Theme 3 - Application

Last updated: 03/31/2015

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Section A - Project Summary

A. Title of Proposed Systematic Review

Does female economic empowerment foster economic growth?: A systematic review of the theory and empirical evidence

A1. Systematic Review Summary

Provide a brief summary, in non-technical language, of what this review of evidence is about and how it will be undertaken.

Maximum 500 words.

Promoting gender equality is not only intrinsically valuable but can also be a means to promote economic growth. A significant amount of macro and micro-level research has investigated the effect of female economic empowerment on growth and development. We intend to conduct a systematic review of the existing evidence, wherein firstly we would evaluate theoretical papers that explain the link between female empowerment and growth. Second, we will systematically review the macro-evidence on the link between gender inequality and growth. Third, we intend to methodologically examine the observational micro evidence on the impact of gender gaps in assets and inputs on efficiency and productivity. Lastly, we will conduct a meta-analysis of the impact of interventions based on natural experiments or randomized control trials aimed at fostering female economic empowerment and their effect on growth. We will focus on studies written between 1990 and 2015. The analysis focuses on interventions that i) improve access to education, ii) expand access to financial services iii) promote female labor force participation, iv) foster political participation, v) allocate income to women and iv) reform anti-discriminatory laws. Special focus will be given to studies in middle income and poor countries.

A2. Project Duration

Maximum 24 months.

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A2a. Proposed Start Date

2016-02-01 00:00:00

A2b. Proposed End Date

2017-07-01 00:00:00

A3. Organization Responsible for Systematic Review of Evidence

Name	Georg August Universitaet Göttingen

Country	Germany

A4. Principal Investigators and Contact Person(s)

Indicate the principal investigator (PI) and contact person for this project (if different from lead PI).

*Please note that all key correspondence related to this application will only be sent to the lead PI and contact person for review.

Title	Principal Investigator
Name	Stephan Klasen
Email	sklasen@gwdg.de

Section-B

Section B - Project Information

B1. Research Question

- What is the primary question that this review of evidence seeks to answer?
- Are there any secondary questions that you will address?
- If there is an underlying theoretical framework, provide an outline.

Maximum 500 words

In the past three decades, a large amount of research has focused on this topic both from a theoretical and an empirical perspective. Yet, to date, this research appears largely scattered and the few existing literature reviews have focused on limited number of articles, a limited time span, or a non-systematic assessment of available published and unpublished studies (e.g. King et al., 2008; Duflo, 2012; Bandiera and Natraj, 2013). Our research objective is to provide a comprehensive and systematic review of the impact of female empowerment on economic growth. This review would help identify interventions that are effective at empowering women and generating economic growth, and identify research gaps on the effects of women's economic empowerment on economic growth.

Our research is structured around four main groups of questions:

- What are the mechanisms that explain the link between female economic empowerment and growth? Which theoretical models have been developed to explain this link? What are the transmission channels that are proposed and are they likely to be relevant and applicable? What short term and long-term (including inter-generational) effects can be expected based on this literature?

- What does the macro literature find on the impact of gender inequalities, with particular emphasis on gender gaps in education, employment, and pay on long-term growth? Do countries that are more equal grow faster? What are the main demographic and economic transmission channels identified in the macro literature? What are the main limitations of the different macro studies and which ones are particularly methodologically credible?

- What does the observational micro literature say on the impact of gender gaps on efficiency and productivity, with associated impact on economic growth? Do gender gaps in access to input and assets reduce productivity of female producers, with associated negative consequences for growth?

- Do interventions that aim at empowering women generate the expected results on economic performance in the short and in the long term? Are these interventions equally effective across different cultural and institutional contexts? Which institutional contexts are more favorable for female economic empowerment to affect economic growth?

B2. Existing Evidence

Indicate the state of existing evidence on this topic, including the quantity and quality of the evidence as well as any existing systematic reviews on the topic.

Maximum 1000 words

There have been a number of papers studying the relation between female economic empowerment and economic growth. One group of papers focuses on the theoretical links and proposes different transmission channels. First, under the assumption that talents are equally distributed among men and women, the removal of sex-specific distortions would lead to an efficient utilization of all human resources (Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Klasen, 2002 and Abu-Ghaida and Klasen, 2004). Second, if marginal returns to education and capital are higher for women than men, it is expected that the allocation of resources to women would generate higher growth rate (Schultz, 2002). Third, increasing gender equality (and rising levels of human capital) leads to greater employment alternatives and rising wages for women, changing their opportunity cost of time and culminating in a quantity-quality trade off in fertility decisions. This brings about a virtuous circle with intergenerational effects like the demographic transition and accelerated growth due to improvements in human capital (Galor and Weil, 1996; Lagerlöf, 2003). Fourth, empirical evidence suggests that increases in the relative resources controlled by women are associated with a larger share of household resources going to family welfare, especially to expenditures on children which is likely to positively impact education, health and nutrition of all children (e.g. Thomas, 1990, 1997; Haddad and Hoddinott, 1994). Fifth, access to resources is associated with higher female bargaining power in the family, which can be reflected in decreased fertility, improved outcomes for daughters and higher political participation.

A second group of papers focuses on empirically testing the relation between gender inequalities in education, employment and political representation in growth (World Bank, 2001; and King, Klasen, and Porter, 2008). These studies are mainly based on cross-country comparisons and include panel data sets. The main findings of this research support the view that gender inequality constrains growth (see for example King et al. 2008). There is some macro evidence on the association between gender inequality and economic growth. However, these kinds of studies suffer from endogeneity problems and difficulty in identifying transmission channels. (Bandiera and Natraj, 2013).

A third group of papers have turned attention towards micro-data studies to investigate the impact of gender gaps on economic performance at the micro level. The literature reveals evidence of misallocation of resources within a household that leads to lower productivity within plots of land owned by women (Udry et al, 1995; Udry, 1996). Equal access to productive resources for both female and males, however, could potentially increase the agricultural output (Bisseleua et al, 2008; WDR 2012).

Fourth, there is a micro-literature based on randomized controlled trials or natural experiments. The main advantage of this kind of study design is that it allows one to credibly identify the effect of a particular intervention and to disentangle the main transmission channels. Yet, they are typically limited in scope and estimating the long term effect of the interventions is more challenging.

Micro-economic evidence provides a mixed picture on the impacts of female empowerment on growth. While increased access to education for girls is associated with decreased fertility as well as improved educational and health outcomes for children (Duflo, 2012), the effects do not seem to differ between men and women in Taiwan (Chou et al. 2010). The effect of education on female labor force participation and income has been much more modest than expected (King et al. 2008). While income in the hands of women is associated with more spending on children (Schultz, 2002; Thomas, 1990), some evidence in South Africa indicates that female pensioners invest more in food but less in education (Duflo, 2003; Edmonds, 2006). More recent evidence has also shown that productive resources (land, credit) in the hands of women can be less productive than in the hands of men (De Mel, et al. 2009; Fafchamps et al., 2011; Karlan and Zinman, 2011). Given this contradictory evidence, it is quite clear that it is necessary to conduct a systematic review of the impact of different interventions and in different contexts.

Existing articles on the impact of female empowerment on growth are King et al. (2008), Morrison, Raju and Sinha (2010), Duflo (2012), Bandiera and Natraj, (2013). Also the studies commissioned by the United Nations Foundation and the ExxonMobil Foundation to identify the most effective interventions to advance women's economic opportunities, provide a valuable overview. For example Todd, (2012) and Kraz (2013) present an overview on employment for women; Doss et al. (2012) and Knowles (2012) focus on female empowerment in the agricultural sector; Rodgers and Menon (2012) consider the effect of land rights on females well-being; Mehra et al. (2012) and Buvinic and Furst-Nichols (2013) focus on the impact of financial access and Woodruff and McKemzie, (2013) consider the effect of business entrepreneur training programs. Fultz and Francis (2013) compare the impact of conditional cash transfers on female empowerment.

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Section B - Project Information cont'd

B3. Review Methods

Indicate how the review will be undertaken, using the following headings:

B3.i. Inclusion Criteria

Specify the scope, population (if relevant) and nature of the intervention

Max 500 words

For the 4 research questions, we will apply slightly different methods for our review. While for research questions 1-3, we will do a systematic review of the evidence by collecting all relevant studies and then qualitatively assessing them in a structured framework, for research question 4 we additionally will undertake an econometric meta-analysis of impact evaluations.

We would consider interventions with particular emphasis on low-income countries (but also including evidence from middle-income countries where it is particularly relevant). The emphasis would be in interventions that aim at empowering women by: i) improving access to education, ii) fostering employment opportunities, iii) providing financial access, iv) fostering political participation and v) reforming discriminatory laws.

To understand how the effectiveness of the interventions varies according to the social and institutional context, we would also use information from the social institutions and gender index (SIGI) (Branisa et al. 2013). The analysis would also consider heterogeneity of outcomes by region. We would aggregate the countries studied into six groups, Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, South Asia, East and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and East-European and Asian countries in transition.

For the empirical review of theoretical and macro studies, we only include studies that specifically have economic growth as the outcome variable and consider gender gaps in key factors affecting economic growth. Most of these studies focus on gender gaps in education, employment, pay, governance, and health on economic growth. For the micro studies (questions 3 and 4), we would focus on papers that have a quantitative emphasis and that allow estimating the magnitudes of the effects of female empowerment on at least one of the following outcomes that have a direct or indirect impact on economic growth: Income, savings, investments, wages, returns to capital, inter-generational effects of gender inequality such as fertility, child mortality, investment in education, school attendance and health and nutritional outcomes of children. We would include papers written in English, Spanish, French, German, Hindi and Italian during the period 1990 and 2015. Besides published papers in peer reviewed journals, we would also include articles in books, conference papers, working papers, and policy briefs. We would refer to the reference list to identify original articles and would also use citations from Google and

Journals to search for additional sources. In our review we will consider the quality of the outlet as an important criteria for assessing the findings.

B3.ii. Search Strategy

Describe your proposed search strategy for identifying published and unpublished studies, which are likely to include, but are not limited to, the following sources:

- Electronic sources (e.g., database, e-library, internet);
- Print sources (e.g., journals, library shelves, hand search);
- Grey literature (e.g., databases, conference proceedings, research funders); and/or
- References snowballing from published and unpublished literature

*Note the key search terms you expect to use, and any restrictions arising from the choice of start date for searches or languages of reporting.

Max 500 words

Potentially relevant literature will be identified in two ways: 1. By identifying existing systematic reviews in related areas that could yield relevant references for inclusion in the review 2. By conducting targeted searches in a wide range of websites that are likely to contain information relevant to the review. All searches will be conducted by at least two reviewers who will conduct the literature search independent from each other.

In order to make the data construction as transparent as possible, we will use easily accessible but universal research databases. We will prepare a search algorithm (in title, abstract, and keywords) for literature review and assessing interventions. We will search the Economic Literature Index (EconLit) and Google Scholar for any reference to: ‘(wage* or salary* or earning* or education* or leadership* decision making*) and (discrimination or difference*) and (sex or gender)’. EconLit is the most comprehensive database for economic research papers. We will also use search engines for working papers such as SSRN (Social Science Research Network), WOPEC (WOrking Papers in EConomics), and working papers series of well-known research institutes such as NBER, the World Bank, WIDER, IZA.

We will also conduct a library search for reviews, books and book chapters. A manual search will be conducted using reference lists from reviews, book chapters, and articles in order to find additional studies that may have been overlooked.

We will review the list of all included articles, relevant review articles and related systematic reviews to identify the articles that may have been missed in database searches.

Lastly, in an effort to capture studies that are still unpublished, we will send emails to the leading authors in the field of gender and development requesting unpublished working papers.

We will also search for additional references focusing on the included references in the articles and on citations of the articles.

We will provide a separated list of the articles selected and not selected for inclusion with the corresponding summary. For articles that were not selected, we would provide an explanation for this decision. In case of disagreement among the two reviewers, the paper would be assigned to a third reviewer. All opinions would count equally.

B3.iii. Data Extraction and Critical Appraisal

- Describe how the data from primary studies will be coded, extracted and reconciled.
- Indicate which quality appraisal tool(s) you will use. Justify this for the type of evidence to be included.

Max 500 words

All of the studies included within the review will be reviewed by at least two researchers. To determine relevance of each quantitative study, two independent reviewers will assess this study, prior to the inclusion using standardized critical appraisal instruments. Naturally

these will be adjusted to reflect the current review research objectives. Any disagreements that arise between the reviewers over any study would be resolved through discussion, or with a third reviewer. Data extraction from the report would be done using pre-defined data collection forms that include, a table or summary of the characteristics of participants, location of study, study design, identification strategy, interventions, outcomes and unexpected results, external validity criteria, attrition, for each of the included studies will be provided within the review. Risk of bias in the results would be evaluated considering the identification strategy used, the robustness of the results in different specifications, attrition of participants in the evaluation of the intervention and external validity.
For studies where the data is not disaggregated by gender an effort would be done to either obtain the data or ask authors to provide disaggregated data.
In case there is analysis based on sub-grouping or based on common features, these studies would be classified separately. For example one kind of grouping could be based on a particular transmission channel, wherein a sub-grouping can be based on the type of study included (RCT, large sample, cross country etc.)
Unpublished studies will also be synthesized separately as their findings might have smaller effects.

B3.iv. Analysis

Provide a detailed description of how quantitative and qualitative data (if applicable) will be analysed and synthesised.

Maximum 500 words

The analysis section of the review will follow the Cochrane review protocol. The Cochrane guidelines recommend that the following objectives should be addressed. These objectives are slightly modified keeping in mind the specific scope of our review.
• Ensure that the analysis strategy firmly addresses the stated objectives of the review
• Consider which types of study design would be appropriate for the review.
• Consider whether it is possible to specify in advance if there is evidence of an effect, then estimate the size of the effect and the uncertainty surrounding that size; and investigate whether the effect is consistent across studies.
• Decide how the risk of bias in included studies will be assessed and addressed in the analysis.
• Pre-specify characteristics of the studies that may be examined as potential causes of heterogeneity.
• Decide whether (and how) evidence of possible publication and/or reporting biases will be sought.

B3.v. Report Writing

Describe a report-writing plan, including:

- Contributions of participating team members;
- Section(s) of the report in which they will be involved; and
- Approach for communicating in a user-friendly manner (e.g. summary of findings, shorter version of the report).

Maximum 500 words

We will split the whole review into four papers according to the research questions mentioned in part B1. The structure of each paper will follow the following sturcture:

• Abstract: summarizes the content, including purpose, technical approach, results, and conclusion of the paper.
• Executive Summary: gives a summary will summarize the basic procedures, main findings and principal conclusions of the study.
• Introduction: describes the aim, background and justification of the paper and gives a brief overview of the research topic to the readers.
• Review methods: describes the following criteria: 1. Defining criteria for including studies 2. Assessment of methodological 3. Pre - determined selection criteria 4. Search strategy 5. Data extraction 6. How we addressed the risk of bias in included studies 7. Method of

synthesis of findings 8. Analysis of data..
• Review result: discusses the studies considered and their number of studies under different sub topics, summary of the overall quality of the literature identified, presenting results and summary of findings based on the objectives of the review and the criteria for considering studies, and comments by reviewers.
• Discussion: provides an overview of the results, and address issues arising from the conduct of the review including limitations and issues arising from the results of the review.
• Future research questions: presents the research questions that have not been addressed in the literature and give suggestion on how to address them.
• Conclude: Finally we will conclude by drawing implications for practical as well as research purposes.

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Section B - Project Information Cont'd

B4. Quality Assurance Arrangements

Please indicate:

- Internal quality assurance: how each component of the review will be quality assured by the team.
- External quality assurance arrangements the team intends to use (e.g. Campbell Collaboration, Cochrane Collaboration, EPPI-Centre).

Maximum 250 words

To assure quality of the project report we plan to carry out midterm and an end-term review with the help of an external review committee (e.g. Campbell Collaboration, Cochrane Collaboration, EPPI-Centre). The review will cover the following aspects:

Activity analysis: This will investigate the information on the responsibilities, activities and constraints of all researchers who provided input to the project.

Relevance: Relevance criteria reflect whether the review could fulfill the original project objectives that it was supposed to address. It should include an assessment of the quality of project preparation, the logic and completeness of the project planning process.

Efficiency: This will investigate whether project results have been achieved at reasonable cost i.e. if the available resources have been utilized properly to achieve the project objectives, in terms of quality, quantity and time.

Impact: The effect of the project on its wider environment, and its contribution to the wider policy objectives (as summarized in the project's Overall Objective).

Recommendation: Finally the evaluation would include recommendations on the possible improvements of the review quality.

B5. Policy Relevance and Potential Impact

- Describe the potential policy relevance of the proposed review of evidence to GrOW, focusing on the critical knowledge gaps that the study would address, and how that aligns with the enduring policy challenges for women's economic empowerment.
- Describe the policy influence objective(s) of the review, the target audiences (especially the policy stakeholders) for the study, and main rationale, strategies and expected outcomes for engaging with each of the target audiences.

Maximum 500 words

We contribute to the research on female economic empowerment and growth by providing a unifying conceptual framework to theoretically and empirically evaluate the effect of female empowerment on growth.
The target audiences for our study are government officials and politicians from low-and middle-income countries, officials from International Organizations, other researchers as well as all relevant donors in the development sector. The rationale for engaging with policymakers at various levels is to provide them a comprehensive overview on existing research about female empowerment and growth in order to facilitate well informed decisions. We will engage with other research to increase the visibility of our work and to further spread the results through them We will engage with donors to inform their decisions on program design and priority setting with our results.
We will engage with the different stakeholders through various channels. We will provide a policy brief for each paper that we are writing and circulate it among relevant decision makers. We will put up a website that transparently summarizes our findings and makes it easy for everyone to access our results. We will present our results at international conferences and specifically target such conferences, which are typically frequented by policy stakeholders. Other means of communication might be developed in the policy influence plan.

Section-C

Section C - Team Structure and Project Management

C. Reseach Team

- Describe the research team and how individuals and institutions will collaborate to achieve project outcomes.
- Provide information on team member contributions to review tasks (for instance team coordination, protocol development, searching, critical appraisal, data extraction, qualitative analysis, statistical meta analysis, report writing, policy influence plan), and the number of days to be spent at each stage over the course of the review.
- Please include names of all team members, noting the job title (e.g., Research Assistant) where an appointment has not yet been made.

Note: In the annex section of this application, please include CVs of all the named researchers/team members mentioned below including any previous training, experience and skills in evidence synthesis and subject matter, and citing a list of systematic reviews undertaken to date.

Maximum 500 words

The reviews will be undertaken by all members of our team. Each section within review will be perform with at least two members to increase ensure likelihood that errors are detected especially for such as selection of studies for eligibility and data extraction
The review team include expertise in the topic area, expertise in systematic review methodology (including statistical expertise)
For new review authors, they will work with others who are experienced in the process of systematic reviews . We also will conduct some trainings for review team to help them to prepare and maintain high quality reviews.
In order to ensure that Systematic reviews are relevant to the end user and of higher quality in terms of both the topic and the methodology. We will built a Advisory group of people from research, academic, policy and service organizations related to the studied areas. job descriptions or person specifications for an advisory group will be developed to ensure there is clarity about the task(s) required. The group will meet at least three times over the course of the review. frameworks for reviews will be refined through advisory group discussions.

C1. Capacity Building and Collaboration with Southern Researchers

- Indicate how the project might build the capacities of researchers, policy makers, civil society members, local populations, and/or others.
- Indicate how the project will build the capacity for research uptake.
- Indicate whether some may need specific training before, during or after the project.

*Inclusion of southern researchers is strongly encouraged. For review groups with members from both northern and southern countries, briefly outline the history of collaboration between the groups.

Maximum 500 words

The research group will aim to build capacity among the authors involved in the project, including those based at universities, as well as to engage user bodies such as policy makers. This will be done by organizing, or participating in, training events. These events will be conducted in collaboration with an existing pool of highly experienced researchers and outside trainers.

We will also engage with other researchers through the university's partner institutions in countries like India, Vietnam, Colombia and other developing country-based research organizations and policy makers and civil organizations worldwide. One PI of our proposed study is from Colombia, two researchers are from India and one researcher is from Vietnam. One of them is currently based in India.

The research group will also collaborate with the Cochrane Developing Countries Network. While our research group takes a broad view on the possible collaborations, such as civil organizations, the group envisages, however, that direct engagement is more likely to be with policy makers and, research organization.

In order to ensure that the reviews are relevant to users, we will ensure that the question of policy relevance is adequately addressed in all papers, and we will aim to use methods of dissemination of literature, which are accessible by policy makers and civil organizations.

C2. Expected Activities and Monitoring

Please provide a timetable with detailed information on activities and milestones for the project, including for the specific activities that will lead to the outputs and outcomes previously described.

- You should allow one month for title registration (if applicable) and two months for peer review at protocol and report stages.
- Please note that policy influencing planning should start at the beginning of the study. Policy influencing activities may start earlier than report writing, and they are expected to continue through the end of the grant.
- Ensure that key activities, such as the following, are tracked: title registration (if relevant) and development of policy influence plan, protocol development, submission of protocol for peer review, publication of search protocol, publication of protocol, data extraction and critical appraisal, qualitative analysis, statistical meta-analysis, policy influencing activities, report writing, draft report submitted for peer review, and publication of final report.

Maximum 500 words

Activities:

A. Title registration: Feb 2016

B. Development of review protocol: March and April 2016

C. Development of policy influence plan: March and April 2016

D. Peer-review of protocol: May 2016

E. Publication of search protocol: May 2016

F. Data extraction and critical appraisal: June - September 2016

G. Policy influence activities: October-December 2016 and January 2017

H. Qualitative analysis: October-December 2016 and January 2017

I. Statistical meta-analysis: October-December 2016 and January 2017

J. Report writing: February-May 2017

K. Draft report submitted for peer-review: May and June 2017

L. Publication of final report: July 2017

C3. Access and Data Management Strategy

GrOW is committed to ensuring that research outputs, which are developed by funded researchers, are made available pursuant to open access principles. In addition to ensuring deposits in IDRC's IDL, recipients are asked to give priority to open access compatible venues.

Please describe your strategy for ensuring access to research outputs and data.

Maximum 500 words

There are several ways that review information can be managed and we present our system for recording data and information.

• Effective management via cataloguing of electronic references in an online available database library.

• Transparency in sourcing, appraisal and synthesis of the literature to ensure ease of access. This would also ensure that each study can be tracked and there is relevant explanation for why the study was included.

• Bibliographic data on paper will be maintained in case of studies which are only available in print.

The review would be available via the database maintained at the IDRC's Digital library, allowing open access to researchers online.

C4. Risk and Risk Mitigation Strategies

Outline any possible political, reputational, and operational risks associated with the project, and strategies for mitigating these. This applies to both the research process and the dissemination of results.

Maximum 500 words

Risk mitigation within the context of report writing could be defined as the measures that the research team would undertake to reduce or eliminate the risks associated with the report writing. In our contexts risks can be of various types such as technical risks, monetary risks and scheduling-based risks. The principal investigator will design appropriate risk mitigation strategies to reduce the probability of occurrence of such risks while report writing. We now discuss some of the risk coping strategies that we anticipate might occur during project implementation.

Mitigating Risks of complex task management

While delegating tasks to individual researchers one might overlook the technical burden or level of complexities individual researchers are facing. It might increase the chance of the delaying the project and researchers missing deadlines. To avoid such delays, communication between team members should be facilitated in ways that researchers can discuss the possible workload they are individually bearing and to identify whether relocation of responsibilities is possible. Thus the risk associated with the complexity level of any particular task could be diversified among multiple individuals.

Mitigating Monetary Risks

Another type of risk associated with monetary management could also be critical to put risk mitigation strategy development. Although such risks factors are difficult to estimate, however if not managed carefully might lead to a situation of severe resource scarcity. To avoid such a situation the principle investigator (PI) along with other experienced researchers in the team could plan the budget much earlier than the actual project implementation such that fund allocation in different items can be planned well ahead. The PI could also decide to reserve some funds to meet any unforeseen spending during the actual review writing.

Ethical Risk

As the review involves human subjects and elements of empowerment, ethical risk could occur if the review hurt human sentiment or generated any adverse situation for them. This risk is rather limited since no primary research is involved, nevertheless we will discuss probable concerns with the ethical panels.

Mitigating timing Risks

Executing the right task at the right time might help lowering the risk of not meeting the project due dates. Tasks can be assigned to individuals in two ways. The project PI decides on a time frame for the entire project and then sets specific deadlines for each individual task. This time frame will be openly discussed with all researchers involved and revised if necessary. This could be done along a two-step approach. First is to allocate the project responsibilities among individual researchers depending on their respective experiences. Second is setting deadlines for the researchers for each individual task they are responsible for. Some extra time will be kept so that in case of any unforeseen delay the project submission deadline is not missed.

C5.Ethical Considerations

Identify possible ethical risks associated with the project, and summarise some of the mitigation strategies that will be adopted. Highlight whether the proposal will be/has been submitted to an ethics review board.

Maximum 500 words

Ethics in research is a topic of common interest and ethical concerns raised in public debates should not be ignored. There are few ethical concerns that we need to take into account in our research. For example

1. We should not confront any commonly shared values or norms. Since, societies vary with respect to their cultural and ethical norms; concept of women empowerment also varies across different societies. Therefore, researchers are required to carefully handle these issues so they do not affect social sentiment of any particular group of people.
2. Similarly, we should not confront certain perceptions an individual might be having. This might hurt human dignity. Moreover, it may be in a researcher’s interest to try to change the values the public holds, attempting this within the context of a publicly funded project would not be the appropriate place.

Once the threat is identified, the researchers then need to apply risk reduction measures to protect such ethical issues. However, the ethical issues will not become obstacles to research, but we will ensure that ethical values are being safeguarded.

Advice from ethical panels: there are ethical panels with experts from different backgrounds. For our purpose we could approach one of these panels who would help us by providing a multidisciplinary assessment of our review and recommendations from a broad range of societal interests. For example The European Commission operates on the principles of openness and engagement. They could be approached to address the ethical issues or societal obstacles.

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Selecting **save and exit** (below) will complete this form, save its contents, mark the task complete, and return you to your home page to continue with the application process.