



GenderSAFE
ENDING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN ACADEMIA

Participatory techniques for testing the Model Policy Framework

Online workshop

Title of the workshop

Participatory techniques for testing the Model Policy Framework

Learning objectives

The main objectives of this workshop are to:

- offer participants a clear overview of the GenderSAFE Model Policy Framework and support them in selecting the parts they wish to test in their institutions
- introduce participatory techniques that can support the testing process, with a focus on stakeholder mapping and journey mapping
- equip participants with practical skills to identify relevant stakeholders, potential allies, sources of resistance and decision-making roles in their institutions
- support participants in planning the sequence of steps needed to test selected parts of the Model Policy Framework, including consultation, co-creation, drafting, advocacy and formal approval

Description for the promotion of the workshop

This workshop introduces participatory techniques that can support institutions in testing selected parts of the GenderSAFE Model Policy Framework. It is designed for institutions, teams and professionals who wish to use participatory techniques to test, adapt or further develop policies for addressing gender-based violence in higher education and research settings.

The workshop first provides an overview of possible areas of the Model Policy Framework that can be tested, including topics that may be more sensitive, more manageable or more likely to receive broad support. Participants are invited to reflect on their institutional needs, possible resistance, existing momentum and the strategic value of different policy areas.

The second part of the workshop focuses on two practical techniques. Stakeholder mapping helps participants identify the actors who influence policy adoption, including decision-makers, advisory actors, informal influencers, allies, neutral actors and potential sources of resistance. Journey mapping helps participants plan the sequence of steps required to move from consultation and co-creation to drafting, advocacy and formal approval.

By the end of the workshop, participants will have a clearer understanding of what they may test, who needs to be involved and how the testing process can be planned in a realistic and participatory way.

Who is it for?

This workshop is designed for:

- members involved in testing the Model Policy Framework
- institutional teams supporting the testing process
- gender equality officers, equality and diversity officers and staff responsible for institutional policy work
- human resources, legal, student support, ombudspersons or other institutional actors involved in addressing gender-based violence
- allies and colleagues who can support consultation, co-creation, drafting, advocacy or approval processes

Preparation

Before the workshop, participants are invited to:

- familiarise themselves with the GenderSAFE Model Policy Framework
- identify the policy approval mechanisms in their institution
- reflect on which parts of the Model Policy Framework may be relevant to their institutional context
- consider which colleagues, units, decision-makers and external actors could influence the testing process

Format: Online workshop

Duration: 2.5 hours, including a break

Language: English

Suggested number of participants: 10–25

Suggested tools: Zoom or similar online platform, Miro or another collaborative board, breakout rooms

Structure of the workshop:

MIRO board: https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVHUXANGE=?share_link_id=2227286947

Programme	Approach	Duration	Observations
Welcome and introduction	The facilitators welcome participants, introduce the workshop objectives and present the agenda. Ground rules are agreed at the beginning, including confidentiality, respectful listening, concise contributions, active participation and respect for the timing.	15 min	The opening creates a respectful and focused learning environment. It is useful to acknowledge that participants may come from different institutional contexts and may be at different stages of policy development. The facilitator can also remind participants that the workshop is practical and aims to support their testing process.
Introduction to participatory techniques	The facilitator briefly presents participatory techniques that can support institutional change and testing of the Model Policy Framework. These may include stakeholder mapping, journey mapping, personas, SWOT analysis, cause diagrams, lotus blossom and world café. The facilitator explains that the workshop will focus mainly on stakeholder mapping and journey mapping.	Included in welcome session	This part helps participants understand that participatory techniques can make policy development more grounded, realistic and inclusive. Personas can also be introduced as a useful tool for later stages, even if they are not used in the hands-on exercises of this workshop.
Selecting Model Policy Framework content for testing	The facilitator introduces the question of what participants may test in their institutions. Participants are guided through different types of Model Policy Framework topics. These can be presented as: high-heat topics, which may raise strong debate or resistance; warm topics, which may be more manageable but still require careful framing; and cooler topics, which are more likely to receive broad support.	45 min	This section helps participants reflect strategically before choosing what to test. The facilitator can stress that no topic is necessarily easy and that each institution will have different needs, constraints and windows of opportunity. Participants are invited

			to think about institutional need, ease of implementation, existing momentum and strategic leverage.
Task: selecting possible topics for testing	Participants identify three topics, articles or sections of the Model Policy Framework that they may wish to test. They provide a brief justification for each one, considering relevance to current challenges, likely resistance, existing interest and potential to open doors for broader policy adoption.	Included in previous section	The task does not need to lead to a final decision during the workshop. It is meant to support reflection and help participants prepare for discussions with their institutional teams. Participants can use their own notes or a dedicated space on the Miro board.
Stakeholder mapping: introduction	The facilitator introduces stakeholder mapping as a tool to identify actors who influence the adoption and implementation of institutional policies. The facilitator explains the categories used in the exercise, including gatekeepers, advisory or consultative actors, actors with strong informal influence, resistant actors, neutral actors and allies or supporters.	10 min	Stakeholder mapping helps participants move from a general idea of institutional change to a clearer understanding of who needs to be involved, informed, consulted or monitored. The facilitator can invite participants to include formal and informal actors, such as senior management, legal offices, equality bodies, HR, students, faculty, IT, finance, quality management and external organisations.
Hands-on exercise: stakeholder mapping	Participants work in breakout rooms using a stakeholder mapping template on Miro. They identify key actors in their institution who may influence Model Policy Framework adoption. They categorise them according to their role and stance: gatekeepers, advisory actors or informal influencers, and resistant, neutral or supportive actors. Participants can also identify external allies and add comments on sticky notes.	20 min	Participants are encouraged to be honest and reflective, even where information is incomplete. They can group actors where useful and mark uncertainty with a question mark. The aim is not to produce a perfect map, but to make the institutional

			landscape more visible and to support planning for engagement, consultation and advocacy.
Stakeholder mapping: plenary reflection	Participants return to plenary and share key reflections from the mapping exercise. The facilitator may ask what surprised them, which actors appear central, where resistance may emerge and which allies could support the testing process.	10 min	The plenary discussion helps participants learn from one another and recognise common patterns across institutions. It can also help them think about how to approach different stakeholders in the next phase of the testing process.
Break		15 min	
Journey mapping: introduction	The facilitator introduces journey mapping as a tool for planning the chronological sequence of a process from before it starts until after it ends. The facilitator explains that a journey map can include different layers, such as the user perspective, the institutional perspective, touchpoints, problems and opportunities.	10 min	Journey mapping helps participants translate their selected testing topic into a sequence of steps. In this workshop, the map focuses on three main phases: consultation and co-creation, drafting and advocacy and the formal approval process.
Hands-on exercise: journey mapping	Participants work in breakout rooms and sketch a journey map for testing their selected part of the Model Policy Framework. They organise the process across three phases: consultation and co-creation, drafting and advocacy and formal approval. For each phase, they consider who needs to be persuaded, how support can be built, what steps are needed and what risks or opportunities may appear.	20 min	Participants can use the stakeholder map developed earlier to inform the journey map. The facilitator may remind participants of three useful principles: build legitimacy before pushing for approval, work with allies first and build momentum by using windows of opportunity such as leadership changes, existing initiatives or awareness-raising events.

Journey mapping: plenary reflection	Participants return to plenary and share main insights from the journey mapping exercise. The facilitator invites reflections on next steps, missing actors, possible delays and areas where more internal consultation may be needed.	Included in previous section or wrap-up	The plenary reflection supports participants in turning the map into a practical plan. It can also help identify needs for further support, including strategic framing, peer exchange or follow-up discussions with institutional teams.
Wrap-up, Q&A and next steps	The facilitators summarise the main points from the workshop, answer remaining questions and present next steps. These may include working with institutional teams, joining a follow-up workshop on strategic framing and participating in mutual exchange and learning sessions. Participants are invited to complete the exit questionnaire before leaving.	15 min	The closing should connect the workshop back to the testing process. It is useful to remind participants that the tools introduced during the workshop are adaptable and can be used with their teams or allies in their own institutions.

Facilitation guidance

Setting the tone

At the start of the workshop, facilitators should create a safe and respectful environment. Participants may be discussing sensitive institutional dynamics, including resistance, power relations or gaps in addressing gender-based violence. The ground rules should make clear that the workshop is a space for learning and exchange, while respecting confidentiality and the limits of what can be shared about specific institutions.

Explaining the Model Policy Framework testing process

The workshop is not intended to require participants to make final decisions on the spot. Its role is to support reflection on what could be tested, why that topic matters and how the testing process could be organised. Participants can be reminded that adaptation is expected. Testing does not require copying and pasting the Model Policy Framework text. Translation, contextualisation and changes to wording may be needed to make the policy relevant to each institutional and national context.

Presenting the “heat” of different topics

When presenting possible Model Policy Framework topics, the facilitator can explain that some topics are likely to generate stronger debate because they touch on legal, political, cultural or institutional sensitivities. Examples of high-heat topics include anonymous reporting, proactive investigations, conflict of interest and abuse of power, the relation with law enforcement, shifting the burden of proof and evidence gathering. Warmer topics may include definitions of gender-based violence, sexual consent, resource allocation, risk assessment and the scope of the policy. Cooler topics may include informal and formal reporting mechanisms, prevention, support services, monitoring and evaluation and protection against retaliation.

The aim of this classification is to help participants anticipate resistance and choose strategically. It should not discourage them from testing challenging topics if these are relevant and timely in their institutions.

Supporting the stakeholder mapping exercise

The stakeholder mapping exercise works best when participants think broadly about institutional actors. This can include:

- senior management and leadership
- legal offices and data protection officers
- human resources
- equality, diversity and inclusion bodies
- ombudspersons or trusted persons
- student representatives and student services
- faculty, department heads and research group leaders
- IT, communication, finance and quality management units
- external experts, NGOs, public authorities or support services

Participants can be encouraged to identify both formal authority and informal influence. Some actors may not hold formal decision-making power, but can still shape acceptance, resistance or implementation.

Supporting the journey mapping exercise

The journey mapping exercise helps participants organise the testing process over time. Facilitators can guide participants to think through three main phases:

1. **Consultation and co-creation:** Who needs to be consulted? Which allies can help build legitimacy? Which groups may be affected by the policy? How can students, staff or relevant services be meaningfully involved?
2. **Drafting and advocacy:** Who will draft or adapt the text? Which evidence, examples or arguments are needed? How can the proposal be framed so that it speaks to institutional values and priorities?
3. **Formal approval process:** Which bodies need to review, approve or endorse the policy? What are the likely steps, timelines and possible delays? Who can support the proposal through the approval process?

Participants can also be invited to identify potential problems and opportunities at each stage. This can help them prepare for resistance, avoid unrealistic timelines and plan communication with different stakeholders.

Materials needed

- PowerPoint presentation
- Model Policy Framework or selected extracts from it
- Miro board or another collaborative online board

Resources

- GenderSAFE Model Policy Framework <https://gendersafe.eu/project-news/work-in-progress-baseline-policy-framework-for-addressing-gender-based-violence/>
- GenderSAFE guide on co-creation and participatory approaches <https://zenodo.org/records/13986398>
- UniSAFE persona stories <https://unisafe-toolkit.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Persona-Stories-.pdf>
- UniSAFE Toolkit <https://unisafe-toolkit.eu/>

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