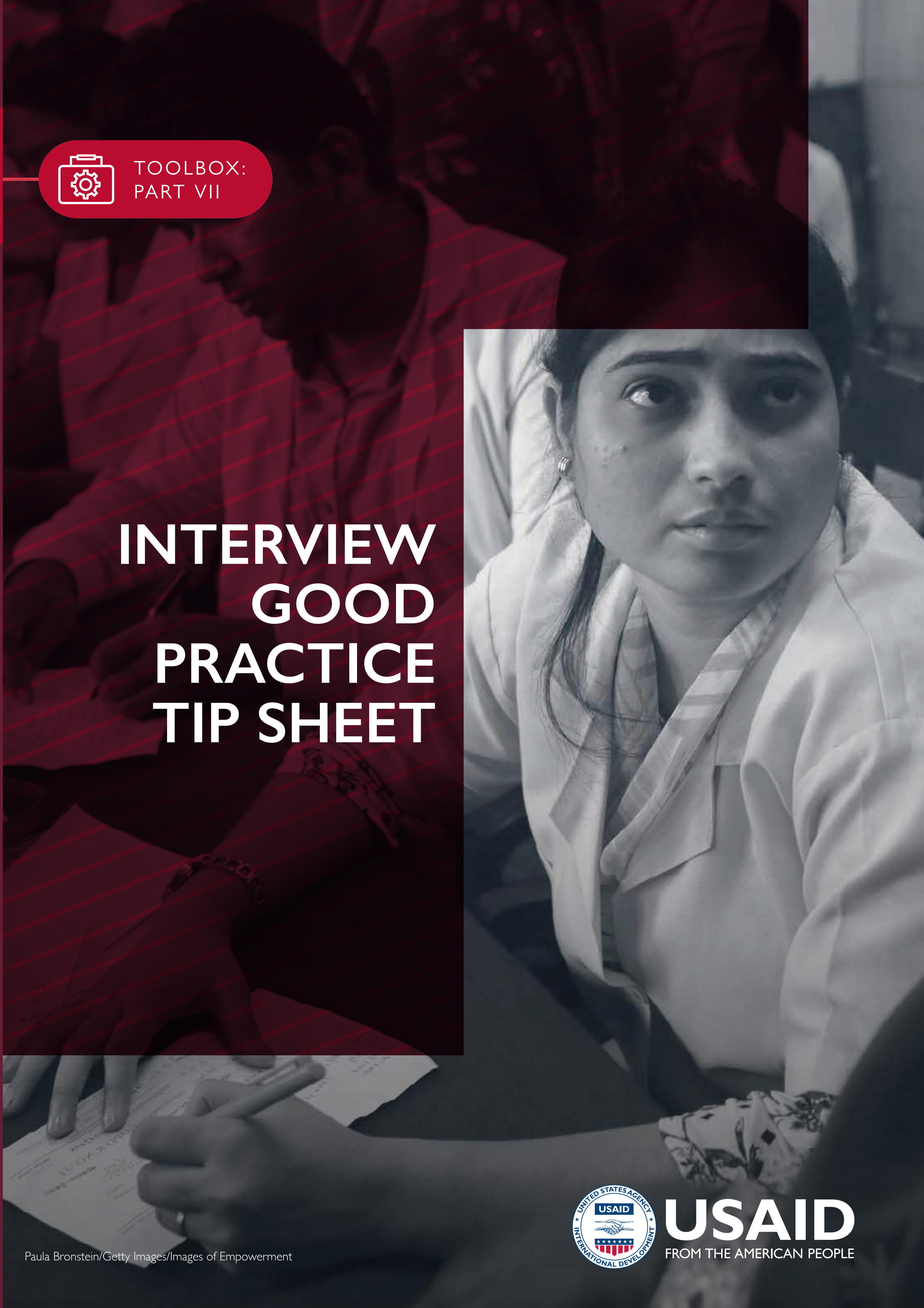
WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY TECHNICAL GUIDE

TOOLBOX:
PART VII



INTERVIEW GOOD PRACTICE TIP SHEET

Paula Bronstein/Getty Images/Images of Empowerment

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Principles of gender equality and female empowerment must guide—not only the content of USAID gender analyses with a women's economic empowerment and gender equality (WEEGE) lens—but also the way the analyses are conducted. (Refer to Box 1, Research Guiding Principles.)

To remain accountable to the individuals engaged in the research, promote a more balanced research relationship and ensure that findings are validated and best reflect the realities of stakeholders, the following guidelines and actions are recommended to be carried out, before, during and after gender analysis interviews.

Before the Interview

- **PLEASE REVIEW**
  the common federal policy for the protection of human subjects, Part 225 of Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations, as well as the Procedures for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research Supported by USAID if vulnerable individuals are being interviewed, particularly children and youth with no legal authority, or if the interview discusses sensitive subject matters. These standards outline the protection of human research subjects and the requirements for use of the institutional review board.

- **ENSURE**
  an equal representation of women and men during the identification and selection of interviewees. Be aware of differences in ethnicity, class, ability and other experiences and backgrounds.

- **PAIR**
  female researchers with female interviewees and male researchers with male interviewees when possible. Relational power dynamics can influence how comfortable an interviewee is when sharing information about certain topics, such as gender-based norms and experiences.

- **MAKE SURE**
  the researcher, or translator if used, can conduct the interview in the interviewee's native language.

- **CONTACT**
  interviewees before the the meeting (by email, phone or in person, depending on access to technology) and explain to them the purpose of the interview and the context in which the findings will be used. Ask them if they are comfortable having the interview recorded, and tell them that the recording will not be shared beyond the research team. It is often easier for interviewees to express their confidentiality preferences in advance, rather than when they are being asked by the researcher face-to-face.

Box 1: Research Guiding Principles

- DO NO HARM
- PRIOR FREE INFORMED CONSENT
- INFORMANT CONFIDENTIALITY
- PROTECTION OF INFORMATION
- NON-DISCRIMINATION AND RESPECT
- ETHICAL DATA COLLECTION
- HOLISTIC PARTICIPATION
- COLLABORATIVE LEARNING
- CULTURAL SENSITIVITY
- INTERSECTIONALITY

Before the Interview (cont.d)

- **SCHEDULE**
  the interview for a date and time that is convenient for the interviewee. The interviewee's time is valuable, so be mindful of the duration of the interview. Ideally, individual key informant interviews (KIIs) should last no longer than one hour. Confirm with the interviewee in advance the duration of the interview and their availability.

- **ASK**
  the interviewee to propose a meeting location for an in-person interview, or to suggest a preferred communication platform in the case of a remote interview. These options should not burden the interviewee with expenses. They should be convenient for the interviewee and provide a comfortable space to openly discuss potentially sensitive topics.

- **ARRIVE EARLY**
  to the interview to prepare. Do not be late: it could be construed as disrespectful by the interviewee.

Don't assume that you know what the interviewee will say (as, for example: "I know this probably doesn't apply to you, but…").

During the Interview

- **USE ACTIVE LISTENING TECHNIQUES:**
  - Summarize long statements
  - Paraphrase to make sure you understand the points being made
  - Use friendly body language, such as nodding, smiling and having an open posture (no crossed arms)

- **USE PROBING QUESTIONS:**
  - Can you tell me more?
  - Can you give me an example?
  - Can you explain this to me?
  - Why was this important?

- **REPEAT**
  a question in different ways as needed—but avoid asking the same question too often, or interviewees may get the impression that their opinions are not believed or trusted.

- **ASK**
  interviewees to describe past events or experiences when they respond to questions, to add detail to a vague opinion.

- **BE PATIENT**
  and polite always. Allow for some silence, giving interviewees time to think about their answers.

During the Interview (cont.d)

- **DON'T ASSUME**
  that you know what the interviewee will say (as, for example: "I know this probably doesn't apply to you, but…").

- **TAKE NOTES**
  during the interview, even when recording the session, to capture key points and themes.

- **OFFER**
  to send the interviewee a copy of the draft report, so they have a chance to comment on the interpretation and analysis before it is finalized. However, make sure to receive USAID's approval to share the draft report before making this offer to the interviewee.

After the Interview

- **ALWAYS THANK**
  interviewees for their time and willingness to participate.

- **LEAVE THE INTERVIEW ROOM**
  as clean as it was when you entered; do not leave any trash or disorder, especially if participants have been given drinks or snacks.

- **REVIEW**
  your notes and pull out or highlight the main themes that stood out.

- **NOTE**
  any points that require clarification or further information, and contact the interviewee with any follow-up questions.

- **SEND**
  the interviewee a copy of the draft report, if requested (and if approved by USAID), and follow up on any adjustments or corrections needed. Interviewee comments may or may not affect or change your analysis, but in either case they can be acknowledged in footnotes or in the validation section of the report.

- **PROTECT**
  the interviewee's data by anonymizing it, storing the data securely, and restricting access only to those staff who need it.

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