carry out analyses specific to an individual marginalized group (e.g., people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, LGBTI people, youth, etc.). The suggestions provided in this document can also be used to ensure that the BAA integrates attention to these groups. See USAID (July 2018). *Suggested Approaches for Integrating Inclusive Development Across the Program Cycle and in Mission Operations: Additional Help for ADS 201* for more information.

- i. If a project approach is used, the project-level gender analysis should include as much information as possible that is relevant to the research area or problem statement described in the solicitation. This gender analysis should follow the requirements laid out in [ADS 205.3.4](#).
- ii. If the activity is a standalone activity that is not included under a project, commission or review an appropriate activity-level gender analysis and/or consider how gender issues will be addressed throughout the BAA process in cases where substantial details of the design are not yet determined at the time of initial design.

b. Planning for the proposed activity begins:

- i. Engage the Bureau/Pillar and/or Mission Gender Advisor(s) for awareness and/or active participation in the BAA process.
- ii. Establish a standard procedure for the Operating Unit (OU)/Mission whereby Gender Advisors and other interested staff can find a current list of planned solicitations, including BAAs.

2. Stage 1: Drafting and Posting the BAA

a. The OU or Mission issues a BAA:

- i. The BAA at least briefly describes the broad gender issues that are relevant in the research area or problem statement, based on earlier gender analyses.
- ii. The problem statement mentions that solutions should be responsive to identified gender needs or needs to empower women/girls.
- iii. The BAA requests potential solutions to address relevant gender issues.

b. The OU or Mission issues an Addendum to a BAA (this does not always happen): Direct readers of the Addendum to gender-related information in the overall BAA or cite the relevant information in the Addendum.

3. OPTIONAL Stage 2: Co-creation (ONLY if originally contemplated under the BAA)

a. The OU or Mission plans the co-creation event:

- i. Invite at least one participant who has a strong gender and/or inclusive development lens to participate. This could be a partner whose submission was especially strong on gender, the OU's

Gender Advisor, a local gender expert, or a government partner with significant gender expertise. Agency staff participating in the co-creation should connect these participants with the cognizant gender advisor to ensure knowledge flow and provide support as needed or appropriate.

- ii. If the co-creation event will include a specific gender discussion, reflect this in the Facilitator's agenda when preparation for the co-creation begins.

b. The co-creation event is held:

- i. Include at least one session (or one agenda point for a shorter meeting) dedicated to a discussion of relevant gender issues.
- ii. If gender was explicitly listed in the BAA as an evaluation criterion for concept paper submissions, articulate that attention to gender in proposed solutions will be considered at this stage.
- iii. When appropriate, include the OU or Mission gender expert(s) as active participants in the co-creation event.

c. Concept paper submissions are developed:

- i. Subsequent to the co-creation event, gather more gender-related information relevant to the activity, if needed, or identify additional relevant resources or experts during the period in which concept papers are co-developed.
- ii. Bring in OU or Mission gender experts for additional conversations with potential offerors/applicants about including gender in the proposed solution while concept papers are being co-developed.
- iii. In cases where it is not feasible for Mission or OU gender experts to be meaningfully involved in co-creation, consider circulating relevant gender-related information, facts and data, key documents and other resources to other USAID staff who are involved.

4. Stage 3: Peer and scientific review

a. Peer/scientific review of concept papers is conducted:

- i. Include the gender advisor as a non-voting member of the review panel when feasible; they can be included as a voting member only if they have the requisite technical/scientific background required to participate in the scientific review.
- ii. If gender integration was explicitly listed as an evaluation criterion in the BAA, in addition to the mandatory evaluation criteria outlined in the FAR 35.016, when providing guidance to the review panel, provide pointers as to what reviewers should focus on for this aspect of their review.

5. Stage 4: Request for Full Proposal or Application and Resulting Award

a. The technical office must work with the CO/AO to:

- i. Include a requirement in the request for full proposal/application as well as the resulting award, that the contractor/recipient carry out additional activity-specific gender analysis as needed, either at the initiation of the activity or on a rolling basis, as the activity is adapted to changing conditions.
- ii. Ensure that in the request for proposal/application, as well as the resulting award, there is a clause noting that gender should be addressed in the activity work plan, MEL Plan, and reporting.
- iii. Consider whether it would be useful to require gender action plans or strategies describing how gender will be integrated into all phases of the work (see [ADS 205.3.7](#)).
- iv. If informed by the activity design process and included in the BAA, ask the offeror/applicant to specify the gender-based learning relevant to the scientific/technical goal of the BAA in their proposal/application (if the details of the work plan are mainly addressed in the implementation phase, this may be suggested at that point instead).
- v. Include gender-focused work products, when significant or innovative gender-related results are expected in the request for full proposal/application as well as the resulting award. (This may include a standalone report on gender-related results, fact sheets, a document outlining key lessons learned or best practices, etc.).

b. The award is implemented:

- i. The COR/AOR should ensure that gender-related elements of the activity are being implemented as planned in the activity design and workplan.
- ii. To the extent possible, allow for a flexible and adaptive workplan that is responsive to evolving gender considerations.
- iii. The COR/AOR should ensure that all people-level data that is reported across the lifespan of the award is sex-disaggregated, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the award.