

Webinar 2: Handout 18

Guidance on developing gender equitable and inclusive materials

The following is excerpted and adapted from: *A Guide for Strengthening Gender Equity and Inclusiveness in EGR Materials* (RTI International, 2015). Consult the guide for detailed information and tools. An Asia-specific adaptation of the guide is also available (RTI International 2017).

Why it's important to develop gender equitable materials

Efforts to improve reading instruction and children's reading skills are part of a broad global effort to provide both girls and boys with a quality education, as well as to ensure that the most marginalized populations are included in efforts to improve learning outcomes.

The materials in EGR programs that teachers and students use on a daily basis transmit messages—explicitly and implicitly—through the topics they include and the characters they portray (RTI, 2015). Research has shown that these messages can have a profound positive or negative impact on how children view themselves and those around them. As a result, care should be taken to develop EGR materials that are free of bias and that promote equality and inclusiveness of those who may be marginalized, disadvantaged or underrepresented.

Guidance on integrating gender equity and inclusivity in EGR materials

Concrete steps can be taken to develop materials that portray girls and boys, men and women in positive ways. These include:

- **Identify what issues may be particularly important in your context.** This includes gender, ethnicity, religion and physical ability. Take time to discuss what issues are particularly salient in your context.
- **Pay explicit attention to gender equity and inclusivity.** Devote time to discussion and training on these topics. Integrate it into support and preparation provided to a materials development team.
- **Build gender equity and inclusiveness into materials QC process.** Review materials during various stages of development for gender equitable and inclusive illustrations, language, etc. Develop specific tools to guide the process.

"I noted the care that was taken by the authors to be gender sensitive. There is a balanced use of gender pronouns like 'he' and 'she.' In addition to that, female characters are given roles that are predominantly thought to be masculine. Girls are driving taxis, climbing trees, and they are policewomen. This should set a foundation for the elimination of gender bias." Stakeholder feedback on stories used in the Rwanda L3 program.

Teacher, commenting on locally developed materials for the Rwanda Literacy, Language and Learning (L3) initiative (Source: EDC, 2015)

References

RTI International. (2015). A guide for strengthening gender equality and inclusiveness in teaching and learning materials. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Agency for International Development. Available at <http://shared.rti.org/content/guide-promoting-gender-equality-and-inclusiveness-teaching-and-learning-materials-2>

RTI International. (2017). A guide for strengthening gender equality and inclusiveness in teaching and learning materials in Asia. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Agency for International Development. Available at <http://shared.rti.org/content/asia-adapted-guide-strengthening-gender-equality-and-inclusiveness-teaching-and-learning>

EDC. (2015). Rwandan Teacher Community of Practice. Teacher commentary on L3 P3 materials. Retrieved from <http://www.tcop.education.rw> on March 5, 2015.