

What Works Hub for Global Education Strategy for Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)

The What Works Hub for Global Education is committed to *learning at scale with equity*, ensuring that education reforms improve foundational learning outcomes for all learners, particularly those persisting in 'zones of exclusion' and those disadvantaged by gender, disability, poverty, ethnicity, or other intersecting identities.

This GEDSI¹ Strategy takes forward that commitment. It sets out how the Hub embeds gender equality, disability inclusion, and social inclusion across research, implementation, governance, and engagement so that evidence generation and use are both inclusive and transformative.

Why GEDSI matters

While implementation science helps identify *what works, for whom, and under what conditions*, a GEDSI lens pushes us further to examine *why exclusion persists, how power operates in systems, and what must change to reach those furthest behind*. Evidence shows that many large-scale education reforms overlook the structures that perpetuate inequality. The What Works Hub for Global Education aims to change this by systematically integrating GEDSI across its research, operations, and partnerships.

This strategy supports the Hub's overarching goal of improving foundational learning for marginalised children, while aligning with the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014, the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4.5), and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The GEDSI Impact Continuum

To achieve the Hub's ambition of *scaling up with equity*, the GEDSI Impact Continuum provides a structured way to assess and strengthen inclusion across all Hub work as seen in Table 1.

¹ Gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GE[D]SI) is a concept that examines **unequal power relations** between different social groups. The GE[D]SI approach...focuses on the need for action to **re-balance these power relations and ensure equal rights, opportunities, and respect for all individuals regardless of their social identity**" (GESI Working Group 2017, p. 37)

Table 1. What Works Hub for Global Education GEDSI Framework

| | -1. GEDSI Unequal research | 0. GEDSI Omitting research | 1. GEDSI Aware research | 2. GEDSI Sensitive research | 3. GEDSI Transformative research |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| GEDSI informed programme formulation and design | | | | | |
| GEDSI informed data collection and analysis | | | | | |
| Engagement with local stakeholders including marginalised groups | | | | | |
| Diversity in team composition | | | | | |
| GEDSI informed and accessible dissemination/communication | | | | | |

Transformative research places GEDSI at the core of design, aiming to transform harmful norms and foster equitable power relationships.

All Hub projects and knowledge products are reviewed across five key components:

- GEDSI-informed **programme design**
- GEDSI-inclusive **data collection and analysis**
- **Engagement** with local stakeholders and marginalised groups
- **Diversity** in research team composition
- GEDSI-informed, **accessible dissemination**

This framework underpins quarterly report reviews and structured feedback, helping partners move from awareness to transformation through iterative learning and adaptation.

Strategic objectives

1. Provide global thought leadership on GEDSI within implementation science and scaling efforts

The Hub contributes to shaping global dialogue on how education interventions can be implemented at scale in ways that improve outcomes for marginalised groups. Academic leadership reviews all outputs through a GEDSI lens, ensuring they reflect intentional engagement with inclusion and equity dimensions. Through blogs, briefs, and webinars, the Hub curates reflective spaces to explore the balance between

scale and inclusion and to synthesise evidence on what equitable implementation requires.

2. Generate contextually grounded GEDSI evidence through partner country research and implementation

The Hub supports the generation of GEDSI-related insights from country-level research and implementation efforts. Partner teams reflect national priorities and local contexts, analysing how interventions address exclusion and improve outcomes for marginalised learners. Impact case studies document where research and implementation contribute to actions that improve learning outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

3. Mainstream GEDSI principles across Hub governance, operations, and engagement

The What Works Hub for Global Education embeds GEDSI across its governance, operations, and engagement structures. This includes ensuring diverse representation across groups such as the academic leadership team, inclusion of GEDSI expertise within governance frameworks, and equity-focused panels and learning opportunities across the Hub's engagement plan. Communications, events, and programme planning reflect commitments to inclusive design and representation. In particular, the Hub provides a platform to ensure that global south insight and expertise shapes both Hub strategy and global education dialogue.

Accountability and learning

Progress on GEDSI integration is monitored through the **GEDSI Assessment Framework**, led by the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team in collaboration with the GEDSI advisors. Findings inform adaptive programming and strengthen the Hub's collective capacity to deliver *learning at scale with equity*.

Looking ahead

This strategy advances the Hub's vision of inclusive implementation at scale by embedding equity across research, practice, and governance. By linking GEDSI to the Hub's three pillars – **evidence translation, evidence use, and implementation science** – the What Works Hub for Global Education ensures that inclusion is a foundation for how learning systems evolve and deliver for every child.