

# IPS GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT COSSAY 3 PD 1 T 1 O N

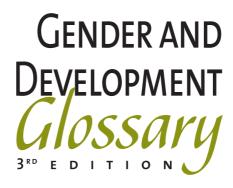
# A TOOL FOR JOURNALISTS AND WRITERS

that has a solution. Two decades of innovation, experience, and activism have shown that achieving the goal of greater gender equality and women's empowerment is possible. There are many practical steps that can reduce inequalities based on gender—inequalities that restrict the potential to reduce poverty and achieve high levels of well-being in societies around the world. There are also many positive actions that can empower women. Without leadership and political will, however, the world will fall short of taking these



#### A TOOL FOR JOURNALISTS AND WRITERS





e-version

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## **ABOUT THIS BOOK**



he production and publication of this third edition of the IPS-Inter Press Service Gender and Development Glossary was undertaken under 'Communicating for Change', an IPS project (2009-2011) financed through the Dutch Ministry's MDG-3 Fund: Investing in Equality.

Through this initiative, IPS has produced and disseminated stories, op-ed columns, newsletters and websites about gender equality. With NGO partners working for women's empowerment, IPS has developed communication plans and co-hosted national or regional media and civil society seminars.

IPS-Inter Press Service is a pioneering communication institution with a global news agency at its core (www.ipsnews.net). Its focus is on producing independent news and content, dissemination and networking, and capacity building in the media and NGO sectors.

IPS has a longstanding commitment to gender equality within the organisation and gender mainstreaming in all its products.

The IPS Gender and Development Glossary (3rd edition) was updated by IPS Asia-Pacific for the IPS news network, building on the work and content of the previous editions of the publication. This edition updates the terms covered in the glossary chapter as well as in the other sections, and adds discussion of gender, development and media issues and debates that have emerged in the last decade. The third edition is also available in Spanish and French.

The first English-language edition was published in 1997 and the revised/second edition, in 2000. Both were products of collaboration

between Carolina Taborga and Beryl Leach, and Daniela Vatter provided editorial assistance for the first edition.

IPS Asia-Pacific would like to thank those who contributed to this publication project: Nattharin Kittithaweepan (who provided research and editorial support); Joel Chong; Sakulrat Worathumrong, Diana Mendoza (who helped in the initial collection of journalists and development experts' views in preparation for this book); and Winnie Dobbs for handling the layout and design as she did in the glossary's first two editions.





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#### INTRODUCTION



# WHAT'S IN A (GENDER) WORD?

Reporter when speaking to a transgender man about a scuffle they had with police: "Did you get man-handled, I mean, person-handled?" -- from 'Overheard in the Newsroom' (http://overheardinthenewsroom.com)

ne might agree or disagree with the existence and use of 'person-handled' in the above remark, which I stumbled upon in October 2009 from a site that collects comments, from the ironic to the caustic to the hilarious, around news and journalism. But whatever one's opinions are, these words show what can happen when a journalist mentally takes a step or two back and rethinks the language he or she uses.

Letting journalists and writers take a second look at news language – as a way to do better news stories – is what this third edition of the IPS Gender and Development Glossary offers. The first part of the glossary lists terms around gender and sexuality that are often used in news stories these days about health, society, human rights and international negotiations about development commitments, so that journalists can report better and more confidently on them. The second part is a list of media-friendly terms to replace commonly used words and phrases that contain gender stereotypes and sexist assumptions. These terms can be included in stylebooks.

Gender-sensitive and gender-aware language belongs not just in the corner of 'alternative media' that it is usually boxed into, but in the set of editorial values that we journalists seek to apply to stories —

such as diversity of views, balance and fairness, accuracy, provision and analysis of context, and avoidance of biases.

Because language reflects how society thinks and how we were brought up in many of its assumptions – as news consumers as well as producers and gatekeepers– rethinking language allows us to walk through these assumptions about gender.

#### **REALITY CHECK**

The replies to a qualitative questionnaire on gender-related terms and concepts that IPS Asia-Pacific sent to editors and journalists – as the first step in updating this glossary – provide quite a reality check. The 24 respondents were a mix of men and women from mainstream and other media, and included some with more experience in development reporting than others.

Many differentiated sex and gender. But several, asked to look through a list of sample terms, did not find anything questionable about 'maid' (better as 'domestic worker') or housewife (the suggested replacement is 'homemaker', although one gender professor asked if this was not more accurately a term referring to a woman whose time is "totally devoted to domestic work").

Majority of the journalist-respondents zeroed in on the terms that had obvious sex and gender classifications such as 'salesman', 'chairman', 'manpower' and 'newsmen'. Many of them said these terms should be changed to drop the references that overtly say whether they are men or women. Only a handful argued for their right usage (that is, saying 'chairman' for a male chairperson and 'chairwoman' for a female chairperson), for avoiding their use to refer to both men and women, or for avoiding the assumption that the terms almost always refer to men. (Referring to the common prescription of using 'chair' instead of 'chairman' or 'chairwoman', one editor respondent remarked: "Anyone who wants to be referred to as a piece of furniture is insane.")

Other gender-related terms were trickier. Many equated 'men who have sex with men' (MSM) with homosexual men, which is not the case because the phrase includes men who have sex with other men but do not identify themselves as gay. (Asked to define 'MSM', one reporter replied 'mainstream media', which is also right.) Transgenders and transsexuals stumped some. Whether to use 'prostitutes' interchangeably with 'sex workers' is far from settled – many gender advocates see prostitutes as a judgement-laden term, but some groups question the 'work' part of 'sex work' and may prefer 'prostituted persons'.



One journalist frankly explained that while he sees the merit of putting on the gender lens when writing news, "I don't try to be too PC (politically correct) because it involves explaining things to your reader and time is short." A senior business editor shared honestly that he cannot see how gender plays a role in business stories. A few subtly asked if seeking out women's voices for stories was not skewing the article needlessly.

At the same time, the editor-in-chief of a newspaper pointed out that interviewing women (and other genders) for stories should not be an afterthought but "even women reporters have to be reminded of this". Still others asked how to actually go about making a story more gender-sensitive.

#### **GENDER LENS**

Here are a few ways to use the gender lens to tell stories, for which this glossary can be a tool for:

 Using gender-sensitive and gender-aware terms does not mean removing all traces of sex or gender in noun, and making stories gender-blind. Hiding sex or gender does not make for gender sensitivity. If the head of a committee is a woman, calling her chairwoman is by no means wrong or politically incorrect. Consider, too, the fact that it is not always possible to tell by a source's name if that is a man or a woman, so saying 'she' or 'chairwoman' helps readers understand a story better.

- 2. Gender is not just about women or mentioning women. But many gender-sensitive stories do make room for the presence of women in several ways, such as including their voices, quoting them as sources and considering them in relation to issues where writers usually go for males (economists, scientists), and being conscious of how women are portrayed, in particular avoiding portraying them just as victims. Gender-friendly stories also look into the relationships between men and women and other genders, and their experiences in society.
- 3. More than being a topic for articles, gender is also an approach to more in-depth reporting. This is because genderaware stories look beyond news events and the obvious, and dig into subtle, sometimes unacknowledged angles that shape how different genders have different opportunities, options and perceptions based on their social locations and the power structures they live with.

The debate about gender-inclusive terminology is of course by no means new; the first edition of this glossary came off the press at the height of this focus in the nineties. In the past, linking gender and media has not always been easy. Efforts to promote such language by making journalists and newsrooms campaigners for this 'cause' backfired in many cases. Flag waving and slogan shouting do not work in news material. Likewise, so-called alternative media have at times fallen into the trap of assuming that gender sensitivity and awareness is an all-too-obvious truth to the rest of the media.

In the end, a gender-sensitive story is a much stronger, nuanced story because it has more depth and reflects different viewpoints and voices, including those that are read and heard less even if they make up half or more of the world's population, and goes into power relations that shape society's inequalities and make men and women experience the impact of policies and events in different ways.



#### **NEWSSPEAK**

But while gender sensitivity is an editorial value to be pursued, it also needs to be 'translated' into, discussed and developed in daily 'newsspeak' so that it becomes a habit and a norm -- and hopefully finds its way into journalism stylebooks and journalism classes.

Words are guideposts to mindsets, stereotypes and assumptions and those are the things gender-sensitive news language seeks to reshape and help undo. Rethinking language, as this glossary urges, is not about tinkering with words for its own sake. Likewise, the alternative terms it suggests should work for the media profession – and it is in this editorial discussion that IPS, being a news agency focusing on development issues, is committed to making a contribution.

Today, more than a decade after the gender discussions of the nineties, questions have also arisen about 'overdoing' political correctness to the point of losing sight of the goal of building on gender-sensitive language as a usable, accessible and inclusive everyday tool.

"We have (already) reached a stage where an inanimate object replaces a human being, as when 'chair' replaces 'chairman'," Laufred Hernandez, a professor at the University of the Philippines-Manila and head of the Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies on Health and Development, said in his reply to questions for this glossary. "Indeed, an overzealous insistence on using or avoiding particular forms of expression can be irritating, burdensome and unnecessarily inhibiting."

Instead, he proposes finding a balance between encouraging genderinclusive language and discouraging that which people find patronising 14

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or distasteful, and realising that the "excessively rigid application of language formulas can create an oppressive environment".

In many ways, reporting sensitively and effectively from a gender perspective also means telling stories that touch on gender – without even using the word 'gender'.

Johanna Son

Director

IPS Asia-Pacific



Photos by: Johanna Son, IPS Africa, Xu Jinyan

# **CHAPTER I GLOSSARY**





Abstinence, Being faithful, and Condom use. This approach has been used in the context of HIV prevention, especially for programmes that reach out to young people, coming from religious versus public health principles.

But gender and reproductive health advocates say that this approach focuses on the dichotomy between abstinence and faithfulness, and that such is not always successful. Given that it focuses on individual behaviour, ABC does not protect those individuals who are faithful to their partners but cannot control their partners' behaviour or individuals who have been abstaining but get married to older partners who may already been infected. In many instances, this places women in a disadvantaged position as they may not be able to control their husbands' sexual behaviour or negotiate condom use with their partners.

Advocates call for a choice of methods in different settings, including a combination with the CNN approach of 'Condom, Needles, and Negotiating skills'. The CNN approach, or harm reduction approach for HIV prevention, emphasises the use of condoms, the giving of needles to drug dependents, and the training of people on how to negotiate for safer sex.

# Abortion

Termination of a pregnancy by any means before the foetus is sufficiently developed to survive outside the uterus. Abortion can

happen after deliberate intervention or spontaneously as a result of early foetal death. (See also pre-natal sex selection; missing women)

There are varied and conflicting views about abortion in many countries. Those who support a woman's right to make decisions about her own body say this includes the right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy and to have access to safe, affordable and legal abortion services. Those against abortion oppose giving women the right to terminate an unwanted pregnancy or to have access to safe, affordable and legal abortion services. Anti-abortion advocates oppose any legalisation of abortion, while other groups support abortion in case of rape or ill health of the mother. The term 'abortion', derived from the Latin 'abortus' (to disappear, miscarry) also has different legal and judicial implications in different countries. For instance, abortion is illegal in many developing countries except under specific circumstances, usually related to rape and the mother's health.

# Abstinence

Avoidance of sexual relations of any kind.

For some, it may mean the decision to avoid only penetrative sex; for others, it may mean only engaging in 'outercourse'. Reasons for abstinence could include contraception and prevention of pregnancy, disease, as well as religious belief. (See also ABC.)

#### Affirmative action

A plan or programme designed to combat the effects of discrimination against an identified group based on sex, race, age, religion or ethnicity that has been disadvantaged in hiring, promotion, the award of contracts or access to employment opportunities.

It can include systems of preferences designed to give additional considerations to individuals who are from groups that have suffered discrimination. The term 'positive action' or 'affirmative action' is preferable to 'reverse discrimination'. (See also disadvantaged groups; discrimination; gender parity.)



# AIDS

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome or the late stage of the chronic disease caused by the infection with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), in which the immune system is weakened and unable to fight opportunistic infections.

For many years, the term 'HIV/AIDS' was used freely in media reports to refer to the global epidemic. But increasingly, the accepted – and more accurate – terminology and usage have been to separate HIV and AIDS ('HIV and AIDS' instead of 'HIV/AIDS') because they are not one and the same, and because lumping them together tends to confuse the statistics for both as well. The 2007 terminology summary by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) encourages writers to "use HIV unless specifically referring to AIDS", for instance as in "HIV testing", and "children orphaned by AIDS". HIV epidemic and AIDS epidemic are acceptable.

# Beijing Conference

The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in the Chinese capital in 1995.

It produced a declaration of the international community's commitment to the advancement of women and a platform of action that set out measures for action by 2000. The conference provided a clear commitment that the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girl children are a key part of universal human rights.

The three previous world conferences were in held in Mexico City in 1975, Copenhagen in 1980 and Nairobi in 1985. In many ways, the results of the Beijing conference furthered the progress made at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, Egypt, where the advancement and empowerment of women, and women's rights to control their fertility had already been negotiated. (See also International Conference on Population and Development.)

# Bias

Inclination or attitude toward or against something, someone or a particular group of persons; prejudice. (See also discrimination; gender bias.)

# Birth control

All methods of preventing birth, including abstinence and abortion. Birth control was initially used synonymously with family planning. (See also family planning.)

## Bisexual

A person who has significant sexual and romantic attractions to members of both the same and the other sex. (See also sexuality; sexual orientation; sexual preference.)

# Casual sex

Sexual encounters between people who barely know each other and where pleasure is generated by excitement and novelty, or between people who have sexual encounters but have no intention to develop the relationship into long-term commitment. This is also referred to sometimes as recreational sex.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. It is a human rights treaty that lays down governmental obligations on matters related to any form of discrimination against women in terms of individual rights and freedoms.



The Convention defines discrimination against women 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." The Convention aims at equality between men and women through the assurance of equal access to and equal opportunities in public life, education, health and employment. It is the first treaty that targets harmful cultural and traditional practices that shape gender roles. Countries that have ratified the Convention are legally bound to implement its provisions and submit reports at least every four years.

# Celibacy

Abstinence from all sexual activities and sexual relations, especially for religious reasons.

# Civil society

The space for voluntary collective action around shared goals and interests, outside both the market and the state but interacting with them.

"It is often described as the space between the citizen and the state, where the will of citizens is manifested and mobilised outside of

official (i.e., state) auspices," says the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Civil society organisations include non-governmental organisations, trade unions, grassroots organisations, women's groups, academic and research institutions, faith-based groups, cooperatives, local community groups, professional associations, youth organisations and cultural groups. Government agencies, political representatives, political parties and for-profit businesses are not part of civil society.

# Condom

A flexible sheath (usually made of thin latex or polyurethane) designed to cover the penis (male condom) or vulva (female condom) during sexual intercourse for contraceptive purposes or as a means of preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Both the male and female condoms, if used consistently, prevent the spread of STIs including HIV, an issue that adds to the controversy around condom use among conservative groups.

# Contraceptive

A chemical agent and/or physical device for the prevention of fertility. Contraceptives prevent sexual intercourse from resulting in conception.

A woman's right to control her fertility through any means she chooses is a tenet of the women's reproductive health rights agenda. In many societies, gender roles dictate that women are responsible for contraceptive use. In others, gender roles also make women responsible for contraceptive use, but gender relations dictate that they cannot use contraceptives without their partners' permission. Many contraceptives used by women (e.g., oral contraceptives, intrauterine devices and implants) have undesirable side effects. A key

goal in improving the quality of reproductive health services is to make contraceptives safe for women and to broaden responsibility for their use to men, in part by broadening the choice of contraceptives for both men and women. (See also family planning; reproductive health; reproductive rights.)



#### Critical mass

The minimum number of a non-majority group necessary before change can occur in an institution or structure affecting the status of that group. It is also the level at which change can be self-sustaining.

According to the United Nations, the critical mass threshold is estimated to be 30 to 35 percent participation by a non-majority group. Reaching the numerical goal of 30 percent participation does not automatically lead to desired change, as it is also dependent upon the quality of the participation, the decision-making authority of those participants and the environment still dictated by the majority group. Still, achieving critical mass in organisations is considered by many experts to be a necessary and priority goal in attaining gender equality. (See also tokenism.)

# Cross-dressing

Act of dressing as the gender opposite of one's birth sex.

# Date rape

A form of unwanted sexual vaginal, anal, or oral intercourse or any other sexual contact involving the use of force, or threat of force or deception perpetuated by an acquaintance of the rape survivor. It is also called acquaintance rape. Unsuccessful attempts are also included within the term 'rape'.

# Disadvantaged groups

Groups within a society that have fewer opportunities to have access to resources such as education, health, credit and power.

Some examples of disadvantaged groups are ethnic groups, older adults, children and disabled persons. Women and girls in these groups tend to have even fewer opportunities than their male counterparts; in other words, they are doubly disadvantaged/doubly marginalised. They are very often invisible in media reports that make these groups seem homogenous, especially when details about them - such as the sex and age of persons within them – are not disaggregated. (See also discrimination; gender-disaggregated data.)

#### Discrimination

Difference in the treatment of a person on a basis other than individual merit.

Derived from the Latin term 'discriminare' (to divide, separate, distinguish), it refers to action based on prejudice against age, physical abilities, class, ethnicity, sex, race or religion. (See also affirmative action.)

# Domestic responsibilities

Tasks performed inside a household in order to ensure that the basic needs of its members are met, such as cooking, cleaning, and taking care of children or older adults.

Traditionally, a person is not paid for performing these tasks, and power or status is not necessarily accorded because of these responsibilities. In many societies, the person responsible for the household is in a subordinate position within it and most often, women and girls are responsible for all household tasks, even if they work outside the home. It is this traditional gender-based division of household responsibilities that can limit girls' access to education, when they are kept out of school or leave early in order to assume domestic responsibilities. But at the same time, the sharing of household responsibilities is much more common these days in many societies. Domestic responsibilities are not the sole obligation of female members in a household. (See also gender-based division of labour; household maintenance; reproductive labour.)



## Domestic violence

Pattern of coercive behaviour, whether physical, psychological or sexual, against any member of a family or household, including by an intimate partner.

Domestic violence against women and girls ranges from humiliation and economic coercion to physical assault, usually at the hands of intimate partners, husbands, brothers, uncles or males within or associated within the household. Same-sex domestic violence occurs, though much less frequently than violence by males against females. (See also gender-based violence; marital rape; rape; sexual assault.)

## Double standard

A code of social values or principles that applies different standards to one group or circumstances than to another, including more restrictive standards to women's behaviour than to men. (See also gender roles; glass ceiling.)

# Dowry

Money or goods that a woman brings as a gift to her husband upon marriage.

Originally a wedding gift of money, jewellery, clothing or household items made to a daughter from her family, dowry was seen as a type of insurance in case of mistreatment by the bride's new family or a failed marriage.

After being around for centuries, the use of dowry has fallen by the wayside and has been outlawed in many countries, largely because of the abuse of women it has led to in many cases. Where it continues in some cultures, it has become common for the groom and his family to demand a dowry of considerable amounts of money or goods (e.g., car, refrigerator, home electronics) at the time of marriage. The most extreme form of dowry-related abuse occurs when women are burnt to death (bride burning) by their husbands or in-laws, often because of disappointment with the woman's dowry. In other cultures, it is the groom's family that pays the dowry to the bride's family, usually with livestock or equivalent goods.

# Emergency contraception

A contraceptive method used after unprotected intercourse that is also known as the morning-after pill.

The emergency contraception pill (ECP) should be used as soon as possible after unprotected sexual intercourse, health experts say. It prevents ovulation, fertilisation, and/or implantation of the egg. However, once the process of implantation has begun, the ECP will not cause an abortion. (See also contraceptive.)

# Empowerment of women

The social, economic, political and legal enabling of women to act by granting or reinforcing rights, abilities and access to facilities, resources and equal participation previously denied or restricted. Men and women have different and unequal access to power and resources, and this is a key characteristic that shapes the gender-based division of labour.



There are five components in women's empowerment: women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. (See also affirmative action; discrimination; gender-based division of labour; gender parity.)

# **Equality**

The exact same measure, quantity, amount or number as another and the affecting of all objects in the same way. It is not a synonym for equity. (See also equity; gender equality; gender parity.)

# **Equity**

Fair and impartial treatment of all classes of people without regard to gender, class, race, ethnic background, religion, handicap, age or sexual preference. Equity, like the word 'fair', is subjective and does not necessary mean equal. (See also equality; gender equity; gender parity.)

# Family

A group of individuals living under one roof and sharing domestic resources and/or responsibilities; a group of persons of common ancestry. The term is borrowed from the Latin 'familia' (household including relatives and servants) and 'famulus' (servant).

Different types of families exist, although 'family' is usually used in the meaning most associated with the mother-father-children model.

A biological family is a group consisting of a man and a woman and their biological offspring.

An extended family comprises not only parents and children, but also relatives living together or in proximity to share household resources and responsibilities. Extended families usually form around a biological family as a nucleus, although they may include persons who are not biologically related, but carry out the roles of relatives, such as aunts or uncles.

A nuclear family consists of parents, who may be a heterosexual or same-sex couple, and their biological or adopted children, of one or both of the parents. A single-parent family consists of a sole parent and his/her children, whether biological or adopted.

There has been debate over the meaning of 'family' in international negotiations such as the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994, where some countries and conservative groups opposed the idea that there can be other types of families to include same-sex and/or single-parent set-ups. (See also female-headed household; International Conference on Population and Development.)

# Family planning

Services or programmes that allow couples or individuals to make conscious efforts to plan their families and conceive the number of children they want.

Family planning programmes often offer contraceptives to prevent fertility and advocate child-spacing methods to help protect both mothers' and infants' health. Family planning is often mistakenly used as a synonym for contraceptives, which are only one component of family planning services.

In this context, 'family' has been generally understood to refer to heterosexual married couples, thereby leaving out unmarried women and men, lesbians, gay men and teenagers from both programme policy design and service provision. The word 'planning' may have a negative connotation in cases where family planning programmes are used coercively to control population through centrally planned and controlled policies and services. Family planning is not a synonym for reproductive health care. (See also contraceptive; family; reproductive health.)



# Female

Refers to biologically based references to sex.

The word 'female' derives from the Latin 'femella', which is a dimunutive of 'femina' or woman. It is often mistakenly assumed to have been derived from 'male', a word that comes through Old French from the Latin 'masculus', which is a diminutive of 'mas' (male, masculine). (See also girl; woman.)

#### Female-headed household

A household in which an adult female is the sole or main income producer and decision maker.

In most countries, women are not usually considered as heads of households unless no adult male is living permanently in the household. The assumption that heads of households are always adult males, even if a woman's economic contribution to the household's maintenance is the same or greater than a man's, is a form of gender bias. In developing countries, there is a general trend of more and more women being the primary source of economic support for their families.

# Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Traditional practice that involves the cutting of female genitals, involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

FGM is usually performed by traditional practitioners, in unhygienic conditions, on young girls between infancy and age 15, as part of beliefs about raising a girl properly and what is considered needed to ensure proper sexual behaviour. But the World Health Organisation (WHO) has said it has no health benefits and causes both immediate complications and long-term consequences such as painful sexual intercourse, recurrent vaginal and/or urinary tract infections, infertility, cysts, increased risk of childbirth complications and newborn deaths, and physical inability to have an orgasm. It is recognised internationally as a violation of the human rights of women and girls, as well as a significant sexual and reproductive health concern.

WHO has classified FGM into four major types: (1) clitoridectomy, which involves partial or total removal of the clitoris or in very rare cases, only the prepuce (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoris); (2) excision, which is partial or total removal of the clitoris and the labia minora, with or without excision of the labia majora (the labia are the 'lips' that surround the vagina); (3) infibulations, or narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal, which is formed by cutting and repositioning the inner, or outer, labia, with or without removal of the clitoris; (4) all other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes, including pricking, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterising the genital area, or the introduction of substances into the vagina to cause bleeding or with the purpose of narrowing it or tightening it. The practice is most common in parts of Africa, in some countries in Asia and the Middle East, and among certain immigrant communities in North America and Europe. (See also domestic violence; sexual assault; sexual violence; tradition; violence against women.)

#### Feminine

Gender characteristics and roles usually associated with women that may differ across cultures and societies.





#### **Femininity**

The set of expectations about how women should behave, think and appear in a given culture.



#### Feminisation of migration

The trend in international migration patterns that has resulted in many more women moving from one country to another independently, often in search of jobs that make them key economic providers for their households.

While women have always been part of international migration trends, they have in recent decades been migrating for work on their own instead of as dependents or joining families abroad. The net feminisation of migration has been stark in regions like parts of Asia, with women dominating sectors such as domestic work and caregiving. Other specifically female forms of migration include the migration and trafficking of women for the sex industry, and marriage migration.

The feminisation of migration goes beyond statistics and raises other issues such as the role of gender in migration processes, the social cost of migration, labour policies in sending and receiving countries that affect gender, and remittances sent by women migrant workers.

Women account for almost half of all migrants, a proportion that the United Nations says has changed little in the last two decades. (See also marriage migration.)

# Feminisation of poverty

Analysis of the negative economic effects that result from economic globalisation and affect women more, and in different ways than men.

In many developing countries, these negative impacts are the result of the implementation of macroeconomic policies that often include structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). (See also Structural Adjustment Programmes.)



# Feminism

Various theories and practices based on belief in the political, social and economic equality of the sexes.

The term was coined by the First International Woman's Congress in Paris in 1892. Common among feminists is the assumption that social organisation and culture have been dominated by men to the exclusion of women. This exclusion has been accompanied by a pattern of devaluation of women, which has given rise to their marginalised status in most societies. A main focus, therefore, is the retrieval and articulation of women's experiences in history and contemporary societies.

There is a diversity of feminisms. Liberal feminism advocates legal reforms to equal rights to men and women, for example, in employment. Radical feminism advocates deeper political, social and economic changes that are associated with gender-based structural inequalities, attributing women's oppression to patriarchal institutions or to 'masculinity' itself. Ecofeminism or ecological feminism is based on the belief that the domination of women is tied to the exploitation of the environment and natural resources by male-dominated power structures.

#### Feminist

A woman or a man who believes in feminism.





A term most often used to describe a man who is sexually and romantically attracted to other men. Colloquially, it is used as an umbrella term to include all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people. (See also homosexuality; sexuality, sexual identity; sexual orientation; transgender.)



#### Gender

A concept that refers to the differences between males and females that are socially constructed, changeable over time and have wide variations within and between cultures.

As opposed to biologically determined characteristics (sex), gender refers to learned behaviour and expectations to fulfil one's image of masculinity and femininity. Gender is also a socio-economic and political variable with which to analyse people's roles, responsibilities, constraints and opportunities. Gender and women are not synonyms. (See also gender roles; gender identity.)



# Gender analysis

Analysis of a process or phenomenon by examining the roles played by men and women, including such key issues as the gender-based division of labour, productive and reproductive activities, access to and control over resources and benefits, and socio-economic and environmental factors that influence men and women.

Gender analysis also refers to the systematic investigation of how development has different impacts on women and men. It should be conducted at every step of an intervention, policy or programme, starting from the setting of priorities and data collection to its design, implementation and evaluation. (See also gender-disaggregated data.)

# Gender and Development (GAD)

The approach that recognises that all development planning, policies and projects must reflect gender sensitivity about and gender awareness of the different roles that men and women play in societies, differences in their access to and control over resources and the differential impacts of development processes on men and women.

The GAD approach is different from the Women in Development (WID) approach, which by the late 1970s was being questioned for focusing resources, programmes and projects on women in isolation and away from mainstream development. (See also Women in Development.)

## Gender awareness

A commitment to placing women's needs and priorities at the centre of development planning and programming and analysing programmes and projects for the differential impacts that they have on women and men.

This awareness includes knowing that women, as well as men, should be involved in consultations about the design and implementation of development policies and projects. (See also gender blindness; gender sensitivity.)

#### Gender-based division of labour

The division of work based on the gender socialisation patterns within society.



Generally, societies use the different reproductive roles that stem from biological differences between men and women as the basis to divide other tasks both in the home and in the public sphere. This has led to some tasks traditionally being taken as "women's work" and others as "men's work". (See also domestic responsibilities; gender roles; household maintenance; production; reproductive labour.)



#### Gender-based violence

Any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering based on the gender of a person.

It usually refers to women and girls, but includes violence against lesbians, gay men and transgender and queer people. It includes threats, coercion, deprivation of liberty, deprivation of the right to work or earn income, sexual or mental rape, stalking or other forms of harassment, whether occurring in public or private life. (See also domestic violence; marital rape; private and public spheres; rape; sexual assault.)



#### Gender bias

Prejudiced actions or thoughts based on gender-based perceptions that women are not equal to men. (See also discrimination; gender blindness; sexism.)



#### Gender blindness

The inability to consider the differences between men's and women's needs, benefits, access to resources, access to power or socio-political status; the absence of gender analysis from thought or practice. (See also gender analysis; gender awareness; gender bias; gender sensitivity.)



#### Gender-differentiated impact

The effects of policies, programmes, projects or measures, which have different impacts on men and women based on the different roles that they play in society and their differential access to resources. (See also gender analysis.)

# Gender-disaggregated data

Data that is collected and analysed by sex.

This kind of information distinguishes activities, aspirations, needs and interests of both men and women as well as their access to resources. Sex-disaggregated data is broken down only by sex, where sex is one of the independent variables.



#### Gender discrimination

Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of socially constructed gender roles and norms that prevent a person, female or male, from enjoying full human rights. (See also discrimination; gender bias.)



# Gender disparities

The differences in men's and women's access to resources, status and well-being that usually favour men and are often institutionalised through laws and social customs. (See also gender gap; gender parity.)

# Gender-dominated occupations

Jobs and occupations where one of the sexes -either male or femalepredominates based on the gender-based division of labour. (See also gender-based division of labour.)





#### Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)

A measure of the empowerment of women in a country in three basic areas - economic participation and decision-making (the number of professional and managerial jobs held by women), political participation (the number of parliamentary seats held by women) and decision-making and power over economic resources.

It is one of five indicators by which the UNDP ranks countries in its annual Human Development Report. Together with the Genderrelated Development Index (GDI), it is one of two measures of human development of women first introduced in the Human Development Report 1995. The GEM and GDI are often used as advocacy and monitoring tools for gender-related analysis. (See also Gender-related Development Index.)



## Gender equality

The equal treatment of women and men in laws and policies, and equal access to resources and services, including education, health and occupational positions, within families, communities and society. (See also gender equity; gender equality; gender parity.)

## Gender equity

Fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men

Gender equity recognises that men and women have different needs and power and that these should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between them. Thus, womenspecific programmes and policies may be needed to reach equality. (See also gender equality; gender parity)

## Gender gap

The apparent disparity between women and men in values, attitude and issues, such as voting patterns, access to power and to positions. (See also gender parity.)

## Gender identity

Individuals' self-awareness or fundamental sense of themselves as being masculine or feminine, and male or female; how one thinks of one's own gender. (See also gender roles.)

## Gender mainstreaming

The integration of gender into the entire spectrum of activities funded by or executed by an organisation, and equitable and full delegation of responsibility for gender to all staff.

It can also involve strategies to increase the number and diversity of women on staff, to train staff about gender and to review or develop internal procedures to include gender issues and responses. In news organisations, mainstreaming means the integration of the concepts of gender, equality and women's rights into all aspects of editorial coverage and ensuring that these issues influence the news agenda, from planning, sourcing, writing to copyediting.

### Gender neutral

An adjective that refers to the presence of gender sensitivity in people or policies but without evidence of wanting to achieve a vision of gender or the explicit allocation of resources to achieve gender equality.



In relation to socialisation, it describes clothing, behaviour, thoughts, feelings and relationships that are considered appropriate for both sexes. It also refers to language that is not gender-specific, for example, using the term 'partner' or 'spouse' rather than 'husband' or 'wife'. (See also gender awareness; gender blindness; gender sensitivity.)

## Gender parity

The condition of balance or equivalence between the genders in relation to different aspects of human development, including education, employment, politics and governance.

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is a socioeconomic indicator that assesses gender differences by looking at the ratio of girls to boys in the area of access to education. The GPI is the value of an indicator for girls divided by that for boys. A value of less than one indicates differences in favour of boys and a value near one indicates that parity has more or less been achieved; gender parity is often considered to have been attained when the GPI lies in between. Parity is also used in looking at the participation of women in politics, including their presence in parliament. (See also gender equity; gender equality; gender mainstreaming; gender paritiy.)



## Gender perspective

The investigation of how men and women affect and are affected by economic, political, social, legal and cultural events and processes in different ways.

In news writing, the simplest form of gender perspective is the inclusion of women's and girls' voices, which are not always heard in stories.

## Gender-related Development Index (GDI)

A measure of achievement in the same basic capabilities as the Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Human Development Report, but factors in inequality in achievement between women and men in terms of a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living.

UNDP describes it as "simply the HDI discounted, or adjusted downwards, for gender inequality". The World Economic Forum also has an annual Global Gender Gap Report that measures how well countries are dividing their resources and opportunities among their male and female populations, regardless of the overall levels of these resources and opportunities. (See also Gender Empowerment Measure.)

## Gender relations

The relative positions of men and women in the division of resources and responsibilities, benefits and rights, and power and privilege.

### Gender roles

The socially determined behaviours, tasks and responsibilities for men and women based on socially perceived differences that define how they should think, act and feel based on their respective sex.

Gender roles can and do change through individual choice and in response to events and processes such as economic crises, declining fertility rates, increasing educational levels for women, changes in migration patterns and in information systems.

## Gender sensitivity

The ability to understand and consider the socio-cultural factors underlying gender-based discrimination, socialisation of men and women into certain behaviours or opportunities, power relations between men and women, as well as the different needs, problems and levels of access to resources that they have. (See also gender awareness; gender blindness; gender neutral.)





A female child. 'Girl child' is the term used by the United Nations to refer to a female child below the age of 18. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as a person below the age of 18.



## Glass ceiling

The de facto barrier that prevents women from rising professionally to senior positions, regardless of education, expertise or the presence of non-discriminatory rules and legislation or even of affirmativeaction practices to increase the number of women in the employment patterns of organisations.



### Heterosexism

The assumption that every person should be heterosexual, thus marginalising those who do not identify themselves as heterosexual.

It also implies that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and other sexual identities and orientations. (See also sexism.)

## Heterosexuality

Sexual, emotional and/or romantic attraction to a sex other than one's own.

It is commonly thought of as 'attraction to the opposite sex', but this is inaccurate because there are not only two sexes (see intersex and transsexual).

## HIV

Human Immunodeficiency Virus, or the virus that causes AIDS.

The virus is transmitted through unprotected sexual contact, through blood, and from mother to child. As the virus damages the immune system of a person, some opportunistic infections such as diarrhoea, fever, tuberculosis, pneumonia and lymphoma begin to develop, becoming progressively severe.

## **Homophobia**

The irrational fear and intolerance of people who are homosexuals or of homosexual feelings within oneself.

It assumes that heterosexuality is superior and is usually expressed by discriminatory attitudes toward homosexuals, or even the use of outright violence against homosexuals.

## Homosexuality

Sexual, emotional and/or romantic attraction to people of the same sex. (See also gay; sexuality; sexual identity; sexual orientation; sexual preference.)

### Household maintenance

All domestic and people-related activities carried out by household members, such as the collection of fuel wood and water, meal preparation, child care, repair services, financial services, banking and legal services.



All of these activities are taken into consideration in a country's satellite account. (See also domestic responsibilities; national accounts.)



### Housewife

A woman whose principal occupation is managing a household and who does not receive remuneration or profit from her activities. The preferred gender-sensitive term to use in news and writing is 'homemaker'. (See also reproductive labour.)



## **Human smuggling**

The movement and importation of people into a country through the deliberate evasion of immigration laws, usually for financial or other material benefit.

People who are smuggled can range from those seeking better employment and financial opportunities in another country where they are not nationals or residents of, asylum seekers, refugees and others fleeing conflict or persecution. While people who are smuggled usually pay fees to get them to their destinations, this is not always the case when it comes to families and friends who get others to join them. Smuggling, including that by organised networks in different parts of the world, is usually differentiated from trafficking by the elements of coercion and deception that go with the latter. (See also trafficking of persons.)



# International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)

A United Nations conference that focused on the linkages among population, human rights (including reproductive health), sustained economic growth and balanced development.

Also called the 'Cairo Conference', the ICPD was held in the Egyptian capital in September 1994. In the 20-year Programme of Action they adopted in Cairo, 170 governments confirmed as cornerstones of population and development policies the advancement of gender equality, elimination of violence against women and women's ability to control their own fertility. Discussions on population had tended to focus on demographic targets and population control, until the Cairo consensus introduced a new concept of reproductive health by focusing on the rights on individuals and couples to decide the number, spacing and timing of their children, as a key part of social development.

At the same time, discussions about reproductive health as a right, as well as contraception and reproductive health services for adolescents, ignited debates in many countries before and after the conference.



### Incest

Sexual contact between closely related individuals that violates sociocultural or religious norms or laws. The types of kinship within which sex is forbidden vary widely among cultures.



### Inheritance

The right to receive goods and property through transfer entitlements upon the death of the owner of goods or property.

Traditionally, inheritance rights concern the transfer of goods and property between biological family members. Women in some cultures do not have the legal right to inheritance or to share equally with male heirs.





## Intersex

People born with 'sex chromosomes', external genitalia or reproductive systems that are not considered 'standard' for either male or female.

Intersexuality refers to a set of medical conditions that feature congenital anomaly of the reproductive and sexual system. The existence of intersexuals shows that there are not just two sexes. This word replaces 'hermaphrodite', which is generally considered impolite and/or derogatory.



### Labour

Human activity that produces goods and/or services and most commonly refers to remunerated work.

The term 'invisible labour' refers to unremunerated reproductive labour (e.g., subsistence household maintenance work, usually performed by women and girls) and low-paid informal sector work, both of which are not accounted for in a country's system of national accounts. Invisible labour includes tasks such as carrying water and fuel wood, growing and processing primary agricultural products for families and performing domestic work, including child care. (See also domestic responsibilities; gender-based division of labour; household maintenance; national accounts; production; reproductive labour.)



### Lesbian

A female who is sexually, emotionally and/or romantically attracted to other women.

The term 'lesbian' is preferable to gay or homosexual, which are often used to describe men and, therefore, tend to keep gay women invisible in the media. (See also gay; sexuality; sexual identity; sexual orientation.)



### Machismo

Machismo is a Spanish term for standards of masculinity.

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### Male

Refers to biologically based references to sex.

The word comes through Old French from the Latin 'masculus', which is a diminutive of 'mas' (male, masculine).



An adult male human being.

## Marriage migration

Migration within countries or across borders due to marriage, a trend that has become more common with globalisation, increased mobility and large numbers of labour migrants in host societies.

There are different strands of issues within this form of migration, ranging from uneven levels of development inside and among countries; the predominance of women marriage migrants; economic

Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women

and social mobility; the role of cyberspace; immigration policies, integration and identity; and the emergence of new citizens in migrant-receiving countries.

Some women's advocacy groups focus mostly on the risks and challenges that come with marriage migration, while others touch on the role of these new communities in their new environments. Still others work on commercial marriage migration, which includes the mail-order bride phenomenon.

## Marital rape

Unwanted sexual intercourse, or any other unwanted sexual contact obtained by force, threat of force, or when the spouse is unable to consent; also called spousal rape. (See also date rape; rape.)

### Masculine

The gender characteristics and roles usually associated with being male. (See also gender roles.)

## Matriarchy

A tradition where the line of power resides with older females in the community or tribe. In a matriarchy children are identified in relation to their mothers (matrilinearity) rather than their fathers, so that extended families and tribal alliances rely on female bloodlines.

## Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

A set of eight goals, to be met by 2015, that governments have identified in order to respond to the world's major development challenges. It is used as an indicator of human development.

The MDGs were agreed upon by 189 governments at the United Nations Millennium Summit, held in September 2000. The eight MDGs are: Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education; Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women; Goal 4: Reduce child mortality; Goal 5: Improve maternal health; Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability; and Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development.

## Men who have sex with men (MSM)

Men who engage in same-sex behaviour, but who may not necessarily identify themselves as gay.

In many cultures, men have sex with other men but do not think of themselves as homosexual. The category 'men who have sex with men' is used as a neutral term to refer to such individuals and is thus not a synonym for homosexual men.

### National accounts

The System of National Accounts (SNA) includes the production of all goods, whether destined for the market or not.

Production of services for one's self and for household members is not included in the definition of production of goods and therefore, is not counted in the SNA. Since the SNA is not designed as a measure of welfare, current accounting procedures require that the value of household services for own consumption must be measured as a supplement to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These supplements are called satellite accounts. Women perform the great majority of unremunerated household work (reproductive labour),

but their contribution is not valued in national accounts such as GDP. (See also domestic responsibilities; gender-based division of labour; household maintenance; labour; production; reproductive labour.)





### Ownership

Possession of a resource based on the legal right to own, possess or control it.

There is a difference between having control and having access to resources. To have control over a resource is to have decision-making power over it, which normally derives from ownership of it. To have access to a resource is to have the possibility of making use of it, but not necessarily to have any control over it. For example, women in some cultures do not have the legal right to own land or cattle (often the required collateral to be eligible for credit). They therefore do not have decision-making power over these resources, even if they make use of and manage them on a daily basis.



## Parental rights

The sum total of the rights of parents concerning concerning their children; they also reflect a child's rights in relation to his or her parents.



### Parenthood

The state of being responsible for a child.

The activities performed by men and women as parents are socially determined and vary among cultures and classes.

## Patriarchy

The dominance of men over women that occurs in several spheres of life, including, but not limited to, the economic, political and cultural spheres.

## Pay equity

Compensation based on education, skills, effort, training and responsibility rather than classifications of sex, age, race, ethnic background or other discriminatory classifications.

Pay inequalities are differences in remuneration for the same work when performed by men and women. (See also discrimination.)

## Planned parenthood

The desire and ability to determine the number and spacing of births. (See also family planning.)

## Pre-natal sex selection

Abortion performed because the sex of the foetus is judged to be undesirable to one or both parents.

This usually happens in societies where there is a strong son preference and usually refers to the abortion of female foetuses. It is also called sex-selective abortion. (See also missing women; son preference.)

## Private and public spheres

The traditional areas into which a society is divided, into those regarded as being for women and those for men.

Women's activities have been associated with the private and domestic spheres of life, usually regarded as non-economic; and men to the public ones – usually regarded as economic and political.





### Production

The creation or manufacture for sale of goods and services.

Production results in rewards, benefits, privileges or power deriving from an individual's production while using her/his own or hired resources. A distinction is usually made between productive or economic activities, which are usually remunerated and socially recognised, and reproductive or human maintenance activities, which are carried out to reproduce and care for the household, its members and the community at large, including fuel and water collection, crop cultivation and livestock production, food preparation, child care, education, health care and home maintenance. Reproductive activities, including many done by women, are generally viewed as non-economic and thus often carry no monetary compensation, leading them to be excluded from the national income accounts. (See also domestic responsibilities; household maintenance; labour; national accounts; reproductive labour.)



### Prostitute

A man, woman or transgender who engages in sex acts or sexual intercourse for money or goods.

The term 'sex worker' is also used frequently and many activists use the term 'people in prostitution and sex work'. Debate has continued around the use of the words 'commercial sex worker' and 'prostitute'. Some women's rights advocates say prostitution is work that a person can enter into voluntarily and enjoy benefits and legal protection for, while others say that the room for choice in it is inherently limited and necessarily involves exploitation or is immoral and/or illegal.



A term used to refer to all lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer people.

It is also used as a label to explain a complex set of sexual behaviours and desires. For example, a person who is attracted to multiple genders may identify as 'queer'. Originally, it was a synonym for odd. The word 'queer' became a derogatory expression for gays in the last century. Even though many people still use 'queer' as an anti-gay epithet, a movement emerged in the 1980s that calls itself queer. In this context, queer means sexually dissident. Many gays, transsexuals, bisexuals and even heterosexuals whose sexuality does not fit into the cultural standard of monogamous heterosexual marriage have adopted the 'queer' label.

## Rape

Any form of sexual intercourse or other sexual contact forced by one person upon another, using physical force, threat, deception or coercion.

Rape is a form of violence rather than a form of sex. Statutory rape is sexual intercourse with a person under the age of consent and is illegal in almost all legal systems, regardless of whether there is consent. (See also date rape; domestic violence; gender-based violence; marital rape; sexual assault.)

## Reproductive age

The span of age at which individuals are capable of bearing children.

Although the term can refer to both men and women, most frequently it refers only to women. For example, the phrase 'couples

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of reproductive age' almost always means a couple in which the woman is of childbearing age. The age range referred to is usually 15 to 49.



## Reproductive health

The state of complete physical, mental and social well-being —and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity— in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes.

It is also the ability to enjoy sexual relations without fear of infection, to avoid unwanted pregnancies or coercion; to regulate fertility without risk; to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth; and to bear and raise healthy children. Reproductive health care refers to the methods, techniques and services that contribute to reproductive health and well-being by preventing and solving reproductive health problems, ranging from family-planning counselling and information, prenatal and post-natal care, complications of pregnancy, treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and infertility, and HIV and AIDS. (See also sexual health.)

## Reproductive labour

Activities carried out to care for the household, its members and the community at large, including food preparation, childbirth, breastfeeding, child care, education, health care, fuel and water collection, crop cultivation, livestock production and home maintenance.

In most societies, reproductive labour is undertaken primarily by women and girls. Most often, no monetary value is placed on it or remuneration given to those who do reproductive labour. (See also domestic responsibilities; household maintenance; labour; national accounts; production.)

## Reproductive rights

The basic rights of couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly on the number, spacing and timing of their children, and to have access to the information and means to do so, in order to be able to attain the highest standards of reproductive health, and to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion or violence.

Reproductive rights are not synonymous with sexual rights. (See also sexual rights.)



### Resources

The potential wealth or means of a country or society.

It refers to what people use to perform their activities, such as land, seeds, trees, credit, technology, labour and services. Access to resources is the possibility to use resources readily, without necessarily having control over them. Control of resources includes decision-making power over the use and distribution of resources. (See also labour; ownership; production; reproductive labour.)

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### Safe motherhood

The concept of ensuring that women receive the appropriate care to be safe and healthy throughout pregnancy and childbirth with low risk of death or ill health.

This requires putting in place priorities at the country level such as the empowerment of women to ensure choices, delay in marriage and first birth, ensuring good-quality and skilled delivery, improvement in access to reproductive health services, and prevention of unwanted pregnancies.

## Safe sex

Sexual behaviour that does not pose risks for the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV and AIDS.

However, some reproductive health experts argue that, with the exception of abstinence and solo masturbation, there are no sexual behaviours that are totally safe, and therefore the term 'safer sex' is more appropriate. In this context, safer sex refers to sexual behaviours that reduce - as against do not pose - any risks of transmission of STDs. The consistent use of condoms during sexual activity and non-penetrative sexual activities are some examples of safer sex techniques. Other definitions of safe sex might include relations that lower the risk not only of disease transmission but also of unintended pregnancy, violence, coercion, or abuse of power. In this case, safer sex also includes protected sex, which refers to any sexual behaviour that provides protection either from unwanted pregnancy or from STDs.



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## Sex Sex

Biological characteristics that define human beings at birth as males or females. (See also female; male.)



### Sexism

The supposition, belief or assertion that one sex is superior to the other, often expressed in the context of traditional stereotyping of social roles on the basis of sex, with resultant discrimination practised against members of the supposedly inferior sex. (See also discrimination; gender bias.)

## **Sexuality**

The central aspect of being human that encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction.

Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. It is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical, and religious and spiritual factors. (See also reproductive health; sexual health.)

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### Sexual abuse

Any experience during childhood or adolescence which involves inappropriate, unwanted or forced sexual attention by, usually, an adult but sometimes an older child, teenager or even same-age friend.

Sexual abuse may involve sexualised language, sexual touching, being forced into sex acts or exposure to sexual behaviour or to pornography. The legal definition of sexual abuse varies in different countries. (See also gender-based violence.)

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### Sexual assault

Sexual acts upon or directed to another person that are unwanted and not consented to by the other, usually involving physical force, violence, threat or intimidation.

The legal definition of the acts of sexual violence that constitute sexual assault differs in various countries. (See also domestic violence; gender-based violence; marital rape; rape.)

### Sexual harassment

The use of status or power to coerce or attempt to coerce a person into any kind of sexual contact.

It includes any unwelcome and unwanted practice, comments and attitudes that have sexual implications directed at individuals in a power position toward subordinates, especially in occupational and educational settings. (See also gender-based violence; sexual assault.)



### Sexual health

Women's and men's ability to enjoy and express their sexuality free from the risk of sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy, coercion, violence and discrimination

It means being able to have an informed, enjoyable and safe sex life, based on a positive approach to sexual expression and mutual respect in sexual relations. It is positively enriching, includes pleasure and enhances self-determination, communication and relationships. (See also reproductive health.)



## Sexual identity

How one thinks of oneself in terms of attraction to the same sex or members of the other sex based on one's own experiences, thoughts and reactions, rather than defining oneself based on the gender or sex of one's sexual partner(s).

This can include refusing to label oneself with a sexual identification. (See also sexual orientation.)



### Sexual orientation

The preference of one sex to another as a partner in sexual relations.

Sexual orientation, also called sexual preference, reflects the opinion that people do not control or influence their sexual or romantic attractions. Sexual preference reflects the opinion that people can and do have the ability to control or influence their sexual or romantic attractions and their sexual orientation. (See also sexual identity.)



## Sexual rights

The right to have control and decide freely and responsibly in matters related to one's sexuality, free of coercion, in the preservation of their physical, mental and moral integrity.

Sexual rights include the right to choose to be sexually active or not, and are not synonymous with reproductive rights. (See also reproductive rights; sexuality.)

## Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

Infections usually passed from person to person by sexual contact, although some can be passed on by other means (e.g., through needlestick injury). It is also called sexually transmitted diseases or STDs.



## Single parent

A person who is bringing up a child or children without the assistance of a partner. (See also parental rights; parenthood.)

### Sisterhood

Solidarity among women; the bonding of women who share the same goals, experiences or points of view toward their empowerment.





### Son preference

The desire to have at least one male child in the family.

This is often due to the perception that sons contribute to the economy of households, are able to continue the family line, and carry out rites and rituals, as well as provide security to parents during their old age. (See also pre-natal sex selection.)



### Structural adjustment programmes (SAPs)

Economic policies for developing countries that have been promoted by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and which these countries have to follow in order to receive loans from these two institutions.

SAPs policies reflect the neoliberal ideology that drives globalisation. They aim to achieve long-term or accelerated economic growth in poorer countries through policies that focus on reducing government intervention and pushing export-led growth, privatisation and liberalisation for the efficiency of the free market.

The World Bank and IMF pushed SAPs during the eighties and nineties, during which debates emerged about their harmful impact on social sectors. Since then, there has been an acceptance of the problems that SAPs lead to and the importance of balancing economic reform with social priorities and development. The term, which acquired a negative connotation in civil society circles, is not used as often as it has been in the past. But critics of SAPs say that their philosophy and elements continue in the term 'poverty

reduction' that financial institutions have used increasingly since the late 1990s. 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers', which countries are encouraged to draw up, have basically taken the place of SAPs. (See also feminisation of poverty.)

## **Tokenism**

A policy or practice of attempting to fulfil one's obligations or implement a goal with limited efforts or gestures, especially toward minority groups and women, in ways that give a mere appearance of inclusivity or execution and will not change male-dominated power and/or organisational arrangements.

For example, a woman may be given a middle-management position without significant power to make decisions, allowing a company to claim that it does not discriminate against women. (See also critical mass.)

## Total fertility rate (TFR)

The average number of children that would be born alive to a woman during her lifetime if the age-specific fertility rates of a given year applied throughout her childbearing years.

### Traditions

Inherited, established or customary patterns of thought, action or behaviour.

Some traditions and customs, such as polygamy, are embraced by women and men in one society, but may be rejected by them in another. Some traditions and customs accord women status and power, such as healers. But other traditional practices, such as dowry deaths and female genital mutilation, reinforce an unequal and

subservient position for women and girls in society and/or violate women's rights. (See also dowry; female genital mutilation; genderbased violence: inheritance.)





### Trafficking of persons

The act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring, or receiving people through the threat or use of force, deception, coercion, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability for the purpose of exploiting them.

This exploitation is usually for prostitution, sexual exploitation, forced labour or the removal of organs, and can be facilitated by giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim. In addition, the trafficking of women and girls includes being for the purpose of domestic work, arranged marriages or 'selling' them as brides, within countries or to other countries.

The trafficking of persons, or human trafficking, is usually differentiated from human smuggling based on whether a person is moved from one place to another willingly, but this does not mean that no abuses occur in a situation of human smuggling, say of asylum seekers. (See also human smuggling.)



## Transgender

A person whose behaviour, thoughts or traits differ from society's expectations for his or her sex.

Transgenders include cross-dressers, transsexuals (people who physically switch sexes, usually through surgery, and undergo sex reassignment therapy), intersexed individuals, people whose external genitalia or internal reproductive systems fall outside the norms for either male or female bodies, gay men, lesbian women and bisexuals.

Terms such as 'gay' and 'homosexual' are often applied to transgenders, but these may not be accurate because more than sexual orientation is involved. Transgenders include men who behave like women, in the clothes they wear and body gestures for instance, but who also remain distinct as a 'third sex' category.

Transgenders have an entirely distinct lifestyle, neither male nor female, and do not conform to social norms for typical men and women. (See also gender identity; sexual identity; sexual orientation.)

### Transsexual

A person who experiences a mismatch of the biological sex he/she was born as and the biological sex he/she identifies as.

A transsexual sometimes undergoes medical treatment to change his/her physical sex to match his/her sex identity through hormone treatments and/or surgical procedures. (See also sexual identity; sexual orientation.)



### Transvestite

A man who enjoys wearing women's clothing for pleasure, or for sexual, emotional or spiritual gratification.

Transvestites are often heterosexual-identified men who enjoy dressing in women's clothing in private or openly. (See also sexual identity; sexual orientation.)



## Unprotected sex

Any sexual behaviour that has a degree of risk because partners are not using protection against either pregnancy or STDs. At present, condom use is the only method that can provide protection against these two. (See also condom; safe sex; unsafe sex.)

### Unsafe abortions

Procedures for terminating a pregnancy performed either by persons lacking the necessary skills or in an environment lacking the basic medical and standard sanitary conditions, or both.



A quarter of women worldwide live in countries where there is no access to legal abortion. In countries where abortion is legal, women may not be able to obtain the necessary bureaucratic permission. In these circumstances, women frequently resort to unsafe abortion, which exposes them to an increased risk of mortality or morbidity. (See also abortion.)



### Unsafe sex

Any sexual behaviour that poses risks of transmission of STDs, including HIV and AIDS.

There are different levels of risky behaviours, categorised from low to high. Moderate-risk sexual activities include oral-anal contact, oral sex without a condom, sex with multiple partners and sharing sex toys. High-risk sexual activities include anal and vaginal intercourse without a condom when not in a long-term relationship in which both partners are free from STDs, do not have any other sexual partners, and do not share intravenous drug equipment with others. (See also safe sex.)



### Unwanted sex

Any forced sexual behaviour with an individual without his or her consent.

It may also refer to sexual contact in which one of the partners feels obliged to satisfy the other even without overt coercion to do so. (See also sexual assault; sexual violence.)



## Violence against women

"Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life," as defined by the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.

It also includes "physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family and in the general community including battering, sexual abuse of female children, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation, sexual harassment, and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women, forced prostitution, and violence perpetrated or condoned by the state." (See also genderbased violence.)



### Woman

An adult female human being.



### Missing women

The number of women missing from global population data, as their potential existence had been eliminated through foeticide, infanticide, sex-selective abortion, selective malnourishment, denial of health care and various forms of gender violence.

The term was coined by Indian economist Amartya Sen, who wrote an article in 1990 that referred to the estimated 100 million women who were missing as a result of various forms of gender inequality. (See also pre-natal sex selection; son preference.)

## Women in Development (WID)

The approach that was developed in the early 1970s to increase development resources targeted toward women specifically, and usually separately, as a group.



Emphasis is usually on income-generating schemes that often reinforce women's traditional roles and responsibilities. While the WID approach seeks to integrate women in the development process, it has often increased women's workload and reinforced gender-based inequalities. Its focus on women as a separate group ignored the close and interdependent connections of social and power relations between men and women.

The shortcomings of the WID approach gave impetus to the development of the gender and development (GAD) approach, which recognises that all development planning, policies and projects must reflect gender sensitivity about and gender awareness of the different roles that men and women play in societies, differences in their access to and control over resources and the differential impacts of development processes on them.

WID and GAD are often used interchangeably, but they have approaches that seek very different results. (See also Gender and Development; gender mainstreaming.)

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# CHAPTER II TROUBLESOME TERMS AND ALTERNATIVES



ow exactly does one use gender-friendly language in news copy? Does one hide sexes and genders and remove all references to them, tiptoe around them? Is one supposed to remove all terms that end in —men or —man?

These are common and frank questions journalists have asked in many a discussion when it comes to gender and the news.

Gender awareness and sensitivity are tools for better reporting. They are part of the standard editorial guidepost that includes avoiding the use of language that perpetuates racial, sexual, religious and other stereotypes, and not mentioning a person's race, sexual orientation, nationality or marital status unless these are relevant to the story. Better reporting here includes the use of words that help remove sexist biases and frameworks in news language and speech, some of which we may not even be aware of.

Language is a prism that reflects how we think. It is common to assume that generic terms are masculine first before they are feminine or that the feminine comes from the masculine, as Dennis Baron points out in his book 'Gender and Grammar' (1986), which looks into the gender biases that exist in the English language and attempts at gender reform over centuries. "More often than not . . . the masculine in language, whether in word form or grammatical form, is assumed to be the norm, while the feminine is ignored or barely noticed. This reflects a distorted world view in which women function as the second sex and language simply holds a mirror up to nature," he writes.

Assuming that sources in the news such as scientists, police officers or soldiers are male brings up not just the issue of gender sensitivity – but of accuracy. They are not always men.

The areas easiest to trip over are the use of gender-specific nouns in news copy that mark women as different, inferior or stereotyped in some situations and roles, and the use of the generic masculine (-men) and gender-blind words that render women invisible.

Substituting 'chairman' or 'chairwoman' with a piece of furniture – chair – does not make a story gender-friendly or add clarity in any way. Replacing all references to 'chairman' or chairwoman' to 'chairperson' deprives readers of a basic fact that helps them understand a story better – knowing whether the voice in a news story is a he or a she (especially because this is not easy to tell from people's names in several countries and cultures).

In sum, not knowing the sex of persons appearing in stories often reinforces two very biased assumptions: (1) that the persons being referred to are men and (2) that women and/or girls do not perform work or take on roles associated with the persons these articles talk about. For example, in a story about farmers, the lack of further details or quotes from both men and women farmers will inevitably lead readers to assume that the story refers to male farmers, read about it from a male perspective and/or presume that most farmers are male. This is grossly incorrect in many parts of the developing world.

History has been rich in linguistic lapses. To stress the point about mistaken notions often reflected through people's choice of words, for instance, Baron cites the example of the pronoun 'she', which is "occasionally treated as a prefix of sorts attached to the masculine 'he', a theory which falsifies the history of these unrelated pronouns". Likewise, 'female' is commonly assumed to have been derived from 'male'. But Baron explains that 'female' actually comes from the Latin 'femella', a diminutive of 'femina' or woman. "It is completely unrelated to male, which comes to us via Old French from the Latin masculus, a diminutive of 'male, masculine'."

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Against this backdrop, the media are often reactive and tend to use vocabulary that reinforce the status quo and reinforce women's unequal positions in society.



But the media can also be proactive in changing perceptions about people in a society by using new terms regularly, or explaining why a term has become negative and unacceptable to a group of people. For example, the terms 'aboriginals' and 'Indians' have been replaced by 'indigenous peoples' and 'Native Americans'. When media play this role, they can be very powerful change agents.

Here is a selected list of terms that should be avoided because either they are sexist, exclude women, or are demeaning, most often to women and girls. Alternatives include sex-specific terms and genderneutral plural forms. It is good to remember that while gender-neutral terms avoid sexism, they can keep women invisible. In cases where the use of a word has reinforced a perception that only men perform a task or role, sex-specific alternatives to it are noted.

TERMS TO AVOID	ALTERNATIVES		
abortion mills	abortion clinics		
aged	older women, older men, older adults		
airline stewards/esses	flight attendants		
bag lady	homeless woman		
barmaid	drinks server		
barren	infertile		
bellboy	bellhop		
Blacks (N. America)	African American women/girls, African American men/boys, African Americans		
boy child	boy		
broken home	single-parent family		

TERMS TO AVOID	ALTERNATIVES		
brotherhood of Man	humanity		
busboy	waiters' assistant		
businessmen	businessman, businesswoman, entrepreneur, business community		
cameraman	camera operator, photographer		
chairman	chairman; chairwomen, moderator; never chairperson or chair unless in a quote		
chambermaid	hotel worker		
child molestation	child abuse		
chorus girl	chorus dancer/singer		
cleaning women	cleaners		
congressmen	congressional representatives; members of Congress, congressmen and congresswomen		
craftsmen	craftsman, craftswoman, artisans		
delivery boy	deliverer		
doorman	doorkeeper		
draughtsmen	draughtsman, draughtswoman, drafters		
dyke	lesbian		
early Man	early peoples, early men and women		
employed mothers	mothers working outside the home		
employment barrier	job discrimination		
effeminate	delicate, feeble, soft, affected		
father (religious)	priest		
female homosexuality	lesbianism		
firemen	firefighters		
fishermen	fisherwomen, fishermen, fishers, fishing trade/community		
fishwives	fish sellers		
forefathers	ancestors		
foreman	supervisor		
gay female	gay woman or lesbian		

TERMS TO AVOID	ALTERNATIVES			
gay male	gay man			
genitalia	genitals			
gentleman's agreement	unwritten agreement			
girl child	girl			
girl Friday	administrative assistant			
girl watching	harassment			
hooker	prostitute, commercial sex worker			
househusband	homemaker			
housewife	homemaker			
longshoremen	longshoreman, longshorewoman, longshore workers			
lumberjack	lumberman, lumberwomen, lumber cutters, dockers			
maid	household worker, domestic worker			
maiden name	birth name			
maidenhead	hymen			
mailman	mail carrier			
male homosexual	homosexual, gay man			
man, mankind	humanity, human species, humans, humankind, human beings, peoples			
man a project	staff a project, hire personnel			
man-hours	work hours, labour time			
man and wife	husband and wife, wife and husband			
man-made	handmade			
manpower	human resources, labour force, personnel			
man to man	one to one, person to person			
masterful	skilful, expert			
middleman	intermediary, agent			
mill girl	factory worker			
motherhood	parenthood			
newsman/newshen	reporter, journalist, male or female journalist			



TERMS TO AVOID	ALTERNATIVES		
pitchman	promoter, hawker		
pressmen	press operators		
pro-choice movement	pro-abortion movement		
pro-life movement	anti-abortion movement		
repairmen	repairman, repairwoman, repairers		
reverse discrimination	affirmative action		
right to life	anti-abortion movement		
salesmen/girl	salesman, saleswoman, salespeople		
servant	household worker, domestic worker		
sex offences	sex crimes		
spokesman	spokesman, spokeswoman;		
	never spokesperson unless in a quote		
statesmen	diplomats, political leaders		
statesmanship	diplomacy		
street people	homeless men and women		
unmarried father	single father		
unmarried men	single men		
unmarried/unwed mother	single mother		
unmarried woman	single woman		
waitress	waiter		
watchman	guard, security guard		
weatherman	weather reporter, meteorologist		
whore	prostitute, commercial sex worker		
woman driver	driver		
working mother/wife/woman	mother/wife/woman working outside the home		

# **CHAPTER III REPORTING GENDER**



Bringing out the gender nuances in news stories makes for better in-depth articles because they carry more varied voices, different views and explore angles beyond the obvious ones. These can help journalists discover aspects of a story that make it more interesting, capture readers' attention and generate discussion.

Examining facets that look into how relations between men and women impact on a situation or a trend, as well as society's perception of different genders and their roles, is useful for all stories.

Gender is about power relationships between men and women, including access to and control over resources and expression. Gender is part of the political, social, economic and cultural dimensions of a story. Gender roles and responsibilities are changeable. Gender is not a synonym for women.

In developing stories, as well as editing them, it is useful to remember that gender is part of every quality story.

Below are some questions that help story development:

- How varied are the voices in this story? Where are the women in it?
- How are the women portrayed? (Is it in a manner that reinforces stereotypes, unduly shows them as victims?)
- What is the sex of the person(s) in the story?
- What roles do these men and women have (thinking also about age, class, race and ethnicity) and how do these factors shape the issues and story?

- What are the power relationships between men and women and how do these roles and power relationships further explain the issue being addressed?
- How are the impacts of events and processes different for women and men?

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