



WorldYWCA

We Rise, We Lead

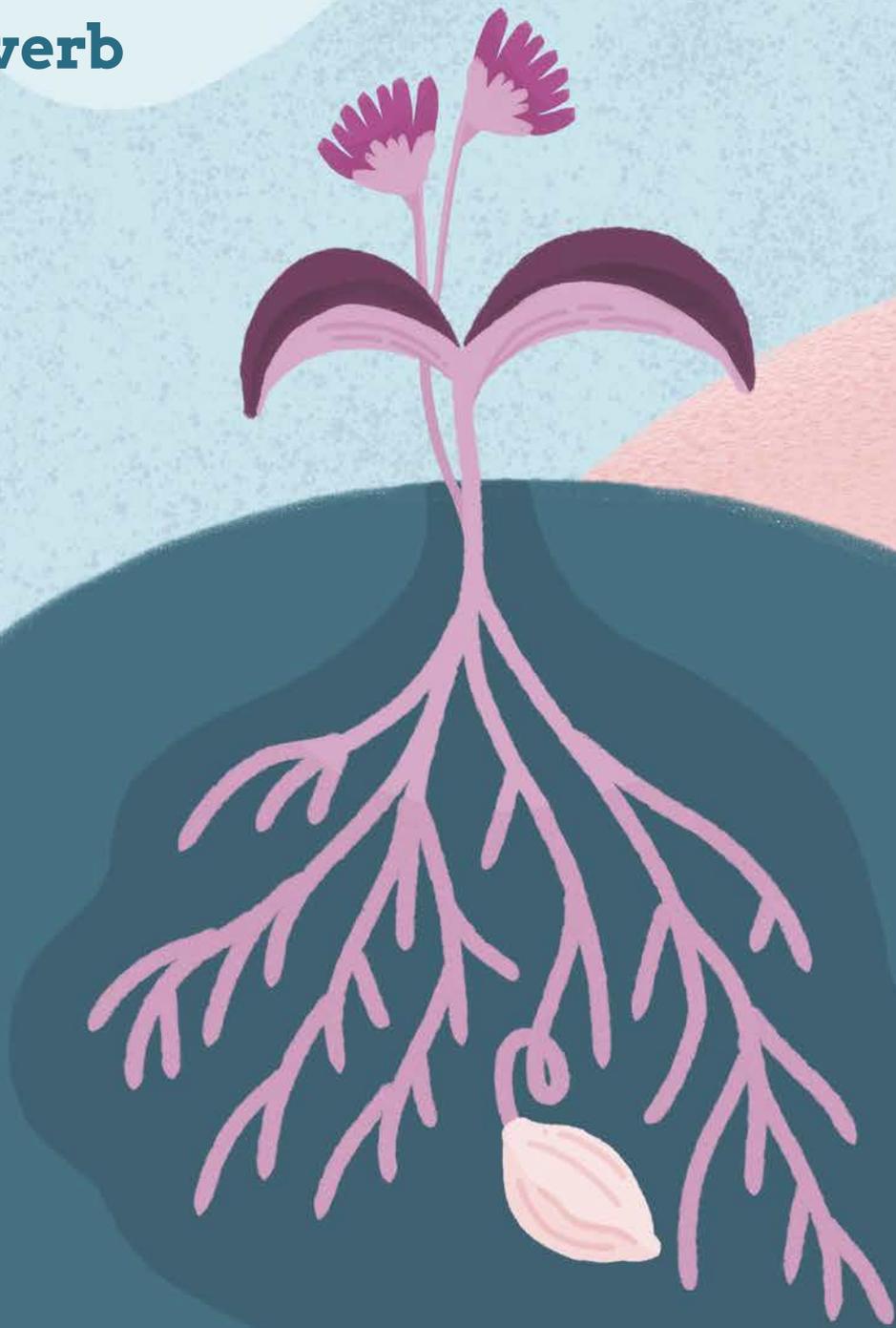
World YWCA's

Young Women-Led Feminist
Consultation Methodology Guide



**The flowers of
tomorrow are the
seeds of today...**

- Proverb





About the World YWCA

We are a global women's rights organisation engaging millions of women, young women, and girls around the world each year, across cultures and beliefs, to transform lives and the world for the better. With a presence in over a hundred countries, our work is grassroots-driven, grounded in local communities and rooted in the transformational power of women. We provide support and opportunities for women, young women, and girls to become leaders and change-makers who not only protect their rights and impact their communities but inspire their peers to do the same.

We are focused on building a strong, intergenerational network of women and young women leaders, with programmes led by and for women and young women in response to the unique needs they see in their communities.

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Table of Contents

- 1** How To Use This Guide
- 3** Executive Summary
- 6** A journey to develop the Feminist Consultation Methodology

The Methodology

- 8** What is the Methodology?
- 8** What makes it feminist and intersectional?
- 12** Who should use it?
- 13** Why use it?
- 13** How to put it into practise?
- 18** Your Role as a Researcher
- 24** The Process

Plan

- 25** Define goals and outcomes
- 27** Gather the team
- 27** Map out resources
- 28** Prepare to monitor

Design

- 31** Design for...
- 32** Design for feminist research principles
- 33** Design for clear language

Design (continued)

- 35** Design for safety
- 44** Choose who and how many to engage
- 45** Decide on data
- 48** Explore research method(s)
- 48** Surveys
- 52** Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling
- 55** Interviews

Implement

- 57** Seek participants
- 60** Bring to life the research method(s)
- 62** Surveys
- 64** Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling
- 66** Interviews
- 68** Validate to see what works

Sense Make

- 70** Solicit skills and support
- 71** Analyse results

Learn

- [75](#) Reflect as a research team
- [76](#) Invite peer and community feedback
- [76](#) Explore possible solutions

Iterate

- [83](#) Look ahead and also circle back
- [85](#) Your Journey Continues

Appendix

- [87](#) Acknowledgements and Thanks
- [89](#) Important Words and Phrases
- [97](#) Sampling
- [97](#) Why sample and how to do it
- [98](#) Probability sampling methods
- [99](#) Non-probability sampling methods
- [103](#) Safety and Security

Tools and Templates

Project Management

- [107](#) Action Plan Guide
- [110](#) Budget Template
- [115](#) Publicity Template
- [117](#) Social Media Cheat Sheet
- [121](#) Invitation Template
- [124](#) Consent Form Template
- [131](#) Recording and Image Consent Form Template

Tools and Templates

Project Management (continued)

- [138](#) Progress Report Template
- [141](#) Project Tracking and Review Template
- [144](#) Evaluation Checklist Template

Research Methodology

- [146](#) Research Question Development Template
- [148](#) Questionnaire Template
- [157](#) Community Agreements Sample
- [160](#) Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling Field Guide
- [163](#) One-on-One Interview Field Guide
- [166](#) Storytelling Template
- [169](#) Data Collection Guide

Examples

- [173](#) Data Collection Example

Reference

- [176](#) Resources
- [178](#) Endnotes

How To Use This Guide

Welcome to the Feminist Consultation Methodology! We are excited for this guide to support your work in engaging and co-creating with [young women](#).

If this is your first time using the Methodology, we recommend reviewing this guide in full to develop a robust understanding. This guide is a great source of in-depth explanations and contains many [tools and templates](#) to get you started. We urge you to adapt them as needed to meet the vision of your [consultation](#). These are not one-size-fits-all since every individual and organisation has different needs! Regardless of the consultation you design, be sure to centre the voices of young women and prioritise [diversity, equity](#), access, and [inclusion](#).

This guide is to present information so that it is accessible and inclusive. When we say “you”, we are referring to whoever you are—a member of a volunteer group, a non-profit organisation, a student research group, a corporation, an individual, or a [community leader](#). You may be a first-time researcher or you may have lots of past experience. When we say “we”, we are referring to World YWCA and the co-creators of this Methodology who now use it regularly.

In the spirit of co-creation and taking the [feminist](#) approach, we encourage you to incorporate stories and quotes into your consultation where possible. Not only will this provide credibility and strengthen your research but it is also a way of acknowledging the contributions of your [participants](#). If you come across a powerful learning or story during your consultation process, we invite you to share it with us to help evolve this Methodology. This Methodology is a continual learning journey for all of us and was created by young women for young women.

Let’s walk this journey together...

A few words about language

The language used in this Methodology holds much significance. Specifically and with great intention, we have claimed the use of the term “feminist” to contribute to a more positive perception and clear understanding of what it means to be “feminist.” That said, we acknowledge the term “feminist” can sometimes be stigmatised and controversial in many contexts. As such, you can either omit or adapt as relevant. Regardless of whether you use the term or not, the essence of the Methodology will remain feminist if you follow the recommended [steps and methods](#). This stands true for all of the [important words and phrases](#) in this Methodology.

For the best experience

This Methodology is meant to be used by you and your [research team](#). This means we provide space throughout the Methodology for you to take notes and fill in the [tools and templates](#) (found in the Appendix). You can either fill them in digitally or print them to fill in by hand. If you choose to fill them in digitally first and then print, you should be aware of the limitations. There is a chance your typed information may not print fully in each section (even if you can see the full information on your screen). Unfortunately, this is a limitation of the digital file which we are unable to control. We recommend testing one page first before digitally filling in and then printing many pages. Similarly, you may find the templates need adjusting to suit the needs of your consultation. We invite you to use the tools and templates as inspiration and make any adjustments needed!

We developed icons and color-coded this methodology as visual cues to support you along journey.

Reach out: We are here to help!

As you use this Methodology, reach out with any challenges or questions. If this document does not meet your accessibility needs, please let us know as we are happy to help.

Contact **World YWCA** at:
getinvolved@worldywca.org



Visual cues

Icons and colour-codes in this Methodology to support your journey.

Icons



Call to Action: Plant seeds
Apply your knowledge and take action.



Tip: Sunlight
Focus on key information.



Consideration: Water
Explore ideas for your consultation.



Be Aware: Wind
Stay ahead of possible challenges.

Headers

Green: Take Action

Take action! It may be to visit a website, complete an assessment, or document your learnings.

Yellow: Appendix, Resources

Showcases the Appendix where most of the practical tools and frameworks are located.

Purple: Steps 1-3 of the Methodology

Plan (Seed), Design (Root), Implement (Sprout).



Teal: Steps 4-6 of the Methodology

Sense Make (Bloom), Learn (Pollinate), Iterate (Fruit).



Plant progress bar

As you move through each phase of Methodology, you will grow a plant along the right side of the page.



Executive Summary

Gender equity through intergenerational and intersectional leadership

Nurturing a movement to transform the world

Women, **young women**, and girls are the leaders in everything we do at World YWCA. As one of the oldest and largest women’s rights grassroots-driven global movements, World YWCA continues to support the world’s intergenerational and intersectional community of women—supporting them to courageously advance a global movement of dignity and justice for all people and our planet. We do so through our purpose of developing the leadership and collective power of women and girls around the world to achieve justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom, and a sustainable environment for all people. Our aspirations for the future are grounded in a bold objective known as [Goal 2035](#)¹:

“By 2035, 100 million young women and girls will transform power structures to create justice, gender equality, and a world without violence and war; leading a sustainable YWCA movement, inclusive of all women.”

With Goal 2035, we embrace global solidarity. We respond directly to the United Nations Secretary-General’s [Our Common Agenda](#)² and the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)³. We recognise the gaps across the globe in fully realising the potential of women and girls. And we acknowledge the work needed to bring forth change.

Simply put, the path for Goal 2035 must be shared. To achieve the future we envision, World YWCA

is dedicated to continuing our role as a mobiliser of change. We know there is tremendous value in cultivating and nurturing engagement with on-the-ground leaders—both within and beyond the YWCA movement. By connecting to and consulting with women, young women, and girls from across the globe, World YWCA is committed to engaging the collective energy of the movement and mobilising change for good.

Investing in and building young women’s leadership

Across the globe, young people are standing up. They see what is happening in their communities and around the world. Their courageous voices say, “Enough injustice! Enough inequality! Enough division!” And yet, “enough” is simply not enough. In these challenging times, each and every person has a role to play in turning collective efforts into action. And it takes the leadership of young people—especially young women—to guide the way. Now more than ever, society must acknowledge the conditions needed to create true change. Transformation only happens when communities value all women, and when young women realise their power to create change.

Inspired by the change efforts of young women, World YWCA embarked on a journey to support their meaningful work. Over several years, World YWCA collaborated with a team of intergenerational women from on-the-ground communities and regions around

the world. These women and young women shared their experiences and insights to co-create something new to catalyse change: a methodology for feminist and participatory consultation.

Engaging young women to lead feminist and participatory consultation

The Feminist Consultation Methodology provides a new and much-needed approach for engaging communities. This Methodology differs from traditional research methodologies which are often rooted in colonial approaches for evidence gathering. Within this Methodology, research is framed as the spark for transformative justice. Anchored in a diverse, democratic, and decolonised approach, this Methodology is designed to centre girls and women in all their intersecting identities.

A crucial focus of this Methodology is placing power into the rightful hands of women and young women to be the leaders of their lives and futures. Co-created by and for young women using the same participatory approach described therein, this Methodology is an authentic reflection of innovative, feminist leadership. Here, power is shared with research participants who are engaged as co-researchers, and with communities who are engaged in community-led data collection and analysis. This Methodology takes into account language, tone, and power dynamics by fostering intergenerational knowledge sharing, self-determination, and agency. This collaborative approach to consultation seeks to dismantle broken systems and remedy inequalities,

while ensuring the voices of women and young women always remain at the forefront.

Guided by feminist principles, this Methodology encourages diverse perspectives and acknowledges the importance of all voices—especially those who are or have been historically excluded. For change interventions to be feminist, they must centre on the empowerment of women and other marginalised genders. Similarly, this Methodology is designed to ensure young leaders have the tools to unlock their true potential and be equipped with expertise for full and equal participation. Young people deserve a seat at the table to share their perspectives, be a part of decision making, and challenge the status quo.

As a practical tool, this Methodology can be used for advocacy of the movement and to scale impact. Historically, the feminist movement is grossly underfunded. Data suggests less than 1% of gender funding reaches feminist and women-led movements—resulting in a current landscape that is far from adequate in advancing rights and justice⁴. By investing in people—forming connections, nurturing relationships, and building capacity—this Methodology helps foster resiliency within the movement. By applying a feminist lens to gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis, this Methodology helps uncover insights to drive collective action. In support of the diversity within the YWCA movement, this Methodology is flexible for individuals and organisations to adapt based on their needs.

Care and time are essential elements of this Methodology. In keeping with the core essence of the feminist movement, this Methodology serves with love. From the outside, someone might question

why it takes the movement time to do things, or why this Methodology is so detailed. And yet, young women know the answer. Time is vital to do things meaningfully and with intention.

Celebrating the power of young women

The journey of co-creating this Methodology highlights the importance of young women as change agents. When it comes to transforming the world for a better future, young women should not solely be on the receiving end of change. Instead, young women are eager for their voices to be centred and heard at every step of the process. Young women are ready to lead and own the change agenda. Young women are excited to chart a new path forward.

There is an old saying that describes youth as the leaders of tomorrow—yet this simply is not true. Young women are already the leaders of today! The power of young women is exponential when unlocked through collective and intergenerational efforts. When supported in their agency, empowered young women make change happen by leading with love and empathy. Young women help society to recognise our shared humanity and look past our differences, borders, and politics. Young women—no matter where they are—inspire us to commit to taking meaningful, bolder actions. Young women remind us gender equity cannot wait and that the time for change is now.

When #YoungWomenLead, we all expand our capacity to transform the world for the better.

This Methodology is intended to be friendly for people of all abilities and identities. It is designed with inclusion in mind. As a living document, if you notice any gaps, we invite you to share feedback and insights. We believe in the power of co-creation and partnerships to strengthen how feminist consultation is conducted. Together, we can make this Methodology more inclusive based on the unique realities of people of all abilities. **Please reach out** if you have feedback or wish to partner.

Contact **World YWCA** at:
getinvolved@worldywca.org



A journey to develop the Feminist Consultation Methodology

Starting in late 2018, World YWCA engaged the leadership of young women from across the globe to co-create this Feminist Consultation Methodology.

These young women collaborated as advisors and testers to bring the Methodology to life. They championed what it meant for consultations to be truly feminist. They shared insights on how to best engage and learn alongside young women. They provided a critical review of the Methodology as it began to take shape. They brought the Methodology to their communities and gathered feedback. They combined their wisdom and expertise to co-create the Methodology you see today: a guide for young women-led feminist consultation.

Throughout this work, World YWCA acted as a **facilitator** while ensuring young women led the process. World YWCA shared this role with **IWORDS**⁵, who facilitated the daily consultation process with the young women co-creators.

In the spirit of collaboration, all stakeholders involved in developing this Methodology agreed to hold a safe and inclusive space for young women to contribute freely. This freedom honoured the young women in their roles as co-creators, and enabled a transparent exchange of ideas and feedback. As the work unfolded, many of the learnings experienced first-hand by the co-creators helped shape the Methodology itself. The journey of developing the Methodology was key to identify and capture some of the challenges and opportunities of working with young women from different communities, backgrounds, orientations, and understandings.

Timely global issues shaped the Methodology—most notably the world-wide impacts of COVID-19 and the racial justice **movement**. The pandemic caused ripple effects across all levels of society including the lives of the young women leading this work. The racial justice movement brought together activists and protesters to show solidarity and demand change to the racist and colonial legacies facing humanity for centuries.

The value of **empathy** rises to the top of the many lessons learned during these moments of social awakening. Now, more than ever, there is a universal need for care and consideration of one another. These elements are core to feminist consultation, and are essential to transforming the way women are engaged. Both the pandemic and racial justice movement brought stark reminders of how important empathy is when balancing our reflections of present-day realities and acknowledgements of future uncertainties.

Similarly, the heightened need for remote connection during the pandemic ignited new ways of engaging young women. This Methodology leverages technology, through virtual gatherings and social media, as a core element to ensure an innovative, **intersectional**, and feminist approach to engaging young women.

As you move forward in using this Methodology, it is important to know it was designed using a human- and equity-centred approach. As such, it is essential to remember that the world is ever-changing and humans are consistently evolving. This Methodology is a starting point, and should be adapted to meet the needs of your project, group, community, or ecosystem. And in doing so, ensuring you always uphold respect for the voices of young women.

Our team is always learning, and would love to **hear about how you have applied this Methodology** to your work. **Please reach out** if you have any questions. There is an engaged network of diverse, intergenerational, and multidisciplinary leaders who are ready to support your journey. It is our honour to support you on our shared path of leading a sustainable movement—inclusive of all women. Share your learnings with us.

Contact **World YWCA** at: getinvolved@worldywca.org



The Feminist Consultation Methodology

What is the Methodology?

Designed by young women for young women, the Methodology is anchored in a six-step process and three complementary research methods ([Surveys](#), [Focus Group Discussions + Storytelling](#), and [Interviews](#)).

Young women are at the core of this Methodology. Here, the term “young women” is an overarching category for people, in all their diversity, who are between the ages of 16 to 35 (though this range may vary based on specific organisational or cultural definitions). Young women are a non-biological category. This means we include all people who identify themselves as female or non-binary.

This Methodology uses and encourages inclusive language recognising non-binary people. Be aware this reflects a political positioning. Always bear in mind language is both a descriptor and a generator of reality.

Are you ready to learn about a more inclusive and empowering approach to changing the world? While the Methodology may not be revolutionary from a research perspective, it is revolutionary in its feminist approach. It guides the way for young women’s voices to be elevated and amplified. We believe there is **power** in rooting the Methodology in the transformative wisdom of [intergenerational](#) women. And together, we all play a role in the movement toward a sustainable and just world.

What makes it feminist and intersectional?

Despite many gains in gender mainstreaming, there is still an overall lack of understanding about women’s realities. **Androcentric** practises of centring society around men’s experiences, needs, and perspectives have long been the norm. For decades, feminist critics have questioned the universality of science⁶ leading to masculinised ideals that reproduce sexist values and gender inequalities⁷. Typical research processes have helped us monitor and evaluate gender inequalities, but they have been gender-biased (for example, they have been designed by men without soliciting

feedback from women). Overall, there are very few research initiatives taking a feminist approach.

For World YWCA, it is essential to redistribute power back into the hands of women and young women. Doing so is the key to advancing gender equality. In this Methodology, power is shared with research **participants** as a way to dismantle broken systems, counteract patriarchal models, and remedy inequalities.

This methodology is an example of **participatory research**. The full participation of young women was key to designing this Methodology in response to their needs, experiences, and opinions. Fourteen young women from around the world—from within and beyond the YWCA movement—actively participated in defining the process, building the methodology, and validating the final product.

This Methodology is designed with a feminist lens—by and for young women through a **participatory approach** as it fosters a collaborative way for being. It amplifies and acknowledges the importance of all voices, especially those who are or have been historically excluded. The approach encourages diverse perspectives to ensure meaningful representation of the world's diverse social fabric. The process encourages reflection and open dialogue to ensure inequities are not perpetuated in the work. As such, the Methodology takes into account language, tone, and **power dynamics**.

A key part of being feminist means creating **safe spaces**⁸. This Methodology is designed to create safe spaces for young women participants to share their experiences, opinions, and views without fear of political, economic, or personal **harm**. Even the most well-intentioned person or organisation has the potential to cause harm or **trauma** resulting from the impact of an action (or sometimes a lack of action). This Methodology outlines a planful way for you or your team to create safety for participants and catalyse positive impact.

The women's movement is all about women coming together to fight for equality. And yet, the urge for

unity should not be mistaken for homogeneity⁹. A singular focus on the oppression of women can pose a serious threat to the mobilisation of women's joint power. When the differences among women are ignored, it robs them of each others' energy and creative insight. Within the women's movement and feminist consultations, it is essential to expand the focus to also include race, sexual preference, class, age, etc. This Methodology provides the tools and prompts to guide you in an intersectional approach. As humans, we are complex in nature and our identities are made up of many overlapping social categorisations. For example, a **racialised** young woman, despite being highly educated, may experience inequities depending on where she lives. As such, if you intend to include her as a participant in your consultation, it is essential to be mindful of **privilege** and power dynamics. You or your **research team** have a responsibility to consider not only the power and privilege dynamics you might hold, but how they may show up for this participant given the **intersectionality** of her identity.

This Methodology supports you to design a consultation by acknowledging and understanding systems of power and oppression. These intersecting systems perpetuate discriminatory beliefs and **biases** such as heteropatriarchy, transphobia, homophobia, fatphobia, xenophobia, **sexism**, **tokenism**, **ableism**, **classism**, heterosexism, **ageism**, colourism, **elitism**, and **racism**—to name a few. They often play a role in impacting social, cultural, institutional, political, and interpersonal behaviours and values. This Methodology acknowledges these inequities while providing concrete strategies to help you embrace human differences within your consultation.



This Methodology is feminist because it...

Uses language with intention

Language is a powerful tool for democratising access and promoting **inclusivity**. The language of this Methodology is intended to resonate across global contexts. We have designed this guide with language to reflect the intersectional identities held by young women in all their diversity, including LGBTIQ women and **marginalised and/or underrepresented genders**. We have intentionally chosen language to reinforce young women as empowered protagonists in their own lives and communities—not passive subjects. Given that language is loaded with meaning and has the power to transform and influence, we want to ensure all women feel safe and empowered to raise their voices at every stage of this Methodology.

A definition for “**feminist**” is included in this Methodology. In the spirit feminist principles, we recommend reviewing the definition as a team. Discuss and collaborate to ensure the term is adequate for your context. You may also consider consulting with participants to hear their perspectives.

See the **Important Words and Phrases** for more information.

At the moment, this Methodology is only available in English. We are aware it must be translated into multiple languages to reach a wider audience. We are making efforts to facilitate its translation and we invite those who want to translate it into other local languages to do so. If you are interested in translating the Methodology, we are happy to explore how we can partner with you.

Please contact us at: getinvolved@worldywca.org

Fosters collaboration and co-creation by bridging theory and practise

This Methodology guides the way for a new relationship dynamic when it comes to research. The needs, experiences, and desires of young women participants are placed at the centre of this Methodology. Through this, the Methodology encourages an environment of trust and trust—thus transforming the role of participants. Traditionally, participants are often viewed as passive subjects in research initiatives. What’s different about this Methodology is that participants are also **co-researchers**—each with an active voice in shaping the consultation process.

Inspires ownership and promotes empowerment

Building and transferring knowledge is essential to this Methodology. Young women are more inclined to be invested in the work when they play an active role in its creation. Better yet, young women are more likely to be positively impacted by work that is led and owned by young women themselves. This Methodology

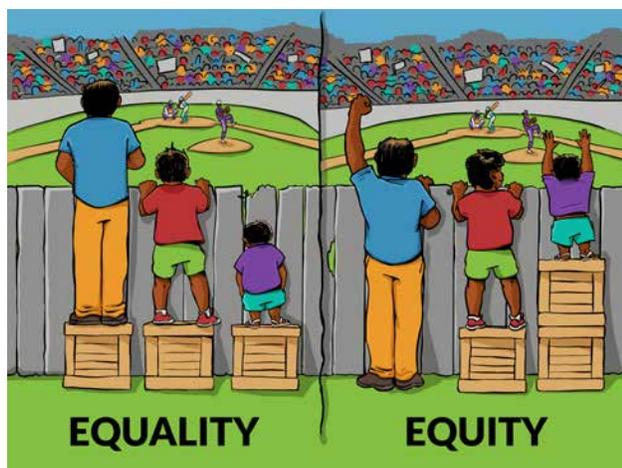
is a key for unlocking the voices of young women participants as co-partners, co-researchers, and change agents within their communities.

Welds and shares power

This Methodology acknowledges various types of power and ensures no one is left out in the design and delivery of your consultation. This guide provides steps to help you consider the power you hold (or perceive to hold) and how to share it with participants. When rooted in **equity-enhancing** approaches, research has the power to build momentum for collective change.

Power dynamics can show up in many different ways. For example, how the room is set up for an in-person session can be an opportunity to share power. Arranging chairs in a circle (instead of lecture style with the facilitator at the front of the room) creates a more inviting space for conversation. Of course, sometimes things may be out of your control. That said, it is important to be aware of what you can do to change power dynamics.

To better understand the difference between **equity** and **equality**¹⁰, take a look at this visual image.



Interaction Institute for Social Change | Artist: Angus Maguire.



Creates safe spaces rooted in sisterhood

The consultations guided by this Methodology begin with the principle of creating a safe space for all. In holding space and fostering collective care, young women participants can feel connected to a greater purpose. It is critical for participants to feel a sense of belonging and part of the movement.

By creating and upholding safe spaces, your consultation can benefit from the generosity, transparency, and reciprocity that are inherent to women-centric communities.

Acknowledges we all play a role in creating change

At its core, this Methodology is intended to be used by and for young women. That said, in order to create change and positive impact within certain contexts, it can be helpful to include other voices. The Methodology is flexible to engage allies such as men who can provide insight to your research questions when appropriate (of course, this **engagement** must be done thoughtfully, such as creating a separate space). Taking a holistic approach to understanding and creating solutions can sometimes be the key to unlocking societal issues.

Who should use it?

- Are you a young person between 18-30 years?
- Are you an organisation or community group who engages with young people and/or leads the **advocacy** agenda for young people?
- Do you wish to make your engagement with young people more systematic and results-oriented?
- Do you want to truly listen to young people instead of just hearing them?
- Do you seek to design your programmes, communications, and evaluation to be participatory and with young people at the centre?
- Do you wish to create safe spaces for young people to openly engage and participate?
- Do you want feminist principles to guide your youth engagement efforts each and every day?

If answers to these questions are “YES”, this feminist consultation Methodology is for YOU!

Remember this Methodology is participatory and can be used by everyone! You do not need to have experience in consultation or be a seasoned designer or researcher. We developed this Methodology as a tool for gender mainstreaming—a guide for you to feel equipped when gathering insights to infuse the perspective of young women into your work.

Throughout your consultation process, we hope you will feel confident and empowered with this guide to support your journey. Whether you are an individual or an organisation, you may experience feelings of **imposter syndrome** when using this Methodology. You may not see yourself as a leader or you might feel like you are unable to facilitate a particular research activity, or make sense of all your gathered data. First, take a deep breath. We are all humans and it is absolutely normal to experience these feelings! Then, trust in yourself and stand in your power. You are capable of conducting research and stepping into your own definition of leadership.

Recent research and movements rooted in “feminist leadership” reveal that women have a unique approach when it comes to leadership. As leaders, women bring greater attention to collaboration, cooperation, collective decision making, and relationship building. Feminist international human rights organisation CREA defines feminist leadership as follows:

“Women with a feminist perspective and vision of social justice, individually and collectively transforming themselves to use their power, resources, and skill in non-oppressive, inclusive structures and processes to mobilise others—especially other women—around a shared agenda of social, cultural, economic, and political transformation for equality and the realisation of human rights for all.”¹¹

In addition to standing in your power as a leader, know that you can always ask for help! World YWCA, along with a global network of leaders who have developed

and applied this Methodology, are available to provide support. We encourage you to look for allies and partners from your own community too. Remember support can come in many forms—from mentorship and emotional encouragement, to funding and resource contributions. Some of the most impactful support we have witnessed has been knowledge transfer from intergenerational leaders who are eager to elevate the voices of young women.



As you continue on your path, please **reach out to us** so we can support your journey and celebrate your successes.

Why use it?

This Methodology has numerous benefits—from building confidence and fostering **empowerment**, addressing systemic inequities and giving voice to participants. Using this Methodology is an exercise of growth. By applying the principles and activities of feminist consultation again and again over time, they can become everyday practise for you or your organisation.

Our hypothesis is you may find yourself using some of the tools and perspectives from this Methodology beyond your research work—you may start to see them show up in other areas of your work and personal life.

And imagine...a more feminist, more equitable world. The change starts with you.

How to put it into practise?

The Feminist Consultation Methodology is anchored in a **six-step process**.

1. Plan
2. Design
3. Implement
4. Sense Make
5. Learn
6. Iterate

Within the Design and Implement steps, you will explore **three complementary research methods** to engage participants:

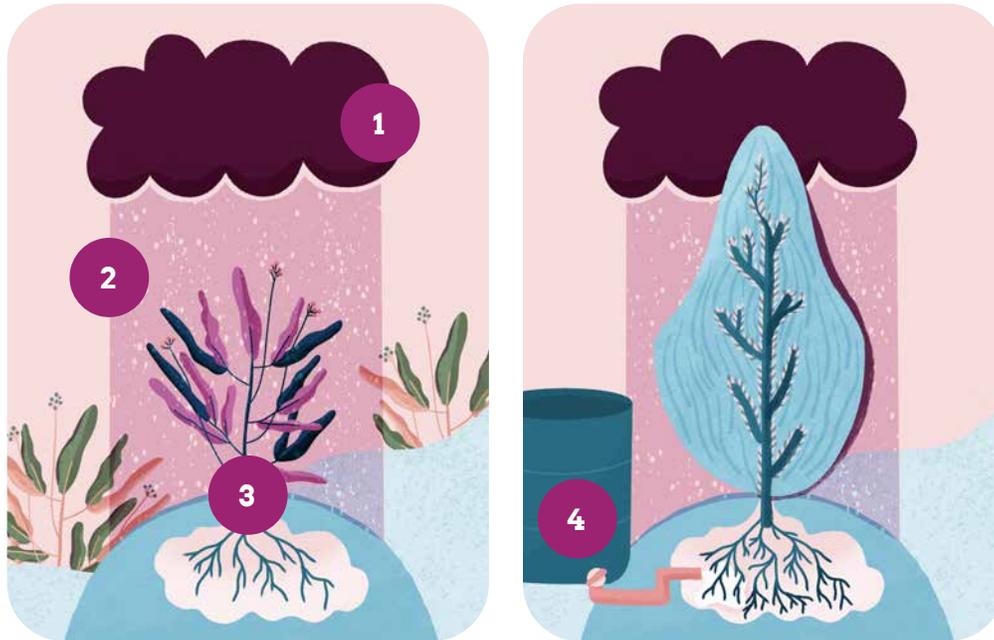
- **Surveys**
- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) + Storytelling**
- **Interviews**

This iterative research process is based on human- and equity-centred approaches to addressing complex challenges. This Methodology centres the needs of participants, fosters empathy, and supports the design of impactful solutions.

While there are six steps in this process, there is no prescribed amount of time to spend on each. There are also no prescribed activities—meaning you and your research team are flexible to adapt the Methodology to best meet the needs of your participants and their communities. We encourage you to spend whatever time you need to move through each step, and be mindful of any **unconscious biases** (or implicit biases) at play.

How bias can impact your research

Biases are (un)conscious predispositions or generalisations about a group of people based on personal characteristics or stereotypes. They are attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. We all have biases, some can be positive while others can be based on prejudices. Here is an analogy to help you understand how biases can permeate through all aspects of your life.



1. This cloud represents how biases form our thoughts. As we navigate life, our thoughts inform how we process experiences. Just like how a cloud can block out the sun, biases can prevent us from seeing perspectives and beliefs outside of our own.
2. In our garden, a weed soaks up rainwater, outcompeting nearby plants for essential resources such as water, soil, nutrients and sunlight. It's important to tend to our garden—when we don't prune the weeds, they overrun and starve our garden of life. Similarly, it's important for us to examine how our biases guide our thoughts, beliefs, and decisions.
3. What happens when we leave our biases unchecked? As our garden becomes overrun by weeds, our biases feed into a cycle of limited growth and potential. Over time, one weed becomes many. As humans, we hold the potential to inherit biases from our elders and pass them down to the next generation. It is important to inspect what feeds our biases, where they come from, how they show up in our lives, and decide if they serve us.
4. Awareness is understanding the relationship between our thoughts and biases so we can strategise what to do about them. Here, a barrel collects and filters pollutants out of rainwater, leaving only nutrients behind. Similarly, once we identify our biases, we can develop healthier ways to continuously work on cultivating a healthy ecosystem.

Here are a few examples of the types of biases you may need to address during your consultation:



Affinity bias

1. Affinity bias is the idea that people are naturally drawn to people most like themselves based on age, race, gender, and more.

This can look like

2. Selecting participants who do similar work or are passionate about the same topics as you.

How to be mindful of this bias

3. How to be mindful of this bias Ensure participants are chosen based on a wide range of selection criteria.



Attribution bias

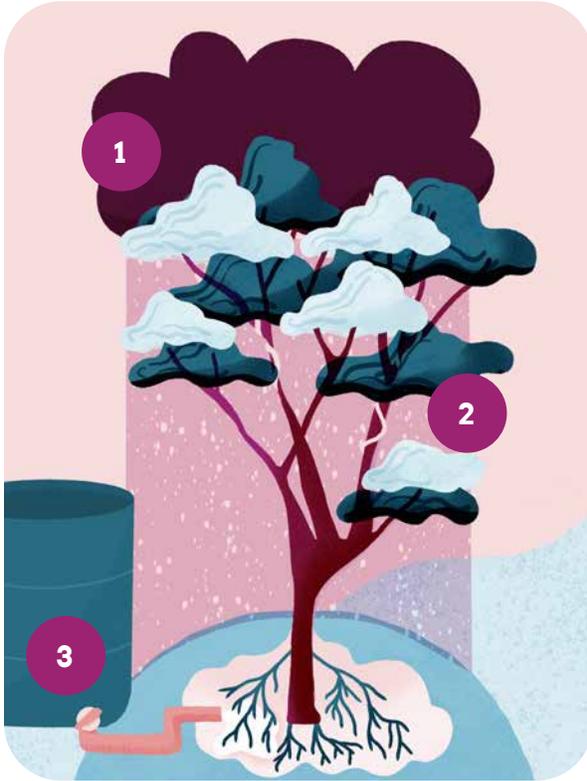
1. Judging someone's behaviour based on prior interactions or observations and using these judgements to form your perception of this person.

This can look like

2. Limiting who to invite to participate in the research based on past interactions.

How to be mindful of this bias

3. Include diverse voices in the consultation.



Conformity bias

1. Peer pressure and/or the tendency for people to behave similar to those around them regardless of their beliefs.

This can look like

2. Experiencing “group-think” within a Focus Group Discussion session where participants all share the same responses.

How to be mindful of this bias

3. Design the session to offer space for participants to share their individual opinions and the facilitator(s) encourage space for individual reflections.



Ageism

1. Having negative feelings about people based on their age.

This can look like

2. Dismissing someone’s perspective because of their age.

How to be mindful of this bias

3. Acknowledge how wisdom can be shared through intergenerational learning and be proactive in selecting participants across a broad range of ages.



By holding safe spaces, creating a welcoming environment, and promoting belonging for your participants, you are designing with diversity, equity, access, and inclusion in mind. And yet, it is important to avoid assumptions about the value of your consultation. Depending on how connected you are to participants and/or their communities, be sure to take time to understand how your research can be beneficial to the community. Do not outrightly assume your research is helpful, wanted, or needed. Instead, allow the community to guide the direction and flow of your consultation. Listen to the needs of the participants. Set your ego aside. Be humble to acknowledge when you need to step back. Let the process unfold to guide where you can add the most value.

As you embark on your journey with this Methodology, it is safe to assume you might face some challenges. First, take a deep breath:

Anchor bias

1. Relying too heavily on the first piece of information and using it to sway decisions.

This can look like

2. Gaining an initial insight and drawing conclusions to inform the overall research.

How to be mindful of this bias

3. Be detailed in documenting insights during the analysis and synthesis phase of the work, and take all insights into consideration before drawing conclusions.

challenges are completely normal and happen more often than you think. Take a look at the [solution bank](#) for some common challenges you may encounter. We also encourage you to connect with your network or others who may be curious about a similar topic and see what they have learned on their journey.

Notes

Your Role as a Researcher

Hi, my name is “Researcher”



As you prepare for your consultation, you may be stepping into the role of “researcher” for the first time. Regardless of how much research experience you may have, it is always beneficial to pause and reflect on what it means to be a researcher.

Responsibilities of a researcher

The role of researcher is a privilege that should not be taken lightly. You must embrace the responsibilities of the role and do your best to...

Demonstrate duty of care

You and your research team are accountable to the participants and communities engaged in your consultation. They are counting on you to conduct your consultation in an ethical, inclusive, and human-centred manner. As a researcher, you have a duty to demonstrate care and thoughtfulness in all aspects of the consultation. This includes sharing information so

participants can understand and provide consent. It also includes stewarding the process for how data is collected and used to ensure it is done so in ways that are both safe and appropriate for the context of your consultation. For participatory research, your duty includes involving participants (in a meaningful way) in the consultation process, as well as providing opportunities for them to exercise control over their data.

To make better decisions reflecting the needs of participants and/or the community, review the **Public Participation Spectrum**¹². It captures a series of participation goals (e.g., inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower) and may provide some inspiration for your consultation.

It is your responsibility to think through risks and implications for your consultation. As a researcher, you must be prepared for the possibility of the research not unfolding as originally intended. Spend time reflecting



on these questions. You and your research team may wish to take notes and document your discussion of these questions both now and throughout your consultation.

- What if I do not attract enough participants? Am I still able to gather enough data to draw informative and accurate insights? If not, what compromises might I make that would not threaten the integrity of the consultation?
- What do I anticipate or expect to discover from the research? Have I considered potential consequences of the research? Is there a possibility for the research data and/or insights to be used to harm the community? How might I address this?
- What metrics are appropriate for the consultation? What are the commonly used metrics for this type of research? Are there limitations or inequities built into them?
- How might participants hold me and/or the research team accountable? How can consent be an ongoing process?

Consider developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Letter of Intent (LOI) as a formal agreement between you and the participants. Even though it may not be a legally binding contract, it demonstrates good faith by articulating the benefits and expectations of everyone involved.

While these may seem like big questions, do not be overwhelmed. Thinking through various scenarios early on helps you prepare accordingly—which ultimately strengthens your work and promotes transparency about what you will do when things don't go as planned.

Understand power and privilege

One of the worst feelings in life is feeling powerless and whilst we can feel powerless, power teaches us that inherently, we are all powerful and we have agency. We just need to realise our potential. With this in mind, it is important to recognise the critical role of power in society—regardless of socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts— and how it intersects and operates within individuals, groups, and organisations. Power can take many forms. There are expressions of power (power over/with/to/within/under¹³), dimensions of power (visible or direct, hidden, and invisible or indirect), and power within explicit leadership roles (intrinsic or intimate and extrinsic or assigned/positional/earned authority¹⁴).

As a researcher, you must be aware of how power dynamics influence your engagement with participants. Equally important, you must reflect on and acknowledge the power and privilege you hold based on your identity and **positionality**.

Your role as a researcher offers you great influence over the outcomes of your consultation—including unintentional impacts. Your role also gives you power to ensure feminist and equity-centred approaches are upheld within your research. Privilege is not just what you have gone through, rather more-so what you have not had to go through.

With the goal of promoting self-determination and agency, you can redistribute power within your consultation by placing it into the hands of participants and their communities. Community-led data collection and analysis is the key to driving change and scaling collective impact. You can also use your power to protect the integrity of the evidence because you have first-hand access to the raw data.

As you consider your power and privilege in your role of “researcher”, spend time reflecting on these questions:

- Why am I the right person to lead this work? What are my responsibilities in the consultation process?
- What are some assumptions I have heading into this consultation?
- Why should the community trust me to steward this consultation process?
- Why is this consultation relevant and important?
- Who should be involved in the design of the research questions?
- Who collects the data?
- Who owns or exercises the right to the data?
- Who uses the data and for what purpose?
- What are some potential risks if the consultation is not intentionally designed and causes harm?

Address biases and stereotypes

Societal norms and life experiences contribute to our beliefs. And while our beliefs influence our judgments, they do not always drive our behaviours. A person can have sincere beliefs, and at the same time, exhibit behaviours such as harmful comments or actions resulting from unconscious or implicit **biases**.

Biases, in one form or another, are hardwired into the brains of all humans. There are many types of biases including affinity bias, similarity bias, conformity bias, efficiency bias, hindsight bias, confirmation bias, accessibility bias, negativity bias, etc. Unfortunately, no amount of unconscious bias training can completely cure a person from having biases. As a researcher, it is important to take time to become aware and acknowledge your biases by becoming aware of their

existence. Complete assessments to identify and understand the biases you hold so you can start to develop more empathy and move towards compassionate action. This is the key to re-training your brain to drive behaviours based on logic instead of biases¹⁵. Be sure to consider the impact of your positionality and intersectionality in relation to your biases.

There are many resources available to help uncover implicit biases and stereotypes. For example:

- Harvard University devised a set of tests called the **Implicit Association Test (IAT)**¹⁶. This test measures the strength of associations between concepts and evaluations or stereotypes.
- **Empathy Quotient (EQ)**¹⁷ test developed by Simon Baron-Cohen at ARC (the Autism Research Centre) at the University of Cambridge.
- Many organisations offer courses, such as **Microsoft’s courses on biases, inclusion, and allyship**¹⁸. Find one that is suitable for you based on your needs and region (such as virtual self-paced or supporting a local organisation).

Given you are a researcher for a feminist consultation, it is important to acknowledge the biases faced by women such as the **double-bind standards**. This form of stereotyping captures the disconnect between characteristics of women (descriptive bias) and expectations for how women ‘should’ behave

(prescriptive bias). For example, women in leadership positions may be judged based on whether she is caring, warm, sensitive, emotional, etc. If she does not exhibit these characteristics, she may be labelled as ruthless, abrupt, or brusque. Her competence may be judged in comparison to the performance and gender stereotypes of a male leader¹⁹. Throughout your consultation, watch out for instances of these widely-held biases against women and take action to address them.

Build relationships

As a researcher, you are strongly encouraged to develop trust-based relationships with participants and their communities. Begin with honesty, clear communications, and a transparent agenda to start fostering connections among those involved in your consultation. By engaging the wisdom of communities, you are creating the conditions for open dialogue. This dialogue is essential to support your research by checking partial truths, validating assumptions, and testing hypotheses. With your role as the researcher, be sure to shift power dynamics to foster equality when building relationships with stakeholders. You may need to reinforce **accountability** across all stakeholders to ensure the consultation offers reciprocal value to participants and their communities.

Be an ally

As a researcher, you can be an **ally** by using your privilege to advocate for a marginalised and/or underrepresented individual or group - you might be part of that community as well. Begin by understanding what it means to be an ally. The work of an ally is to stand beside others and amplify their voices—not speak for them. True allyship requires the sharing of power in order to build power. Be wary of performative allyship by understanding your motives.

Authentic and intentional allyship is rooted in a motivation to promote belonging and harmony. In your role as researcher, you have an opportunity to not only be an ally for participants but to also model for others what it looks like to be a good ally. Be intentional and authentic about how you show up for participants.



Safeguard against harm and trauma

One of a researcher's most critical responsibilities is to protect participants and their communities. As a researcher, you want to do everything in your power to ensure your consultation does not cause harm or trauma.

Harm (both intended and unintended) can look like:

- Exploiting communities by excavating insights and not sharing-back what was learned.
- Not giving participants or the community an opportunity to validate interpretations or respond to insights.
- Using and/or draining community resources, such as taking up influential community members' time.
- Driving the research team's agenda, being self-serving, and not demonstrating reciprocity and gratitude to participants.
- Conducting research that is irrelevant to the community.
- Triggering trauma within participants.

Your journey to not cause harm starts with being self aware. Take time to reflect on and understand the internalised oppression you hold within yourself. Doing so gives you the clarity to design and conduct your consultation in a manner that does not uphold systems of oppression.

When designing the consultation, try to minimise the effects of trauma at the onset. Within your research team, begin by building awareness about harm and trauma, and openly discuss your capacities for supporting participants when needed. If the research team is not experienced or equipped to deal with de-escalation, consider partnering with an individual or group who has the expertise to offer support.

As a researcher, you should be prepared for the possibility of triggering memories or emotions among your participants. Everyone has their own experiences with trauma. While you may take every precaution to avoid triggering participants, the reality is that it might still occur unintentionally or indirectly. If this happens, you must support them. While it is not your role to carry their burden, you can approach it with grace and protect them from the emotional intensity of their pain. When you can truly see your participants and extend your compassion, it can change the dynamics of the room and create a strong bond rooted in human connection.

The safe space you create and uphold in your consultation can be a refuge for belonging. This space can allow for dialogue and stories to be exchanged which can help heal wounds of the past. Depending on the topic you are researching, this space can be the foundation for building a trauma-informed community.

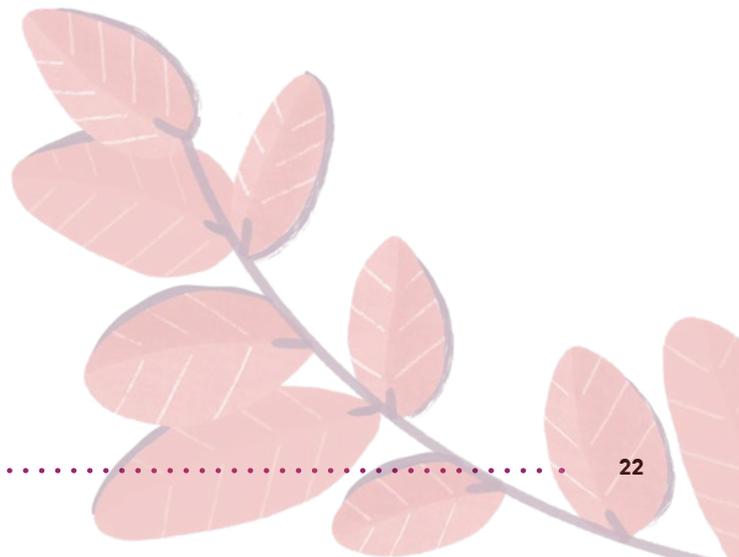
Read the room whether it is a virtual or in-person consultation. If a participant(s) feels triggered, you may opt to call for a break and allow for the participant and/or the research team to regroup.



Create the conditions for healing

Healing happens when people develop and feel a sense of connection and belonging to one another. This feeling blooms from shared experiences with those we trust and respect. And these shared experiences emerge from reciprocal relationships, kinship, and healthy connections.

As a researcher, you can help create the conditions for healing by providing a safe space. Within the safe space of your consultation, participants can make meaning and build trust together. You can support participants on their healing journeys by encouraging them to give themselves permission to feel their feelings. By engaging in reflection within a caring and supportive environment, participants can start to build resilience, develop their capacity for patience and forgiveness, and learn to regulate their reactions and behaviours—all key elements of healing.



Decentralise and decolonise research

Acknowledging **intersectionality and designing for diversity** is important in any research. Across the globe, there is still much work to be done to dismantle systems of oppression. One way to get us all closer to an equitable world is to decentralise and decolonise research. As a researcher, it is important for you to ensure the decisions feeding into your consultation are not biased toward Western cultures. Look for opportunities to include diverse and region-specific perspectives. For example, consider including other sources beyond solely academic literature to help shape your research. You might include oral traditions and orature (unwritten literature like songs, poems, proverbs, and stories). These unofficial forms are key in some cultures and can help broaden your research to be more representative of the world we live in.

In addition, the language you use as a researcher plays a role in decolonising research. As a researcher, you must be aware of the colonial past of the English language, and be mindful of how you use it to avoid upholding systems of oppression²⁰. Whenever possible, use language, terms, and dialects that are representative of the region and culture where your consultation is taking place.

Our intention is for future versions of this Methodology to be available in multiple languages. Throughout the Methodology in its current state, we identify some examples and suggestions for decentralising and decolonising language and research overall—but it is by no means exhaustive. **Reach out to us and share your experiences** in decolonising the way this Methodology is used!



Steps 4-6

Tending to your garden for insights and improvements to take shape

Learn

Plants mature and flowers are fully bloomed—sparking new ideas on how to improve your process.

Iterate

Fruit provides nourishment and seeds for a new cycle—inspiring iteration of your process to amplify your impact.

5

6

Implement

With time, seedlings sprout and appear above ground—bringing your consultation to life.

Sense Make

Seedlings become blossoms—insights from your consultation are analysed and synthesised.

3

4

Plan

It begins with a choice of which seeds to plant—charting the course for your consultation.

2

Design

With care, a seed develops a healthy root system—building the foundation of your consultation.

1

The Process

Steps 1-3

Nurturing the roots to form a strong foundation for growth



Step 1: Plan

It begins with a choice of which seeds to plant—charting the course for your research.

Planning is the first step in the Feminist Consultation Methodology. As tempting as it may be to dive right into actually doing the consultation, it is important to take time to plan. This sets the foundation for your entire consultation. It is where you establish important ideas like objectives, depth of engagement, and availability of resources. From here, you can determine the research methods most suitable for your consultation.

We created an [Action Plan Template](#) to support your planning process.

“It was an empowering process to be able to co-develop tools that can be contextualised and used by women and young women within and outside the YWCA movement.”



Naomi Woyengu,
Papua New Guinea

Define goals and outcomes

Before anything else, get clear on what you want to achieve with the consultation. Outcomes are specific and measurable statements letting you know when you reached the desired state. Outcome statements describe the changes you expect to see as a result of your actions. Ask yourself (or your research team) a few questions to reveal your high-level [goals](#) and outcomes:

- What is/are the objective(s) of the consultation? It could be about raising awareness, fundraising, [advocacy](#), communications, etc.
- What outcomes do I want to achieve at a local level? How does it fit into your bigger organisational strategy?
- What do I want to achieve at a global level (if applicable)?
- What do I know about engaging participants? How might I ensure participants stay motivated and involved?
- What do I know about including young women’s perspectives in my work or the work of my organisation?



Once you discuss your outcomes at a high level, you can then set more concrete goals. Defining goals and outcomes give the research team a clear sense of purpose. Transparency is key to fostering buy-in and setting expectations across the team so everyone can work together. You may be familiar with SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Timely) as a way to frame the details of your goals. In addition to SMART goals, consider using two other goal frameworks:

WISE goals

WISE goals can show the readiness and excitement levels among your research team.

W	I	S	E
Willingness	Inspirational	Self-Transformational	Equitable
Are you and/or your team willing to work toward the goal—even if it means possibly making some sacrifices?	Does the goal inspire and energise you and/or your team? Or is it based on external pressures that the goal should be achieved?	Does the goal serve as a natural next step leading to growth and impact?	Do you and/or your team feel agency and empowerment to achieve the goal?

FAST goals²¹

FAST goals can drive specific strategic priorities for the consultation.

F	A	S	T
Frequently Discussed	Ambitious	Specific	Transparent
Are you prepared to discuss the goal on an ongoing basis to review progress, allocate resources, and provide feedback?	Is the goal difficult but not impossible to achieve?	Can the goal be translated into concrete metrics and milestones that create clarity on how to measure progress?	Can you and/or your team ensure the goal and its current status is publicly known?



Gather the team

The research team

Bring together your research team and decide how you will work together. Or think through how you will work if you are a team of one.

This might include deciding who will make up the research team and responsibilities for each role. You might also think about approval processes (who needs to provide approvals and how much lead time is necessary to get them) and communications (when to communicate, in what form, and how often). Finally, consider any external help you may need.

Advisory group or committee

You may choose to explore opportunities to engage additional stakeholders in your consultation. An advisory group or committee can be an effective way to increase awareness and accountability while embedding community ownership. Note that this does not need to be a formal group of experts but can be formal allies or supporters who have something valuable (expertise, knowledge, lived experience and so on) to contribute. This speaks directly to the Methodology being anchored in a feminist approach.

When considering whether an advisory group or committee makes sense for your consultation, ask yourself and/or your research team:

- How might we involve community members in the consultation beyond being research participants? What would it look like for participants to act in an advisory capacity by sharing expertise and being a sounding board with vested interests in the community?
- Are there knowledge and skills gaps that can be filled through meaningful and reciprocal knowledge transfer?
- How might we encourage intergenerational engagement where women of all ages can share their wisdom and experiences to inform the consultation process?

Map out resources

Build a work plan, timeline, and budget to map out the resources needed for your consultation. See the [Action Plan](#) and [Budget Template](#) for guidance.

Things to keep in mind

Timeline

- Align your timeline with priorities beyond your consultation. Think about the priorities in the lives of the research team and participants. Consider how these priorities might impact the timing of your consultation. Also think about approval processes within your timeline.
- Build in buffer time to accommodate for unexpected delays. A little bit of wiggle room in your timeline can go a long way!



Sometimes adding buffer time is not possible. If this is the case, be sure to call out potential risks and look for opportunities to break out the research steps. You do not want to compromise the integrity of the research because you are prioritising expediency bias.



Budget

- Consider the financial implications of your work plan. Look at how many people you wish to involve and over what period of time. Typically, the more people involved, the higher the costs.
- Develop a draft budget based on your work plan and timeline. Then, meet with key colleagues or partners to discuss available resources. You may need to revise your budget based on these discussions. If no internal resources are available, you may need to identify other sources. For example, grants from foundations or governmental institutions aligning with your research objectives. You might find individuals or businesses to develop **partnerships** or sponsorships for the research. You might ask for guidance from someone with fundraising skills. Look within your organisation or network for help with grant writing and budgeting.
- If possible, align your consultation with an existing programme in your organisation. Doing so may enable you to tap into an existing budget. (As an added bonus, this is a great way to find participants who already know your organisation.)
- Cover any expenses required for participants to engage in your consultation. This may include things like travel, food, or internet costs.

- Depending on your budget, consider offering incentives or honourariums to participants. Paying an honourarium or incentive shows your gratitude for participants' time and insights. For example, enter Survey participants into a prize draw after submitting their responses. Or you provide a meal for participants who attend a Focus Group Discussion. These types of incentives may seem like simple gestures. And yet, they can mean a lot to some participants! A partner or sponsor may help cover some or all of the costs of incentives or honorariums in exchange for recognition.
- Consider including a skill-building element for the research team and participants. For example, you may gather focus group participants twice. The intent of this Methodology is to foster an empowering experience for everyone involved!

Prepare to monitor

Time and resources are precious ingredients for your consultation. Monitoring and reporting allows you to make the most of your resources. And while it may sound impersonal and technical, monitoring provides clarity on your progress. It helps ensure your consultation maintains a participant-centred approach.

We created two templates to support your monitoring and reporting activities. The **[Progress Report Template](#)** can be used for regular reporting. The **[Project Tracking and Review Template](#)** can be used during and at the end of the consultation. Feel free to change these templates based on your monitoring and reporting needs.



Monitoring and reporting is useful even if you are the only researcher. It is good practise to share updates on your work. Consider sharing updates with participants or other teams in your organisation or group.



Setting the foundation to stay on track

At the start of the consultation, take time to align on your team's monitoring and reporting needs. Most importantly, agree as a team about the role of monitoring in your consultation. The purpose of monitoring and reporting is to help achieve your research objectives while upholding feminist principles. Then, be clear about what is being measured (see the [SMARTIE Guidelines](#)). Make sure the team aligns on what success looks like for your measurement targets.

Once everyone is on the same page about why to monitor progress, decide on the details. Who is responsible for providing reports? Who is responsible for receiving reports? What is the frequency for updates? What is the format for updates?

Monitoring and reporting isn't solely reserved for major milestones and outcomes. Even if you think a task is straightforward, it can be useful to provide ongoing updates on its progress. These updates might take place synchronously (when the team receives updates at the same time) or asynchronously (when the team receives updates at different times, often in writing). For example, you might choose to host a weekly project check-in meeting with your team. Or you might track daily tasks on a digital board like Trello or Asana. These are simply a few examples—use whatever cadence and mechanisms work best

for your research team. Regular reporting provides transparency and keeps your consultation on track.

Knowing the next step to take

A feminist perspective places equal value on the research process and the end results. Monitoring and reporting lets you reflect during the consultation as well as at its end. It offers you the relevant information to understand what is working and what is not.

And with that, it places you in a better position to take the next step. Perhaps the next step is pivoting a task. Or perhaps it is celebrating the completion of a milestone. Or perhaps it is debriefing on the success of a research method to carry forward the learnings. Whatever steps you need to take, monitoring and reporting provides the evidence to guide you.

It is important to be flexible based on what you learn from monitoring and reporting. That said, find the right balance. Constantly altering your approach can negatively impact the quality of your results.



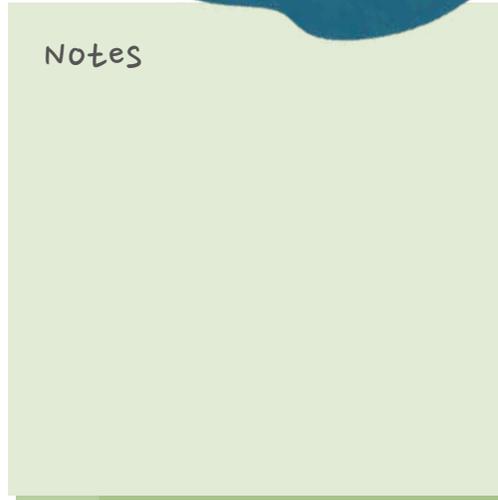
Making sure you have the data you need to take action

By monitoring your progress throughout your consultation, you are in a better position to have the data you need by the end of your research. The ongoing efforts embed accountability with the research. It also ensures your process, data, and insights are all in alignment with your end goal—be it policy advocacy, campaigning, or other efforts.

Tips for monitoring and reporting

- Support the team in communicating regularly with each other, partners, and participants. Start your monitoring and reporting activities at the beginning of your consultation to build momentum.
- Encourage everyone to ask for help and admit mistakes. We are all learning, and documenting the journey is helpful for continuous improvement.
- Praise work done well and keep criticism constructive.
- Delegate responsibilities if needed to maintain smooth reporting. For example, when someone needs to be away for any length of time.
- Keep reporting mechanisms active through to the end of the consultation. It is easy to let reporting slip. Ensure everyone knows the importance of reporting. Help them understand how it contributes to the success of the consultation.

Notes





Step 2: Design

With care, a seed develops a healthy root system—building the foundation of your consultation.

The second step in the Feminist Consultation Methodology is Design. This step is about taking a feminist approach to design all aspects of your consultation. Here is where you decide on research questions and select your research methods. Design is an exciting and dynamic step where creativity runs free!

Design for...

Design is an act of power rooted in making decisions and taking action. And we are always designing “for something”—whether we are conscious of it or not.

When approached with intention and care, we can increase our chances of “designing for good.” In other words, we can make decisions with a deep understanding of how they might impact the people and world around us. We can strive to create meaningful change through our design choices. Or better yet, we can design by learning and creating alongside those closest to the issues. And by doing so, we can put the power of design rightfully back into their hands.

“I really enjoyed being part of a project with women from different nationalities, to learn about their different perspectives and...work together in creating a better and more equal world....”



Natalia Arenas,
United Kingdom
(originally from Colombia)

This Methodology focuses on three areas of design:

- [Design for feminist research principles](#)
- [Design for clear language](#)
- [Design for safety](#)

Use the tips shared here to guide the design of your consultation. Refer to these as you move through the sub-steps of design to help you be as feminist, clear, and safe as possible.



Design for feminist research principles

Focus on community impact

Always be mindful of the impact your consultation may have on the community.

Foster a collaborative relationship between researcher and participant

If possible, collaborate with some of the participants as co-researchers. Work together to adapt the Methodology by using their ideas to produce new insights. Consider training co-researchers and other women to help gather data and analyse results. Remember when working with co-researchers to uphold trust, respect, and transparency. Also remember to be mindful of power dynamics. This is critical when working as part of an organisation with intergenerational teams and/or few young people.

Ensure gender inclusivity

Being inclusive means eliminating the barriers in the way of people being who they are. Be intentional when designing research activities to ensure participants feel safe, valued, and respected. For example, consider whether you need to ask for a participant's gender, and if so, ask the participant to self-identify (instead of asking them to choose from a limited list of options which may not represent their identity)—also known as [gender sensitivity](#).

Gather and protect data with respect

Thoughtful use of data enables community empowerment. A respectful approach to [data governance](#), [sovereignty](#), and [stewardship](#) promotes community-led decision making, equity, and [transformative justice](#).

There are plenty of examples of how feminist consultation has been put into practise from grassroots to global efforts. For example, the [UN Women have documented their research in a Global Study](#)²² demonstrating women's equal and meaningful participation in peace and security efforts.

Anchor efforts on research objectives

Always ensure you are answering your research question(s). Refer to where you first defined your research questions (see the [Research Question Development Template](#)).

Combine research methods (when applicable)

The three research methods outlined in this Methodology are not interdependent. Instead, they can be singular or combined with one another.

Double down on documentation

Save all notes. You never know when you (or another stakeholder) may need to reference it.

Create field guides

Develop field guides to support the implementation of your selected research method(s). Field guides promote consistency while offering flexibility to adapt in real time (see the [Focus Group Discussion + Storytelling Field Guide](#) and [Interview Field Guide](#)).



Foster safe spaces and respect

Promote dignity by conducting your consultation using the [World YWCA's safe space](#)²³ framework.

Host joint work sessions

Conduct joint work sessions with participants. Work together to interpret and reflect on the findings. This results in many perspectives helping to shape the findings.

Encourage diversity of thought

Involve voices from different groups to embrace diversity of thought. Doing so helps achieve a more complete vision of reality. (See [Sampling](#) for details on how to select different groups to be part of your consultation.)

Share knowledge and skill development opportunities

Build in opportunities to share knowledge and train participants on how to use the Methodology. Doing so helps develop skills in young women. It also ensures the Methodology can be repeated with sustained impact.

Build and tap into support networks

Consider using messaging apps to create an informal network for your participants. Creating networks between participants can contribute to trust building, collaboration, and knowledge sharing.

Design for clear language

How you speak matters. Language choice and clarity can both impact the success of your consultation. What you say and how you say it can influence the overall experience for your consultation. This is especially true when engaging participants.

Use these tips to guide you in using clear language in your consultation. Then, read the [Important Words and Phrases](#) section to learn about the terms from this Methodology.

Acknowledge the power of language

It is important to acknowledge the power of language. There has been much work done to democratise language. In other words, ensuring language is accessible, inclusive, and representative of its audience. Despite these best efforts, language can still carry ill effects. Language can represent political positions, and be controversial.

Translate academic language, heavy jargons, and concepts into easy to understand and relevant descriptions. Keep in mind the needs of a wide audience, such as literacy levels, non-native language speakers, etc. It is crucial for participants to see themselves reflected in the language used in the research. This is key to ensure the insights are accurate and avoid causing exclusion or inadvertent harm.

Understand the context

Some terms in this Methodology may not capture the reality of all regions and contexts. Or some terms may be controversial or triggering for certain



contexts. Take the time to understand the context of the space in which you wish to do your consultation. Then use this understanding to guide your choice and use of words.

Adjust to fit the context

Adjust the Methodology's language based on your context. Be sure to maintain the original spirit of the text. Do so while ensuring everyone feels comfortable and safe with the terminology.

Recognise intersectionality

Your language must reflect the intersectional identities and experiences of your participants. This is especially true if your consultation is global. Or if your consultation involves women from different walks of life. Be aware of **sexual dichotomy** and use **gender-sensitive** language reflecting socio-economic, political, religious, and cultural diversity. You may wish to engage an expert or someone who has nuanced insight to help you craft language.

Leverage digital translation tools (with caution)

Digital translation tools (such as [Google Translate](#)²⁴) can be helpful for working in different languages. That said, these tools have their limitations. If translating the Methodology using a digital tool, be sure to validate it. Engage a speaker of the language to check if the translation keeps the intent of the original text.

Be mindful of similarities and differences of languages

If working across many languages using translated materials, keep in mind the similarities and differences of languages. Remember there are some words with no equivalent translation. There are also some words that sound the same but mean completely different things.

Keep it simple

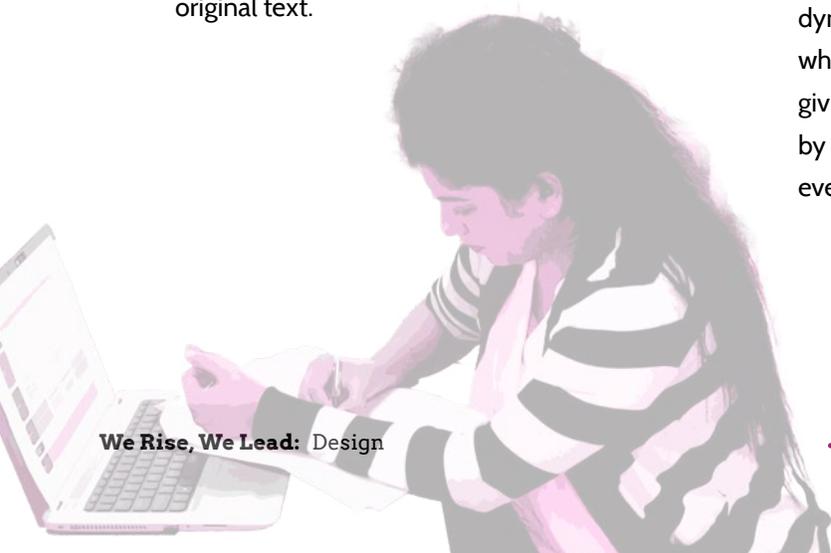
Use simple language to reach the greatest number of people. Maintain a neutral tone and avoid slang whenever possible. Use local dialects when working locally and consider more widely understood language when working across different contexts.

Use empowering definitions

Carefully consider the choice of definitions to ensure all participants understand. This is particularly crucial when dealing with sensitive issues. Spend time to seek advice and decide on the best definitions for your participants. Your goal is for all participants to understand and feel comfortable sharing. When deciding on definitions, be mindful of deeply rooted dynamics like power and gender inequality.

Separate the "I" from the "we"

Use words to make participants and co-researchers feel part of the process. Be mindful of power dynamics and focus on using "we" instead of "I" when talking about the consultation. But when giving personal opinions, speak in the first person by saying "I believe/I think..." This highlights how everyone has a unique opinion to share.



Refer to people the way in which they want to be referred

Show respect by using the language people ask you to use. For example, recognise non-binary people with the pronouns they use. Always bear in mind language is both a descriptor and a generator of reality.

Assess the language of your tools before using

After designing your **data collection tools**, spend some time validating them. Assess the language by reviewing key elements such as vocabulary, tone of voice, clarity, relevance to context, and connection to your research objectives. Make edits to ensure your tools are as useful and relevant as possible.

Design for safety

Principles of Feminist Safe Spaces and Security

A core focus of this Methodology is ensuring safety and security. To be feminist means to nurture safe spaces and experiences. Security means promoting individual and collective care. Be sure to care for everyone involved in your consultation. This includes your participants, research team, partners, and other stakeholders.

Use these safe space principles to guide you. (And



remember, these tips apply to both in-person or remote consultations!)

Do no harm

Above all else, make sure you do no harm. Before starting, consider the impact of your consultation. Think about how it might harm the community and the participants. Think about how it might impact the rights or dignity of your participants. Then design your consultation to mitigate any negative impacts. For example, a consultation with

women who are victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV) must mitigate the negative impact of recounting sensitive experiences. If it does not seem possible to avoid harm in your consultation, then you need to rethink your approach.

Be mindful of how your research activities might bring up experiences of **microaggressions** faced by women in society. While these transgressions may be small, they can compound over time to cause tension that is emotionally draining to confront. Depending on your research topic, it may be intentional for you to explore these topics. If this is the case, consider addressing these topics directly and create space for participants to process and share.

Embrace intersectionality

Ensure your consultation stands for the rights and empowerment of all women. Consider



the differences among women in all aspects of their identities. These differences may include radicalisation, sexuality, economic status, nationality, religion, and language²⁵. Then, design your consultation to speak to the different realities of women. This helps to avoid further harm or excluding one group of women over another.

Engage with community leaders

Build alliances with community leaders. Take the time early on to explain what your research is about and how you would like to involve the community. Gain their knowledge of the local context, approval, and input. Community leaders are a source of wisdom for how to approach the community in a sensitive way.

Adapt language

Be thoughtful about using words and phrases that make sense for the local context. Familiar and easy-to-understand language helps participants feel comfortable and safe throughout your consultation. Be sure to adapt the language in your data collection tools and other research materials. (See the [Design for clear language](#) section.)

Eliminate power dynamics

Remove power dynamics as much as possible between the research team and participants. Equalising power helps participants feel comfortable and safe to express sensitive ideas. A good practise for removing power dynamics is through co-creation. This is when the research team and participants collaboratively shape the work.

Understand your identity and positionality as it may influence how you engage with participants. Your power and privilege can be misperceived if you do not own how you come across to participants.

Foster open communication

Create ways for participants to share feedback and concerns with the research team. Foster open communication by accepting feedback with gratitude. The goal is to create an environment where participants are willing to share. It is important to know if anyone feels or felt uncomfortable in any way. This includes before, during or after your consultation. Keep in mind not everyone is fond of giving feedback. It may be helpful to provide ways to gather anonymous feedback.

You may wish to gather post-engagement feedback using a short survey. Refer to the [Survey Design](#) section of the methodology.

Show gratitude to and recognise participants

Find out how to recognise your participants in a way that is meaningful to them. Recognition for participants' time and contributions may be financial (see the [Incentives and Honourariums](#) section) or through other means. Get creative by offering networking opportunities, [capacity building](#), a certificate, or reference letter. Be prepared to share your recognition with participants soon after their participation.

Identify supporting resources

Identify resources to provide support for your participants. These resources may include



psychological support. For example, you might share a hotline number or app for participants to get support if your research is on mental health. Remember, offering resources does not replace the principle of “do no harm.”

Choose a physically safe space (for in-person consultations)

If meeting in person, always choose a safe place. Select somewhere with appropriate accessibility conditions so everyone can participate equally. You might consider meeting at a medical centre, school, or community building. Avoid places where there is little to no privacy or where participants may feel uncomfortable sharing their experiences.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a promise or commitment to not share specific details or information with anyone outside of the research team. It is especially important for details that may reveal the identity of participants. Confidentiality protects participants (including their information, identity, and stories) and the research team.

We strongly recommend discussing confidentiality with all stakeholders on your team. Ensure everyone is on the same page about confidentiality and roles in upholding it.

One way to ensure confidentiality of information is to develop participant codes to **de-identify data** (removing personal identifiers such as name, contact information, etc.). First, create a document stored separately from your research notes. Then, list your participants’ names with a code next to each name. Now, write this code instead of the participant’s name on all your research notes.

When facilitating a remote session, it is also crucial to uphold confidentiality. This means ensuring no one takes and shares screenshots of the group without consent. When confidentiality cannot be met, you must tell participants. In other words, you must let participants know in advance if you are unable to ensure their identity will not be linked to what they share.

Privacy and data protection

At the beginning of your consultation, you should consider security measures around privacy and data protection. Depending on your research topic and the design of the consultation activities, you may be collecting confidential and sensitive information. Maintaining privacy and protecting data is a team effort and the responsibility should not fall upon one individual. We encourage you to do your due diligence to understand any established standards to follow for privacy and/or data protection based on your region or context. As a researcher, you need to responsibly manage and steward data to protect the evidence you are collecting. Protection and data compliance can look like:

- Scrubbing and/or encrypting the data to ensure the information is not identifiable.
- Limiting access to the data to only the research team and/or the participants unless explicit consent is provided.
- Securely storing and using the collected information for an agreed upon timeframe and then destroying all data afterward.
- Sharing/signing a code of conduct/an agreement outlining that the collected data will not be shared or misused and the participant data will be protected.





Consider the type of security protection used on your technological devices (e.g., mobile device, computer, or laptop).

Some may have an option for a password, touch ID or even face ID. Think about what will provide you with the greatest security and protection.

Depending on your region, there may be important considerations to protect the safety of both yourself and your participants. Take time early on to learn about:

- Legal obligations about access to information. Make sure you are aware of your obligations. For example, in Canada, [FIPPA \(Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act\)](#)²⁶ and in [India, Right to Information](#)²⁷.
- The political environment where there may be surveillance around information that is shared on social media or on the internet. This might mean you need to be creative in how questions are framed or seek advisors who can help guide the process. Remember, your safety comes first.
- Your rights. Knowing your rights is essential to prepare for any situation you may find yourself in.

Pandemic and other public safety considerations

Now more than ever, public safety is an important consideration for your consultation. Even more so if you are planning to host in-person research activities. Follow all public health measures in your area. These measures might include:

- Wearing a mask and gloves.
- Providing masks, gloves, hand sanitiser, and other safety items to the participants.
- Encouraging frequent hand washing.
- Maintaining the required social distance based on recommendations from local health authorities.
- Opening a collective care space at the beginning of the session. Invite participants to share their pandemic experiences and support each other.
- Considering hybrid or online sessions instead of in-person activities.





There may be other safety precautions to consider. Depending on your region, it may not be acceptable for women to engage in conversation. Ensure you are aware of cultural and regional differences to plan accordingly.

Well-being and burnout of participants and research team

As feminist changeleaders, the weight of our work can be heavy and challenging—on top of balancing our personal obligations. Mental exhaustion and burnout are prevalent in activism, and are even more common among individuals with intersecting identities²⁸.

Taking care of the mental well-being of ourselves, our team, and our communities is crucial to give us all the strength to continue ‘showing up’ to do the work we do. We must be vigilant to protect our well-being. This starts by recognising the signs of stress and burnout, and building the habits to seek support.

Stress is our body’s response to our situation or surroundings. Stress looks different from person to person but ultimately too much stress can lead to burnout. Someone who is experiencing burnout may show signs of one or more symptoms including mental and/or physical exhaustion, irritability, increased anxiety, depression, and more²⁹. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic and other political realities have amplified many inequities and imbalances, and thus further widened the gender burnout gap³⁰—meaning more women than ever are experiencing burnout.

To avoid and counteract burnout, we need to support one another. Support can be in the form of listening, providing guidance, and sharing resources to name a few. By taking an intersectional approach

and embracing feminine characteristics of nurturing and care, we can promote restorative practises to foster collective healing in our communities. Look at hosting a virtual/ in person safe space if needed.

Within your consultation, you have the opportunity to safeguard the well-being of your participant and research team. In the design of your research activities, you can be thoughtful of the kind of energy you are asking participants to share with you. For example, you can right-size your activities for leaders and influential women who are often asked to speak on behalf of their communities and thus typically carry a heavier load. Or you can seek out other voices from the community to engage.

Regardless of who you engage, be sure to:

- Hold space and acknowledge the realities of your region, industry, and current events.
- Be mindful of when you engage people as they have personal lives and may be juggling many realities.
- Demonstrate compassion and empathy through active listening.
- Considering hybrid or online sessions instead of in-person activities.



Develop questions and key asks

Developing questions and key asks is a critical piece of the design step. This is where you look at your research objectives and determine the best questions to ask. We talk about “key asks” because there is never enough time to ask every question on your wish list. You must be strategic in narrowing down your questions. Focus only on what is most crucial to learn about from your participants.

Here are some questions to help you and your research team developing your questions:

Here are some ‘How might I...’ questions to help guide you as you develop your questions:

- ... narrow my options to choose a specific topic?
- ... find out what I want to know?
- ... make my questions interesting for participants to answer?
- ... make my questions easily understandable for participants?
- ... frame the questions through a feminist lens?

As you formulate your research questions, it is crucial to embed intersectionality in every step. Be aware **data bias exists as we live in a world designed for men**³¹. Intersections of race, gender identity, abilities, age, etc. are amplified by the gender data gap.

We created a [Research Question Development Template](#) to use as you work through the types of questions to ask.

How to know what to ask

Follow these steps to create refined questions for your consultation:

Choose an interesting topic

Your consultation is something you will invest a significant amount of time in. With this in mind, make sure to pick an interesting topic for your consultation. Choose a topic connected to your passion or the needs of your organisation or cause. Describe the topic in a catchy manner using simple words. The topic should not be vague. Specificity is key to correctly frame your questions.

Conduct desk research on the topic

Begin with online or desk research (meaning research you do from a desk instead of in the field) to learn more about your topic. Read articles or journals about your topic to see what research already exists. You can also connect with real-life experts, though this will likely take more time.

A good way to start is with an online search engine, like Google. Search for different combinations of keywords related to your topic.



World YWCA

feminist methodology research

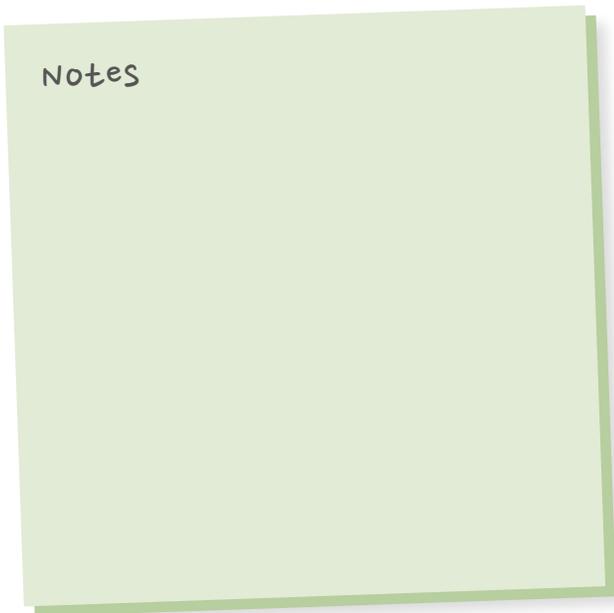


Search



Every online search engine has its own ways to make your search results more specific:

- Write specific statements if you have a clear idea of your topic. For example, “reproductive needs of young women in eastern Europe”.
- Enter keywords into the search bar with quotation marks. For example, you might enter “young women, mental health, Asia, COVID-19, research”. This helps refine your search and retrieves exact words or sets of words you entered.
- Use the minus or dash (“-”) sign to filter unwanted words in a search. There are various modifiers you can use to refine the search results. Learn more on the [Google Guide](#)³² or [Google’s Search Operator](#)³³ pages.
- Use [Google Trends](#)³⁴ to learn more about the popular questions related to your topic.
- Search for the names of academic articles and subject experts related to your topic. There are often literature reviews readily available. Always double-check that the sources cited are valid.



If this research is a part of a project, make sure to embed it into the larger objectives.



Identify subtopics and gaps in the information

Look at the information collected during your desk research to begin identifying subtopics. In doing so, you may note information gaps that give you a clearer idea of where to focus your research. Organising the subtopic and gaps into themes to help you make your selection.

Choose the subtopic(s) that interest you the most

Choose a subtopic that interests you. Be sure to focus on a maximum of three subtopics to maintain focus for your consultation.

Develop a research question for your subtopics

Test out many questions to explore your selected subtopics. Ask yourself open-ended “how” and “why” questions about your subtopic. Then, narrow your focus to choose one question for each subtopic. This will be your main research question for this subtopic.



A research question typically asks:

- What happens if...?
- What have we changed because of...?
- What are the effects of...?

Build a list of sub-questions

Once you define the research question(s), you can create more detailed sub-questions. Use the information gaps you identified earlier to build a list of sub-questions. Write one simple question for each information gap.

Evaluate your questions

Review your list of sub-questions to find the best questions for your consultation.

Use these **SMARTIE** guidelines to evaluate your questions:



S	M	A	R	T	I	E
Specify	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-Bound	Inclusive	Equitable
Is the question researchable or consultative? Is it too broad or too narrow?	Is it measurable? Will asking this question lead to data that can be supported or contradicted?	Is it realistic considering the available time-frame and resources?	Will asking this question lead to data that can build knowledge or insight into real-life situations?	Does it include a clear deadline?	Does it include traditionally marginalised and/or underrepresented people in a way that shares power?	Does it include an element of fairness and social justice that seeks to address systemic injustice, inequity, or oppression?



Refine your questions

Refine the best questions from your SMARTIE evaluation. Engage potential co-researchers and non-team members to review the questions with fresh eyes.

Test and adjust your questions based on the following criteria:

- Is the question clear?
- Is the question focused? Will this question get the data or information you want?
- Is the question complex? Will this question get data that cannot currently be found elsewhere?
- Is it an open-ended “how” or “why” question? Is the question broad enough so it cannot be answered with a simple “yes” or “no”.

Refine your questions

Your research question

Do young women use Facebook to organise their work?

Is the question complex?

No, meaning it won't provide enough data to reveal something new about your topic.

Is it an open-ended “how” and “why” question?

No, this is a “yes” or “no” question. This means it won't encourage participants to provide details.

Refine it

How are young women, ages 15-30, in Africa using technology (e.g. social media, crowdfunding, blogs, mobile phones, etc.) to organise, find resources, and raise awareness of their work?

Let's look at an example

Let us assume you are trying to research the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on young women under 30 years, below the poverty line in Nepal. A good subtopic might include the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health. Your desk research might show a gap in young women having access to safe spaces for getting mental health support. In this example, you might consider sub-questions such as:

- What kinds of safe spaces can these young women access?
- How can we provide safe spaces without harming their lives?
- Do these young women have access to the internet?
- How can I involve these young women as participants in this consultation?

Save your refined questions for easy access

Collect your refined questions in one place: your Questionnaire (see the [Questionnaire Template](#)).

The language used to articulate your research questions can be helpful for other aspects of your consultation. For example, you can repurpose it when crafting invitations for participants or when writing your findings report.



Choose who and how many to engage

Create a sample

When choosing who to engage as participants, it is important to understand the difference between “**target population**” and “**sample**.” A sample provides a manageable number of participants to represent your target population. Using a sample is especially helpful when time or resources are tight, or when your target population is large. Be aware the research team is not tokenise the participants.

Be thoughtful about who you engage. Researchers in positions of power have a tendency of **over-researching** certain groups. This can look like tokenising experiences of communities as ‘interesting social issues’, reproducing previous research, and/or producing findings with little to no accountability to participants.

Additionally, an ‘outsider’ researcher can sometimes inadvertently harm communities by creating more difficulties for communities as a result of the research process.

There are many ways to create a sample. See **Sampling** for details and instructions. Here are a few questions to help you think about sampling for your consultation:

- How might I work with participants to get the best results?
- What challenges might participants face in taking part in this research?
- How might I check with participants to learn about what would motivate them to take part in this research?
- Am I including diverse voices and different perspectives? Do I have the capacity to include more diverse voices?
- Am I giving voice to those who are not usually consulted?
- What are some power dynamics that could be at play when forming my sample? What power or privilege do I hold? How might I wield it and yield it?

BA-The timing, budget, and the method(s) you plan to use in your consultation will shape the number of participants to include. Consider why you want to engage a certain number of participants, and remember that perhaps **five voices are sufficient for you to draw insights**³⁵.

Be inclusive and intersectional

Think about your sample through the lens of **intersectionality**. Commit to engaging diverse and hard to reach audiences. This might include reaching out to specific people who may be underrepresented based on one or more aspect of their identity (e.g., ethnicity, race, economic class, caste, age, physical impairment, religion, sexual orientation, etc.). Consider including people across



various age groups to hear the perspectives of different generations.

Remember when trying to engage individuals from diverse backgrounds, it is important to understand what barriers they face and how you might mitigate them. This is especially true for people who are marginalised or underrepresented. Typically, marginalisation is a result of systemic discrimination, and all efforts should be taken to reduce the discriminatory barriers they face. For example, racialised populations are more likely to live below the poverty line. As such, if your budget permits, consider providing a meal, paying for their transportation to and from your session, and offering an honourarium.

Decide on data

Data may seem like a scientific term but fear not! Data is simply the collection of facts, words, and numbers from your consultation.

When deciding how to collect data in your consultation, be sure to consider a variety of factors. Things like convenience, time, and resources can have a big impact on data collection. Be sure to think about the short-term and long-term value of the data collection approach(es). Consider the bigger picture when it comes to data collection. This may help you identify opportunities for scaling the research to a wider audience. Or it might reveal opportunities for re-administering the research in the future.



Re-administering the research in the future lets you see change over a longer period.



There are two approaches for collecting data: qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative (words)

Qualitative research is about the collection of words, descriptions, and stories. It is used to understand individual experiences, thoughts, opinions, and trends. Qualitative research creates the conditions for dialogue, discussion, and clarifying questions. Qualitative research activities include but are not limited to interviews with open-ended questions, focus group discussions, and **storytelling**.

You may need interpretation support for some qualitative research activities. For example, when participants do not all speak the same language. Be sure to factor this cost into your budget.



Quantitative (numbers)

Quantitative research is about the collection of numbers and statistics. It is used to help provide substantive evidence to support your research. Most often, insights from quantitative research appear as percentages or ratios. Quantitative research activities include but are not limited to surveys, experiments, and interviews with close-ended questions (such as questions requiring a “yes” or “no” answer, multiple choice, or a rating scale).



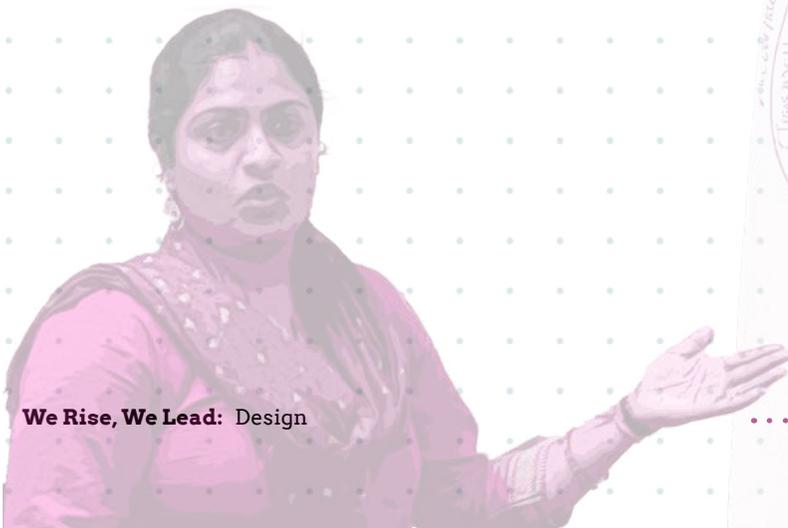
comparing qualitative and quantitative

Qualitative (words)

- Seeks to explore, explain, and understand a situation or phenomenon. Seeks to uncover “what” and “why.”
- Data is in the form of narratives, words, stories, pictures, or objects.
- Data is gathered through interviews, focus group discussions, observations, content analysis, etc.
- Uses open-ended questions.
- Research tools are designed to be flexible. Tools can emerge or evolve as the research unfolds.
- Results may be interpreted and presented subjectively. This means the results may include bias and opinions of the research team. As such, it is crucial to validate your assumptions, check your biases, and be aware of your power and privilege. All these factors may impact the interpretation of results.

Quantitative (numbers)

- Seeks to confirm a statement (hypothesis) about a situation or phenomenon. Seeks to uncover “how many/much/often.”
- Data is in the form of numbers and statistics.
- Data is gathered using experiments, surveys, equipment, etc.
- Uses closed-ended questions (such as questions requiring a “yes” or “no” answer, multiple choice, or a rating scale).
- Research tools are designed to be highly structured. Tools are agreed upon in advance of the research.
- Results are documented using objective language.



Try a hybrid approach

Qualitative and quantitative research each serve a purpose—and they can be even more powerful when paired together! A hybrid approach can lead to deep insights and a more fulsome picture.

Be mindful of demographics

Demographic data helps to understand a population based on factors such as age, income, gender, etc. In research, demographics are often considered to be essential. They are also often captured in a seemingly straightforward manner with minimal thought to the nuances of asking people to share intimate details about themselves.

When it comes to demographics, it is best to consider whether or not you actually need to capture this information for your consultation. If deemed essential based on the context of your consultation, be mindful about the type of demographic data you seek.

For example, traditional research demographics captured sex and gender as binaries (male or female and man or woman). That said, perceptions of sex and gender have evolved over time across cultures. Today, sex is related to biological factors and gender (male, female, or intersex) to self-identity (man, woman, non-binary and two-spirit³⁶). If collecting gender statistics is important for your research, be sure to have inclusive data collection practises to accommodate people who are transgender, non-binary, and two-spirited.

Similarly, be aware that demographic data might not give you an accurate picture of the situation. For example, data on socio-economic status can provide an inaccurate representation of household income and access to resources by different members of a family.

Notes



Explore research method(s)

Now comes the fun part: exploring and selecting the research method(s)! This Methodology is based on three complementary research methods for engaging participants:

1. **Surveys:** A research method using a list of questions to gather data from a particular group of people. Surveys rely on tools (either digital or hardcopy) to collect responses.
2. **Focus Group Discussions (FGD) + Storytelling:** A research method to spark discussion in a group. Focus groups provide a safe space for participants to share with one another. Within a FGD, storytelling is an activity where participants use narratives and anecdotes to describe ideas.
3. **Interviews:** A research method using conversation to gather data from one participant at a time. Interviews often include open-ended questions and accompanying “why” or “how” questions.

You can choose one, two, or all three methods to use in your consultation. Read on to learn more about each method, why you might consider using it in your consultation, and how the method is feminist.

Like all things, the success of these methods largely depends on the amount of time and thoughtfulness spent designing them. Take your time and design based on how to best engage your participants!



Surveys



If rings on a tree represent your target audience, the purple rings show the level of reach you would expect from Survey responses. Surveys have the highest reach of the three methods.

Why use Surveys?

Surveys—whether on social media, through email, or on paper—are by far the most innovative method of this Methodology. Surveys have the potential to create a fun, informal, and agile dynamic between participants and your research team. Overall, Surveys are a quick, simple, and inexpensive research method that often require few resources.

Surveys, in their quick nature, can help you identify trending issues of interest to your participants. They can be a useful option for participants who are unable to engage in other research methods that require more time. Additionally, Surveys can be helpful tools in combination with other research methods. For example, you might create a follow-up Survey to accompany your FGD or Interviews.



The content of this Survey might focus on the topics discussed during the session, or might ask for feedback about the session.

Depending on your topic and research questions, you may choose to design a simple Survey with as little as three to five questions. Or you may choose to design a more thorough Survey to capture deeper insights. Surveys can be qualitative, quantitative, or a combination—which means your creativity is the only limit on what’s possible to learn from a Survey!

There are many ways to create a Survey:

- As a simple document where a hard copy can be easily printed and distributed to participants. This is especially helpful if there are concerns with limited or no access to technology or internet connectivity.
- On an online survey platform (such as [SurveyMonkey](#)³⁷, [Google Forms](#)³⁸, etc.) where a digital link can be copied to share with participants. This link can be emailed to participants, posted on one or more social media platforms, or shared through messenger platforms to participants.
- Directly on a social media platform with a “surveying” or “question” feature to engage your followers or the general community. This approach is great for engaging participants who are active on social media. Note some platforms (such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram, and WeChat) only allow time-bound polls.

If you are interested in leveraging a social platform to host a survey, consider the potential risks and safety concerns. See the Safety and Security section of the Appendix for more details. We recommend visiting the platform’s support pages directly to assess whether it makes sense for your consultation.



Spotlight on social media

Breaking news! More than half of the people on Earth now use social media! Social media plays a big role globally in entertainment and real-time communication. And there are an ever-increasing number of platforms. Social media has the power to increase visibility and spark mass movements for social justice issues.

Did you know?

A study at the [Qatar Computing Research Institute](#)³⁹ uncovered an insight about women in countries with high gender inequities. These women were more likely to have significant online presences. This was despite facing gender inequalities in their offline, “real” lives. For example, women in Pakistan had more followers on Google+ (twenty-five versus sixteen) and Twitter (600 versus 222) on average than their male counterparts.



For your consultation, social media can help you reach a larger and diverse audience. However, it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of social media. Access to technology, internet, and social media platforms themselves can be major barriers. This is especially true for participants living in rural communities or as refugees. Consider ways to remove access barriers in your consultation. For example, you might cover internet costs for participants. Or you might partner with an organisation who can give access to technology devices.



What makes Surveys feminist?

Provides a sense of anonymity

Depending on the situation or context, it may not be safe for participants to share their opinions openly in your consultation. A Survey provides anonymity for participants to respond where they feel safe or comfortable.

Offers convenience

Participants may be juggling multiple priorities—whether it's school, work, or childcare. The ability to respond to a Survey on their own time allows participants to self-identify when it is convenient for them to share their thoughts.

Increases opportunities to engage feminist networks

Surveys are easily shareable. This means they have great potential to create or expand feminist consultation within online communities.

Shares results quickly and easily

Surveys (especially online surveys) are often quick when it comes to compiling results. Sharing results from the Survey in a timely manner can be a great way to continue involving participants in your consultation.

What might you consider when using this method?

Before selecting Surveys as a method for your consultation, ask yourself and your research team a few questions:

- Who am I trying to engage as participants? What are their demographics, psychographics, behaviour, geographical location, etc.?
- Who might face the greatest barriers to participate using this method?
- If participants do not have access to the internet, how might I reach them? Would I be able to distribute hard copies of the Survey?
- How can participants be reached through social media networks? If so, what platform(s) do participants use? What language(s) do they use on these platforms?
- Who might feel more comfortable participating in an online survey?



- What kind of participants are most likely to use social media?
- Who is following the social media accounts I would use to share the Survey?
- How might I protect the data and privacy of respondents to the Survey?

Considerations

- Experiment with the length of the Survey based on the number of questions and types of questions. For example, participants may take longer to respond to open-ended questions. Remember most Surveys on social media are typically short interactions (no longer than 2-4 minutes). This short duration is intentional to capture the attention of participants before they continue scrolling.
- Participants might feel more comfortable answering “yes” or “no” questions based on their language skills and context. In this case, you might choose to ask closed-questions to gain a high-level understanding. Doing so means you acknowledge that the insights you gather may not be conclusive and might require further research.
- If planning to use two or more methods in your consultation, you may wish to stagger the methods. Consider starting with a Survey. Then keep the Survey open until after you finish conducting the FGD + Storytelling and/or Interview sessions.
- Depending on the type of Survey you wish to use, it may be helpful to think about timelines and capacity. For example using a hard copy Survey means you may need time to transcribe

the responses. Depending on the number of Surveys and the length of responses, this may take some time.

- If privacy and data protection is a concern, be sure to look into the policies of the platforms you plan to use for the Survey. These policies can change often. Also find out where the data is stored for these platforms—sometimes data may be stored in another country!

Tips

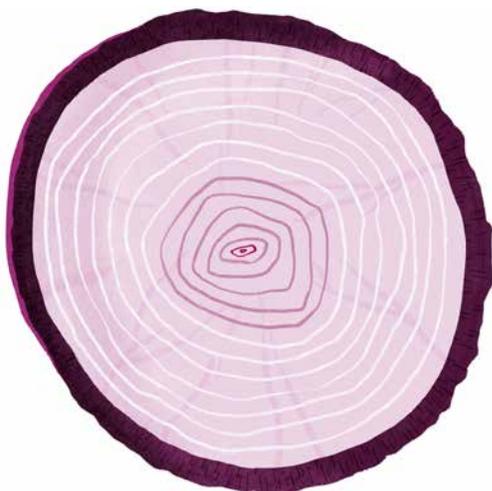
- Have a few hard copies available even if you are conducting your Survey online. Hard copies can be useful for participants with accessibility concerns, or those who do not have an email address or social media account.
- Leverage images or visuals in your Survey, especially if there are language barriers between you and the participants. These visuals can help build a deeper connection and create a common understanding. While it may sound overly simplified, these visuals can be very impactful.

Notes





Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling



If rings on a tree represent your target audience, the purple rings show the level of reach you would expect from a FGD session.

Why use FGD + Storytelling?

FGD + Storytelling is a fusion between a **focus group** and a **storytelling** session to create a safe consultation space for young women. With a relatively small group of 5-6 participants, FGD + Storytelling sessions allow everyone the opportunity to speak and share. The true magic of a FGD + Storytelling session is its ability to tap into the collective wisdom of participants. Doing so lights the spark to invite let discussions and stories flow freely.

Storytelling, as a knowledge sharing activity, has been used for centuries across many cultures. Storytelling is a powerful tool for dialogue. It empowers participants to narrate and share their stories as agents of social change.

FGD + Storytelling sessions are designed with intention to gain a deep and comprehensive understanding of individual and shared experiences. The open nature of discussions during these sessions can foster a sense of camaraderie and belonging among participants.

What makes FGD + Storytelling feminist?

Creates a positive and empowering environment

FGD + Storytelling sessions empower participants to shape their environment. At the start of the session, participants are invited to share what they need from each other by creating **community agreements**. These agreements are a consensus-driven tool to guide their interactions during the session. There are two types of agreements: relational (how people want to be in relationship with each other) and operational (agreed upon procedures or structures to be observed). They outline how everyone in the session can make and uphold a safe and brave space. They remind everyone of any power dynamics at play, and how those dynamics can be rebalanced. Community agreements give participants full ownership of their experience during the FGD + Storytelling session.

Agreements differ from rules (strict guidelines mandated or enforced by an authority which may not reflect the will of the people) and norms (the ways we behave and are currently in relationship with each other).



Uses supportive facilitation

The facilitation style in these sessions is informal and non-directive. It avoids traditional hierarchies and places power into the rightful hands of participants. The facilitator should be someone who represents (or is very familiar with) the community of participants.

Promotes diversity and equity

FGD + Storytelling sessions celebrate diversity. These sessions are designed to acknowledge and value the different experiences of participants. In these sessions, emotions are seen as keys to unlocking our understanding of what it means to be human. Participants are encouraged to make space and take space in conversation with one another.

Leverages shared accountability

Everyone in the session shares the **accountability** of upholding the community agreements. This means both the facilitator and participants create and uphold a safe and inclusive environment.



See the **FGD + Storytelling Field Guide** to help you design your session.

What might you consider when using FGD + Storytelling?

Before selecting FGD + Storytelling as a method for your consultation, ask yourself and your research team a few questions:

- Would engaging participants in a group setting be the best way to answer my research question(s)?
- Who would be most likely to attend a FGD + Storytelling session? How might I design the invitation to articulate the value for participants?

- Who might feel more comfortable participating in a FGD + Storytelling session? How can I design the session to encourage participation?
- What might be some barriers for participants?
- How might I create a safe and inviting group setting to encourage authentic engagement?
- How might I capture insights from the sessions?
- How might I encourage continued engagement following the session, if appropriate?

Considerations

- FGD + Storytelling requires a few roles. You will need at least one facilitator and a note taker.
- The number of facilitators relates to the number of participants. For example, in a large group of 10 or more participants, consider splitting off into smaller groups. Each breakout group should have its own facilitator.
- You may consider recording the session in addition to taking notes. The purpose of the recording is to help fill in any gaps missed from the notes. The recording is not to be shared beyond the research team. **Consent** must be obtained from the participants before recording.
- FGD + Storytelling sessions may not be appropriate or accessible for all participants. Provide other ways for these participants to engage (such as a Survey or Interview).
- FGD can catalyse connections among participants that last beyond the consultation. These sessions can inspire women to continue sharing and supporting each other. This ongoing connection can continue providing important data and insights for your research.

Tips

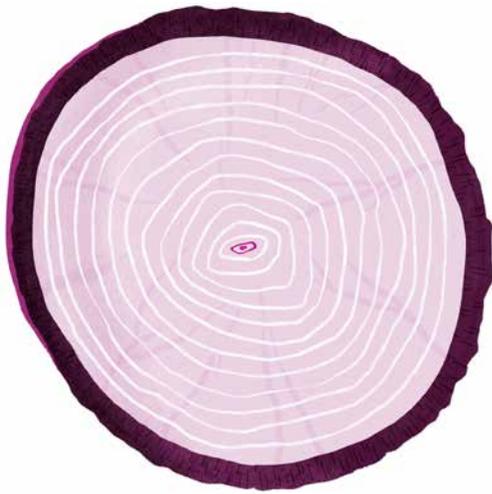
- Be creative and have fun when designing your Storytelling activity! Include creative practises like photos, songs, weaving, writing down stories, drawing, or improv. Creative practises can make the process feel more informal and inviting. See the [Storytelling Template](#) as a starting point.
- Encourage participants to share in first person and speak from their own experiences. This helps create an inclusive and respectful environment.

Notes





Interviews



If rings on a tree represent your target audience, the purple rings show the level of reach you would expect from Interviews. Interviews have the lowest reach of the three methods.

Why use Interviews?

Interviews are all about deep conversation. Interviews take place with one participant at a time to understand their ideas, opinions, and experiences. The one-on-one nature of an Interview creates a safe space for a participant. This is especially helpful for participants who might be uncomfortable sharing in a group.

For this Methodology, Interviews are **semi-structured**. This means Interviews use a flexible guide of predetermined questions. The Interview is encouraged to follow the natural conversation flow. They can ask new questions and prompt participants to dive deeper with their responses.

What makes Interviews feminist?

Uncovers in-depth insights

The intimate, one-on-one setting of an Interview enables deeper conversations. This allows participants to share in-depth insights to inform the research.

Encourages authenticity

Interviews can be powerful when the interviewer understands **intersectionality**. Authentic conversations happen when participants feel seen, heard, and valued. A thoughtful interviewer helps participants feel comfortable to share with honesty and vulnerability.

Ensures inclusion

The one-on-one nature of an Interview creates an intimate environment. This quiet intimacy is essential for some participants.

Promotes safety and anonymity

Interviews are useful for engaging participants who wish to remain anonymous. In some cultures and regions, participants may be more willing to participate in your consultation if they know their identity is protected.

Prioritises real-time adaptation

Life happens while you are busy making other plans. A semi-structured Interview gives the best of both worlds. It provides guidance while encouraging the interviewer to adapt questions.





See the [Interview Field Guide](#) to help you design your Interview.

What might you consider when using Interviews?

Before selecting Interviews as a method for your consultation, ask yourself and your research team a few questions:

- Are certain participants more likely to prefer or be more comfortable participating in an Interview?
- Who might face the greatest barriers to participate using this method?
- Where is the most appropriate, accessible, and private place to host the Interview?
- How might I capture data during the Interview while maintaining a positive rapport with the participant?

Considerations

- You may consider recording the Interview in addition to taking notes. The purpose of the recording is to help fill in any gaps missed from the notes. The recording is not to be shared beyond the research team. Consent must be obtained from the participants before recording. Leverage Interviews as a way to build on the information gathered from other methods. For example, you might invite specific participants from the FGD + Storytelling session to take part in an Interview. The Interview can be an effective way to gather extra insights about ideas shared during the session.
- Be mindful of the time allocated for your Interview to help you decide the type and quantity of questions to ask.



Tips

- Feel free to take a few minutes for casual conversation with your participant before starting the Interview. This can help set a casual tone for the Interview.
- Typically 10-12 questions are suitable for an hour-long Interview. This allows time to give an overview of the research project, describe the process, speak about confidentiality, and obtain consent before diving into your question.

Notes





Step 3: Implement

With time, seedlings sprout and appear above ground—bringing your consultation to life.

This third step in the Feminist Consultation Methodology is Implement. This step is where your consultation comes to life! Here is where you attract participants and begin engaging them through your selected research methods.

Seek participants

This Methodology is all about young women being at the centre of your consultation. You might be eager to find participants and get started right away. You likely already identified a sample representing the community of people you wish to engage. That said, it is important to be thoughtful when it comes to seeking participants.

Build excitement and interest

In order for young women to meaningfully participate in your consultation, they first need to be clear on what your consultation is, why it matters, and how you plan to do it. From here, they can decide if they are willing to participate and then give their consent. Your goal is for young women to be excited and interested in being part of your consultation!

When seeking participants, be sure to share:

- The benefit or value to the participant. Make it clear why their participation is integral to the research. Communicate any details of benefits they receive as participants (e.g., capacity building opportunities, etc.).

“...Thank you world YwCA for bringing this initiative and creating a safe space for young women to own the process.”

Nirmala Gurung,
Nepal



- Research question(s) or topic(s). Help participants understand the kinds of questions they might be asked.
- The research process, timelines, and logistics. Build trust by letting participants know what to expect as part of the consultation process.
- Any accommodations you can offer to support their participation (e.g., covering internet costs, providing a meal during the FGD, etc.).
- How they can reach out to you to ask questions or seek clarification.

- Consider asking past participants to take part in a different research method. For example, participants from your FGD + Storytelling session might be open to sharing more details during an Interview.
- Depending on the research, you may consider partnering with an organisation to engage participants or engage organisations who are aligned with the work to sponsor the project.



Targeted versus general

There are typically two ways to seek participants. You can use one or both ways depending on the context of your consultation:

1. **Targeted invitations:** Reaching out directly to potential participants via email, text message, or direct message on social media. You might contact people you know from past engagements or new people. See the [Invitation Template](#).
2. **General call for participation:** Sharing public messages seeking participants. See the [Publicity Template](#).

Tips for promoting your consultation

- Ensure your call for participants takes into account the language of the local context. This sensitivity sets the stage for what participants can expect. Thoughtful language can also play a role by ensuring their participation will not result in the perpetuation of harm.
- If being done in person, include an open invitation for participants to request any accommodations they might need based on abilities or impairments. Ensure your research team is able to make the appropriate accommodations if requested.
- Promote your consultation based on where your potential participants will see it. For example, promote on the most commonly used social media platforms of your target population. Or share on messenger applications such as WhatsApp, Telegram, or text messages. Use many different channels to reach a greater number of people (e.g., social media, the school or university forum, the notice board in the community centre, a radio programme, etc.).





The channels you use for promotion may have certain subscribers or followers. Be aware if there may be conflicts of interest for either your target participants or your research topic and do your due diligence.

- Start publicising your consultation well in advance. For Surveys, publicise one week in advance. This can be effective to generate interest without being so far away for participants to forget about it. For FGD, publicise a few weeks in advance to give participants lots of notice.
- Creating a single post and sharing it multiple times will only get you so far. Instead, create and share different posts at different times to reach different audiences.
- Be specific about time expectations. For example, let potential participants know how much time is needed to complete a Survey or participate in a FGD.
- Highlight the date(s) and length of availability for each research activity. For example, state the open and close dates of the Survey, or the date when you will begin your Interviews. Look to allies or partners for support in finding participants. Ask them to share your calls for participants through their networks. Ask them to use the same hashtags and tag your account to amplify the reach. Think of innovative ways to collaborate and partner. For example, you might do a social media takeover of a partner's account.
- Look to allies or partners for support in finding participants. Ask them to share your calls for participants through their networks. Ask them to use the same **hashtags** (#) and tag your account to amplify the reach. Think of innovative ways to collaborate and partner. For example, you might do a social media takeover of a partner's account.
- Connect with local influencers or people engaging with their communities on social media to help you broaden your reach. Ask them to redirect their followers to your consultation. Remember to ensure a safe space when sharing to wider circles.
- Continuously promote until the day before you close the Survey. This helps to recruit new participants and remind those who have been following your posts to take part while they still can.
- Use clear links and/or hyperlink when possible to make it easy for the reader to understand and follow through for each of your call to action items.
- Consider monitoring or tracking the details of potential participants to ensure they are not fake accounts and **trolls**. If working with partners and allies, consider asking their social media account managers to share any relevant data or feedback they receive.



Bring to life the research method(s)

You are now ready to bring your research method(s) to life! Use the [Field Guide templates](#) to plan and organise the logistics and details for your selected method(s).

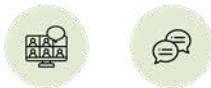
Regardless of the method(s) you choose, you will need to make some decisions. Here are some considerations for you and your research team to discuss:

Remote versus in-person



What approach should you use for this method: remote or in-person (for Surveys, this means a paper-based survey)? If conducting remote research, use technology platforms that make sense for your participants.

Location



Where should you host the session? Certain physical locations may trigger negative feelings or memories for some participants. For example, many LGBTQ+ individuals may have negative experiences with religious institutions.



Space layout

How should you set up the space? In certain contexts, a lecture-style setup may be appropriate. That said, in other contexts it may reinforce hierarchy between researcher and/or facilitator and participants. For FGD, sitting on the floor in a circle can reduce the implicit hierarchy and bring all participants to an equal level. For Interviews, sitting the interviewer and participant side by side can eliminate a barrier of a table between them.

Accessibility



How can you accommodate accessibility needs? Encourage participants to communicate any accommodations they require in order to participate. Take into consideration ways to be mindful of accessibility, For example, include Alt text on images used in your Survey. Or be thoughtful about the type of music, lighting, and technology during your FGD or Interview.

Safety



How can you create a safe space? Ensure you follow the [World YWCA Safe Space Guidelines](#)⁴⁰ to create a safe and respectful environment for both physical and virtual/online spaces.



Relationship dynamics



What power dynamics might be at play? Consider who else may be in the room (e.g., notetaker) during your session. Prepare ways you might bridge some potential power imbalances.

Timing



When should you conduct this method? Depending on the needs of participants, choose dates and times that suit most of them. For example, avoid research activities during busy periods for your participants (e.g., the start of the school year for students) or at times when they are unavailable (e.g., daytime hours for students). Be mindful of timings that work for some but not all. For example, evening sessions may be great for students but might be difficult for young parents. In this case, consider providing childcare, or running sessions at a variety of times to give flexibility to your participants. Depending on the timing of the session, you may consider providing meals and refreshments.

Flow



How should you organise the flow of questions and activities for this method? Start Surveys with a few easy warm up questions before diving into your main topic. Then end with less important questions in case the respondent doesn't finish the Survey. For FGD, start with an ice-breaker activity to help participants get to know each other. For interviews, start with some easy questions to ease into the conversation and build trust.

Thanks



How should you thank participants for their contributions? You might share individual messages of thanks, or a public message. If providing an honourarium to participants, you might include details in the thank-you message.





Surveys

Prepare the Survey Data Collection Guide

The **Data Collection Guide** is a tool for organising the questions and responses for your Survey. It outlines the data collection instructions, accountabilities of the research team, and questions for the Survey. Review the guide among the research team to ensure everyone is clear.

Validate and refine

Validate your Field Guides and Data Collection tools by testing. Check to see if they make sense and meet the needs of your research. See the **Validate** section below for more details.

Choose the most appropriate platform

Choose a survey platform after researching and evaluating the available options. Your goal is to select a platform to help you reach the greatest number of participants while respecting privacy and security needs. Your selected platform should be the one most likely used by your target population and/or the one most commonly used in your region. (You can review the **World Map of Social Networks**⁴¹ to find the most used social media networks by country.)

That said, always defer to co-researchers and/or potential participants about the platforms they use most often. For example, there may be contexts where certain platforms are restricted for some participants and/or internet connection is unstable. In those cases, consider exploring other alternatives such as a paper Survey.

Select the survey administrator

Identify who on the research team is responsible for creating the Survey on the predetermined platform. Typically, you need one administrator to manage and monitor the Survey. If you are sharing the Survey on social media, it may be beneficial to have an additional person as a collaborator.

A good Survey administrator:

- Understands the research objectives.
- Is mindful of participants' needs and how to best support them.
- Knows appropriate ways to communicate with the participants to help answer questions.
- Has reliable access to technology needed to manage and monitor the Survey.

Choose the account to create the survey

Create the survey using an account with enough followers and enough engagement⁴². If the account does not have enough followers, you might look for allies or partner accounts who are willing to share your Survey with their followers to help amplify the reach.

Average engagement on Instagram for an organisation's account is 2%—and this is higher than other social media networks! So, for example, if you want to engage 40 participants, the account you use should have at least 2000 followers.



Confirm the timing of the Survey

Select the day(s) and time(s) to publish the Survey, as well as the timeframe to keep it open. Consider when participants are most likely available to take the Survey. This may be easier if your consultation is local or regional. If it is global, ensure you leave the Survey open long enough to be inclusive of participation across time zones.

Build and test the Survey

Use the [Data Collection Guide](#) as the map for building your Survey on the selected platform. You might consider searching for tutorials on how to best use the platform and maximise its available features. Share the built Survey with your research team or partners to test it and find any errors before launching.



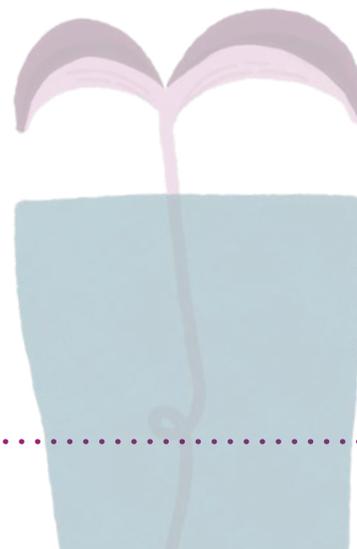
Launch the Survey

The exciting moment is finally here: you are ready to launch the Survey! Share the Survey by posting on one or more social media platforms, or emailing to participants, or sharing through messenger platforms. Make sure your survey administrator is available to answer questions or troubleshoot any issues experienced by participants as they complete the Survey.

Close the Survey and share early results

Once your Survey time frame is finished, you may need to close or end the survey (based on the chosen platform). Once closed, you might consider sharing early results with participants and/or publically. Remember to practise confidentiality when sharing any results (for example, blurring or hiding participants' names). Some platforms like Instagram allow you to view Survey results as percentages and easily share them through your account.

How and when you share results from the Survey is a decision for your research team. Remember, it is important to consider the benefits of sharing results from a feminist perspective. In this Methodology, it is good practise to engage participants in the analysis and/or sharing of results. This involvement fosters engagement and reduces the distance between participants and researcher(s). Involving participants in making sense of the results and sharing them demonstrates respect. It is a small way of building trust and encouraging participation in future engagements.





Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling

Prepare the FGD + Storytelling Data Collection Guide

The [Data Collection Guide](#) is a tool for planning and organising the details of your FGD + Storytelling session. This guide should be used throughout your FGD session(s) as a support tool for the facilitator(s). This guide maintains the integrity of the research objectives while enabling insights to emerge during the session. Review the guide among the research team to ensure everyone is clear.

Validate and refine

Validate your Field Guides and Data Collection tools by testing. Check to see if they make sense and meet the needs of your research. See the [Validate](#) section below for more details.

Select the team

A FGD + Storytelling session requires a facilitator and a notetaker. You might also include someone to be a recorder (if applicable and if you have the consent of participants).

Facilitator

A facilitator is a person who guides a group through discussion. A facilitator who follows feminist principles is mindful of privilege and power dynamics. They come from the participants' community without having significant power over the participants. They ensure participants are the rightful owners of the session. They collaborate with participants to foster a safe space.

A facilitator's role includes:

- Co-creating a safe place alongside participants. Collectively respecting and celebrating diversity by recognising all participants have different perceptions of reality and all are equally valid.
- Guiding the conversation so it remains in line with the consultation's aim.
- Ensuring the session is rooted in respectful and empathic dialogue.
- Putting aside personal opinions to avoid influencing, highlighting, or silencing any voices.
- Being self-aware to have courageous conversations. If you feel comfortable, be vulnerable and share your personal experiences to invite others to do the same. Honest conversations can initially be uncomfortable but can also be an opportunity to strengthen and deepen connections in profound ways.
- Intervening, if necessary, to make sure everyone has enough time to speak and/or ask questions.
- Addressing signs of discomfort and/or stopping disrespect or aggression using a calm manner.
- Monitoring engagement levels of the group and rekindling energy as needed. For example, introducing an alternative question, suggesting a break, facilitating a breathing exercise, etc.
- Being familiar with the research objectives, questionnaire, and field guide in advance of the session, and making adjustments (when appropriate) in real-time during the session.



Notetaker

The notetaker (sometimes called a scribe) is a passive observer who captures the discussion from a session. They can be a volunteer or someone chosen by the participants and/or co-researchers. They are responsible for recording the conversation once consent is obtained from everyone.

Set the size of the session

The size of the session depends on several factors. Be sure to consider the number of participants who wish to participate, the number of sessions you wish to host, the availability of the research team, and the experience or comfort level of the facilitator. For example, a skilled facilitator can typically host a meaningful conversation of 10-12 people. A facilitator who is at the beginning stages of building their experience may not be as comfortable guiding large conversations. In this case, it may be beneficial to start with a smaller, more intimate group of 3-4 participants. Calibrate the size of the session to ensure participants feel welcome, appreciated, and engaged throughout the session.

Confirm logistics for the session

Decide on the location, time, and date for the FGD session. Remember to consider the needs of your participants and your research team.

Confirm participants

Consider setting up a shared calendar to manage participant bookings. Be sure to contact participants a few days in advance to confirm their attendance and remind them of important details like time and location.

Host the session

The exciting moment is finally here: you are ready to host the FGD + Storytelling session! Welcome the participants and make sure everyone on the research team is comfortable in their roles as facilitator, notetaker, etc.

Territory or land acknowledgement

Consider dedicating time at the start of the session to recognise those who came before us and those who steward the land and territories, if applicable for your region. Paying respects at the beginning of each engagement is a thoughtful way to show your commitment to reconciliation and foster conversations about the history of colonialism. We recommend reviewing resources like [Native Land](#)⁴³ to learn more about the history and sacredness of your region. Territory or land acknowledgements are concise and often individualised. For example, “I want to acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of [nation names].”⁴⁴

Learn from a specific example

Here is how Australia pays their respect to the traditional custodians of the land on which the event takes place through three types of Acknowledgement of Country⁴⁵.





Interviews

Prepare the Interview Data Collection Guide

The **Data Collection Guide** is a tool for planning and organising the details of your Interview. This guide should be used throughout your Interview as a support tool for the interviewer and notetaker. This guide maintains the integrity of the research objectives while enabling insights to emerge during the conversation. Review the guide among the research team to ensure everyone is clear.

Validate and refine

Validate your Field Guides and Data Collection tools by testing. Check to see if they make sense and meet the needs of your research. See the **Validate** section below for more details.

Select the team

An Interview requires an interviewer and a notetaker.

Interviewer

An interviewer is a person who leads an intimate conversation with one participant at a time. An interviewer who follows feminist principles is mindful of privilege and power dynamics. They come from the participants' community without having significant power over the participant. They ensure the participant feels comfortable and safe to share meaningful insights during the Interview.

An interviewer's role includes:

- Setting a welcoming tone for the Interview so the participant feels heard and valued.
- Asking one question at a time and giving space for the participant to think of their response.
- Using active listening techniques to show respect and demonstrate concern. For example, non-verbal cues such as nodding and eye contact. Or verbal cues such as brief affirmations like, "I see," "I understand," and "Thank you".
- Acknowledging emotions and allowing participants to express them.
- Providing enough time for the participant to elaborate and give examples.
- Putting aside personal opinions to avoid influencing, highlighting, or silencing the voice of the participant.
- Being self-aware to have courageous conversations—if you feel comfortable, be vulnerable and share your personal experiences to invite others to do the same. Honest conversations can initially be uncomfortable but can also be an opportunity to strengthen and deepen connections in profound ways.
- Observing the participant's body language to ensure they are comfortable. Recognise signs of fatigue or disassociation, such as the participant looking at their phone or crossing their arms.



- Pivoting questions as needed to address difficult topics by refocusing the questions back to your talking points from the Interview Guide. The intent with the pivot is to end each response in a positive manner and provide closure.
- Being familiar with the research objectives, questionnaire, and field guide in advance, and making adjustments (when appropriate) in real-time during the Interview.
- Knowing when to end the Interview (an Interview is typically 45 minutes to one hour at most). That said, an Interview can be much shorter too! Whenever you feel like you have complete answers, feel free to end the Interview and ask the participants if they have anything else to add or if they have any questions for you.

Notetaker

The notetaker (sometimes called a scribe) is a passive observer who captures the discussion from the Interview. They can be a volunteer or someone chosen by the participants and/or co-researchers. They are responsible for recording the conversation once consent is obtained from the participant.

Confirm logistics for the Interview

Decide on the location, time, and date for the Interviews. Remember to consider the needs of your participants and your research team. If conducting many Interviews back-to-back on the same day, build in some buffer time in case you need a quick break.

When planning on where to conduct the Interview,

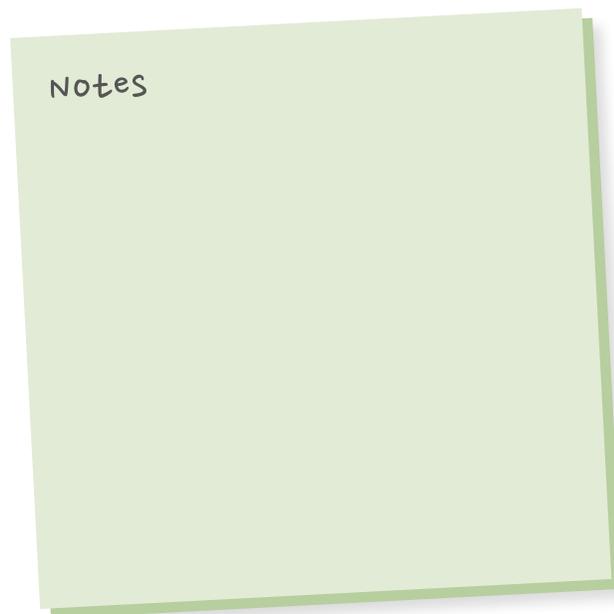
might consider a walking Interview. A walking Interview is exactly as it sounds: conducting the Interview while taking a walk together. Depending on the context, this might make the participant feel more comfortable. Note one challenge with a walking Interview is decreased ability to reference your Interview Guide and capture notes.

Confirm the participants

Consider setting up a shared calendar to manage Interview bookings. Be sure to contact participants a few days in advance to confirm their attendance and remind them of important details like time and location.

Host the Interview

The exciting moment is finally here: you are ready to host the Interview! Welcome the participant and make sure everyone on the research team is comfortable in their roles as interviewer, notetaker, etc.



Validate to see what works

What is validation?

Validation is the act of testing or checking in advance before implementing your research method(s). Validation helps you learn if the questions chosen for your Survey, FGD + Storytelling, and/or Interview will be understood by potential participants in their context. Validation helps overcome a common research challenge: respondents misinterpreting questions.

If the data collection tools were translated into different languages, it is important to assess the translation. See if there are words with no equivalent translation, or words with semantic equivalence but representing slightly different concepts.

Why validate?

Taking the time now to validate can save you many headaches down the road. Validation can help you and your research team:

- Ensure questions are clear, appropriate (e.g., free from assumptions), and aligned with research objectives.
- Identify ambiguous wording and/or language issues across different contexts.
- Gain insight into how participants might respond.

- Highlight opportunities for improvement to minimise the chances for confusion or discomfort among participants. This includes the wording of the questions and/or the implementation of the method. Highlight opportunities for improvement to strengthen your data collection tools to make for easier data capture.

How to validate?

There are many ways to validate. You might consider conducting a test session of your research method(s). In this case, you might engage a group of individuals as testers who have the same or similar characteristics as your target population. Or, you might work with your research team to role-play what it would be like to implement one of your methods.

The purpose of validation is to document where your testers experience confusion or discomfort. The goal is to identify what you can do to resolve the issues experiencing during validation. For example, you may need to provide additional clarity about your research objectives at the start of your FGD. Or you may need to reword or change the order of questions in your Survey.

During your validation activities, you might use the [Data Collection Guide](#) to get a feel for how it works. However, if you have limited time and can only engage testers in an unofficial manner, simply capture notes where you can. Rough feedback is better than not validating at all.



What to do after validation?

Gather together all the information from your validation activities. Start to organise the information and draw conclusions on whether the insights are appropriate for your target population.

There are many ways to organise information, so be sure to use one that best suits your consultation. The way you choose to organise your information has a direct impact on your ability to interpret the insights.

Based on the insights from your validation activities, begin to adjust your Field Guide and/or Data Collection Guide as needed.

How to learn more about validation?

Validation plays an interesting role in consultation research. We recommend additional readings to better understand how validation fits into research^{46,47}. Additionally, we provide an example of how a research team can synthesise findings from a validation activity (see [Data Collection Example](#)).

Notes





Step 4: Sense Make

Seedlings become blossoms-insights from your consultation are and synthesised.

This fourth step in the Feminist Consultation Methodology is Sense Make. This step is about making sense of all the data, information, ideas, and insights gathered from the consultation. Here, your focus is on relating information across different sources, identifying categories, establishing connections, and offering evidence-based conclusions. After making sense of the research, you can share back your findings with the community to catalyse meaningful action and change.

“Young women benefit when they are the voice that leads the process. This tool will redefine young women engagement and amplify their leadership potential.”



Varaidzo Faith
Magodo-Matimba,
Zimbabwe

Solicit skills and support

It is now time to make sense of the collected data from your research methods! Analysis and synthesis are research terms to describe the sense-making process. Simply put, this is where you turn your data into insights. By using a systematic process rooted in critical thinking and interpretation, you can turn a large amount of data into a smaller number of actionable insights, conclusions, or results.

Creativity, divergent thinking, and perception of patterns are all important skills for data analysis. While you are not expected to be an expert, you and your team should have background knowledge on the topic and be committed to look for patterns—including patterns that do not match what you were expecting. If you do not have previous experience in analysis, we recommend you seek some support. You may reach out to other young women across your networks who have more experience. Ask for support from those who can guide, mentor, or train you. You can also reach out to a local university or college to see if anyone might be able to support you. Make sure your team is set up for success when it comes to data analysis.



It is good practise to re-engage participants to involve them in the sense-making process, as well as share the results. Keep in mind, involving participants in the sense-making step requires additional time. That said, we highly recommend doing so. Participants may be engaged as active partners in data analysis or as reviewers of the insights to validate whether the results accurately reflect the voices of participants. Regardless of how they are involved, the inclusion of participants in this step is incredibly valuable.

Analyse results

The analysis and synthesis is all about **analytics**—converting data and information into insights. Research insights can be extremely informative and helpful, especially when surfaced in collaboration with the people closest to the issues. Research insights can lead to positive changes by shining light on issues and empowering communities. However, research insights can also be harmful. Whether intentional or not, research insights have the potential to misrepresent communities or be used against people—and ultimately perpetuate stigma, cause trauma, and increase inequity.

Before beginning data analysis to uncover your research insights, it is important to remember:

- Analysis of data without consideration of intersectionality is an inaccurate reflection of reality.
- Avoid making generalisations or assumptions, and validate them whenever possible.
- Put in an effort to be aware of your unconscious

biases. Be intentional about not letting your biases influence the results based on your previous experiences and judgements. Carefully document the process to enhance the credibility of your findings.

Steps for data analysis and synthesis

1. Prepare your data



Make sure your data is ready to be analysed. Finish all transcriptions and set up the document(s) or virtual workspace where you plan to conduct your analysis. We recommend making copies of your data so that you keep the originals safe while your analysis notes and edits to the copies. This allows you to reference the raw data without potentially losing important information.

2. Revisit the research objectives and questions

Re-anchor yourself in the objectives of your research.



3. Review the data and preliminary insights collected to date

Take time to ensure you and your research team understands the context of the research. Familiarise yourself with the data collected thus far so that you feel ready to start identifying patterns across different data sources. If applicable, listen to recordings from FGD sessions and/or interviews to refamiliarise yourself with the sessions.

4. Develop a framework (also known as **Coding or Indexing**)

Start by highlighting and summarising the main ideas from the data. Then create categories and subcategories to use for grouping together key ideas.

It may be helpful to develop tags for whether data is qualitative or quantitative. There are many ways to capture and tabulate quantitative information, such as adding up the number of ratings, rankings, or “yes”s, “no”s for each question.

5. Identify the main findings

Use the framework to begin categorising the data. This should follow a smooth sorting process and allow you to easily attribute meaning to the data.

As you categorise the data, be mindful of how **disaggregated data**⁴⁸—meaning data that provides subcategories of information, such as demographics—can reveal inequalities and relationships between categories. By

visualising systemic inequalities, data can lead to positive change. The same data, when used or collected poorly, can reinforce stereotypes and stigmatisation causing individual and community harm.

6. Interpret the data



Attempt to put the information in perspective. Compare the findings with what you expected to see. Consider the findings in relation to any existing indicators or measures of success as appropriate for the context of your consultation.

Organise your interpretations into additional categories and labels (e.g.: feedback, strengths, weaknesses, similar experiences, programme inputs, recommendations, outputs, outcomes). Your interpretations should be aimed at answering the research questions. It is important not to lose focus and always keep in mind the research objective(s).



7. Synthesise the data



Triangulate the data by looking across your sources of data and begin identifying themes^{49,50,51,52}. Themes can be based on patterns, associations, causal relationships you notice across the data. For example, you might see all people who attended programmes in the evening had similar concerns.

For ratings and rankings questions, consider calculating a mean, or average, for each question. For example, “For question #1, the average ranking was 2.4”. Based on the context of your consultation, an average can be more meaningful than indicating how many respondents ranked 1, 2, or 3. Consider conveying the range of answers, such as 20 people ranked “1”, 30 ranked “2”, and 20 people ranked “3”.

Once you have developed many themes, begin combining them to reveal results or insights. The goal of insights is to provide evidence-based conclusions about your research objectives.

8. Test and validate your findings

When the analysis is complete, you can test and validate your findings. This can be particularly useful to test the consistency of the results obtained using different methods.

If not already involved in the analysis step, now is an ideal time to re-engage your participants. Walk them through your findings and gather their feedback so that you can revisit and improve your results as needed. Testing and validation helps strengthen your results by:

- **Exploring** the similarities, and differences of results for research questions obtained using different methods.
- **Enriching** the outputs of different methods by highlighting how they explain different aspects of an issue.
- **Confirming or refuting** where one set of data confirms or disproves a statement resulting from another set.
- **Explaining** where one set of data sheds light on unexpected findings.
- **Identifying potential gaps** in the data sets to be included in your key learnings.

9. Insert the findings into the report

Document the story of your consultation in a report. The goal of your report is to help the reader to understand your findings and ideally take action.



Begin by providing a brief overview of the consultation process, when it took place, the methods used, and the target population engaged. Then summarise the insights and learnings from your analysis. Be sure to mention any identified gaps in the data and provide recommendations for how they can potentially be addressed in the future. Include any relevant correlations and comparisons with other studies from your initial desk research.



10. Share the report and results

Share the report and results with relevant stakeholders, including participants and partners, as well as with the public if appropriate. Share the report via email, social media, messenger apps and other platforms used by your target population. Consider sending the report to relevant publications and organisations who may distribute it further on your behalf.

11. Save copies of your report and analysis notes

Save a copy of your report, as well as notes from your analysis. You may need to reference these items in the future.

Tips for writing a research report

- Present the information succinctly and clearly so it can be easily understood.
- Share conclusions and insights that are already validated with the research team and participants.
- Protect the confidentiality of research participants. For example, if sharing direct quotes from an interview, attribute the quote using only relevant details such as age and location (e.g.: 'Interview participant, age 18, India).
- Capture attention with visuals. Leverage graphics, tables, and diagrams to describe concepts in an easy to understand manner. If budget permits, include videos or audio for a multimedia report.
- Consider including recommendations to help your organisation or group and/or partners. These recommendations might include evidence-based suggestions to define priorities, guide advocacy goals, improve a programme, etc.





Step 5: Learn

Plants mature and flowers are fully bloomed-sparking new ideas on how to improve your process.

This fifth step in the Feminist Consultation Methodology is Learn. This step is where you and your research team reflect on the overall consultation process. It is important to be open and transparent about your successes and struggles. Doing so helps light the way for improvement moving forward. If you and your research team were diligent in your ongoing monitoring and reporting activities, then you can draw from these documents to reflect in great detail.

Reflect as a research team

As much as we hope your research is a success, the reality is that not all consultations go smoothly. Based on a variety of factors, your consultation might not yield the kind of informative insights you seek. First and foremost, be kind to yourself. This is completely okay and part of the learning journey.

Take time to debrief with your research team on the learnings from your consultation. We strongly recommend you complete the [Evaluation Checklist Template](#). Conduct this step with everyone on the research team as it is important to capture the things that went well, areas the team found challenging, key learnings, etc. Encourage everyone to be honest and generous with feedback as this is the only way to learn and move forward.

Reflect on your consultation by asking yourself and your team a few questions:

- How did the consultation feel? What, if any, impact did it have on me (and/or the research team or target population)?
- What was difficult or challenging about the consultation? What barriers did I face?

"I hope that many different organizations will apply this tool and the world increasingly understands the significance of young women at the decision making table."

Julia Sophie van Zijl,
Australia



- What were some key learnings from the consultation? How might I apply the learnings to another part of my work?
- Was there anything that was/is unclear about the consultation process?
- Am I still curious about any aspect of the research topic? How might I continue to explore the research topic?
- How might I improve the consultation process? What could be added, revised, or removed to make it feel more effective or relevant?



Invite peer and community feedback

Make space for peer and community feedback. Invite comments and critique of the overall consultation process including the research methods, interpretation of data, and final results. Remember that feedback is a gift. Be careful to not tokenise the reviewers by ensuring they are given the power to engage in an impactful way. In the end, learn from your mistakes. Take into account the observations and feedback from diverse

perspectives, including people in your organisation or group, your research team, and participants.

Questions might include:

- What went well and what didn't? Why or why not?
- What was the feedback from participants at all stages?
- Did they understand the process? Did they see value in it?
- How sustainable is this consultation process? What needs to change?

Explore possible solutions

Learning is all about doing better tomorrow based on today's lessons. At any step of your consultation, you may find yourself facing a challenge or two. Fear not because there are always many possible solutions to help you.

Whenever you find yourself stuck on a challenge, take a moment to scan through this solution bank. It captures some possible challenges you may face and ideas for overcoming them. You may not know which solution to try for each challenge, and that's okay. Remember, we learn by doing, so you always have a chance to do things better next time!

As you gain experience with this Methodology, we invite you to add your wisdom to the solution bank. [Reach out to us](#) to share what challenges you faced and how you overcame them.



Solution Bank

I'm facing a challenge with...	Here's more detail about my challenge	Ideas for how I might solve this challenge...
Limited or non-existent internet connection for participants	In some regions, internet connectivity is very limited or even non-existent. It's a barrier for research activities using social media or video conferencing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer other research activities that don't need internet (e.g., in-person, via text messaging, hard copies of Surveys) • Build a space where participants can connect to the internet and use a few available devices. • Offer to cover internet expenses of participants. • Find a business or organisation with reliable access and ask if you can use their internet. They may even be a potential sponsor or partner of your project.
Finding appropriate physical space	I am having a hard time finding a space that is accessible and affordable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore spaces operated by women's groups and organisations. • Ask community leaders for help to find appropriate spaces.
Meeting in person	Meeting in person can be difficult. You may face transportation issues, location unavailability, or lockdowns measures (like from the COVID-19 pandemic).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider remote options instead of in-person research activities. This can be helpful when participants cannot meet, are too far away, or when meeting costs are high.
Getting permission for the work	Based on the context of the consultation or specific research activity, I need to get permission from a local authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find allies, like community leaders, who can help you gain support for this work. • Explain to community leaders and local authorities the purpose of the research and how it will benefit the community.



Solution Bank

I'm facing a challenge with...	Here's more detail about my challenge	Ideas for how I might solve this challenge...
Finding diverse participants	It is difficult to find diverse participants and access different communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a map of the different groups or perspectives you want to reach and where to find them in the community. • contact organisations with community connections and ask for help to find participants.
Many or different languages	The participants do not speak the same language or dialect. I am worried about losing the language nuances in our discussions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants in advance what language they will use during your activity and whether they might need any support. • Translate materials in advance of your session – this may include the FGD + Storytelling and Interview Data collection Guides. • Find a translator/interpreter to support you during the sessions. This is essential for the comfort of all participants, regardless of language differences. • Be mindful that an interpreter is an external person who may alter the dynamic of your FGD or Interview. • Provide a copy of translated materials to the interpreter in advance. This helps them prepare so they can concentrate on the participants' comments.



Solution Bank

I'm facing a challenge with...	Here's more detail about my challenge	Ideas for how I might solve this challenge...
<p>Many or different languages</p>	<p>The participants do not speak the same language or dialect. I am worried about losing the language nuances in our discussions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan for simultaneous interpretation (when translation happens at the same time as the discussion). There is less chance of forgetting important information or missing an opportunity to explore a topic in more detail. Increase the planned time of your session to give space for interpretation. Use clear explanations and easy-to-understand words to account for differing literacy levels. Invite participants to help answer questions from each other within the FGD. This is a great way to keep participants interested and encourage peer-to-peer learning.
<p>Disabilities</p>	<p>I want to support participants who have physical, sensory, and/or intellectual disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask participants in advance of any support or arrangements they might need. Make the necessary accommodations based on participant needs. Remember the participant should be the only one who determines necessary arrangements as they should not be guessed or decided by the facilitator. For example, a participant who uses a wheelchair needs an accessible meeting location. This may include having an access ramp and using tables that are wheelchair height.



Solution Bank

I'm facing a challenge with...	Here's more detail about my challenge	Ideas for how I might solve this challenge...
Finding participants	I am not getting the participation (including numbers or diversity) that I expected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When conducting outreach, be clear about the research objectives and articulate why it is important to participate. • Review how you publicised or shared your research activities. Tweak your publicising approach and reshare (consider using different channels). • Tweak your publicising approach and reshare (consider using different channels). • consider translating materials into different languages. • Publicise the language options that are available for the research activities. • check the design of your research activities. For example, keep Surveys short, schedule FGD when participants are most likely to be available, etc.
Embracing the passive approach to facilitation in FGD	Traditional facilitators are there to intervene and guide the process. Yet for this Methodology, the facilitator must adopt a more passive role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train the facilitator to find the balance between intervening and being passive. • Think of examples for what "ownership by the participants" might look like in the FGD, in advance of the session.



Solution Bank

I'm facing a challenge with...	Here's more detail about my challenge	Ideas for how I might solve this challenge...
<p>Limited story sharing in FGD</p>	<p>Stories set the tone for the FGD, but many of the participants are hesitant to share their stories.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask participants to prepare their story in advance through their chosen media (words, pictures, video, etc.) as this helps to avoid putting participants on the spot to share. • Start the session with an activity for participants to get to know each other and build trust. If applicable, have the facilitator share their own experience to invite dialogue and vulnerability. • Consider introducing creative techniques, like photos or illustrations, to inspire participants. • Invite participants to write their experiences anonymously instead of sharing them publicly. This technique can be used in specific cases, but should not replace the whole group dialogue.
<p>Apathy among participants</p>	<p>Some young women are unsure about how this work will make a difference. They have many other life challenges and the impact of this work is unclear to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to and acknowledge the realities of your participants. • Highlight the value of your participants' contributions and the impact in the long-term.
<p>Sustainability of this work</p>	<p>People come and go often in my organisation or group. It makes me concerned about the sustained use of this Methodology with so much turnover.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training for current members to learn about this Methodology.



Solution Bank

I'm facing a challenge with...	Here's more detail about my challenge	Ideas for how I might solve this challenge...
Sustainability of this work	People come and go often in my organisation or group. It makes me concerned about the sustained use of this Methodology with so much turnover.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide capacity building opportunities for current members to engage in this Methodology. • Include this Methodology in training for future members of your group or organisation. • capture learnings from when the Methodology is used so there is knowledge transfer between colleagues.
Ensuring the Methodology stays owned by young women	<p>As the Methodology moves forward, others will start to become involved in the work. I am concerned about young women no longer being owners of the work.</p> <p>How do we prevent the Methodology from morphing into something else? How do we stop it from being taken on as someone else's work, or used in ways not originally intended?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and capacity building opportunities for this Methodology as much as possible. • Remind and reinforce the principles of young women's ownership and feminism. Do this in all phases of the Methodology and with all stakeholders. • Identify and engage allies who can support the work and uphold the feminist consultation values.





Step 6: Iteration

Fruit provides nourishment and seeds for a new cycle—inspiring iteration of your process to amplify your impact.

This sixth step in the Feminist Consultation Methodology is Iterate. This step is where you look ahead and imagine the future—both for your research findings and your consultation process. While your research insights represent a snapshot in time, their impact is not limited to the present moment. Here, your focus is on exploring ways to extend or deepen your research for lasting community impact. This is also where you can build on the learnings from your consultation to evolve your approach for next time. By looking back and reflecting today on the experiences of your consultation, you can iterate your process for tomorrow and beyond.

“...I hope this tool will be one step towards a decolonized, anti-racist, holistic, and truly intersectional approach to feminist research.”



Aniqah Nadha Zowni,
Canada

Look ahead and also circle back

Now that your consultation activities are complete, you may feel ready for a break. You showed thoughtfulness when planning, designing, and implementing your research methods. You demonstrated rigour when making sense of the data. You exemplified critical thinking when reflecting on your experiences. And while rest is a key aspect of any feminist work, you must not forget about an equally important part: iteration.

Looking ahead

Whether it is called “growing”, “evolving”, “changing”, or any other word, the intention remains the same. For this Methodology, “iteration” describes all the ways in which your research can expand and live on to create a positive impact.

Once your consultation is complete, do not simply wrap up and disappear. Instead, first take time to open your heart and mind about what comes next. Ask yourself, your research team, your participants, and your community how to move forward—together. Invite expansiveness into your responses when answering the question: How might people benefit from the insights of this research?



Perhaps you might explore how to bring the research back into the community in a meaningful way (simply sharing a link to the report is not enough). Or you might collaborate with stakeholders and use the research to take action and advocate for positive change. You might work alongside community members to form advisory groups and create strategies to help resolve some of the issues from the research. Or perhaps you might create opportunities for wide-reaching feedback on the research. You might create the conditions for people to challenge your interpretations, and in doing so, highlight new or deeper topics to explore in future research.

Circling back

Regardless of what the path ahead looks like for your consultation, be sure to take a moment to honour what brought you here. Take a strengths-based approach to celebrate the time, energy, talents, and wisdom of you, your research participants, and the communities. All those who played a role in your consultation deserve gratitude. Honour the power behind the women's movements and the collective energy that helped bring your consultation to life.



Notes



Your Journey Continues

Whether this is your first or fiftieth time using the Methodology, one thing is certain: your journey continues. Whether or not you continue to lead or participate in research, it is our greatest wish for the principles of feminist consultation to stay with you. This is a tool that can be used throughout all aspects of your life. We hope you....

- Continue to be curious
- Question biases
- Embrace differences
- Challenge assumptions
- Validate conclusions
- Be inspired

As you move forward in your work and life, these disciplined practises—when guided by a feminist approach— can lead to systemic change.

Know that when facing whatever awaits you on your future journey, you are ready. Have confidence that you are surrounded by a sisterhood of feminist changemakers who are united by the passion for driving progress. Remember by using this Methodology as your guide, you are powered by the sisterhood's knowledge and wisdom to create a more feminist world. Trust that you have the power and agency to be the change.

The end is just the beginning.



Suju Poon (Core group member: Phase II and III)

“The whole process has been an amazing learning experience for me. My journey from understanding the need for a feminist methodology to conducting validation sessions in Asia has helped in deepening and diversifying the concept of feminism and feminist movements. I have full faith that the Methodology will do the same for individuals and organisations and push you to be intersectional, diverse and inclusive.”

Daniela Rueda (Core group member: Phase III)

“Girls and women do not want their story to be written by someone else; they want tools and spaces to build the path towards gender equality. Participating in the development of this Methodology was an enriching experience. I am convinced that the knowledge and tools gathered in these documents will favour the leadership processes of many girls and women.”

Heather Redman (Core group member: Phase I)

“My hope is that the tool gives young women's voices the (unfortunately) needed boost in feminist movements and that a tool like this won't be needed forever when true age equality is achieved in social justice spaces.”

Alannah Bonalos, Jessica Borich and Kay Nadalin (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Designers)

“This Methodology is evidence of the collective power of women—thoughtfully designed and truly centres the feminist voice and perspective. We wish this tool existed for us when we started our careers. We are excited to see the sisterhood achieve transformative change for gender equality.”



WorldYWCA

Appendix

World YWCA's
Young Women-Led Feminist
Consultation Methodology Guide



Acknowledgements and Thanks

The Feminist Consultation Methodology is a clear example of what is possible through the power of collaboration. The work was not easy—spanning several years, traversing many countries, and stretching across multiple time zones—and yet young women joined together with World YWCA and supporters to co-create the Methodology you see today.

Young women co-creators

World YWCA is immensely grateful to the amazing young women who shared their wisdom as co-creators of this Methodology during the three phases of its development.

From providing insights into the content of the Methodology, to leading in-country validation exercises, these young women embodied what it means to work in feminist ways.

Phase I

- Heather Redman, Canada
- Nirmala Gurung, Nepal
- Varaidzo Faith Magodo-Matimba, Zimbabwe
- Naomi Woyengu, Papua New Guinea
- Isabella María Díaz Vásquez, Honduras

Phase II

- Aniqah Nadha Zowni, Canada
- Kalisito Vaecece Biaukula, Fiji
- Julia Sophie Van Zijl, Australia
- Varaidzo Faith Magodo-Matimba, Zimbabwe
- Nirmala Gurung, Nepal
- Suju Poon, Nepal
- Natalia Arenas, UK (originally from Colombia)

Phase III

- Amany Emil Jabra Abu Awad, Palestine
- Kalisito Vaecece Biaukula, Fiji
- Julia Sophie Van Zijl, Australia
- Lilian Murphy Eisner, USA
- Nirmala Gurung, Nepal
- Suju Poon, Nepal
- Ingrid Daniela Rueda Forero, Colombia
- Tanya Maringo, Kenya
- Solea Winnie Nalubega, Uganda





World YWCA

The Methodology was developed with the leadership of a number of World YWCA team members included but not limited to: Dr. Suchi Gaur (Director of Global Engagement and Impact) for providing the leadership throughout the journey; Daniela Zelaya (Project Specialist) for coordinating the engagement of young women; and Talisa Avanthay (Communications Associate) for supporting in the pilot testing.

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Consultants

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- Jessica Borich and Kay Nadalin for providing support with the final edits and equity-centred design.
- Alannah Bonalos, for providing accessible and inclusive graphic design and illustrations.



Important Words and Phrases

Language is a powerful tool for communicating ideas and impacting how we think and act. And yet, complex or “jargony” language can sometimes get in the way of building shared understanding among people. This is especially true when words and phrases are new, unfamiliar, or different from people’s past references

This list of definitions provides clarity for important words and phrases related to feminist consultation and research as seen within this Methodology. While not an exhaustive list, these definitions are written with the intention of serving as common language for all those working through the Methodology.

When it comes to language, we must be mindful of regional contexts and how some languages use more gendered words than others. These definitions prioritise accessible and inclusive language¹ (including gender-inclusive language²) to help participants and researchers feel comfortable when using the Methodology.

For a more detailed list of important words and phrases, we encourage you to read [World YWCA’s Glossary and Definitions](#)³.

Ableism: Discrimination of and prejudice against people with disabilities (mental, emotional, and/or physical) based on the belief that some bodies (typical and atypical) are more valuable than others. Ableism defines people by their ability and classifies people with disabilities as “less than” (e.g., not worthy of respect and consideration, unable to contribute and take part in life, and other misconceptions). Ableism can be conscious or unconscious, and is embedded in institutions, systems, and the broader culture of a society.

Accountability: To be accountable means a person or a group is held responsible for a task, job, program, or upholding of a law. It requires trust, and is often coupled with

an enforcement mechanism and consequences for not following through.

Advocacy: “Advocacy consists of both strategy and action to achieve an objective. The objective of advocacy is the engagement of stakeholders in the decisions affecting them. The actions to achieve the objective, such as lobbying those stakeholders, typically occur over time, and incrementally.”⁴

Ageism (agism)⁵: Stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel), and discrimination (how we act) toward others or oneself based on age. Ageism can lead to poorer health, social isolation, earlier deaths, and so much more.

Unfortunately, ageism is widely prevalent across institutions and sectors, and has far-reaching consequences on economies and society⁶. A few examples of ageism include losing your job because of your age, viewing younger people as unskilled and irresponsible, or disregarding someone’s concerns due to their age.

Allyship: An ally is someone who uses their privilege (see privilege) to advocate for and with a marginalised and/or underrepresented group. Allyship takes the form of showcasing support to promote a more inclusive world. Acts of allyship can include showing and speaking up, challenging the status quo, and creating or extending opportunities.

Analytics: Turning information and data into insights to make better decisions.

Androcentrism: The practise of centring society around men's experiences, needs, and perspectives. It is important to be mindful of how androcentrism may impact the way you interpret and analyse your research data.

Biases: (Un)conscious predispositions or generalisations about a group of people based on personal characteristics or stereotypes. Some biases can be positive and helpful. Other biases can be based on prejudices rather than knowledge. These cognitive shortcuts can sometimes result in judgements leading to rash decisions and discriminatory practises. (Also see [Unconscious/Implicit biases](#).)

Capacity building: The improvement of an individual's or an organisation's ability to fulfil their mission by strengthening their infrastructure, skills or expertise, governance, and human resources. Capacity building can happen through training, investment, experiential learning, etc.⁷

Classism: Structures, attitudes, and behaviours that feed the discrimination and prejudices based on social or economic class. As a form of systemic oppression,

classism might look like one group feeling they have power and privilege over another based on certain circumstances like income or access to resources.

Coding (or Indexing): Assigning codes to broad ideas and topics (i.e., age, gender, socio-economic status, region) as a means to structure and label data.

Community leader: A person with the ability to influence or make change within a defined community. This role can be formal (i.e., elected officials, religious leaders, recognised ethno-cultural leaders, or leaders of specific formal groups) or informal (someone who likes to help)⁸.

Confidentiality: A commitment to not share specific details or information with anyone outside of the research team, especially details that may reveal the identity of the research participants.

Consultation: A series of planned in person and/or online processes seeking engagement and feedback on how to advance an agenda. A feminist consultation is culturally responsive, empowering, structured to be non-hierarchical and should look at extra-personal and outside factors. More broadly, consultation can range from formal to informal; and active (people provide comment and feedback on the

decision making process) to passive (people are merely informed).

Co-researchers: Participants who are situated as joint contributors to research. This participatory approach enhances the experiences of participants by positioning them experts and collaborators in the research. Co-researchers can play various roles throughout all steps of the consultation process⁹.

Data collection tool: An instrument used for gathering data or statistics in response to research questions.

Data governance (DG): The power of a person or group to make decisions about data including its use, collection, access, accuracy, dissemination, and storage. Data governance oversees many aspects of data such as its usability (how easy it is to understand), metadata (why it is being collected), security (who has access to it and where it is stored), integration (how it is used), and preservation (how long to keep it and where). For example, the European Union's [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)¹⁰ outlines the rules, rights and freedom, and free movement of personal data. Note data governance is not the same as data management, which is about executing the rules and policies of the governance strategy.

Data sovereignty: The right of a nation, group, or individual to exert control over the governance of data collection, application, and ownership. An example: you are Canadian (living in Montreal) and you send an email to your neighbour. Depending on where the ‘internet exchange point’ is located, your email may flow through New York (many cloud services are US based) before it reaches your neighbour in Montreal. This means your data is subject to Canadian privacy laws when it is in Canada, but once it flows outside of the borders, it is subject to the laws of the land.

Data stewardship (or Data management): The practises and procedures to manage how data is acquired, stored, aggregated, de-identified, used, and released. Data stewardship falls under the umbrella of data governance with the goal of empowering users by providing trusted data.

De-identified data: Data that has been stripped or “cleaned” of all direct identifiers—that is, all details that might be used to identify the people from whom the data was derived¹¹. In qualitative and quantitative research, it is important to de-identify data including direct information (like someone’s name or date of birth) and contextual information that might make it easy

to figure out a person’s identity (like someone’s job).

Diversity: The “variety of unique dimensions, qualities, and characteristics we all possess¹².”

Double-bind standard: The practise of using a different criteria when analysing or evaluating identical behaviours or situations for two or more genders. For example, men are awarded for being dedicated to their professions while women are frowned upon for not focusing on family life.

Elitism: The belief of a person or group as superior because they possess qualities or attributes such as intellect, power, wealth, etc. You may be an expert in research or other aspects of life, but you are not the expert on the specific community or the lives of your participants. As you conduct the consultation, be mindful of the way you present yourself and how you engage with participants. Even if you may be from the community (or a peer), your position as a leader in the research may create the perception of you as an elitist in the eyes of the participants.

Empathy: The ability to sense people’s emotions and imagine what they might be thinking or feeling based on their frame of reference. There are three types of empathy. Cognitive empathy

is the ability to understand someone else’s point of view. Emotional empathy is the ability to feel what someone else feels. Empathetic concern is the ability to (un)consciously determine what someone might need from you.

Engagement: A formal or informal agreement whereby an individual commits themselves to the specific cause or activity of an organisation, team, or group. Often, engagement is a result of a personal or emotional connection between the member and the organisation, as they share a passion and commitment for the same causes, mission, vision, and/or values.

Empowerment: The process of devolving or restoring power to an individual or a group of individuals. It often helps individuals to grow stronger, more confident, and exert more agency and control over their life, rights, and choices.

Equity: The fair distribution of opportunities, power, and resources to meet the needs of all people, regardless of age, ability, gender, income, education level, culture, and background.

Equity-enhancing research: Research that contributes to alleviating social inequalities by surfacing the root causes of inequalities in areas such as healthcare, education, and the law.

This type of research recognises differences among people and uses this recognition to achieve equality in all aspects of a person's life to make society more just.

Facilitator: A person who guides a group through discussion and collaborate with participants to foster a safe space. A facilitator who follows feminist principles is mindful of privilege and power dynamics. They come from the participants' community without having significant power over the participants and ensure participants are the rightful owners of the session.

Feminism: Rather than being a single concept, there is a spectrum of feminism shaped by the lived experiences, identities, and communities of feminists around the globe.

Feminist: An approach that places the transformation of power relations, especially gender, at the heart of all social change analyses or processes. Feminist change interventions centre on the empowerment of women and other marginalised and/or underrepresented genders; the transformation of gender power relations; and the advancement of gender equality. Feminist change interventions are often viewed through a "gender lens"

(e.g.: asking whether gender equality and women's rights are being consciously addressed and advanced by the change process).

Focus group discussion (FGD): A research method frequently used as a qualitative (where responses are collected in words) approach to gain an in-depth understanding of social issues from a selected group of individuals¹³. Focus groups have the potential to provide a mutually supportive and empowering environment¹⁴ where research participants share their ideas and experiences in a group setting.

Gender sensitivity: Being aware of how gender impacts the treatment of others. For example, valuing the importance of language in power relations by understanding that some words might carry different meanings across genders.

Goal: Goals define and quantify the steps a movement must take. They are the signposts to show progress in the right direction. They are measurable and answer questions like, "When?" and "How much?"¹⁵ Goals aim to create specific impact. For example: [World YWCA's Goal 2035](#)¹⁶ describes a clear vision for the future: "By 2035, 100 million young women and girls transform power structures to create justice, gender equality, and a world without violence and

war; leading a sustainable YWCA movement inclusive of all women."

Harm: The act of causing injury and the result of said injury. Harm may be physical, emotional, spiritual, or even psychological. Harm can be caused either intentionally or unintentionally. When someone is harmed, they might not realise they are harmed or know how to respond. They might also be in denial. The person experiencing harm needs support and time to recover and heal.

Hashtag: A label for content beginning with the "#" symbol. Hashtags help people to quickly find content on social media based on a topic of interest. A hashtag looks like this: #WomensRights or #YoungWomenLead.

Imposter syndrome: A persistent internalised belief causing a person to doubt their skills, talents, or accomplishments. Often those who experience imposter syndrome fear being exposed as a "fraud". A few examples of imposter syndrome include attributing success to external factors, sabotaging your own progress, overachieving, and fear of not living up to expectations. Anyone can experience imposter syndrome at any stage in their life.

Inclusion: The act of removing barriers to enable full participation and belonging. Inclusion looks like being intentional to identify challenges, understanding what people need, and providing reasonable accommodations to foster equitable spaces and experiences.

Inclusivity: Supporting a sense of belonging for others, whoever they are. Inclusivity is achieved when people have agency to share their opinions, and make decisions, and feel respected and valued, regardless of their identity. To promote inclusivity, World YWCA fully acknowledges and embraces the diversity of race, ethnicity, health, status, class, caste, differently abled, indigenous, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and faith.

Indexing (see [Coding](#))

Intergenerational: Describes the relationship between and across generations. An intergenerational approach is grounded in respect for the lived experience of each individual, independent of their age, and what we can learn from them.

Intersectional / Intersectionality: A term created by law professor Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw. The interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class,

and gender. When these social categories apply to an individual or group, they overlap to create new and interdependent power relations, discriminations, (dis) advantages, or privileges¹⁷.

Marginalised and/or underrepresented communities: Groups of people within a given culture, context, and history at risk of being subjected to multiple discrimination due to the interplay of different personal characteristics or grounds, such as sex, gender, age, ethnicity, religion or belief, health status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, education or income, or living in various geographic localities¹⁸.

Microaggressions: An indirect comment or act of discrimination made unconsciously or unintentionally by people who seem well intentioned. These expressions are directed toward a member of a marginalised and/or underrepresented group based on their gender, race, age, or any form of identity.

Movement: A process of organising and mobilising communities in response to problems and concerns. Movement-building can include a shared analysis of why the problem exists, a common vision and agenda for change, and short and long-term strategies.

Movement-building also requires those involved to define shared principles and mechanisms for communication, roles and responsibilities, and processes¹⁹.

Over-researching: The practise of subjecting certain groups or communities (often those who experience systemic oppression) to multiple research projects. These groups or communities typically have little say about how the research unfolds or why it is taking place. Instead, they should be the leaders or co-creators of any research affecting them.

Participant: A person who consents to sharing their ideas and perspectives during research activities.

Participatory: A process using a variety of techniques to share power and ownership over agenda, process, and outcomes. Participants are encouraged to identify possible solutions and actions. The methods aim to articulate and share the perspectives of marginalised and/or underrepresented groups while supporting their direct collaboration with those in positions of power and authority.

Participatory research methodology: Research participants are considered co-producers of knowledge²⁰. This

Methodology is an example of participatory research: The full participation of young women was key to designing this Methodology in response to their needs, experiences, and opinions. Fourteen young women from around the world—from within and beyond the YWCA movement—actively participated in defining the process, building the Methodology, and validating the final product.

Partnership: A mutually beneficial relationship between two or more individuals or institutions. In a partnership, both partners join around a common objective, and each partner has a fully recognised agency and role.

Positionality: The social and political context shaping your identity such as your race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability status. Positionality also describes how your identity might influence—and potentially bias—your outlook on the world.

Power: The capacity or ability to influence—through individual action or by contributing to collective efforts—the behaviour of others or the course of events²¹.

Power dynamics: Systems of influence and control over individuals, organisations, governments, or other spheres

of life. Power structures exist in every relationship, in families, and in organisations. It is important to be mindful of unequal and unfair power structures to understand how these might impact people’s agency and behaviour²².

Privilege: “Unearned access to resources and social power that are readily available to some people because of their social group membership.” Privilege can be inherent (e.g., white privilege, male privilege, etc.) or an unearned advantage because of your identity (e.g., class privilege, adult privilege, etc.)²³. Regardless of the type, privilege is about the power you hold based on your social group—often at the expense of another social group.

Qualitative: An overarching category of research activities where responses are collected in the form of words. Qualitative research activities can include discussions, open-ended questions, interviews, and storytelling.

Quantitative: An overarching category of research activities where responses are collected in the form of numbers and statistics. Quantitative research activities include but are not limited to surveys, experiments, and interviews with close-ended questions (such as questions

requiring a “yes” or “no” answer, multiple choice, or a rating scale).

Racialised (populations): Groups to whom society has assigned a racial category that dictates the discriminatory or oppressive treatment they receive, in particular from formal institutions through systemic or institutional racism. Race is a social construct imposed by the dominant on the oppressed.

Racism: The belief in the inherent superiority of one race over all others and thereby the right to dominance - a global system of race-based oppression. Racial discrimination and injustices have been embedded in the political, economic, and social structure of society for centuries. However, in 2020, the video of George Floyd’s murder in the US transcended borders to ignite solidarity protests around the world. This moment sparked a global racial reckoning fuelling the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. Learn more by taking [UNESCO’s Racism and Discrimination course](#)²⁴.

Research team: One or more people who bring the research process to life. This person or group of people serve as the “doers” or practitioners with the tools, experiences, and resources needed to design, facilitate, and participate in the end-to-end research process.

Safe space: On/offline (virtual or in-person) places that seek to provide an environment where all people feel safe, comfortable, and can share their experiences, opinions, and views without fear or threat of political, economic, or personal harm.

Sample/Sampling: A technique of selecting a smaller or specific group of people from a population to make conclusions about the entire population. A sample can be drawn a sample when working with large populations because there is not enough time or resources to consult everyone.

Semi-structured interview: A research method where the researcher engages conversationally with one participant at a time by asking open ended questions and accompanying “why” or “how” questions. The dialogue moves freely between topics, rather than adhering to a standardised list of questions²⁵.

Sexism: Stereotyping, prejudice, and/or discrimination based on one’s gender or sex.

Sexual dichotomy: Treating men and women as segregated categories, as if they have nothing in common. For example, ignoring that men and women exist as fluid in gender, and as a result can appreciate the same things.

Social change: Change in both the power structures that govern society and the cultural norms and values held by people. Advocacy, resource mobilisation, movement building, and young women transforming power structures are all examples of ways to achieve social change.

Storytelling: A research activity where participants share knowledge and experiences through words (e.g., narratives and anecdotes) as powerful tools for describing lessons, ideas, concepts, and causal relationships. Storytelling is a compelling way to exchange and consolidate learning, build trust, cultivate norms, transfer knowledge, facilitate unlearning, and generate emotional connections²⁶.

Survey: A research method using a list of questions to gather data from a particular group of people. Surveys rely on tools (either digital or hardcopy) to collect responses.

Target population (or group): The entire population, or group, who meet the criteria or specific characteristics defined in your research objectives. In other words, the target population represents all the people with whom your research team wants to consult. These can be defined based on different permutations between age, ethnicity, geography, and/

or gender. For example, under the World YWCA, target groups are defined as the following: Women: 18 years and older, Young women: women age 30 or younger, and Girl: Minors, 17 years and younger.

Trauma: An emotional, physiological, or physical response resulting from one or more harmful experiences. Chronic trauma comes from repeated and prolonged exposure to high-stress environments. Complex trauma comes from exposure to multiple events. Secondary trauma comes from close contact to someone who has experienced trauma. Acute trauma comes from a single isolated event. Regardless of the type, trauma is often described as a stress response with no visible signs. Symptoms can include feelings of numbness, detachment, and shock to name a few. Most people experience at least one traumatic event at some point in their lives. Without properly addressing it, trauma can have long-term effects on a person’s well-being.

Transformative Justice (TJ)²⁷: A political framework and approach for responding to violence, harm, and abuse. At its most basic, transformative justice seeks to respond to violence without creating more violence and/or engaging in harm reduction to

lessen the violence. TJ can be thought of as a way to “make things right,” get in “right relation,” or create justice together.

Triangulation: The practise of using multiple approaches or sources when analysing data to enhance the credibility of the results.

Troll: Someone who leaves an intentionally annoying or offensive online message to upset the recipient or to get attention.

Tokenism: When individuals who belong to a marginalised and/or underrepresented group appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.

Unconscious/Implicit bias: The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. We all have biases—no matter our identities and regardless of how educated we are on the topic. These associations begin developing at an early age and continue over the course of a lifetime through exposure to direct and indirect messages.

Young women: An overarching category for people, in all their diversity, who are between the ages of 16 to 35 (though sometimes younger or older, depending on specific organisational or cultural definitions) and identify as female or non-binary.



Sampling

Why sample and how to do it

A sample provides a manageable number of participants to represent your target population. Using a sample is especially helpful when time or resources are tight, or when your target population is large.

There are two methods for sampling: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Each sampling method offers a few different ways of generating your sample.

Keep these guiding principles in mind when sampling:

- Make sure your sample consists of as many diverse profiles as possible.
- Do not leave out hard-to-reach populations.
- Ensure age, race, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status are representative and aligned with your research objectives.

Probability sampling methods

vs

Non-probability sampling methods



Probability sampling methods

Simple random sampling

The target population must...

Contain a finite number of members who all have similar characteristics.

For example, a company with 250 employees.

How to generate this sample:

Use a random lottery approach. Assign a number to each member of the population to protect their identity and eliminate bias. Then randomly select as many numbers as needed for your sample.

For example, choosing numbers out of a hat for 25 employees from a company of 250 employees. All employees have a chance to be chosen.

Systematic sampling

The target population must...

Contain a finite number of members who all have similar characteristics.

How to generate this sample:

Take a systematic approach. Assign a number to each member of the population to protect their identity and eliminate bias. Then select numbers on regular intervals (i.e., time, space, or order) as needed for your sample but ensure there are no patterns in the numbering list that might skew the sample.

For example, a local charity is seeking to form a systematic sample of 500 volunteers from a population of 5000. The charity can build their sample by selecting every 10th person on their volunteer list.

Stratified sampling

The target population must...

Be very diverse (also known as heterogeneous) to ensure every characteristic is proportionally represented.

For example, an organisation looking to improve their services for marginalised and/or underrepresented groups must ensure representation of various gender orientations, racial, and ethnic groups.

How to generate this sample:

Work with sub-groups (also known as strata). Start with the population and divide into sub-groups based on relevant criteria to your research objectives (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, etc.). Then decide how many people should be sampled from each sub-group. Finally use simple random sampling or systematic sampling to select a sample from each sub-group. Allow the topic and nature of your consultation to guide what criteria to use when forming the sub-groups.

Multi-stage sampling

The target population must...

Be very large and typically without a finite or known number of members.

How to generate this sample:

Take a staged approach. Start with the population and cluster it into groups based on one categorisation relevant to your research objectives (i.e., region). Next select a sample of your groups using simple random sampling or systematic sampling. Then divide your sample's groups into sub-groups based on another relevant categorisation. Select a new sample of your sub-groups. Finally use your new sample of groups to

create a sample of research participants using simple random sampling or systematic sampling.

Non-probability sampling methods

Voluntary response sampling

The target population must:

Know about your consultation so they can volunteer themselves to be research participants.

How to generate this sample:

Build awareness of your consultation so people can learn about it and decide if it is of interest to them. Then provide opportunities for people to volunteer themselves. The research team may decide to publicise a call for participants in places where your target population is likely to see it.



Be mindful of risks like bias and lack of representation when building your sample this way.

Snowball sampling

The target population must:

Consist of current participants in your research who are willing to recruit other participants.

How to generate this sample:

Build relationships with your current research participants. Treat them well and help them feel confident in recommending this research opportunity to people they know (especially people who are difficult to access). You can make this an easy process by providing appropriate information for them to share.

Probability sampling methods

Non-probability sampling methods

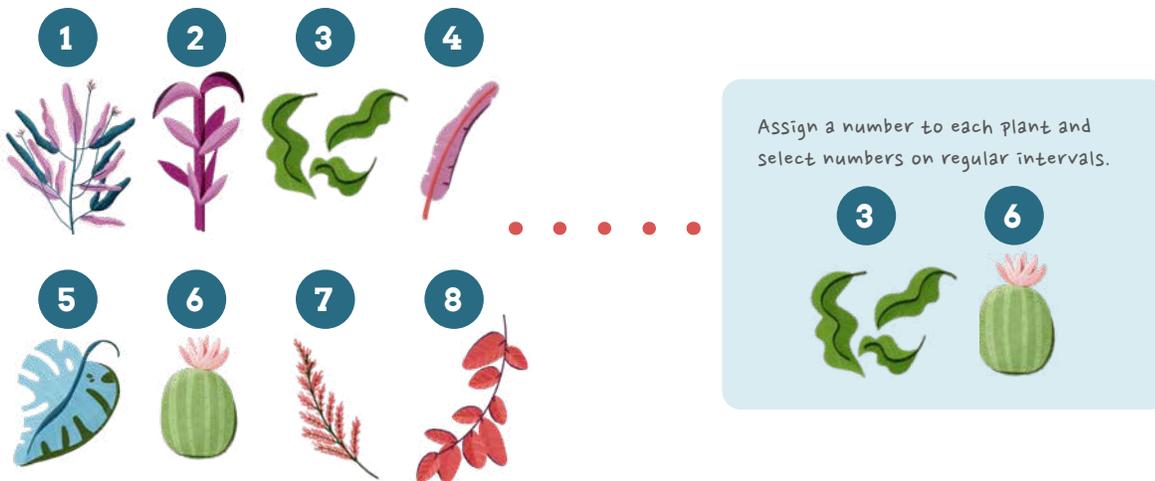
Notes

Probability sampling methods

Simple random sampling

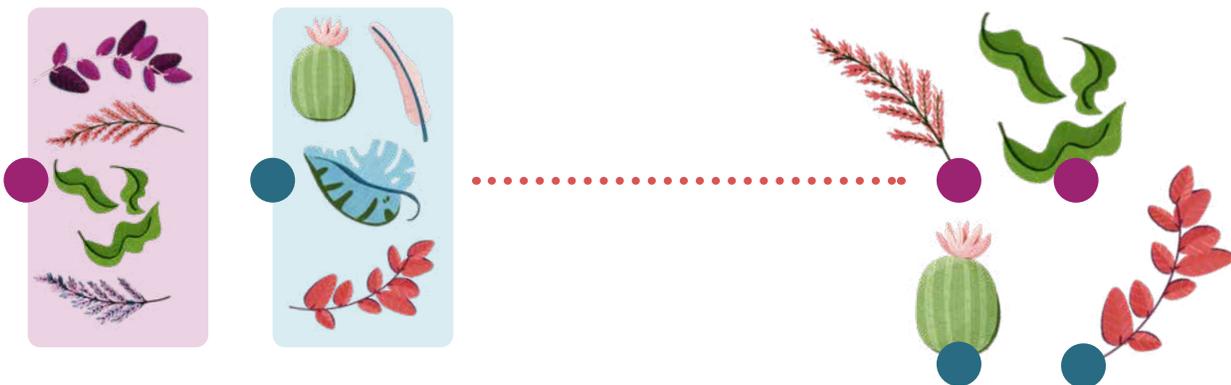


Systematic sampling



Stratified sampling

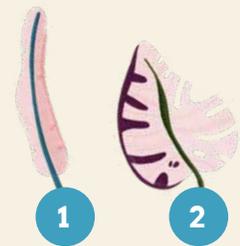
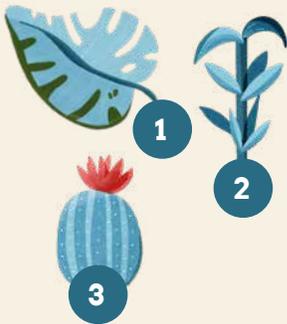
Work with sub-groups (strate) and divide into subgroups. Decide how many should be sampled from each sub-group and select using random or systematic sampling.



Multi-stage sampling

cluster into groups based on one categorisation relevant to your research.
Select a sample of your groups using simple random or systematic sampling.

In this example, we first divide our plants by color and select a sample using systematic sampling, choosing every first and third plant.

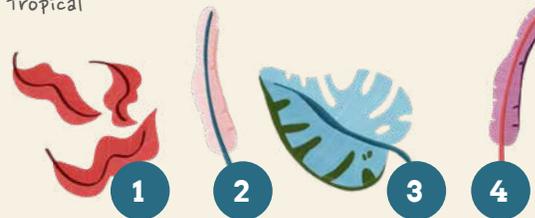


Next, we will divide our sample's groups into sub-groups based on another relevant categorisation and select a new sample from our sub-groups. For this round, we divide our plants by climate: dry or tropical.

Dry



Tropical



Finally, we select a new sample for our research by using simple random sampling.



Non-probability sampling methods

Voluntary response sampling



Tania Fernandes
@taniafernandez

Support a global movement and ignite change! Complete this survey bit.ly/EducationForAll on online safety and security for women. It is our collective responsibility to protect #YoungWomen.



1:14 PM - 26 Feb 2022

1 Retweet 11 Likes

1 1 11

Add another Tweet

Snowball sampling



Tania Fernandes
@taniafernandez

Join us on 3/1 at 1 PM and bring a friend. We will be hosting a workshop on Empowered Young Women and would love to include your voice. Sign up and RT: bit.ly/EducationForAll #ShareYourVoice



1:14 PM - 26 Feb 2022

1 Retweet 11 Likes

1 1 11

Add another Tweet

voluntary response
sampling

Snowball sampling



Safety and Security

Online platforms

Online platforms, like social media and video conferencing, play a big role in today's world. It is now easier than ever to connect with someone located on the other side of the globe. One of the most innovative elements of this Methodology is using social media as a tool for consultation. This offers great potential for research teams who wish to do remote consultations.

And yet, like all tools, online platforms pose safety and security risks. No platform is 100% secure. Because of this, research teams must be thoughtful and careful about using online platforms in their consultations. The safety and comfort of participants is essential for remote consultation. Before starting any remote consultations, ask yourself or your research team these questions:

- What online platforms might I use to engage participants and collect data?
- What are the limitations of these platforms when it comes to protecting the privacy of participants?
- What features do I need to engage participants? What online platforms offer these features for free or at low cost? What online platforms are already being used by participants?
- Should I use an organisation's account or a personal account? Which one is safer based on the privacy needs of participants? Which one is more appropriate based on public optics?
- How will I store the data? Who will have access to the recordings and results?

- What will I do with the data once the consultation is finished?
- When will I delete the data?

We strongly recommend these tips to protect the privacy and security of yourself and your participants.

Social media tips for safety

Review privacy and security settings for social media platforms

There are many social media platforms available to use in your consultation. When deciding on a platform, be sure to understand its privacy and security measures. Take some time to explore its policies and procedures for security as well as its privacy settings. All social media platforms have some privacy settings (for example, [Facebook Security](#)²⁸, [Instagram Security](#)²⁹, [WhatsApp Security](#)³⁰, and [Twitter Security](#)³¹) Check out the platform's Frequently Asked Questions page or look externally at tutorials. Then select the platform that best aligns with your research scope and privacy needs.

Select the highest level of privacy protection

Whatever platform you select, choose the highest level of privacy protection from your account's privacy settings. Be mindful of how the content you share may impact the privacy of others. It is possible to inadvertently put others at risk based on the quantity and quality of your posts. For example, tagging

participants in a post reveals their participation in your consultation. Do not publicly share the raw data collected during your research. For example, avoid sharing screenshots or document photos containing participants names or information.

Decide on the type of account to use: Private versus public or organisational

Evaluate the pros and cons of running the consultation from a private or personal account versus an organisational social media account. Consider how the type of account might impact the number of people and/or the diversity of profiles reached in your consultation.

Control who sees the information you share

Use privacy settings to control who sees what you share (past, present, and future). On many platforms, you can choose to hide some or all your posts from specific people. This is a key strategy to prevent negative or unwanted interference in your consultation. It is also a helpful way to protect your participants. Settings for hiding posts will depend on the type of account you have and the platform you use.

Share your location with caution

Tagging or sharing your location on posts and photos, as well as broadcasting “live”, enables everyone to find out where you are in real-time. If it is necessary to reveal where you are at a given time, consider using other channels or ways of sharing your location. For example, share your location with only your “close friends” on social media (if the platform offers this feature). Or consider sharing your location via text messaging or group chats.

Block and restrict accounts

Not everyone agrees with activism and research. This is especially true when it comes to controversial or sensitive issues. Block harassers, **trolls**, and people who make you uncomfortable. When using social networks as a consultation tool, you must ensure the participants feel comfortable throughout. Be ready to intervene if any aggression occurs.

Report offensive or inappropriate content

Some people may try to sabotage the consultation. These people may post content on your profile that goes against the purpose of your research. Immediately report any offensive content by following the reporting steps of the platform.

Be wise about passwords

Use a different password for every platform: Resist the temptation to use the same password over and over again! Repeated use of the same password increases the chances for hacking on one or more of your accounts. Use a unique password for each platform to limit the impact to only one account if you do get hacked.

Create strong passwords: Make your passwords complex so that they cannot be easily guessed. Use upper case letters, numbers, and symbols in your passwords. Do not include anything personal or obvious, like your name or birthday. Keep your passwords secret and do not share them with others. To avoid forgetting your passwords, consider using a password manager in your browser.

Turn off the “save password” option in your browsers: Avoid automatically saving passwords to your device, even if you own the device. This stops anyone from getting into your accounts if you lose your device or

leave it unattended. If you do save passwords to your browser, make sure you sign into the browser before saving them. And always be sure to clear your browser history and cookies!

Video conferencing tips for safety

Review privacy and security setting for video conferencing platforms

Video conferencing platforms enable research methods like FGD and Interviews to take place remotely. There are many free and popular video conferencing platforms for you to consider using in your consultation (for example, Zoom, BlueJeans, Google Meet, or Skype). Start by reviewing the different platforms. Take time to look into their privacy settings, FAQs, and tutorials. Learn about the privacy limitations of the platforms. Keep in mind no video conferencing platform is 100% perfect. Then select the platform that best aligns with your research scope and privacy needs.

Use passwords and/or a waiting room feature

Some platforms offer the option to create a password-protected session. Consider creating a password to share in advance of the session with participants so they can gain access. Password-protected sessions allow you to control who enters the session. This is a helpful strategy to protect the session as a safe space.

In the invite instructions for your session, ask participants to update their display name on the platform to match the name they used when signing up to participate in your consultation. This way you can monitor the waiting room and remove anyone who isn't on your participant list. For inclusivity, you may consider asking them to share their pronouns as well.

For the same purpose of regulating who has access to the space, you can also use a waiting room feature. A waiting room allows the meeting host to track who enters and remains in the session. It also lets the host “lock” access to the session once all participants arrive.

Be sure to familiarise yourself with the steps to remove a participant. You may need to quickly do so to protect the safety of everyone.

Record or use transcripts with caution

Many video conferencing platforms give the option to record or create a transcript. These records can be very helpful for note-taking purposes. However it is essential to obtain consent first before recording. Getting consent means explaining the purpose of the consultation, why it is being recorded, how you will use the recording, and when it will be destroyed. It also means asking participants to confirm their consent. You can collect consent in writing (see the [Consent Form](#)) or verbally at the start of the recording.

Use the collected information with care

It is critical to protect participants by collecting confidential and anonymous information. Be thoughtful about files are titled and shared from your consultation. When sharing audio files, use a secure channel with a confidential password and destroy all audio files once the consultation is over.



Tools and Templates

Why start with a blank page when you don't have to?

When putting together this Methodology, it was important for us to create helpful tools and templates. The goal of these items is to support you in bringing your consultation to life.

You are welcome to use the tools and templates as they are or you can modify them to suit the context of your consultation.

Explore this collection of tools and templates to help get you started with...

- **Project Management**
- **Research Methodology**

We are here to help!

As you use this Methodology, please reach out if you have any challenges or questions. We would love to hear how you use and apply these tools.

Contact us at World YWCA:
getinvolved@worldywca.org

Action Plan Guide

What

This template enables you to be clear about the activities of your consultation. It allows you to track accountability, timelines, required resources, etc.

Why

Documenting the details allows you to think through each element of your consultation. By asking critical questions, you gain clarity on key aspects of the research to set a strong foundation for success.

How

These are starting points. Feel free to amend the headers and questions to suit your consultation needs. For example, if applicable, you may wish to include identifying possible risks, mitigation strategies, partner or sponsor outreach, etc.

what

why

HOW

We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Action Plan Template

Action steps	Person responsible	Date completed	Resources needed or dependencies	Potential challenges	Collaborators
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					



Action Plan Template

Consider presenting the action plan to participants for feedback. This encourages full participation in the process.

Actions	What information do we need?	Where can we get it?	By when?	Open dialogue and reflection
				Are we doing what we said we'd do? How are we doing?
Planning and implementation issues 1 2 3 4				
Objectives 1 2 3 4				
Impact on participants/co-researchers 1 2 3 4				



Budget Template

What

A tool to keep track of what you need to do this work and how much it costs.

Why

Keeping track of costs helps keep you on track. A budget gives transparency into the cost of doing this work.

How

Use this template as a guide. Remove whatever is not applicable for you and add new rows as needed.

what

Why

HOW

We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Budget Template

Project name

Date

Expense	Description	Units	Cost per unit	Total cost
Human Resources				
Researcher				
Interpreter				
Translator				
Driver				
Travel and lodging				
Travel				
Lodging				
Car/van rental				
Bus fare				
Driver allowance				
Fuel				
Research technology equipment				
Mobile phones				
Modem				
Internet connection/mobile phones bills				

Budget Template

Expense	Description	Units	Cost per unit	Total cost
Human Resources				
Researcher				
Interpreter				
Translator				
Driver				
Travel and lodging				
Travel				
Lodging				
Car/van rental				
Bus fare				
Driver allowance				
Fuel				
Research technology equipment				
Mobile phones				
Modem				
Internet connection/mobile phones bills				
Digital camera				
Laptop				

Budget Template

Expense	Description	Units	Cost per unit	Total cost
Research technology equipment (cont'd.)				
Anti-virus software				
Toner for printer				
Colour printer				
Research materials				
Refreshments/meals				
Meeting room rental				
Photocopies				
Papers, markers, pens, flip charts				
Honorariums and gifts				
Participant honorariums				
Gifts for community leaders				
Certificates				
Publication and dissemination				
Printing Methodology guide				
Printing and binding of reports				

Publicity Template

What

A template to write about your consultation and attract potential participants and possible partners or sponsors.

Why

Getting the word out into the community about your consultation is an important early step. Without awareness about your research, you may miss an opportunity to attract the interest of potential participants, partners or sponsors.

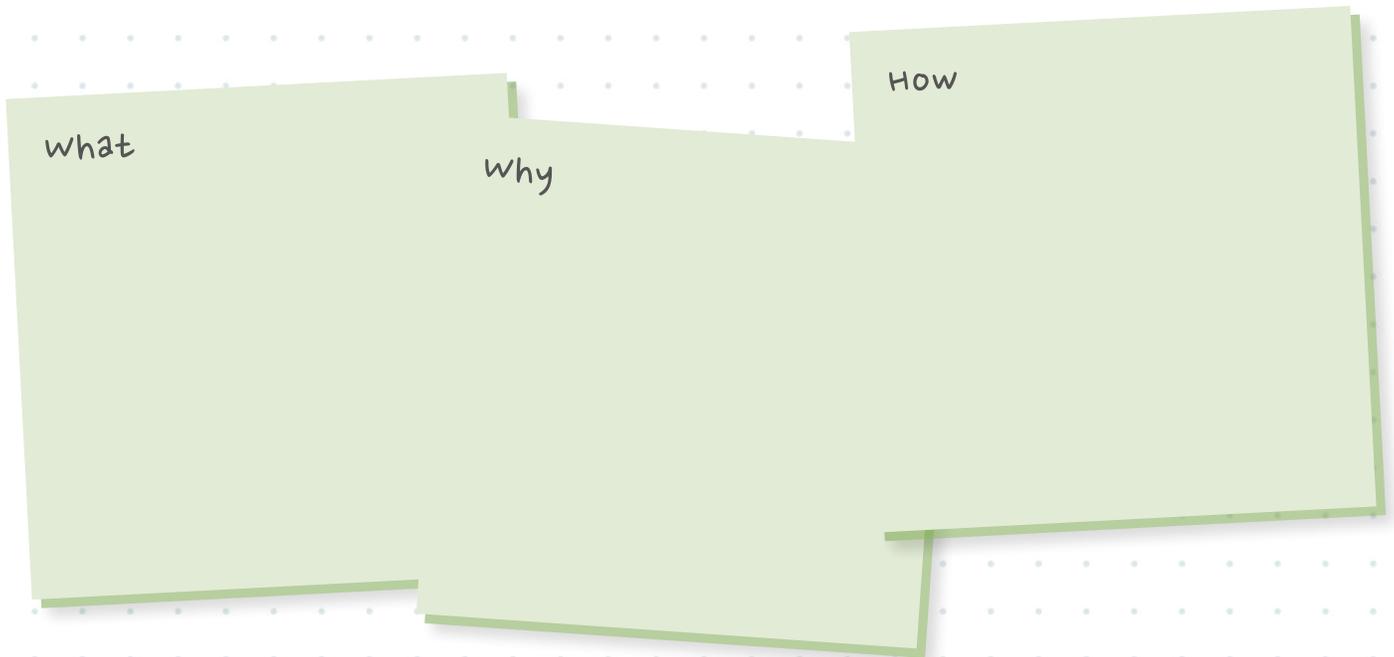
How

Use this template as a starting point for writing your publicising message. You can adapt, remove, or add new content sections as needed.

Ensure your message is short and precise. Use language that is user-friendly and adjusted to the specific context of your community. Avoid terms that may be too academic, offensive, or exclusionary. Be aware of language that might lead to social stigma or triggering for people.

Write your message and then edit it. Test your message by showing it to others and making adjustments based on feedback.

Share your message on channels where your target population is likely to see it.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Publicity Template

General theme

Objective

Purpose

Relevance (why is it important?)

Why your target audience and what is the value to them (e.g., long term impact, incentives, etc.)?

How will we use the information we collect?

How to sign up or get in touch with you if interested in being a participant:



Social Media Cheat Sheet

What

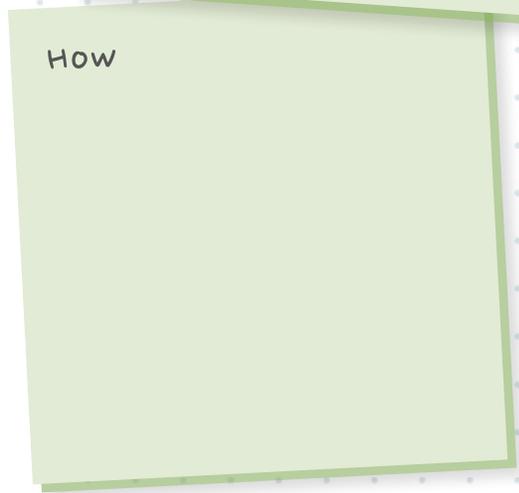
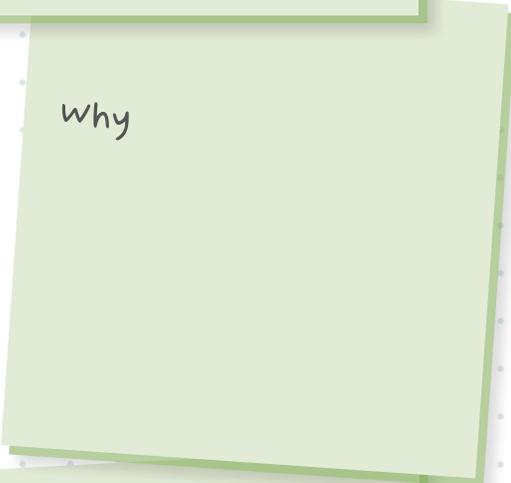
A template of important details and list of tips to support the research team to build awareness about the consultation using social media.

Why

Social media is a great tool for building awareness about your consultation. When working with a research team, participants, and partners, it can be helpful to compile all important social media details into one place. This makes it easy to share the details of your consultation on social media and increase your reach.

How

Fill in the “Important social media details for this consultation”. Share with the research team, participants, and partners as needed. Then use the sample posts and tips as inspiration to help you promote your consultation on social media.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Social Media Cheat Sheet

Important social media details for this consultation

Where to find us

Hashtag(s)

#

#

Website(s)

Add anything else relevant for your consultation:

Digital Assets

Promotional assets

Links to folder or website with relevant images, graphics, videos, or documents (e.g.: posters promoting a FGD session):

Logos

Link to folder or website for downloading:

Primary Social Media Handles

Instagram @

Twitter @

Facebook @

YouTube

Add any other platforms:

Secondary Social Media Handles

Add platforms and handles for any partners or sponsors, if applicable:

Sample social media posts

- Everyone deserves a chance at education. Are you a young woman between 18–30 years old? Share your voice! Tell us what education and leadership mean to you during a focus group discussion. [<bit.ly/linktosite>](#) #EducationForAll
- Join us on [<date and time>](#) at the [<event name>](#). We will be hosting a workshop on Empowered Young Women and would love to include your voice. Sign up now [<link>](#)! #EmpoweredYoungWomen #ShareYourVoice
- Support a global movement and ignite change! Complete this survey [<link>](#) on online safety and security for women. It is our collective responsibility to protect #YoungWomen.

Social media best practises

Tweak your post(s) for different social media platforms

Write your post to match the tone and style of each platform. For example, Instagram posts typically list many hashtags at the end of the post. In comparison, Twitter posts often include hashtags within a sentence to take the place of words or phrases.

Be intentional about the length of your posts

Short posts generally perform better, so make your message clear and succinct³². Write your post based on the recommended character count for the social media platform(s). Doing so may increase engagement (e.g., likes, replies, retweets, impressions, average link clicks, etc.). For example, the recommended character count for Facebook is 50 characters or less, Twitter is between 240 and 259 characters, and Instagram captions is under 125 characters.

Shorten URL links

You can shorten url links³³ using sites like [bit.ly](#)³⁴, [Rebrandly](#)³⁵, and [Tiny URL](#)³⁶. This helps create tailored links while decreasing the number of characters.

Do not forget to use hashtags

Map out hashtags to include in your posts. Hashtags are helpful for gaining greater visibility, and they can be used to track engagement metrics. To help determine hashtags to use, spend some time searching hashtags related to your research questions. Be sure to capitalise each word in your hashtag to make it readable for screen readers. This is an important way to practise inclusivity on social media.

Consolidate many links into one link

Make it easy for your audience to find your content across multiple links. Use a tool like [Linktree](#)³⁷ to consolidate many links into one main link. This is helpful if you have many links related to your consultation (e.g., links for your website, a link to a Survey, a link to a sign-up sheet for FGD, etc.).

Create a content calendar

Develop a content calendar (also known as a “social media plan”) to stay organised. A content calendar helps you plan all your content. It tracks the platform to plan to post on and the date/time for the post.

Track social media metrics

For each post, consider tracking metric details like impressions, reposts/tweets, comments, etc. These metrics can give insight into the most optimal day and/or time to engage your followers and the type of content that resonates with them. Many social media platforms have dashboards for the account owner to view metrics.

Creativity is key to capturing attention

Prepare visually appealing posts using few words, bold colours, and attractive photos or illustrations. We recommend testing two to three different titles, headlines, or subject lines to see what works best. This is crucial in capturing audience attention as there is no shortage of available content across a number of topics and platforms. As such, not only will you be competing for their attention, but you will need to engage them long enough to want to take action, especially as our collective attention span is narrowing³⁸.

Incorporate emojis

Depending on the context of your target population, sometimes a message can be conveyed using emojis, as they can add fun and humour to your posts. They can shorten the message, help make it visually stand out, and appeal to a younger audience. Gifs and emojis can help bring visibility to your posts. That said, they can also cause challenges. For example, they might require more bandwidth to load or deter readers from clicking on your content. Check with young women co-researchers for their opinions before using gifs and emojis.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Invitation Template

What

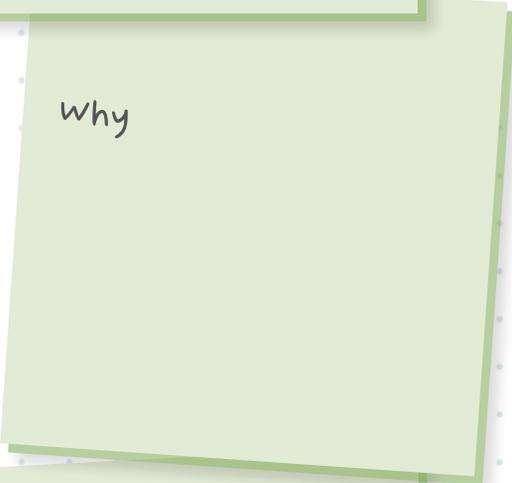
An invitation template for potential participants to invite them to participate in the consultation.

Why

This invitation can be tailored and personalised to engage potential participants. It provides an opportunity to be clear in your request about why people would benefit from sharing their insights. The personalised touch is intended to elicit a positive response and increase participation.

How

Adjust this template based on the context of your consultation. Use this template for circulating a Survey, inviting a group (or individuals) to join a FGD + Storytelling session, or inviting individuals to participate in an Interview. Be sure to provide details in a clear and succinct manner.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Invitation Template

Dear / To / Hello <Name of Participant>,

I / We hope this letter / email / message finds you well.

I am / We are writing to invite you to participate in a Survey / Focus Group Discussion / Interview on <Topic>. This is an important topic to <Organisation Name or Reason> because it <Relevance - Describe why it is important>. <The Organisation Name / I am / your name> is interested in <Topic> as it will <Purpose - Describe its intended impact, alignment to the organisation, etc.>. We are hoping to better understand <Research Question(s)> and feel you would be able to provide insights. We are committed to sharing our findings back with the community and we hope that the collective knowledge that is shared will be informative to your work and journey.

Your participation would be greatly appreciated and we hope you respond to the survey / join us in-person/ virtually. This should take <Estimated Time>. The details to participate are as follows:

Location: <Address or Link, if remote>

When: <Date(s) and Time(s). You can list if there are multiple options.>

<Any other relevant information to help increase interest and manage expectations. E.g.: food provided, compensation, etc.>

If you are interested in participating, please RSVP / let me know by <Date> by <Sign Up Tracking. E.g.: reply to this email, click the sign up link, etc.>. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

<Your name and other relevant information. E.g.: title, website, email address, phone number>



Invitation Template

Dear / To / Hello _____,

I / We hope this letter / email / message finds you well.

I am / We are writing to invite you to participate in a **Survey / Focus Group Discussion / Interview** on _____ . This is an important topic to _____ because it _____ . **The Organisation Name / I am / your name** is interested in _____ as it will _____ . We are hoping to better understand _____ and feel you would be able to provide insights.

We are committed to sharing our findings back with the community and we hope that the collective knowledge that is shared will be informative to your work and journey.

Your participation would be greatly appreciated and we hope you **respond to the survey / join us in-person / virtually**.

This should take _____. The details to participate are as follows:

Location: _____

When: _____

If you are interested in participating, please RSVP / let me know by _____ by _____ . Feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Consent Form Template

What

An agreement to share details about the consultation and obtain the consent of each participant.

Why

Consent is the first step of engaging with a participant. Getting consent means explaining the purpose of the consultation, why it is taking place, how you will use their information, and when it will be destroyed. It also means asking participants to confirm their consent. Doing so is a demonstration of respect to the participant and shows you value them and their contributions.

How

Fill in the following template. Feel free to adapt or add sections based on the context of your consultation.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Consent Form Template

Introduction

Project name

State the name of your consultation.

Brief introduction of the research

Introduce the project in three sentences.

Why are we doing this research?

Explain the objective of the research.

What are we doing?

Explain the context in which the research is being carried out and its importance.

What if you decide to participate in the research?

Describes the data collection phase of the research, the topics that will be addressed and who will implement the consultation.

Do you have to participate in the research?

Make it clear that participation in the consultation is completely voluntary.

Consent Form Template

Keeping your information safe and private

How we will use and store your information

Describe how you plan to use and store the information collected during the consultation.

(e.g.: The information you provide to us will be strictly protected. This means data will be completely anonymous and confidential, and will only be used for this research. It is very important for you to know that your identity won't be disclosed. We will be taking notes and recording this conversation if you give us your permission to do so. The purpose of recording is to help in case we miss something in our notes. The audio recording will be deleted once the research is over.)

How can you find out more about the research?

Provide contact information for one or more people on the research team who can be contacted if further information is required.

What if you no longer want to participate in the research?

Explain since it is a voluntary exercise, the person is free to choose not to answer one or more questions. The participant may even withdraw from the session at any point for any reason.

Support services that you can receive

List any support services available to the participant.

Consent Form Template

Consent

- I have read and understand the information on this paper / I have had the information read to me.
- I understand what you will be doing during the consultation.
- I understand that I can stop the process at any time and do not have to answer questions if I wish to skip them.
- I understand who I can speak to if at any time I feel uncomfortable or concerned about this process.
- I understand that my identity will be confidential during this process.
- I consent to being recorded.

Participant's Name

Name / initials / fingerprint OR verbal consent

Date



Consent Form Template

Introduction

Project name

Brief introduction of the research

Why are we doing this research?

What are we doing?

What if you decide to participate in the research?

Do you have to participate in the research?



Consent Form Template

Keeping your information safe and private

How we will use and store your information

How can you find out more about the research?

What if you no longer want to participate in the research?

Support services that you can receive





Consent Form Template

Consent

- I have read and understand the information on this paper / I have had the information read to me.
- I understand what you will be doing during the consultation.
- I understand that I can stop the process at any time and do not have to answer questions if I wish to skip them.
- I understand who I can speak to if at any time I feel uncomfortable or concerned about this process.
- I understand that my identity will be confidential during this process.
- I consent to being recorded.

Participant's name

Name / initials / fingerprint OR verbal consent

Date

Recording and Image Consent Form Template

What

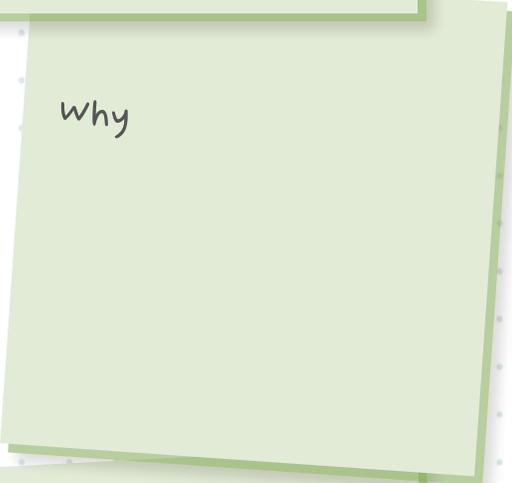
An agreement to share details and obtain the participant's consent if planning to record and/or take images during the session. The recordings and images might be created for research purposes, or promotional purposes, or both.

Why

Transparency is important and obtaining consent is critical to building trust with participants. Getting consent means explaining the purpose of the recording and/or images, how they will be used, and when they will be destroyed. It means asking participants to confirm their understanding by providing their official consent. Doing so is a demonstration of respect to the participant as it shows you value them and their contributions.

How

Fill in the italicised template. Feel free to adapt or add sections based on the context of your consultation. Remember to first obtain consent from your participants to agree to be part of your research. You may wish to combine this Recording and Image Consent Form with the original **Consent Form**. Or you may wish to keep them as two separate forms.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Recording and Image Consent Form Template

Introduction

Project name

Session date

Session location or virtual link

Session time

Thank you for participating in our consultation! We wish to record and/or take images during today's session.

Please read the following details about the recording and/or images. After reading, please initial and sign below if you are in agreement.

Recording

Purpose of the recording:

- Research purposes only
- Promotional purposes only
- Both research and promotional purposes

Details about the purpose of the recording

Share more details about why you are recording.

(e.g.: The recording will be used for internal purposes to make sure we didn't miss anything when writing notes during the session. Also, the recording will allow our research team members who were unable to be here today to hear your comments.)

How we will use and store your information

Describe how you plan to use and store the information collected during the consultation.

(e.g.: The information you provide to us will be strictly protected. This means data will be completely anonymous and confidential, and will only be used for this research. It is very important for you to know that your identity won't be disclosed. The audio recording will be deleted once the research is over.)

Recording and Image Consent Form Template

Image

- Purpose of the images:
- Research purposes only
- Promotional purposes only
- Both research and promotional purposes

Details about the purpose of the images

Share more details about why you are capturing images.

(e.g.: The images will be used for promotional purposes to show a screenshot of the virtual session.)

How we will use and store your images

Describe how you plan to use and store the images captured during the consultation.

(e.g.: We will post the screenshot image on social media to thank participants from today's session and promote details about another upcoming session. The original screenshot will be saved as a promotional asset in our team's file storage. The image will be deleted once the research is over.)

Consent

- I consent to <Your name / Organisation name>:
- I have read and understand the information on this paper / I have had the information read to me.
- I consent to audio and/or video recording(s) to be made of me.
- I consent to having my photo taken.
- I consent to the use of quotes from the session(s), photograph(s), video(s), or reproduction(s) of me, and/or recording of my voice, in part or in whole.
- (if for promotional purposes) I understand this use may occur in publications, in newspapers, magazines and other print media, on television, radio, and electronic media (including the Internet), and/or in mailings.

Participant's name

Participant's signature

Date

Signed at (location)

Recording and Image Consent Form Template

If a minor, a Parent or Legal Guardian will need to provide their name and signature.

I, <Parent or legal guardian name>, give consent and permission on behalf of <Participant name>.

Parent or legal guardian's name

Parent or legal guardian's signature

Witness name

Witness signature



Recording and Image Consent Form Template

Introduction

Project name

Session date

Session location or virtual link

Session time

Thank you for participating in our consultation! We wish to record and/or take images during today's session.

Please read the following details about the recording and/or images. After reading, please initial and sign below if you are in agreement.

Recording

Purpose of the recording:

- Research purposes only
- Promotional purposes only
- Both research and promotional purposes

How we will use and store your information

Details about the purpose of the recording



Recording and Image Consent Form Template

Image

- Purpose of the images:
- Research purposes only
- Promotional purposes only
- Both research and promotional purposes

Details about the purpose of the images

How we will use and store your images

Consent

- I consent to _____:
- I have read and understand the information on this paper / I have had the information read to me.
- I consent to audio and/or video recording(s) to be made of me.
- I consent to having my photo taken.
- I consent to the use of quotes from the session(s), photograph(s), video(s), or reproduction(s) of me, and/or recording of my voice, in part or in whole.
- (if for promotional purposes) I understand this use may occur in publications, in newspapers, magazines and other print media, on television, radio, and electronic media (including the Internet), and/or in mailings.

Participant's name

Participant's signature

Date

Signed at (location)



Recording and Image Consent Form Template

If a minor, a Parent or Legal Guardian will need to provide their name and signature.

I, _____, give consent and permission on behalf of _____.

Parent or legal guardian's name

Parent or legal guardian's signature

Witness name

Witness signature



Progress Report Template

What

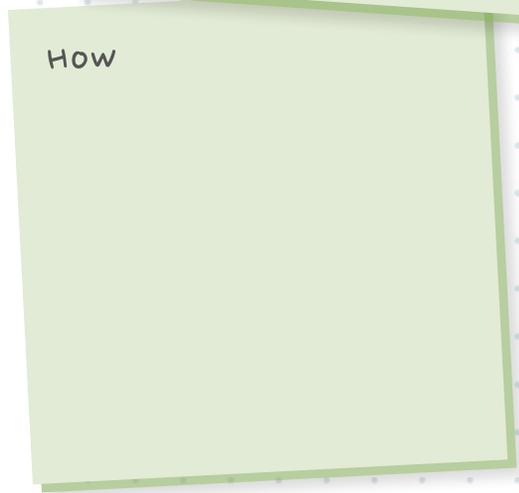
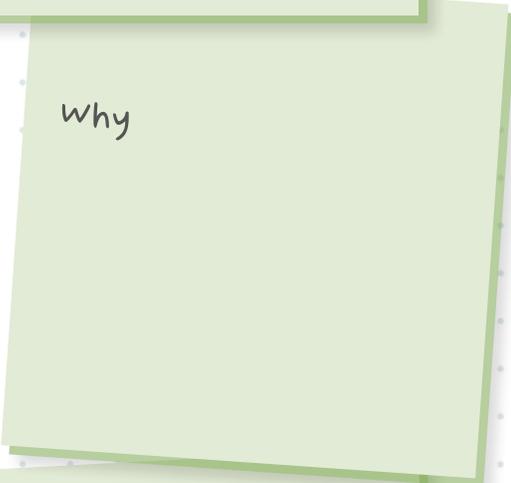
A report for monitoring your work / the research on a regular basis.

Why

Stay on track! Fill in your progress report to reflect and identify where to focus your energy next. If you are working with a group, be sure to dedicate time to complete your progress report together.

How

Adjust this template based on the needs of your research team. Remember to actively include participants and their feedback in all monitoring.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Progress Report Template

Project name

Date

What worked well this week (or whatever agreed upon cadence)?

This can include time, budget, communication channels, numbers reached, numbers of participants, and much more!

Action	Indicator	Status Complete or In Progress	Who worked on this?	Open dialogue and reflection (Are we doing what we said we'd do? How are we doing?)

What were some challenges and are there adjustments we want to make?

Action	Who worked on this?	Open dialogue and reflection (Are we doing what we said we'd do? How are we doing?)



Project Tracking and Review Template

What

A template to gather quantitative and qualitative feedback about your consultation.

Why

Reviewing your work is a great way to see impact and improvement opportunities. It's important to find out what went well and what didn't go well. Feedback from diverse perspectives helps paint a picture of what happened and how you can improve next time.

How

Adjust this template based on the activities used for your consultation. For qualitative feedback, you can log your own comments if you were the only researcher. Or add more lines if there were more researchers.

You can also add lines to gather feedback from participants too. Be inclusive in seeking feedback! Collect feedback from a range of participants, including those who were hard to reach in your consultation. Remember to code any responses from participants to protect their confidentiality.

what

why

How

We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Project Tracking and Review Template

Quantitative tracking and review of your consultation

(numbers, time, budget)

Research method	Who was involved	Number of people
Survey	Researcher	
	Participants	
Focus group discussions	Researcher	
	Participants	
Interviews	Researcher	
	Participants	

Research method	Planned length of time	Actual length of time
Survey		
Focus group discussions		
Interviews		

Research method	Planned budget	Actual costs
Survey		
Focus group discussions		
Interviews		





Project Tracking and Review Template

Qualitative tracking and review of your consultation

(feedback, comments suggestions)

Research method	Feedback from Insert name or code	What went well?	What didn't go well?
Survey	Researcher		
	Participant #1		
	Participant #2		
	Participant #3		
Focus group discussion	Researcher		
	Participant #1		
	Participant #2		
	Participant #3		
Interviews	Researcher		
	Participant #1		
	Participant #2		

Suggestions for improvement	Open dialogue and reflection Did we do what we said we'd do? How did we do?



Evaluation Checklist Template

What

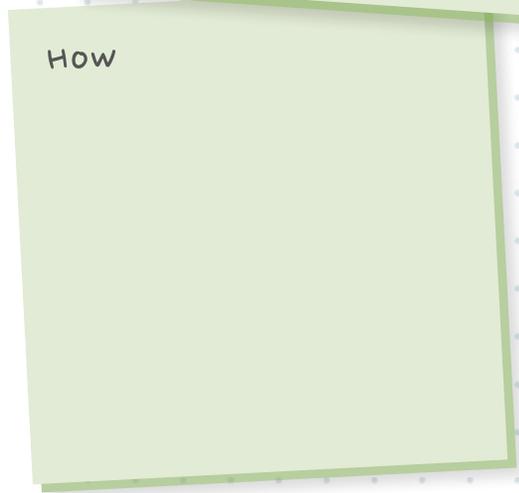
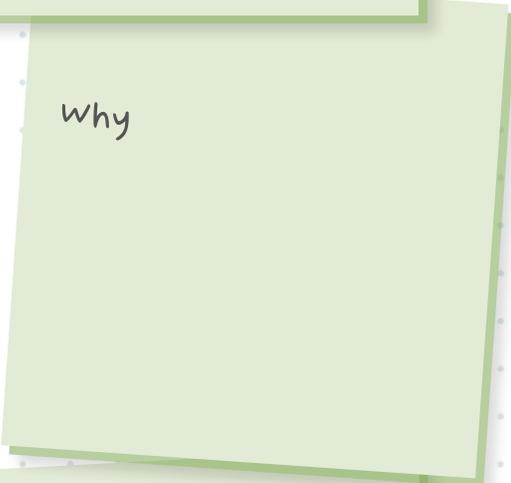
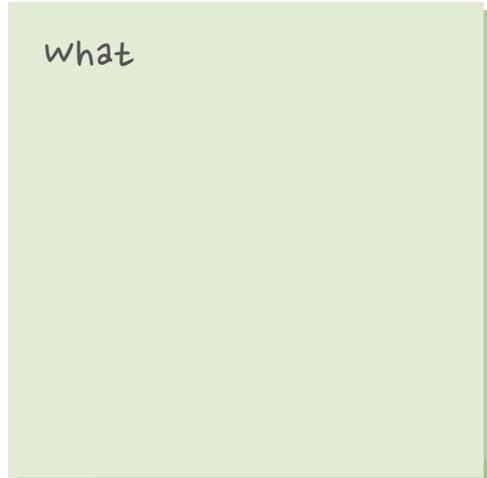
A checklist to reflect on your consultation.

Why

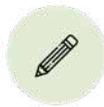
To move forward, it is helpful to learn about what went well and what didn't go well in your consultation. There is always an opportunity to improve or reframe ahead of next time!

How

Use this checklist as probing questions to discuss with your research team and participants.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Evaluation Checklist Template

Project name

Date

Evaluate the big picture

- How might the findings advance knowledge?
- How might the findings and implications be framed as newsworthy? How can the insights be amplified?
- How might the findings be used to inform the wider feminist movement or other movements?
- How might this Methodology be used again in the future?
- Are there other people who could benefit from the insights the research team uncovered? Who might they be and how might you engage them?
- How might the findings be shared more broadly?

Evaluate the experience of your participants

- Did they feel included and valued at all stages?
- Did they feel uncomfortable or disengaged at any stage?
- Did they think the research methods chosen were the right ones?
- What changes would they recommend in future?
- Did they need additional support or help that they didn't get?
- Did they understand the value of their input and how the findings will be used?

Evaluate your findings

- Have you summarised the findings?
- Are the findings clear and concise? Easy to understand?
- How do the findings reflect the original objectives of the research?
- How have you shared the findings with participants?
- How do the findings resonate with participants?
- Are participants requesting any modifications? If so, to what data?
- What is your plan for sharing the findings in a digestible format (internally with your organisation, with the community, etc.)?
- What innovative ways do you plan to use the findings beyond the scope? For example, obtaining participant permission to share their quotes and images on social media, newsletters, and websites, or creating videos or podcasts.
- What is your plan for ensuring the findings are key to your organisation's goals? For example, how might they be embedded as learnings for planning and goal setting.
- What are some of the research team's learnings? What worked well? Anything the team found particularly challenging? What would the team do differently next time?

Research Question Development Template

What

A tool to guide your team in thinking through your research questions.

Why

Your research questions are the heart and soul of your consultation. In a few words, the research questions describe what you want to learn and how you'll do it. They connect back to the objectives of your research while giving direction on how to move forward.

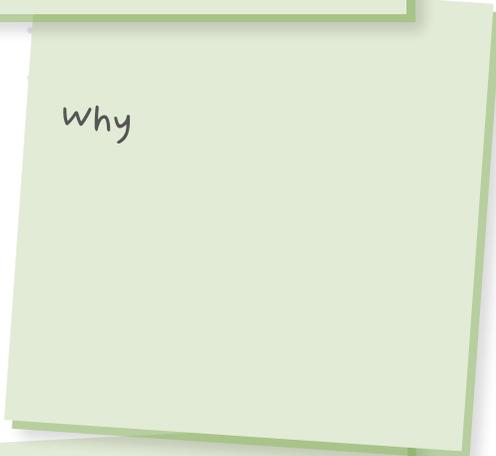
How

Start by writing your questions and sub-questions in the first column. These questions must connect to your overall objectives. Remember to keep the language easy to understand and free of jargon.

Next identify the type of data that will be useful to answer your questions. Remember you can choose one or both options (qualitative or quantitative) for each question (this depends on how detailed and how much information you want to collect).

Then specify the research methods (Surveys, FGDs, and/or Interviews) most appropriate for each question. You may use one, two, or all three methods for each question, depending on the detail of information needed.

Finally decide if it makes sense to use the Methodology as it was designed or if you need to adapt it and how.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Questionnaire Template

What

A list of sample questions to adapt for your consultation.

Why

A questionnaire is an important piece of your Methodology toolkit. It guides how you go about engaging participants and what questions to ask them.

How

Use these sample questions as a template for your consultation. Feel free to change, remove, or add new questions. Helpful hints are included for some questions on how to organise and analyse responses.

We have included some questions to guide the discussion.

You can be creative in how you frame some questions. For example, you can ask a scaled rating question by posing a statement and ask people on a scale of 1-5 if they agree or disagree (1 being disagree and 5 being agree).

what

why

How

We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Questionnaire Template

Facilitator reminder

It is important for this to feel like a conversation. Make sure participants have the opportunity to freely share their experiences and opinions. This may mean the discussion deviates away from this list. Some questions might not be covered at all or might be addressed at a later point in the discussion. This questionnaire is more of a guide and less of a script.

1. Do you consider yourself to be an activist?

Yes

No

2. What makes you an activist? Not an activist? Just skip this one!

3. Do you identify as a feminist?

Yes

No

4. What does feminism mean to you? It's okay if you don't identify as a feminist. We still want to hear from you!

Helpful hint

These responses could be organised into three categories:

- Personal experience
- Human right of all women/diversity
- Equality between men and women

5. Would you describe yourself as working (professionally or otherwise) for some form of social change?

Yes

No

6. What motivated you to work for social change?

Helpful hint

These responses could be organised into a few categories:

- Personal experience
- Experience of someone close to me
- A need I see in my community
- Global events
- Other

7. What area(s) or issue(s) are you (or your organisation) working on?

Questionnaire Template

8. What critical issues do you feel are not currently being addressed by organisations?

9. In your opinion, what societal issues are challenging to mobilise people around?

10. What has been your main challenge when participating in social change or civil society organising?

Helpful hint

These responses could be organised into a few categories:

- Internal
- External

Idea for validation

Post (anonymously) one response from each category and provide the thermometer option for participants to react to it.

11. Which social structures impact your organising? (e.g., community, school, family, political parties, religious institutions, etc).

Idea for validation

Take the analysed themes from the responses and format as new questions. Post for participants to react to it.

For example:

“How does [family] impact your organising? Your responses can be positive or negative.”

12. What technology tools and platforms are you using to organise, find resources, and make your work visible? How are you using them?

Helpful hint

These responses could be organised into a few categories:

- Social media
- Crowdfunding sites
- Radio
- Videos
- Other

Idea for validation

Post the top five categories and ask young women how they are using them.

Questionnaire Template

13. If not addressed in the previous question: Are you (or your organisation) using social media for organising your work? If so, could you provide an example of how?

14. What challenges (if any) do you face in using technology for your organising efforts?

- Cyberbullying
- Cost of access
- Unreliable connection/service
- Lack of knowledge and/or capacity
- Other (please describe)

15. How are you (or your organisation) relating to other young women's groups in your local context?

16. How are you (or your organisation) relating to other young women's groups in your country?

17. How are you (or your organisation) relating to other young women's groups in other parts of the world?

18. Which platforms are you using to collaborate and/or engage with other young women around the world?

Idea for validation

Post (anonymously) the most common responses and provide the thermometer option for participants to react to it.

19. What networking opportunities for young women do you know about?

Idea for validation

Post (anonymously) the most common responses and provide the thermometer option for participants to react to it.

Questionnaire Template

20. What networking opportunities do you feel are lacking for young women interested in social change?

Idea for validation

Post (anonymously) the most common responses and provide the thermometer option for participants to react to it.

21. How diverse are the voices of young women within young women's organising? Who is being "left behind"?

22. Are there any young women left out of your organising efforts? If so, who are they and why are they being left out? How might you better engage them? Which local actors are or should be supporting young women's organising?

23. Which local actors are or should be supporting young women's organising?

Idea for validation

Take the analysed themes from the responses and format as new questions. Post for participants to react to it.

For example:

"How should [government agencies] be supporting young women's organising?"

24. Which international actors are or should be supporting young women's organising?

Idea for validation

Take the analysed themes from the responses and format as new questions. Post for participants to react to it.

For example:

"How should [United Nations agencies] be supporting young women's organising?"

25. Is there anything else we haven't touched on that you would like to share?



Questionnaire Template

Facilitator reminder

It is important for this to feel like a conversation. Make sure participants have the opportunity to freely share their experiences and opinions. This may mean the discussion deviates away from this list. Some questions might not be covered at all or might be addressed at a later point in the discussion. This questionnaire is more of a guide and less of a script.

1. Do you consider yourself to be an activist?

- Yes
- No

2. What makes you an activist? Not an activist? Just skip this one!

3. Do you identify as a feminist?

- Yes
- No

4. What does feminism mean to you? It's okay if you don't identify as a feminist. We still want to hear from you!

5. Would you describe yourself as working (professionally or otherwise) for some form of social change?

- Yes
- No

6. What motivated you to work for social change?

7. What area(s) or issue(s) are you (or your organisation) working on?





Questionnaire Template

8. What critical issues do you feel are not currently being addressed by organisations?

9. In your opinion, what societal issues are challenging to mobilise people around?

10. What has been your main challenge when participating in social change or civil society organising?

11. Which social structures impact your organising? (e.g., community, school, family, political parties, religious institutions, etc).

12. What technology tools and platforms are you using to organise, find resources, and make your work visible? How are you using them?



Questionnaire Template

13. If not addressed in the previous question: Are you (or your organisation) using social media for organising your work? If so, could you provide an example of how?

14. What challenges (if any) do you face in using technology for your organising efforts?

15. How are you (or your organisation) relating to other young women's groups in your local context?

16. How are you (or your organisation) relating to other young women's groups in your country?

17. How are you (or your organisation) relating to other young women's groups in other parts of the world?

18. Which platforms are you using to collaborate and/or engage with other young women around the world?

19. What networking opportunities for young women do you know about?



Questionnaire Template

20. What networking opportunities do you feel are lacking for young women interested in social change?

21. How diverse are the voices of young women within young women's organising? Who is being "left behind"?

22. Are there any young women left out of your organising efforts? If so, who are they and why are they being left out? How might you better engage them? Which local actors are or should be supporting young women's organising?

23. Which local actors are or should be supporting young women's organising?

24. Which international actors are or should be supporting young women's organising?

25. Is there anything else we haven't touched on that you would like to share?



Community Agreements Sample

What

Community agreements (sometimes referred to as “community norms” or “guidelines”) are shared or co-created with a group of people to establish a commitment to one another.

Why

Community agreements lay the foundation for an open, inclusive, and safe space. They provide guidance for everyone to play a role in fostering participation, dialogue, respect, and trust building. Co-creating community agreements gives power to participants as they are more likely to feel responsible for implementing and upholding the agreements (as opposed to compared rules imposed by the facilitator).

How

Share this sample with participants at the beginning of the FGD + Storytelling session. Ensure the facilitator(s):

- Clearly explain the purpose of a community agreement.
- Acknowledge everyone’s needs are different.
- Provide time on the agenda for participants to consider their needs.
- If predetermined agreements are selected for consideration, invite participants to review the proposed agreements. Then collectively add to or amend any of the statements.

- If co-creating new agreements, introduce this sample to help inspire participants in shaping their own agreements as part of a facilitated activity.
- Highlight the importance of empowerment. Community agreements must have the genuine consent of everyone involved. An ‘agreement’ isn’t helpful if some participants do not support it.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Community Agreements Sample

Introducing community agreements

As we gather as a collective group, we are committing to forming a community that is respectful, kind, diverse and open. We recognise and acknowledge that we are all individuals. We all come from different backgrounds, experiences, and places of knowing.

These agreements are intended to help us get the most out of this session. We agree to work together effectively and respectfully through the guidance of these agreements. We agree to be mindful and accountable for our own actions. We commit to being open to observations of our behaviour, and we are open to being called in. We will be honest when sharing feedback with others.

Pool of possible community agreements

- No one knows everything but together we know a lot.
- This is a safe space where we respect the opinions of all people without judgement.
- One voice at a time. We won't interrupt each other.
- We can't be articulate all the time, so give the benefit of the doubt and ask questions.
- Take space and make space. In other words, if you are usually quiet, challenge yourself to take more space. If you usually talk a lot, be mindful to leave room for quieter voices.
- Embrace mistakes and failure. They show us what we need to learn. Treat this as a learning experience and challenge yourself to learn new things.
- Speak in headlines and use summary statements for everyone's clarity. Be aware of time.
- Expect unfinished business. There will be opportunities to finish these discussions at another time.
- What is shared here stays here, what is learned here leaves here. In other words, protect the confidentiality of fellow participants. Don't repeat something shared in a private or safe space.
- Work together to ensure everyone feels listened to and no one feels excluded.
- Lean into discomfort. Use dialogue to work together through conflict.
- We live at intersections, meaning we all benefit and are harmed by systematic oppression.
- We take care of ourselves. We are encouraged to stretch, eat, drink, use the restroom, take a break, etc. as needed.
- Avoid jargon and acronyms. Instead, use inclusive language that is accessible for people with varying knowledge.
- Speak from your own experience. Use "I" statements when sharing personal insights instead of generalisations. Do not assume everyone is on the same page or has the same opinion.
- Listen to understand.

Community Agreements Sample

- Debate and challenge each other’s assumptions and ideas. But don’t challenge the person. Everyone’s ideas are valid.
- Be conscious of intent vs. impact. No matter the intention, you are responsible for your impact.
- Avoid using “-isms” without explaining what you mean by them.
- “Nothing about us, without us.” Be inclusive of others without tokenising, stigmatising, or disrespecting them

Tips

- Be aware of power dynamics within the group. Some participants, such as people who already feel confident and share insights more vocally and easily, might gain even more power by creating agreements for everyone else to follow. This is a particular concern if the agreements themselves make it difficult for participants to challenge each other.
- Make sure the agreements are realistic to uphold within the context of the session and the dynamics of the participants. For example, it is unlikely for participants to transform the way they communicate simply because they ‘agreed’ to a guideline.
- Write the agreements using language that is familiar to everyone. If anyone has any questions, explain before moving ahead.
- Test the agreements by implementing them and amending if necessary.

Notes





Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling Field Guide

What

A guide to plan and organise the details of your Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling session.

Why

FGD + Storytelling sessions are powerful opportunities to connect with young women. It is important to be ready before heading into the sessions. This preparation can help you to create a meaningful experience for your participants.

How

Fill in the italicised template. Feel free to adapt or add sections based on the context of your consultation.

Once you finish filling in the guide, share it with your team for feedback. As part of your preparation, you may role-play with a co-facilitator or team member to get a feel for how the session might unfold.

what

why

HOW

We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling Field Guide

Overview

Project name	
Session theme	Session location or virtual link
Session date	
Session time	Materials
Number of participants	

Flow of the consultation

Welcome participants

Include a warm welcome to your participants. Introduce yourself and the research team members who are present.

Share a brief introduction of the research

Introduce the project to your participants. Be sure to explain the context of the research, its objectives, and its importance. You might also briefly explain the different stages of the research.

Describe the theme and objectives of today's session

Help participants understand why we are gathered together and how it relates to the research.

Share how you will ensure confidentiality

Explain how your research team is maintaining confidentiality of the ideas shared here today. Be sure to include information about how you will use the notes and recordings (if applicable).

Request consent from participants

Gather written or oral consent from all your participants before moving forward. See the [Consent Form](#).

Build community agreements with participants

Co-create a shared understanding among all participants about how the session should feel. These agreements are less about rules. Instead, they are a way to understand what is important for all participants to feel like this is a safe space.



Focus Group Discussion (FGD) + Storytelling Field Guide

Here are some examples of community agreements:

- We will respect the opinions of all people in this space without judgement.
- We won't interrupt each other, and we will talk one at a time.
- This is a safe space where respect is important, and where we will protect each other.
- The information we share here is completely confidential.
- We will all work together to ensure everyone feels listened to and no one feels excluded.

Do a warm up activity together

Select a warm up activity for participants to get to know each other. This helps build trust among participants before they begin sharing their stories. Encourage all participants to take part.

Here are some examples of warm up activities:

- Do a dance move to be copied by others.
- Share one interesting fact about you.
- Share what is famous about your hometown/ country.



Engage the group in storytelling

Give participants a few minutes to think about the theme. Then ask if anyone wishes to share their reflections, experiences, or stories about the theme. Allow time to hear from everyone who wants to share before moving on. Do not overlook this activity as it is a critical element for engaging participants. Stories are powerful and play a role in many cultures and traditions where details, descriptions, and sentiments from these stories can be insightful. They help us better understand behaviour, history, motives, etc. Use the [Storytelling Template](#) to guide the group in sharing their narratives.

Consider taking a break

Even a short one may help participants recharge. Encourage them to hydrate, take a bio break, or step outside to get some air if possible. We understand this might not be possible for everyone, so find a unique way to take a break of a few minutes.

Facilitate a discussion using the questionnaire

Use the [Questionnaire Template](#) to guide a group discussion.

Convene a closing circle

Invite participants to make suggestions, share comments, or ask questions. Make note of any questions that you cannot answer in the moment.

Share gratitude and next steps

Thank participants for their time and energy. Offer them ways to stay in touch with you and with other participants.



One-on-One Interview Field Guide

What

A guide to support the one-on-one Interview session(s).

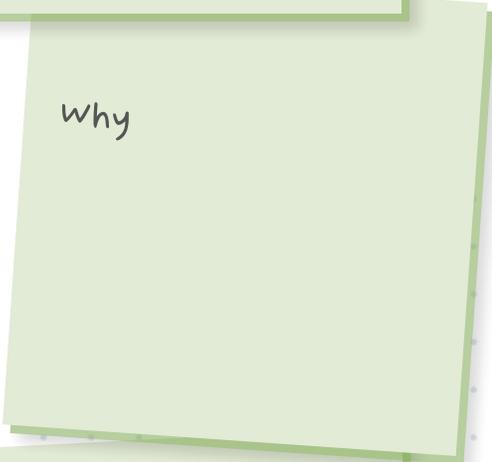
Why

Preparing can help you create a meaningful experience for your participants. A thoughtfully curated guide is important as it enables you to articulate the interview protocols, outline the session format, and structure the research questions. The field guide supports the flow of the interview (e.g.: staying on track with questions, keeping the session on time, enabling the scribe to follow the question sequencing, etc.).

How

Fill in the italicised template. Feel free to adapt or add sections based on the context of your consultation.

Once you finish filling in the guide, share it with your team for feedback. As part of your preparation, you may role-play with a team member to get a feel for how the session might unfold. If you have someone supporting you to scribe the interview, this template may also serve as a complementary document to the [Data Collection Guide](#) for notetaking.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



One-on-One Interview Field Guide

Overview

Project name

Session theme

Session date

Session time

Interviewer name

Notetaker name

Session location or virtual link

Materials

If applicable

Participant name

Flow of the consultation

Welcome the participant

Include a warm welcome and thank your participant for agreeing to conduct the Interview with you. Introduce yourself and the research team member(s) who are present. Describe your role as the interviewer and their role as a scribe.

Share a brief introduction of the research

Introduce the project to your participant. Be sure to explain the context of the research, its objectives, and its importance. You might also briefly explain the different stages of the research.

Describe the theme and objectives of the interview

Describe the theme and objectives of the Interview. Help the participant understand why we are conducting this Interview and how it relates to the research. Explain the flow of the Interview and approximately how long it will take.

Share how you will ensure confidentiality

Explain how your research team is maintaining confidentiality of the ideas shared here today. For example, you might explain how insights gathered from each Interview will remain confidential and not be directly attributed to any participant. Be sure to include information about how you will use the notes and recordings (if applicable).



One-on-One Interview Field Guide

Request consent from participant

Gather written or oral consent from the participant before moving forward. See the [Consent Form](#).

Express how this is a safe space

Explain your intention to create a safe space. Describe how it is important for the participant to be comfortable, and what you will do to support their comfort. For example, you might explain how you will pause the interview to invite the participant to take a break if needed. Add information on safety of content and non-disclosure by everyone.

Create space for questions from the participant

Ask the participant if they have any questions and let them know they are free to ask at any time.

Facilitate the Interview

Use the [Questionnaire Template](#) to guide the interview.

Close the Interview

Let the participant know you have asked all the questions on your list. Invite the participant to ask any questions, make suggestions, share comments, etc. Make note of any questions that you cannot answer in the moment.

Share gratitude and next steps

Thank the participant for their time and energy. Offer them ways to stay in touch with you.





Storytelling Template

What

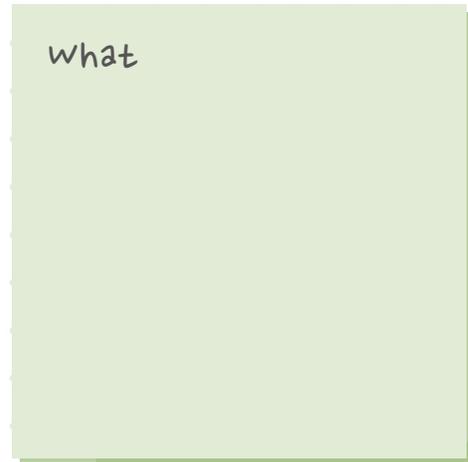
A template to help organise what you want to say and the story you want to tell.

Why

Storytelling is a powerful way to communicate, capture attention, and catalyse ideas. A well-organised story resonates with audiences and fosters connections.

How

Fill in the template³⁹ to capture why you are telling a story, who the story is for, and how all the pieces of the story fit together to inspire action.



what



why



HOW

We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Storytelling Template

Purpose

What is the purpose of the story? What type of story?

Audience/Persona

Why do they care (or not)?

Hook

What will capture your audience's attention to bring them into this story?

Beginning

Who is the main character, what makes them authentic and how to set the scene?



Storytelling Template

Middle

What challenges did they encounter along the way?

Ending

How did your organization solve the challenge or help in the main character's transformation?

Emotion

What emotion do you want the audience to feel after experiencing your story?

Call to action

What is the one thing you want your audience to do after experiencing your story?

Data Collection Guide

What

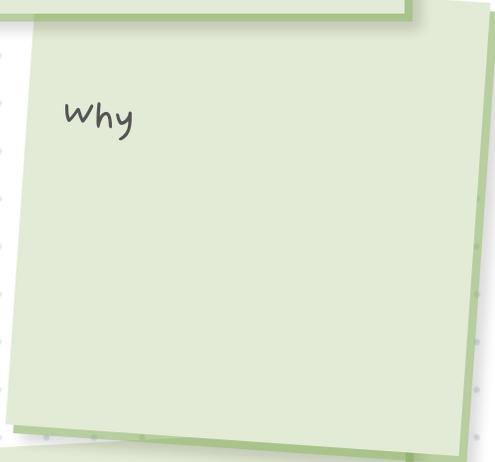
A template to organise the questions and responses from each Interview, FGD, or Survey.

Why

Proper data collection is vital to your research process. It is important to organise your questions and participant responses. It is equally important to capture any feedback to help improve for next time. Capturing feedback beside the responses can help show patterns and opportunities for improvement.

How

Use this template as a guide. Feel free to adapt or add sections based on the context of your consultation. You should create a unique version of this guide for each research method (Survey, FGD, and Interviews).



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)



Data Collection Guide

Overview

Project name	
Facilitator/Interviewer name	Session date
Notetaker name	Participant code

Collection of consultation data

Add a new row for each question you plan to ask. Probe questions are optional questions to get more detailed responses to the main question.

Questions and responses

Question #	Is this a Question or Probe?	Question	Participant responses
1	Question	How long have you been part of the YWCA? Tell us a bit about your involvement.	I have been involved with YWCA for over 5 years. I first started as a volunteer...
2	Probe	What do you understand by "being involved?"	
3			
4			
5			



Data Collection Guide

Feedback and improvements

Challenges that emerge after asking the question may include interpretation or wording confusion.

Question #	Challenges that emerged	Revised wording
1	The participant didn't understand the question and asked for clarification on what "involvement" meant.	What role(s) have you performed within the YWCA?

Moments of fatigue or disengagement

The quality of data can worsen depending on a variety of factors. Watch for when participants start repeating similar answers or when they seem distracted.

Keep in mind some moments of fatigue will have nothing to do with your consultation. For example, environmental factors like background noise and lighting can be major distractions.

Description of fatigue or disengagement	Moment in the discussion when this occurred





Data Collection Guide

Research team debrief at the end of the consultation

Did we finish on time and address all the questions we wanted to ask?

If there were too many questions, which ones should we skip next time?

Anything else to help us improve for next time?



Data Collection Example

What

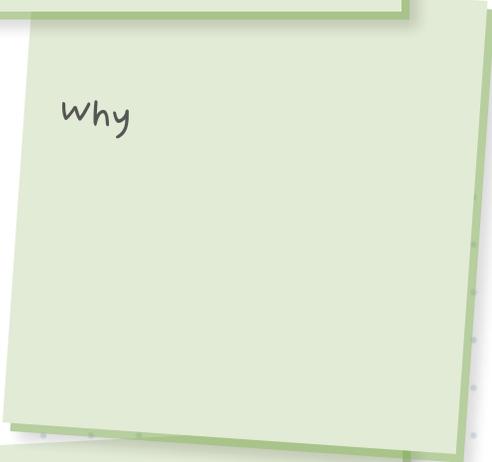
An example of how to organise and synthesise data from a validation activity (data can be collected across all three methods: Surveys, FGD + Storytelling, and Interviews).

Why

Data synthesis can sometimes feel like an overwhelming task. You might feel like you are swimming in data after finishing your research sessions. Fear not! Take things one step at a time when synthesising, and soon enough, a clear picture will emerge from your data.

How

Use this example as a guide to show you what synthesised data might look like from a validation session. Remember every consultation is different. Feel free to take inspiration from this example and then do what makes sense for the context of your work.



We are here to help! [Reach out if you have any challenges or questions.](#)

Data Collection Example

The following information is organised by region. This choice was informed by our research objective to understand different perspectives across different regions.

Collection of consultation data

Question #2: In your own point of view, how would you describe the level of involvement and participation of young women in your local XXX?

proposed by young women

Problems (interpretation, challenges)

Asia

- 3 out of 9 young women needed us to clarify what “involvement” means
- Young women respondents are from Yangon and aren't familiar with other local associations (Myanmar)

Best wording of the question

Asia

- In your own point of view, how would you describe your role in your local _ _ _ ?

Pacific

- Everyone in the FG misinterpreted because they are new to _ _ _
- Needs extra clarification and follow up questions

Latin America

- visible fatigue or emotion

Question #3: In your own point of view, how much does your local XXX mission cater to young women's needs?

Problems (interpretation, challenges)

Africa (Uganda)

- They couldn't relate to the specific needs of the question and were torn between personal, professional or educational POVs

Best wording of the question

Africa (Uganda)

- Do you think _ _ _ caters for your needs as a young woman in the movement?

Asia

- Some local _ _ _ use other words for “mission,” e.g., vision, purpose, policy, action plan etc.

Asia

- In your own point of view, how much does your local _ _ _ vision/purpose statement cater to young women's needs?

Data Collection Example

Moments of fatigue or disengagement

Describe causes of visible fatigue or emotion

- Africa (Uganda)
 - When the women couldn't understand the question
 - Questions that involved defining keywords
 - When they didn't have the knowledge to respond to the questions asked

- Asia
 - Some started saying "I don't know" and "I might not know well but..."
 - Sufficient number of barriers and challenges were shared, but not their actions against them
 - Started showing fatigue, e.g., going to the bathroom, getting a drink
 - Oversharing of other participants
 - Decreasing interest

- Pacific
 - Lost track with response being derailed out of context
 - Emotions of pain and sensitivity during the FG
 - Number of questions meant FG ran for a long time which caused fatigue (Australia)
 - Found it hard to relate to the question (Fiji)
 - Did not even understand the question (Fiji)

Moment in the discussion where it appeared

- Africa (Uganda)
 - When asked question 7, in relation to the closing space of civil society: not many understood the question's intention
 - When asking question 19, in relation to the constitution: they were confused on whether it was in relation to World Y or local Y
 - Some members couldn't give their own definitions and would share what their colleagues said or say they agree with others

- Asia
 - When asked question 4: one hour and 30 minutes into the interview
 - When asked question 6
 - When asked question 15
 - When asked question 16

- Pacific
 - Question 4, 6, 17, 19
 - Interview questions 7, 10, 18 and FG question 3
 - FG question 12, 18, 20, 21 because they were tired
 - Ended FG after 90 minutes, it was appropriate length of time to manage fatigue (we need to do multiple FG if we want to cover all questions)

Resources

Here is a list of tools and materials to help you learn more and bring the Methodology to life.

World YWCA

Goal 2035: Theory of change
worldywca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/DOC-BM-3.1.3-Theory-of-change_FINAL-EN.pdf

World YWCA Glossary
worldywca.org/glossary/index.html

Virtual safe spaces
worldywca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Virtual-Safe-Spaces.pdf

Virtual safe spaces video
youtu.be/CQ9PPDrXs30

Safe spaces (brochure to print)
worldywca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/SafeSpaces-brochure-ENG-WEB-092016.pdf

Safe spaces for girls' comic
shespeaksworldywca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/comic-square-format-scaled.jpg

RiseUp! Leadership training manual
worldywca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Rise-UP-PDF_yellow.pdf

Engaging with consent: A journey of a leader comic
shespeaksworldywca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Engaging_With_Consent-scaled.jpg

Other Resources

An introduction to sampling methods
scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods

AWID: Brave, creative and resilient state young feminist organizing
awid.org/publications/brave-creative-and-resilient-state-young-feminist-organizing

AWID: Feminist realities toolkit
drive.google.com/file/d/1VLVEdejfbgvCblhlksMpZxbLjDvjWzW4/view

AYETA digital rights toolkit
paradigmhq.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Ayeta%20Toolkit%20-%20English%20Version.pdf

Accessibility guidelines for adult workshop presenters⁴⁰
uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/accessibility-guidelines

Active listening⁴¹
mindtools.com/CommSkill/ActiveListening.htm

Asana (digital tool for monitoring and managing projects)
asana.com

CREA: Feminist international human rights resources
creaworld.org/resources

CREA: Feminist leadership and movement building
creaworld.org/programs/feminist-leadership

CREA: Building feminist leadership
creaworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/feminist-leadership-clearing-conceptual-cloud-srilatha-batliwala.pdf

Global mapping: I am the centre activity⁴²

trainingforchange.org/training_tools/i-am-the-center

How to analyse survey data

surveymonkey.com/mp/how-to-analyze-survey-data

How to use hashtags in 2021: A quick and simple guide for every network

blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-use-hashtags

How to...write a good research question

researchgate.net/publication/324140563_How_to_write_a_good_research_question

How to write a research question

writingcenter.gmu.edu/guides/how-to-write-a-research-question

Lean data approaches to measure impact course

acumenacademy.org/course/lean-data-approaches-measure-social-impact

Logic model handout: Writing outcome statements

https://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/mph-modules/programevaluation/Logic_Model_handout.pdf

Monitoring and evaluation tools (offline and digital)

opact.com/monitoring-and-evaluation-tools

Native Land: A resource to learn more about Indigenous territories, languages, lands, and ways of life

native-land.ca/

Online polling⁴³

polleverywhere.com

Sampling methods in research methodology: How to choose a sampling technique for research

researchgate.net/publication/319998246_Sampling_Methods_in_Research_Methodology_How_to_Choose_a_Sampling_Technique_for_Research

Social media demographics

sproutsocial.com/insights/new-social-media-demographics

Strategic questioning

context.org/iclib/ic40/peavey

Street speaking

trainingforchange.org/training_tools/street-speaking

Social impact analysis course

acumenacademy.org/course/social-impact-analysis-breadth-depth%20

Trello (digital tool for monitoring and managing projects)

trello.com

Vision accessibility⁴⁴

visionaustralia.org/information/adaptive-technology/using-technology/computer-screen-readers

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World YWCA

16 L'Ancienne-Route
1218 Grand-Saconnex
Geneva Switzerland
Tel: + 41 22 929 6040
Fax: + 41 22 929 6044

worldoffice@worldywca.org

worldywca.org

Social Media

[linkedin.com/company/world-ywca](https://www.linkedin.com/company/world-ywca)

twitter.com/worldywca

facebook.com/worldywca

instagram.com/worldywca