

PRESIDIUM MODEL UN CONFERENCE 2017

“Addressing Systematic Gender Inequalities with special emphasis on

A) Gender Sensitive Infrastructure and Right to Property B) Right to Decent Work and Economic Growth C) Right to Reproductive Health”



UNITED NATIONS WOMEN

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Introduction

Over many decades, the UN has made significant progress in advancing gender equality, including through landmark agreements such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Gender equality is not only a basic human right, but its achievement has enormous socio-economic ramifications.

Empowering women fuels thriving economies, spurring productivity and growth. Yet gender inequalities remain deeply entrenched in every society. Women lack access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps. They are too often denied access to basic education and health care. Women in all parts of the world suffer violence and discrimination. They are under-represented in political and economic decision-making processes.

For many years, the UN has faced serious challenges in its efforts to promote gender equality globally, including inadequate funding and no single recognized driver to direct UN activities on gender equality issues. UN Women was created to address such challenges. It will be a dynamic and strong champion for women and girls, providing them with a powerful voice at the global, regional and local levels. Grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the UN Charter, UN Women, among other issues, works for the:

- elimination of discrimination against women and girls;
- empowerment of women; and
- achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

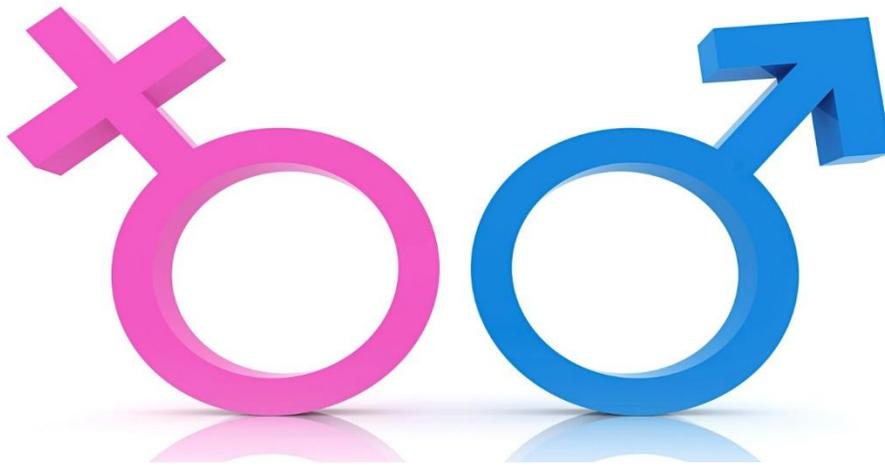
The agenda chosen by the Executive Board aims to work on the issues not as a whole but at particular levels such as Right to Property, Right to Reproductive Health and Right to Decent work and Economic Growth. The reason we have chosen a limited scope of the agenda is because we want you all to explore the depth of issue and not only the diversity of this issue. Though these individual topics have their own diversity but we feel choosing a limited scope of agenda is better than keeping a very wide agenda. The streamlining of agenda in our view will increase efficiency and facilitate consensus making and productivity.

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What is Gender?

Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed. While most people are born either male or female, they are taught appropriate norms and behaviours – including how they should interact with others of the same or opposite sex within households, communities and work places. When individuals or groups do not “fit” established gender norms they often face stigma, discriminatory practices or social exclusion – all of which adversely affect health. It is important to be sensitive to different identities that do not necessarily fit into binary male or female sex categories.



Gender norms, roles and relations influence people’s susceptibility to different health conditions and diseases and affect their enjoyment of good mental, physical health and wellbeing. They also have a bearing on people’s access to and uptake of health services and on the health outcomes they experience throughout the life-course.

The terms sex and gender are commonly used interchangeably, however, it is important to understand that there is a significant difference between the implications and usage of the two terms. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), ‘gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female at a particular point in time’ Gender roles are learned behaviours that a society or community assigns to women, men, girls and boys based on their gender. Such roles tend to influence which activities, tasks and responsibilities are perceived to be female and male. More specifically, these roles influence the relationship between women, men, girls and boys. Social and cultural understanding of gender varies throughout societies and time. On the other hand, sex is biologically determined and ‘refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male’ (as defined by WHO) and these characteristics are considered as being universally similar and is constant.

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Important terms

Gender analysis

Gender analysis identifies, assesses and informs actions to address inequality that come from: 1) different gender norms, roles and relations; 2) unequal power relations between and among groups of men and women, and 3) the interaction of contextual factors with gender such as sexual orientation, ethnicity, education or employment status.

Gender based division of labour

Refers to where, how and under what conditions women and men work (for or without pay) based on gender norms and roles.

Gender blind

Ignores gender norms, roles and relations and very often reinforces gender-based discrimination. By ignoring differences in opportunities and resource allocation for women and men, such policies are often assumed to be “fair” as they claim to treat everyone the same.

Gender equality

Refers to equal chances or opportunities for groups of women and men to access and control social, economic and political resources, including protection under the law (such as health services, education and voting rights). It is also known as equality of opportunity – or formal equality. Gender equality is often used interchangeably with gender equity, but the two refer to different, complementary strategies that are needed to reduce gender-based health inequities.

Gender equality in health

Women and men have equal conditions to realize their full rights and potential to be healthy, contribute to health development and benefit from the results. Achieving gender equality will require specific measures designed to support groups of people with limited access to such goods and resources.

Gender equity

More than formal equality of opportunity, gender equity refers to the different needs, preferences and interests of women and men. This may mean that different treatment is needed to ensure equality of opportunity. This is often referred to as substantive equality (or equality of results) and requires considering the realities of women’s and men’s lives. Gender equity is often used interchangeably with gender equality, but the two refer to different, complementary strategies that are needed to reduce gender-based health inequities.

Gender equity in health

Refers to a process of being fair to women and men with the objective of reducing unjust and avoidable inequality between women and men in health status, access to health services and their contributions to the health workforce.

Gender mainstreaming

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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.

Gender norms

Refer to beliefs about women and men, boys and girls that are passed from generation to generation through the process of socialization. They change over time and differ in different cultures and populations. Gender norms lead to inequality if they reinforce: a) mistreatment of one group or sex over the other; b) differences in power and opportunities.

Gender relations

Refers to social relations between and among women and men that are based on gender norms and roles. Gender relations often create to hierarchies between and among groups of men and women that can lead to unequal power relations, disadvantaging one group over another.

Gender responsive

A policy or programme that considers gender norms, roles and inequality with measures taken to actively reduce their harmful effects.

Gender roles

Refers to what males and females are expected to do (in the household, community and workplace) in a given society.

Gender specific

Considers women's and men's specific needs and intentionally targets and benefits a specific group of women or men to achieve certain policy or programme goals or meet certain needs. Such policies often make it easier for women and men to fulfil duties that are ascribed to them based on their gender roles, but do not address underlying causes of gender differences.

Gender stereotypes

Images, beliefs, attitudes or assumptions about certain groups of women and men. Stereotypes are usually negative and based on assumed gender norms, roles and relations.

Gender sensitive

Indicates gender awareness, although no remedial action is developed.

Gender transformative

Addresses the causes of gender-based health inequities by including ways to transform harmful gender norms, roles and relations. The objective of such programmes is often to promote gender equality and foster progressive changes in power relationships between women and men.

Gender unequal

Perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing unbalanced norms, roles and relations and often leads to one sex enjoying more rights or opportunities than the other.

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Gender Inequality



Gender equality seeks to promote the basic and universally recognised civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. Gender equality means being free to act outside the parameters of the inscribed gender roles, that is, the stereotypical roles usually associated with women, men, girls and boys, and the prejudice associated with such roles.

The European Commission (1998) defines gender equality as, ‘The concept meaning that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles; that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally’ Furthermore, gender equality refers to ‘equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life’ and means that, ‘the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally’. Therefore, ‘equality between men and women exists when both sexes are able to share equally in the

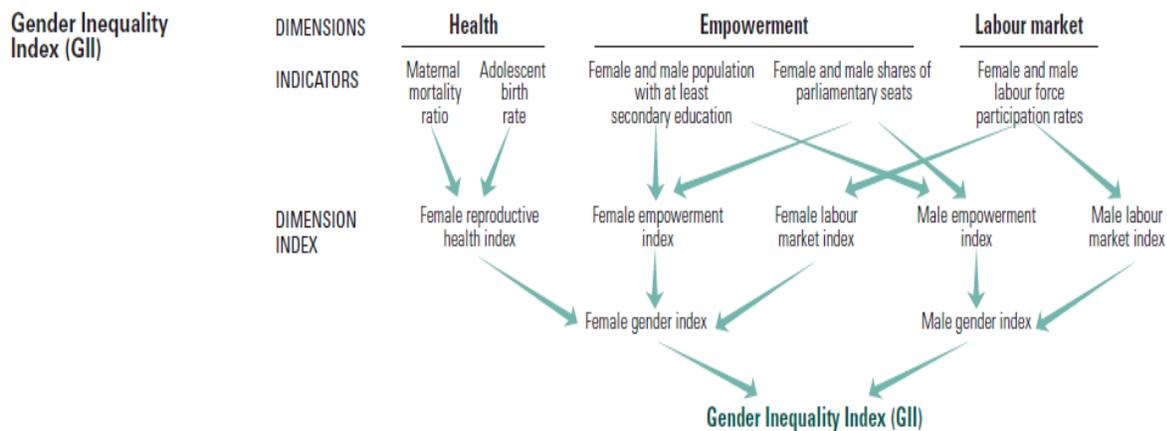
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distribution of power and influence’. Gender equality strives to create a society that will function equally for women, men, girls and boys.

Note: Some countries have a different definition of equality. So for them inequality differs. Please research upon what definition does your country follows. You may even discuss these differences in committee.

Gender Inequality Index (GII)



Gender inequality remains a major barrier to human development. Girls and women have made major strides since 1990, but they have not yet gained gender equity. The disadvantages facing women and girls are a major source of inequality. All too often, women and girls are discriminated against in health, education, political representation, labour market, etc.—with negative consequences for development of their capabilities and their freedom of choice.

The GII is an inequality index. It measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development—reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status, expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male

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populations aged 15 years and older. The GII is built on the same framework as the IHDI—to better expose differences in the distribution of achievements between women and men. It measures the human development costs of gender inequality. Thus the higher the GII value the more disparities between females and males and the more loss to human development.

The GII sheds new light on the position of women in 159 countries; it yields insights in gender gaps in major areas of human development. The component indicators highlight areas in need of critical policy intervention and it stimulates proactive thinking and public policy to overcome systematic disadvantages of women.

SOURCES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/faq-page/gender-inequality-index-gii> - FAQs on Gender Equality

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/data> -Data on Gender inequality can be accessed from here.

Gender Mainstreaming

‘Gender Mainstreaming is the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making’.

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The ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality. It is a strategy which seeks to integrate the concerns and experiences of women, men, girls and boys into any planned action, by assessing the implications which might affect the way women and men and girls and boys might experience any particular action. Therefore, gender mainstreaming is about incorporating a gender perspective into all planned policies, activities and projects, before decisions are taken, that is, during the design and implementation stages and then monitoring and evaluating the effects of incorporating such a strategy.

Incorporating a gender perspective into policies means that both women, men, girls and boys are not considered as a homogenous group, but as distinct groups with differing needs, characteristics and behaviors that require different approaches. Gender mainstreaming ensures that women, men, girls and boys benefit from a more equal society built on the recognition of differences, which addresses and values individual and group needs.

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In 1995, during the preparations for the Beijing Conference, the Council of Europe decided to set up the Group of Specialists on mainstreaming, which developed the present conceptual framework and methodology for gender mainstreaming. In line with EU policy, the Maltese government is committed towards adopting gender mainstreaming as a strategic tool to bring about gender equality. Through the access to EU structural funds, various projects have been designed and implemented by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) Malta to implement gender equality programmes. NCPE has worked on various projects since its inception in 2004, building vast expertise both as a lead partner and as a trans-national partner of EU co-funded projects.