

MacArthur  
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# **Incorporating Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) into On Nigeria's Anticorruption Work**



# On Nigeria, GESI, and the MacArthur Foundation’s “Just Imperative”

The MacArthur Foundation’s On Nigeria program seeks to reduce corruption and improve the quality of life of Nigerians by collaborating with stakeholders from civil society, donor partners, government, and academia to support Nigerian-led efforts that strengthen accountability, transparency, and participation. The program is also committed to ensuring that the Foundation’s “Just Imperative”—which “charges us to lead with a commitment to justice...the essential condition for human dignity, equitable opportunity, and shared prosperity”—permeates all aspects of On Nigeria’s work, and “requires that we interrogate our decisions and actions to ensure that they enhance the conditions in which justice can thrive”.

“The Just Imperative is grounded in our values of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Diversity includes all the ways that people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while also identifying and eliminating barriers that have prevented full participation of some individuals.

Inclusion is the act of creating authentic environments in which all individuals feel welcomed, respected, valued, and feel a sense of belonging.

We apply an intersectional framework—taking into consideration how identities and characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and disability overlap—making some individuals vulnerable to multiple systems of oppression. The Just Imperative is centered on racial and ethnic equity.”

Departments, programs, and teams are charged with identifying ways to implement the Just Imperative, determining what the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion mean in the context of their work; what they have done; what they are doing; what they will do to more fully incorporate them into their work; and what success would look like, including changes in any internal systems, structures, and practices within their power to influence that hinder equity and inclusion.

In 2021, the On Nigeria 2.0 strategy added an objective intended to advance Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) in anticorruption systems-strengthening work. The program has committed to: (1) better understand what GESI looks like within the context of Nigeria and On Nigeria’s anticorruption work; (2) learn how to best strengthen staff and grantee skills to develop, review, and implement activities that respond to prevalent GESI issues in Nigeria; and (3) incorporate a GESI lens into programming. GESI-sensitive activities typically seek to understand unequal power relations between women and men and different social groups, and to act to rebalance these relationships and ensure equal rights, opportunities, and respect for all. Incorporating equity into On Nigeria’s programming is the means by which the work contributes to building equality for all Nigerians.

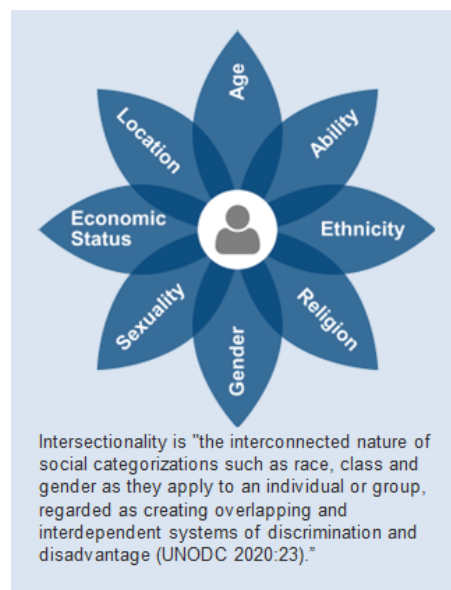
## Intersectional Inequality and Social Exclusion in Nigeria

Evidence exists that gender inequality and social exclusion limit power and agency, influencing individuals' experiences with corruption. A recent literature review conducted by On Nigeria highlights that in Nigeria, poverty, geography, insecurity, and other factors intersect to influence individuals' vulnerability to corruption and capacity to counter it, and that those at particular risk include women and girls; youth and elderly persons; persons with disabilities; and refugees and internally displaced persons. Transparency International has termed this disparity based on gender and social identity "discriminatory corruption." The extent to which data exist on how discriminatory corruption affects specific groups in Nigeria varies greatly.

Corruption in Nigeria is endemic and grounded within a symbiotic relationship between the public and private sectors, with collusion occurring during government procurement, regulatory processes or service delivery, and through the private sector aiding and abetting corrupt practices. GESI issues are present throughout. Among the most frequently highlighted types of corruption in Nigeria are bribery, receipt of illegal proceeds (extortion, kickbacks), sextortion, nepotism/favoritism, contract inflation/procurement fraud, and electoral violations.

On Nigeria recognizes that marginalization impacts both an individual's experience with corruption and their ability to counter it, given non-inclusive systems, limited access to resources, unequal ability to participate and make decisions, and concerns for their safety and well-being. GESI gaps and inequalities exist in a number of domains and can be addressed:

**Exhibit 1: The definition of intersectionality**



### Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices:

Nigeria has laws, legal frameworks, and accountability structures to ensure GESI and counter corruption, and enforcement mechanisms do exist, although implementation remains uneven. Laws, policies, and institutional practices may contain explicit or implicit biases toward women, men, and marginalized groups and formal or informal laws can influence how women, men, and marginalized groups experience corruption and can either support or hinder their ability to counter it.



### Cultural norms and beliefs:

Cultural norms, beliefs, and perceptions shape social identity, can influence how women, men, and individuals in marginalized groups experience corruption, and can support or hinder their ability to counter it.



### Roles, responsibilities, and time use:

Roles and responsibilities may differ particularly between women and men. The ways they spend their time can influence how women, men, and individuals in marginalized groups experience corruption, and can support or hinder their ability to counter it.



### Access to and control over resources:

The capacity of women, men, and individuals from marginalized groups to access and control productive resources (assets, income, public services, technology, information, public spaces, etc.) may influence how they experience corruption and can support or hinder their ability to counter it.



### Power and decision making:

Agency and representation in decision-making positions that women, men, and individuals from marginalized groups have or do not have, and participation in the systems of power that impact their lives may influence how they experience corruption and can support or hinder their ability to counter it.



### Personal safety and security:

The extent to which women, men, and individuals from marginalized groups experience identity-based violence or threats to their safety and the ability to mitigate that violence and secure their well-being may influence how they experience corruption and can support or hinder their ability to counter it.

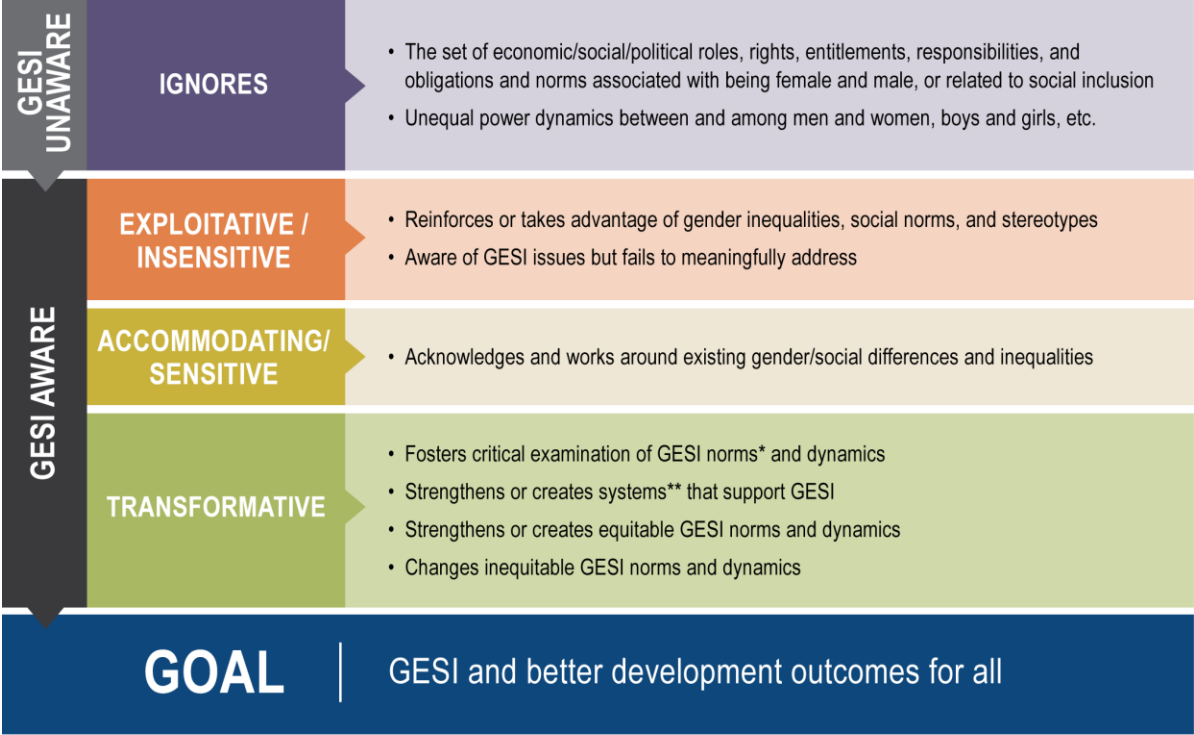
On Nigeria seeks to address inequalities in these domains because of a commitment to respecting all individuals, and a belief that more equitable and inclusive programming will yield strong results.

## On Nigeria's Vision for GESI Integration

GESI permeates On Nigeria's programming in many ways: as a **value** to be incorporated in the program's work, as articulated in the Just Imperative; as an **approach** or pathway by which the Foundation intends to effect change through concrete actions as articulated in the On Nigeria 2.0 theory of change (TOC); and as a valuable **component of robust anticorruption outcomes** as articulated in On Nigeria's module-level TOCs and current research. GESI integration is the process of developing and applying strategies in programmatic design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation to take GESI into account and compensate for inequalities. On Nigeria seeks to make anticorruption programming more aware of and

responsive to GESI issues, leading away from programming that ignores or exploits inequalities and toward programming that is transformative as illustrated in the GESI Continuum below.<sup>1</sup>

**Exhibit 2: GESI Continuum in Programming**



\*Norms encompass attitudes and practices \*\*A system consists of a set of interacting structures, practices, and relations

On Nigeria (ON) envisions:

- ON staff and grantees have a clear understanding of GESI and are able to articulate its importance as an extension of the Foundation’s values and an approach to build more inclusive anticorruption outcomes.
- ON grantees are intentional about applying a GESI lens to build transformative programming and ON staff intentionally apply a GESI lens to decision making around grants.
- ON staff and grantees integrate GESI into institutional policies, practices, and operational guidelines, including those that ensure safety and security for all.
- ON staff and grantees build representation and diversity into staffing and seek to encourage marginalized groups to participate in programming with the goal of amplifying their voices and building their agency.
- ON supports targeted research and employs evaluation practices that reflect attention to GESI.
- ON stories of change and communications integrate clear data on GESI outcomes for change beyond On Nigeria.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the IGWG Gender Integration Continuum (2017)

## On Nigeria's Strategic Approach to GESI Integration

On Nigeria has already experienced success in GESI integration on many fronts: by providing tools and resources to grantees to incorporate GESI at the proposal stage; building team diversity and representation; commissioning research to answer GESI-related questions; improving equity in grant making and grantee selection through affirmative measures (youth, women, persons with disabilities, geography); and encouraging grantee advocacy and awareness-raising efforts related to marginalized groups. The program seeks to continue building off those successes by identifying opportunities to use the following approaches:



### *Research, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning*

- 1) **Sharing and applying findings from GESI research:** Support efforts to share research relevant to the intersection of corruption and GESI, apply findings from research, and address the dearth of current data surrounding marginalized groups.
- 2) **Enabling GESI-sensitive grantee monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL):** Encourage quantitative and qualitative data collection that measures progress toward GESI outcomes articulated in activity designs and MEL plans. Encourage comprehensive data disaggregation by all accessible parameters—sex, gender, disability, geography, age, etc.—as appropriate and share sample corruption indicators that address GESI.
- 3) **Integrating collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) principles:** Ensure that CLA principles are integrated into program and MEL activities to ensure that grantees can learn from the data they collect and adapt activities to not only be more effective but also more inclusive.
- 4) **Tracking data to build government accountability:** Build advocacy for the integration of GESI-sensitive monitoring systems into grantee engagement with government agencies to better track progress toward inclusive systems.



### *Strengthening Legal Frameworks and Institutions*

- 1) **Strengthening GESI-sensitive legislation and policy implementation:** Support inclusive policy implementation in legislative bodies, electoral systems, and the justice sector (e.g., the National Development Plan, National Gender Policy, the ACJA, ACJLs and VAPP Act) across ministries at the national and state levels.
- 2) **Building inclusive reporting mechanisms:** Push for more inclusive and accessible reporting mechanisms considering the factors that limit access for women and vulnerable groups (e.g., location, ICT access, fear of reprisals, etc.).
- 3) **Encouraging affirmative measures:** Encourage grantees and government actors to meaningfully engage members of traditionally marginalized groups in decision making by building participation and representation.



## Grant Selection and Activity Design

- 1) **Articulating a commitment to GESI at the solicitation phase:** Standardize the incorporation of On Nigeria's GESI commitments throughout all solicitation activities (e.g., considering grantee commitments to GESI during outreach and pre-award consultations and pre-grant inquiry and proposal development).
- 2) **Designing GESI-aware activities:** Encourage grantees to conduct or incorporate the findings of GESI research/analysis into their activity designs and provide checklists for GESI mainstreaming at the design phase.
- 3) **Incorporating targeted GESI activities:** Support grantee activities that specifically target GESI issues/gaps in their programming or focus on meeting the needs or raising the voices of historically marginalized groups (e.g. persons with disabilities and hard to reach populations).
- 4) **Including affirmative measures:** Encourage grantees to incorporate a diversity of actors in design and implementation of anticorruption activities.



## Skill Strengthening

- 1) **Grantee skill strengthening:** Improve the knowledge and skills of grantees through GESI training activities targeted toward their stated areas of greatest concern (e.g., building a common understanding of GESI terms and concepts, addressing GESI in activity design and MEL), and establish a baseline understanding of the importance of GESI in anticorruption work.
- 2) **Government skill strengthening:** Support grantees in building the knowledge and skills of anticorruption agencies and other government entities to integrate GESI concerns into anticorruption initiatives.



## Collaboration and Network Building

- 1) **Encouraging knowledge sharing:** Create opportunities for grantees to share their good practices in addressing GESI in their work, either through regular module-level meetings, virtual platforms, or portfolio-wide events.
- 2) **Fostering coalition building:** Seek out opportunities to create relationships between civil society actors and civil society-government representatives who are explicitly working to build accountability systems that are equitable and inclusive.



## Advocacy and Awareness Raising

- 1) **Advocating for commitments to GESI from political parties:** Support grantees to engage the electoral and political party process to educate on GESI and advocate for commitments to implement GESI laws and policies from political parties and candidates.

- 2) **Supporting reporting on corruption and GESI:** Continue backing media efforts to raise awareness of the differential impact of corruption on women, men, and marginalized groups, and magnify their voices.
- 3) **Raising public awareness and social accountability:** Support grantee efforts to raise public awareness of the intersection of GESI and corruption and encourage citizens to demand transparency and accountability.
- 4) **Raising awareness of government actors:** Equip grantees with the advocacy tools needed to press for integration of GESI into anticorruption initiatives and implementation of laws.

## Seeking to Do No Harm

- 1) **Encouraging risk assessments/safety audits:** Support rapid assessments of risks associated with Foundation and grantee activities.
- 2) **Articulating safeguarding policies:** Develop policies and protocols, including gender-based violence prevention and response strategies, for preventing and mitigating risks to all individuals involved in Foundation and grantee activities and particularly to those who are historically most vulnerable (e.g., women, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, children/elderly).
- 3) **Supporting commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion:** Encourage grantee organizations to articulate internal diversity, equity, and inclusion commitments for their organizations and promote adherence to principles of inclusion.

## Key Terms

**Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI):** seeks to address unequal power relations between women and men and different social groups, acting to rebalance these relationships and ensure equal rights, opportunity, and respect.

**Marginalization/Social Exclusion:** refers to dynamic processes by which a group of people are excluded from power and access to resources.

**Social Inclusion:** is the process of improving the ability, access, dignity, and opportunity of all people who have been disadvantaged based on their social identity to participate in society and access resources.

**Equity:** is fairness in the distribution of resources, benefits, and opportunities among individuals and groups, where measures are taken to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent operation on a level playing field.



**Equality:** occurs when individuals have equal rights, freedoms, conditions, and opportunities for realizing their full potential. On Nigeria's commitment to equity helps to build equality in Nigeria.

**Power:** is the degree of control over material, human, intellectual, and financial resources exercised by different sections of society. Power is dynamic, relational, and unequally distributed. Social divisions such as gender, age, class, ethnicity, and race and institutions such as family, religion, education, and the law perpetuate and sustain power.