

CHAPTER TWO

KEY GENDER CONCEPTS



In this chapter the focus is on providing an overview of key concepts that form the basis for understanding gender equality issues. The concepts are signposts, and offer insights into gender relations. How they are used is dependent on the policy, project and programme context of the organisation using them. The key concepts discussed in this chapter are:-

- Sex and gender, and their application in different settings.
- Gender division of labour.
- Gender stereotyping.
- Equality of opportunities versus equality of outcomes.



Exercise 1: The difference between sex and gender

Each participant will be given cards with different roles, activities and occupations. These cards will be placed by the participants on either of the two areas of a wall - boy/man and girl/woman, as they think appropriate.

Boy/Man	Girl/Woman

1) Now try swapping the cards. Which of the cards can be swapped?

2) Which cannot?

3) Which of the roles played by the woman in the first image below has to do with her sex and which with her gender? What does the second image reveal about gender roles?



Exercise 2: Sex and gender in the workplace

Now consider the following common work place considerations. Which of the functions/issues below are associated with sex or gender? Note the highlighted function/issue, which will guide you as to whether it's a sex or gender issue.

Function/issue	Sex	Gender
Breastfeeding times for employees		
Cleaning duties by support staff		
Guard duties by support staff		
Maternity leave		
Catering duties by support staff		
Management roles and responsibilities of new projects		
Paternity leave		
Leadership in the development of training curricula		
Provision of sanitary ware facilities in all Secretariat toilets		



Exercise 3: Sex and gender in policy⁸

1. Consider the following policy issues. Tick whether you think the issues is about sex or gender.

Issue	Sex	Gender
Women in most SADC countries are barred from boxing, serving in combat roles in the military and from mining activities.		
Research reveals that secondary school teachers in the sciences are providing male students more positive reinforcement than in the case of female students.		
Research has shown that many teenage girls miss school a number of days a year because schools provide inadequate sanitary facilities		
Men predominate in all leadership positions in society- in cabinet, the legislature local government, the judiciary, the media etc.		
Research reveals that there women are dying during child birth at very high rates (maternal mortality) due to preventable complications.		
Young girls who become pregnant are invariably forced to leave school while the young men who impregnate them complete their studies.		
A SADC country is considering legalising sex work ahead of Soccer 2010.		

2. As a team within the Secretariat responsible for advising Member States on the course of action to take, how would you advise on each issue?

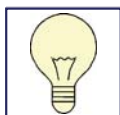
3. From this exercise, how would you define the difference between sex and gender?



Notes: Most of the elements that are identified with women and men (roles, behaviours) are not fixed biologically. They are not natural or universal but socially and culturally determined; they are shaped by different societal and cultural values.

⁸ Adapted from SADC GU (2004) Report on the Gender Training Workshop for the Directorate of Social, Human Development and Special Programmes

- What is constructed or learned can be deconstructed and unlearned. Gender identities can change gradually over time due to political, economic and broader cultural changes, or a change can be sudden during periods of upheaval.
- Change can threaten the status quo in society, and in the context of male domination, any change that opens up opportunities for women can be strongly resisted by men, and also by women who want to protect the status quo. If there is backlash as a result of the new opportunities for change, gains made in advancing women's empowerment can be lost.
- Gender as a concept seeks to transform societal norms that mediate women and men's lives, so it can be contested by both women and men and also threaten their current identities at a deep level.⁹



Definitions

Gender - describes the socially constructed differences between women and men, which can change over time and which vary within a given society from one society to the next. Our gender identity determines how we are perceived and how we are expected to behave as women and men. Thus while the fact that women give birth to children is biologically determined, the fact that they perform the majority of household chores, predominate in the informal survivalist sector and in the lower paid "care" work in the formal sector are all socially constructed. What is important to stress is that gender relations are dynamic. They are shaped through the history of social relations and interactions. They vary over time and place and between different groups of people. They may also be impacted by other factors, such as race, class, ethnicity and disability.

Gender relations - describes the social relationships between women and men. These are socially constituted and do not derive from biology. Biological differences are permanent- with the rare exception of those who undergo sex changes. Gender relations are dynamic. They are shaped through the history of social relations and interactions. They vary over time and place and between different groups of people. They may also be impacted by other factors, such as race, class, ethnicity and disability.

Sex describes the biological difference between women and women. Men produce sperm; women become pregnant, bear and breastfeed children.

⁹Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth of Learning (2004) The GMS Toolkit Trainer's Guide 4



Exercise 4: Gender division of labour

Use the table provided below to highlight different types and reproductive, productive, community work and personality traits, and place them in the appropriate place on the table of the biologically determined and socially determined roles of men and women.

Sex/Gender role	Woman	Man
Reproductive Work		
Productive Work		
Home		
Work Place		
Community Work		
Personality Traits		

Questions

1. Is this a “natural” division of labour?

2. If not, what is wrong with the assumptions that underpin the gender division of labour?

3. What are the economic differences between the roles assigned to men and those assigned to women?

4. How do they lead to discrimination?



Notes:

Generally women and men are allotted different work roles. These work roles tend to be discriminatory, with women largely confined to the low status, low paid or unpaid jobs whilst men usually have higher paying and high status jobs. There is thus a predominance of women in unpaid domestic work and subsistence food production, whilst men dominate in waged employment cash crop production.

Some key points:

- The connection between women's generally low status and unpaid labour locks them into a vicious cycle. This requires a deliberate effort to alter the gender division of labour and the values ascribed to it.
- By virtue of this perspective women's economic activity is under represented in national accounting, and this reinforces the perception, borne out of gender bias, that men do the majority of the world's work.
- The gender division of labour must be analysed in policy and planning, because failure to do this can result in women's work load increasing in the development process. It is imperative that women's reproductive and other unpaid work, and work in the informal sector, must be recognised.
- Women's productive work is in most cases seen as an extension of their reproductive work, and is largely undervalued. An example is women's care work, which is seen as an extension of their reproductive function, and is therefore not valued or well remunerated.
- The gender division of labour has a significant impact in discriminating against women and perpetuating women's oppression. The solution does not lie in women and men swapping jobs necessarily, but in equally valuing men and women's work, and providing equal opportunities to training, education and types of work. At the same time there is need to ensure shared responsibility, with men taking on more work in the reproductive sphere, for example in the household and care work.

Source: Commonwealth Secretariat and Commonwealth of Learning (2004) The GMS Toolkit



Definitions

Reproductive work comprises the child bearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks ordinarily undertaken by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. It includes not only biological reproduction but also the maintenance of the work force (husband and working children) and the future workforce (infants and school going children)

Productive work comprises work done by both women and men for payment in cash or kind. It includes both market place production with an exchange value, and subsistence/home production with an actual use value, but also a potential exchange value. For women in agricultural production, for example, this includes work as independent farmers, peasant’s wives and wagedworkers.

Community managing comprises activities undertaken by women primarily at the community level, as an extension of their reproductive role. This is to ensure the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption, such as water, health care and education. It is voluntary unpaid work, undertaken in free time.

Community politics: In contrast to community managing, community politics comprises activities undertaken by men at the community level organising at the formal political level. It is usually paid work, either directly or indirectly, through wages or increases in status and power.

Source: Gender Planning and Development: Theory Practice and Training, Caroline O.N. Moser



Exercise 5: The unwaged work of women

Think for a moment about the household you come from, and the principal male/female figure in this household. Draw up a simple time use sheet for a typical working day for these two individuals as follows:

	Man	Woman
6 am - 8 am		
8 am- 5 pm		
5pm- 8pm		
8pm- 10pm		
TOTAL HOURS OF WORK		

Questions

1) Who works longer hours? Why?

2) Which of the above work is paid?

3) Which of the above time is unpaid?

4) What insights does the cartoon overleaf add to your understanding of women and work?



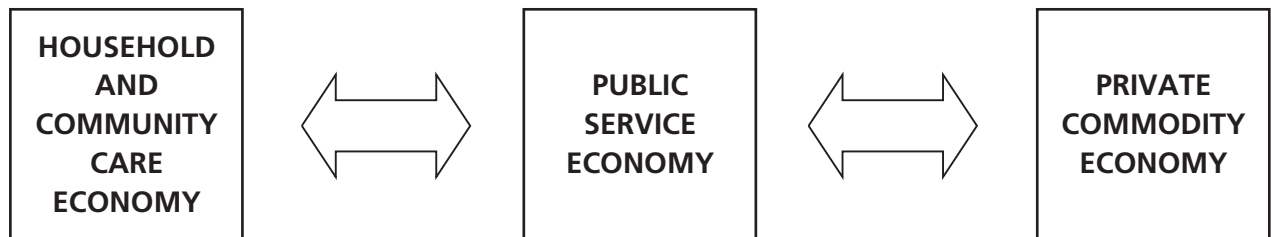
Source: The Oxfam Gender Training Manual ©Oxfam UK and Ireland 1994

5. What do you understand by the term "the unwaged work of women"?



Fact Sheet 1: Making care work count

According to traditional economics, gross domestic product (GDP) is made up of two sectors: the private and the public. Feminist economists argue that there is a third sector: the “care economy” - or the unpaid reproductive and domestic work of women including caring for the aged and the sick; as well as voluntary community services. The UNDP’s 1995 Human Development Report estimated that women’s unpaid work is equivalent to some \$11 trillion annually.



In sub-Saharan Africa an estimated 4.3 million people need AIDS home-based care, but only 12 percent receive it. Approximately 90 percent of AIDS care takes place in the home and is mostly done by women and girls. Because this work is unpaid, it is often taken for granted and undervalued. Caring for someone with AIDS can increase the workload of a family caretaker by one third.

Recent experiments have shown that it is possible to incorporate gender into marco modelling. Time studies are underway in a number of countries to obtain a clearer picture of the unpaid labour of women. Some experiments have been conducted on incorporating women’s work into national accounts (for example in Canada), but so far these have been placed in parallel accounts. Very little quantitative research and information is available in the closely related area of the “informal sector” - the survivalist activities that the poor, and especially women, engage in, often circumventing cumbersome and costly regulations, in order to make a living.

This field of inquiry intensified in the eighties as a result of mounting evidence that the cuts in social spending as a result of the need to reduce budget deficits under structural adjustment were leading to disproportionately negative effects on women, who bore the brunt of new user fees and declines in subsidies in areas such as education and health. Retrenchments also led to an increase in the number of those making a living in the “informal sector” - an area in which women predominate. Such criticism prompted moves to ensure that social spending is protected in structural adjustment programmes.

Within the formal economy, women tend to take jobs that are of a care nature- domestic work, nursing, clerical and secretarial work, nursery school and primary school teaching. Men tend to take jobs that are of a “control” nature- management, finance, defence and security, politics etc. Society assigns very different values to these types of work. In general the professions in which men predominate are much more highly paid than those in which women predominate. This explains why, in just about every part of the world, women’s wages in the formal sector are about sixty percent those of men, not because of formal discrimination, but because women are socialized into taking jobs that are not rewarded in the same way as the jobs that men perform.

With the recent wide-scale trade liberalization measures being undertaken both by countries undergoing structural adjustment and those that are not, the debate is shifting towards the gendered impact of

globalisation. Rapid export led growth, often entailing the establishment of Export Processing Zones (EPZs), has led to job creation for women in many developing countries because of the nature of the industries (predominantly textiles and clothing) and the fact that women’s labour is cheaper. Some 80 percent of employees in EPZs are women.

In Latin America and Asia, this phenomenon has raised the living standards of women and is leading to shifts in the sharing of responsibilities within the home. But it has also raised labour-related concerns including direct and indirect wage discrimination; and the vulnerable status of women employees in EPZs. In Sub Saharan Africa, where exports are still largely agriculturally- based, the shift towards export- led growth is placing increasing burdens on women who shoulder major responsibilities for food production as well as providing labour to export crops whose proceeds are typically controlled by men.

Understanding the gendered outcomes of marco- economic policy is critical to targeted policy formulation. In the above examples, for instance, the disadvantages confronted by women relative to men can be ameliorated by labour legislation on the one hand; and support for women farmers (including access to land tenure; credit, labour saving devices and technical advice) on the other. Another critical policy consideration is state subventions and support for those who provide care work.

Source: Lowe Morna, C (2006) Business Unusual: Gender and Economic Reporting - A Southern African Workbook Gender Links









Exercise 6: Gender stereotyping

Break into six groups and discuss what messages are conveyed about women and men in:

- The media
- Advertising
- Culture and tradition
- Educational institutions
- Language, sayings and idioms
- Religion (you may wish to refer to the following quotes from religious texts).



<p><i>The Bible</i></p> 	<p>"Wives, submit unto your husbands, as unto the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church. Therefore as the Church is subject to Christ so let wives be subject to husbands in everything."</p>
<p><i>The Quran</i></p> 	<p>"Men have authority over women because Allah has made one superior to the other. Good women are obedient. They guard the unseen parts because Allah has guarded them. As for those of you who fear disobedience, admonish them and send them to beds apart and beat them." - <i>the Koran</i>.</p>
<p><i>The Mishnah. a basic part of the Talmud, Judaism</i></p> 	<p>"Learning the Torah is a paradox for women, as they will turn the words of the Torah into foolish words due to lack of understanding or interest."</p>
<p><i>Tulsidas, writing in the Ramayana, Hindu Religion</i></p> 	<p>"The drum, the village fool, the Shuras (lower classes) animals, women, all these are fit to be beaten."</p>

1. What messages are sent out about women and men?

Messages about women	Messages about men

2. From these exercises what do you understand by gender mainstreaming?



Notes:

- Gender stereotyping has the overall effect of perpetuating inequality through reinforcing discrimination, and in development processes, keeping or relegating women to the margins of human development.
- The media, advertising, language, religion and institutional cultures and structures subliminally portray gender stereotypical messages in the way they construct language, use images depict roles of men and women, and assign roles and responsibilities, thereby giving the impression that this is the reality that normalises inequality
- It is necessary to challenge gender stereotypes through recasting images, language, actions in a way that affirms gender equality, values difference and recognises potential. This is particularly critical in development and policy planning and implementation so that both men and women participate equally.



Definitions

Stereotype: Reducing an individual to a mere instance of a characteristic. An unduly fixed mental impression that is made unchangeable.

Gender stereotypes are socially constructed beliefs about men and women. They are constructed through sayings, songs, proverbs, the media, religion, custom, culture, education, drama etc.

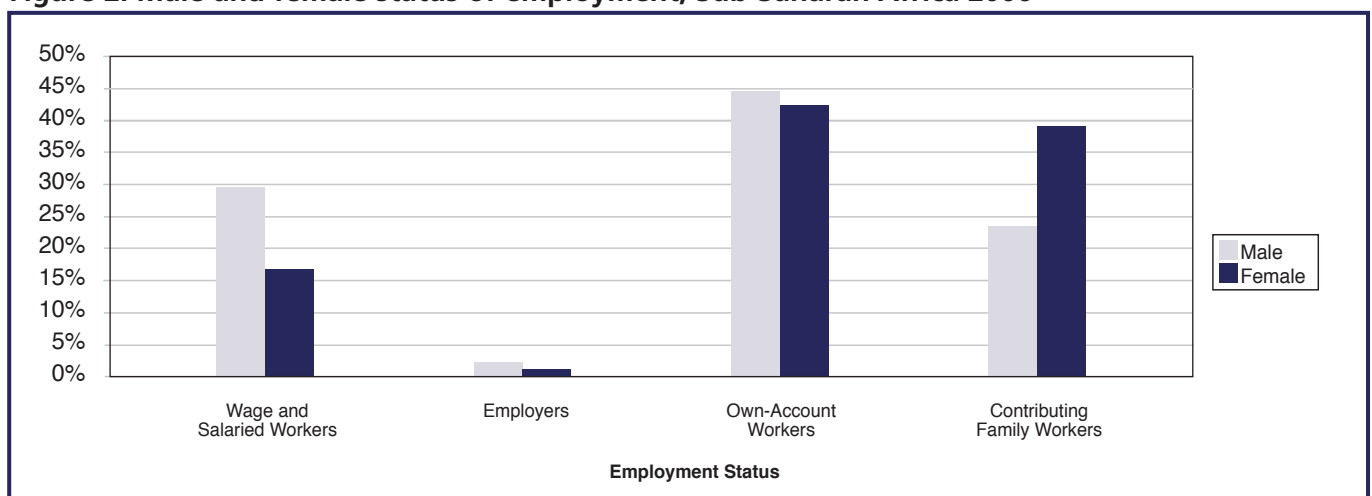


Exercise 7: Equality of opportunity versus equality of outcomes

Read the excerpt below and answer the questions that follow:

The indicator of status in employment distinguishes between types of employment by dividing people into three categories: wage and salaried workers (employees); self-employed workers; and contributing family workers. Recent ILO data shows that in sub-Saharan Africa men outnumber women in the first two categories while women dominate in the last one (Figure two).

Figure 2: Male and female status of employment, Sub-Saharan Africa 2006



Source: Adapted from ILO, *Global Employment trends for Women, Brief, march 2007*: 16

Numerous time-use studies have also shown that women work longer hours than men, when both market and non-market activities are taken into account. This is especially true for poor women who do not have resources to hire additional labour to take over some of the household responsibilities as they engage in market activities (UNECA, 2001a). This point is particularly relevant given the wide evidence that, while women are entering the formal sector in increasing numbers, their domestic workloads have not declined. They continue to be primarily responsible for such activities as the care of minor children and the elderly members of the household, cooking and cleaning, fetching water and firewood and managing the household in general (UNECA, 2001a).

Wage Disparity

An ILO review of data for six occupation groups shows that, in most economies around the world, women earn 90 percent or less of what their male counterparts earn. In Africa women earn, on average, only 60 to 70 percent of what men are paid for similar work even in typically female occupations such as nursing and teaching (ILO, 2007). The SADC region is no exception, as Table 1 below illustrates:

Table 1: Estimated earned income by gender, SADC, 2005

Country	Estimated earned income Female (PPP US\$)	Estimated earned income Male (PPP US\$)
Angola	1 787	2 898
Botswana	5 913	19 094
Congo, D.R.	488	944
Lesotho	2 340	4 480
Madagascar	758	1 090
Malawi	565	771
Mauritius	7 407	18 098
Mozambique	1 115	1 378
Namibia	5 527	9 679
South Africa	6 927	15 446
Swaziland	2 187	7 659
Tanzania	627	863
Zambia	725	1 319
Zimbabwe	1 499	2 585

Source: Human Development Report, 2007 data accessed at <http://hdrstats.undp.org>

Except for Botswana and Swaziland, no other country had wage data. For the purposes of calculating the estimated female ad ale earned income, a value of 0.75 was used for the ratio of the female non-agricultural wage to the male non-agricultural wage. * Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) - A rate of exchange that accounts for price differences across countries allowing international comparisons of real output and incomes. At the PPP US\$ rate, PPP US\$1 has the same purchasing power in the domestic economy as \$1 has in the United States.

Questions

1. Considering that all SADC countries have legislation and policies that provide equal opportunities for both women and men to access employment, what factors are contributing to the disparities in income highlighted above?

2. From this exercise what do you understand as the difference between equality of opportunity and equality of outcomes?



Definitions

Equality of Opportunity versus equality of Outcomes

Equality of opportunity means that every person is afforded the same access to a benefit as every other person. Equality of outcome means that every person actually receives the same benefit as everyone else. For example, government X can provide credit facilities for all, but access to those facilities will largely accrue to men, due to the existence of discriminatory laws and criteria that demand that married women get consent from their husband to enter into legally binding agreements, or that collateral is required, which most women might not have.

From the perspective of gender equality the distinction between equal opportunities and outcomes determines whether gender equality policies, programmes, and projects are making a difference through addressing gaps, inequalities, and contributing to women's empowerment. If inequality already exists, providing equal opportunities will perpetuate the inequality, so some positive measures, such as affirmative action or other positive empowering measures by governments are required, in order that equality of outcomes is achieved. Equality of outcomes will thus be concrete and measurable. (adapted from <http://en.wikipedia.org>) accessed 22.05.08)

Gender equality - Means that women and men have equal rights, opportunities and conditions for realising their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from economic, social, cultural and political development.

Gender equity - Means just treatment, balanced recognition and appreciation of the potential of both women and men, in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities. To ensure fairness, measure must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level (equal) playing field - such as affirmative action for women who remain disadvantaged in many areas of life.

