

Purpose and introduction

We here aim to outline priority directions for future research on gender and sexuality in development, which are needed to advance our understanding of gender and sexuality in an increasingly unequal, polarised and volatile world. We also aim to build support and collaboration in this endeavour, with funders, policymakers, partners and colleagues, by outlining the key questions raised and recommended ways of approaching research to provide answers in support of transformative responses for social justice. The agenda represents the outcome of a nine-month collaborative effort building on lessons from global work by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), partner organisations and networks over the past decade. It draws in perspectives from external experts and policymakers through two small targeted surveys and expert interviews, as well as discussions and consultations at a range of events during 2016.¹ It comes at a time not only of major changes in global politics and trends, but also of major shifts in international development itself, following the establishment of the global goals for sustainable

development or ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs) in Agenda 2030.

Below, we first situate IDS – i.e. ‘*who*’ we are – in terms of gender and sexuality in development. We then consider ‘*why*’ a new agenda is required and outline some major current trends and challenges reshaping the landscape for work on gender equality, inclusion and social justice, including shifts and trends in policy and financing of such work. We go on to propose ‘*what*’ we see as needed in future research – namely, a set of new directions in four key areas for further development, along with specific rationales, central questions for exploration and proposed methodologies for ‘*how*’ this can be achieved, and with ‘*whom*’, in broad terms of partnerships and stakeholders. We then elaborate links between these areas of research and propose ways of creating innovative dialogues across different streams of work. We end by laying out our way of working and how we can build knowledge mobilisation and communications for policy influence into the design of research, methods and partnerships throughout the process.

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