A multi-country evaluation
for a more effective gender mainstreaming approach in education and protection projects
in Burkina Faso, Lebanon and the Philippines

REPORT

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AFD	Agence Française de Développement – French Development Agency
B&Z	Basmeh & Zeitooneh (Lebanon)
CEEP	Centres d'Eveil et d'Education Préscolaire (Early Learning and Preschool Education Centres, Burkina Faso)
CHAP	ChildHope Philippines
CO	Country-Office (Asmae)
CONFEMEN	Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des États et gouvernements de la Francophonie
CPP	Child Protection Policy
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CWC	Council for the Welfare of Children (Philippines)
DGEFG	Direction générale de l'Enseignement Formel Général (Burkina Faso)
DGESS	Direction générale des études et des statistiques sectorielles (Burkina Faso)
DGREIP	Direction générale de la Recherche en Éducation et de l'Innovation pédagogique (Burkina Faso)
DPEPPNF	Direction provinciale de l'éducation préscolaire primaire et non formelle (Burkina Faso)
DREPPNF	Direction régionale de l'éducation préscolaire primaire et non formelle (Burkina Faso)
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ERPAT	Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Training (name of a training module, meaning "Dad" in local slang in the Philippines)
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
HO	Head-Office (Asmae)
ICCV	Initiative Communautaire Changer la Vie (Burkina Faso)
IRC	International Rescue Committee
KSEM	Kanlungan Sa Er-ma Ministry (Philippines)
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and other sexual orientations, gender identities and gender identity expressions
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCSD	National Council on Social Development (Philippines)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PASEC	Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN
PSS	Psycho-social support
SENMMAP	Street Educators Network of Metro Manila Asmae Partners (Philippines)

SOGIE	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
SWOT	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Obstacles
TFP	Technical and Financial Partners
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (Lebanon)

Glossary

Gender-blind

Projects, programmes, policies and attitudes that do not consider different roles and diverse needs of men and women (boys and girls). Therefore, at the best, they maintain status quo, but they might even contribute to widening the gender gap, as they provide new opportunities or services that might be seized more easily by those that are more advantaged socially.

Gender-neutral

Projects, programmes, policies and attitudes that do consider different roles and diverse needs of men and women (boys and girls) in order to ensure that they are benefiting equally from new opportunities or services provided. They therefore avoid increasing inequalities, but will not help transforming the unequal structure of gender relations.

Gender sensitive

Projects, policies and programmes that consider the particularities pertaining to the lives of both women and men; they seek to contribute to the reduction of gender inequalities, therefore addressing the gender dimensions, including through equity measures. The reduction of gender inequality can be a secondary objective.

Gender specific

Two meanings are possible: 1) Projects, programs and policies that are specifically aiming at only one gender (women or men / girls or boys) e.g. a project strengthening girls school retention rate, or a project aiming at reducing paid work of boys; 2) Projects, programs and policies whose specific objective is to reduce gender inequalities.

"Gender-specific indicators" in a gender sensitive project refer to indicators that go further than simply differentiating boys and girls (men and women) for each item, but that measure specific elements linked to gender issues, e.g. reduction of cases of verbal or physical aggression amongst boys; percentage of girls feeling comfortable about their menstrual hygiene management, etc.

Gender transformative

Projects, policies and programmes that address causes of gender-based inequalities and aim at transforming harmful gender roles, norms and relations.

Intersectionnality

The notion of "intersectionality" focuses on the intersection of different social characteristics of an individual or a group of individuals. The gender approach implies this intersectional vision, addressing the fact that gender is always articulated with other social factors. Women do not form a homogeneous group, but within the same mixed social group (women and men), women often have a subordinate or disadvantaged position in relation to men.

Masculinity

A social construction (variable according to culture and periods in time) that evokes a set of characters, characteristics, attributes, roles, etc., forming a "social and biological image" of man. (see also Footnote 25).

Non-binary

This is an umbrella term to describe any gender identity that does not fit into the gender binary of male and female. Nonbinary gender (also sometimes referred to as genderqueer) people may, for example, identify as having no gender, fall on a gender spectrum somewhere between male and female, or identify as totally outside binary gender identities.

Executive Summary

Asmae – Association Soeur Emmanuelle is a French international NGO created in 1980 by Sister Emmanuelle that supports partners in the fields of education and child protection, promoting a world that guarantees children are able to live and grow with dignity with their family and their environment, to become free men and women, active citizens in their society.

With regard to gender mainstreaming, Asmae has no defined strategic guidelines or programming framework and has recently decided to **adopt a more proactive and systematic approach**. This evaluation is one of the milestones in this ongoing process.

Asmae initiated this gender study for different converging reasons, showing a general tendency for a growing interest in gender and a need for a formalized gender mainstreaming policy, enhancing more consistent gender practices. The different elements mentioned in the ToRs highlight that internal and external elements triggered this **process of strengthening gender** mainstreaming (marked by two internal awareness sessions/trainings in 2018 and 2019 and other initiatives, like a Gender section in the quarterly newsletter sent by HO Technical advisor).

The **direct objective** of this study was to analyze the practices and effects associated with gender mainstreaming in 3 projects. The recommendations are seeking to improve the quality of the assessed projects over the remaining duration, making the activities and the services offered more relevant and effective from a gender point of view. As a side effect, the study is supposed to contribute to strengthening the capacities of the Program teams on gender issues.

The **ultimate objective** is to foster a more proactive and systematic gender approach in Asmae: by sharing specific aspects of the study's recommendations across the organization, they are tailored to feed into a more global gender strategy, making it easier to develop a framework and tools promoting gender, accompanied by a suitable gender action plan.

The three involved projects cover **two of the five main themes of intervention** of Asmae: Early childhood care and education in Burkina Faso; Prevention and care of children at risk in the Philippines and Lebanon.

The three concerned countries embrace a **great variety of contexts**: Burkina Faso ranked 182 out of 189 in terms of Human Development Index (2018), belonging to the low human development category. The Philippines, ranked 106th and Lebanon, at rank 93, are considered high human development countries. They are very different also concerning the size of their population: Lebanon has an estimated population of almost 7 million, with 1 million Syrian refugees amongst them. There are about 20 million inhabitants in Burkina Faso, and more than five times as much (106.7 million) in the archipelago of the Philippines. The mean years of schooling are interesting to look at to get a glimpse of educational issues that are central to Asmae: 1.6 in Burkina Faso, compared to 8.7 in Lebanon and 9.4 in the Philippines.

When looking at this contextual information, Asmae's **intervention logic** becomes very clear: in Burkina Faso, the general situation of the education system is still critical and Asmae aims at enhancing structural improvements. In the Philippines and in Lebanon, Asmae strengthens partners working with the underprivileged, the refugees in Lebanon and children and adults in street situations in the Philippines.

The proposed **evaluation questions were restructured and partly reformulated**, as confirmed during the scoping meeting.

The **institutional dimension** focused on the way gender is understood within Asmae and its partners, how gender is dealt with at Asmae's level and at partners' levels, the principles common

to the 3 countries on which Asmae could rely on to build a gender approach strategy, the type of gender approach that seems feasible for the future and the way, intersectionality can be considered.

The evaluation questions about the **project dimension** covered how the projects have mainstreamed gender throughout the project's cycle and aimed at verifying that girls and boys, women and men, have the same opportunities to access the services offered by Asmae's partners. Furthermore, the gender knowledge and skills level of the teams involved was questioned, their practices and the related M&E processes, the formal or informal mechanisms, levers and obstacles or resources which have encouraged or limited the consideration of gender throughout the project cycle, as well as gender considerations in the messages and the facilitation methodologies during awareness and training activities. Finally, the study covered the gender-related stakes for each project and the mechanisms that should be in place at project development stage to ensure that national policies, strategies and laws related to gender issues are considered.

The **process of this study** was structured **by different steps:**

- Preliminary meeting (July 2019)
- Step 1: Refining the study approach and preparing its implementation (August – September 2019)
- Steps 2, 4 and 5: The field missions (Philippines: October 2019; Burkina Faso: November 2019; Lebanon: January 2020) followed a basic pattern that was tested in Step 2, adjusted in Step 3 (see below) and also adapted to each local context. All in all, 274 people were interviewed or have been participating in focus group discussions.
- Step 3: Adjusting the approach (October 2019) on the basis of the first field mission.
- Step 6: Finalizing transversal analysis and writing of the evaluation report (draft and final, February – March 2020)
- Closing and sharing workshops in France and in the three countries (still to be organized).

The **main findings from each country case study** are presented in the **country summary reports**.

The three projects studied in three of Asmae's intervention countries highlighted the tremendous diversity of the contexts Asmae is working in, of the populations its projects are supporting and therefore also of the types of projects and activities the NGO is implementing via its partners. These **different situations, needs and constraints have to be considered for Asmae's future gender approach**.

Concerning the **country teams**, the level of gender awareness, gender knowledge, gender commitment and **gender competence varies**, linked to personal factors of the concerned individuals, but also to the way gender is accepted and integrated into the wider society.

The team in the **Philippines** is **very aware about gender issues and strongly committed, also on SOGIE issues**, but the available gender competencies to operationalize gender have not yet been fully employed in the studied project. In the absence of a clear institutional mandate the national Asmae **team is not identifies as a partner for strengthening on gender**.

In **Burkina Faso**, there is a **great variety in the comprehension of gender**, with little consciousness about processes of social construction and about the importance to consider both females and males in a gender approach. The accent is mostly on girls/women and/or on treating everybody the same. The team is **open to strengthen their gender approach, but also reserved**.

In **Lebanon**, the team has a **fairly good understanding about the meaning of gender**. No reluctance about strengthening gender in their projects was perceived, but no strong enthusiasm

either. On the one hand, in the current crisis, **gender is not seen as a priority**. On the other hand, some staff members consider that gender is integrated transversally. Pressure on the bread-winner role of men and to a growing extent also on boys is identified as a gender issue, as well as the difficulties to mobilize fathers on matters linked to their children.

For the studies projects, gender has not been amongst the **criteria for the choice of the partners.** In the **Philippines**, **Bahay Tuluyan** is making efforts to instore gender, CHAP and KSEM are not yet gender pro-active, whereas NCSD appeared comparatively as the most gender-blind partner. In **Burkina Faso**, **ICCV** has tried to address gender in some of its activities. The institutional partners from different divisions of the educational **ministry** (MENA) are **upholding the public policy about gender and education**. In **Lebanon**, the main project partners – **Jafra and B&Z** – are **aware of gender differences** amongst the youth of the refugee communities. **Najdeh is a historical partner with gender experience** (developed largely independently from Asmae), but their gender expertise is not solicited in the AFD project.

The **<u>findings concerning the institutional dimension</u>** highlight **first achievements** of the ongoing gender process that has put gender on the agenda.

Asmae has not yet decided on a gender definition, has **not formalized a gender strategy** and there is very little mention of gender in Asmae's policy documents. Amongst the HO and CO staff members there is **no open reluctance against gender, but a very wide variety of understandings of gender** are observed.

The internal gender-sessions had suggested three **different options for Asmae's possible gender focus**, the first one looking at inequalities between men and women (2 genders) and discrimination against women, the second one including other genders and discrimination against gender minorities and the third one also including discriminations on the basis of sexual orientations. One element that is not covered by these options is the integration of the focus on socially constructed **masculinities**. **School-related gender-based violence** is not at all mentioned, even though it is an issue of international concern amongst educational actors. There is a **relatively weak consideration of intersectionality**.

All Asmae partners that have been included in the present study are **consciously striving for inclusion of children or youth from both sexes**, seeking a balanced participation of boys and girls and assuring access to the same services. This reflects **Asmae's long-standing stance of non-discrimination** and is a promising foundation for gearing up gender in the projects.

For the **Philippines**, the **AFD proposal included some statements about how gender could be integrated**, but the team does not perceive gender as part of their main work-line and respects partners' thematic demands for capacity building (where gender has not been raised up until now). The project in **Burkina Faso** is the one that **integrated gender most explicitly**, following a recommendation on gender in the evaluation of the first phase of this projects. Some elements of a one-shot gender training have been **reinvested in the adaptation of the picture tool** and **in some project specific tools**. In **Lebanon**, Asmaes' partners are experimenting improvements of existing training modules about the gender dimension (amongst others) that are mainly supervised by other partners.

CO teams in the three visited countries are **disaggregating more and more systematically all collected data**, with some room for further improvement.

All three countries concerned covered by this study have **national gender policies** and engagements that can also be mobilized to adapt Asmae's gender approach to each country. The country office teams all have a certain **potential for strengthening gender which can be**

enhanced further through training. They have clearly voiced that this upgrading of gender has to be **guided and supported by an institutional gender policy** which stipulates Asmae's standards and procedures in embedding gender into its projects and partnerships, including language and communication.

Despite their interest in gender and their openness about the topic, most of Asmae's implementing **partners** involved in this evaluation do **not have sufficient gender competence to integrate gender effectively into their activities**. Asmae has been trying here and there to respond to these needs, but their own command of gender is not yet consistent and operational enough, neither clearly framed (in absence of a gender definition and strategy), and the **support, guidance and capacity-building of partners on gender is not explicitly part of the ongoing projects**.

The **findings concerning the project dimension** highlighted the multiple contextual elements that refrain gender integration and its outcome in each studied country. Some evidence could be found for integrating gender into M&E.

One activity specifically geared to men, the ERPAT session KSEM is carrying out in Manila, is based on traditional social norms, reproducing gender stereotypes, but seems to have mobilized a stronger participation of fathers into their community activities, which suggests that there is an **interest for creating activities for men and spaces for exchange about their roles as husbands and fathers**.

There was some **evidence of effects of gender integration** in **Burkina Faso**, where the educators showed a considerable level of consciousness about "considering both sexes" in their learning centers. The mothers' focus group of ICCV beneficiaries has cited examples of **changed behavior of children**, which seems to be the fruit of gender sensitive activities that ICCV has carried out, independently of Asmae's tutorship.

The **recommendations** emphasize that Asmae's way of working through local partners imposes to **strengthen gender simultaneously on three levels**: 1) the **institution Asmae**, including the tools to frame interventions; 2) Asmae's **capacity building process of its partners**; 3) the **projects** implemented by the partners, with support of the country teams. In other words, inside a **clear institutional gender framework** and after **substantial gender training**, Asmae staff does not only have to **be convinced and competent** to integrate gender in their own work, but they also have to **be able to convince and strengthen the gender competencies of their partners, in an intercultural setting**.

The ambition to transversally strengthen gender must therefore be met by a whole **series of measures, discussed and co-constructed** with a wide range of staff members, combined with gender training, in order to create **effective ownership of gender inside Asmae**. These recommendations are most of all aimed at fuelling and enabling this essential process.

The **recommendations concerning the institutional dimension** highlight the importance of the careful framing of a **shared definition of gender, large enough** to capture the variations of understandings of gender, but which can be **"tailored" to fit each country of intervention**.

On this basis, a comprehensive **gender strategy** should be constructed and transposed into a **gender action plan**. The options proposed during the past two internal awareness-raising / training gender sessions towards the staff could be **enriched by elements on masculinity and intersectionality** and be presented as a general framework, with a focus on **equality of women and men** as the common base applicable everywhere and the other dimensions to be **acknowledged as factors of discrimination** (especially in countries where they are culturally

challenging), even though they might not be explicitly integrated in the projects, in dialogue with partners, etc.

The aim should be that no Asmae project is gender blind, and to assure that all projects **pass from "gender neutral" to "gender sensitive",** striving in the medium or long-term **towards a "gender transformative" approach, adapted to each specific context.**

To mainstream gender into Asmae's activities, it is necessary to **integrate gender into its main operational tools,** the intervention framework and the different policies of its areas of intervention, highlighting when certain issues are stronger or different for one gender than another (especially in terms of obstacles and opportunities), adding elements that are specific to one gender, including considerations linked to preventing or reducing sexism and gender-based violence. The explicit **integration of gender into each country strategy** will assure contextualization of the gender approach.

In order to operationalize the gender strategy, it is not only necessary to strengthen the system of **focal points** – to be formally integrated in a **Gender Team** (or gender task force, or gender working group) –, but also to **raise the general level of gender knowledge** and competence amongst the staff, with emphasize on the technical advisor who occupies a strategic function. **Future recruitments** should require basic gender competences or otherwise provide a possibility to be trained after the recruitment. Furthermore, gender should also be integrated **inside the organization Asmae** (in the statutes and internal rules, through harmonization of inclusive writing style, anti-harassment prevention and signaling mechanism and other human Resources gender concerns).

The **recommendations concerning the project dimension** are first targeting the **three studied projects**. All of them have **underused opportunities to better integrate gender** that might be recoverable, some on a very short-term basis, others during the remaining project time. In all three countries, Asmaes' partners have expressed interest for strengthening their gender capacity. Some suggestions to **improve the studied projects for their remaining duration**, have been formulated, basically linked to training, gender mainstreaming in activities and linkages with gender pro-active actors.

Amongst the set of general project-oriented recommendations are the ones linked to Asmae's **relationship with its partners**. The criteria for the choice of project partners have recently evolved including some gender aspects, and gender should also be integrated into all existing tools for partner capacity-building.

In order to make contextualization more relevant and enhance synergetic effects of the joint efforts of the multiple stakeholders engaged in gender in all the Asmae's intervention countries, the Asmae country teams should **seek actively alliance with national gender expertise** through different options.

Gender has to be **mainstreamed through all stages of the project-cycle** (initial gender analysis, integration of gender into the project formulation and the gender dimension in the M&E mechanism). This could be framed by the adoption of a gender marker which can also monitor progress.

I. Scope of this gender study

Asmae - Association Sœur Emmanuelle is a French international NGO created in 1980 by Sister Emmanuelle to promote child development through a global approach, by supporting families and considering the environment. In the seven countries where the association operates (Burkina Faso, Egypt, India, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mali and the Philippines)[1], Asmae works in partnership with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in order to strengthen the capacity of local child development actors on technical, operational and organizational aspects, strengthening synergies between them, and maximizing their social impact; advocate for children through awareness-raising and advocacy; experiment, spread and disseminate.

Asmae assists partners in the fields of education and child protection around five themes: 1/Prevention of school drop-out and underperformance, 2/Early childhood care and education, 3/Prevention and care of children at risk, 4/ Adolescence Support, 5/ Support to children with disabilities.

Overall, Asmae promotes a world where girls and boys, women and men, enjoy equal access to and control over opportunity, resources and decision-making. With regard to gender mainstreaming, Asmae has no defined strategic guidelines or programming framework and has recently decided to adopt a more proactive and systematic approach. This evaluation is one of the milestones in this ongoing process.

1. Objectives of the study

Asmae decided to initiate the present study for different converging reasons, showing a general tendency for a growing interest in gender and a need for a formalized gender mainstreaming policy, enhancing more consistent gender practices. The following reasons for this evaluation are put forward in the Terms of Reference (ToR):

> - In June 2018, Asmae's Board approved an organizational statement stating that "a special attention will be given to gender equality [in Asmae's interventions]".

> - Discussions with AFD (an important source of institutional funding), especially when working on the development of the second phase of the project in Burkina Faso: AFD recommended that Asmae assesses its gender approach, as the lack of a global gender strategy had been highlighted by the evaluation of the first phase of the project in Burkina Faso. AFD has agreed to provide inputs on the ToR of the study and confirmed its interest in being involved throughout the process.

> - The work initiated to strengthen Asmae's intervention framework and strategy to ensure quality programming: there is a will to systematize good practices of the sector such as mainstreaming gender, child protection, child participation as well as adopting a child-rights based approach. This work started in 2018 focusing first on partnership relationship and child protection mainstreaming. Gender was planned to be a focus in the discussions in 2019.

The different elements mentioned in the ToRs highlight that internal and external elements triggered of this process of strengthening gender mainstreaming: externally, the institutional funders that play a growing role in Asmae's funding scheme are stressing the need to improve

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[1] The country offices in Mali and India have been closed during the period of this study.

gender integration and encourage Asmae's development in this direction; internally, there seem to be constructive input from individuals motivated by gender and disposing of gender competencies. Above all, the gender dynamics is fueled by the Asia Area Manager who was appointed gender focal point. She has carried out two internal awareness sessions in December 2018 and May 2019 and acted as focal point for this study (until she went on maternity leave during the active part of the study, her replacement having taken over during this period). Other staff-members are likeminded (some have recently left Asmae), as indicated by the note developed by Programs department on how to write in an inclusive manner, and the Gender section in the quarterly newsletter sent by HO Technical advisor. This shows the existing interest in working on this area but also illustrates the need for greater consistency and clearer strategy. The ToR were not focused on existing gender competences and current gender training needs, as there was only one explicit mention in the ToRs of a possible need for growing gender skills and competencies.

The **direct objective** of this study was to allow Asmae and its operational partners to analyze the practices and effects associated with gender mainstreaming in the 3 evaluated projects. The recommendations are seeking to support Asmae and its partners' in changing/adjusting their practices over the final 18 months of the projects concerned, in order to improve the quality of the assessed projects, making the activities and the services offered more relevant and effective from a gender point of view.

As a side effect, the study is supposed to contribute to strengthening the capacities of the Program teams on gender issues and seeks to assess needs for formal training, gender coaching or requirement of local external gender competencies or alliances with gender skilled actors. The possible impact on partners still needs to be further explored with them, as they were not involved at the request stage for the present evaluation (due to time constraints and to the fact that they had not expressed an interest to explore gender as such in the past – according to Asmae, mostly due to lack of knowledge and skills).

The **ultimate objective** is to foster a more proactive and systematic gender approach in Asmae: by sharing specific aspects of the study's recommendations across the organization, they are tailored to feed into a more global gender strategy, making it easier to develop a framework and tools promoting gender, accompanied by a suitable gender action plan.

As stated in the ToR, Asmae does not have a very long experience with external evaluation, probably because its core funds were giving Asmae the liberty to rather choose internal evaluation processes in the past (which is not the case with many institutional funds). The present study is not a classical external project evaluation, but a study that is geared to analyzing, in three very different contexts (see next section), the way Asmae takes gender issues explicitly or implicitly into account, the obstacles these initiatives encounter and the opportunities that exist to go further.

2. The context in the three concerned countries[2]

The three countries covered in this study are very different concerning their development stage (HDI), specific issues like schooling rates and key problems faced by the concerned populations,

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[2] Most of the data quoted in this section come from the Human Development reports 2018 and 2019, published by UNDP (http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdro_statistical_data_table7_15.pdf and http://report2017.archive.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com)

covering the wide variety of contexts in which Asmae is active. The three projects cover two of the five main themes of intervention of Asmae:

1. Early childhood care and education: Burkina Faso

2. Prevention and care of children at risk: Philippines, Lebanon

The three concerned countries embrace a great variety of contexts: Burkina Faso ranked 182 out of 189 in terms of Human Development Index (2018), belonging to the low human development category. The Philippines, ranked 106th and Lebanon, at rank 93, are considered high human development countries. They are very different also concerning the size of their population: Lebanon has an estimated population of almost 7 million, with 1 million Syrian and 1 million Palestinian[3] refugees amongst them. There are about 20 million inhabitants in Burkina Faso, and more than five times as much (106.7 million) in the archipelago of the Philippines. The mean years of schooling are interesting to look at to get a glimpse of educational issues that are central to Asmae: 1.6 in Burkina Faso, compared to 8.7 in Lebanon and 9.4 in the Philippines.

When looking at this contextual information, Asmae's intervention logic becomes very clear: in Burkina Faso, the general situation of the education system is critical (as confirmed by the PASEC data) and Asmae aims at enhancing structural improvements. In the Philippines and in Lebanon, Asmae strengthens partners working with the underprivileged, the refugees in Lebanon and children and adults in street situations in the Philippines.

The following issues contribute to characterize each country, in relation with the different themes Asmae covers in each of them:

Philippines: The case of the Philippines is paradoxical – despite its good economic results, the benefits have disproportionately benefited the country's elite, while the population living below the poverty line increases in recent years (more than 1 out of 5, with slightly more women). Even considering gender indicators, the Philippines, following international recommendations (Beijing platform, SDG5, etc.), achieves rather positive scores: for example, population with at least some secondary education (2010 – 2017): 76.6% female, 72.4% male; and 29.1% of parliamentary seeds are occupied by women, etc. On the other side, gender-based violence and teenage pregnancy rates are very high. Despite the generally positive macro indicators in politics, academic and economic spheres, it is undoubtedly the poorest part of the population – namely the persons living on the streets, and even more so the street children – that see their vulnerabilities increased by critical gender issues. They are particularly exposed to violence and women and girls more particularly to gender based violence, with a high risk of social reproduction of factors of poverty (teenage pregnancy of street children reducing chances for women's empowerment and for escaping the poverty trap, also for the next generation…).

Burkina Faso: Considering all the components of the human development indicator, Burkina Faso is by far the one with the lowest rank of the three concerned countries. Obviously, education is a central issue in a country where the number of mean years of schooling is only 1.5, as education is a necessary (even though insufficient) condition for development. Burkina Faso's educational indicators have improved in the last decades, through educational policies supported by external donors, focusing on strengthening the primary enrolment rate, with special emphasis on girls'

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[3] According to UNRWA there are 475075 registered Palestinian refugees, while they estimate that the total, including the non-registered, is around 1 million Palestinians in Lebanon,

education, reaching respectively 75.45% for boys and 77.37% for girls in 2017. However, a low retention rate, and high school dropout and repetition rates are still to be deplored. They are explained by the use of a "foreign" language in school, limited teachers' education level, overcrowded classes, lack of teaching and learning materials, "old" teaching methods (based on repetition, with still some corporal punishment) and weak students' and parents' engagement, among others. As for gender inequalities, girls are expected to fulfil a reproductive role (get married and take the household chores in charge) whereas boys are considered as future household heads, leading to parents' weaker support towards girls' education (especially beyond the primary level).

Lebanon: Due to the conflict in Syria, Lebanon nowadays hosts around 1 million Syrian refugees (out of about 6 million inhabitants), which is overwhelming basic public services; violence, exploitation, and abuse of children are very high, especially among refugee populations. In the Syrian refugee communities, female-headed households (18%) remain more vulnerable than male-headed households, amongst others due to employment status (55% of female-headed households did not have any member working versus 27% for male-headed households), with unemployment being a particular challenge for women. In education, the number of girls in primary school remained almost equal to that of boys and at secondary levels, more girls are enrolled than boys. This may be explained due to boys being pressurized to provide for their family, even at a younger age (rates of child labor: 3.4% for boys, 0.9% for girls), showing how socially constructed roles of masculinity also put much pressure on boys and men. As for child marriage, it is part of an economic coping strategy: three in ten girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are currently married. Gender mainstreaming is a trending priority in Lebanon both for Development and Humanitarian actors and the Government.

3. Main issues covered

Asmae's wish to better integrate gender is based on a series of assumptions that the evaluation will analyze further. Three of them are linked to the objective to improve Asmae's and partners' programmatic approach by better mainstreaming gender, in order to:

- allow better tackling deep-rooted inequalities and discrimination,
- address issues at stake in a more efficient and relevant manner,
- foster greater impact and sustainability in the long term.

Beyond the programmatic/project level, Asmae supposes that gender mainstreaming will contribute to:

- improve Asmae's and partners' organizational capacities and global governance.

Asmae has proposed to structure the evaluation questions according to three components: a strategic one, a programmatic one and one linked to the results. According to the evaluation team, the proposed questions can be structured a bit differently, distinguishing the **institutional dimension** – concerning both Asmae and its partners – and a **project dimension**.

The **institutional dimension** is largely covering the "strategic component" proposed in the ToRs, incorporating also at this level interculturality, without forgetting that most of the concerned partners have not yet contributed pro-actively to this process of improving gender mainstreaming.

The proposed **project dimension** will include both the initial programmatic and results components.

Here the proposed restructured and partly reformulated evaluation questions that were confirmed during the discussion in the scoping meeting:

Institutional dimension:

- How is gender understood within Asmae and its partners? What do we mean by gender (female/male, non-binary gender approach including gender minorities and/or including sexual minorities)?

- How is gender dealt with at Asmae's level and at partners' level (including level of involvement/mobilization, etc.)? Are there identifiable points of resistance or fears? Can governance be improved through proactive gender policies at institutional level?

- What are the principles common to the 3 countries on which Asmae could rely on to build a gender approach strategy? How can the intercultural dimension be integrated?

- Will the common objective aim for an inclusive, a gender sensitive or a gender transformative approach? Or a differentiated approach adaptable to each context and partners' skills and objectives?

- How can intersectionality be considered? How can gender be articulated with the focus on youth? Is a synergetic approach possible?

Project dimension:

- How were the specific needs, constraints, resources and opportunities of girls and boys, women and men taken into account at project development and how have they been operationalized? How have the projects mainstreamed gender throughout the project's cycle?

- Do girls and boys, women and men, have the same opportunities to access the services offered by Asmae's partners (considering various discriminations)? Have differentiated responses been given to beneficiaries (women/men, girls/boys) regarding the services offered? How is the participation of girls/women and boys/men ensured in both the implementation and management of the project?

- Does the composition of the teams (more or less parity, position of women and men in the institutional hierarchy, etc.) influence gender mainstreaming in the projects? Regarding gender, what is the knowledge and skills level of the teams involved in the development and implementation of the projects, what are their practices and the related M&E processes (are gender-specific effects measured)?

- Are the messages and the facilitation methodologies gender-sensitive / inclusive / transformative during awareness and training activities?

- What are the formal or informal mechanisms, levers and obstacles or resources which have encouraged or limited the consideration of gender throughout the project cycle?

- When gender has been mainstreamed, can we observe any results? Otherwise, were there any side effects? Which are the gender-related stakes for each project?

- Which mechanisms should be in place at project development stage to ensure that national policies, strategies and laws related to gender issues are considered? Which tools are and/or should be used to improve gender mainstreaming throughout the project cycle?

Obviously, as the listed questions suggest, both dimensions will be evaluated primarily looking at the first phase of the ongoing projects, and will also be analyzed in a prospective manner, in order to formulate recommendations for the lasting months of the current projects. Moreover, the consultancy team will "extract" more general recommendations and points of attention for the future development of Asmae's general gender strategy (and an accompanying gender action plan). The question of how Asmae can strengthen its partners for the advancement of their own gender strategy is also considered in the recommendations (based on the exchanges with the partners involved in the three projects targeted in this study).

II.   Methodology

The study was organized largely along the scheme proposed in the ToR. Overall, the proposed steps were followed, with some necessary adjustments to the calendar (mainly concerning Lebanon, where the field mission had to be rescheduled from November to January because of the consequences of the civil mobilization). The evaluation team sought to actively involve the four concerned steering committees (the three country steering committees and the international one) in order to create conditions for Asmae's "ownership" of the evaluation results. The tools (like guidelines for semi-structured interviews, per interviewee's category) have been transmitted beforehand. Methodological steps where discussed with the concerned focal point of each country, for her[4] critique and input. The sampling and the choice of activities to be observed was assured by the focal point and the local partners. Moreover, the respective evaluation team shared their findings, questions and provisional conclusions in a preliminary restitution at the end of the 5-day field mission. The consultants took the steering committees' feed-back into account to enrich their analysis and deepen their argumentation. This also gave room for discussion when points of views where diverging.

1. Steps of the evaluation[5]

The **preliminary meeting** (by skype, July 2019) was an occasion for the study team leader to get to know the Study Steering Committee members and deepen her understanding of the expectations and challenges of this study (beyond their written expression in the ToRs). She could also present in more detail her team and its cohesion and answer the questions her offer and the proposed methodology raised.

Step 1: Refining the study approach and preparing its implementation (August – September 2019)

- The project documents (including the baseline studies and mid-term evaluations, where available) and some contextual documents were provided by Asmae, and the three country evaluation teams completed with some of the relevant documents about the theme of the respective project and related to the gender issues and stakes in each country. The study team completed the documentation by their own research and in all countries, complementary documentation was provided by the national team during the field mission. The team coordinator read all of the documentation, each country team read the country specific ones, completed by some general ones on Asmae, its approach, the concerned projects and this gender study.

- Preparatory interviews (individual and collective) with members from the Steering committee were carried out by the team leader, on the basis of some guiding questions previously submitted to the Steering Committee (in Burkina Faso, the national consultants were also present during the interview with Regional Representative and another staff member of Asmae Burkina Faso).

- A brief inception report has been written to complete the original offer. It presented the stakes, the objectives, the methodology proposed, the tools considered to be used as well as the study plan with respective roles and responsibilities.

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[4] All focal points are female.
[5] See calendar of the study in Annex 1.

- The scoping workshop (1⁄2 day) at Asmae's head office took place in September, based on the inception report. The study steering committee members and the lead consultant were present, the representatives from each of the concerned countries and the national consultants of Burkina Faso joined by skype to discuss specific points.

- The tools for the field missions were shared with the steering committee for final exchanges and approval.

Steps 2, 4 and 5: The field missions (October 2019 – January 2020) followed a basic pattern that was tested in Step 2, adjusted in Step 3 (see below) and also adapted to each local context:

- Initial meeting with the national Asmae team to get to know each other, confirm the planning of the field mission and carry out a first collective session collecting the staff members' perceptions and points of views about gender integration (through an animated SWOT workshop)[6];

- Semi-structured interviews with institutional and civil society partners;

- Visit of some selected project activities (proposed by the gender focal point and the concerned colleagues), observations based on an observation grid (adjusted to each type of activity observed)[7];

- Focus group discussions with:

> - professionals (mainly from the local partner organizations) that collaborate with Asmae and that have been trained and otherwise strengthened by the project: social workers and other professionals in the Philippines, educators and teachers in Burkina Faso[8], different professionals and members of the child protection committees in Lebanon;

> - parents and children and/or adolescents of both sexes: several workshops multiplied by the number of sites per country (12 in Manila, 2 in Ouagadougou, 8 in Beirut) with mothers, fathers, girls and boys separately);

- Final collective workshop with the field steering committee to discuss preliminary findings, to (in)validate and complete them, sharpening the understanding the evaluators had built up during the field mission; these workshops also allowed for a discussion of the recommendations which could be completed by the suggestions from the participants, or amended if the steering committee members did not consider them feasible as proposed. This essential restitution workshop took always place on a Friday afternoon after an intense week during which the gender study had strongly mobilized the concerned professionals. Retrospectively, such a timing was not ideal, but it showed that the concerned partners are motivated by gender issues.

- A country summary paper was drafted after each field mission to present the country specific findings, including summaries of all data collection sessions (by categories of stakeholders interviewed or involved in focus group discussions) and a synthetic presentation of the results of the individual anonymous questionnaire.

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[6] See Annex 2 for the three country SWOT analysis.
Initially, this first meeting was supposed to unite the national steering committee, but as they had not been actively involved in the preparation of the study beforehand and as no other specific meeting with the local Asmae team was planned, it finally turned out more relevant to start all the field missions with such a country team workshop.

[7] In Beirut, the observations had to be canceled as the time in the camp was reduced for security reasons.

[8] In Burkina Faso, the project activities with a training institute had been suspended because the concerned institution had been under re-structuring for months already. As the concerned activities had not taken place, the study team did not meet any students.

Number of people interviewed or met during focus group discussions

	Philippines		Burkina Faso		Lebanon		France	
	m	**f**	**m**	**f**	**m**	**f**	**m**	**f**
Asmae staff	1	4	5	4	1	4	2	6
Asmae partners (management, staff, implementers) and local actors	7	21	41	30	4	9		
Beneficiaries children	11	8			18	23		
Beneficiaries parents	7	19	1	10	14	24		
Total /country / sex	21	44	47	44	37	60	2	6
Total / country	78		91		97		8	
Total	**274** 112 male (m) and 162 female (f) 60 children/adolescents and 214 adults							

Step 3: Adjusting the approach (October 2019) on the basis of the first field mission

- After the mission in the Philippines, a note on preliminary findings beyond the specific country findings (reported in the summary paper) was drafted. It reflected on encountered difficulties concerning methodology and tools, experienced limitations and proposals for adjustments to be applied in the second and third field missions (taking country specificities into account)
- The preliminary findings meeting allowed the study team coordinator to present these first findings, the challenges faced, the perceived limits of the study and get feedbacks and input from the steering committee (including F3E) to adjust the evaluation accordingly.
- Tools and methodology were slightly reviewed based on this first experience and the steering committee's suggestions and feedbacks.

Step 6: Finalizing transversal analysis and writing of the evaluation report (draft and final, February – March 2020)

The team leader analyzed consolidated data collected about Asmae headquarters and concerning the organization as a whole, as well as the outcomes of the three field missions.[9] The present report was first handed in as an interim draft report which was commented on the occasion of a meeting with the study steering committee members. The report has then been finalized on the basis of these comments and discussions.

Closing and sharing workshops: As stipulated in the ToRs, other meetings will be organized to close the study process and to disseminate its main findings and recommendations.

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[9] See Annex 3 for an overview of the key elements of the cross-cutting analysis.

The « Closing workshop » proposed consists in a half-day review session in Asmae head office to present the results of the evaluation and the linked recommendations, with wide attendance including all directors and at country levels (through skype): Project Officers, Project-Partnership Managers and Country Representatives, some representatives from partners.

Different "sharing findings" events are planned:

- One in Paris, open to other organizations – including F3E members and possibly in relation with Coordination Sud Gender and Youth Committees – so that Asmae's lessons learnt from this experience benefit to a larger number of stakeholders involved on these issues (to be co-facilitated by consultants and Asmae – 1⁄2-day workshop);

- Similar sessions will be organized with all Asmae head office staff as part of a staff meeting (to be facilitated by the Asmae gender focal point);

- Sharing sessions will be organized at the country level to disseminate the findings with all partners (including institutional partners – Ministries, AFD delegations, etc. and other likeminded organizations), with the involvement of national consultants (1⁄2-day workshop in each country);

- Project in-country steering committees will discuss the evaluation findings and adjust plans accordingly (to be facilitated by Asmae);

- A finding-sharing session will also be facilitated for Asmae country representatives during Asmae's annual seminar (likely in September 2020, 1⁄2-day workshop);

- A presentation to the Board of Asmae (2h presentation, ideally with the consultant's involvement).

The proposed budget covers the presence of the lead consultant during the closing workshop and two more "sharing findings" events in France, as well as one per involved country, in the presence of the respective national consultants.

2. The steering committees

The overall international steering committee had a moving composition as far as the head-office members are concerned. In the ToR, the concerned Area Managers, the Programs director, the Grants Officer and the Finance and Admin director were listed as members of the steering committee. During the study, the Programs Director, two of the Area Managers[10] and the Grants Officer changed. The main contact point for the study and main driving force for the gender dynamics in general and for this gender study in particular was the Asia Area Manager. For reasons of maternity leave, she was replaced from the beginning July 2019 to the beginning of March 2020 (which represented the main period of this study). The Finance and Admin director was not involved in the committee, but the head-office (HO) Technical advisor participated.

In the three concerned countries, the study steering committee members had been informed about the study, but they had not been actively involved in the writing of the ToRs and the preparation of the study (apart from logistic issues). This was obviously also linked to the fact that up until now, gender has not been a main issue in the partnership between the Asmae country teams and their respective partners.

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[10] The HO team was restructured after the closure of the activities in two countries, reducing the number of area managers from three to two.

The moving composition of the HO members of the steering committee and the relatively low degree of implication of the country steering committees did make the study less participatory than planned. For instance, there were no reactions, criticism or suggestions about any of the proposed tools, probably also because gender is new in the organization and therefore people did not know how to handle this. All in all, such a situation was not ideal for creating the best chances for strong ownership of the study results by the concerned teams. Nevertheless, as the field steering committees / focal points from Asmae country offices remain the same throughout the process, ownership at country level is likely to increase. The continuous efforts of the HO-focal point (herself a replacement person present from July 2019 until mid-March 2020) to keep things going despite the evolutions of the team around her were essential for carrying this gender study through. The return of the statuary HO gender focal point in March 2020 increases chances of implementation of the study outcome, as she picks up the thread of the increasing gender dynamics she had driven before her maternity leave prior to the study. F3E's implication in framing the study all along was also constructive.

3. Primary data collection

The ToRs suggestions about data collection were largely adopted (summarized in the table below).

Country	Initial meeting (country team)	Semi-structured interviews	Focus-group discussions	Observations
Philippines	One of the objectives of this meeting is to collect the staff members' perceptions and points of views about gender integration	Department of Social Welfare and Development; Task Force Manila core group; social workers and professionals (or focus groups)	Selected children and parents in street situation; social workers and professionals (or interviews)	Selected project activities in Metro Manila (one activity to be observed had to be cancelled because of an ongoing clearing operation by the city government)
Burkina Faso		DGESS, DREPPNF, DPEPPNF, DGREIP, DGEFG; female and male teachers (or focus groups); partners (or focus groups)	educators, school directors, parents (of children regularly visiting the libraries); students from the National Teaching Institute for Social Workers; female and male teachers (or interviews); Partners (or interviews)	Selected project activities in Ouagadougou, including some observation session in preschool classes and in libraries
Lebanon		Child protection committees (or focus groups); community representatives; UNRWA (interviews)	Selected beneficiaries; Child protection committees (or interviews);	Cancelled for security reasons that limited the available time in the camps
Tools	Tools for auto-/ internal evaluations, like SWOT	Guidelines of questions / points to be covered (one for each category)	Guidelines of questions / points to be covered (one for each category); Non-mixed groups for parents, students, children or adolescents	Observation-grid with points to be observed (adapted to each category of activity)

Compared to the initial offer, the team added an anonymous individual questionnaire for the staff members of the Asmae country teams[11] and of the partners. This was an interesting complement to

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[11] With exception of the team in Lebanon. Here the questionnaire would have coincidentally interfered with the running of the initial workshop.

the focus group discussions where answers influence each other, especially in a professional setting with its hierarchies.

Concerning the focus group discussions, they were carried out with homogeneous groups in order to create conditions for every participant to be at ease, facilitating expression and exchanges. The following categories of focus groups were carried out:

- Mothers
- Fathers
- Girls
- Boys

It had not been possible to organize focus group discussions with mothers and fathers of single headed families, as suggested in the methodological offer (because these households often face particular vulnerabilities). Indeed, they are generally not a category of beneficiaries particularly identified by Asmae's partners and their proportion amongst the beneficiary families is not known.

In Burkina Faso, focus group discussions with educators were organized along the following lines (always aiming at creating a good degree of homogeneity necessary for creating a setting that liberates tongues as much as possible):

- Male urban educators
- Female urban educators
- Male rural educators
- Female rural educators

As Asmae is working with beneficiaries living in situations of poverty, it was necessary to provide transport costs and a snack to the participants of the focus groups and a per diem to the members of the steering committee (in Burkina Faso). This cost had not been budgeted initially, but Asmae found an ad hoc solution to cover them, in order to facilitate good conditions for carrying out the study.

4. The involved team

Obviously, the composition of the evaluation team was a crucial ingredient for the success of this study. The choice of the team members had been done carefully, after exchange with the concerned persons. Nevertheless, it had been subject to changes, in particular in Lebanon.

The coordinator was motivated by this study first of all because she had some previous idea of Asmae and the way the NGO works: she has had the chance to get to know indirectly Asmae's work in Madagascar, where she has been doing in the past two external evaluations of an Asmae partner, Hardi Madagascar. On these occasions, she also had the opportunity to speak with members of the Asmae country team (the one covering Antananarivo). Moreover, some years ago one of her former students became a volunteer with the country team in south-east Madagascar, staying in touch with her during this period. On a more general level, she is highly interested in the dynamics of increasingly integrating gender into NGOs (with their different dimensions), on the basis of her experience with organizations like the French NGO Gret, but also with the F3E working

group on this issue (where she had a support role and was involved in the drafting of the tool-sheets that were one of the outcomes of this series of workshops).

Concerning the Filipino team, the coordinator had no prior working experience with them personally, but she had been able to identify them through a trustworthy network. Their profiles are complementary, with Dr. Carolyn Sobritchea bringing in a deep knowledge and experience about the gender situation in the Philippines, the ongoing evolutions and the structural factors. Haley Atienza has strong NGO and evaluation experience and a sound knowledge of the field.

In Lebanon, Lina Abou-Habib and Omar Taboulsi were unavailable after the change of date of the mission. Two rather junior colleagues took their place, Emile Waibeh and Ranim Chaya. They had been working together before and had complementary profiles: public health for Emile Waibeh and sociology for Ranim Chaya, with sound gender knowledge for both of them. They were taken on board only less than two weeks before the beginning of the field mission and showed a very good adaptability.

In Burkina it was possible to mobilize a tandem that has worked together in the past and was efficient. Elise Paule Henry is a very experienced gender evaluator, consultant and trainer, with experience in educational projects as well as in institutional gender integration. Karim Ouedraogo has much evaluation and consultancy experience and even though his field of expertise is rather agriculture, he has undergone high quality gender training, done some specific gender consultancies and often mainstreams gender in his other expertise work.

The ToR had proposed to have a female – male tandem for each country, which is not always provided for in project evaluations. In this study, it was a positive element, especially for carrying out the non-mixed focus groups. This mixed national team was also very useful for contextualizing the study approach in each country, combining a female and a male "vision" of the local realities.

Overall, the teams worked very well. The weak point was the need of translation that had been underestimated. There had been no provision for translation and it did not seem appropriate to have the national consultants adopt the role of translators. In some focus groups led in local languages, the team leader stayed in an observation role to avoid too much disruption, sharing the content of the discussions only later with the national colleagues. In others, a staff member of the Asmae country team or of a partner translated.

In all cases (with or without translation issues), the teams de-briefed every day, sharing findings from focus groups that had been carried out in parallel and more generally the impressions, questions and elements of analysis the different study team members had. The national team members drafted the respective country summary reports, finalized with the team leader. They also wrote the synthetic transcripts of the interviews and focus group discussions.

III. Main findings

The main findings from each country case study are available in the country summary reports. In the present report, the focus will be on a consolidated analysis highlighting both converging and diverging aspects.

1. Cross-cutting analyses of the three-country case-studies

The three projects studied in three of Asmae's intervention countries highlighted the tremendous diversity of the contexts Asmae is working in, of the populations its projects are supporting and therefore also of the types of projects and activities the NGO is implementing via its partners. A strictly comparative analysis is therefore not appropriate. The following elements emphasize the **diversity of situations, needs and constraints that have to be considered for Asmae's future gender approach**.

Contextual elements

The **three very different contexts** in the three countries of this studies highlighted the importance of **conceiving the future gender strategy as an adjustable framework**.

In the **Philippines**, official statistics show a very good performance in matters of women's equality. In the Global Gender Gap Index 2020, the Philippines are at rank 16 (out of 153), just after France (they ranked even 10th out of 145 countries in 2017), with a score of 0.781, meaning that 78.1% of the gap between women and men is closed.[12] Indeed, the most widely discussed gender topics in media and on the political scene are linked nowadays more to discriminations based on sexual orientation and gender identity expression (referred to as SOGIE) than focused on inequalities between women and men. **This very positive ranking is obviously hiding negative side-effects[13] and enormous disparities inside the Filipino society**. The beneficiaries of Asmae's partners are living in extreme poverty and are not in a position to benefit fully from equal rights. Street-children suffer from a high exposure to violence, much of it being gender-based. Early parenthood has strong effects on schooling and careers for both parents, but particularly for the young mothers. Online child sexual abuse and exploitation[14] is a growing threat in the Philippines, especially for vulnerable populations. Questions linked to sexual orientation and identity are also an issue for many street-children and adolescents, being a source of victimization.

Burkina Faso is ranking 129th (out of 153) in the Global Gender Gap Index with a score of 0.635, despite the important progress in the educational attainment sub index since the creation of the index in 2006. Most **differences between women and men (and consequently also boys and girls) are seen as "natural" and endorsed by cultural and religious precepts**, as there is little awareness about social construction mechanisms of gendered identities. In some settings, gender

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[12] The overall gender gap performance is a synthesis of performances across the four dimensions composing the index—the Economic Participation, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival and Political Empowerment sub indexes (http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf). The score is a number between 0 (= imparity) and 1 (= parity).

[13] In reality, women's increased participation in education and employment contributed to increase their multiple burden. Unpaid care work is mostly contributed by women within Filipino families and communities, including in the practice of faith/religion.

[14] Also referred to as Online Sexual Exploitation of Children (OSEC)

equality is considered as a "Northern" issue, not much relevant in an African setting. When gender is taken up, it either translates into a focus on women (or girls), rather than on socially constructed relationships between women and men, or it concentrates on parity with a strongly quantitative orientation, disregarding qualitative aspects. SOGIE issues are culturally taboo and it is widely considered counter-productive to include this dimension in a gender approach.

Lebanon ranks 145 (out of 153 countries), especially because of its very low political empowerment score and the weakness of the economic participation and opportunity sub index. Despite having a long history of activism in gender equality, the term "gender" is still considered rather ambiguous and confusing and is generally understood as **synonymous to women and/or everything related to women's issues and women's affairs and is often associated with violence against women**. Indeed, many women are facing gender-based violence, often in domestic settings. At the level of national laws, the laws governing the lives of women are discriminatory against them, namely the penal code which gives a preferential treatment to the man and the personal status laws which are governed by 15 different religious courts.[15] The refugee populations, such as the beneficiaries of the Asmae project, are particularly socio-economically vulnerable and the recent economic crises has increased poverty further, which impacts negatively domestic violence. Female headed households remain more vulnerable, especially in case of lack of legal stay, which increases the risk of exploitation through human trafficking or survival sex (not necessarily in a public setting, but also in exchange of rent, etc.).

The country teams' attitudes towards gender

Concerning the Asmae country teams involved in this study, their support and facilitation for this study was essential and highly appreciated by the evaluation team. As gender was not a required

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[15] Some examples for discriminatory laws in Lebanon:
• Penal code: adultery laws are biased against women. For a man to be arrested for adultery, he would have to be caught in the act in his marital bed or in public for it to qualify as adultery. For women, a mere accusation from the husband is enough to open a case. It used to be that women had a harsher sentence than men, but the law was amended. However, in practice, women still get a harsher sentence and the burden to prove innocence is bigger for women. Plus, it is being used as a tool to counterattack when a woman asks for divorce and custody of children.
• The personal status law dictates that each person has to follow the laws of his own sect. No unified civil laws. This affects women negatively in many respects: they are entitled to less or no inheritance compared to their male siblings in some sects, divorce is harder and impossible in some sects, custody of children differs per sect (Orthodox Christian mothers can keep their kids with them well into their teenage years whereas Shia women lose their boys at age 2 and girls at age 7). Even child support is different according to sect. The minimum age of marriage is also different according to sect with every sect allowing some version of child marriage.
• The penal code used to allow rapists to escape their sentence if they marry their victim. That was outlawed but instead they amended two new laws to keep the effects of this law in place. The newly amended laws are article 505 and 518 of the penal code. Article 505 pardons statutory rape – sex with a minor – if the perpetrator then marries the victim, while 518 dictates that if a virgin is raped with the intention of marrying the victim, the rapist can escape punishment by doing just that.
• The labor law prevents women from doing certain professions because they are not considered safe for them to do, which is discriminatory and patronizing.
• No law exists to protect from sexual harassment in the workplace, which affects women disproportionately.
• Men are allowed to cover their wives by the National social security fund whereas women cannot insure their husbands.
• Law 293 is supposed to protect women from domestic violence but it excludes marital rape. It is supposed to protect all women on Lebanese territory but in practice it does not protect refugees who live inside camps and are out of the reach of law enforcement and who might be undocumented refugees. Also, the jury is slow in processing requests for protection and in many cases has only separated the couple for a few days only. This led to retaliation from the abusers and led to an increase in cases of marital murders.

competence[16] in the past and not a main topic for Asmae, it was interesting to look at the **level of gender awareness, gender knowledge, gender commitment and gender competence** of the respective teams. Obviously, these aspects are linked to personal factors of the concerned individuals, but also to the way gender is accepted and integrated into the wider society.

The team in the **Philippines** is **very aware about gender issues and strongly committed, also on SOGIE issues**. The leading team members are very knowledgeable about gender, based on specific university courses with research assignments on gender. The gender competencies to operationalize gender are supposedly potentially available inside the team (or at least easily attainable), but have **not yet been maximized in the studied project**. One of the reasons seem to be the absence, within Asmae, of a clear mandate   to integrate gender, nor   any instructions on how to do this operationally. Undoubtedly, gender sensitivity is embedded in the language used in the country office and, according to the country team, also in discussions with partners, but the latter did not mention this aspect and had **not identified the national Asmae team as a partner for strengthening their capacity on gender**[17].

In **Burkina Faso**, the team includes two expatriates[18], one of which is the country representative. The definitions the staff members shared in the individual questionnaires show a **great variety in the comprehension of gender**, with little consciousness about processes of social construction and about the importance to consider both females and males in a gender approach. The necessity of considering gender in the future adolescent project seemed obvious to most team members, but for pre-school-children, gender is not perceived as an important topic; as the majority of the pre-school-children are girls, some team members see no need for further action, **parity** (understood often as "at least 50% of girls/women" and not necessarily as a balanced representation of both sexes) being seen as a sign for successful gender integration. Only two team members have been trained on gender (one in the one-shot gender sensitive pedagogy training, another one in a previous job); for four out of nine, gender includes differences related to sex, but also to other factors (handicap, age, nationality, etc.). The team showed itself **open to strengthen their gender approach, but also reserved** (fear of the "lobby Saint Gender", apprehension that the gender approach discriminates against boys/men, gender being perceived as an imposition of the donors…) and afraid of a gender obligation that could be imposed by the head-office, increasing the already very heavy workload of the country team. Socio-cultural obstacles inside the Burkinabe society are considered deeply anchored.

In **Lebanon**, the majority of the team had undergone gender-training during previous professional positions and therefore had a **fairly good understanding about the meaning of gender**. Two of the staff members come from NGOs that have formalized gender strategies (Mercy Corps, IRC). **No reluctance about strengthening gender in their projects was perceived, but no strong enthusiasm either**. On the one hand, faced with civil unrest and the economic crises, combined with reoccurring security issues inside the camps, gender is not seen as a priority. On the other hand, some staff members consider that gender is integrated, pointing for example to sensitization activities about gender-based violence that are being carried out. Pressure on the bread-winner role of men and to a growing extent also on boys is identified as a gender issue, as well as the difficulties to mobilize fathers on matters linked to their children.

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[16] The term competence is used here in the following sense: the quality or state of having sufficient knowledge, judgment, skill, or strength and to be able to combine and deploy them in order to solve a problem, in a concrete operational manner.

[17] Indeed, gender was not identified as an element in the partners' needs assessment, but it was integrated as a thematic concern in the training module on Youth Peer Advocates Training.

[18] There are no expatriates in the teams in Beirut and Manila.

The study team did not find evidence of **formal criteria for the choice of the partners** of the programs concerned by this study[19], but it is clear that gender (gender integration, gender competence, or at least openness about gender) has not been one of them in the past. Some are "historical partners" that have been on board already when Asmae was not as dependent on institutional funding and could develop long-standing partnerships not necessarily framed by a project- and log-frame approach.

In the **Philippines**, **Bahay Tuluyan is the only partner that has started to develop a gender strategy** and their deputy director is proactive about gender and has undergone gender training. The other staff members do not yet seem to have developed an ownership of the gender approach and they refer readily to the deputy. KSEM and Child Hope are Christian organizations and most staff members seem to be driven by Christian values, which means for example, that they do not make condoms available (whereas Bahay Tuluyan does). One KSEM male staff has undergone at least partly the same gender training as the Bahay Tuluyan deputy, but he seems quite reserved about the issue[20] and his training does not seem to have had any repercussion on the organization or the projects.[21] **NCSD appeared comparatively as the most "gender-blind" partner**, which is critical as it is a network with a potential of influencing all its members (beyond the Asmae partners).

In **Burkina Faso**, ICCV is the only civil society partner of the project. Some long-standing **ICCV-staff has had some gender training** in the past and has tried to address the issue in its activities with the adolescents and their parents through awareness raising and some particular events, like a mixed football tournament or a theatre performance on girls' education. Two more recent members of the ICCV management team that are in the ESEC (the M&E team of the project) are open about gender, but do not seem to have a clear understanding and lack operational gender competencies. The **institutional partners from different divisions of the educational ministry (MENA) are upholding the public policy about gender and education**. Their understanding of gender is mainly geared towards strengthening girls' education and striving for strict numeral equality / parity, with a discourse underlining that "**girls and boys are the same**" (without considering differences in needs, constraints and opportunities, that make differentiated treatment on equity lines necessary in order to achieve equality in the long run – see illustration below). The director for inclusive education, girls' education and gender of the MENA has not been solicited in the project (e.g. for the steering committee).

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[19] A new partnership policy was drafted (updated / reworked) in 2019 and finalized in November 2019, with a gender criteria about partner identification: "Promotes a gender-based approach when implementing actions for children and families".

[20] Bahay Tuluyan Director was also critical about the training, but not at all for the same reasons: she found it was too much focused on women, with an exclusively binary approach that is not appropriate in a Filipino setting.

[21] The comparison of the effect this gender training had on two different trainees underlines the importance of conviction about gender matters, as an essential complementary element to gender knowledge.

EQUALITY vs. EQUITY
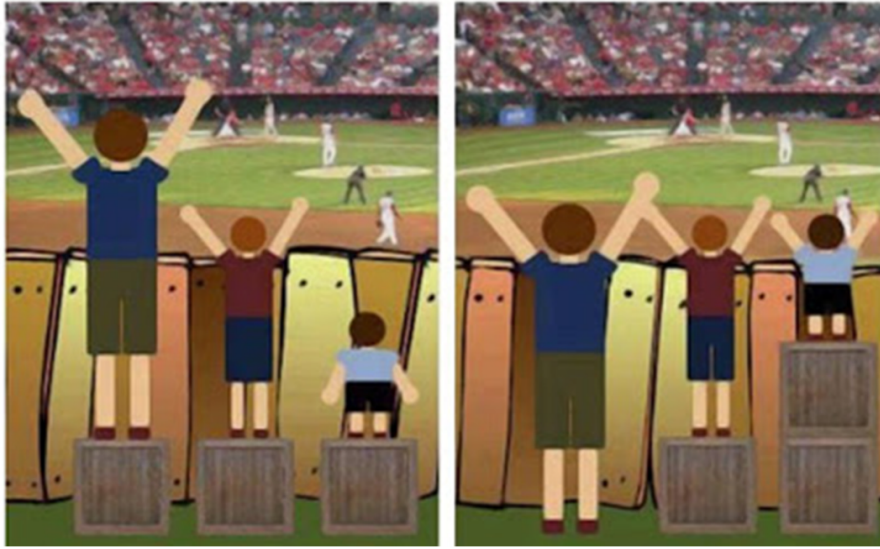
Equality = Sameness

GIVING EVERYONE THE SAME THING → It only works if everyone starts from the same place

Equity = Fairness

ACCESS TO THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES → We must first ensure equity before we can enjoy equality

Equity image credit: Please note, this image was adapted from an image adapted by the City of Portland, Oregon, Office of Equity and Human Rights from the original graphic: http://indianfunnypicture.com/img/2013/01/Equality-Doesnt-Means-Justice-Facebook-Pics.jpg

In **Lebanon**, the main project partners – **Jafra and B&Z** – are **aware of gender differences amongst the youth of the refugee communities** they are working in and they have expressed their motivation to strengthen gender integration in their activities. B&Z refers to gender in their Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies (linked to gender-based discrimination) and their Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Policy mentions sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. Both organizations use pre-existing manuals that address some gender matters and they are experimenting some improvements, accompanied by other partners than Asmae. No capacity building was provided on gender but Asmae created a referral system, and trained partners' teams to refer cases, which may be related to gender. The partners do not have mechanisms to identify which children come from female headed households (that are particularly vulnerable and make up for almost one out of five households in the Syrian refugee communities). **Najdeh is a historical partner with a feminist stance and according to the local Asmae team, with gender experience** (developed largely independently from Asmae), but in line with the AFD project proposal, Najdeh staff is only marginally involved in the AFD project (regarding the referral mechanism and sharing the activities within the CPN), and **does not feed in their supposed gender expertise** (for example about violence against women).

2. Findings concerning the institutional dimension

First achievements of the ongoing gender process

Currently, **Asmae has not decided on a gender definition** and a part from a Memo for inclusive writing (issued by the Project department in May 2018), the NGO has **not formalized a gender strategy**. There is very little mention of gender in Asmae's policy documents. For example, Asmae's Child protection policy (CPP) does not mention gender explicitly in the policy as such; it appears only in two of the Appendixes: 3. Code of good practices, and Glossary, where a definition of gender from the Minimum Standards for child protection in humanitarian action (Child Protection Working Group (CPWG), 2012) is shared, and the term gender appears in a paragraph about non-discrimination.

The exchanges with the staff members of Asmae head-office and the three concerned country teams showed that there is **no open reluctance against gender, but a very wide variety of understandings of gender** are observed. The definition of the Glossary in the CPP does not seem widely known; it highlights the socially constructed nature of gender, but stays on a binary comprehension of gender (women – men). Therefore, the different staff members' attitudes towards gender do not refer to a common understanding, which complicated the analysis of the degree of motivation for strengthening this not clearly identified subject, gender. In Burkina Faso and in Lebanon, gender was understood as a focus on equality between women and men, and was sometimes even seen as focused on women/girls. In Burkina Faso, parity was often highlighted, in Lebanon, the link with gender-based violence was obvious. In the Philippines, spontaneously gender was associated with SOGIE issues, but this seems to have been influenced by the fact that the SOGIE bill proposed in Congress was a hot issue during the field mission[22]. Compared to Burkina Faso and Lebanon, the scope is clearly wider in the Philippines where gender is understood as non-discrimination and equal rights among all gender.

In the head office, despite positive attitudes about gender, the topic seems to be perceived as driven mainly by some individuals whose engagement is sometimes perceived as a personal interest. The session for the HO staff in December 2018 (3h workshop on gender), the gender survey amongst country representatives in early 2019 and the gender session during the head-office seminar in May 2019 were **important initiatives to put gender on the agenda and to create space for exchange and discussion**.
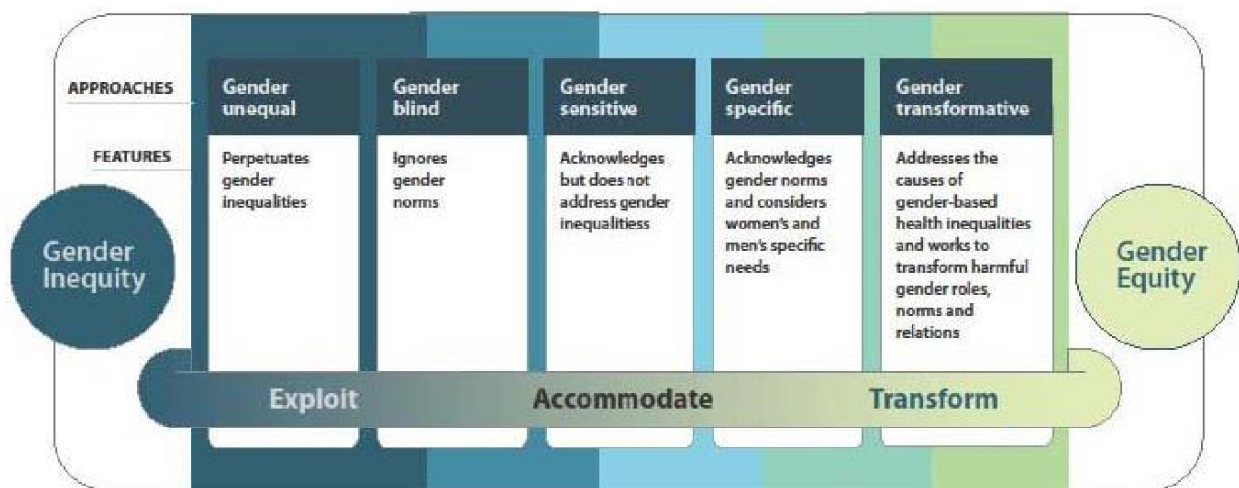
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[22] This dominance of SOGIE-issues was confirmed by one of the national consultants who is a very experienced gender trainer: currently all her training demands focus exclusively or amongst others on SOGIE challenges.

Here some key elements presented during the gender sessions:

Review of concepts

- *Difference between « **biological sex** » and « **social sex** » (gender): men's and women's roles, behaviors, attitudes, etc. defined by society (rapports sociaux de sexe), resulting from a learning process*

- ***Social constructs characterized by an opposition between 2 categories*** *– female/male; woman/man*

- ***Social relations characterized by inequalities / power and domination relationships (hierarchy)****: men / male aspects considered as « superior » to women / female aspects > unequal social values*

- ***Characterized by intersectionality*** *– interacting with other power relationships > discrimination on the basis of age, socio-economic status, religions, etc.*

- ***Different*** *across geographical areas/from a culture to another/ religion / time, etc.*

The different approaches on gender in programs

APPROACHES	Gender unequal	Gender blind	Gender sensitive	Gender specific	Gender transformative
FEATURES	Perpetuates gender inequalities	Ignores gender norms	Acknowledges but does not address gender inequalitiess	Acknowledges gender norms and considers women's and men's specific needs	Addresses the causes of gender-based health inequalities and works to transform harmful gender roles, norms and relations

Gender Inequity — Exploit — Accommodate — Transform — Gender Equity

Inspired by remarks by Geeta Rao Gupta, Ph.D, Director, International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) during her plenary address at the XIIIth International Aids Conference, Durban, South Africa, July 12, 2000:
"To effectively address the intersection between HIV/AIDS and gender and sexuality requires that interactions should, at the very least, not reinforce damaging gender and sexual stereotypes."

As far as the **memo for inclusive writing** is concerned, it was more perceived as an isolated and **disconnected initiative, relevant mainly for communication in French**. An exchange with a HO staff member working on communication (who had also followed a half-day course on gender sensitive communication with Coordination Sud in 2018) highlighted some of the **perceived difficulties for integration gender into communication**. General ones, like the limited number of characters when communicating on social networks, like Twitter, or Asmae-specific ones, like the high mean age of the donors that receive the quarterly news-letter. On the Asmae web-site, there is some evidence for the use of inclusive writing (e.g. feminized version of the position of a

quoted female employee: "chargée"), but there is no consistency (e.g. the page presenting the different professions inside Asmae[23], is written inclusively, but the page where the Human Resource Policy is presented[24] is not). The visuals seem at first sight relatively balanced concerning the children. The adults that are represented are mainly female (which reflects the more general composition of the educational and social sector in France). Internal communication amongst Asmae staff members was not looked into, but it has been mentioned by the country team that communicates in French that it is cumbersome to make ordinary written communication inclusive, adding a futile burden.

The gender-sessions had suggested three **different options for Asmae's possible gender focus**:

- Only looking at inequalities between men and women (2 genders) - discrimination against women

- Or also including other genders - discrimination against gender minorities

- And/or also including discriminations on the basis of sexual orientations

The 2nd and 3rd options are **culturally challenging** and in contexts like Burkina Faso, there is a risk that their inclusion in the gender focus monopolizes attention at the expense of the universally important discriminations against women. **One element that is not covered by these options is the integration of the focus on socially constructed masculinities**[25]. This dimension is important not only because the changes in women's roles and self-esteem must necessarily be accompanied by larger changes in society, including men; on the other hand, as the situation in the Lebanon showed, pressure on males as breadwinners is enormous, creating an obstacle to their involvement in parenthood and to boys' education; furthermore, masculinities are a central issue in gender-based violence. **School-related gender-based violence** is not at all mentioned, even though it is an issue of international concern[26], comprising violence against girls (perpetrated amongst others by their male teachers), against boys (e.g. by the gangs in certain Latin-American contexts), all forms of gender-based harassment and cyber-bullying, homo- and lesbo-phobic violence, etc.

A final point about this very constructive introduction of the gender issue inside Asmae is the **relatively weak consideration of intersectionality**, meaning the importance of integration gender into all considerations of other factors of vulnerability and exclusion, in theory and practice. The AFD policy on youth (referred to in the ToR of this study) is an illustration of a focus (based on age) which is completely unarticulated with gender and the AFD gender policy, even though the adolescence is such a crucial age for boys and girls with their specific challenges[27]. Inside Asmae, for example, when focusing on the inclusion of children with disabilities (as the Burkinabe team

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[23] https://www.asmae.fr/decouvrez-nos-metiers/: Le/la Responsable projet partenariat, Représentant.e pays, Chargé.e de projet, Conseiller.ère technique,…

[24] https://www.asmae.fr/politique-rh/: professionnels engagés, collaborateur, l'emploi qu'il occupe,…

[25] In recent years there has been a much stronger direct focus on men in research on gender perspectives. There are three main approaches in the increased focus on men. Firstly, the need to identify men as allies for gender equality and involve them more actively in this work. Secondly, the recognition that gender equality is not possible unless men change their attitudes and behavior in many areas, for example in relation to reproductive rights and health. And thirdly, that gender systems in place in many contexts are negative for men as well as for women – creating unrealistic demands on men and requiring men to behave in narrowly defined ways. A considerable amount of interesting research is being undertaken, by both women and men, on male identities and masculinity. The increased focus on men will have significant impact on future strategies for working with gender perspectives in development. (Source: Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) United Nations, Definitions and Concepts)

[26] See for example https://en.unesco.org/themes/school-violence-and-bullying/school-related-gender-based-violence, http://www.ungei.org/news/247_srgbv.html, http://www.ungei.org/srgbv/index_6131.html.

[27] See the proposed changes in the adolescence policy (Annex 7).

does), the absence of the distinction between girls with disabilities compared to boys with disabilities makes it impossible to capture potential differences in opportunities, constraints and ambitions.

In general, inside Asmae, **teams are composed of a majority of women**, which is most likely related to the nature of the activities, linked to education and child-protection, a female-dominated professional field, not only in France (one of the exceptions is the Burkinabe team). Asmae has no human resource policy to assure parity. Most staff members considered that their sex does not strongly influence their work and do not necessarily see any reason to strive for more parity. In the Philippines and Lebanon, the only two male staff members were respectively the country representatives, which shows that the glass-ceiling (barriers in the career evolution of women) might be an issue to consider in certain countries.

Positive elements from the country offices for strengthening gender

All Asmae partners that have been included in the present study are **consciously striving for inclusion of children or youth from both sexes**, seeking a balanced participation of boys and girls and assuring access to the same services. This reflects **Asmae's long-standing stance of non-discrimination** and is a promising foundation for gearing up gender in the projects.

Some Asmae staff members have knowledge, competence and experience about gender, either from previous professional experiences, or from professional or academic trainings or because of activist involvement in favor of gender equality. These **competences have not been mobilized, apparently mainly because there was no institutional incentive for integrating gender**.

In **Lebanon**, this might also result from the fact that the majority of the staff members have arrived quite recently and have not co-constructed the evaluated projects. Asmaes' Lebanese partners are experimenting improvements of existing training modules about the gender dimension (amongst others) that are mainly supervised by other partners, encouraged by Asmae Child Protection Technical Advisor, according to the Asmae partners' staff members.

For the **Philippines**, the **AFD proposal included some statements about how gender could be integrated**, but the team – very knowledgeable and convinced about gender – does not perceive gender as part of their main work-line. Their **efforts are aimed to be gender neutral** (taking gender into account in order to avoid the increase of gender inequalities and gender discriminations)**, in line with the perceived organizational practice where gender mainstreaming is not yet systematic**, and to respect partners' thematic demands for capacity building (where gender has not been raised up until now). This situation in Manila pinpoints the importance of a coherent overall institutional gender engagement allowing the national teams to fully deploy their gender potential. Concerning the recruitment of a new staff-member that was underway during the study, gender experience/ knowledge has been included as a criterion (though optional as the main work of the Project Monitoring Officer is not gender).

The project in **Burkina Faso** is the one that **integrated gender most explicitly**, following a recommendation on gender in the evaluation of the first phase of this projects. The implementing team has tried to integrate gender, but was **limited in its gender competence** (only part of the implementing team has been trained on a one-time basis). The member of the projects' M&E team who had been hired as consultant to carry out the five-day training on gender sensitive pedagogy in 2017 (during the first phase of the project) is a trained sociologist and had participated in a summer school on gender and intergenerational issues in Switzerland. He is designed gender focal point in his department by the ministry. He has not followed up on the training despite his continuing involvement with Asmae and there is no clear evidence that he has further fed his gender

competence into the project, even during his collaboration with the illustrator of the picture tool. According to his point of view, he had no mandate to do so. Some elements of this training have been **reinvested in the adaptation of the picture tool** (originally created in Madagascar, without taking gender into consideration) and **in some project specific tools** (like the M&E template). This is a positive point as such, that has triggered off interest to deepen the gender understanding of the Asmae team and its partners. On the less positive side, this shows also the **limits of a one-shot training**, especially as one of the reinvested elements is questionable (the idea of invalidating a stereotype with a "counter-stereotype"[28]) and needs to be revised, which is not possible internally with the current level of command of gender.

In the **Philippines** (where the country team has good gender knowledge), **some partner staff members from management and field level expressed that they are helpless when confronted with some facets and realities of gender issues** (especially homosexuality and cross-dressing, to a lesser extent also early parenthood have been mentioned). But they had not sought assistance from Asmae on these points and had not discussed these issues in their network SENMAPP. This shows that Asmae is not yet identified for tutorship on gender matters, despite some available competencies and despite the process that is underway internally since 2018.

Still on the positive side, it is important to mention that the Asmae teams in the three visited countries are **disaggregating more and more systematically all collected data**, with some room for further improvement (e.g. some templates in Burkina note the numbers of boys, girls and disabled children, without articulating these categories to distinguish disabled boys and girls).

The **identification of gender focal points amongst each partner** (for example in Burkina Faso, where gender focal points exist in all departments of ministries) is also an initiative (outside the partnership with Asmae) that is worth mentioning and improving. For now, the role of these focal points was weak, as their responsibilities and their interactions with Asmae staff are not yet identified. Some other partners have growing experience through their own institutional gender integration: Bahay Tuluyan in the Philippines whose Deputy Director seeks to mainstream gender into the organizational level, B&Z and Najdeh in Lebanon, with the former being in the process of strengthening gender in the policy dimension and the later having a long-standing feminist stance. They can potentially **share this experience with other Asmae partners**.

All three countries covered by this study have **national gender policies** and engagements that can also be mobilized to adopt Asmae's gender approach to each country. The link with these national strategies, policies and commitments is particularly visible in Burkina, where departments of the Ministry of Education are involved in the project implementation. The representatives from these authorities are obviously motivated by the idea to apply the national gender strategy also in the project carried out with Asmae.[29]

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[28] See the Burkina Faso Country Report for more details.

[29] The narrow gender focus on parity and on strict equality of numbers observed amongst the Asmae team and its partners is not in line with the national gender strategy. Here an extract from the Strategy published in January 2020 (Stratégie Nationale Genre 2020 - 2024 Burkina Faso, Janvier 2020, p.10.):
Dans le cadre de l'élaboration de la présente Stratégie Nationale Genre 2020-2024, la définition du concept de genre retenue de façon consensuelle est celle utilisée au cours des dix années passées. Elle stipule que : « le genre doit être analysé sous l'angle des inégalités et des disparités entre hommes et femmes en examinant les différentes catégories sociales dans le but d'une plus grande justice sociale et d'un développement équitable ».
(In developing this National Gender Strategy 2020-2024, the definition of the concept of gender agreed upon by consensus is the one used over the past ten years. It stipulates that: "gender must be analyzed from the perspective of inequalities and disparities between men and women by examining the different social categories with a view to greater social justice and equitable development".)

The country office teams all have a certain **potential for strengthening gender which can be enhanced further through training**. They have clearly voiced that this upgrading of gender has to be guided and supported by an institutional gender policy which stipulates Asmae's standards and procedures in embedding gender into its projects and partnerships, including language and communication.

The limited capacity of Asmae's partners

Despite their interest in gender and their openness about the topic, most of Asmae's implementing partners involved in this evaluation do **not have sufficient gender competence to integrate gender effectively into their activities**. Asmae has been trying here and there to respond to these needs, but their own command of gender is not yet consistent and operational enough, neither clearly framed (in absence of a gender definition and strategy), and the tutorship of partners on gender is not explicitly part of the ongoing projects. For example, the assistance ICCV proposes to different libraries in Ouagadougou, under Asmae tutorship, seems to be completely gender-blind, even though ICCV has staff members with some gender experience. When asked about their interest in gender, one of the library heads claimed that gender is integrated, because the majority of their readers are girls. Elements like the possibilities to tackle gender issues during some of their usual group sessions (maybe even non-mixed ones), to offer access to constructive resources about sexual education, to be attentive to gender stereotypes in the proposed literature, to think about how to attract more teenage boys to reading, or to highlight particularly female authors had not at all been considered (and are absent of the initial project proposal). This shows that there is still an **enormous margin of improving the gender knowledge and competence amongst the implementing partners** (which is also true in Lebanon and the Philippines).

3. Findings concerning the project dimension

Contextual elements that refrain gender integration and its outcomes

One of the identified **limits for strengthening the potential gender component of Asmae's projects is the children's family and community environment**.

This is particularly true in **Lebanon** where the refugee populations are very much attached to their culture of origins, gender norms being part of them. Next to this strong will to preserve one's culture is also the critical economic situation, with child labor of boys and early marriage of girls being part of the coping strategies. When Asmae's partners work with the girls and boys on gender, motivating them to continue studying, sensitizing them on gender-based violence (on the bases of an approach referred to as "Good touch / Bad touch"[30]), the received messages can potentially put them out of phase with social norms that are put forward in the family. Several times, girls expressed their belief that their parents cannot change. This statement underlines the relatively small margin for change that these teenagers perceive and it also shows the delicate balance the implementation partners have to strike: **proposing mind openers to the girls and boys, but**

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[30] Good Touch / Bad Touch is an approach to body-safety programs, used for example in Canada or in India. Children are taught what abuse is, personal body-safety rules, who can help them and what to do if they are threatened or harmed. Such programs seek to teach children vital safety skills on a developmental level compatible with their age group, to enable them to talk in a comfortable way about a very sensitive problem. Lessons are positive and taught according to values such as respect for oneself and others, compassion, humor, honesty, caring and responsibility.

without disconnecting them from their family and community, also to avoid that these children lose permission to attend the proposed activities. This is particularly problematic for girls, as coming to the center is often the only legitimate reason for leaving home for a girl. Obviously, Asmae's partners try and work with the families to pass on similar messages and reduce the gap, but the possibility to make them change their minds are limited, the economic situation has been becoming more critical in the last months and fathers (that are usually the main decision makers) are even more difficult to reach than mothers, because of their reduced availability, especially during working hours.

In the **Philippines** and **Burkina Faso,** the situation is less critical, but the **unwieldiness of social and cultural norms and certain religious beliefs are also mentioned as barriers** to acting in a gender transformative way.

Poverty is also an enormous obstacle for the prevention of school drop-out, the reduction of child labor, and the avoidance of coping strategies that are harmful to girls and/or boys. In contexts like the growing economic crises in Lebanon during the time of this study, the increase of economic pressure can have unexpected effects, such as women taking up or increasing income generating activities.[31] In general, increased female income does not necessarily mean that women control their income and increased activity can have a negative impact on their available time (as their domestic work burden stays important) or on the health of the concerned mothers. Such situations can also increase the **risk of gender violence** if the spouse feels disturbed by the fact the he cannot anymore assure his social role as main bread-winner (as also observed during Asmae's partners' activity implementation   in the Philippines, where cases of violence against women and children were mentioned by female participants with micro-businesses in a Community Facilitators' Training). Several recent documents in Lebanon report the increase of domestic violence against women and children, with victimized mothers also becoming perpetrators violating their children, which triggers of guilt and frustration.[32] In the Philippines, other context related obstacles have been mentioned, like the consumption of drugs (by children and adults, often more by males than females) that trigger off violence, or economic pressure leading to sexual abuse of girls and to a lesser extent also boys (including through online tools). These types of **contexts are rather conducive to the reproduction of gender inequalities than to their reduction**, despite the efforts Asmae partners deploy.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as an important element for strengthening gender

In the **Philippines**, the M&E system introduced by Asmae was found to have **helped improved the data gathering and reports generation among partners in general (beyond the gender focus).** However, the purported sex-disaggregation of data was not utilized as valuable input for gender analysis in order to better understand the strategic and practical gender needs of the boys and girls.

In **Burkina Faso**, the monitoring and supervision tools included in their initial version some possibilities to integrate gender, without it being compulsory. The **revision of these tools** that took place at the same time than this gender study, added some specific questions and boxes. They were

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[31] This has been mentioned by Asmae partners as a possible coping strategy, but no details have been shared. Different publications also mention these situations, but they seem to be observed more often in rural settings (where women find work in agriculture), than in urban ones: Humanitarian Impact Assessment of Lebanon's Ongoing Social Unrest and Possible Economic Crisis on Women and Girls, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Task Force (Lebanon), 29 November 2019; Addressing Gender amongst Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, Research Brief, UN-Women Lebanon, September 2019, etc.

[32] See resources mentioned above (precedent footnote)

probably tested in the meanwhile and will hopefully increase the insight on the effect of making the deployed pedagogy more gender-sensitive. Astonishingly, the projects' log-frame does not include any gender-disaggregated indicators (which is obviously not an obstacle to disaggregating data).

In **Lebanon**, a series of tools has been developed and tested[33]. They do **not systematically disaggregate data**. Some of them, used mainly for internal purposes in the capacity strengthening process of the partner, seek to cover gender in specific section (e.g. Question "5. Are activities gender appropriate?" in the Observation monitoring form for center staff, the outcome of these observations being discussed during the monthly whole staff meetings; apparently, the idea is to consider some questions only for gender-sensitive activities, which seems restrictive, as the simple mixed presence of the boys and girls might make any session "gender-sensitive", independently from the addressed topic). The "teacher exam" that is proposed to be used as a training needs assessment at the beginning of the next school year has no question on gender. Furthermore, it can be highlighted that this is the only country where the study team found evidence of **questions about safe restrooms (toilets)** accessible to girls and boys participating in activities.

Masculinities as a dimension of gender

With the limited gender knowledge available, in many minds gender is still very much associated with women or girls, or with an exclusive focus on parity between women and men, girls and boys. It is therefore interesting to highlight **one activity specifically geared to men**, the ERPAT session KSEM is carrying out in **Manila**. Asmae head-office staff hat mentioned this activity before the field mission, but the trainer being on sick leave, it was not possible to observe any sessions. However, the team could look at the ERPAT manual, which is actually based on a method elaborated in the late 90s. This module seeks to encourage fathers' involvement in the community activities and instil the values of supporting their partners in nurturing their children. A closer look showed that the **underlying social norms are of a very essentialist nature, reproducing strong gender stereotypes**.[34] It is worth noting that KSEM was able to mobilize a stronger participation of fathers into their community activities than other partners, which suggests that there is an **interest for creating activities for men and spaces for exchange about their roles as husbands and fathers**.

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[33] There is the Asmae Whole Centre & Sessions Monitoring Checklist, the Monthly PSS Observation Guide for Asmae Child Protection Technical Advisor, Observation, Shadowing and Coaching Checklist, School satisfaction survey, Teacher classroom observation template, Teachers and educational staff FGD guidelines, Teachers' Datasheet, Feedback Form, School Checklist, Teachers exam and a Technical Sheet that summarizes most of these tools and explains their use. There is also a Project management tool.

[34] Upon review of the guide book, it appears that it uses some sexist expressions, it promotes stereotypes (such as relegating the role of the mother as the "Ilaw ng tahanan", which means the light of the family, while the father is hailed as "haligi ng tahanan", or the foundation of the household) and is based on the principle of complementarity of mother and father, rather than equality. The idea of reviewing/improving this manual has been considered, but this does not seem a viable option, as it is clearly outdated and strongly oriented by traditional Christian values. Since masculinities are a growing focus, more up-to-date manuals are probably available also in the context of the Philippines. (Here some examples in English: https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/pluginfile.php/72/mod_data/content/26885/masculinities%20booklet%20.pdf https://prevention-collaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2017-Tearfund-Transforming-Masculinities-En.pdf https://femnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/training_manual_on_masculinities_and_engaging_men-2.pdf https://www.whatworks.co.za/documents/publications/curricula/216-2017-tearfund-transforming-masculinities-en/file https://www.abaadmena.org/documents/ebook.1538129644.pdf)

There was **no evidence for other specific and non-mixed activities for fathers or boys**. In **Lebanon**, the focus group with fathers were laborious and confirmed that they were not used to discuss amongst each other. The sensitization sessions on early marriage are held for girls and parents, but not for boys (even though they will also be concerned by this issue later in their lifetime when they will get married to a wife… of their age or much younger).

In **Burkina Faso**, the reflection about **integrating gender into the picture tool concerned mainly stereotypes about women** (e.g. showing a female police women). No remarkable attempt to question stereotypes about men have been made (for example to show a father doing child-care, a boy that is crying[35], etc.). For the **future adolescence projects, masculinities could be an interesting dimension** as well that has been suggested to the national team.

Some evidence of effects of gender integration

In **Burkina Faso**, it was not possible to witness any outcomes on the level of the children that are too young – possible outcome of their exposure to gender-sensitive pedagogy can only transpire in medium and long term. They were seated in mixed seating arrangements, but it was not possible to establish if this is an effect of gender sensitization of the concerned educator or a common arrangement.[36] Concerning the educators, they showed a considerable level of consciousness about "**considering both sexes**" in their learning centers. According to their testimonies, they try and encourage boys and girls to intermix and do activities together, to speak up alternately, etc. They appreciate the regular opportunity to meet during the network meetings ("mise en réseau") to exchange about their experiences, amongst others concerning gender. Apparently, the question of the occupation of space by boys and girls is amongst the issues that have been addressed. The **mothers' focus group of ICCV beneficiaries has cited examples of changed behavior of children**, which seems to be the fruit of gender sensitive activities that are probably independent of Asmae's tutorship.

In **Lebanon**, where Asmae   Child Protection Technical Advisor considers that some of the messages and facilitation methodologies are gender-sensitive (based on the gender experience acquired in her former employment with IRC), there is **no clear evidence of transformative outcomes**. Both B&Z and Jafra Foundation offer psycho-social support sessions on gender stereotypes and how to break them, which seems to have a certain effect, especially on girls who implicitly do question gender roles and stereotypes, but they know that they have to be mindful of the cultural restraints.

In the **Philippines**, as gender has not been explicitly discussed between the Asmae staff and their partners and was not included specifically in the support Asmae provided, a part from the gender session during Youth Peer Advocates' Training[37], the question of the effect of gender integration was not considered relevant by most of the interviewees. Some of the youth facilitators participated in the focus groups and even if they have not been specifically mentioned this gender session, they insisted on **values of tolerance and acceptance of every individual, regardless of their gender**.

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[35] The latter was the case in the original picture tool in Madagascar, despite no deliberate gender integration.

[36] In France, in preschool age, there is an effort to mix groups, but not in a perspective of enhancing equality. Apparently, groups with a great majority of boys are considered too turbulent; the presence of girls supposedly has a regulating effect.

[37] Unfortunately, the study team has not been conscious about this gender training early enough to ask for specific interviews with the trained facilitators.

IV.   Recommendations

Asmae's way of working through local partners imposes to **strengthen gender simultaneously on the following three levels**:

- The **institution Asmae**, including the tools to frame interventions
- Asmae's **capacity building process of its partners**
- The **projects** implemented by the partners, with support of the country teams

In other words, inside a **clear institutional gender framework** (gender strategy, gender mainstreamed in all policies, country strategies, and the complete project cycles from diagnosis and baseline-studies to implementation, M&E and external evaluations, etc.) and after **substantial gender training**, Asmae staff does not only have to be **convinced and competent** to integrate gender in their own work, but they also have to **be able to convince and strengthen the gender competencies of their partners, in an intercultural setting**. This is particularly challenging as gender is not a strictly technical and professional issue, but implicitly it always questions the concerned individual (professional or beneficiary) in its private and even intimate sphere.

The ambition to transversally strengthen gender must therefore be met by a whole **series of measures** that are outlined below. It is crucial that these measures are **discussed and co-constructed** with a wide range of staff members, combined with gender training, in order to create **effective ownership of gender inside Asmae**. These recommendations are most of all aimed at fueling and enabling this essential process.

1. Recommendations concerning the institutional dimension

Adopting a shared definition of gender

Based on the findings, the adoption of a common definition of gender is a first necessary step that Asmae will have to go through. Obviously, this definition has to be **large enough to capture all variations of understandings of gender**. On a more operational level, the definition can be **"tailored" to fit each country of intervention**, in order to avoid blocking situations in case of strong reluctance, for example about LGBTIQ+ issues (criminalized in certain countries…).

Here a relatively detailed definition that can be adapted to Asmae's needs and preferences:

*Gender refers to social attributes that are learned or acquired during socialization as a member of a given community. **Gender is therefore an acquired identity**. The concept of gender needs to be understood clearly as a **cross-cutting socio-cultural variable**. It is an overarching variable in the sense that gender can also be applied to all other cross-cutting variables such as race, class, age, ethnic group, etc. Gender systems are established in different socio-cultural contexts which **determine what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman/man and girl/boy in these specific contexts**. Gender roles are learned through socialization processes; they are **not fixed but are changeable**. Gender systems are institutionalized through education systems, political and economic systems, legislation, and culture and traditions. In utilizing a gender approach, the focus is not on individual women and men (like in a classic social work approach) but on the systemic elements, which determine gender roles / responsibilities, access to and control over resources, and decision-making potentials. It is also important to emphasize that the concept of gender is not interchangeable with women. **Gender refers to both, women and men, and the relations between them. Promotion of gender equality should concern and engage men as well as women**.[38]*

*In a wider perspective, gender also includes **wider questions of gender identity** (each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms) and of **sexual orientation** (each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender, the same gender or more than one gender).[39]*

*On this basis, **Asmae can engage in favor of gender equality with the objective that women and men, girls and boys have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realizing their full potential, human rights and dignity, and for contributing to (and benefitting from) economic, social, cultural and political development**. Gender equality is, therefore, the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being **full partners in the home, community and society**. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that **women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female**. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men and girls and boys are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups and that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes and prejudices about gender roles. **Gender equality is a matter of human rights and is considered a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development**.[40]*

[38] https://medinstgenderstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/Gender-Glossary-updated_final.pdf
[39] Idem.
[40] https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/1761/file/Gender%20glossary%20of%20terms%20and%20concepts%20p df

In **coherence with its non-discriminatory approach**, Asmae should aim for gender equality for **all individuals, regardless of their gender identity and their sexual orientation**. In some countries, it might be too difficult or even counterproductive to raise this dimension of the gender approach explicitly with the partners and the beneficiaries. In these cases, only the first part of the definition can be shared, at least in the early stages of the partnerships.

Another option would be to aim for a **more concise definition** of gender that includes the gender identity and sexual orientation dimension only implicitly (by mentioning discriminations of individuals that deviate from accepted social norms). For example:

> *Gender refers to the **socially constructed characteristics** of female and male identities and the **social relationships that arise from them**. Gender norms are the set of behaviors expected of men and women in both their public and private lives. These social norms are at the root of **gender inequalities and discrimination that are structural in societies, put pressure on social groups and individuals and affect people who deviate from them**. Gender does not describe all types of social relationships, but it **always interacts and intersects with them and can contribute to the creation of relationships of domination/subordination**.*

It is recommended to include the following key elements in the Asmae definition:
- Focus on **all human beings**, men, women and individuals that are not fully comfortable with these binary categories
- Focus on **social construction of female and male identities and the way they structure societies** (it is important to overcome the idea that female and male characteristics are supposedly "natural" and fixed; on the contrary, the notion of social construction implies that changes are possible[41]… and that every project can contribute to some extent to changes towards more equality)
- Highlighting **increased vulnerabilities, inequalities and discriminations** that result from these social norms, affecting social groups and individuals
- Insisting on the **cumulative nature of different factors of discrimination and vulnerabilities – with gender being always a transversal issue**[42] – and the importance to assess and address them in an articulated manner (intersectionality).

Some examples of definitions and strategies are presented in Annex 8.

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[41] This might question certain aspects of the local culture (e.g. female genital mutilation, to take an extreme example) and there is always a risk of gender being perceived as imposing westernized cultures. It is therefore crucial to work actively with local actors on the aspects of their culture they themselves want to transform in order to make their cultural identities evolve in a way they perceive as positive and more valuable.

[42] For example, considering that the needs, obstacles and opportunities of disabled children, adolescents, school drop-outs, street populations will va   ry amongst boys and girls, women and men. Gender and age are the two transversal factors that are concerning every individual in one way or another (and as far as age is concerned, in a way that is changing during an individuals' life-cycle), and they interact with other vulnerabilities the social group and/or the individual might be facing.

The gender strategy should be built around the **gender focus as introduced** in the December 2018 and May 2019 gender sessions[43]. The proposed options could be **enriched by elements on masculinity and intersectionality** and be presented as a general framework, with a focus on **equality of women and men** as the common base applicable everywhere and the other dimensions having to be **acknowledged as factors of discrimination** (especially in countries where they are culturally challenging), even though they might not be explicitly integrated in the projects, in dialogue with partners, etc. Here a proposal of a reformulated gender focus:

- Looking systematically for **inequalities between women and men** (girls and boys), at **discrimination against women and girls** (or men and boys), at the **impact of social pressure on women and men** (girls and boys) ; **crossing the gender perspectives with other factors of discrimination** (differences between boys with disabilities and girls with disabilities; considering that women form different ethnic groups do not face the same challenges, etc.), not to distinguish them, but to **understand and address their articulation**.

- Assuring that the focus **includes also men (and boys),** considering how social norms about masculinity – linked to strength, authority, virility and even aggressiveness – affect them negatively in different contexts[44] and how they can contribute to gender equality[45].

- Considering the **existence of other genders and of discrimination against gender minorities**

- Considering **discriminations and violence on the basis of sexual orientations**

On the bases of such a focus, Asmae's strategy should ensure that no project is gender blind, and should aim for **passing projects from "gender neutral" to "gender sensitive", striving in the medium or long-term towards a "gender transformative"[46] approach, adapted to each specific context**[47]. In line with this general gender goal, the strategy can include all of the following items of these recommendations (with exception of the short-term project-related points).

Last not least, the success of such a strategy depends on the **resources provided for its implementation**. The required resources are above all human resource time which has to be

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[43] The slides and minutes of these sessions should be widely shared, also with colleagues that did not attend one of the sessions.

[44] E.g. boys having to contribute to livelihood in situations of extreme poverty, boys having to prove their "manhood" by engaging in risky behavior, boys feeling that school-performance might entrench their recognition by peers, etc.

[45] E.g. through more respect for girls and women (on subjects like consent to sexual intercourse, etc.), more equal sharing of domestic burden, better control of aggressiveness, responsible, constructive and caring fatherhood, etc.

[46] The gender sessions organized by the HO gender focal point in 2018 and 2019 introduced a typology that included a 5th category, "gender specific projects" (see box p. 22). For practical reasons, this category has not been mentioned here, as the line between a "gender sensitive" approach and a "gender specific" one can be complex to determine for a specific project. Nevertheless, the option with 5 types of projects can be chosen for Asmae, to give more different categories for advancement, if the gender focal points consider it enough manageable.

[47] The type of transformations that change gender relations and contribute to more gender equality, will vary according to each context.

accounted for, as the staff members underlined everywhere the already heavy workload. Some points, as the initial training course recommended below, also mobilize financial resources.

The **process for the conception of the gender strategy should be as participatory as possible** and therefore several staff members at HO and CO level should be involved in **developing the strategy in line with Asmae's realities, to build strong ownership amongst the teams**. A regular rhythm of collective (online) working sessions should be scheduled to advance progressively.

Once drawn up, widely shared and discussed, then adopted, the gender strategy should be **transposed into a gender action plan** in order to prioritize and schedule concrete activities for the next 3 to 5 years. A realistic estimation of the necessary resources and their timely provision are sine qua non for a successful implementation of the gender action plan. This could possibly take the form of a specific project, with its dedicated budget and its own M&E mechanisms, before gender can be considered as mainstreamed throughout Asmae and all its projects in the medium or long term.

To conclude this section on the gender strategy, a general comment as "food for thought" for the medium and long term: if Asmae adopted a **rights-based approach[48]** (children's rights, women's rights), gender integration would be straightforward and obvious. This would imply a general revision of Asmae's vision, goal and approach.

Integrating gender into intervention framework and policies

To mainstream gender into Asmae's activities, it is necessary to **integrate gender into its main operational tools[49], the intervention framework and the different policies of its areas of intervention**. Concerning the intervention framework, as it is structured around the five areas of intervention, each area has to be covered. Here an example for the possible gender integration in one of the areas (proposed changes and additions are in red):

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[48] A human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyze inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress. (https://www.unicef.org/policyanalysis/rights/index_62012.html)

[49] See in Annex 5 a list of available tools online.

Prevention of school drop-out and underperformance

Target: ~~*Children*~~ *Boys and girls aged 6 to 18*

Issues: *low school enrolment rates, school dropout, socio-economic opportunities limited, sense of underperformance, lack of self-confidence*

Gender issues: *all of the above-mentioned issues tend to be aggravated for girls; in some contexts, boys are under pressure to earn income; parental support for girl's education is weaker than for boy's education ; in many emergency / crisis contexts though the contrary can be seen where boys / men have to work as the family breadwinners and therefore are not supported in continuing their education ; risk of drop-out of girls increases with puberty for different reasons (menstrual hygiene management, school related gender-based violence, early parenthood, etc.); girls are underrepresented in STEM majors; not enough female role models.*

Overall objective: *Encouraging quality education, school retention and access to knowledge*

Operational objective:

- *Foster access to and school retention*
  - o *Pay for tuition fees and foster access to primary care and to the school canteen*
  - o *Support legal and administrative procedures enabling children to access education*
  - o *Sensitize parents to the importance of schooling for boys and girls*
- *Support the development of actions to prevent school drop-out*
  - o *Support the organization of awareness campaigns close to children, families and communities*
  - o *Support the creation of discussion groups on difficulties at school and on school related gender-based violence*
  - o *Support the provision and maintenance of non-mixed, closed sanitary facilities with access to water*
  - o *Sensitize parents about the negative impact of household chores on girls' education*
  - o *Support efforts to reintegrate teenage mothers into school*
- *Help to improve the quality of education*
  - o *Train teachers (also women) / Encourage innovation in education*
  - o *Promote a favorable non-sexist environment / Foster the development of life skills (including sexual education)*
- *Support work done with families and communities*
  - o *Support improvement of family/school relations, involvement of mothers and fathers*
  - o *Build on and improve family and community skills and support for education of boys and girls*

Concerning the policy on adolescence, some basic suggestions of including gender into this policy have been drawn up in Annex 7.[50]

The different policies should also be revised in the perspective of integrating gender in a transversal manner, **highlighting when certain issues are stronger or different for one gender than another** (especially in terms of obstacles and opportunities), **adding elements that are specific to one gender, including considerations linked to preventing or reducing sexism and gender-based violence.**

For instance, to integrate gender into Asmae's **Child Protection Policy** (CPP), the following suggestions can be made, to be completed by further elements that can be drawn from the documents cited under the first bullet point:

- Preamble (p. 4): A revision for mainstreaming gender into the CPP can be based on the following documents (to be added to the list inside the CPP):
  - http://www.adequations.org/spip.php?article2142
  - https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/crs1.pdf and https://www.unicef.org/gender/files/CRC_and_CEDAW_Facilitators_Guide-small.pdf
- Missions (p. 6): They could be adapted in compliance with the future gender strategy
- Goals of the CPP (p. 7): It is useful to state here that girls and boys do not necessarily have the same needs and vulnerabilities, they do not necessarily face the same risks, and at least not all needs, vulnerabilities and risks are the same. This should be considered by employees and visitors.
- Appendix 1 Form to identify a risky situation (p. 18): it is suggested to add an open box about the sex of the child (as an open non-binary category)
- Glossary (p.28/29): include considerations on SOGIE (either in the gender definition or in a separate definition), because children concerned by SOGIE issues are particularly vulnerable to abuse; this can be inspired by the following resources:
  - https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/15414/pdf/save_the_children_sexual_orientation_gender_identity_policy_position.pdf;
  - https://www.qmul.ac.uk/law/humanrights/media/humanrights/news/hrlr/2016/Bucataru-FINAL.pdf

Integrating gender in each country strategy

The integration of gender into each country strategy will be an efficient way to assure contextualization of the gender approach. In order to adapt Asmae's gender approach to each intervention country, specific resources can be mobilized (like the AFD country profiles or similar tools that are created and regularly updated by other Technical and Financial Partners, like UN-Women) and combined with a literature review, namely of national and international academic publications, including reports of national public bodies, civil societies and TFP.

Concerning the need for **support for this "gender-revision" of the country-strategies,** the teams in the Philippines and in Burkina Faso teams asked for support from HO, while Lebanon mentioned the possibility of mobilising a consultant budgeted as part of the AFD programme framework agreement. A mobilization of local or national resource NGO partners, of peer support from national alliances, or of national consultants in collaboration with the gender-focal points (from HO and CO) could be envisaged to engage the country teams into an **"action-training" process**:

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[50] The team has also made a certain number of suggestions about the document of the new project for adolescents in Burkina Faso (sent directly to the country team)

an initial **training** about how to contextualize the Asmae gender strategy and to integrate it into the country strategy, a **follow up period** of about 4 to 6 weeks during which the teams elaborate a draft (with the possibility to consult the trainers/"coaches" for specific questions) and a **participatory workshop** with the external resources or the HO focal point to finalize the gendered country strategy and its implication for ongoing and future projects.

In order to operationalize the gender strategy, one of the priorities is to strengthen the system of focal points and to integrate them formally into a **Gender Team** (or gender task force, or gender working group) with regular meetings. The members of this Gender Team and above all, the HO gender focal point, should be allocated a certain percentage of their working time to their activities as focal points (10-15% for the CO focal points, 30-50% for the HO focal point are estimations in line with the ambitions of the recommendations of this study). The task of strengthening gender in all the projects, inside the support, coaching and capacity building of partners and throughout the organisation should be explicitly integrated into their respective job profiles.

Another priority is to raise the general level of gender knowledge and competence amongst the staff (as focal points can only enhance and not replace the conviction and competence about gender amongst all staff-members). On the basis of the gender strategy, the content for a **basic gender training** should be designed and proposed to all Asmae staff (head-office and country-offices), on a format of 2 days minimum. This training should include basic gender knowledge, methods and tools for effectively applying this knowledge and also a sound introduction to all elements of the Asmae gender strategy. The training could be carried out **first at the head-office level, animated by an experienced trainer** (mobilised for example through the future AFD programme convention) **and co-animated by the head-office gender focal point**. She could then **replicate this training in each country team, with the help of the concerned gender focal point** and possibly a national trainer/consultant, and accompany on this occasion also the gender integration in the respective country strategy.

After this basic training, the focal points should organize **regular virtual exchange sessions** (once a month) to share their experiences, discuss difficulties and obstacles and share good practices. Their **role and responsibilities as gender focal points should be clearly stated and integrated in their job profile** (if this is not yet the case), with a clear attribution of a dedicated time-frame (at least half a day/week). It should also be made clear to all staff members when they can or must consult their gender focal point. In any case, **it should be avoided that the focal points carry the sole responsibility for integrating gender**. This responsibility should rather be shared by all staff members, whereas the focal points should adopt a supporting role.

On the HO-level, **gender competences of the programme team should also be deepened**, and in particular **the technical advisor,** as he/she occupies a **strategic function, concerning projects, tools, consultancies**, etc. This can be done through participation in advanced gender training (possible in an online format, if no classic training workshop opportunities come up), participation in collective gender activities (F3E, Plateforme genre et développement) and partly through an autodidactic approach (if the necessary working-time should be made available). An alternative could be a form of **gender coaching for the technical advisor provided by the HO focal point and/or the HO-CO Gender Team, or outside expertise** (following training, for example), during the first 12 months of implementing the future gender strategy.

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[51] For more information on training opportunities, see Annex 6

Future recruitments should require basic gender competences or otherwise provide a possibility to be trained after the recruitment (for example by the HO gender focal point). Special attention should be paid to a renewal of a gender focal point in a country team. As the staff fluctuation seems to be relatively high, the **basic gender training could be repeated once a year** in the head-office (maybe with a virtual presence of new-comers from country-teams).

Considering the integration of gender inside the organization Asmae

Even though Asmae has chosen to concentrate its gender integration for now on the operational dimension, the organizational dimension should not be neglected in order to **create a general coherence, anchor the gender engagement politically in the organization** (to assure that it does not depend any more on certain individual "gender champions") and **give a convincing example to the partners**. These elements are not included in the present study, but should be tackled in the near future to make Asmae's engagement explicit also on this dimension:

- Gender equality and non-discrimination should be explicitly mentioned in the **statutes and internal rules** of the association Asmae

- Harmonization of **inclusive writing style** in internal and external communication, especially in French, in order to be consistent about the way of communicating; towards the individual donors, such an initiative will need explanations that can be delivered when presenting Asmae's future gender strategy

- **Anti-harassment prevention and signaling mechanism** should be explicit and known by everyone

- **Human Resources gender concerns**: integration of gender team activities in the job profile of focal points, annual human resource survey (concerning head-office and country-offices) about potential differences in salary and career evolution between women and men, consideration of child-care issues (for mothers and fathers), etc.

2. Recommendations concerning the project dimension

Recommendations about three studied projects[52]

Concerning the ongoing projects, all three of them have **underused opportunities to better integrate gender** that might be recoverable, some on a **very short-term basis**:

- In **Manila**, the gender-blind "Best practices" collected by NCSD[53] could maybe be **completed by some exemplary gender integrative good practices** before the publication.

- In **Ouagadougou**, the **picture tool** which is under final revision before generalization, could **integrate gender further** on the basis of some suggestions that have been shared in

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[52] Please refer to the respective country reports for more details.

[53] Asmae partner NCSD was supported by Asmae for the publication of good practices in child protection and education, collected amongst their members, written with the help of an external consultant. Apparently, the collected examples did not integrate gender, which is a missed opportunity. As the process is already very advanced, the only possibility is to add some gender pro-active examples before finalizing and disseminating the book.

the country summary report[54]. This might cause some delay, which has to be negotiated, but considering AFD's interest in strengthening gender, there are good chances that they would agree to a reasonable re-scheduling. Furthermore, the director for inclusive education, girls' education and gender of the MENA could be invited to join the projects' steering committee and get actively involved in the finalization of the picture tool.

- In **Beirut**, during the field mission, the Asmae team had received a **first draft of the report of the projects' baseline study** (carried out in the second semester 2019). The data for this study had apparently been sex-disaggregated, but **gender is not systematically considered in the data analysis**. It has been suggested during the mission to ask the concerned consultants to catch up on this in order to deepen the insight on gender, not only for improving this baseline in itself, but also for enhancing the possibilities for gender integration in the future evaluation that will take the baseline as a reference when assessing impact.

In all three countries, Asmae's partners have expressed interest for strengthening their gender capacity in the course of this study. As Asmae generally concentrates its capacity building on topics identified by the partners, this seems a recommendation easy to implement. This could be organized with the **help of a national trainer (or, even better, of a mixed team – male and female – of two national trainers) and include Asmae CO-staff**, coordinated by the HO.

Here some suggestions to **improve the studied projects for their remaining duration**, by country:

Burkina Faso

- Members of the country team could approach **actors more proactive on gender and education** (e.g. FAWE, Plan International, UNICEF, etc.) and join the Framework for Consultation of CSOs Engaged on Gender and Women in Politics.
- **Capitalization and sharing of good gender practices** during network meetings among early childhood educators, but also within the national consultation framework on pedagogical innovations in pre-school and primary education in Burkina Faso.
- **Strengthening gender skills at various levels, particularly among CEEP educators** for gender mainstreaming, on the basis of a **revised training module on gender-sensitive pedagogy.**
- Complete and finalize the **systematic integration of gender-specific indicators** in the monitoring sheets in order to better assess gender trends and to have gender statistics available; integrate **at least one question on the understanding of the gender concept in the post-training evaluation on the picture tool**.
- The **libraries** could organize sessions on topical themes related to gender (gender violence, drug addiction of young people, non-violent education, sexuality of young people, early parenthood, etc.), offer access to resources about sexual education, be attentive to gender

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[54] Specific recommendations concerned the introduction of new themes, like emotions (where cards could show a boy crying, an angry girl, boys and girls laughing together, etc.), but the country team considers this as impossible inside the current schedule (is it negotiable with partners and donors?). Some less disturbing recommended changes concern representation of professions: showing a male and a female doctor (not a nurse!) on the same card, a policeman and a policewoman, a male and female tailor… or have two cards for each profession, showing respectively a man and a woman.

stereotypes in the proposed literature, think about how to attract more teenage boys to reading, and highlight particularly female authors.

- **Support sensitization campaigns on gender and education for parents and the wider community** to strengthen the coherence of educational messages in school and at home, or at least include gender messages and gender sensitive language in already programmed sensitization activities.
- The team is encouraged to make the **link between the relevance of gender as a dimension for the future adolescence project** (where the necessity to address the gender dimension was considered as obvious by the team) and the fact that the **pre-school children – the adolescents of tomorrow – construct their gendered identities from early childhood on**.

Lebanon

- The gender focal point[55] could become a member of the **Sexual and gender-based violence Task Force (SGBV-TF).**
- **Najdeh** could be integrated more actively in the project in order to share their experience, if relevant, in some gender matters and to integrate gender more explicitly in the Child Protection Committees.
- Asmae could support its partners to **develop a mechanism to identify female-headed households** (FHH) in order to reach these potentially very vulnerable households more easily; alternatively, local actors who have conceived and tested such an identification mechanism (e.g. IRC) could be invited to share their expertise, for example at the level of the Child Protection Network (as children from FHH are more exposed to certain risks).
- The **impact of the current economic crisis and national unrest could be monitored more closely from a gender perspective** as the consequences are most likely partly gender-differentiated (in collaboration with the SGBV-TF).
- Asmae could **strengthen its partners to develop and test tools and types of interventions that enhance gender mainstreaming**, including:
  o Peer education on sensitive topics such as GBV or drug use,
  o Non-mixed moments (girls and boys apart), articulated with mixed ones, allowing to address also topics like masculinities
  o Gender-balanced interventions (a man and a woman co-facilitating sessions, etc.),
  o More proactive gender activities (e.g. contest for illustrating gender equality in painting, through theatre, songs, etc.)

Philippines

- **Strengthen SENMMAP as a strategic platform** in creating a safe space for the partners to engage among themselves into gender discourse and identifying good practices (even if this might involve changes in its latest action plan). **Gender capacity building initiatives** for the SENMMAP members can be carried out with a Training of Trainers approach in order to develop a pool of competent facilitators and resource persons on integrating gender in street education program.

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[55] The CO gender focal point suggested that the Child Protection Technical Advisor joins the SGBV-TF, which is also an option, to be discussed inside the HO-CO Gender Team. In any case, as in all country teams, a mechanism should be put in place to regularly inform all CO team members of the content of these meetings of national gender alliances.

- Trigger more **reflection sessions among partners on the challenging issues** that revolve around the traditional beliefs of social norms and cultural dictates especially on stereotyping, discrimination, marginalization, including violence against girls/boys and women/men, responsible masculinities, including sensitive matters of sexuality (contraception), SOGIE, etc.
- The self-developed **M&E tool** of Asmae can be **completed with more gender specific aspects** and tested.
- Build up **Community Awareness Campaign on Gender Education to educate parents and community members on gender sensitivity**. The partners have to do networking with other partners and allies that have substantial experiences on gender programs.
- **Develop a gender advocacy agenda** to be disseminated through SENMMAP and/or by **levelling-up the role of NCSD** to influence duty bearers to make children's programs more gender responsive and gender sensitive and to promote social work among males. However, a sound gender training seems necessary in order to prepare the members and their board for such an evolution.[56] This can be enabled through formalizing the structure of SENMMAP (accreditation) who can then play a leading role inside NCSD or by maximizing the NCSD network sub-committee on gender to initiate gender advocacy.
- In the medium term, **SENMMAP members could envisage a joined pilot program to experiment stronger gender integration in their projects**, making their different fields of expertise converge. This could become a good practice among partners worth documenting and sharing to other actors.

Choice of project partners

Asmae relationships with its partners is central, as Asmae is not implementing projects directly, but is seeking to strengthen implementing partners. Therefore, a gender strategy cannot only focus on the specific projects, but also on the tutorship / capacity building Asmae provides to the partners.

A first critical issue is therefore the choice of partners, which has **already improved through the new partnership guidelines and the joint selection grid tool**. This is to ensure that in terms of gender, partners are open to the theme and motivated to deepen their knowledge and competence in the matter. Considering the multiplicity of meanings of gender that are common, combined with contextual specificities, it is central to **address this issue openly when choosing a new partner, in order to guarantee a minimum level of shared values**. This could be done through a sharing of Asmae's gender strategy or through the **conception of a specific contextualized "gender charter" for each country, and/or each intervention theme** (e.g. in Burkina Faso, the gender engagement might not be the same for partners working on adolescence, on early childhood and on disabilities) on the basis of a common set of core elements.

The question of **gender should also be integrated into all existing tools for partner capacity-building**, like the organizational capacity assessment that Asmae carriers out with its partners. On this occasion, the country team can verify certain items, for example:

- Does the partner have a gender strategy, is gender integrated in its vision and core values?

- Is the partners' staff gender-balanced (overall, concerning the management level)?

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[56] The study team could not verify if some NCSD members were more pro-active about gender integration than the board.

- Does the partner have mechanisms in place for GBV prevention, signaling and care for victims?
- Does the partners' staff have gender knowledge and competence? Is there a gender focal point (or several)?
- What are the needs for strengthening the partners' capacity to integrate gender?

The advancement on transversal gender integration in the projects and inside the partners institution should also be addressed **through the organizational capacity analysis process and in the periodical reviews of the partnerships**. As gender is usually driven by individuals that are particularly motivated, it is important to **provide support for these "gender champions"** but also assure that the base for carrying the gender engagements is broadening and that there are **advancements in formalizing commitments**.

Alliance with national gender expertise[57]

In order to make contextualization more relevant and enhance synergetic effects of the joint efforts of the multiple stakeholders engaged in gender in all the Asmae's intervention countries, the Asmae country teams should seek actively alliance with national gender expertise through different options.

National or local organizations/institutions or personalities that have gender expertise should be invited to join the project steering committees (where they exist). In the projects where there are working relationships with one or more ministries, it is advised to also involve **the gender focal point of the concerned division and a representative of the national women/gender machinery**. Every time the country team falls back on **national expertise**, they should require the **competence to mainstream gender into their assignment**, and should mention gender specifically in the terms of reference (sex-disaggregation of data, gender specific questions/items, etc.); specific consultancies to advice about gender integration can also be considered. The local staff members (in particular the gender focal point) should **join local or national gender networks or working groups** (of TFPs or civil society platforms). In some cases, it might be helpful to **bring a highly gender experienced civil society partner temporarily on board of a project to catch up on the gender integration**. Indeed, in all three countries visited, the study team could identify some local organizations that could be a source of inspiration or help on the road of strengthening gender in Asmae.

Concerning head-office, Asmae should continue its **involvement in the F3E community of practice** on gender in order to exchange experiences with other like-minded actors (mainly NGOs). Asmae can possibly get involved in other circles, like the Coordination Sud gender commission, and assist occasionally events like AFD or F3E restitutions or conferences on gender or reunions of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs gender and development platform.

Mainstreaming gender all throughout the project-cycle

Concerning the projects Asmae's partners implement with Asmae's support, gender should be integrated in all stages of the project cycle. The transversal issues are the initial gender analysis, the integration of gender into the project formulation and the gender dimension in the M&E mechanism.

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[57] See information related to national gender expertise in Annex 4.

Concerning the **project identification** state, a gender analysis is crucial and provides the foundation for integrating gender in the future project and its M&E mechanisms. The aim is to **identify at this stage key issues contributing to gender inequalities amongst the targeted beneficiary populations** (many of which also contribute to poor development outcomes). It should further be explored how gendered power relations lead to discrimination, subordination, and exclusion, particularly when intersecting with other areas of marginalization or inequality (due to age, class, ethnicity, caste, disability, status, sexuality etc.). Gender analyses should explore the different gendered roles and relationships within the project target area and identify how these create specific needs, risks and opportunities for women and men (girls and boys) or different relevant sub-groups.

The results of this gender analysis should be used to **design program activities that respond to the identified differing gendered needs, risks, and opportunities**. This means that services and activities will be designed and implemented in a manner that is reflective of gender differences to ensure accessibility to all individuals targeted by the project. Furthermore, it might be relevant and possible for future projects to include targeted activities designed to strengthen the partners for **covering unmet needs of a particular gender** (e.g. menstrual hygiene management) **or a certain sub-group** (e.g. for children from female headed households[58]) and reducing gender discrimination.

Concerning **gender in M&E**, different elements should be considered. First of all, when monitoring the implementation of activities and the achievement of the expected results, outputs and outcomes, the systematic disaggregation of data according to the sex (and other context-relevant factors) is crucial: data is collected and analyzed by differentiating male, female groups (potentially subdivided by other factors, like household-composition, etc.). This provides information on **how participation in activities, results, positive or negative outcomes, etc. vary according to sex** (possible cross-analyzed with other relevant factors) and whether this variation is problematic or not. Furthermore, it can be insightful to **monitor changing gender roles and relations** as a result of the project activities (e.g. stronger involvement of boys in household-chores as mentioned by ICCV in Burkina Faso). The M&E mechanisms should also try to capture and analyze unintended consequences of the project activities (that can be both positive and negative). For example, a negative unintended consequence could be that girls are taken out of an educational program when they start to question early marriage as a result of a sensitization activity on this topic.

These elements should be covered **for all future projects and as far as M&E mechanism is concerned, also for ongoing ones** (like the projects visited during this study). Obviously, the form this gender integration takes will depend on the nature of the project. In the Asmae gender-session 2019, a typology with five categories of projects has been presented: gender unequal, gender blind, gender sensitive, gender specific, gender transformative. Even though the **participants of this session have tended in the majority towards a gender transformative approach**, this study showed that gender-transformative projects are not the rule today. Considering the country teams and partners' level of gender competence and commitment, as well as certain contextual factors, **all Asmae projects will not become gender transformative in the short term**. The immediate aim is to strengthen the acknowledgment of gender norms and inequalities and the way the projects consider them (which corresponds to gender sensitive and gender specific types). **The long-term aim would be to address gender-based inequalities through the projects and to work towards transforming harmful gender roles, norms and relations** (making the projects "gender-transformative").

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[58] For example, CARE's Community Score Card includes the identification of female headed households
(https://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/FP-2013-CARE_CommunityScoreCardToolkit.pdf).

Based on the tools developed by Care for their gender marker,[59] the following guiding questions can be considered for the future gender mainstreaming:

	Gender sensitive projects	**Gender transformative projects**
Initial gender analysis	Is this intervention informed by some analysis of the gender differences of women, men, boys, and girls?	Is this intervention informed by an in-depth, project specific gender analysis of the distinct needs, roles, relationships, risks and power dynamics of and between women, men, boys and girls?
Integration of gender into the project formulation	Are project activities adapted to meet the distinct needs of women, men, boys, and girls as identified in the analysis?	Are project activities adapted to meet the distinct needs of women, men, boys and girls, supported by specific gender activities advancing gender equality and transforming harmful social norms?
Gender dimension in the M&E	Is the monitoring system collecting and analyzing sex disaggregated data (cross-analyzed with other relevant factors, like the housing situation, etc.)?	Is the monitoring system, analyzing participation in activities, results, positive or negative outcomes, according to sex (possibly cross-analyzed with other relevant factors), and addressing changes in gender roles and relations, as well as unintended consequences?

Asmae can also chose to **adopt this marker** (in an adapted version) in order to make gender ambitions explicit for each project and allow for an overall gender M&E of its projects, monitoring the progress of strengthening gender inside each project, but also for Asmae's projects altogether (% of gender sensitive projects, % of gender-transformative projects, etc.). The gender strategy could include a target of a percentage of projects (ratio to be calculated also in relation to the respective budget volume) for the next years. **Ideally, Asmae could aim for 100% of gender transformative projects in 3 to 5 years, if the dynamics around gender further increases and generalizes, driven by the necessary resources and support from higher management**.

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[59] https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/in-practice/care-gender-marker?highlight=YTo2OntpOjA7czo2OiJnZW5kZXIiO2k6MTtzOjc6IidnZW5kZXIiO2k6MjtzOjc6ImdlbmRlciciO2k6MztzOjY6Im1hcmtlciI7aTo0O3M6ODoibWFya2VyJywiO2k6NTtzOjEzOiJnZW5kZXIgbWFya2VyIjt9

Concluding remarks

This gender study carried out in three different countries from three different regions represented a stimulating challenge right from the start. Two elements complexified its conduct: o n the one hand, the study took two months longer after the imposed postponement of the field part to Lebanon due to the civil unrest there. On the other hand, the study took place during a period of transition for Asmae with withdrawals out of two of its intervention countries and a reorganization of head-office staff, leading to a restructured team, reduced in numbers. Several of the staff members from the studies' HO steering comity changed during the (extended) process of the study.

The study shows that **many strong points exist**, especially a **significant amount of gender knowledge and motivation**, some **gender experience and competence** and also some (fairly scattered) promising **gender experiences in Asmae projects**. The **contexts also evolve rather positively**: the new national gender strategy of Burkina Faso came out in January and will soon be followed by an implementation plan. Gender and women's rights are amongst the issues that were voiced in the civil uprising in Lebanon during the last months. In the Philippines, the SOGIE-bill seems in a form of dead-lock, and if no particular sign of a further evolution could be captured, it must be stated that the gender approach in Filipino society is currently probably even more advanced than the French one (even though the two are not really comparable), at least concerning issues of gender identity and sexual orientation. Another positive contextual element is the identification of gender proactive actors in all three countries concerned by this study, as well as in France, representing an important potential for collaboration, exchanges or at least for taking example and referring to them as sources of inspiration.

The **identified obstacles are not at all insurmountable**, even though the necessary efforts to overcome them will mobilize time and some resources. Asmae's very exemplary approach of working in partnership with local actors can grow still richer through an effective gender integration. Asmae's driving forces are now holding all the necessary cards for the advancement of designing and implementing their gender strategy, which will undoubtedly bare important and interesting fruits.

Annex

Annex 1: Calendar

Annex 2: Country SWOT analysis

Annex 3: Overview of the key elements of the cross-cutting analysis

Annex 4: Opportunities for alliance with local and national gender expertise

Annex 5: Suggestion of tools to be mobilized

Annex 6: Opportunities for gender training

Annex 7: Points of attention for gendering the policy on Adolescence Support

Annex 8: Examples of definitions and strategies

Annex 9: Summary Country Reports (separate documents)

Annex 1: Calendar

	July 2019	August – Sept 2019	October 2019	November 2019	January 2020	Feb-March 2020	Later in 2020
Preliminary Meeting	▓						
Step 1: **Refining the study approach and preparing its implementation**		▓					
Step 2: **Philippines**			▓				
Step 3: **Adjusting the approach**			▓				
Step 4: **Burkina Faso**				▓			
Step 5: **Lebanon**					▓		
Step 6: **Finalising transversal analysis and writing of the evaluation report**						▓	
Sharing findings							▓

Annex 2: Country Swot Analysis (perceptions of the respective country teams)

Burkina Faso (French):

Succès	Échecs/ limites
Mixité équipe+++ Proportion de femmes au poste de cadre/ responsabilité A la tête de l'équipe des femmes Prise en compte dans les activités avec cette idée que le fait d'être une équipe mixte comme une condition importante qui facilite l'intégration du genre, mais attention pas toujours évident, car qui est où et qui fait quoi Équilibre dans les projets dans EFC et Points focaux mixte à la demande d'Asmae dans les structures partenaires Écriture respectant le genre « écriture inclusive » systématique adoptée à Asmae, une demande du siège, vu comme une charge de travail supplémentaire (pas forcement agréable) Ok mais échanger sur l'utilité ? : l'esprit de tenir compte déjà des personnes concernés, mais peut poser quelques fois des contraintes d'écriture/ orthographique « Équité » dans les points focaux des ministères Formation genre dispensé au sein du projet Dans la mise en œuvre des projets Asmae prône l'égalité entre les sexes des enjeux de genre ?comment ? - Ex projet lire pour réussir dans sa conception même dans l'imager qui a été conçu par Asmae - Dans les animations avec « la pédagogie sensible au genre » dans la prise de parole, dans les tâches confiées aux élèves filles et garçons Dans la rédaction des projets selon exigence des bailleurs, mais plus induit par les critères des bailleurs, mais dans la pratique pas si facile. « Les fées de la lecture/les anges de la lecture »	Existence de stratégie jeunesse AFD est aveugle au genre réflexion sur les incitations du bailleur par forcement de cohérence des bailleurs non plus (parentalité précoce/ grossesse et conséquences sur la vie de maman et des jeunes filles) Difficile compréhension commune pour l'ensemble de l'équipe « Mot valise » sans avoir une compréhension commune au Siège et dans les études Expression des identités de genre, discrimination sur la base de l'orientation sexuelle, religion, violences Enjeux au niveau des pays Asmae Pas de formation de l'équipe projet Asmae au plan institutionnel Pas assez de temps pour l'analyse de genre dans le montage de projet et selon les projets Parfois difficile Assez récent d'intégration du genre dans la petite enfance et au niveau scolaire…. sujet assez nouveau Plus artificiel pour les plus petits que pour les adolescents

Potentialité	Obstacles
Existence de beaucoup de sources pour comprendre mieux cette approche	Absence de politique et positionnement organisationnel à Asmae avoir un socle commun
Équipe compétente qui peut progresser dans le genre	Pas de stratégie pour aider
Équipe dirigée par une femme	Contraintes liées aux ressources pour intégrer / former au genre (allocation des ressources financières 6 temps)
Prise de conscience de l'importance du genre grandissante au sein d'Asmae et dans les projets	Niveau de compétences au sein des membres de l'équipe (des compétences + des outils+ des mesures des effets) pas seulement le résultat d'une bonne volonté
Comment trouver l'équilibre pour ne pas le vivre comme une « pesanteur »	Donc avoir des profils / compétences de genre
Point focal genre au siège	Pesanteurs socio culturelles des pays et selon les milieux (+ autres paramètres)
Effort payant / crédibilité	Comment prendre en compte cette préoccupation avec les stéréotypes en place
Lien avec la DPGEIFG, volonté relative avec les acteurs institutionnels	Société qui n'applique pas les politiques en faveur du genre
On s'appuie sur ce qui existe au niveau national des stratégies et politiques nationales, comme levier + respect des engagements du pays	Les limites naturelles au « plan physique », ne pas nier les différences naturelles, mais
Volonté du département Programme Asmae sur le genre	Ne pas être dans la survalorisation des filles/ femmes par rapport aux hommes
Travailler selon le contexte pays	Comment se questionner sur les questions « d'égalité » et « d'équité »
Partager le film « Ouaga girls » sur les métiers masculins	

Lebanon :

Strengths	Weaknesses
● Asmae, as an organization, is always thriving to develop while staying in line with its values. ● Members of the Asmae team have been trained on gender, gender-based violence, and gender evaluation for projects in previous places of employment ● Even though no one in the team is specialized in gender, they have experience in the humanitarian sector, child protection and gender mainstreaming programs ● Partner organizations are open to working on gender	● Asmae does not talk about gender with their partners ● No shared definition or understanding of gender ● In the problem design, gender is not integrated properly ● No indicators to measure impact of conducted activities that tackle gender ● Lack of capacity building strategy or initiatives for staff ● The target population of many activities tackling gender focus on the children and not their parents

Opportunities	Threats
• One of the partners (Najdeh) is a feminist organization who works on gender • Open-mindedness among NGOs on the topic • Existence of resources on gender (manuals/reports) • Access to beneficiaries and the target communities • Interest of Funding agency in integration of gender (AFD)	• Even in its most narrow definition, gender is still considered a taboo topic. • Fear/Resistance to talk about gender with beneficiaries as not to lose their trust • Parents are aware and accepting of the notions but they do not apply them in practice • Difficulty reaching the fathers and boys because of they are often at work • Palestinians in Lebanon are oppressed and have very limited rights

Philippines :

INTERNAL		EXTERNAL	
Strength		**Opportunities**	
• Willingness of Asmae to mainstream gender and development into the children's program • Presence of gender champion within Asmae to trigger gender integration; Asmae head office has a gender champion • The Philippine team is more sensitized and most of them are gender advocates • Growing commitment among the management and staff with good awareness level on gender concerns • Programs for the partners has somehow included in the project implementation, ex. gender education among the youth • Head office has put gender mainstreaming study		• F3E supported the study on gender • National laws on gender; creation of the gender and development (GAD) committee and child protection unit at the local government level • Enabling mechanisms and policies; a lot of organizations championing on gender • A network on GO-NGO partnership (SENMMAP) • AFD or F3E support to gender mainstreaming, ex. gender analysis or research study • More funding opportunities	
Weaknesses		**Threats**	
• No gender policy in Asmae • Only 1 gender champion in the head office • No relation of gender in the project design and actual implementation; no parameter on gender • Absence of gender analysis or tools to use; no gender lens (gender blind) • Gender is not reflected in the Asmae vision-mission statement *(A fair world which guarantees that children can live and grow with dignity within their environment, to become free women and men who contribute to the society)*		• Government policies that contradicts to certain aspects such as the SOGIE bill • Religious and cultural beliefs • Strong influence of church that may affect mainstreaming within the gender discussion	

Annex 3: Overview of the key elements of the cross-cutting analysis

PAYS	Gender integration on partner level	Gender integration on project level	Gender composition and competence in Asmae country teams	Main recommendations	Particularity during the field mission
PHILIPPINES	No gender strategies for 3 out of 4 partners…; accent on equal access to services to children and families in street situation; Bahay Tuluyan has a gender strategy and a trained gender trainer; KSEM works with fathers on paternity, but very essentialist framing; KSEM: ¾ female staff; Bahay Tuluyan: 80% female staff; ChildHope: 60% female staff; NCSD: 3 female staff, 65% female trustees	gender mainstreaming described in proposal but not really part of the discussions with partners; stress on equal participation in project activities + management; SENMMAP has not worked on gender; gender-disaggregation of M&E indicators; contraception, SOGIE and masculinities are important issues that are not openly addressed	4 employees, one male, 3 female, one recruitment underway. Very high gender awareness amongst the tea members; very good level of gender knowledge (two of the members)	Putting the gender knowledge and competencies available to good use (Asmae team and Bahay Tuluyan), namely for gender training for partner teams; Put gender related topics on the agenda of SENMMAP and allow for experience-sharing and capitalisation; Envisage referral in cases of conflict with Christian values	One visit of project activities in Metro Manilla was disturbed by police force intervention against street populations; Evaluation team was hosted in the hostel run by one of the Asmae partners (with the active involvement of beneficiairies) which allowed for an insightful immersion
BURKINA FASO	Public partners have gender focal points (with gender training); gender bureau of the Ministry of Education not involved in the project; ICCV: some longstanding female staff members have some gender experience, but not the new senior managers;	Evaluation of 1st phase critical about gender integration: not included in M&E, lack of skills and experience; One training on gender sensitive pedagogy (with some weak points), some gender sensitivity in picture tool; no gender training for the educators; No gender integration in the work with libraries	9 employees (4 female and 5 male) involved in different reunions of this study; female Country Representative; only two members of the current staff have been trained on gender;	Basic gender training for all staff members is necessary; revised gender sensitive pedagogy module should be replicated to touch all stakeholders; Gender integration in M&E is improving and should become systematic; Improve gender integration in picture tool before generalisation	Observation of the educators' reunion ("mise en reseau") was not possible during the main mission; it was carried out by a national consultant some weeks later;
LEBANON	B&Z (women's club in Shatila center) has expertise in protection and empowerment of women (based on the DEAL curriculum) B&Z: mainly female staff, male leadership; Jafra: 15 staff (only headoffice at the moment), mostly male, led by a male Executive director;	Specific needs and constraints of girls/boys and adolescents have been reflected in the description of activities to assure equal opportunities for participation; Jafra: specific activity to empower adolescent girls ("She deal" component of the DEAL curriculum, which is being improved with Asmaes' support); No mechanism to identify female-headed households	6 employees: 5 female and 1 male, who is Country Representative	Gender training for all staff members and the staff of the main partners; More systematic gender integration in all activities (including the monitoring of impact of the current crises on the refugee communities); Strengthen specific activities on gender issues (GBV, FHH, etc.) with interactive methods and tools (peer education, theatre, talent shows, etc.)	Field mission reported because of civil unrest; During the mission, strong rain and a funeral restricted the presence of the evaluation team inside the camps, making observation of project activities impossible.

	Gender integration on partner level	Gender integration on project level	Gender composition and competence in Asmae country teams
P H I L I P P I N E S	No gender strategies for 3 out of 4 partners…; accent on equal access to services to children and families in street situation; Bahay Tuluyan has a gender strategy and a trained gender trainer; KSEM works with fathers on paternity, but very essentialist framing; KSEM: ¾ female staff; Bahay Tuluyan: 80% female staff; ChildHope: 60% female staff; NCSD: 3 female staff, 65% female trustees	gender mainstreaming described in proposal but not really part of the discussions with partners; stress on equal participation in project activities + management; SENMMAP has not worked on gender; gender-disaggregation of M&E indicators; contraception, SOGIE and masculinities are important issues that are not openly addressed	4 employees, one male, 3 female, one recruitment underway. Very high gender awareness amongst the tea members; very good level of gender knowledge (two of the members)
B U R K I N A F A S O	Public partners have gender focal points (with gender training); gender bureau of the Ministry of Education not involved in the project; ICCV: some longstanding female staff members have some gender experience, but not the new senior managers;	Evaluation of 1st phase critical about gender integration: not included in M&E, lack of skills and experience; One training on gender sensitive pedagogy (with some weak points), some gender sensitivity in picture tool; no gender training for the educators; No gender integration in the work with libraries	9 employees (4 female and 5 male) involved in different reunions of this study; female Country Representative; only two members of the current staff have been trained on gender;
L E B A N O N	B&Z (women's club in Shatila center) has expertise in protection and empowerment of women (based on the DEAL curriculum) B&Z: mainly female staff, male leadership; Jafra: 15 staff (only headoffice at the moment), mostly male, led by a male Executive director;	Specific needs and constraints of girls/boys and adolescents have been reflected in the description of activities to assure equal opportunities for participation; Jafra: specific activity to empower adolescent girls ("She deal" component of the DEAL curriculum, which is being improved with Asmaes' support); No mechanism to identify female-headed households	6 employees: 5 female and 1 male, who is Country Representative

Annex 4: Opportunities for alliance with local and national gender expertise

	Local or national gender networks or working groups	Local and national gender expertise
Burkina Faso	Cadre de concertation des OSC engagées sur le genre et des femmes en politique	Direction de l'éducation inclusive, de la promotion de l'éducation des filles et du genre (DEIPFG), FAWE Burkina Faso, Plan international Burkina Faso, UNICEF Burkina Faso, HI Burkina Faso
Lebanon	SGBV-TF	IRC, Mercy Corps Najdeh (already partner, but not sharing their feminist/violence against women experience)
Philippines	DSWD National Capital Region (NCR) office on gender sensitive case management CWC for child-friendly and gender-sensitive policies	UNICEF Save the children
France	F3E Gender Communities of Practice Plateforme Genre et Développement	Genre en Action Être égale Adéquations

Annex 5: Suggestions of online tools to be mobilized

Concerned aspects	Tool	EN / FR
Gender in Project Cycle Management	● https://f3e.asso.fr/video-integrer-le-genre-dans-le-cycle-de-projet/ (video)	FR
	● http://www.otcaecidniger.org/files/guide_integration_genre.pdf	FR
	● Gender Equality resource kit, https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/gender_equality_resource_kit_-_2006.doc	EN
	● How to Mainstream Gender in Project Cycle Management, https://www.shareweb.ch/site/Gender/Documents/Gendernet%20Toolbox/Toolbox/Methodic/Gender%20in%20PCM.pdf	EN
	● « Pense-Genre », https://www.genreenaction.net/IMG/pdf/Manuel_Pense_Genre_version_08122010_1_.pdf	FR
	● Prise en compte des approches genre dans les interventions de développement, https://www.genreenaction.net/IMG/pdf/classeur.pdf	FR
	● Fiches pédagogiques genre et développement, https://f3e.asso.fr/wp-content/uploads/11_fiches_web_2.pdf	FR
M&E	● https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/tr-16-128-en	EN
	● https://www.measureevaluation.org/resources/publications/tr-16-128-fr	FR
	● Guidelines for Integrating Gender into an M&E Framework and System Assessment https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Samantha_Herrera/publication/307887134_Guidelines_for_Integrating_Gender_into_an_ME_Framework_and_System_Assessment/links/57d0733108ae5f03b4890f47/Guidelines-for-Integrating-Gender-into-an-M-E-Framework-and-System-Assessment.pdf	EN
Evaluation	● https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/themes/gender_analysis	EN
	● http://idev.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/files/Integrating%20gender%20%28En%29%20Web.pdf	EN
	● https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20americas/documentos/publicaciones/guide%20for%20the%20evaluation%20of%20programmes%20un%20women%20-en.pdf?la=es&vs=3319	EN
	● https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gSPTOdfov11S_obNgxJ5g2okieKmbCJl/view	EN
Gender in the organization and/or with partners	● Vivre le genre ! 9 fiches pratiques pour faire progresser l'égalité de genre, https://f3e.asso.fr/wp-content/uploads/F3E_Guide-Genre_web.pdf	FR
	● Gender mainstreaming Toolkit, EIGE, https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/genderequalitytrainingtoolkit.pdf	EN
	● Mainstreaming a Gender Justice Approach, A Manual to support NGOs in self-assessing their gender mainstreaming competence, https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/188709/ml-mainstreaming-gender-justice-approach-270910-en.pdf;jsessionid=DFDFC6E9AD8724A135C46131F98F3797?sequence=3	EN
	● ActionAid's Anti Sexual Harassment Policy, https://actionaid.org/publications/2004/actionaids-anti-sexual-harassment-policy#downloads	EN
Fight against school drop-out and failure	● Pour Une Pédagogie Qui Intègre La Dimension Genre, FAWE, 2005, http://www.ungei.org/resources/files/FAWE_GRP_French_version.pdf	FR
	● Gender perspectives on causes and effects of school dropouts, SIDA, 2016 http://www.ungei.org/Final_Paper_on_Gender_perspectives_C2.pdf	EN
	● Every Last Girl, Save the Children http://www.ungei.org/Every_Last_Girl_Africa_online_version.pdf	EN
	● School related gender-based violence, A cross-country analysis of baseline research from Kenya, Ghana and Mozambique, https://actionaid.org/publications/2011/cross-country-analysis-baseline-research-kenya-ghana-and-mozambique#downloads	EN
Early childhood care and education	● Gender-Responsive Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education: A toolkit for teachers and school leaders, FAWE, Mar 12, 2019, https://www.vvob.org/sites/belgium/files/grp4ece-toolkit-72dpi_0.pdf (or	EN

	https://www.vvob.org/en/news/grp4ece-toolkit?_ga=2.76452886.2036965523.1573250300-514242756.1573250300)	
	● Gender Inequality and Early Childhood Development, A Review of the Linkages, Plan International, https://plan-international.org/file/18908/download?token=IlvZtx6s	EN
Prevention and care for children at risk	● Adolescent girls in crisis: Voices from Beirut, Plan International https://plan-international.org/file/35524/download?token=OCSkQ9mf	EN
	● Gender mainstreaming in actions against child labor, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@gender/documents/publication/wcms_084177.pdf	EN
Support for adolescents	● Gender and sexual and reproductive health of adolescents, https://f3e.asso.fr/wp-content/uploads/Guide-des-ressources-Genre-et-SSR-chez-les-adolescent.e.s.pdf	FR
	● Self-evaluation of communicating on sexual and reproductive health, https://f3e.asso.fr/wp-content/uploads/Outils-dauto-évaluation.pdf	FR
	● Changing the World: Youth Promoting Gender Equality, Plan International https://plan-international.org/publications/youth-promoting-gender-equality#download-options	EN
	● Life skills in non-formal contexts for adolescent girls in developing countrieshttp://www.ungei.org/Life-skills-in-non-formal-contexts-for-adolescent-girls-CMI-Brookings-April-2018.pdf	EN
	● My Safety, My Wellbeing: equipping adolescent girls, https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/4169/ircmysafetymywellbeingcurriculumforadolescentgirls.pdf	EN
	● Violence prevention and response at the IRC: adolescent girls, https://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/document/1186/ircviolencepreventionandresponseadolescentgirlsinfo0916.pdf	EH
Support for children with disabilities	● Adolescents with disabilities: enhancing resilience and delivering inclusive education, http://www.ungei.org/Adolescents-with-disabilities-GAGE-programme-ODI-report-July-2018.pdf	EN
	● Education for All: a gender and disability perspective, https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000146931	EN
Masculinities	● Adolescent Boys and young men, http://www.ungei.org/Adolescent-Boys-and-Young-Men-Promundo.pdf	EN
	● Masculinités, participation des hommes à l'égalité http://www.adequations.org/IMG/pdf/Masculinites-complet-P.pdf	FR
	● Me engage, http://menengage.org; multiple resources, e.g.: The making of sexual violence, How does a boy grow up to commit rape? http://menengage.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/The-Making-Of-Sexual-Violence-June-2014.pdf	EN
Other specific aspects	● Gender observation during events, https://f3e.asso.fr/wp-content/uploads/fiche_f3e_observation_genre.pdf	FR
	● Guide pour la mise en œuvre de la Convention internationale des droits de l'enfant à partir de l'approche de genre, http://www.adequations.org/IMG/pdf/GuideADQ_CIDEgenre.pdf	FR
	● They Didn't Help Me; They Shamed Me: A Baseline Study on the Vulnerabilities of Street-Involved Boys in Manila, Philippines https://cronfa.swan.ac.uk/Record/cronfa44691/Download/0044691-03102018001302.pdf	EN
	● The gendered impacts of bullying on mental health among adolescents in low- and middle-income countries, http://www.ungei.org/USAIDYouthPower_GenderBullyingMentalHealth_Brief_WebReady_0.pdf	EN
	● LGBT vision for action, https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1874/LGBT_Vision.pdf	EN

Annex 6: Potential opportunities for gender training

	Opportunities for gender training
Burkina Faso	No specific opportunities have been identified, but experienced national trainers are available (amongst them, Elise Paule Henry, the national consultant of this study)
Lebanon	IRC (after verification by Lebanon CO, IRC is providing currently only SGBV training, but currently more specialized gender training is reserved to their staff; they will invite the Asmae staff member to any potential training related to the gender in the future)
Philippines	University of the Philippines Center for Women's and Gender Studies Likhaan Center for Women's Health Inc. Women's Health Care Foundation Incorporated (WHCF) (cf. Footnote p. 11-12, in the Country Summary Report)
France / Europe	https://www.mondefemmes.org/nos-formations/ (Belgique) F3E, Coordination Sud, etc. ILO https://www.itcilo.org/topics/gender-equality-and-diversity (Italy)
Online	https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/portal/ https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/portal/?lang=fr https://graduateinstitute.ch/executive-education-courses/genre-et-developpement Gender M&E eLearning Course, https://www.usaidassist.org/resources/gender-me-elearning-course

Adolescence support

<div style="background-color:orange;">
Target: Young people between 10 and 18 years of age
</div>

1. Definition of concepts[60]

Recognition of adolescence as a key period in an individual's development was late to emerge. In the West, it was not until the 19th century that it was recognised and its specific features taken into account. In some countries, it took until the 20th century, while others still fail to recognise adolescence as a stage in human development.

Today, although the International Convention on the Rights of the Child covers children from 0 to 18, there is still no international convention specifically asserting and protecting the rights of adolescents. The Ibero-American Convention on the Rights of Youth (adopted in 2005) is innovative in this respect. The African Youth Charter, adopted in 2006, also marks advancement in this area. This policy and legal document provides a framework for African countries, setting guidelines for promoting the development of young people. In the rest of the world, no convention on the rights of adolescents exists.

But what is adolescence?

Adolescence is a multi-facetted phenomenon: physiological, psychological, physical, sociological, historical and contextual. While it is often overlooked, adolescence is nonetheless a critical step in an individual's personal construction, determining for the future life-course, especially for the most vulnerable young people (with implications that often differ according to gender).

Depending on whether a psychological, biological or even a sociological perspective is taken, the definition of adolescence varies. While generally, adolescence is said to begin at the start of puberty, the end of adolescence is more difficult to define and can range from 18 to 30 years of age. In some countries, neither physical characteristics nor age mark the end of childhood and the start of adult life, but rites of passage.

In general, adolescence can be described as a period characterised by change.
The most visible changes are the physical ones: what we call puberty is a physiological phenomenon, a hormonal change that adolescents, without choosing it, must go through. The secretion of hormones is reactivated around the age of eight and causes the body to change (growth considerably speeds up and then stops, the body is transformed, secondary sexual features such as breasts appear, etc.).
The physical changes bring psychological transformations because they may be hard for the adolescent to come to terms with. They sometimes come about so fast that a teenager will find it hard to recognise and accept him or herself. His/her image of him-/herself no longer corresponds to the reality, and this can create anguish. This inner turmoil will be linked to external remarks and to the image of himself that people

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[60] On this topic, read the Asmae documents: "La participation des adolescents et des jeunes au Liban" (Adolescent and youth participation in Lebanon) by Anne Goetz (2015) and "Accompagnement de l'adolescence" (Supporting adolescence) by Anastasia Kerachni (2014)

Adolescence is therefore a time of imbalance. Adolescents need to rely on the people around them to regain this balance, and sometimes to identify with them (older peers, brothers or sisters, educators, etc.). By interacting with others, adolescents will rely on them and maintain the bond, while gradually becoming more distant. If solid foundations have been laid during childhood, the separation will not be difficult. Otherwise, it can be. Because adolescents can only become themselves by withdrawing from and becoming different to others.

This is the process that can create high-risk behaviour in adolescents. Some teenagers will indeed look for limits that the family or society does not accept. The family's reaction to this behaviour (and more broadly the environment's) will therefore be decisive. Trapped between the paradoxical desires for independence and close bonds, adolescents are reassured when rules are laid down.

Not all adolescents are liable to adopt high-risk behaviours and it is important not to confine them to this representation.

While adolescence can be regarded as a rupture between childhood and adulthood, it can also be seen as a continuation of childhood. Calling it a rupture implies that childhood and adulthood are stable stages, which they are not. In any case, adolescents must gradually accept the loss of their childhood and everything that goes with it (status, special treatment).

Supporting adolescence is a gradual process conducted in connection with adolescents and all the people around them: family, friends, community, educators, etc. Supporting adolescents means adapting to their rhythm (as not all adolescents develop at the same pace and we cannot therefore support them all in the same way), helping without assisting, focusing on their skills and not their inabilities, and encouraging them, etc.

While many of the above-mentioned elements apply to adolescents from both sexes, it is important to consider potential gender-related differences, that vary according to contexts: child-labour, gender-based violence and more particularly sexual abuse, early parenthood[62], peer-pressure, cyber-bullying, human trafficking, etc. Some are particularly affecting girls and young women: female genital mutilation (FMG)[63], menstrual hygiene management, child marriage, reproductive and sexual health issues, obligation of virginity, contribution to household-chores, etc. Others are stronger for boys, like gang violence (in Latin American contexts), pressure to contribute to income generation (amongst the refugee population in Lebanon) or drug-abuse.

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[61] P. Jeammet (dir), *Adolescences – repères pour les parents et les professionnels.* Paris: la Découverte, 2012.

[62] The term "early parenthood" is preferred to the more conventional "early pregnancy" as it highlights the fact that in many contexts, a pregnancy affects the concerned mother way beyond of giving birth. It also allows for considering how early fatherhood influences also young men's future (e.g. by forcing them to stop studying).

[63] This practice that used to be considered as a rite of passage from childhood to adolescence, is nowadays often practiced in early childhood. In some contexts, young women undergo FMG in order to comply to conditions of marriage. Others suffer from the consequences especially during adolescence (first intercourse, births, etc.)

2. Issues

Recognition of adolescence and participation

Whereas, in some countries, adolescence has gradually gained recognition, in others, it still has difficulty being seen as a key period in the development of the adolescents' personality, his/her level of education, career opportunities, life-style options and health.
A child goes directly to adulthood and adolescents are sometimes considered to be children, sometimes adults. Families, professionals and even governments struggle to see this period as a fundamental time in life. Policies make no reference to adolescents and there are almost no systems devoted to them.

- *What causes this lack of recognition?*

There are many causes and they are found in the very context and history of a country. We can, however, mention:
  o Schooling that often stops after primary education, causing children to enter the labour market prematurely
  o Early marriage and parenthood, which thrust adolescents into adult life prematurely
  o No mention of their existence in legislation

- *What are the consequences of this lack of recognition?*

● Premature entry into adult life

Not being regarded as individuals in their own right, not pursuing one's studies or marrying, bearing and raising children early, etc. drive adolescents to enter adult life when they are not necessarily prepared for it, mentally and physically.

● Limited participation

Adolescence is trapped between two antagonisms. Between a life dreamed of and envied, and a period that is feared or rejected, adolescents are generally misunderstood. Faced with these ambiguities, adolescents often find it hard to position themselves and their concerns are rarely given any consideration. Discussion groups are few and far between, and there are often no facilities dedicated to them. In some of Asmae's countries of intervention, the only places where they can meet are directly linked to political parties or religious movements.
Mobility and social interaction outside the family sphere is even more restricted for girls and young women than for boys and young men. In some societies, this is linked to early marriage and

Key figures on adolescents in danger…

The number of adolescents has more than doubled since 1950. In 2009, there were 1.2 billion adolescents between the ages of 10 and 19 on earth, accounting for 18% of the global population.

The great majority of adolescents – 88% – live in developing countries. (UNICEF)

Worldwide, more than 50% of adolescents live in South Asia, and in East Asia and Pacific. These two regions of the world are each home to some 330 million adolescents. (UNICEF)

Adolescents represent more than one habitant in five in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is estimated that by 2050, sub-Saharan Africa will have more adolescents than any other region in the world.

In the Arab States, one person in two is under 25.

In 2015, UNESCO estimates that 61 million adolescents do not attend school.

In France, according to UNICEF, more than 17% of children and teenagers are materially deprived (eating three meals a day, having somewhere to do homework, etc.).

The lack of recognition of adolescents inevitably impacts the regard for their opinions, and their participation as young citizens.

By participation, we here mean taking part in decisions that concern individuals, influencing those decisions and being involved in actions and activities that contribute to their well-being[64].

In reality, adolescents only rarely have the right to and the possibility of taking part in the life of their community, or more broadly society, and of being part of the decision-making that concerns them, or in the organisation of activities, etc. In most societies, adolescent girls and young women face even stronger barriers to make their voice heard than adolescent boys or young men. Patriarchal structures of societies lead to an almost general over-representation of male citizens in the great majority of decision-making bodies world-wide.

- A lack of systems

The lack of recognition of adolescence impacts the way this period is taken into account as a key stage in growing up. The support and care systems that adolescents ought to have are therefore almost non-existent. We know, for example, that the psychological suffering specific to their age is given very little consideration. Efforts mainly focus on education, even though only a small portion of adolescents attend secondary school and we know that school cannot, on any account, be the only solution provided to support adolescents. Out of school adolescents (who are in the majority female, with contextual variations) are particularly vulnerable and not easily reached by public policy and development interventions.

Youth education and integration into the world of work

In Asmae's countries of intervention, young people seldom have access to school: either they stop attending secondary school early or they do not go at all.

- *What are the causes?* [65]

As a general rule, adolescents from the poorest families are the ones who least attend school or have to stop going to school to help their family, to support themselves or because the tuition fees and other costs are too high.

Early marriage and parenthood are also causes of these low rates of secondary school attendance, especially for girls. Furthermore, female adolescents school attendance is hampered by prevalence of school related gender-based violence (which can affect also boys, to a lesser extent) and by the difficult menstrual hygiene management in schools with insufficient sanitary facilities.

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[64] Definition freely inspired by the document "La participation des adolescents et des jeunes au Liban" (Adolescent and youth participation in Lebanon), A. Goetz (2015)

[65] To find out more about the causes of school drop-out or non-access to schooling, read the file "Prévention de la déscolarisation et de l'échec scolaire" (Prevention of school drop-out and academic failure)

> - *What are the consequences of this low rate of access?*

Many adolescents work and do not attend school. Others combine the two. Furthermore, some adolescents are still in primary school because they started school late or have had to repeat many years. Premature entry to the labour market or increasing domestic workloads (concerning particularly girls) can be a cause and a consequence of adolescents ceasing to attend school. In any case, these youths will certainly not learn the necessary skills (reading, writing, arithmetic) to subsequently find employment in formal economy. This relegates these young adults to the informal economy (where women are very present). Increasing unemployment and poverty are consequences of the failure to learn these skills. Unpaid and hazardous jobs are others.

Sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression

Adolescence is also the age of discovering sexuality, which is a complex issue, with very diverse implications. Even in countries were pre-marital sexuality is stigmatised, many adolescents are sexually active, exposing them to different psychological and health risks that have potential severe consequences on their lives – amongst them early parenthood (see below).
The absence of sexual education and the non-availability of contraception (especially for unmarried couples) also increases the risk of sexually transmitted diseases.
Adolescents that are becoming aware of their sexual orientation being different than the socially accepted hetero-sexuality are exposed to harassment, discrimination, violence, rejection form their family and community, etc. Many young people are tormented about questions about their sexual orientation and online pornography is often a traumatising source of unqualified information about sexuality. Besides, adolescents are increasingly victims of online sexual exploitation (sometimes orchestrated by their own family).

Early parenthood

Each year, millions of teenage girls become mothers worldwide. The fathers of these children are often older men, but teenage boys might also be concerned. Parental responsibilities might be assured by other generations, limiting the impact of parenthood which otherwise tends to fall mainly on the mothers, as many fathers (young or older) escape paternal responsibilities.

- What are the causes of early parenthood?

For some adolescents, pregnancy may be something they wished for. However, for the biggest proportion, this is not the case. The World Health Organisation (WHO) identifies numerous factors that contribute to these unwanted pregnancies:
   o Pressure sometimes put on adolescents as regards marriage and pregnancy
   o Very slight possibilities of getting a job or studying
   o Sexuality is taboo, and there is therefore no prevention at all in some of Asmae's countries of intervention
   o These teenage girls do not know how to avoid pregnancy or when they do, they have no access to contraception
   o Teenage girls sometimes have difficulty refusing intercourse or are victims of rape

- o Some of these young girls are married early (which greatly increases the risk of early pregnancy)
- o In situations of poverty, girls and women might have to resort to transactional sexuality.

- *What are the consequences of early parenthood?*

During the phase of early parenthood (pregnancy), disease and mortality are the first consequences. In low- and moderate-income countries, complications of pregnancy and childbirth are the main cause of death in young women aged 15 to 19[66].

These young women indeed have limited access to care during pregnancy, childbirth, and the post-natal period. They may also have difficulty accessing legal and safe abortion, even if they are victims of rape.

Leaving school is another consequence of these early pregnancies.

Pregnancy often terminates a teenage girl's education. It is estimated that approximately one teenage girl in three resumes studying after the birth of her child. And those that do face discriminatory attitudes from teachers and peers; the significant stigma as well as economic reasons and social norms often prevent them from returning to school. Others (like victims of child and early marriage) have left school before pregnancy.

Early parenthood also limits young women's capacity to have independent access to financial resources (employment, income generating activities, etc.), increasing their economic dependence on their husband, their parents, etc., which implies also an increased risk of becoming victim of domestic violence.

High-risk behaviours

High-risk behaviours are not easy to define. Each person assesses risk in a personal and therefore subjective way. Adolescents often see it as positive and a number of media present it as such. Risk can indeed be associated with ambition, courage and recognition.

- *What are these high-risk behaviours?*

There are endless types of high-risk behaviour. Without systematically endangering their life, they undermine the balance of teenagers' lives and their social relationships, in a space-time that may be more or less well controlled: drug-taking, alcohol abuse, drunk driving, riding without a helmet or driving without a seatbelt, unprotected sex, extreme sports, dropping out of school, violence between peers, etc. High-risk behaviours are diverse but they are above all socially situated: depending on the environment they come from, adolescents will adopt very different risky behaviours.

Such behaviours will have direct effects on the adolescent's life (injury, death, loss of interest in everything around him/her, breakdown of relations with the family and the environment, etc.) and on that of his/her family (incomprehension, feeling of being excluded, etc.).

- *What causes high-risk behaviours?*

Deliberately taking risks is a way of existing, of gaining peer recognition, and of growing up by trying out new experiences.

In sociology, two typical groups can be identified in risk-taking:

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[66] WHO [online], available at:
http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/documents/preventing_early_pregnancy/fr/> (Consulted in August 2015)

- Those for whom risk-taking helps them to build their identity. In this case, the compensation is what drives them to take risks:
  - Economic compensation
  - Symbolic compensation: how do I find fulfilment, how do I gain recognition
  - Psychological compensation: fear of disappearing, of being like everybody else, of being invisible
- For the second group, risk-taking is a way of escaping themselves and their problems.

In psychology, two root causes of risky behaviours are distinguished:
- Identity and self-esteem: difficulty accepting the loss of childhood and everything inherent in it (games, clothes, special habits, etc.). The adolescent is distressed about losing his/her child's body which he/she felt comfortable with, and cannot accept his/her "new body". An adolescent who does not feel secure in his/her body or with his/her identity may endanger himself. In this situation, high-risk behaviours may be seen in:
  - Control of eating patterns leading to eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia, addictions, etc.)
  - Self-aggressive and hetero-aggressive behaviour (primarily self-injury and violence)
- Relations with others and attachment: Adolescents create new friendships (groups/gangs) whereas their bonds with the family environment change (parents are no longer idealised, resulting in their authority being contested or rejected).
  The adolescent is sometimes very isolated in certain social positions (scapegoats, leaders, etc.), and in fragile family contexts. Adopting risky behaviour may, in this case, be a "cry for help". In this context, high-risk behaviours can show:
  - Through defiance of the family/social/school framework (absenteeism, dropping out of school, running away)
  - Through depression and withdrawal

3. Asmae's Positioning

Why support projects targeting adolescents?

Adolescence is a crucial period in terms of identity building. But it is not recognised as a crucial period of development in a life cycle and neither are the problems specific to it. Furthermore, local players either fail to provide responses or the responses are not adapted. Yet, measures taken for adolescents can be a lever for protection (against ill-treatment, against high-risk behaviours, etc.) and education (citizenship education, preventing school drop-out, etc.) provided they have a place in which to be implemented. Because school should not be the only place where young people receive education.

Working on the recognition of adolescence

Recognition of adolescence, both by Governments and by families, is vital for appropriate systems to be created and for adolescents to be heard. Because if adolescence does not exist, adolescents – in their diversity – cannot be considered either.
Yet, they go through a particularly difficult time during which professionals, working within appropriate systems, should be able to support their development: psychosocial support, discussion groups, medical assistance, etc. For female adolescents this period is particularly crucial, as they are exposed to different

risks (e.g. early and child marriage and parenthood), that are particularly determining the rest of their life-cycle (for example, an early marriage can lead to school drop-out, early and multiple pregnancies with related health risks, reduction of employment or income generating opportunities, economic dependency on the husband reducing strongly the possibilities to escape domestic violence, etc. with repercussions on the following generation, as child mortality and girls schooling are directly correlated with mothers' educational level).

This recognition may involve awareness actions, among both families and communities, and on a broader scale, advocacy to the State.

However, this drive for recognition cannot be done in isolation. The social issues (early and child marriage and parenthood, etc.) and the educational issues (compulsory attendance, school performance, early drop-out, etc.) are inter-connected and must be addressed in parallel.

How can participation of adolescents be implemented?

Adolescents' participation is not an end in itself but a means of serving citizenship. Participation is not confined solely to policy, but covers all types of participation: voicing opinions, making suggestions, assuming responsibilities, etc. Participation of adolescents – of all gender – may range from organising a cultural outing to taking part in decisions concerning their neighbourhood or town.

Encouraging adolescent participation is fundamental and is only possible if the following conditions are met:

- Adolescents have the right to participate, young men and young women can participate equitably.
- Their participation is supported (moral, financial, institutional support) and facilitated by caring adults
- They are given the possibility of participating (by informing them of the opportunities, by facilitating access to spaces, safe transportation, etc.)
- Adolescents have the means to participate (decent living conditions: food, health, education)
- Adolescents are given room to participate (appropriate premises, equipment, appropriate separate sanitary facilities, etc.).

In all cases, it is important to protect adolescents from "fake participation" to which they are sometimes invited to make them believe that they are taking part in a decision when in fact it has already been made[67].

Why is reproductive health prevention important and how should it be done?

In some countries, adolescents have their first sexual relations before they know how to protect themselves against sexually transmissible diseases, how to avoid a non-desired pregnancy, how to avoid non-consented sexual relationships and what to do if they are harassed, forced to intercourse or exposed to other forms of sexual abuse.

Prevention is rare in this area and sexuality is taboo in many countries. At a time when adolescents discover all these questions (including those about sexual orientation and gender identity), they are greatly in need of support and attention.

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[67] Information taken from « La participation des adolescents et des jeunes au Liban » by Anne Goetz

Preventing early parenthood involves, for example, helping adolescents find out about contraception, informing young men and women about sexual violence and the importance of consent, and providing information about places where safe abortions are carried out, etc.

Prevention in the field of sexuality should also quite simply commence with establishing dialogue with adolescents, seeking to find out what they have yet to understand and not making them feel guilty about any risky or "unusual" (not conform to social norms) behaviour. It is also important not to give adolescents a negative image by focusing solely on the danger of sexuality and never on pleasure and love.

What work can be done on high-risk behaviours?

Above all, it is vital to listen to adolescents: do they realise that they are taking risks? If they do, do they see it as positive or negative? What society regards as risk-taking may be totally different to how the youth sees it. Smoking cannabis for example, is seldom seen as risky by young people, except cases of severe addiction, whereas adults often regard it as a risk.

Prevention messages must be developed with the adolescents themselves, with schools, with families and with professionals. It is only by addressing this task from several angles that adolescents can be given good-quality support, partly differentiated according to gender.

Since compensation is often the factor that prompts them to take risks, support must help adolescents to find new ways of compensating.

In any case, long-term, multi-professional support is vital. Adolescents need to feel that supporting professionals (of both sexes) trust them and do not judge their attitudes and behaviour. Adolescents are heard very little, yet they should be given the chance to be at the heart of the support they will receive.

How can discriminating social norms be addressed?

Early and child marriage is still frequent and socially acceptable in Asmae 's intervention countries. The related social norms are closely linked to socially enhanced roles for women as caring mothers and submissive wives, above all. The arguments against early marriage can be linked to health issues, be rights based and also refer to a larger value of gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence[68].

Other culturally sensitive issues include polygamous family structures and discrimination against non-heterosexual and non-cis-gender adolescents.

Asmae's multi-professional support to local partners for sensitization of adolescents, their families and their communities on culturally sensitive topics is essential.

Training of professional for supporting victims of discrimination and survivors of gender-based violence is another crucial element.

Asmae can also strengthen capacities for advocacy for the effective application of children's, women's and human rights, even if they are not fully in line with cultural norms.

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[68] The age gap between spouses being one of the factors that increases the risk of domestic violence, wives that have been married as teenagers are particularly exposed (as their husbands are usually significantly older).

4. Asmae's goals: What changes does Asmae hope to contribute to by working in this area?

General goal:

- Encourage personal development, strengthen psychosocial skills and prevent high-risk behaviour in adolescents

Operational goals

- Promote recognition of adolescence as a key stage in the development of a person's life-cycle
- Support actions that integrate context-related constraints, the phases in adolescents' development and a gender-differentiation in analysing the challenges and addressing them
- Contribute to changing the community's attitude to this key stage in development

- Support communities and/or organisations in creating opportunities for female, male and non-binary adolescents to be active participants

- Foster adolescent participation and responsibility
- Encourage dialogue about the realities that adolescents face, also from a gender-differentiated perspective

- Encourage citizenship education actions, promoting values of equality (gender, amongst others), respect and tolerance (also towards LGBTIQ+ individuals)

- Assist professionals with their support for the development of adolescents

Annex 8: Examples of definitions and strategies

In order to feed into the process of developing Asmae's Gender Strategy, here are some commented links to useful resources from key stakeholders:

AFD:

- **Definition**: Gender is a concept that refers to the distribution of roles and the nature of relationships between women and men. Unlike biological sex, this social construction of gender relations evolves in time and space. Thus, the status, roles and responsibilities as well as the power attributed to individuals may vary according to criteria other than belonging to one or the other sex alone; depending on the country, culture, age, ethnicity, political status, socio-economic group, caste, religion, sexual orientation, etc. In some sub-Saharan African cultures, for example, older women may have more power than younger men. However, these roles have historically most often been unfavorable to women, and are at the root of many inequalities still observed today and illustrated above. In order to reduce them, it is necessary to understand the mechanism of gender relations, i.e. how gender relations are structuring at the level of a society and its development, without focusing exclusively on women.[69]
- Aligned on the Gender Strategy of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, AFD had developed a gender intervention framework for the period of 2014-2017 (which is currently under evaluation). Their three operational priorities are to **prevent gender inequality, to promote gender equality and to accompany the evolution of gender in the concerned societies**; the positioning is binary (male-female)[70], with an accent on women's empowerment.
- https://www.afd.fr/sites/afd/files/2017-08/cadre-intervention-genre-reduction-inegalites.pdf (only available in French)

UNICEF:

- There is no definition of gender on their website, but a position on addressing gender challenges: many **gender disparities emerge in early childhood and intensify in adolescence**, including, for example, gender inequities in nutrition and education outcomes. Gender socialization that sets discriminatory gender norms and roles is a determinant of inequitable development outcomes for girls and boys. UNICEF has a strategic advantage in addressing bottlenecks and barriers to gender equality and empowerment for girls because of the organization's programmatic focus on early childhood and adolescence. This advantage is strengthened by the UNICEF global

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[69] The original text is in French: "Le genre est un concept qui renvoie à la répartition des rôles et à la nature des relations entre les femmes et les hommes. Contrairement au sexe biologique, cette construction sociale des rapports de genre évolue dans le temps et dans l'espace. Ainsi, les statuts, rôles et responsabilités ainsi que le pouvoir attribués aux individus peuvent-ils varier en fonction d'autres critères que la seule appartenance à l'un ou l'autre sexe ; en fonction du pays, de la culture, de l'âge, de l'ethnie, du statut politique, du groupe socio-économique, de la caste, de la religion, de l'orientation sexuelle,... Dans certaines cultures d'Afrique subsaharienne, par exemple, les aînées peuvent avoir davantage de pouvoir que des hommes appartenant à une classe d'âge inférieure. Toutefois, ces rôles ont historiquement le plus souvent été défavorables aux femmes, et sont à l'origine de nombreuses inégalités observées encore aujourd'hui et illustrées ci-avant. Pour les réduire, il faut comprendre le mécanisme des rapports de genre, c'est-à-dire en quoi les rapports de genre sont structurants au niveau d'une société et de son développement, sans se focaliser exclusivement sur les femmes."

[70] The French governments' policy on SOGIE issues is to consider them under the Human Rights and Gouvernance heading.

gender programming framework that emphasizes the link between the well-being of children and that of women; and multisectoral coordination around adolescent girls' empowerment, including through global joint programs and participation in adolescent-focused initiatives such as Generation Unlimited, a global movement to get every young person, especially girls, into education, learning, training or employment by 2030.

- In addition to a strategic plan goal on Gender equality for girls and boys and in care and support for women and children they have a specific goal on **Empowerment and well-being for adolescent girls**; there is no mention of SOGIE issues.
https://www.unicef.org/gender/files/Gender_Action_Plan_brochure-web.pdf,
https://www.unicef.org/media/65586/file/A-new-era-for-girls-2020.pdf,
https://www.unicef.org/media/65361/file,

UNESCO:

- No definition of gender. The organization has a specific division for Gender Equality, https://en.unesco.org/genderequality/division

- Challenges: Of the 193 member-countries of the United Nations, 189 are State Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (as of December 2019). In many parts of the world significant progress on gender equality has been achieved. However, despite the tremendous progress in access to education made over the past 20 years, girls are still more likely than boys to never set foot in a classroom. Discriminatory laws and policies, social norms, gender-based stereotypes and violence, and a rising conservative agenda are still compromising efforts to achieve gender equality. The **advancement of gender equality through education**, the sciences, culture, information and communication, at the heart of UNESCO's mandate, aims to equip both women and men to address the challenges of sustainable development in a fast-changing world.

- UNESCO is actively engaged in fighting **school-related gender-based violence** (https://en.unesco.org/themes/school-violence-and-bullying/school-related-gender-based-violence)

- Report on recent achievements: Promise of Gender Equality: Key actions 2018-2019: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000372716

European Union:

- As a basic principle, the EU is working with the definitions from the European Institute for Gender Equality, that defines gender as "**social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male and to the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as to the relations between women and those between men**." Their thesaurus gives many concise definitions of related terms: https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/

- The Gender Equality Strategy frames the European Commission's work on gender equality and sets out the policy objectives and key actions for the 2020-2025 period. It aims at achieving a gender equal Europe where gender-based violence, sex discrimination and structural inequality between women and men are a thing of the past. A Europe where women and men, girls and boys, in all their **diversity***, are equal. Where they are free to pursue their chosen path in life, where they have equal opportunities to thrive, and where they can equally participate in and lead our European society.

- The foot-note (*) after the term diversity indicates: "The expression 'in all their diversity' is used in this strategy to express that, where women or men are mentioned, these are heterogeneous categories including in relation to their sex, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics. It affirms the commitment to leave no one behind and achieve a gender equal Europe for everyone, regardless of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation."
- https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152&from=EN

Some **other examples** of gender strategies:

- Save the Children https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/save-children-gender-equality-policy-transforming-inequalities-transforming-lives
- Action Aid https://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/doc_lib/119_1_gender_policy.pdf
- CARE https://www.care-international.org/files/files/publications/Final%20CI%20Gender%20Equality%20Policy%202018.pdf
- IRC https://www.rescue.org/resource/international-rescue-committees-gender-action-plan
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