



GENDER CAMPUS

THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA:
TOOLS FOR GENDER SENSITIVE
PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

TRAINING MODULE

CORE CONTENT

Must Know on Gender and Development



UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality. Using a rights-based approach, UNIFEM focuses on strengthening women's economic security and rights; combating violence and HIV and AIDS among women and girls; promoting gender equality in governance in both conflict and non-conflict situations. It is the executing agency for the EC/UN Partnership at the country level.

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Training Module: Must Know on Gender and Development

Gender Campus

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OVERVIEW

This Module equips you with the basic tools to adopt a “gender approach to development”.

Unit A “Why?” illustrates the rationale for the promotion of gender equality in development, and gives an overview of the international legal and policy frameworks supporting gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Unit B “What?” familiarises you with the basic concepts and terminology related to the “gender discourse”.

Unit C “How?” gives a brief overview of the methodological approaches to gender equality and illustrates practical tools for gender mainstreaming in development processes.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this Module you will have learned why gender equality is to be regarded as a key element of any development agenda, and an issue cutting across all other social and economic sectors; more specifically you will have:

- gained an historical overview of the legal and political milestones of international action for gender equality and women’s empowerment;
- explored the jargon relating to gender and development;
- appraised some operational approaches to promoting gender equality in development planning.

UNIT A. GENDER EQUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT: WHY?

Over the last 100 years many changes have affected humanity. Developments in health, life expectancy, science, technology, literacy and the political sphere are some of these changes. Women's acquisition of civil and political rights is one of the most pervasive and significant of such changes: women's movements emerged more or less simultaneously all over the world, lobbying for their political and economic identity and for their right to vote, participate in public and political life, receive appropriate education, and ultimately be legally entitled to control over their own lives.

However, the recently-achieved parity in primary education is not reflected at secondary and tertiary levels. The level of women's participation in economic and political decision-making is still much lower than men's. Though women have entered paid employment in great numbers, they are still often concentrated in lower-paid, less protected jobs, and they are over-represented in the informal economy. Gender-based violence still devastates the lives of women and men world-wide. The HIV/AIDS epidemic takes its toll on women and men but is putting the burden of caring for the sick disproportionately on to women and girls. There is as yet no country in the world where women and girls can be said to be fully enjoying their fundamental human rights.

The following paragraphs describe **the international legal and policy** framework that guides action towards gender equality and promotion and protection of the human rights of women, while presenting the rationale for

- ✓ special consideration for the human rights of women and girls,
- ✓ the close linkages between sustainable development, poverty and gender,
- ✓ gender equality as a cross-cutting objective for the ILO Decent Work Agenda.

1. Gender and human rights: the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

The primary reason why gender equality is a global developmental objective is that it is a fundamental human right, which is impaired by the persistence of specific social, cultural and economic biases against women: discrimination is one of the major causes of gender inequality and needs to be eliminated through dedicated legal provisions and measures.

The **Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, is often described as the international bill of women's rights. It provides the basis for realising equality between women and men through ensuring women's equal access to – and equal opportunities in – political and public life, as well as education, health and employment. The Convention makes it clear that gender discrimination is not only about denied opportunities and unequal outcomes, it is first and foremost a violation of the human rights of women. It establishes a comprehensive concept of equality, one that is both formal and substantive.

Formal equality (or equality *de jure*) implies equality of treatment under the law in terms of procedures, and refers to the legal status of women and men in society. From the State's side, this implies a 'negative' obligation, that is the obligation not to violate a citizen's right to vote, express their opinions, receive appropriate education and health assistance and so on. **Substantive equality** (or equality *de facto*), on the other hand, refers to equality of outcomes: it implies a principle of non-discrimination (both direct and indirect), and the possibility of women and men enjoying such rights in practice.

From the State's side, this implies a 'positive' obligation to intervene and provide appropriately targeted policies and programmes aimed at ensuring equal access to public goods such as education, health assistance, natural resources, employment and so on. The importance of CEDAW lies in this unprecedented focus on State obligation.

By ratifying the Convention, States are legally bound to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms, including:

- ✓ incorporation of the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system, abolition of all discriminatory laws, and adoption of appropriate laws prohibiting discrimination against women;
- ✓ establishment of tribunals and other public institutions to ensure effective protection of women against discrimination; *and*
- ✓ ensuring elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organisations or enterprises¹.

The enforcement of the principles contained in the Convention is closely monitored by the CEDAW Committee, which meets in New York under the auspices of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

Countries which have ratified CEDAW are required to produce an initial report one year after ratification and periodic reports every four years thereafter, describing progress achieved on implementation of the Convention and on the overall situation of women in their country. In many countries a 'shadow' report is also produced by NGOs and civil society groups. As of August 2006, 184 countries – over 90% of members of the United Nations – were signatories to the Convention.

2. Gender and sustainable development: the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals

We can say that sustainable development can only be achieved if women and men are both involved equally and equitably in the development process at all levels of decision-making and responsibility and in all spheres of life.

Based on this paradigm, the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action** (PfA), adopted in 1995 during the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, states that gender equality is a necessary and fundamental prerequisite for development and peace, and instrumental to achievement of all other development objectives: "a transformed partnership based on equality between women and men is a condition for people-centered sustainable development²".

In approving the PfA 185 States committed themselves to removing obstacles to the advancement of women in 12 critical areas, namely: 1. Women and Poverty; 2. Education and Training of Women; 3. Women and Health; 4. Violence against Women; 5. Women and Armed Conflict; 6. Women and the Economy; 7. Women in Power and Decision-making; 8. Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; 9. Human Rights of Women; 10. Women and the Media; 11. Women and the Environment; *and* 12. The Girl-child.

¹ More details and the full text of the Convention are available on <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

² Beijing Platform for Action Mission Statement, full text available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html>

National Governments were invited to prepare **National Action Plans** in accordance with the Platform, and the Commission on the Status of Women was mandated by the General Assembly to play a central role in monitoring its implementation through the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW).

Since 1995 nearly three-quarters of all States have established some form of national machinery for the advancement of women, with the task of supporting the mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective into all policy areas, legislation, programmes and projects³.

Also aiming at putting people at the centre of development, the **Millennium Declaration**, adopted in 2000 during the 55th Session of the UN General Assembly, made strong commitments with regards to peace, security and development. It established eight *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs): 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2. Achieve universal primary education; 3. Promote gender equality and empower women; 4. Reduce child mortality; 5. Improve maternal health; 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; 7. Ensure environmental sustainability; 8. Develop a global partnership for development⁴.

The Millennium Declaration acknowledged the cross-cutting relevance of gender equality for the achievement of the established objectives, and explicitly resolved "to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable"⁵. It represents an important step towards an integrated approach to gender and development in which a correctly-focused gender perspective is brought into the mainstream of every discipline and subject area relevant to the achievement of sustainable development.

³ DAW. 2000. Fact Sheet n. 8, based This fact sheet is based on "Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action: Report of the Secretary-General" (E/CN.6/2000/PC/2). United Nations Department of Public Information, DPI/2035/HCMay 2000. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/session/presskit/fs8.htm>

⁴ For more details on the Millennium Development Goals and Indicators, please refer to the official website <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html>.

⁵ Full text of the Millennium Declaration available at <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>



KEY POINTS

- ✓ Gender equality is a **human right**, necessary for the achievement of social justice.
- ✓ **CEDAW** is described as an international bill of women's human rights.
- ✓ By looking at the issue of women's rights as a problem of access, CEDAW greatly emphasises the important distinction between **formal** – or *de jure* – and **substantive** – or *de facto* – **inequalities**.
- ✓ **CEDAW** also provides for the establishment of tribunals and other public institutions for the protection of women from discrimination, and for a monitoring process based on national reports.
- ✓ The **Beijing PfA** aims at placing gender equality at the core of the development agenda, defining it as not only an objective in itself, but also as necessary for achievement of development that is truly sustainable.
- ✓ As called for by the Beijing PfA, the **Millennium Declaration** incorporates gender equality as both an objective *per se*, and a fundamental means of combating poverty and achieving sustainable development.

UNIT B. BASIC CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS: WHAT?

1. What is “gender”?

The term ‘gender’ refers to the range of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that are ascribed to women and men on the basis of their sex⁶. Such a term may seem complex, as it takes into account a wide range of social and cultural factors that may vary in time and space. The distinction between ‘gender’ and ‘sex’ may help us reach a clearer definition of the term. On the one hand, ‘sex’ refers to the genetically determined biological and anatomical characteristics of women and men, which are manifest in their different roles in biological reproduction. On the other hand, ‘gender’ refers to the socially determined roles and responsibilities that are attributed to women and men in a given social and cultural context, by virtue of their biological characteristics. Whereas sex differences are determined before birth and cannot be modified by environmental or cultural influences, gender is an acquired identity that is learned, and which, therefore, changes over time, within and across cultures.



Gender or Sex?

Statements such as “only women can give birth” and “only men can get prostate cancer” refer to the biological characteristics of women and men: they are as true today as they were a decade ago, whether uttered in the east, west, north or south.

On the other hand, the statements “only women can take care of children” or “only men can drive trucks” refer to the socially determined characteristics assigned to women and men: as much as one can regard them as true, they are not universal, and can be agreed or disagreed upon, according to where and when they are uttered and to whom they are directed.

Gender has to do with how our society defines masculinity and femininity, that is, what is appropriate for men and women respectively. Such concepts can be influenced by a variety of factors such as cultural and religious beliefs, myths, proverbs, jokes, popular traditions, the media, advertising, films, family, kin, community, and so on...

⁶ INSTRAW 2004, Glossary of Gender-related Terms and Concepts, <http://www.un-instraw.org/en/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=37&Itemid=76>

Gender is:

- ✓ Socially determined.
- ✓ Modifiable over time, within and across cultures.

Gender is NOT:

- ✓ The same as sex.
- ✓ The same as women.

2. Gender relations

'Gender' is a relational term: it does not refer simply to women or men, but rather to the relationship between them. 'Gender relations' refer to the ways in which society defines rights, responsibilities and identities of men and women in relation to one another. Gender relations are unavoidable – as women and men interact in all spheres of life – and they are therefore reflected in both private (family, marriage etc.) and public (school, labour market, political life etc.) domains. All social relations contain a gender component since they are defined – albeit in differing degrees – by the gender identity of the subjects involved.



Examples of gender relations

A woman can be a wife in relation to the man who is her husband, an employee in relation to a male employer, a daughter in relation to her father, or a pupil in relation to her teacher.

A close examination of gender relations will reveal the existence of a strong **power** component structuring each relationship. Power is distributed along gender lines in a wide range of social practices, and most of the time to the disadvantage of women. Power relations are evident, for example, in the way resources (natural, economic, political, etc.) are divided between women and men. Women are usually more likely to have relatively limited access to economic, natural and social resources, which greatly affects their power to negotiate their position within the household, the community, the labour market or political life.

Besides gender, which relates to humanity as a whole, the social relationships of women and men can be influenced by a nearly infinite range of factors, and diversity can be defined according to just as many criteria, among which one can mention age, class, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability. Individuals can carry multiple identities according to their religious or political affiliation, ethnicity, social status and so forth.

3. Gender roles and the gender division of labour

The concept of '**gender roles**' denotes activities ascribed to women and men on the basis of their perceived differences. Gender roles are socially determined, change over time or by location, and are influenced by the social, cultural and environmental factors characterising a certain society, community or historical period. Gender roles aim at setting boundaries between what is perceived as appropriate for women and for men in the society in relation to both the public and private domains. Such roles are accepted as

'natural' and internalised by girls and boys from a very early age, through the gender models they learn in their social environment. In most societies individuals are strongly pressurised to abide by such models, not only directly by the family or the community, but also indirectly by the role models underlying the social fabric – labour market, public policy, taxation system and so forth - which often act as deterrents to social change.

Both women and men perform multiple roles in their lives in the productive domain – which includes activities related to production of goods for consumption or trade and income-generating activities – and in the reproductive domain, which includes tasks and activities relating to the creation and sustaining of the family and the household.

Nevertheless, in most societies **men's roles** in the productive domain are prominent, whereas their reproductive – or domestic – role is merely subsidiary. Men's productive work usually takes place outside the home, allowing them to perform their roles sequentially rather than simultaneously. In most countries men are more involved in decision-making processes within political activities: they sit in assemblies and councils and direct more government agencies than women, thereby holding greater political power and being able to exert stronger influence on their communities.

Women, on the other hand, usually have to juggle various tasks simultaneously, because of their tendency to perform **multiple roles** within the reproductive and productive spheres (this is often called 'multi-tasking'). Women have been described as often playing a 'triple role'⁷:

- ✓ A **productive role**: even though women across the world do engage in paid work or income-generation activities, they tend to lose out in terms of access to, control over, and benefits from productive resources.
- ✓ A **reproductive role**: reproduction refers to all activities necessary for the maintenance and survival of human life. Examples include bearing, looking after and educating children, cooking food, washing clothes, growing or foraging for food for home use; and a distinction can also be made between mothers and non-mothers.
- ✓ A **community management role**: this term is used to describe activities usually carried out by women – as an extension of their reproductive role – for the benefit of the community, for example provision and maintenance of scarce resources for collective consumption such as water, health care and education. This work is mostly unpaid and voluntary. Community management activities performed by men tend to be more visible and of higher social value (e.g. administration of local justice).

Women's reproductive and community management roles are often perceived as 'natural': as they do not generate income, they are often invisible at national economic level, even though the same tasks do constitute a professional profile. For example, if a mother or other female relation takes care of children during 'working hours', they are not financially rewarded; however, professional 'carers' receive remuneration for the same tasks and are included in economic statistics. The professionalisation of domestic tasks, in its turn, partially contributes to the concentration of women in certain categories (nursing, domestic service etc), which reinforces the stereotype according to which women have a 'natural' flair for domestic work.

The way work is divided between men and women according to their gender roles is usually referred to as the '**gender division of labour**'. This does not necessarily concern only paid employment, but more generally the work, tasks and responsibilities assigned

⁷ Moser C. O. N., 'Gender planning and development: theory, practice and training', London: Routledge, 1993 .

to women and men in their daily lives, and which may, in their turn, also determine certain patterns in the labour market.



The gender division of labour

- ✓ In parts of Asia it is common to see women working as labourers constructing roads, whereas in Europe road construction is generally men's work.
- ✓ In some cultures purchasing items for household use is a man's task, while in others women control household purchases.
- ✓ In some Buddhist cultures, it is considered 'lowly' to handle money. Because of their lower social status, handling money is therefore often women's responsibility.
- ✓ In some Islamic cultures, on the other hand, men may control household finances and purchase all items for household use.

It is often argued that the gender division of labour is a result of biological traits; however, if we notice that in some societies women perform tasks and jobs that in some other societies are traditionally considered as men's jobs, and *vice versa*, we see that division of labour has much to do with what each society perceives as appropriate for women and men.

The labour market (as well as education and training) is heavily segregated along gender lines, with differences between regions and cultures. Also some generalisations about gender divisions in the labour force are quite truthful, as men dominate certain sectors and occupations and women others. For example, there is a concentration of women in services and of men in manufacturing. By sub-sector there is also a gender division: in manufacturing, for instance, there are more women concentrated in the electronics and garments industries, and men in the car industry.

This is called 'occupational segregation', which is commonly split into a horizontal and a vertical dimension. In the context of gender, **horizontal segregation** refers to the extent to which men and women are located in different occupational sectors. Women are usually highly concentrated in sectors that require lesser skills (e.g. agriculture), promise little chance of career advancement (e.g. services) or are care-related (e.g. nursing), which often coincide also with low wages. On the other hand, **vertical segregation** refers to the extent to which men and women occupy different hierarchical positions within the same occupational sector. Within the same sector, women tend to occupy the lower ranks of the hierarchical ladder (and consequently the lower salary ranges). Statistics show that the higher the position, the wider the gender gap, so that on average women hold less than 5% of the top jobs in corporations⁸.

The gender division of labour is not fixed for all time; it changes in response to wider economic, political and social changes. For example, men and women follow different

⁸ ILO, Decent Work for Women. An ILO proposal to accelerate implementation of the Beijing Action Platform, Geneva: ILO Bureau for Gender Equality, 2000.

migration patterns, and engage in different occupations when they migrate. Migration may also result in men taking on tasks that they would not normally consider within their socially-ascribed role, such as having to cook for themselves.

4. Gender discrimination

CEDAW defines discrimination as "...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field". Such a definition adds a crucial aspect to the discussion on discrimination, as it makes it a matter of human rights. Gender discrimination is not only about denied opportunities and unequal outcomes, it is first and foremost a violation of the human rights of women.

Gender discrimination is a difference in treatment based on sex that puts the individual at a disadvantage or limits his or her access to opportunities available to other members of society. Discrimination relates not only to the **difference in treatment** that might prove discriminatory, but also to the **different outcomes** of certain practices that might result in deprivation and limitation. This suggests that the presence of intent is not necessary to identify a situation of discrimination⁹. This allows us to make a very important distinction between direct and indirect discrimination.

Discrimination is **direct** when rules and practices explicitly exclude or give preference to certain individuals solely on the basis of their membership of a particular group.

Indirect discrimination is much harder to detect, as it refers to norms, procedures and practices that appear to be neutral, but whose application disproportionately affects members of certain groups.

The notion of indirect discrimination has at least two significant implications¹⁰. The first is that treating different people in the same way, without taking into account specific circumstances or context of the disadvantaged, may in some cases perpetuate or even deepen existing inequalities instead of reducing them. Practices in the public or private sphere which avoid taking account of gender inequalities as a determinant factor are known as 'gender-blind' or 'gender-neutral': they are not overtly discriminatory, but might still generate inequalities.

The second important implication of the concept of indirect discrimination is that it raises the possibility that discrimination might be **structural**. Structural discrimination is institutionalised in social patterns, institutional structures and legal constructs that reflect and reproduce discriminatory practices and outcomes.¹¹

⁹ Tomei M, *Discrimination and Equality at Work: a Review of the Concepts*, Geneva: International Labour Review, Vol. 142 (2003), No. 4; full text available at http://learning.itsilo.org/gender/_upload/doc/DOC_758.pdf

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ ILO, 2007. Equality at work: Tackling the challenges. Report of the Director-General. Global Report under the follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. International Labour Conference 96th Session 2007 - Report I (B). Geneva.



Gender discrimination – Direct or Indirect?

Job vacancy announcements that overtly discourage applications from married workers are examples of direct discrimination.

In many countries domestic workers are excluded from the protection that the law grants to other employees. As domestic workers tend to comprise mainly women or members of ethnic minorities or migrant workers, their exclusion from entitlements to certain labour rights constitutes a form of indirect discrimination based on sex, race, ethnic origin or nationality

The importance of recognising the **cross-cutting** nature of gender, when considering social factors contributing to the individual's identity, becomes crucial when discussing discrimination: owing to their gender women are more likely to face **multiple discrimination**. Besides constituting discrimination on its own, gender also exacerbates other types of discrimination: for example, a woman from an indigenous group is more vulnerable to discrimination than her male counterpart.



KEY POINTS

- ✓ The term 'Gender relations' refers to the ways in which society defines rights, responsibilities and identities of men and women in relation to one another. They are often also power relations.
- ✓ Besides constituting a separate variable in the definition of social relations, gender cuts across other determinant factors such as age, class, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability.
- ✓ The term 'gender roles' refers to activities ascribed to women and men on the basis of their perceived differences. They are socially determined, and change over time and according to location and culture.
- ✓ Men's primary role is usually productive, whereas women often have multiple roles, both in the productive and unpaid reproductive spheres.
- ✓ The gender division of labour refers to the way in which work is divided between men and women according to their gender roles.
- ✓ Horizontal segregation refers to the extent to which men and women are located in different occupational sectors;
- ✓ Vertical segregation refers to the extent to which men and women occupy different hierarchical positions within the same occupational sector.
- ✓ Direct discrimination refers to those rules and practices that explicitly exclude or give preference to certain individuals solely on the basis of their membership of a particular group.
- ✓ Indirect discrimination refers to norms, procedures and practices that appear to be neutral, but the application of which disproportionately affects members of certain groups.

UNIT C. STRATEGIES FOR THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY: HOW?

Besides constituting a development objective in its own right, gender equality is also “cross-cutting”, or regarded as binding and a prerequisite for achievement of other development objectives. To ensure that gender equality is considered across the board, certain strategies can be adopted. These include specific activities to promote the empowerment of the least advantaged gender (often women), and *mainstreaming* a gender equality perspective into policies, programmes, projects and other initiatives. This is the case for both wider development goals such as poverty reduction, and more specific goals such as achievement of Decent Work for all women and men, universal primary education, or containment of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

1. Gender mainstreaming: concept and tools

The concept of Gender Mainstreaming was officially introduced as a global strategy during the 1995 Beijing Conference, in response to the necessity of incorporating a gender perspective into all development sectors. Since then it has been widely accepted as one of the main strategies for achievement of gender equality, even though there is often much confusion about its nature and purpose.



Gender mainstreaming – a UN definition

“Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated”.

Definition as adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1997. An excerpt of the ECOSOC report on Gender Mainstreaming available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/GMS.PDF>

Gender mainstreaming is therefore less a goal in itself than a strategy for achieving gender equality. It is not about adding on a ‘women’s component’ or even a ‘gender equality component’ to an existing activity, and it involves more than increasing women’s participation. The underlying assumption is that gender inequalities are deeply embedded in the cultural and socio-economic texture of society, and that every field and area subject to legislation, policies, programmes or individual planned measures contains a gender dimension that needs to be taken into consideration. This includes not only sectors where gender disparities are more visible, such as education, health and welfare provision, but also sectors where gender differences are more ‘hidden’, such as macro-economics, urban planning, private and public budgeting, and so on.

Furthermore, the issue of gender equality needs to be addressed at all stages of the project or programme cycle, including planning and design, implementation, monitoring evaluation. Gender mainstreaming provides that the potential roles and concerns of both men and women are taken into consideration in programmes and policies, together with

an analysis of how such planned actions might affect them differently. This provision is nevertheless often misunderstood and interpreted as if respect for the principle of non-discrimination was sufficient to ensure gender equality through a certain policy or legislation. This is not always true: a policy that is not overtly discriminatory towards either sex – which is therefore ‘gender-neutral’ – does not necessarily guarantee equal benefits and outcomes for both sexes. Gender Mainstreaming does not imply that planned actions should be gender-neutral: rather, it aims at making them gender-sensitive, or even “gender-transformative”¹².

Equal treatment does not necessarily lead to equal outcomes, and treating everybody in the same way when significant inequalities already exist might ultimately reinforce and deepen such inequalities. Gender mainstreaming is a long-term strategy that tackles the root causes of existing gender disparities, so as to prevent inequalities being systematically replicated. Nevertheless gender mainstreaming is not sufficient to address existing inequalities in the short term: as we have seen, women are found in a disadvantaged position in many dimensions of public and private life, and addressing contingent inequalities is fundamental to the effectiveness of any gender mainstreaming strategy. This is why **gender-specific measures** aimed at advancing women’s position in society are also necessary, until women are able to participate in – and benefit from – development in full and equal partnership with men.

There are numerous tools, practices and operational approaches that can be used for bringing gender issues into the *mainstream* of all policies and programmes.

1.1. Gender analysis

The term 'gender analysis' is used to describe a systematic approach to examining factors related to gender. It involves a deliberate effort to identify and understand the different roles, relationships, situations, resources, benefits, constraints, needs and interests of men and women in a given socio-cultural context.

Metaphorically, gender analysis involves wearing a 'gender lens' in order to view the given context from the perspective of both women and men. For example a gender analysis of employment patterns in any country would illustrate labour force participation rates, gender differences in paid employment, differential wages in paid work, occupational segregation, unequal shares between women and men in unpaid family work, and unequal shares in both part-time employment and informal employment.

Gender analysis is also aimed at providing detailed information about the respective practical and strategic needs of men and women in a given community. It attempts to answer agency-related questions such as who does or uses what, how and why. The objective is to better understand what women and men do, and their respective resources, constraints, needs and priorities, so that concrete measures for promotion of equality of opportunity and treatment between men and women workers can be implemented.

There exist different frameworks for conducting gender analysis that can variously be used according to the context and purpose of the analysis.

In general, a good gender analysis should include:

¹² A comprehensive list “gender-related” terms to describe the various ways in which an action can or not integrate a gender perspective is available in : Glossary of gender related terms and concepts, in United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW), www.un-instraw.org

- ✓ collection of data which are disaggregated, that is broken down by gender;
- ✓ identification of gender differentials at work and in other spheres, in terms of division of labour and of access to and control over resources and benefits;
- ✓ an understanding of girls', boys', women's and men's needs, constraints and opportunities in relation to required knowledge and skills, conditions of work, social protection, family responsibilities, and economic and political decision-making;
- ✓ identification of constraints and opportunities in the wider environment (laws, attitudes);
- ✓ review of the capacities of existing institutions and mechanisms to reach out equally to girls, boys, women and men, and to promote gender equality¹³.

1.2. Sex-disaggregated data¹⁴

To best serve their various purposes, including those of informing policy decisions, monitoring progress towards achievement of equitable development goals, and integration of gender analysis, **statistics** need to reflect reality as closely as possible. This means that they should cover relevant facets of all actors in the context examined and describe their different types of situation in sufficient detail.

Sex-disaggregated data contribute to identifying differences and similarities that exist between men and women in relation to their contributions, their conditions of work and of life generally, in activities, legislation, policies or programmes, and more specifically with respect to (a) the activities they carry out and their degree of involvement in them, (b) their access to and control over resources and benefits, and (c) their needs, constraints and opportunities.

Statistics which mainstream or "integrate" gender issues will:

- ✓ cover topics that help explain the differences and similarities that exist between men and women in society, in the labour market, within the household and in political life;
- ✓ take account of the different contributions, conditions, benefits and constraints of men and women. They will do so in at least two ways:
 - (a) by identifying the extent to which women and men are in different or similar situations with respect to education, work and health: how far they pursue different careers; work in different activities with different intensities; suffer from different illnesses; and exhibit different behaviour and perceptions in relation to their social and work situation, which to a large extent are dictated by their traditional roles as house-workers and breadwinners; and
 - (b) by taking these differences into account when designing instruments, collecting data and presenting results.

In order to produce statistics which incorporate gender issues fully, it is necessary:

¹³ Haspels N., ILO Brief: Promotion of Gender Equality through Gender Mainstreaming, ILO 2002, available at <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/docs/RES/236/F1715121525/first%20workshop%20hand-out.doc>

¹⁴ Adapted from: ITC/ILO, 2006, *Module on Statistical Tools*. Gender Campus, Turin.

- ✓ that there be a **political will** to do so at all levels in the organisational planning and execution of statistical data collection, backed up by evidence that introducing gender into statistics actually improves their quality and utility;
- ✓ that a team of persons be set up to identify gender issues in the area of statistics that they are addressing (education, health, labour, etc.);
- ✓ that an increased awareness of all persons involved with the data collection exercise is generated, at all levels from the director of the statistical institute down to the interviewer, and rightly so because the process of gender mainstreaming affects all stages of the data collection exercise.

1.3. Gender Budgeting

Gender budgeting refer to a variety of processes and tools which attempt to assess the use of budgets in terms of differential impact on women and men and on different groups of women and men.

Gender budgets are not separate budgets for women. Gender responsive budgeting means translating legal, policy and programme commitments to gender equality into budgetary commitments.

Gender budgeting may include:

- ✓ disaggregating the impact of expenditures across all sectors and services by sex,
- ✓ analysis of gender-specific allocations (e.g. special programmes targeting women, men, girls or boys),
- ✓ review of equal opportunities policies and allocations, for example within government services.

1.4. Gender Audit

Gender audit is a review or assessment of an organisation's performance in promoting gender equality. It considers whether internal practices and related support systems for gender mainstreaming are effective and reinforce each other, and whether they are being followed; monitors and assesses the relative progress made in gender mainstreaming; establishes a baseline; identifies critical gaps and challenges; recommends ways of addressing them and suggests new and more effective strategies; and documents good practice for achieving gender equality.

The gender audit belongs to the category of "quality audits", also known as social audits, that establish whether internal arrangements are effective and reinforce each other, whether the arrangements and their related rules are being followed, and how to improve and innovate in this area.

A **participatory** gender audit is a self-assessment exercise; it is a process that facilitates organisational learning at all levels of the organisation as to how to implement gender mainstreaming strategies effectively in its policies, programmes and structures. Thus it is a tool that contributes to catalysing **institutional change**.

2. Building capacity for gender mainstreaming

Gender inequalities are often deeply embedded in organisational cultures, structures, mechanisms and processes. Changing attitudes and modifying gender-negative practices within any organisation is crucial for creating an environment conducive to gender equality in the long run. Bureaucratic organisations in particular are more resistant to changing the existing status quo, especially as far as gender roles are concerned. However, a wide consensus has developed on the cost-effectiveness of creating gender-equitable organisational environments.

Capacity-building strategies for institutional may include any of the following:

- ✓ building institutional capacity to assess programmes, policies, performance, and procedures from a gender perspective;
- ✓ providing general and thematic gender analysis training for programme staff;
- ✓ undertaking organisational gender 'audits' to identify areas of good practice and obstacles to equality initiatives;
- ✓ organising dialogue fora, roundtables and briefings for staff on gender issues relevant to their work;
- ✓ promoting resource material collection, website creation, or 'hotlines' that help staff access needed background material on gender and women's empowerment;
- ✓ developing guidelines and checklists that help staff determine if they are supporting women's empowerment or gender mainstreaming strategies;
- ✓ assisting those specifically assigned to lobbying for gender equality - for example gender units and focal points - in developing skills in advocacy, negotiation and other necessary 'change agent' qualities;
- ✓ developing gender equality action plans at departmental and organisational levels¹⁵.

Effective institutional change involves ensuring that women as well as men are given a voice in shaping the nature and characteristics of the change. Consultations with female and male employees on their concerns and perceived constraints are therefore good practice in an effective mainstreaming strategy. Most important, equal participation in decision-making processes within the organisational structure is necessary; organisational structures, particularly in the private sector, are often male-dominated, especially at decision-making levels, and efforts to create a women-friendly environment will not work unless both women and men contribute equally to creating it, as the point of view of one or a few women is not necessarily representative of that of *all* women.

3. Gender-specific actions

Specific measures may be needed to address existing gender inequalities in a given context. They consist of **equal opportunities policies**, which refer to the range of

¹⁵ Please refer to the UN Good Practices in Gender Mainstreaming and Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action database at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/resources/goodpractices/>

actions that can be taken to facilitate equal access for women and men to employment, education, training, career advancement schemes and so on. This includes national legislation and policies regulating working hours, parental leave, child-care provision, services for workers with family responsibilities, as well as 'family-friendly' corporate policies in the same direction: day-care facilities, flexible working hours and working modalities (part-time, job-sharing, tele-working etc.), and, most importantly, equal opportunities provision in recruitment procedures and career development schemes.

Specific measures normally focus on improving the conditions of disadvantaged groups, or "levelling the playing field" which is normally not flat. They should be adopted in parallel with broader gender mainstreaming, as these strategies are perfectly compatible and complementary.

Women-specific activities are interventions specifically targeted at girls and women whenever cultural norms and values influence women's participation in certain activities. For example, in the employment field such activities may involve:

- ✓ improving working conditions in sectors, industries and occupations where girls and women are found to be prevalent (e.g. agricultural and informal sector work, home work, domestic work, sex work, leather and garments industries),
- ✓ boosting the presence of women and girls in sectors where they are virtually absent (male-dominated industries and occupations or executive levels).

In the field of education and training, women-specific actions may be appropriate when women have lower average levels of education compared to men, or when training in specific skills is required to enable them to participate in activities in equal partnership with men. Furthermore, women-specific actions may also involve concerns relating to their reproductive role in terms of health and social protection (teenage pregnancies, reproductive health, maternity protection, etc.).

Men-specific activities are also possible – even though this is often overlooked, inputs from both women and men are necessary to achieve the full partnership necessary for achievement of gender equality. Raising men's awareness of gender issues and their implications is particularly important, as it is often men that hold power and authority within organisations and institutions, and their commitment to eradication of gender disparities becomes fundamental. Examples of specific actions targeting men could be promotion of dialogue between men on domestic violence or on issues typically related to men's health. Educational programmes aimed at discouraging adolescent boys from becoming involved in gangs is another example.

Positive or affirmative measures, sometimes also referred to as positive discrimination, are another form of gender-specific intervention. They are necessary temporary measures designed to eliminate or prevent direct and indirect discrimination, or to compensate for existing disadvantages. Generally they consist of establishing targets or reserving quotas for an underrepresented group so as to generate equal participation in certain activities. This may be applied to smaller or larger-scale projects and programmes in the field of education, employment or political participation. For example, quotas may be established in party lists for political elections, in formal education and training programmes, and in private and public organisational structures.



Affirmative action: components and measures

Affirmative action programmes should have four components:

1. specific numerical targets for the group covered by the programme,
2. specific measures to redress the causes of the discrimination noted,
3. a timetable for attaining the set objectives and for applying the necessary measures,
4. supervisory machinery to monitor progress, assess difficulties and make adjustments.

Affirmative action programmes are most effective when applied following agreement between the government and the institutions and civil society concerned. They should be used in conjunction with awareness-raising programmes aimed at changing mentalities and attitudes.

The kind of measures that can be used varies considerably. They can include corrective and promotional activities. Below are some suggestions for affirmative action:

1. Actively encourage the participation of women in various occupations and at higher levels of responsibility.
2. Encourage employers to recruit and promote women in sectors, occupations and grades where they are under-represented.
3. Promote participation of women in bodies taking decisions on employment.
4. Publish widely, for the public at large, various examples of positive action.
5. Support national equal opportunities committees and organisations which can promote, implement, monitor and evaluate affirmative actions.
6. Suggest that employers and workers develop their own guidelines, principles, and codes of practice for affirmative action.
7. Request firms that are awarded public contracts to adopt and implement affirmative action programmes for their female employees.

Source: ILO 1995

4. Empowerment approaches

Empowerment is concerned with bottom-up development, where people decide themselves the type of 'development' they require, as opposed to top-down planning, where decisions have already been made before they reach the people affected. More simply, empowerment implies increased control over one's life, for example over one's time availability and organisation.

In discussing women's and men's empowerment it must be recognised that empowerment cannot be imposed, it has to be internalised. For example, women themselves must be aware of and define their problems in terms, for example, of 'decent' work, rather than outsiders defining them and developing strategies accordingly, even though outsiders can often facilitate such a process and provide useful inputs.

As empowering literally mean 'to give power to', classifying power is crucial when designing empowerment interventions. Power may result from a person's position such as his or her legal or formalised position at work. Women or men may have power because they are considered 'expert' at their job. They may also be powerful because of their status (supervisory), their personality, or their popularity. Other sources of power may come from an individual's position within their family, kin or tribe or from their political affiliation. Below is a possible three-fold way of classifying power¹⁶:

1. power to compel someone to do something,
2. power to make someone do something *even though* they are unaware that you have influenced them to do it,
3. power to put something on the agenda or keep an issue off the agenda.

Within the gender discourse, the dimensions of power listed above might seem as somehow very 'advanced'. In this respect it is important to analyse women's power over their own life choices, first and foremost over their bodies, in terms of both their reproductive choices and body integrity, and also over the investment of their human capital – skills, knowledge and education opportunities – and their possibility of engaging in paid employment. The analysis at this point should move on to investigating the extent to which women's power over themselves is influenced by someone else's power, and in this regard the three dimensions listed above might prove useful.

An empowerment approach requires bottom-up development. The empowerment of women may emerge through collective organisation and membership of women's groups or workers' organisations, or through a focus on political mobilisation, training and awareness-raising. Hence, to foster empowerment the creation of women's opportunities for organising themselves for promotion of their own interests is often suggested. Women's businesses and self-employment situations will often be empowering. Strategies for fostering women's own empowerment must be emphasised early in the education system in order to counteract stereotypes and personal fears. Increasing women's capacity, skills and confidence to work in non-traditional employment may also foster empowerment.

¹⁶ Lukes, Steven, 1974. *Power: A Radical View*, London: Macmillan.



KEY POINTS

- ✓ **Gender mainstreaming** is a strategy for ensuring that the different needs, views and perceptions of women and men, girls and boys are taken into account in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development.
- ✓ **Gender-specific actions** and **gender mainstreaming** can run in parallel as the two approaches are perfectly compatible and complementary.
- ✓ **Institutional change** through gender mainstreaming is a gradual, incremental process of change in mainstream thinking, law and policy making, and programming at all levels;
- ✓ **Sex-disaggregated data** and **gender analysis and planning**, including budgetary processes, are some of the fundamental tools for gender mainstreaming;
- ✓ The **ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming** is to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.