

GLOSSARY

Equality of opportunity

This policy aims to work towards the achievement of equality of opportunity, in terms of access to and share of employment opportunities, services and resources, as well as equality of treatment by employers and service providers.

Equality of treatment

Equality of treatment involves meeting the specific and distinct needs of different categories of women and men. This can often involve special programmes and the commitment of additional resources, for example in the case of women and men with disabilities. Equality of treatment does not mean treating all men and all women in exactly the same way. This would only serve to perpetuate existing disparities.

Gender

Gender refers to the social roles allocated respectively to women and men in particular societies at particular times. Such roles and the differences between them are conditioned by a variety of political, economic, ideological and cultural factors, and are characterised in most societies by unequal power relations. Gender is distinguished from sex, which is biologically determined.

Gender analysis

Gender analysis is the study of socially determined inequalities between women and men. Gender analysis identifies, analyses and informs action to address inequalities that arise from the different roles of women and men, or the unequal power relationships between them, and the consequences of these inequalities on their lives, their health and well being. The way power is distributed in most societies means that women have less access to and control over resources to protect their health and are less likely to be involved in decision-making. Gender analysis in health therefore often highlights how inequalities disadvantage women's health, the constraints women face to attain health and ways to address and overcome these constraints. Gender analysis also reveals health risks and problems which men face as a result of the social construction of their roles.

In health, gender analysis contributes to the understanding of differentials in:

- ❑ risk factors and exposures;
- ❑ manifestation, severity and frequency of disease; and
- ❑ the social and cultural responses to disease.

Gender analysis also highlights gender differences in:

- ❑ access to resources to promote and protect health (information, education, technology and services, among others);
- ❑ responses from the health sector;
- ❑ the ability to exercise the right to health as a fundamental human right; and

- the way responsibilities and power in health care are distributed.

Gender blind policies

Gender blind policies do not acknowledge differences in roles, responsibilities or access to resources between women and men and may therefore reinforce existing inequalities and inequities.

Gender equality

Gender equality refers to a situation where women and men have equal conditions for realising their full human rights and potential, and are able to contribute equally to national political, economic, social and cultural development, and to benefit equally from the results of such development. Gender equality entails that the underlying causes of discrimination are systematically identified and removed in order to give women and men equal opportunities. The concept of gender equality as used in this document takes into account women's subordinate positions within social relations and aims at the restructuring of society so as to eradicate male domination and privilege.

Gender equity

Gender equity refers to the fair and just distribution of all means of opportunity and resources between women and men. It entails the treatment of women and men in the same way. However, same treatment does not always lead to equal results. Therefore, sometimes there may be the need to treat women and men differently, to achieve sameness in results.

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, such that inequality between men and women is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. Mainstreaming gender is both a technical and a political process, which requires shifts in organisational cultures and ways of thinking, as well as in organisational goals, structures and resource allocations. However, responsibility for implementation lies not with these units, but with the senior management of government. This is the principle of 'mainstreaming' gender.

Gender-neutral policies

Such policies rely on/are based on an accurate understanding of women's and men's roles, responsibilities and access to resources. They do not aim to change these gender norms, but rather try to achieve their policy goals as efficiently as possible within these norms.

Maternal morbidity

Any disabilities resulting from any or all conditions identified under maternal mortality – see below – that prevent the mother from leading a near normal life style.

Maternal mortality

The number of deaths of mothers due to diseases or conditions resulting from pregnancy, for example, pre-eclampsia, high blood pressure, infections, death during labour or during delivery of the baby, and any cause of death as a result of excessive bleeding or infections after the birth of the child (up to two years) during the period of lactation (that is, whilst the mother is still breastfeeding the baby).