



INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION **Guide**

Volunteer Cooperation Program

This guide was produced within the framework of CECI's Volunteer Cooperation Program, funded by the Government of Canada. It is the result of a collaborative process involving all of CECI's Volunteer Cooperation Program teams and is intended for all staff, volunteers and partners.

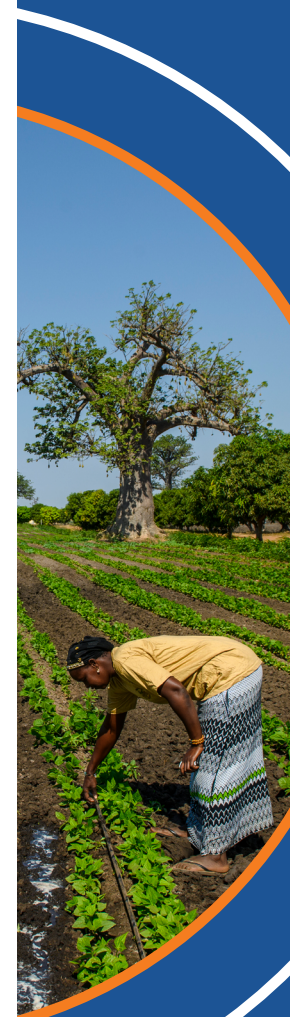
A special mention to our strategic partner, Equitas, for its advisory support throughout the process.



In partnership with
Canada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
About CECI - Volunteer Cooperation Program	5
About This Guide	6
Communication Influences Ways of Thinking	7
Unconscious Linguistic Biases	7
What is Inclusive Communication?	7
A Short History of Inclusive Communication	8
Why Adopt Inclusive Communication?	8
PART 1: Inclusive Writing	9
Linguistic Processes	10
Feminization	10
Epicene Writing	11
To go Further - Spelling Innovations	12
Terms to Prioritize in a Context of Feminist and Decolonial International Cooperation	13
CHECKLIST - COMPARATIVE TABLE	15
PART 2: Inclusive Oral Communication	16
To go Further - Individual Characteristics	17
PART 3: Inclusive Visual Communication	18
The world of CECI	19
Image Rights - Consent	19
Security and Sensitive Contexts	20
A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words	21
Never do	24
Accessibility	24
Checklist	25
PART 4: Inclusive Public Communication	26
Event Planning	27
The Place of the Event	28
The Time and Moment of the Event	28
The Language and Interpretation of the Event	28
Taking Photos During the Events	28
Roles, Participation and Speaking Out	29
Checklist	29
CONCLUSION	30
Argument Box	31
Summary	32
References - And Readings to Continue the Reflection	35



INTRODUCTION

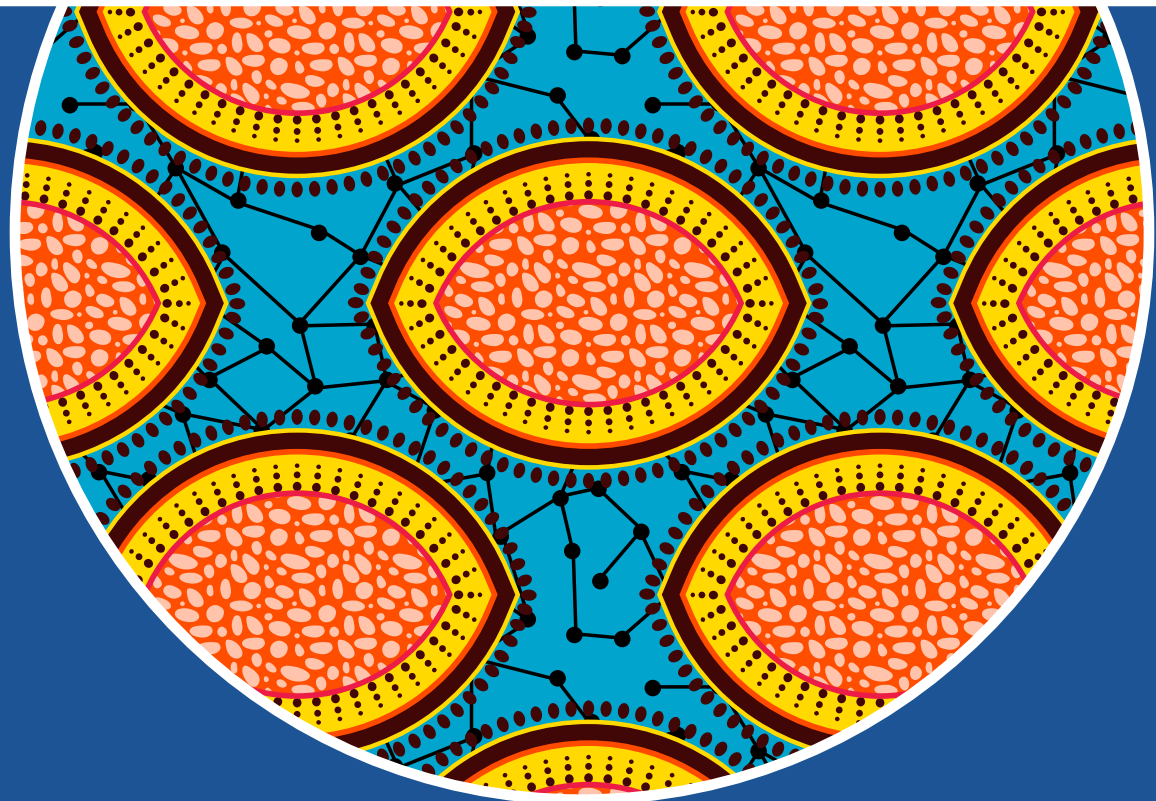


About CECI - Volunteer Cooperation Program

CECI (Centre for International Studies and Cooperation) is an international cooperation organization whose mission is to combat poverty, exclusion and inequality. To do this, CECI focuses on approaches that mobilize communities, are gender-transformative, participate in the advancement of human rights, and promote inclusive markets in a context of adaptation to climate changes. More specifically, in partnership with key agents of change, CECI works to find innovative solutions that help advance:

- The rights of women and girls;
- The economic empowerment of women;
- Adaptation to climate change with increased leadership of women;
- Inclusive governance and peacebuilding in fragile contexts and/or protracted crises.

This guide is an initiative of the CECI Volunteer Cooperation Program (VCP-CECI), funded by the Government of Canada. The Program will improve the performance of partner organizations in the programming countries and their ability to act on the challenges that hinder the achievement of the full potential of women and girls, as well as on gender relations, by focusing on the economic empowerment of women and young women. In this context, the dimension of gender equality, rights and diversity is integrated across all activities. This transformative approach ultimately seeks to reduce gender-based gaps and inequalities as well as to ensure respect for rights and promote diversity by acting on the constraints limiting the participation and action of women, young women and people experiencing intersectional forms of discrimination.*



*To consult the Gender Equality, Rights and Diversity Policy

About This Guide

This guide was created by an international multidisciplinary team made up of various representatives, experts and volunteers from CECI teams. This is a project based on the collaboration and participation of the members of the Volunteer Cooperation Program.

This guide aims to inform and support the work of all CECI teams, their partners and anyone interested in the subject with regard to the use of more inclusive communication practices. With this guide, CECI wishes to ensure that communications are more inclusive and in line with its values and contribute to better representation that reflects the diversity of the communities with which it collaborates.

This collaborative tool is part of an evolving perspective of positive and egalitarian transformations taking place in a decolonial international context.

The guide is currently available in the main working languages of CECI teams, namely French, English and Spanish*. These different versions take into account linguistic nuances and specificities.

Through this guide, CECI undertakes, with its staff, volunteers and partners, to mobilize institutionally in favor of equality and to transform its practices with a view to inclusion and decolonization. This tool responds to our deep conviction to recognize the many variables that can complicate the multiple discriminations faced by several social groups and to act in favor of positive social transformations.

For CECI, inclusion is essential in all of its activities. The application of the guide must be carried out by all the teams, in synergy with their realities and their context. In addition, this global guide is constantly evolving based on the reflections of the CECI teams. Each region of the world has its own context. CECI is aware that certain approaches may vary accordingly. This tool is intended to be a global vector of positive transformation, an adaptation posture is required in certain contexts.

For the record: Already in 2005, CECI had institutionalized the use of non-sexist writing. The defense of equality through its communications is not new. Despite the advances, this fight is still relevant and requires as much effort.

*Special attention will be paid to local languages in the second part of the project.

Inclusive Communication: A Lever for Equality

COMMUNICATION INFLUENCES WAYS OF THINKING

Communication can influence ways of thinking and one's perception of the world¹ as well as perpetuate discrimination and contribute to the exclusion of certain groups. Therefore, it is important to reflect and question the rules that uphold this. These are necessary changes to ensure fair representation of all people in society.

“Recognizing differences and making them visible also means giving them space to exist and helping to value them.”²

UNCONSCIOUS LINGUISTIC BIASES

Contrary to popular thought, language and its use are not neutral. Communication also sheds light on our perceptions of one another. Several languages have a neutral gender, and some of them are based on the rule of masculine which prevails over feminine. In particular, it is implied that the masculine includes the feminine. This principle is at the very basis of the dynamics of oppression³ because it contributes to making certain social groups, especially women, invisible.

The rule that the masculine trumps the feminine, and that the masculine includes the feminine, helps to stimulate and influence a system of oppression unfavorable to women. It may even imply that they don't belong in certain roles.

While it might be said that this occurs more frequently in grammatically gendered languages such as French and Spanish, androcentric language can also be found in languages like English. Examining gendered terms, such as “manpower,” “mankind” or “manmade” may seem futile at first glance, but these terms can contribute to the construction of power relations. In particular, it implies that access to roles of power is only accessible to a privileged group or the invisibilization of the contributions made by women or non-binary individuals and groups to communities and society at large.

We must therefore perceive communication as a tool that affects the real world. The way in which words are communicated (words, expressions, and even the rules that dictate language) has consequences on the perception of reality and can be an unconscious vector of inequalities.

WHAT IS INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION?

Inclusive communication is an approach to adapting and rebalancing communication practices to reflect the struggle for equality. It is an opportunity to deconstruct stereotypes, to fight against discrimination, to stimulate and increase critical reflections surrounding values and practices in communication. Inclusive communication aims to bring about positive transformations, to move towards new non-sexist practices that are more representative of diversity.

Inclusive communication is used in particular to ensure that each person feels represented, challenged and recognized by communications⁴. It also acts as a lever for social change, through its effect of inclusiveness of the various under-represented and socially discriminated, excluded groups. This goal can be achieved by adopting an inclusive approach in written, oral, visual and public communications.

A SHORT HISTORY OF INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION

It is according to the ideology of a society that the language and the techniques of communication evolve, therefore communication is not carried out in the same way today as in the past.

In the case of the French language, the use of the language has not always been discriminatory. Indeed, in the Middle Ages, communication was much more egalitarian in terms of representation, in particular, the rule according to which the masculine prevails over the feminine did not exist. Moreover, the majority of the words could be granted to the masculine and to the feminine. It was in a desire to erase women⁵ from the public sphere that the masculinization of the language then imposed itself, fueled by socially shared perceptions.

The concept of inclusive communication is not new, although it has been more commonly used in the last decade. By claiming access to the public space, for example to professions once reserved for men, people from diverse backgrounds have paved the way for what inclusive communication has become today.

In the spirit of continuity, evolution and full equality, the movement has expanded to other communities that experience oppression and different types of discrimination. Today, society demonstrates a willingness to be fully inclusive.

Unlike languages of Latin origin, which use feminization of terms, English is more gender neutral. This neutrality can be seen in two ways. On the one hand, it greatly facilitates inclusion, but on the other hand, it does not allow for the visibility of women (by its absence of feminization).

For many people, what is not visible does not exist. For CECI, the emancipation of women requires, among other things, the recognition of their presence and their active contribution in society. And this takes shape notably through communication.

WHY ADOPT INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION?

The use of inclusive communication has the effect of ensuring that each person feels included, represented and recognized. As communication has the power of generating social impact, the choice of **inclusive communication is the perfect way to promote gender equality and fight against multiple forms of oppression and discrimination.**

“Adopting inclusive communication means becoming aware of the power of language and the effect of words and images on the [constructed] representation of reality. It is to recognize the stereotypes that can be conveyed or reinforced by [the] discourse. It means accepting to question certain conventional rules of language to encourage greater mobilization of the people affected by [the] remarks.”⁶

Using inclusive communication means helping to fight against inequalities by recognizing that all people are rights-holders and must be represented in society.



PART 1: INCLUSIVE WRITING



INCLUSIVE WRITING AT CECI INVOLVES:

1. The rejection of the generic masculine or androcentric language

2. The alternating use of 2 linguistic processes

The strategic use of feminization to make women more visible

- Process 1: Feminization

The use of encompassing terms to be inclusive for everyone.

- Process 2: Epicene Writing

3. Prioritizing inclusive and non-discriminatory terms in a decolonial perspective

It is important for CECI to use forms of feminization, because it is a way of highlighting and recognizing the presence of women, unlike the sole use of epicene writing.

Linguistic Processes

FEMINIZATION

Feminization consists of presenting the terms feminine and masculine one after the other. While this recommendation stems from gendered languages such as English, French and Spanish, there are ways to make visible the specific contributions of women by naming them instead of using all encompassing gender neutral terms, when appropriate.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

CECI recommends the use of feminization or the use of terms that concretely identify the presence, the contribution and the participation of women. When the feminine and the masculine are used in the same sentence, CECI chooses to place the feminine term first in order to deconstruct the generic masculine rule.

NOT TO DO

Men contribute to the economic development of their community.

Farmers

TO DO

Women and men contribute to the economic development of their community.

Women agricultural workers

REMINDER

Place the feminine term first to intensify the recognition of women

Using “farmers” might not convey the same message that focuses on women’s economic rights and empowerment

EPICENE WRITING

Epicene writing favors the use of terms (nouns, adjectives and pronouns) that are non-gendered, neutral, encompassing and inclusive, which do not show any alternation between feminine and masculine. The terms used by the epicene editorial staff make it possible to be inclusive of all people.

In addition to being inclusive, epicene writing makes writing texts more concise.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

CECI recommends to vary the use of feminization and epicene writing depending on the context and the intention of the communication.

Examples:

REGULAR TERMS

Chairman

Men and women work together

Mankind has accelerated climate change

The spokesmen participated in the press conference

EPICENE TERMS

Chairperson

The community collaborates

Human activity has accelerated climate change

The representatives or spokespersons participated in the press conference

Tip: From the start, it is recommended to write in an inclusive way: this will avoid having to rephrase complete sentences.

Optional

TO GO FURTHER - SPELLING INNOVATIONS

New non-binary writing strategies are emerging more and more. The resulting new terms do not include gender, neither feminine nor masculine, and can sometimes be a way of rejecting the gender binary.

They, for instance, is a third-person pronoun that is gender neutral. Other gender-neutral pronouns include *them*, *this person*, *Ze*, or *Hir*. If you're not sure which pronoun to use, you can also use that person's name.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

CECI recommends the use of these new terms if a person wishing to be identified in this way requests it and the context is favourable.

Tip: If you're comfortable, share your pronouns when meeting new people and give space to other people to do the same, if they feel like it.

Languages

From a decolonial international perspective, the language barrier can be an obstacle and a source of discrimination in terms of accessibility. In order to promote both the right to a language for all, it is crucial to produce, write and create accessible communication tools in the widest variety of languages possible. At a minimum, it must be ensured that these are accessible in the languages of the target audiences or participants. Beyond the main languages used by CECI (French, English and Spanish), local languages must also be taken into account, particularly those of Indigenous communities, in order to promote the inclusion and full participation of these groups and intercultural communication.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

Ensure that all communication materials or activities are produced or accessible in the languages of the participants or CECI's target groups. Particular attention should be given to local languages.

Terms to Prioritize in a Feminist and Decolonial International Cooperation Context

To move towards egalitarian relationships, the decolonization of our speech is essential. As a result, the use of technical terms specific to international cooperation must reflect CECI's organizational transformation. This internationalization is based on a greater North-South balance within all of its activities, its governance, not to mention its communication.

TO AVOID	USE	EXPLANATIONS
Beneficiary	Person participating in projects, activities, programs/person or target group/persons with whom CECI works and collaborates/participant	The people we work with are actors in their own development, using the term beneficiary tends towards a passivity which is pejorative and does not represent reality.
Country of intervention/ Field	Country of programming/country of implementation of the project/program	In a perspective of decolonization and work in reciprocity. The way of designating the places of activities must not be marked by ethno-centric referents.
Developing countries	Middle- or low-income countries	Middle- and low-income country recognizes that the economic status of a country is evolving and not definitive. Developing countries imply that the richest countries are developed and that they are the only model to strive for.
Victim	Survivor/victim	Talking about survivors gives a certain form of positive power back to people. The term victim is also valid, it is a question of not taking one or the other for granted and leaving the choice to the persons concerned.

Global South countries
Global North countries

Countries of the South
Countries of the North

Countries of the South makes it possible to recognize the complexity of the situations, contexts and specificities relating to each country.

Vulnerable person

Person in a vulnerable situation

Person in a situation of vulnerability indicates that it is not the person who is vulnerable, but rather the situation and the context.

Mission

Stay and/or work trip/work travel
(for employees)
Volunteering mandates (for
volunteers)

The term mission has a rescue connotation, which is not consistent with CECI's approach to sustainable development and reciprocity.

Centre for International
Studies and Cooperation
Montreal team and
country offices

CECI - To talk about all CECI teams
CECI-Canada, CECI-Benin,
CECI-Nepal

As CECI's activities become more international, the way in which the teams are presented must reflect this change. The term headquarters implies a hierarchical dynamic of power and responsibilities, while the new approach is based on a transversality of activities.



CHECKLIST

- COMPARATIVE TABLE

INCLUSIVE WRITING

Feminization

Epicene Writing

Feminization by doublets consists of presenting the terms feminine and masculine one after the other.

Epicene writing favors the use of non-gendered, neutral, encompassing and inclusive terms, which do not alternate between feminine and masculine.

Examples

The women and men involved in the project.

The people involved in the project.

Women and men work together.

The community collaborates.

The spokeswomen and the spokesmen.

The spokesperson/people
The representatives

In Practice

Welcome **everyone**, we are delighted to receive you all. The CECI **team** is very happy to see so many **people** committed to equality! We celebrate the collective work efforts from all **women and men** that have contributed to the success of the project.

Not to do

Welcome gentlemen, we are delighted to receive you all. The directors of CECI are very happy to see you all committed to equality! We celebrate the manpower that has contributed to the success of the project.

PART 2: INCLUSIVE ORAL COMMUNICATION



All communications, including oral communication, must be representative of the reality of society as well as the diversity that composes it. As a result, the same rule of rejecting the generic masculine applies as much to inclusive writing as to oral communication.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

The same rules of inclusive writing apply to the oral: alternation between epicene communication and feminization (priority to the feminine).

Just as in writing, and for the same reasons of representativeness and inclusion, CECI alternates between feminization through the doublet and epicene communication. It is up to you to determine the best method depending on the context and the circumstance.

In addition, during verbal feminization, CECI uses the feminine form before the masculine form, with the aim of making the presence of women visible.

TO GO FURTHER - INDIVIDUAL PARTICULARITIES

If you are comfortable, during a first meeting, you can introduce yourself by mentioning the pronoun/s you use. The person can, if they are comfortable, do the same. This way of proceeding avoids taking for granted the gender of the person. Some people may use more than one pronoun.

For example: Hello, my name is [First name and Last name] and I use the pronouns [he, him/she,her/they, them]

PART 3: INCLUSIVE VISUAL COMMUNICATION



The World of CECI

The people with whom CECI works must recognize themselves, feel included and valued in the visual representation of CECI's work, in all their diversity.

CECI recognizes that sometimes circumstances can make it difficult to represent all the diversity of genders, generations or social groups in a single photo, but it is important that diversity as well as equal representation between genders is achieved in all visual communications.

Image Rights - Consent

As part of its mission, CECI works with people in vulnerable situations, who often live in difficult conditions. To capture in image or video their daily life, it is imperative to show sensitivity, to respect their consent (or their refusal) to appear in photos. In addition, they should always be presented with dignity and respect.

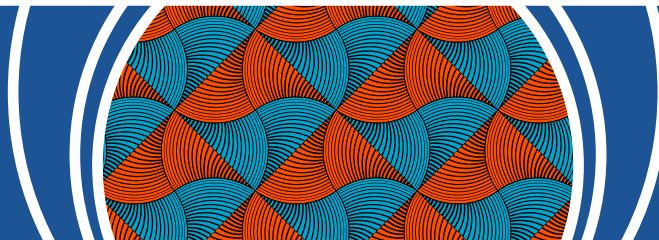
In general, the capture and use of a person's image may constitute an invasion of their privacy and security if they are recognizable there.

Any person appearing in the photos or videos used by CECI must have been informed of the risks, have given their informed consent, and have completed the consent form meant for that purpose. However, in the heat of the moment, this is not always possible. An alternative solution is to request a verbal consent recorded by the subject (on a cell phone, for example) which mentions the date, the place, their full name and their consent.

Minors: It is possible to photograph or take a video of a minor only when they AND their legal guardian give their consent. You need the consent of both parties.

INFORMED CONSENT

Consent does not simply mean that an agreement has been given. This means that the person fully understands why they are giving their consent, to whom they are giving it, how their image could be used and the possible risks. Time must be taken to explain full implications in order to have informed consent. It is possible for the person to request a revocation of their consent at any time.



CECI RECOMMENDATION:

Anyone appearing in the photos and videos used by CECI must have given their informed consent, be fully aware and informed of the possible use of their image and be aware and informed of the risks, via the consent form or an audio recording or video.

In the case of a minor, the form* is mandatory and must be signed by the minor and by their legal guardian. When taking photos of minors, it is encouraged that their identity is kept private or anonymous.

Beyond consent, people's well-being and safety must be considered before releasing images, especially when **minors are involved or that the identification of the persons concerned could harm them**. The dissemination of images documenting awareness-raising or advocacy activities in favour of the rights of certain marginalized groups could, for example, present significant risks for the safety of the persons concerned, even if they have signed a consent form.

Security and Sensitive Contexts

When producing photography or visual communication tools, **personal safety comes first**.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

Do a risk analysis before each photo or video and also before publication. The context may have changed between the photo taking and the broadcast. You have to take that into account.

Particular attention must be paid to the safety of individuals at all times, since CECI's area of expertise is often linked to sensitive contexts (inequality, human rights claims, survivors/victims of sexual violence, etc.). CECI recommends carrying out a risk analysis before carrying out each photo project and also before publishing on a sensitive subject. Depending on the analysis of the situation, the cancellation of the photo project could be possible or a strategy adapted to sensitive contexts could be adopted.

Strategy in a Sensitive Context:

- Respect the anonymity of the people or a group in the photo by ensuring that they are not identifiable.
- It is preferable to put images of a group or a crowd so as not to identify individuals and not to focus on a single person.
- Photograph people from behind or in such a way as not to see their face.
- Make sure that the elements present in the photo do not allow the person to be identified (signs, location, personal information, etc.).



Tip: Focus on the actions taken by the person. This makes it possible to have a dynamic image, even if the subject present in the image is not identifiable.

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

Images are powerful communication tools, they occupy an important place in our daily lives: they attract attention, arouse emotion and lead to reflection.

Images convey not only information, but also values, so they have transformational power over society.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

All CECI images must respect the rules of inclusion, promote equality and be in line with CECI's values. Photos and videos must respect the [CECI's inclusive photography guide](#).

THINGS TO DO WHEN TAKING YOUR PHOTO*:

1. It is necessary to ensure a balanced representation of genders and of people experiencing intersectional discrimination.



2. It is necessary to show the full diversity of activities carried out by the people appearing in the images, so that they are not limited to stereotypes related to gender, age, ethnic origin or others.



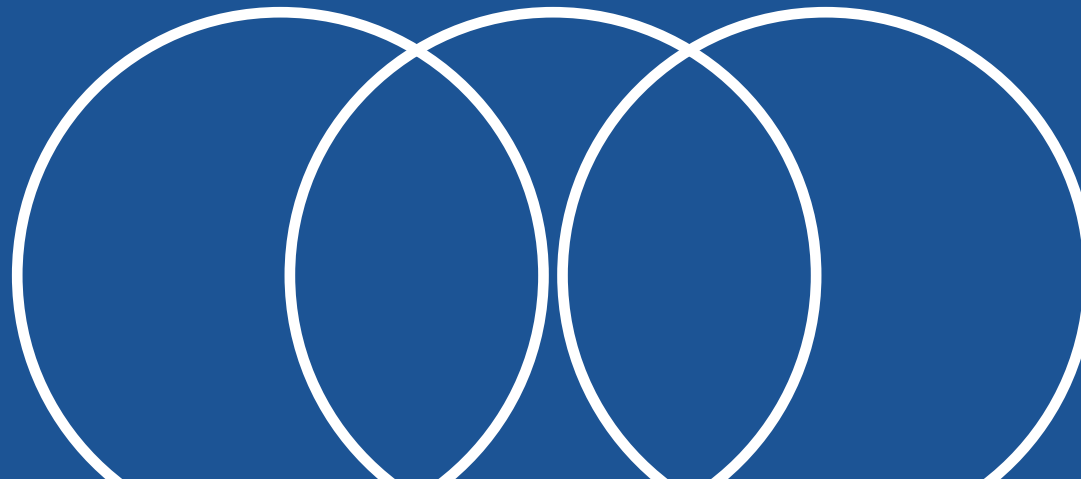
3. Do not reinforce gender stereotypes or any other cross-identities. Do not represent women and people in a situation of marginalization and/or experiencing forms of cross-discrimination as being at the service of men or in passive positions, and men in dominant or important positions. Therefore, bet on photos of women in a position of power or action. Exchanges and cooperation between women and men must be documented.



4. Do not systematically represent men in the foreground, and women in the background or on the margins.



5. Seek to break stereotypes of superiority between privileged groups and marginalized communities/groups.



Never Do

1. Stereotypes, negative or condescending images.
2. Voyeurism and miserabilism.
3. Take photos of people who do not wish to be photographed (without legal consent).
4. Not doing a risk assessment.

Accessibility

Inclusive visual communication also consists in recognizing the difference in the capacities of the people for whom it is intended.

Here are some tips on this:

Pay particular attention to the colours used in the image. We must not only think here of people whose visual abilities are altered by various health conditions (colour blindness, gradual loss of vision, etc.), people whose technical environment does not display colours in the same way (black and white screen, for example) as well as those who will print the content and who do not have access to a colour printer.

If necessary, choose illustrations whose interpretation is universal. Pictograms, colours and acronyms are not always interpreted in a universal way.

Choose a font that is clean and easy to read. Some characters may be more difficult to read and this may affect the main message.

[Consult the CECI Graphic Standards.](#)



Checklist

Always refer to CECI's Inclusive Photography Guide

A few questions to ask yourself when choosing or creating visual content:

- Are women and people in marginal situations present? Is their presence representative of reality?
- Are the actions taken visually by these people positive and representative of the message that CECI wants to project? Are they positioned to benefit them?
- Is the place occupied by the different people in the image fully representative of what CECI wants to project? Are women and people in marginal situations properly placed at the forefront?
- Does the environment (location, atmosphere, etc.) shown by the image adequately represent CECI's mission?
- Is the image free of harmful power relationships between a privileged person or group with one or more women and/or people in a situation of marginality? Do the images contribute to combating/deconstructing prejudices and stereotypes?
- Have the people shown in the image consented (informed consent) to their presence in it? Have they completed a consent form?
- Could the dissemination of this image compromise the well-being and safety of those identified in it?
- Are the colours, acronyms and layout used in the images accessible to everyone? Can their general presentation be easily understood by all CECI audiences?
- Does the communication channel selected to distribute the content take everyone's accessibility into account?



PART 4: INCLUSIVE PUBLIC COMMUNICATION



Public communication and the various external communication channels provide the opportunity to include and value the participation of women, members of diversity as well as minority and/or marginalized groups.

Remember to apply all the inclusive communication processes presented in this guide in all public communications, including those on social networks, the website and in the promotion of all events.

Trust and respect for an organization, group or institution are based in particular on the public's perception of it. This perception is based on several things, including its activities, the members of its team and largely on what is visible and publicly accessible, therefore its external or public communications. External or public communications represent all elements or opportunities for visibility, for example a performance, an event, a public speech, etc.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

Like all types of communication, public communication must represent the values of equality and inclusion and be in line with the values of CECI.

Event Planning

When organizing events, you have to be representative and inclusive from the start of your planning. Whether it is a meeting, a public assembly or any other type of event, we must keep in mind the importance of accessibility for all and to ensure that the event reflects CECI's organizational values, including those of inclusion and diversity. Ensuring events and activities are inclusive requires analysis and effort, and the time and cost needed to make this happen should not be underestimated. It is strongly recommended to have a specific budget to facilitate this evolution.

IDENTIFY AND LOWER ACCESSIBILITY BARRIERS

Accessibility for all is defined as the character of a product, process, service, information or environment which, with the aim of fairness and an inclusive approach, allows everyone to carry out activities independently and to obtain equivalent results.¹¹.

The Place of the Event

It is important that the event takes place in a place and at a time, not only accessible for its different audiences, but also thought out and carried out according to them.

It is therefore necessary to consider the proximity of the place of the event to their residence as well as its accessibility by the means of transport used. Particular attention must also be paid to the physical accessibility of the place where the event is held, in order to allow people with disabilities* to access it and to be able to move around freely. CECI values ensuring the belonging of women and people in marginal situations.

The location of the event can also be online or realized in a hybrid way. You must make sure to communicate the information relating to the connection adequately and to make sure to use a secure, accessible and free platform.

The Time and Moment of the Event

The timing and time of the event should be determined based on the participation of the target audiences. For example, avoid organizing an event in the evening, because the people responsible for the care of the family (mostly women) will not necessarily be able to participate due to their responsibilities. With this in mind, it is recommended not only to consider the times that will be appropriate for them, but also to offer a daycare service to facilitate the participation of the persons responsible for the care. However, if an event wants to reach women working during the day, an evening or midday event may be more conducive to promoting their participation. It is also necessary to recognize that certain times of the year (for example during religious holidays, busy farming days, etc.) can be a factor of exclusion.

The Language and Interpretation of the Event

We must ensure that everyone can not only understand but also interact in a language that they master (especially local languages). It is therefore important to consider the presence of interpreters (oral language or sign language). It should not be forgotten that people with disabilities (visual, auditory or verbal) can also participate. In this case, CECI recommends the presence of interpreters, particularly for local languages and for people with disabilities.

Taking Photos During the Event

If photos are taken during the event, it is necessary to clearly indicate this. Ideally, this mention is in the details sent with the invitation, but it must be clearly indicated at the entrance.

However, this indication does not replace the consent discussed in Part 3 of this guide.

*People with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Due to the complexity of language and its evolution alongside social movements, it is noted that in some instances, it might be preferred to use 'disabled person' instead of 'person with disabilities'. This is one of the ways that the English language has evolved to highlight critiques emerging from the disability justice movement and emphasize that society has created and continues to sustain barriers that prevent accessibility. It is important to favor the self-identification of the person or group being mentioned.

Roles, Participation and Speaking

When planning the event, special attention must be paid to the diversity of the people who will play a role, whether it is about moderating or presenting the various discussion points. It is thus necessary to allow people in a situation of marginality to play central roles.

During the event, it is also important to ensure that participation and speaking out are ensured in the most representative and equal way possible. It is therefore necessary to raise the awareness of the person responsible for giving the floor to the participants on these grounds.

Also, there is a difference between inviting someone and giving them the chance to feel comfortable and respected enough to speak up and fully share their opinion. We must therefore make the necessary efforts to allow this comfort and this respect. For example, by clearly showing openness to different ideas and showing that they are all valid and important for discussion.

Checklist

Some questions to ask yourself when organizing and running an event:

- Is the event taking place in a place and time accessible to its various audiences? Will guests, including those with disabilities, be able to access it easily?
- Is the presence of translators and/or interpreters necessary to ensure that everyone can not only understand but also interact during the event?
- Does the location and format of the event facilitate participation and has it been designed to meet the needs of the target audience of the event?
- Are the roles assigned so that women and marginalized people participate in a way that is representative of CECI's mission?
- Does the organization of the event allow people responsible for the care of the family (mostly women)? Is a daycare service offered to them so that they can participate?
- Will participation and speaking time be distributed equitably for everyone? Are all measures taken so that participants can interact and give their opinion freely?
- Plan an evaluation following the events to assess inclusion.

CECI RECOMMENDATION:

Like all types of communication, public communication must represent the values of equality and inclusion and be in line with the values of CECI.

CONCLUSION

As people committed to international development, CECI's actors have an important role to play in reflecting the reality of each environment in which the organization works, and also in helping to fight and deconstruct prejudices and contribute to transformation of power relations. Using inclusive communication not only means recognizing and ensuring that everyone feels fully involved and recognized, but it is also contributing to full gender equality by representing a fair and appropriate vision of the world we live in. Communication influences the world and the representations that flow from it. This guide, which is intended to evolve, contributes to positive change for all the environments in which CECI operates.



ARGUMENT BOX

1. The use of feminization weighs down communications

Any change requires time to adapt. In order to counter the theory that masculine trumps feminine, which has negative social consequences not only on the visibility of women but also of diversity, it is our duty to take the necessary measures. In addition, the various processes described in this guide are intended to reduce the complexity of fully inclusive communication. The more you use them, the smoother and simpler your communications will be.

2. Inclusive communication complicates our exchanges

On the contrary, inclusive communication is a way of adapting to the different social movements that aim for the full recognition of diversity. It simplifies exchanges, in the sense that it fully recognizes the people you are talking to, often avoiding misunderstandings.

3. Inclusive communication does not respect grammar

The only rule of grammar that the procedures described herein do not respect is that according to which the masculine prevails over the feminine. It is our duty, at CECL, to take the necessary actions to combat this rule stemming from patriarchy which, moreover, is based on heteronormative foundations.

4. People from diverse backgrounds do not participate in activities

People of diversity have suffered or still suffer different forms of oppression. In addition, traditional spaces do not value their participation because they are not adapted to their safety, their needs or even their reality. As a result, they may be more reluctant to express themselves and take full part in the activities offered to them. By adopting the inclusive communication processes described in this guide, CECL attempts to reduce and combat these oppressions and to facilitate access and full representation for those who experience them.

SUMMARY

INCLUSIVE WRITING

Inclusive writing at CECI involves:

- The abandonment of the generic masculine
- The alternating use of the 2 linguistic processes*
- Prioritization of inclusive and non-discriminatory terms

2 LINGUISTIC PROCESSES

1. DOUBLETS

Definition: Feminization by doublets consists of presenting the terms feminine and masculine one after the other.

Example: We welcome all the **women and men** present today.

Recommendation: When the feminine and the masculine are used in the same sentence, CECI chooses to place the feminine term first in order to deconstruct the generic masculine rule.

2. EPICENE WRITING

Definition: Epicene writing favors the use of terms (nouns, adjectives and pronouns) that are non-gendered, neutral, encompassing and inclusive, which do not show any alternation between feminine and masculine.

Example: **The community** collaborates/*Instead of* the women and men collaborate.

Recommendation: CECI jointly uses feminization by doublets and epicene writing, in order to lighten the text and avoid several doublets in the same sentence.

*In both French and Spanish, a third linguistic process is included, called abbreviated doublets. This is not common for English and thus omitted for the English guide.

	Doublets	Epicene writing
	The spokeswomen and spokesmen	The spokespersons or the representatives
In Practice	Welcome everyone , we are delighted to receive you all. The CECI team is very happy to see so many people committed to equality! We celebrate the collective work efforts from all women and men that have contributed to the success of the project.	
Not to do	Welcome gentlemen, we are delighted to receive you all. The directors of CECI are very happy to see you all committed to equality! We celebrate the manpower that has contributed to the success of the project.	

INCLUSIVE ORAL COMMUNICATION

1. Just as in writing, and for the same reasons of representativeness and inclusion, CECI alternates between feminization through the doublet and epicene communication. It is up to you to determine the best method depending on the context and the circumstance.
2. During oral feminization by the doublet, CECI uses the feminine form before the masculine form, with the aim of making the presence of women visible.

INCLUSIVE VISUAL COMMUNICATION

1. The people with whom CECI works must recognize themselves, feel included and valued in the visual representation of CECI's work, in all their diversity.
2. **Consent:** Any person appearing in the photos and videos used by CECI must have given their informed consent, be fully aware and informed of the possible use of their image and be aware and informed of the risks, via the consent form or an audio or video recording. In the case of a minor, the form is mandatory and signed by the minor **and** by her or his legal guardian. When photographing minors, ensuring they are unidentifiable is encouraged. **Consent Form**.
3. **Security and sensitive contexts:** Do a risk analysis before each photo or video and also before publication. The context may have changed between the photo taking and the broadcast. You have to take that into account.
4. **A picture is worth a thousand words:** All CECI images must respect the rules of inclusion, promote equality and be in line with CECI's values. Photos and videos must respect the **CECI inclusive photography guide**.

INCLUSIVE PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

Like all forms of communication, public communication must represent the values of equality and inclusion and be in line with the values of CECL.

SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN ORGANIZING AND RUNNING AN EVENT:

- Is the presence of translators and/or interpreters necessary to ensure that everyone can not only understand but also interact during the event?
- Is the place and the format of the event facilitating participation and has it been designed to meet the needs of the target audience of the event (place, time of the event)? Will guests, including those with disabilities, be able to access it easily?
- Are the roles distributed in such a way that women and people in marginal situations participate in a representative way?
- Does the organization of the event allow those responsible for the care of the family (mostly women) to participate?
- Will participation and speaking time be distributed equitably for everyone? Are all measures taken so that participants can interact and give their opinion freely?
- Plan post-event evaluation to ensure ongoing reflection on inclusion.

REFERENCES

- AND READINGS TO CONTINUE THE REFLECTION

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Boroditsky, L. (2001). Does Language Shape Thought? Mandarin and English Speakers' Conceptions of Time. *Cognitive Psychology*, 43(1), p. 1-22.
- ² Université du Québec - Community of Practice in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) of the Université du Québec (2021). Guide to Inclusive Communication. p. 6. [Online](#)
- ³ Haut Conseil à l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes. (2015). Practical Guide to Gender-stereotype-free Public Communication. [Online](#)
- ⁴ Julie Ruel and Cécile Allaire. (2018). Communicating for all. A Guide to Accessible Information. [Online](#)
- ⁵ Eliane Viennot. (2014). Non, le masculin ne l'emporte pas sur le féminin! Petite histoire des résistances de la langue française.
- ⁶ Université du Québec - Community of practice in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) of the Université du Québec (2021). Guide to Inclusive Communication. p. 5. [Online](#)
- ⁷ Definition developed in 2011 by: Groupe DÉFI Accessibilité (GDA) - Rapport de recherche pour les milieux associatifs de Montréal - Accessibilité universelle et designs contributifs (version 5.3), LANGEVIN, ROCQUE, CHALGHOUMI and GHORAYEB, [Université de Montréal](#) - taken from the [AlterEgo](#) website on January 15, 2023.

AT CECI

- Inclusive photography guide - CECI - [FR](#) [EN](#) [ESP](#)
- Program GERD Strategy - CECI - ajout [FR](#) et [EN](#)
- Gender Equality, Rights and Diversity Policy- CECI - [FR](#) [EN](#) [ESP](#)
- [Glossary](#) - CECI

Others

- Australian Human Rights Commission. (2021). Guide - Creating Accessible and Inclusive Communications. [Online](#)
- Development Center for the Exercise of Citizenship (CDEC). (2020). Inclusive Communication - A User's Guide. [Online](#)
- Council of Europe. (2021). Claiming the Power of Dialogue. [Online](#)
- Council of Europe. (2021). Inclusive Communication. [Online](#)
- Government of Canada. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology Guide. [Online](#)
- Government of Canada. (2022). Écriture inclusive - Lignes directrices et ressources/Inclusive Writing - Guidelines and Resources. Online: [French](#) [English](#)
- Government of Prince Edward Island. (1999). Guidelines for Gender-Inclusive Communication. [Online](#)
- Equitas. (2023). Equitas Inclusive Writing Quick Guide. [Online](#)
- Equitas. (2021). Gender and Sexual Identity Lexicon. [Online](#)
- Equitas. (2022). Lignes directrices pour une utilisation éthique des images/Guidelines for the Ethical use of Images. Online: [French](#) [English](#)
- European Commission. (2021). European Commission Guidelines for Inclusive Communication. [Online](#)
- English Federation of Disability Sports. (2014). Access for All: Inclusive Communications. [Online](#)
- Erasmus Student Network. (2021). Inclusive Communication Manual. [Online](#)
- European Institute for Gender Equality. (2019). Toolkit on Gender-Sensitive Communication. [Online](#)
- FemInEtudes (UQAM). (2020). Inclusive Writing Guide. [Online](#)
- FemInEtudes (UQAM). (2014). Language is Not Neutral. A Short Guide to Feminist Writing. [Online](#)
- Gerardin-Laverge, Mona. (2018). Language is a Place of Struggle: the Performativity of Ordinary Language in the Construction of Gender and Feminist Struggles. [Online](#)
- University of Applied Sciences of Western Switzerland. (2019). For Inclusive Communication. [Online](#)
- HEC Montreal. (2022). Directive for Inclusive Communication at HEC Montréal. [Online](#)
- HEC Montreal. (2022). Guide for Inclusive Communication. [Online](#)
- National Institute for Scientific Research (INRS). (2021). Including Yours! Inclusive Writing Guide. [Online](#)

- Leclercq, Pascale and Benazzo Sandra. Linguistic Relativity and Language Acquisition. (2021). [Online](#)
- Lessard, Michaël and Zaccour, Suzanne. (2022). Inclusive Drafting in Law: Why Do Objections Miss the Target? [Online](#)
- Michigan State University. (2022). Inclusive Guide. [Online](#)
- Quebec Office of the French language. (2020). Self-Training on Epicene Writing. [Online](#)
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). (2022). Accessible and Inclusive Public Communication: Panorama of Practices From OECD countries. [Online](#)
- United Nations (UN). Guidelines for Gender-Inclusive Language in English. [Online](#)
- United Nations (UN) - Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM). (2021). Tips for Gender-Sensitive Communication in DGACM. [Online](#)
- United Nations (UN) - Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). (2014). Gender-Sensitive Language Guidelines. [Online](#)
- United Nations (UN) - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). (2011). Communicating Gender for Rural Development. [Online](#)
- United Nations (UN) - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (1999). Guidelines on Gender-Neutral Language/ Recomendaciones para un uso no sexista del lenguaje. Online: [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- United Nations (UN) - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2017). Indicateurs d'égalité des genres dans les médias/ Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media/Indicadores de género para medios de comunicación. Online: [French](#) [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- United Nations (UN) - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2018). Recommendations for the Use of a Generic Inclusive Language. [Online](#)
- United Nations (UN) - UN Women Asia Pacific. (2017). Women Gender-Inclusive Language Guidelines. [Online](#)
- United Nations (UN) - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). (2017). Glossary on Gender Issues/Glossaire sur les questions concernant l'égalité des sexes/ Glosario sobre cuestiones de género. [Online](#), [multilingual](#)
- United Nations (UN) - UN Women. Glossaire d'égalité des sexes/Gender Equality Glossary/Glosario de Igualdad de Género. Online: [French](#) [English](#) [Spanish](#)
- United Nations - UN Globe. (2018). Recommendations for an Inclusive Workplace for Trans and Gender Nonconforming Staff Members, Dependents, and Other Stakeholders of the UN System. [Online](#)
- Paju, Birgit, Kajamaa, Anu, Pirttimaa, Raija & Kontu Elina. (2022). Collaboration for Inclusive Practices: Teaching Staff Perspectives from Finland, Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research. [Online](#)
- Scottish Government. (2011). Principles of Inclusive Communication - An information and Self-Assessment Tool for Public Authorities. [Online](#)
- Montreal university. (2019). Inclusive. A Writing Guide for Everyone. [Online](#)
- University of Quebec. (2021). Inclusive Writing. 2p. [Online](#)
- University of Quebec. (2021). Guide to Inclusive Communication. [Online](#)
- Laval University. (2020). Guide for Inclusive Writing at Laval University. [Online](#)
- University of Vienna. (2021). Talking Inclusion into Being: Communication as a Facilitator and Obstructor of an Inclusive Work Environment. [Online](#)
- University of Waterloo. University of Waterloo Inclusive Communications Guide. [Online](#)



In partnership with
Canada