Gender concepts

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Gender refers to roles, responsibilities, rights, relationships and identities of men and women that are defined or ascribed to them within a given society and context – and how these roles, responsibilities and rights and identities of men and women affect and influence each other. These roles, etc., are changeable over time, between places and within places.
Gender roles refer to how men and women should act, think and feel according to norms and traditions in a particular place and time.
Social norms refers to socially learnt roles and responsibilities assigned to both sexes in a given culture along with the societal structures that support these roles. They are internalized early in life through the process of gender socialization, are used as standards and expectations to which women and men should conform and can result in gender stereotypes.
Gender equality refers to equal rights, voice, responsibilities and opportunities for men and women in society, at work and in the home.

Gender equity refers to fairness between men and women in access to society’s resources, including socially valued goods, rewards and opportunities.

Video: Gender Equality: Now (3.03 min)
Women’s empowerment refers to the process in which women reflect upon their reality and question the reasons for their situation in society. It includes developing alternative options and taking opportunities to address existing inequalities. It enables them to live their lives in the fullness of their capabilities and their own choices in respect of their rights as human beings.

In the Beijing Declaration, it was agreed that “women’s empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace.
Gender perspective means that

- A differentiation is made between the needs and priorities of men and women;
- The views and ideas of both men and women are taken seriously;
- The implications of decisions on the situation of women relative to men are considered: who will gain and who will lose; and
- Action is taken to address inequalities or imbalance between men and women.