

Gender Mainstreaming

What is Gender Mainstreaming ?

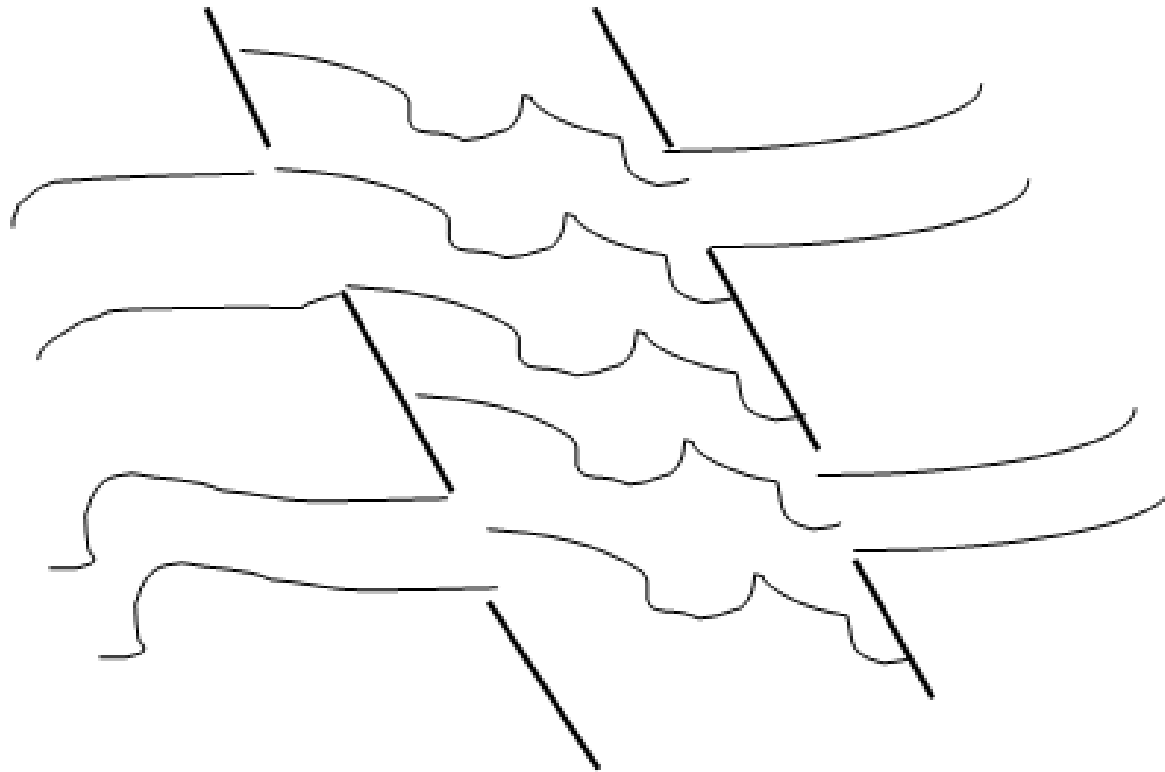
- It is Incorporating equal opportunities for women and men into all national policies and programs at all levels.
- Gender mainstreaming is a strategy aimed at gender equality.
- The goal is to enable men and women to have equal opportunities through the development process.

- It is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned actions, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels.
- -It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes.

What is the Mainstream ?

- In the context of development, the mainstream is the interrelated set of dominant ideas and development directions and decisions taken for gender equality.
- The mainstream includes leaders, lawmakers, the rich, influential people, spiritual leaders, technocrats, local and central government, politicians etc.

The Mainstream and sub-streams



What are the sub-streams?

- The sub-streams are the poor, widowed women, street children, orphans, girl child, old people, domestic workers, needs of the disadvantaged, women's projects, services to the disadvantaged etc.
- The efforts to incorporate these in the development process are marginal in terms of resources(human, material, financial).

Key points to note in gender mainstreaming

- Gender mainstreaming is a political issue – dealing with powers. It needs strategic approach in mainstreaming it within the organizational systems.
- Gender issues are not confined to one sector but must be addressed across all sectors and at all levels

- Gender issues are not confined to programs and target groups but must be addressed at policy (macro), organizational/ institutional level (meso) and community level (micro).
- They must be addressed at every stage in the program/ project cycle, beginning with identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

- At the project level, mainstreaming means that projects have to be designed to ensure that women as well as men are entitled to participate and benefit fully from a project.
- Should consider the interdependence or complementary roles of men and women and to recognise so that one cannot be changed without also affecting the other.

Why mainstream gender?

- To create gender equitable work environment which allows both men and women to be satisfied in their professional and personal lives
- To engage both men and women in decision making
- Aims at shifting gender relations in a direction more favorable to women

- Secures equality between men and women hence transforming gender relations
- Involving both men and women in male and female community organization can ensure that women have a distinct voice and that their self-confidence is increased

Gender mainstreaming plays important roles in influencing:

- the cultural context
- the project management
- human resources development
- institutional development
- training measures
- planning processes
- resource management policies
- trade and economy

Advantages of gender mainstreaming

- Law making process-it justifies the revision of laws and regulations in order to lay a firm foundation for developing gender equality
- Gender issues can be addressed on all policy levels from ministries to communities.
- It empowers about 50% of the population(women) which represents the strongest labour force which is at the same time marginalized in many societies

- Addressing gender issues has positive impact across sectors and at different levels.
- Women are motivated to improve their situation

Steps in Gender Mainstreaming

1. Analysis of a given situation
2. Creating awareness on gender issues within a given context
3. Identification of feasible measures which consider and alleviate gender inequalities
4. Identification of indicators (benchmarks) and preconditions which reflect the success of gender mainstreaming efforts

5. Discussion on all impacts of these measures with sensitized experts
6. Implementation of the above stated measures
7. Monitoring the impact of these measures, adaptation on demand

1. Analysis of a given situation.

- 1. Collection and analysis of available data can give a first insight on the gender balance of a situation. The main questions include:
 - Are gender disaggregated statistics available and what do they represent?
 - Is additional research required to clarify the situation?

2. Creating awareness on gender issues within a given context

- Gender inequalities and inequities are perceived as a major problem. Traditional values within a society represent the norms, and there are few opportunities of comparing this norm with alternatives.
- Group discussion within male and female groups lead to more awareness on the situation of inequalities.
- Therefore presentation of the findings from the analysis can give a clear image of an existing gender imbalance.

- Gender mainstreaming has to be addressed at different political levels:
 - a) Legislative level
 - The development of laws and regulations form the legal basis as a backbone for gender mainstreaming.
 - It is also important to incorporate gender issues on the policy level when the process of removing the gender imbalances shall take place.
 - Existing laws have to be reviewed according to their impact on gender mainstreaming.

b) Institutional Level

- A detailed analysis of institutional set-ups shows, how much gender balance is given to share power within an institution or organization.
- In general, many committees are dominated by males, while females are highly underrepresented. Politically important positions are mostly dominated by men.
- A discussion can be initiated, which analyses the reasons and impacts on the status quo of the gender ratio as well as pinpointing gender inequalities.

c) Community level

- ❑ While the work of men is often linked to higher importance as it forms the income of a household economy (productive activities), the effort being spent on basic reproductive work (fetching water, cooking, washing, looking after children) done by females is often underestimated, even by themselves.
- ❑ The development of a gender resource map helps the males and females to identify the workload and its impact on daily life. It might be helpful to discuss the coping mechanism, in case of sickness of the one or the other family member. This also shows, that both male and female work is indispensable for a household.

5. IDENTIFICATION OF FEASIBLE MEASURES

which consider and alleviate gender inequalities

- After all groups concerned have been sensitized about the impact of gender inequalities in a first step, tangible measures and activities have to be defined and prioritized, in order to improve the overall situation and to (partly) alleviate the gender imbalance.
- This has to be done on various levels with the different priorities, while the scope of activities is limited by the available budget. Measure can be differentiated according to:

Policy level

- Development of gender-equity supporting laws and regulations (eg access to land, credit, staffing, education, laws against discrimination)
- Supporting awareness-creation process on gender issues at policy level.

Institutional / organizational level

- Improving the institutional policies, rules and regulations
- Development of gender equitable staff recruitment procedures
- Institutional training measures in order to decrease educational deficits

Community level

- Gender training, gender oriented education
- Measures to address single households, etc

- After collecting all ideas in a moderated process, the feasibility and priority of all possible measures have to be identified.
- Most important is to get commitments from all actors involved and to define clear responsibilities in order to carry out these measures successfully.

(benchmarks) and preconditions
which reflect the success of gender
mainstreaming effort

- Indicators reflect the degree to which an activity leads to the desired objective
- Preconditions have to be defined, under which activities can be performed.
- In case the conditions change, the implementation of activities has to be redesigned or stopped.

5. Discussion on all impacts of these measures with sensitized experts

- A detailed discussion on the level of intervention and the impact on gender mainstreaming has to be undertaken by a group of relevant experts drawn from all stakeholders.
- A high level of commitment from all involved organizations ensures a successful implementation of gender mainstreaming in all planned activities.

Implementation of the above stated measures

- After defining and prioritizing feasible measures on Gender Mainstreaming, all activities have to be implemented by the stakeholders identified through an agreed action plan.

Monitoring the impact of these measures, adaptation on demand

- While gender mainstreaming is an iterative process to reduce and eliminate gender inequalities and gender inequities, the impact of all measures has to be monitored.
- Measures have to be refined or stopped, if they do contribute towards the objective, or if severe side effects can be observed.
- Indicators determining the impact on the activities can be used to objectively judge about the progressing achievement.