



Vision and Commitment

EngenderHealth strives to achieve gender equality in and through sexual and reproductive health and rights. We aim to create a world where women and girls exercise their rights to gender-equitable sexual and reproductive health services and participate as equal members of society.

We support every person's right to make free, informed decisions about whether, when, and with whom to have sex and whether, when, and with whom to have children. Our programs use a gender-transformative approach that is grounded in youth-centered and socially inclusive principles. We acknowledge the disadvantages and discrimination women and girls face in exercising these rights, and we tackle the gender- and power-related barriers that deny them these rights.

Our Framework for Achieving Gender Equality

We do this through sexual and reproductive health and rights programs that ensure equity—those that compensate for historical and social disadvantages that have prevented women and girls from operating on a level playing field. Our approaches are tailored to the individual women and girls we serve, accounting for their unique experiences and the environments in which they live.

We work through gender-equitable approaches to ensure women and girls can access quality sexual and reproductive health information and services. Ensuring equitable access means often means encouraging self-reflection among EngenderHealth staff members, facility-based health providers, community health workers, and the communities in which women and girls live to challenge their own stereotypes and biases and contribute to gender-transformative change.

Our work and approach draws on the socio-ecological model, human-rights based approach, and the women's empowerment framework to bring about gender-transformative change in the lives of women and girls.

The Gender Marker: A Tool for Internal Reflection & Change

EngenderHealth's Gender Marker* is an internal accountability and monitoring tool that helps programs to assess the degree of gender integration within their programs. This helps teams to track, improve, and support gender-transformative approaches. The Gender Marker grades programs based on five critical criteria—analysis, activities, participation, negative effects, and monitoring and evaluation—using this Gender Integration Continuum (below). Program teams are encouraged to use the tool during all phases, from design to implementation to evaluation.



**The Gender Marker is adapted from two global gender markers—CARE International's Gender Marker and the European Commission's Gender and Age Marker.*

Our Approach to Gender-Equitable Programming

Building Agency

Agency refers to the capacity of women and girls to take purposeful action and pursue their sexual and reproductive health-related intentions, free from fear or backlash. Through our programs, we aspire for women and girls to take charge of their own bodies and their own lives. We build the agency of women and girls by ensuring their access to:

- Age- and context-specific **sexual and reproductive health-related knowledge** inclusive of information about contraception, safe abortion, safe pregnancy, antenatal care, postnatal care, and gender-based violence
- Age- and context-specific **sexual and reproductive health-related skills** inclusive of effective communication, negotiation, and problem-solving skills
- Age- and context-specific **sexual and reproductive health-related decision-making power** inclusive of use of contraception, having children, going for an abortion
- **Opportunities for leadership** inclusive of self-esteem, self-confidence, and personal aspiration

Transforming Structures

Structures refer to the health and education systems that women and girls need, and the policies, laws, and social structures that are foundational to those systems. Through our programs, we make structures conducive to the empowerment of women and girls. Examples of how we do this include:

- **Working with civil society networks to advocate for gender equality** in sexual and reproductive health-related laws and policies
- Working with governments to **build capacities of health facility staff** in provision of sexual and reproductive health services **with a gender lens**
- **Working with community-based groups to change unjust gender and social norms** that affect access to sexual and reproductive health and rights

Changing Relations

Women and girls often must negotiate their sexual and reproductive-related goals and intentions with their partners, family members, peers, and other immediate influencers. Through our programs, we seek to change power dynamics and relations through approaches including:

- **Engagement of men and boys**, including adaptation of EngenderHealth's Men As Partners® approach with a clear focus on gender-transformative messaging, and working with groups of men, adolescent boys, and male champions to challenge unjust gender and social norms
- **Engagement of families on equitable decision making** related to contraception and abortion
- **Engagement of women and girls in self-help groups** to build collective movements for championing and advocating for sexual and reproductive health and rights