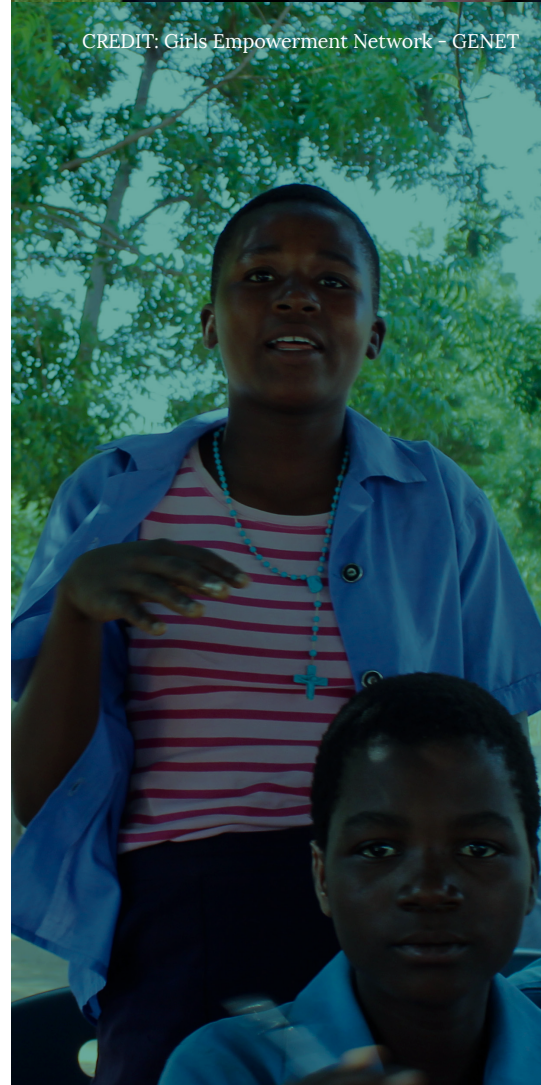


Gender-Sensitive Teacher Training

A guide to the journey of the creation process



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network

Visionaria Network and the Girls Empowerment Network - GENET have received a grant from WomenStrong International, joining a global community of organizations that come together within the WomenStrong Learning Lab to develop, test, sharpen, and disseminate recommendations to advance the rights and wellbeing of women and girls.

WomenStrong International finds, funds, strengthens, and shares women-driven solutions to transform lives in urban communities. Through its Learning Lab collective learning and sharing, we are adding to a global community of organizations that share WomenStrong's vision of a world in which all women and girls are free to prosper and to live their lives in dignity and peace.

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Gender-Sensitive Teacher Training

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From the field of Social Communication Sciences, Paola Saldivias Mendez has developed capacities for the design of programs and projects focused on human rights of women, childhoods and teens. With 8 years of work in the field of sustainable development in Latin America, Paola has gained experience in leading internal teams and managing consultancies. In 2016, she co-founded and launched Visionaria Network, a non-governmental organization for social development which specializes in leadership and agency-based empowerment training, as well as building organizational capacities to support women and girls. Paola is currently adjunct executive director of Visionaria Perú, manager of the program “Walk the Talk: teaching for gender equality en Peru” and one of the lead authors, designer and editor of the “Gender sensitive teacher training - a guide to the journey of the creation process”.

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Acknowledgements

The “Gender sensitive teacher training - a guide to the journey of the creation process” benefited from the contributions of many individuals. Important edits were provided by Susan Blaustein, Chisina Kapungu, Denise Mishiwiiec from WomenStrong International. Valuable inputs for the content and design were provided by Mara Steinhaus and Meg Greene.

We would like to give special thanks to Visionaria Peru, Susan León López for the design and visual creation of the guide.

GENET would like to thank the following for their technical support and advice in the production of this curriculum: The Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare; The ministry of Education, District Education Managers – Blantyre Urban and Rural. The School Health Nutrition Officers, The Gender Officers, The Primary Education Advisors; The Head teachers and She-Dreams Teachers of the targeted schools in this project.

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Introduction

Research has shown schools to be institutions where traditional social norms, generally plagued by discrimination and inequality, are reproduced and exacerbated¹. This is particularly concerning when we consider gender norms, which often require girls to be sexualized, fearful and accommodating toward others, while at the same time demanding that boys restrain their emotions and base their self-esteem on power, physical strength, and dominance over others. As such, schools can be damaging institutions² and instead of serving to empower students, can promulgate social inequality and discrimination. Nonetheless, they also have the potential to produce and foster social norms based on equality.

The potential of the educational system as transformative and as an enabler of a healthier and more equitable learning experience and personal formation is a powerful and potent tool for promoting sustainable development of communities, particularly when it comes to advocating for girls' school retention. Indeed, World Bank research estimates that *failing to educate half the population can cost countries between 15–30 trillion dollars in lifetime productivity and earnings*³. This potential has also been a major incentive for numerous girl-focused organizations to plan strategies and develop projects to advocate for and promote keeping girls in school and enhancing their educational experience. These projects continue to gain support for girls' education through the construction of a more equitable context by tackling the social norms that continue to promote unrealistic and limiting conceptions of masculinity and femininity, among several characteristics of current traditional education.

This guide captures the collective experiences of two organizations, Visionaria Network from Peru, and Girls Empowerment Network - GENET from Malawi, in the design, planning, and creation of gender-sensitive teacher training curricula. GENET and Visionaria have received a grant from WomenStrong International, an organization that finds, funds, strengthens, and shares women-driven solutions to transform lives in urban communities. Through this award, they have joined a global community of organizations that come together within the WomenStrong Learning Lab to develop, test, sharpen, and disseminate recommendations to advance the rights and wellbeing of women and girls.

1 Illich, I. (1971) *Deschooling society*. First edition. New York: Harper & Row; Harber, C. (2004) *Schooling as violence*. London: Routledge; Reay, D. (2009) 'Making sense of white working class educational underachievement' in K. P. Sveinsson (ed.) *Who cares about the white working class?* London: Runnymede Trust; Osler, A. (2006) 'Excluded girls: interpersonal, institutional and structural violence in schooling' *Gender and Education* 18(6): 571-589 Francis, B. and Mills, M. (2012) 'Schools as damaging organizations: instigating a dialogue concerning alternative models of schooling' *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 20(2): 251-271.

2 Harber, C. (2004) *Schooling as violence*. London: Routledge

3 Wodon, Quentin; Montenegro, Claudio; Nguyen, Hoa; Onagoruwa, Adenike. 2018. *Missed Opportunities : The High Cost of Not Educating Girls*. The Cost of Not Educating Girls Notes Series. World Bank, Washington, DC. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/29956> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

Introduction

The organizations share similar strategies to empower girls, keep them in school, and reinforce their learning experience. Their approaches to gender-sensitive teacher training seek to provoke a mind shift among teachers so they will support girls in realizing their fullest potential. Genet and Visionaria collaborated together to create this guide based on their varied experiences, with the goal of *contributing to improving the quality of gender sensitive teaching*.

The most valuable moment of this collaboration occurred during the WomenStrong's Learning Lab experience, when GENET and Visionaria had the chance to sit together and share the desire of producing a joint product. This gender-sensitive teacher training guide was developed with the support of WomenStrong International as an aiding resource for implementers, funders, and local authorities invested in a more equitable education. We strongly believe that we have a responsibility to share our experience and most valuable lessons to strengthen the sector.

By sharing what we have learned in the process of designing and creating the teacher training curricula we can contribute to a wider understanding of the process and required inputs; this can help implementers make better use of their resources (*time, budget, work force*) and add to the construction of their perspective and expectations on how to develop their own curricula. By showcasing our experience, *funders can have* a clearer understanding of the efforts required from organizations and implementers to undertake these endeavors. This guide also shows how a similar resource was created by two different organisations through divergent processes, demonstrating the benefits of cross-organisation learning. Finally, by comprehending the insights emerging from this work, stakeholders that have decision-making power, such as authorities can focus their support more strategically.

Visionaria Network: Walking the talk to promote a more equitable reality through education



Visionaria Network is a non-profit organization founded by a diverse team of international development professionals on a mission to engage local visions for personal and sustainable community development. Since arriving in Peru in 2014, Visionaria Network has partnered with local education ministries, businesses, and sustainable development leaders to design training and leadership opportunities that enable individuals to build personal agency and engage with the sustainable development of their communities.

“Visionaria for Schools” (VfS) is our flagship program. VfS aims for every young woman and man to graduate secondary school with the skills to lead in their own lives and communities. Currently implemented in Cusco, Peru, it is a comprehensive teacher training and accompaniment program for public secondary schools, which trains and supports teachers in understanding and integrating concepts of leadership, agency-based empowerment, and gender equity and norms into their regular classes, while enabling and facilitating opportunities for students to turn their leadership into action to benefit their communities.

Visionaria designed a program with support funding from WomenStrong International, and called it “Walk the Talk: Teaching for Gender Equality in Peru”. The program seeks to introduce and reinforce effective gender-sensitive teaching strategies for educators in the Visionaria for Schools program and throughout Peru. The primary purpose of the project is to enable teachers’ awareness to become gender-sensitive on a personal level, which we believe will also organically result in the enhancement of their teaching experience, promoting a more equitable teaching space to ensure that learning outcomes are achieved for ALL students (regardless of gender).

Due to culturally embedded gender stereotypes and misconceptions among local education authorities and teachers, Visionaria’s previous interventions regarding gender focus initially met with resistance, before successfully engaging their active participation in our programs throughout the school year. The “Walk the Talk” Program is the response Visionaria ideated to the recurrent request from these teachers, allies, and friends, for resources, materials, and guidance in their process of transitioning to more equitable teaching practices and mindsets.

This guide is a systematic approach to the creation of the training experience for teachers and what the Visionaria team has gained and learned from it.

Girls Empowerment Network (GENET): Working toward a world where every girl everywhere is empowered and living in an equitable society



Girls Empowerment Network is a girls and young women's rights local non-profit organization established in 2008. GENET aims at improving the health, status, and well-being of vulnerable, marginalized, and at-risk adolescent girls in Malawi, by empowering adolescent girls and young people to advocate for gender equality and justice and for access to sexual reproductive health rights (SRHR). We build and strengthen the capacities of girls and young women by equipping them with the life and survival skills that will enable them to make informed choices and healthy decisions regarding their life. Our work also focuses on building capacities of local and community structures to be able to respond effectively to the issues affecting girls in their areas and to be able to come up with community-led solutions to these issues. GENET mobilizes girls for action, including demanding their rights from service providers and duty bearers.

GENET works through after-school clubs that are managed by primary and secondary school teachers and sometimes by mentors based in communities. Teachers are trained to provide mentoring and tutoring to girls aged 10 to 18 through these after-school clubs. The clubs are divided by sex, with some only for girls and others only for boys. Teachers manage these clubs and are empowered to select members, deliver sessions, and support the members to cascade the learning from these clubs to other students. GENET is established and working in over 1000 adolescent clubs/networks both community-based and school-based reaching directly to over 20,000 rural, vulnerable, and disadvantaged adolescent girls across the country.

GENET's work with WomenStrong has focused on the thematic area of education, to increase the resilience of girls in schools and increase their school retention. The curriculum developed has the purpose to build teachers' sensitivity to the attitudes and practices that undermine girls' school performance and retention. The after-school "She-Dreams" Girls Clubs established for this project will provide training for 40 teachers who will then go on mentoring and tutoring 300 girls aged 10-18 years in 5 schools.

GENET's vision for She-Dreams is to implement a girls' empowerment and education initiative that empowers female teachers to implement gender-inclusive teaching methods. This pilot project addresses social norms and negative gender stereotypes that are reinforced through inappropriate and gender-insensitive teaching methods that keep girls from staying in school, completing their schooling, and pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). We found that although the materials available to them are quite gender-sensitive, teachers themselves are not gender-sensitive in delivering it. Our curriculum exists specifically to build the capacity of teachers to be more attentive to gender dynamics across all of the topics they are teaching, whether these are mathematics, science, or English. The project will empower and equip female teachers in girl-centered interactive methods, gender-sensitive approaches, and mentoring, to help improve students' academic performance and nurture girls' love for learning, particularly in STEM subjects.

A peek at our initiatives

VISIONARIA'S "WALK THE WALK" CHALLENGE

The “*Walk the talk: Teaching for Gender Equality in Peru*” program is our response to the needs and requests from educators, partners and friends of Visionaria to access resources that allow them to mainstream more effectively the gender focus in their teaching and educational practice, so that the teaching experience has results that are achieved by all students, regardless of their gender, in an area of equality.

The main purpose of the program is to develop teachers' gender sensitivity through personal experience and encouraging them to extend their gender awareness to their teaching experience and practice.

Since the school is a key scenario for the construction of equality, a critical review of the resources, content and strategies within the learning experience is more than a necessity: it is the social responsibility we must assume to provide a quality education that translates into an educational experience that represents equal opportunities for students, beyond their sex and genders. This critical review requires all participants to *be on the same page*, meaning it requires a common ground in the sense of defining and operationalizing gender and related variables such as gender focus, gender equity and equality.

Our previous research in the region has shown that while most teachers agree with the principles of gender equality, they can inadvertently perpetuate harmful gender-related norms and stereotypes through their teaching methods and interactions with students. To continue to grow towards gender equality, we must help our teachers *walk the talk* and go from *saying to doing*.



This is the branding logo for the “Walk the talk” program. Visionaria has 3 programs and each one of them has a specific logo and branding as part of the strategy to engage participants.

GENET'S "SHE-DREAMS" INITIATIVE

GENET's vision is that every girl everywhere is empowered and living in an equitable society. The organization's mission is to promote girls and young women's rights, inclusive education, skills and leadership development, entrepreneurship, and economic freedom. GENET's drive is the commitment to contribute towards the elimination of gender inequalities in health, education, and economic opportunities, through the promotion and creation of safe spaces for girls' participation and development. GENET (Malawi) also works to confront traditional and religious practices that fuel negative masculinities, gender-based violence, and gender discrimination, such as forced early marriages and sexual cleansing.⁴

The organization operates through forming girls' networks and clubs and uses various approaches such as communication and networking, community mobilization, workshops and training, lobbying and advocacy within the framework of social behavior change theory models.

With funding from WomenStrong, GENET is implementing a project called "**She-Dreams**" in schools in five urban and suburban slum areas of Blantyre. The project is training mostly female teachers from surrounding primary and secondary schools, including Chichiri Primary and Secondary Schools, Mpapa Primary and Community Day Secondary and Manja Primary School.

Ten clubs will be established and supported to provide safe spaces for girls to learn, ask questions, and voice concerns. In each club, 30 girl leaders will receive empowerment sessions and will in turn be encouraged to share what they have learned in the She-Dreams curriculum with their peers in the school. It is expected that about 3800 girl learners from the target schools will benefit from the project, as the teachers will apply their new skills during classroom lessons. We also plan to recruit male teachers (10), who can offer a male perspective and act as supporters of girls' education, mobilizing boys and other male teachers to support girls' rights and work against gender-based violence. After training, the male teachers will set up boys clubs (which will have 20 boys per school). In these clubs, the boys will be taught about positive masculinity, how they define being male, changing mindsets, and gender norms. The club's experience will also address understanding how to support girls' rights to stay in school and to live free from violence.

⁴ Warria, A. (2018). Girls' innocence and futures stolen: The cultural practice of sexual cleansing in Malawi. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 91, 298-303.

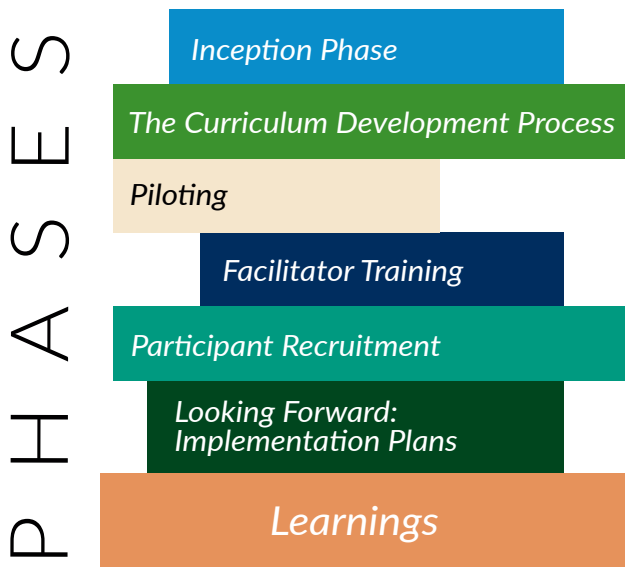
GENET'S “SHE-DREAMS” INITIATIVE

Girls face a lot of risks within the schools and as they go to and from school. The trained teachers will seek solutions and impact mitigation. Within the school systems, there are laws they can act on, and if there are no laws, the female teachers will consider other disciplinary and precautionary actions that might be taken. The “*She-Dreams*” curriculum will be adapted from the existing girl empowerment curriculum and will utilize resources from other sources. The curriculum will be tested and will continuously be refined and improved in the course of the project, to make it more functional, relevant, and effective for teachers.



Girls face a lot of risks at school and as they go to and from school. The trained teachers will seek solutions and impact mitigation. Within the school systems, there are laws they can act on, and if there are no laws, the female teachers will consider other disciplinary and precautionary actions that might be taken. The “*She-Dreams*” curriculum will be adapted from the existing girl empowerment curriculum and will utilize resources from other sources. The curriculum will be tested and will continuously be refined and improved in the course of the project, to make it more functional, relevant, and effective for teachers.

Inception Phase



Any curriculum development process must start by answering some fundamental questions: What need or gap does the curriculum address? Who will be the primary and secondary audiences for the curriculum? What information is needed to develop the curriculum? Is this information already available, or does it need to be gathered, and if so, how?

In this section, we will discuss our experiences answering these questions during the inception of our curricula and provide key recommendations to organizations navigating the same phase.

How to know the curriculum is needed?

For both Visionaria and GENET, the teacher training workshop has been a response to requests from teachers and mentors for material, strategies, and preparation that enables them to understand a focus on gender and equity and to translate their knowledge and understanding into gender-responsive pedagogy.

Visionaria's previous research and experience in the region has shown that while most teachers agree with the benefits and objectives of gender equality, they can inadvertently perpetuate harmful gender-related norms and stereotypes through their teaching content and methods as well as their interactions with students, particularly their disciplinary actions. For our program to succeed, we must help teachers "*walk the talk*" toward gender equality, by transcending the theoretical approach to the practice of comprehending what the gender focus and gender equality actually comprise. The National Ministry of Education requires teachers to pursue gender equality; however, resources and guidance are not adequate or available for them to fulfill said requirements. Teachers must have access to high quality lesson plans focused on gender and gender equality, as well as guidance to understand how to design and produce their own gender-sensitive resources to enable healthy and equitable teaching and learning environments for both girls and boys to succeed. These critical elements have been Visionaria's impetus for focusing on developing an experience that could enhance teachers' capacities and improve their performance.

⁵ Based on the traditional constructs of femininity and masculinity, and expectations from female and male students in class in relation to these constructs.

GENET knew that the curriculum was needed because in Malawi, the adult literacy rate is around 60%, with less than 40% of women and 60% of men aged 25+ having had any secondary education. Girls are frequently discouraged from remaining in school and are more likely than boys to drop out. This is a consequence of deep-rooted sociocultural norms and traditional beliefs regarding girls' and women's role in society; these beliefs contribute to adolescent pregnancy and adolescent marriage. Negative beliefs held by parents and teachers have been shown to reduce girls' enrolment and permanence in school⁶. GENET's curriculum, therefore, aims to challenge these negative sociocultural norms and traditional beliefs by assisting teachers to develop and implement gender-sensitive lessons both in class and in out-of-school clubs.

Who was engaged in conceptualizing the work?

For the Visionaria team, answering teachers' questions and taking their needs as guidance has been an effective strategy for designing our interventions, materials and resources. As we came to answer questions and requests expressed by teachers participating in our "Visionaria for Schools"⁷ program, the Visionaria team ideated a teacher training workshop around which we developed the Walk the Talk Program, as we identified the latent need for an orientation in the comprehension of gender, the gender focus applied to education, and of course, a gender-responsive pedagogy.

The Visionaria for Schools Program (VfS) is a comprehensive teacher training and support program for public secondary schools through which the Visionaria team trains and supports teachers in understanding, integrating, and facilitating concepts of leadership, agency-based empowerment, and gender equity and norms in their current teaching, while enabling and facilitating opportunities for students to practice leadership in their communities.

As part of our implementation process of the VfS program in public secondary schools, we identify teachers' interests and needs to inform the design of strategies and the resources we provide, making their participation and networking with us more appealing. The data we have collected from teachers through different methodologies, such as surveys, group discussions, and informal conversations held during past in-person workshops, was valuable to inform the plans and expected content for the gender-responsive pedagogy workshop.

⁶Nash, K., O'Malley, G., Geoffroy, E., Schell, E., Bvumbwe, A., & Denno, D. M. (2019). "Our girls need to see a path to the future"--perspectives on sexual and reproductive health information among adolescent girls, guardians, and initiation counselors in Mulanje district, Malawi. *Reproductive health*, 16(1), 1-13.

⁷ <https://visionarianetwork.org/visionaria-for-schools/>

To conceptualize the teacher training workshop for gender-sensitive pedagogy, the Visionaria team also resorted to a non-exhaustive online review of similar resources and experiences. This review was an important guide to identifying the necessary content to be included; we set as our standard a basic level of understanding of gender-related themes for our participating teachers.

For GENET, the idea also came after implementing other programs with teachers and identifying the gap, namely, *that they were not gender-sensitive in their teaching. After developing the curriculum, we involved the Ministry of Education and the teachers themselves, bringing this gap to their attention.* The curriculum was based on the requests from teachers with whom we worked for a curriculum to help them mainstream gender into their lesson plans. With the purpose of engaging them, we asked teachers what sort of content should be included in the curriculum and who should be involved in the training.

Not all teachers were involved and convinced that this was important to do. To increase their engagement, we built their capacity and helped them understand that the material was not an extra thing they would have to master, but rather would strengthen how they were accomplishing what they needed to do, helping them become more effective in their teaching.

The Ministry of Education of Malawi was very interested, as they themselves agreed that this gap exists between educational content and the experience of girls at school. The textbooks are adequate, but girls are dropping out, feel diminished, and don't feel safe. They also acknowledged that if teachers are not sensitized, then the effort for equality won't work, and girls will continue to be discriminated against in education.

For both organizations, the primary audiences are school teachers, and the secondary audiences are the students for whom teachers develop gender-responsive pedagogy resources and practices.

What experience and research informed the plans?

Visionaria Perú	GENET
<p><i>For Visionaria in Peru, the Ministry of Education proposed a change in the national curriculum (2016)⁸ that demanded the inclusion and enrichment of several foci, including gender equality. The gender equality focus has been the hardest one to translate into practice and for teachers and even some authorities to fully comprehend. A misinterpretation by the most conservative and religious sectors of Peruvian society regarding what gender equality and the gender focus entail, based on extremely traditional gender norms and stereotypes, generated significant backlash against the Ministry’s initiatives and all related efforts, including training initiatives such as ours.</i></p> <p>As part of the national proposal for education, the Ministry also provided resources, both for teachers and students to work with in class. The Visionaria team briefly reviewed these resources and identified a specific conflict with these materials: textbooks and handbooks consisted of a compilation of resources found online that had been put together, not having necessarily been reviewed, adapted, or edited for use by teachers and students.</p>	<p><i>A number of sobering statistics have motivated GENET’s interest and work: in Malawi, women have lower literacy levels than men, only 69% of women know how to read and write, compared to 81% of men. Girls’ school completion is lower than boys’ in both primary and secondary schools. Females make up 39% of all students at tertiary level, mostly due to fewer female students gaining the required grades. Furthermore, the proportion of girls and boys in secondary school is at 46% to 54%, respectively. About 48% of Malawi’s population is under 14 years of age, and 61.6% of the population lives on less than US\$ 1.25 per person per day.</i></p> <p>Deep-rooted sociocultural norms and traditional beliefs regarding girls’ and women’s role in society have been known to negatively influence girls’ enrolment and school retention. Socioeconomic factors also contribute to high school drop-out rates, especially for female students, amongst whom early marriage remains a serious problem.</p>

⁸MINEDU – Ministerio de Educación (Peruvian Ministry of Education) (2016) Programa curricular de educación Secundaria (Secondary school curriculum). Lima: MINEDU (<http://www.minedu.gob.pe/curriculo/pdf/programa-curricular-ed- ucaion-secundaria.pdf>): Page 363.

What experience and research informed the plans? (continued)

Visionaria Perú

The content was either too general to comprehend or too explicit - particularly the discussion of sex and gender - which caused a great discomfort on several levels: teachers were not comfortable using the material, students were receiving very low-quality education, and families were concerned and confused about the way the gender focus was being implemented. This became a clear statement of the need to develop teachers' skills to design, create, and develop their resources, based on the understanding of their own contexts and their students' characteristics.

In the midst of these changes and conflicts, in 2018 Visionaria guided the study, "*Projecting futures: exploring teachers' and students' perspectives on gender in Peru*"⁹ which aimed to understand the traditional gender norms held by teachers and students and how the VfS program impacted harmful gender norms and stereotypes. Specifically, we found evidence that VfS intervention teachers were more open to discussing and questioning personal beliefs and expressed a greater confidence in applying the new curriculum standards requested by the National Ministry of Education.

GENET

GENET's insights derived from our previous work with other programs working with teachers as facilitators for the girls' clubs. We saw that boys were doing better than girls, and girls were dropping out, so we gave the girls bursaries. We also asked the teachers to provide special support, but that was not helping. This is when we learned from the girls in the clubs that teachers were dismissive of their abilities, and that as soon as girls entered their classrooms, they were made to feel that they are poorer learners than boys.

This information led to the analysis of the textbooks used in class, finding that the problem relies on the way teachers were delivering the material, which was not equitable. Teachers conveyed to girls that they should "go ahead and drop out" since girls were wasting their time in school. They would spend more time with boys, challenging them to do better, while passively accepting girls dropping out based on the belief that they were better off getting married.

⁹<https://www.alignplatform.org/resources/projecting-futures-exploring-teachers-and-students-perspectives-gender-rural-peru>

What experience and research informed the plans? (continued)

Visionaria Perú	GENET
<p>This study was assessed by The Advancing Learning and Innovation on Gender Norms (ALIGN) program and prompted an important key message:</p> <p><i>“To effect change, clear and consistent educational policies are needed regarding gender and gender equality. Educational institutions need to be supported in understanding gender bias through measures such as teacher training and lesson plans so that gender-based social norms in the classroom can change.”</i></p> <p>Our previous work has proven that one of Visionaria’s key strategies is to create a different kind of experience for teacher training. Although Peruvian teachers receive regular, scheduled training from the national and local education authorities, their experience with Visionaria is unconventional and more appealing. Fostering critical thinking and using human-centered design activities, similar to the resources we provide to teachers for their own students through our programs, have been central to the design of the <i>Walk the Talk</i> program.</p>	<p>Based on our experience working with teachers as matrons and facilitators for the clubs, we saw that teachers themselves did not have equitable ideas about girls and boys. This needed to be addressed before they could deliver girl empowerment sessions. Thus identifying the teachers and their teaching style as unsupportive of girls’ studies was an important insight that informed our decision to design this project aimed at engaging teachers to address their own beliefs and values that undermined girls’ participation and opportunities.</p>

Key Learnings: Inception Phase

- The need for this type of curriculum might arise from a specific policy change, such as the one enacted by the Ministry of Education in Peru, or from broader policy mandates such as was the case in Malawi and the involvement of their Ministry of Education.
- Be attentive of beneficiaries' needs and requests -- they represent an organic interest and support for your intervention. While neither of our organizations conducted formal formative research prior to the development of our curricula, we both had a clear understanding of the need and the teaching environment, based on our extensive previous experience working with teachers in our contexts.
- The key stakeholders identified for these curricula were very similar, including authorities as key supporters, teachers as primary beneficiaries, and students as secondary beneficiaries. It will be important for any further planning to factor them in.
- A due diligence review of available resources will be valuable in informing your actions and guiding your plans. GENET's review of the government curriculum revealed that the resources were indeed gender-equitable and that the problem relied on the ways in which teachers delivered the curriculum. In Visionaria's experience, some of the material provided to teachers by the national Ministry of Education, although it did address gender, was unsuitable for the classroom experience, since it was mostly content found online, which had not necessarily been tailored for in-class learning experiences.
- When addressing sensitive subjects, especially those culturally embedded and supported, it is necessary to be flexible to apply changes to the work as it comes, adapting to the situation. GENET's original expectation was to deliver the curricula during school hours, which had to be adapted to be delivered in the afterschool clubs. Visionaria's first intention was to design a workshop for teachers to dive into the creation of resources, which had to be adjusted to the reality that basic steps had to be taken, such as properly understanding gender and gender focus.
- Resistance is natural and normal when trying to bring change in an institution, and it is important to be patient and ready to act on the opportunities to take action. Both programs required buy-in from the Ministries, and we have needed to continue making the case on gender equality and how it can be integrated into teaching.

The Curriculum Development Process

After we clarified the need for a gender-responsive teacher training curriculum in our context and defined our audiences, it was time to begin developing our curricula. Our organizations followed different processes:

- Visionaria defined what the final product would look like and then commissioned local gender experts through a consultancy to develop it.
- GENET developed its curriculum in-house, with their own staff designing the structure and developing the material for the workshop and the Ministry of Education reviewing it.

Topics	Visionaria Perú	GENET
Gender terms and concepts	<p>Visionaria focuses the first 3 out of 6 sessions to define, describe and explain key concepts, parting from the premise that they have been greatly misinterpreted.</p> <p>Key terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender• Gender focus• Gender equity• Equality.	<p>GENET has one session for all gender related key terms to ensure that all the participants clearly understood the terms.</p> <p>Key terms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sex• Gender• Gender equality.

Topics	Visionaria Perú	GENET
Overall purpose	<p>For teachers to have the resources and understanding of key concepts of gender, gender equity and equality and gender focus.</p> <p>First working on a personal level of identifying personal traditional and limiting gender bias, to later work and create with them gender-sensitive pedagogy strategies and resources.</p> <p>They question their own bias, and from these answers, they analyze their teaching and their context - but they don't question structural biases as a specific objective, more as an organic part of the process (organic because we believe this questioning will come naturally).</p>	<p>It is designed to be a practical guide for making teaching and learning processes gender-responsive.</p> <p>Curriculum helps teachers understand concepts of gender, social biases that they have and which make them deliver the lessons in a gender-insensitive manner.</p> <p>They question their own biases, and also structural biases such as how girls and boys are treated differently in the classroom and community.</p>
Common lesson content	<p>The workshop is designed to be a personal experience to develop teachers' gender-sensitivity and enhance their knowledge and skills to develop a gender responsive pedagogy.</p>	<p>The workshop is designed to be facilitated to teachers who will afterwards create their club where they will apply their learning to modify and improve their workshops and work with the girls.</p>

Topics	Visionaria Perú	GENET
Common lesson content	<p>Workshop content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal gender bias ● Previous learning and understanding of sex, gender, gender focus, gender equity and gender equality ● Understanding gender as a social construct and the inequalities it provokes. ● Relation between gender equity and gender equality ● Practical experience applying gender in teachers' day-to-day ● Gender focus in education ● Gender-responsive Pedagogy 	<p>Workshop content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding Gender ● Gender-Responsive Pedagogy ● Gender-Responsive Lesson Planning ● Gender-Responsive Teaching and Learning Materials ● Gender-Responsive Language Use in Classrooms ● Gender-Responsive Classroom Interaction ● Monitoring and Evaluation
Differences in content and workshop structure	<p>Visionaria works with teachers to start developing their gender-sensitivity to identify their personal gender bias and permeate this awareness to their professional teaching practice.</p> <p>Visionaria proposes strategies for teachers who work on varied courses to add to their ongoing teaching practice to mainstream gender in the resources they already use.</p>	<p>GENET prepares teachers to guide and facilitate workshops in the clubs that they will create for girls, and guides teachers to create their own resources.</p> <p>Teachers in the clubs work with GENET's curricula which includes and addresses sexual and reproductive content: gender-responsive management of sexual maturation and sexual harassment.</p> <p>By working with teachers, GENET also pushes the implementation of a gender responsive school management system.</p>

Topics	Visionaria Perú	GENET
Differences in approach	<p>Teachers go through a process of self-assessment regarding their gender bias, with the purpose of making their work with their students in class more gender-responsive.</p> <p>Participation happens by either voluntarily signing up for the program, as well as belonging to schools that are part of a previous agreement with local educational authorities.</p> <p>Although we desire and advocate for our participating teachers to share their experience with their colleagues and the rest of their school community, it's no longer a mandatory responsibility for them since we have had negative experiences with the cascade model work because it represented an additional, hard-to-manage burden for teachers.</p>	<p>Teachers go through a process of self-transformation and then assess their schools.</p> <p>GENET proposes a top-down model, supported by the Ministry of Education's engagement to implement their curriculum.</p> <p>Teachers who have developed their gender-sensitivity then start to make their schools more gender-responsive through an assessment of policies and rules.</p>
Length and format	<p>The Program is designed to last 8 weeks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 weeks of workshop (theory and practice). ● 1 week of personal practice. ● 4 weeks of on the field experience, with support and follow up by the Visionaria team. 	<p>The program is designed to last one school year and the curriculum for training the teachers can delivered in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A workshop setting for 5 to 7 days, or ● Part time through sessions as long as the sessions are completed.

Topics	Visionaria Perú	GENET
Length and format	<p>It was initially designed to combine in-person participation during the workshops and remote & in person accompaniment by the Visionaria team, however due to COVID restrictions, we've opted to digitize the entire experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Virtual workshops. ● Virtual and remote accompaniment. 	<p>After the training, teachers are then required to work with the “She-Dreams” clubs and their schools throughout the school academic year.</p>
The need for flexibility in the face of resistance	<p>The resistance was regarding the content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In Visionaria’s case, the discussion of sex and gender led to resistance among the teachers. In order to retain the content while helping teachers be less fearful, Visionaria began using broader language about “social norms and roles” to avoid using the term “gender.” ● The decision to shift from in-person modality to a virtual experience also generated resistance, specifically within the internal team. The objection was around the difficulty of addressing the gender topic: it was already difficult to do so in person, to be able to do it through digital media was an experience that required proper planning. 	<p>The resistance was regarding the logistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GENET experienced resistance to how the curriculum would be delivered rather than to the content itself. When the Ministry refused to deliver the curriculum during school hours, GENET changed course and recognized that most of the same objectives could be achieved through out-of-school clubs. Indeed, by having the curriculum applied out of school, there was less resistance to the content. ● The Ministry also required that teacher participation be voluntary, so GENET shifted from selecting participating teachers to fulfill a specific sex ratio (5 female and 2 male) to accepting and trainign voluntary teachers willing and interested in doing the work.

Who developed the curriculum?

The Visionaria team conducted a non-exhaustive online review of gender sensitive strategies, resources, and curricula, and combined this information with their general understanding of teachers' needs of key content that needed to be approached during the training experience.

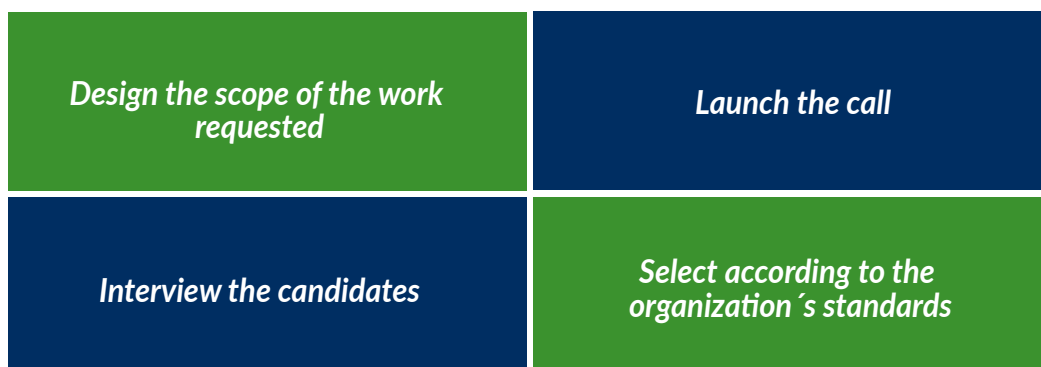
Teachers' needs and preferences (data obtained from previous experiences and evaluation resources used for our workshops) were reflected as much as possible when selecting length, format, content, results, and products expected for the experience. The team also identified the objectives and characteristics of the workshop, which was decided had to be designed and created by gender experts through a consultancy process. The Terms of Reference for the consultancy were drafted and included a detailed description of what the workshop should be, serving as the framework for the gender experts, guiding them in terms of required content and also referring them to Visionaria's way of working with teachers, prompting them to design very hands-on material for teachers to be as engaged as possible

The Terms of Reference for the consultancy were publicly shared through our social media, describing specifics regarding the product we expected, as well as the criteria to be selected, included:

Consultants needed to have

- Previous experience training teachers locally (Peru).
- Experience developing gender-sensitive material and resources.
- Understanding of the particularities of local teacher training and teacher support.
- Experience in the design and creation of monitoring and evaluation resources

The call for consultants was conducted through the following steps, which can serve as a reference or other organizations and implementers trying to engage in a similar process:



The scope of work described in a narrative manner that the consultants would be required to create the workshop (activities to deliver the requested gender-related content), as well as the process and the resources for monitoring and evaluating the experience. A timeframe for meetings and deadlines was also included, which was reviewed and approved by the two parts, the Visionaria team and the consultancy team.

We published the Terms of Reference on our social media and also shared it through different local platforms. Requirements included the presentation of the person's CV, a brief presentation of their previous experiences in related work, and a letter of interest through which they could express what they considered to be the value they would be adding to the experience of designing the workshop.



Cross-evaluate factors important to the organization to make a decision. To us, this meant not only focusing on the person's technical capacities and professional skills to create and deliver the workshop, but also their personal traits and opinions regarding the work we do and the way we work. Try to work with someone who's experience can contribute to yours, and that they also feel that they are gaining from this experience.

45-minute phone interviews were scheduled with each candidate. Since we had a small number of candidates (7), we were able to interview them all. The interviewer had a guiding questionnaire to address both the person's experience in the creation of teaching resources (material and experience provided to our teachers) as well as the person's perspectives of the project, if they thought it was a needed and valuable effort. The interview intended to assess that the person was an adequate fit to develop the resources as well as aligning with our purposes and objectives.

Finally, a team of two female gender experts was selected. They worked on the design of the workshop, organizing the content, designing activities, and creating the required resources (worksheets) to deliver the experience. They also designed the resources for monitoring and evaluating the experience, which eventually had to be enhanced by an in-house team. Although the consultants had good experience for designing the material, their monitoring and evaluating experience fell short of the program's and the organization's needs. A member of the Visionaria team was assigned to work with the consultants, holding regular meetings to review the material, providing feedback to enhance the work. Ultimately, every piece of material designed and created was reviewed, evaluated, and approved by Visionaria's senior facilitators.

#COVIDResponse #RemoteProgramming The workshop was designed according to Visionaria's requirements, based on our know-how and the action plan we developed for our interventions. However, our planning was disrupted by the global pandemic and required us to adapt. In response, the Visionaria team has taken the in-person format of the workshop and is in the process of adjusting the content to a virtual-digital format.

GENET designed a one-week workshop to train the teachers, with the facilitation provided by trainers from the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education referred GENET to the Department of Gender, indicating that they had to work together on the design of the curriculum. GENET described the work and came to agreement with the Department of Gender on the topics that needed to be included. We agreed on the objectives to pursue: for girls to perform better, to stay in school, to enhance the teachers' capacity to understand both the girls' learning needs and the broader contextual challenges they face. We also needed to change the mindset of the teachers, so that they would realize that improving their teaching and making girls more successful would make them more successful as well, that this experience would benefit them. Recognizing that this would be good for the teachers themselves was important to fulfill the requirement from the Ministry, which demanded that teachers participated voluntarily.

After developing the curriculum, GENET shared it with the Department of Gender, which reviewed and approved it. With the Ministry's and the Department of Gender's approval, our curriculum was complete.

How was the content developed?

Previous work and knowledge enabled the Visionaria team to set a baseline of what we considered the level of teachers' comprehension regarding gender and how to address and approach it in class. Conversations with teachers and a rapid assessment of their doubts and frequent questions to our team lead us to establish the baseline for their knowledge and understanding of gender as basic. Our comprehension of the context, both nationally and locally, in which very conservative, religious groups have misled the interpretation of the gender focus in education is one of the reasons we identify as key elements to explain teachers' resistance and even fear of approaching gender in their teaching experience.

We decided that the workshop content needed to include an introductory sensitivity phase from which to build upon the exercise of identifying personal gender bias and finally approach the new teaching practice: gender-responsive pedagogy.

We wanted the content to gradually evolve in its depth and complexity, and we requested the consultants to design the workshop accordingly. Having this in mind, the content was divided into 3 levels:

- The sensitivity level, in which we prioritized the content for learning and comprehending gender, key definitions and elements, properly informing participants' previous understandings and experiences.
- The practice level, in which participants take learnings from the sensitivity content into their daily experiences, to contextualize their comprehending process.
- The new teaching experience, in which the content is oriented to putting into practice the gender focus to pursue gender equity and equality through the design and creation of gender-sensitive pedagogy resources.

The consulting team developed the content for an eight-hour workshop, and structured it to clearly state the objective of the activities. Resources, such as worksheets and sample audio and visual material, were also created - some of it gathered online, some of it specifically created for this experience.

The following elements were evaluated and tested by the Visionaria team:

The **facilitation guide** for delivering the in-person workshop was reviewed by the team based on a work/deliverable timeframe designed and approved by both parties, which allowed feedback to be timely provided.

The **in-person workshop** underwent a "design pilot." The consultants delivered the workshop to the Visionaria team and guest teachers with the purpose of receiving additional feedback to enhance the proposed curriculum.

The expected product of the workshop experience is a summary of gender-sensitive teaching strategies created with the participating teachers, who during the workshop will have received guidance and support from the Visionaria team.

The original program and workshops (in person) took approximately 6 months to develop:

- 2 month designing what we wanted the workshop to be like, commission the design and creation
- 3 months for consultants to create the workshop
- 1 month for Visionaria team to review and feedback to the consultants, pilot the workshop, approve the workshop

The virtual program, which addresses the same content, requires different planning and design of activities and resources - this is ongoing and is planned to be developed in 4 months

#COVIDResponse #RemoteProgramming We have found that the virtual experience we propose as an alternative to the in-person workshops, which are no longer possible because of lockdown, requires the design of activities that emulate in-person engagement. For this purpose, we are taking the in-person workshop content and designing online activities for its development. Although “adapting” the in-person activities was a possibility, experts within the team proposed the value of redesigning them, using a varied set of apps and virtual resources to better engage the participants.

Based on the agreed-upon topics and objectives, GENET staff conducted a scan and review of other curricula on the Internet. The search was specific and focused on terms like “gender-sensitive teaching,” “gender pedagogy,” “gender curriculum.” Quite a few documents came to our attention, and we chose the most relevant and strongest-looking materials to draw from for our curriculum. GENET staff chose what best represented what they wanted to communicate.

GENET’s development of the curriculum to train the teachers and the length of the workshop reflected a realistic perspective of the amount of time teachers could spend receiving the training. We covered the topics that had been selected by the Ministry of Education, and the areas we knew would be essential for helping the teachers develop their gender-sensitivity. The teacher training, which is an innovation, has a new curriculum that focuses on improving academic achievement, overcoming barriers to completing education among girls, promoting interest in STEM subjects, challenging gender stereotypes inside and outside the classroom, and identifying risk factors that promote or perpetuate violence against women and girls.

The technical staff of the Ministry team provided guidance on the amount of time needed to address a given topic properly, detailed input into the content and the language of the curriculum. Throughout the process of developing the curriculum, GENET was continually thinking through how best to influence the way teachers think, and how they might approach each and every topic. Teachers were also consulted during the training workshop about the number and length of sessions and what format would be best for their participation.

The consultations conducted with the Ministry of Education and the Department of Gender were for them to review the curriculum, approve its relevance, and confirm that it addressed the needs and gaps we had identified together. Based on the topics and themes we needed to touch upon, the guidance provided by the Ministry's staff and feedback from teachers, the length of the curriculum reaches approximately 25 hours, to be delivered throughout a 5 day workshop experience. All this process took the GENET team six months to develop:

- Approximately 3 months for the research on what challenges we wanted to address and through which topics we could best approach them.
- Around 2 months were allocated and invested in consultations and discussions with the Ministry of Education to decide which topics to include, which outline worked best and what content was relevant and feasible, according to both our objectives.
- The actual design, creation and writing of the content took GENET another month to work on, which resulted in the booklet to develop the teacher training workshop.

Key Takeaways: Curriculum Development

- Curricula can be developed through different combinations of stakeholder participation and in-house development, with the organization's own team; by external consultants following a layout designed according to the organization's needs and expectations; co-development; and in consultation with members of the Ministry team and teachers themselves.
- Regardless of who leads the curriculum development, staff will need to be heavily involved in the review of the content and format, to ensure that it is aligned with the priorities and audiences it will be engaging, usually identified during the inception phase or even known from previous work.
- The length and format of the curriculum and the workshop to implement it should be adjusted to best fit the needs and availability of time of the target audience(s).
- Even in the initial stages of curriculum development, it may be useful to engage external stakeholders, such as teachers or Ministry of Education staff, to provide input. This input can come from direct sources, and it can also come from existing data obtained through surveys and feedback on previous experiences.

Piloting

Piloting the workshop and its content before the curricula is rolled out in schools allowed both our organizations to assess whether we were meeting our objectives and as well as if any aspect of the content or implementation design needed to be adjusted.

Both Visionaria and GENET had teachers participating in the piloting of their workshops, with the purpose of receiving their feedback to enhance their proposed content. However, the piloting process for both was interrupted by the worldwide COVID emergency.

Who participated and consulted in the piloting process?

The Visionaria team and guest teachers participated in what we called a design pilot. This pilot consisted of participating in a model workshop, facilitated by the consulting team in charge of the creation of the curricula. The entire in-house team was requested to participate. Teachers were individually and personally invited, based on their previous experiences and their openness to participate in learning experiences provided by our organization. Only female participants replied to the invitation.

As participants, we were able to live the experience, evaluate the content, and provide feedback to the consultants, based on our responses to the activities, as well as our understanding of our teachers' needs and characteristics.

The design pilot was the last piece of feedback provided to the consultants by the Visionaria team before they delivered the workshop and all its resources.

The piloting of the workshop with a group formed only by teachers (our primary audience for the workshop), a step we had planned as the final validation of the resources before taking the proposal to the authorities, was interrupted by lockdown and social distancing enforced by the national government as a response to the COVID 19 pandemic emergency.

GENET agreed with the Ministry of Education that it would train the teachers on the curriculum, with participation of their facilitators, and that teachers would voluntarily conduct the lessons and establish the clubs for the She Dreams Program. We intended to finish the training after three months, once they had a bit more experience. For hands-on experience, teachers needed to first establish the She Dreams clubs and deliver sessions using the curriculum, this way GENET would have their feedback from this experience to revise the curriculum. We were supposed to meet them back to learn about the experiences and challenges, so that this information could be included in the document, but we were not able to receive that feedback because of COVID arising.

In a similar plan, teachers were expected to demonstrate their knowledge with the students through the realization of the clubs, which they were unable to do because of COVID. As a response to COVID restrictions, GENET resorted to remote programming. After an initial training experience with teachers, which we were able to give before the pandemic, and considering the impossibility of working in the clubs, we asked participating teachers about the way their experiences as teachers or as parents or family members have been modified, about the changes they felt as a result of their gender-sensitive training. Teachers are reporting weekly and sharing how they are doing things differently in their lives as a result of the training. GENET is working on a booklet to share these experiences with other teachers and we have also opened a WhatsApp group, in which teachers participate by writing and sharing their stories on their phones.



Key Takeaways: Piloting



- The advantage of drawing from existing curricula is that those materials have been tested elsewhere, and we are drawing on content that we know is basically solid. It's still important to adapt and contextualize whatever materials are applied.
- Piloting represents a valuable opportunity to validate the content, which is also useful in the proper allocation of resources, since it's a low-cost experience.
- By conducting a piloting experience, collecting valuable data is possible, such as identifying key moments of the sessions that require particular attention from the facilitator, to enable a richer experience. For the Visionaria team, considering that our local staff is responsible for the facilitation of the workshop and implementation of the program, it was essential that they voiced any and all doubts, so that these could be solved and addressed by the consultants.
- Learnings from the piloting process can also inform other programs and resources of the organization. Both organizations will strengthen their gender mainstreaming in all their other projects. Visionaria has also included as part of their induction process for new staff, their participation of the gender-responsive training workshop.
- The COVID 19 interruption shed a light on the value and potential of digitizing many experiences brought to our audiences. Not all of them, naturally, since a big part of the work we do requires in-person interaction, but the development of complementary digital resources appears to be a must.

Facilitator training

The facilitation of the workshop is as important as the design and creation of the curricula and its content. A key consideration for both organizations was the complexity of tackling these issues in the social contexts of both Peru and Malawi. In that sense, the selection of facilitators is a very important process that requires attention.

What criteria were used to identify and select facilitators?

In Visionaria's case, while the curriculum was created by local gender experts external to the organization, our local, in-house staff is responsible for the facilitation of the workshops with teachers. The team has regular experience facilitating our regular workshops, which is beneficial for this particular experience. However, special considerations have been identified to prepare our team members to facilitate this specific experience:

1. Previous experience with the workshop as a participant: The Visionaria team receives periodic training to explore its own resources and to better comprehend them. The eight-hour workshop will be facilitated with the team in a very similar way they would be expected to deliver it with the group of teachers. This experience will be facilitated by Visionaria's senior facilitator.

3. Facilitation skills: Enabling a teacher's experience to be as reflective of his and her own gender bias both professionally and personally as possible is a key element of Visionaria's teacher training strategies and expectations. The facilitator must achieve those processes, or at least provide a healthy and informed guide towards that process, for which skills such as active listening, patience, and creativity, as well as empathy, need to be very sharp.

2. Extensive review of complementary material and content to meet participants' needs: Within the process of addressing contents that may have not been extensively approached by teachers, many "new" questions, examples, and anecdotes may arise. The facilitator needs to be prepared to address them in a confident, non-defiant way, keeping present that many teachers have been thinking and teaching in a certain way for a great percentage of their careers and lives. It is also possible that teachers already participating in the VfS Program may process the experience and contents a little faster than teachers who have not yet participated with us or approached these contents, and so their needs regarding information and analysis could vary.

The workshop guide has been designed to be a solid resource that can be adapted to participants' specific contexts and needs. In this sense, the facilitator needs to know the material and have a general understanding of the profile of workshop participants, to be able to better adapt the content, examples, and explanations.

We chose to select facilitators from our in-house team for the following reasons:

- Our facilitators have at least two years of experience on our methodologies and resources.
- Our facilitators have a vast understanding of teachers' needs and characteristics in the region because of their previous experience.
- Our facilitating team receives periodic training, preparation and feedback which prepares them to take on new challenges, such as the facilitation of this workshop and its considerations (being that it addresses a delicate matter).

How were facilitators trained, or how will they be trained in the future?

In GENET's case, the agreement and work with the Ministry of Education required that the teacher workshops were facilitated by their own staff. Considering that the Ministry of Education was involved in the entire process of developing the curriculum, its objectives, content and formats, we can say that it was a way of preparing their staff as well, since they were already part of the activities.

The Visionaria team has two facilitators who are responsible for the teacher training workshops. They are constantly prepared by the team's senior facilitator, and are provided with high quality material and resources. For this specific workshop, some new steps have been considered:

Live the experience: It's mandatory that the facilitators undergo the workshop experience as participants first. It will give them a real sense of the activities and content, as well as helping them identify and work on their own biases.

Check yourself: It's quite normal to have very rooted gender biases. After all, this has been part of the upbringing, teaching, and day-to-day life. It's important for facilitators to not only identify their biases but also to work on them, regularly and constantly. And it's also important for the organization to provide guidance and resources to do so.

Active listening: Although it has always been considered as an important skill, with this workshop listening needs to be extra important, especially when trying to cope with participants' resistance to change, understanding that it is about deconstructing very deeply held ideas, considered as "values and truths" in many cases.



Key Takeaways: Facilitator Training

- When working with local, in-house facilitators, make sure to give them the proper support and train them according to the requirements and expectations that both the organization and the program have.
- Different types of content require different levels of preparation. Considering the high level of sensitivity that gender-related content implies in the social contexts of both countries, it is fundamental that facilitators also comprehend these levels of complexity.
- Working with local facilitators will benefit the process, since they will be one step ahead in adapting and contextualizing the content and experience.
- The organization's leadership needs to always keep in mind the value and necessity of providing the best support to their team, especially when it comes to requesting their full commitment.

Participant Recruitment

GENET recruited participating teachers through a competitive process. To recruit teachers, GENET advertised in the schools looking for female and male teachers interested in being involved in the program and requesting them to submit application letters. Participants were selected based on a set of criteria that we prioritized, for example, interest that the person expressed around promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as willingness to work voluntarily, receiving the experience and support as a contribution, rather than an economic one.

GENET's focus has been on female teachers because as an organization we believe that women are stronger together and are also change agents in the educational setting, since they are highly influential in the girls' lives when it comes to matters of academic aspirations, retention, and school performance. The female teacher figure also serves as role models as achieved women become mentors for girls. The program also plans to target male teachers who can give a male perspective, act as supporters of girls' education, and mobilize boys and other male teachers to support girls' rights and self-identify as standing strong against gender-based violence.

Once selected, male teachers will receive the same training as the female teachers, but they will have additional gender-targeted sessions on gender-based violence, positive masculinity, and the transfer of knowledge. These male teachers will also reach out to other male teachers, to sensitize them and to try to change their thinking about gender stereotypes and to be more supportive of female students.

For Visionaria's Walk the Talk experience, participating teachers will be selected based on a previous agreement between local education authorities and our organization. Per local customs and social context, the process to approach and reach out to teachers is through a previous buy-in from the local Ministry of Education. The local Ministry of Education is a key stakeholder to whom we resort for support through their participation in bilateral agreements, approving of our resources for class, and vouching for our program in front of school's administrators and teachers.

Once this agreement is established, the Ministry assigns us a list of schools with which we can collaborate, and teachers from these schools become beneficiaries and participants in our workshops. The agreement and support testify to the strong relationship between our organization and the Ministry, which is decisive for teachers' participation in our program and workshops. The Ministry's support is also a necessity to provide certification for participation, which supports teachers' professional ranking.

For the Walk the Talk program, we will recruit teachers who have already participated in our Visionaria for Schools Program, as well as teachers that have not yet been part of it.

Looking Forward: Implementation Plans

Due to delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, neither of our organizations has yet implemented the curricula in class, with teachers as planned. In this section, we share our implementation plans, both the ones that were originally designed, as well as those developed to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this section is to share how we are intending to deliver this curriculum in the future, and how we ensure the involvement of our key stakeholders during implementation in our respective contexts.

Visionaria: looking on the “virtual” side of things

The Walk the Talk program will work to benefit two specific audiences:

- Participating teachers of the Visionaria for School program (VfS).
- Non-participating teachers of the Visionaria for School program (VfS).

Plans for implementing the program and its workshop have been postponed until 2021. During 2020, our local team has been pitching the idea to several local advisers and obtaining feedback we can use to prepare the proposal for the local Ministry of Education. This will help us be one step ahead logistically, enabling us to start working with teachers in selected schools starting in 2021.

Due to the COVID 19 outbreak, the in-person workshops had to be suspended, impeding the piloting of the workshop after its design validation. As a strategy to face this difficulty, Visionaria has developed an introductory workshop in a digital format. With this additionally adapted resource, the program has an opportunity to capture the interest of local authorities to advocate for it.

Through the Visionaria for Schools program, we already have access to a large local network of teachers who have worked with our resources and during the pandemic and lockdown, have shown openness to continue to bring innovative, alternative resources into their teaching. This would be the initial audience that would work with the Visionaria team to build the experience and showcase this alternative, digital intervention.

Having the resources to host the workshop both in-person and virtually will also keep us a step ahead for when we receive the support from the necessary authorities.

GENET: rooting for reactivation

Based on local information and activities, GENET expects to be able to deliver and implement the “She-Dreams” experience as originally designed.

Through our pilot project we will address social norms and negative gender stereotypes that are reinforced through inappropriate and gender-insensitive teaching methods that further discourage girls from remaining and completing their education and pursuing STEM careers. The teacher training curriculum is a key element to empower female teachers to bring gender-inclusive teaching methods to their practice by equipping female teachers in girl-centered interactive methods, gender-sensitive approaches, and mentoring, and consequently help improve students’ academic performance and nurture a love for learning among girls, particularly in STEM subjects.

The trained teachers will provide mentoring and tutoring to girls aged 10-18 years in schools, through after-school “She-Dreams” Girls’ Clubs, which have yet to be created by participating teachers. Our prepared and trained teachers will manage these clubs, select members, deliver sessions, and support their students in the process of cascading the learning they obtain from their club experience to their peers in school. We also plan and expect for participating teachers, both female and male, to apply their gender/sensitive learning during their own classroom lessons, as a strategy to widen the scope of our project.

Even more after the COVID pandemic, these clubs will provide safe spaces for girls to learn, ask questions, and voice concerns. Each club will receive 30 girl leaders who will receive empowerment sessions and who are requested, as part of their learning experience, to reach out to their peers with the information and knowledge they will learn in these clubs.

The GENET curriculum was designed to contribute to strengthening Malawi’s education sector and its capacity to educate girls through the expansion and improvement of equitable access to inclusive quality education, and that continues to be the motive for our plans, even more so considering the effects that COVID has had in education for girls.

Learnings

What have we learned so far?

1. Be ready to respond to an opportunity - When you create something that is needed, you will eventually find the opportunity to make it happen

- **MOE in Peru enables changes in policy**

Visionaria had been adapting its originally only-girl leadership workshop content to fit the criteria and respond to the needs of the education sector, as a promising alternative to expand our intervention with youth and sustainable development. We had been mainstreaming gender to our material and experiences as part of our agency based girls empowering focus. When we learned of news regarding the requirements from the MOE to mainstream the gender focus for equality in the teaching process, we knew that the content we had been working on would be adequate, fit and enriching for teachers to use in their classes.

- **The willingness from the MOE in Malawi to participate**

GENET had identified the need to work with educators to enable the gender sensitive curriculum that they were offered. We had the bigger picture in mind and were willing to work with what the MOE could concede. They were receptive to recognize that while the MOE curriculum was gender-sensitive, the teachers themselves still needed sensitization. They were willing and open to work together to recognize the need to assess the teachers and schools .

2. Adaptation is key:

- The backlash from traditional, conservative, and religious groups to the intention of the Peruvian MOE to integrate a focus on gender equality reflected the generalized inaccurate understanding of the meaning, purpose and content of the gender focus. Visionaria responded by strategically using alternative gender language to lessen resistance and reassure local educational authorities.
- Willingness to be flexible for Visionaria was important to engage the local education authorities and obtain buy-in. Our ability to reformulate elements of our proposal is different from simply changing them, but rather requires adapting to the needs, characteristics and context of our counterparts. The changes we made consisted in presenting the content in a way that responded to the reality of our counterparts, for example, instead of talking about empowerment, we talk about socio-emotional skills; in lieu of gender, we talk about social norms and roles.

- Although we mainstreamed gender in our experiences and resources since our original interventions, we had not planned to showcase it or even highlight it because the context had proven unresponsive to it. However, the context - being a social construction - shifted towards a need and demand to mainstream gender equity. As an organization, Visionaria had to be very attentive of the changes to appropriately respond to the new demands, which entailed a meaningful opportunity for us.
- The need for this type of curriculum may arise from a specific policy change, such as the one enacted by the Ministry of Education in Peru, or may arise more organically, through teacher demand and broader policy environments such as the SDGs, as was the case in Malawi.
- The COVID-19 interruption shed a light on the value and potential of digitizing many experiences and the possibility of reaching broader audiences through digital means.

Everyone needs to be on the same page:

Regardless of how the curriculum is developed, whether within the organization such as GENET's experience or externally like the consultancy commanded by Visionaria, staff will need to be heavily involved in the review of the content and format, since they are usually ones to communicate and relate to teachers throughout the programs and projects. It's also important to ensure that the material, resources and strategies are aligned with the priorities and audiences of the organization - and that the in-house team is qualified to make this assessment.

The organization's leadership needs to always keep in mind the value and necessity of providing the best support to their team, especially when working in programs that approach sensitive social and cultural issues.

3. Remote programming alternative resource or strategic approach?

Because of COVID break out, both organizations have opted for remote programming, each in their own unique way, responding to their needs and characteristics of their contexts and programs.

- In Peru, COVID has prevented us from taking the workshop beyond the pilot phase. It was necessary to take the content that originally shaped the in-person workshop experience and work it to be delivered through a virtual and digital format. Remote programming was initially considered as an alternative emergency resource to enable our organization to continue to works amidst the pandemic, however the potential benefits in terms of coverage we can have with participating teachers led us to ponder the possibility of adapting remote programming not only as an emergency resource, but like a programmatic strategy.

- Teachers who are part of the GENET experience had to interact with students and now can't do that due to social distancing, thus we are not able to fully assess whether the curriculum is working. As an alternative, we've kept in touch with teachers who had been selected to participate in the program prior to pandemic interruption, so that they keep their knowledge current for when the schools reopen. Remote programming included creating WhatsApp groups where teachers can exchange their experiences applying their acquired gender sensitivity in their life outside the classroom. We plan to develop a booklet of teachers' stories on how they see their life and education through a gender lens.

4. Engage with authorities

- Through our programs, we collaborate with the local ministry of education, particularly in regards to their shortage of specialized and prepared human resources, as we act as suppliers of high-quality workshops and training experience for their teachers.
- Framing our programs as a response to the requests and needs expressed by teachers themselves was key to capture authorities' interest and buy in.
- It has also been important to align our proposal with their own institutional local and national objectives for education. We looked at their goals for education, and presented our proposal integrating our plan into theirs, and making very clear the benefits and explaining how the mutual collaboration would lead us to the accomplishment of both our goals.


5. Things we learned for ourselves

- The Visionaria team participated in the design pilot of the workshop and this experience revealed a potential conflict regarding the skills and understanding of gender from our own staff, and the need to support their capacities to shift their understanding from the theory to the practice to support teachers participating in the program. Additionally to directing us to the potential conflict with our staff, the experience proved the value of our workshop, since our team themselves got so much out of their experience participating in it.
- GENET had experience working with the community and had an existing curriculum, however with teachers we were able to learn about the feminine learning experience more than with girls themselves. Work with teachers enabled us to better comprehend the gender related limitations in school, being that they were more diverse in their social norms as they came from different backgrounds.


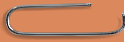
What do we plan to do in the future and learn further along?

Over the next two years the purpose is to learn how teachers with improved gender-sensitive norms and values can positively impact girls' education experience. We believe that the gender-sensitive teacher training, which challenges teachers' personal gender stereotypes inside and outside the classroom, and enables them to identify risk factors that promote or perpetuate violence against women and girls, will challenge teachers to be innovative in providing a learning experience that addresses the many risks girls face both within the schools and once they leave.


Our projection is that teachers with gender awareness will challenge traditional gender norms and values, both personally and professionally, which will lead to the development of a gender-responsive pedagogy.



GENET would like to continue working and collaborating with the Ministry of Education so that the public officials there can understand the benefit of gender-sensitive teacher training and decide to support the scaling up of this teacher training in more schools. To reinforce our proposal, we want to disseminate the learning product in international forums and publicize its results.



For Visionaria, the possibility of developing the same training experience in two different formats - in person, and online - is an important opportunity to learn how to reach our audience better, as well as how to achieve our objectives most effectively. Amidst our learning objectives, we also want to validate the assumption that gender consciousness can permeate from personal to the professional level, thus promoting attitude and behaviour change for gender justice.





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