The gender data gap is also qualitative: mixing methods to leave no one behind

Dr. Tara Patricia Cookson
Director, Ladysmith
SSHRC Research Fellow, University of British Columbia
Counted and Visible, February 27 2020, New York
The gender data gap is also qualitative
Example 1:
Conditional cash transfers (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
Hundreds of quantitative studies show that CCTs effectively increase school attendance and use of health facilities.

In contrast, qualitative research in multiple countries has shown 1) how CCTs work, and 2) their unintended consequences.

This includes:
- Shadow conditions (‘extra-official’ program requirements)
- Obscuring poor quality of services
- Creating burdens on rural women’s time
Example 2
Law against femicide (SDGs 5, 16)
In 2018 the government of Guatemala registered 756 femicides.

Qualitative data offers additional information about how this number is produced, and what it obscures (Fuentes, forthcoming).

- Enormous amounts of time, unpaid labour and resources are required of survivors to ensure that a victim’s case is ‘followed up’
- This burden is especially high for families of victims of lower socio-economic status (class, race)
- Other injustices remain, e.g. sisters and mothers left to care for a victim’s children with little public support
Qualitative data is critical for:

- Showing not just ‘if’ (outcome) a policy or service works, but also how (process)
- Identifying unintended consequences, positive and negative
- Capturing nuance and complexity, including in impact of diverse populations
- Ensuring the voices of intended beneficiaries have a bearing on the interventions intended to include them
Thank you!

@Ladysmith
tara@ladysmithcollective.com
http://ladysmithcollective.com