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COURSE 1 – INTRODUCTION TO GENDER EQUALITY CONCEPTS IN THE CONTEXT OF LAND USE AND FOOD AND AGRICULTURE COMMODITY SYSTEMS

PRE-READING AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

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Key gender equality concepts [1]

Gender

Gender refers to social characteristics of women and men— such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. So, it is not just about biology or what body parts someone has. It's also about how people express themselves, the clothes they wear, the activities they enjoy, and the roles they take on in society. Some people might identify as male, some as female, and some as non-binary, which means they don't feel strictly like a boy/men or a girl/women. Everyone's experience of gender can be unique and personal to them.

Gender norms

Ideas about how men and women should be and act. We internalize and learn these “rules” early in life. This sets-up a life-cycle of gender socialization and stereotyping. Put another way, gender norms are the standards and expectations to which gender identity generally conforms, within a range that defines a particular society, culture and community at that point in time.

Gender roles

Roles that men and women are expected to occupy based on their sex: informal social attributes, behavioral, work or responsibilities. These often determine the traditional responsibilities and tasks assigned to men, women, boys and girls. Gender-specific roles are often conditioned by household structure, access to resources, specific impacts of the global economy, occurrence of conflict or disaster, and other locally relevant factors such as ecological conditions. Like gender itself, gender roles can evolve over time, in particular through the empowerment of women and transformation of masculinities.

[1] Based on UN Women's [I Know Gender Training](#)



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Gender relations

These reflect how people of different genders interact with each other, including how power and resources are divided between them. In many societies, men have more power and control over resources compared to women and others with diverse gender identities. This creates inequality and hierarchical structures. Gender relations can change over time to become fairer and more equal.

Important things to know about gender relations are:

1. **Power Imbalances:** Gender relations often involve one gender having more power and influence than others. This affects who gets resources, makes decisions, and has opportunities. In the past, men have been seen as more powerful than women, but there are efforts to make things more equal.
2. **Social Expectations:** Gender relations include what society expects from people based on their gender. This affects how they're treated and the roles they have in things like family, education, work, and social situations.
3. **Economic Factors:** Gender relations also connect with the economy. Things like which jobs people do, pay differences, and how work is divided can be influenced by gender. This affects people's access to work and money based on their gender.
4. **Intersectionality:** Gender relations are connected to other aspects of people's identity, like race, class, sexuality, and ability. This means that discrimination based on gender can be different for people with multiple marginalized identities.

Gender inequalities

Differences in access to opportunities based solely on gender. They are patriarchy-socially constricted, which means that every aspect of life is dominated primarily by men. The difference between what people do in society does not necessarily produce gender inequality: rather, the unequal power relations limit women's rights in relation to:

- choices and autonomy
- access to and control over resources and earnings
- decision making and participation
- control over related to their sexual and productive rights

Gender discrimination

Disadvantageous treatment of an individual or group based on gender. Gender inequality and gender discrimination are intertwined and perpetuate each other. It is important to note that while gender inequality and discrimination are often discussed in relation to women, individuals can experience inequality or discrimination based on any gender. Gender stereotypes and stigma leads to discrimination, which is a violation of human rights.

RESOURCES

[Handbook on Gender Mainstreaming for Gender Equality Results, UN Women, 2022](#)

[Gender Mainstreaming in Agricultural Supply Chains Can Accelerate Good Growth: What Works and for Whom? Good Growth Partnership, 2020](#)

[FAO's Course: Developing gender-sensitive value chains](#)

[Tools and Methods for Gender Research and Integration in Agricultural Value Chain, Market and Entrepreneurship Projects \(Working Paper\), CGIAR Gender Platform, 2021](#)

These, together with other publications, are part of the Resource Guide on Gender Equality for FOLUR, which will be soon available in a PDF format in the [Food and Agriculture Commodity Systems Community](#) platform. The Resource Guide presents in a synthesised way a selection of resources specifically related to gender equality in the context of Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration, published by [FOLUR](#) Global Platform partners and other organisations in the recent years.



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