

EMPOWERMENT DIAMONDS

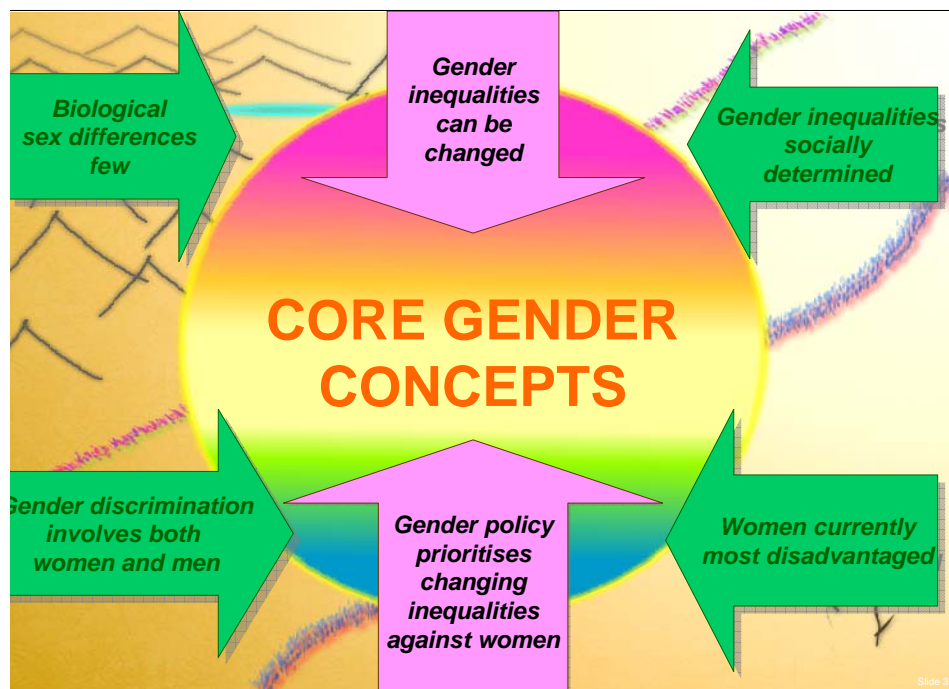
Part of the discussion in this workshop are some basic participatory planning tools which can be used in the field. One is the Road journey used in this Session. A second, which feeds into the Road Journey are Diamonds which are used first to rank indicators, then to score people against each, to identify strategies for those in the bottom section to help them up, and to plot progress over time in impact assessment.

Handout 1 gives details of a series of empowerment diamond exercises conducted by staff of Kashf Foundation following the first gender training for Pakistan Microfinance Network. One of the diamonds is shown here.

The slide shows one of the KASHF Diamonds Near Lahore done by KASHF staff investigated women's own concepts of empowerment (See handout on Kashf Diamonds)

New ones will be conducted in the field during the field visit to look at women's empowerment indicators in this area.

But first, before looking at the field, it is useful in gender training to clarify one's own aspirations and assumptions. Including differences between women and between men, as well as along gender lines. This will increase understanding between participants and how to manage differences and misunderstandings – an essential part of internal gender policy which will be followed up later in the training.



CORE GENDER CONCEPTS

More important than an understanding of all the complexities of academic debate however is clarity of underlying gender principles on which a programme vision and commitment can be built. Most of these were covered in the plenary discussion of your own Empowerment Diamonds:

Gender is a social construct:

Biological sex differences are very few and are unimportant in terms of determining gender inequality.

Gender inequalities can therefore be changed

Because gender inequalities are socially determined they can be changed

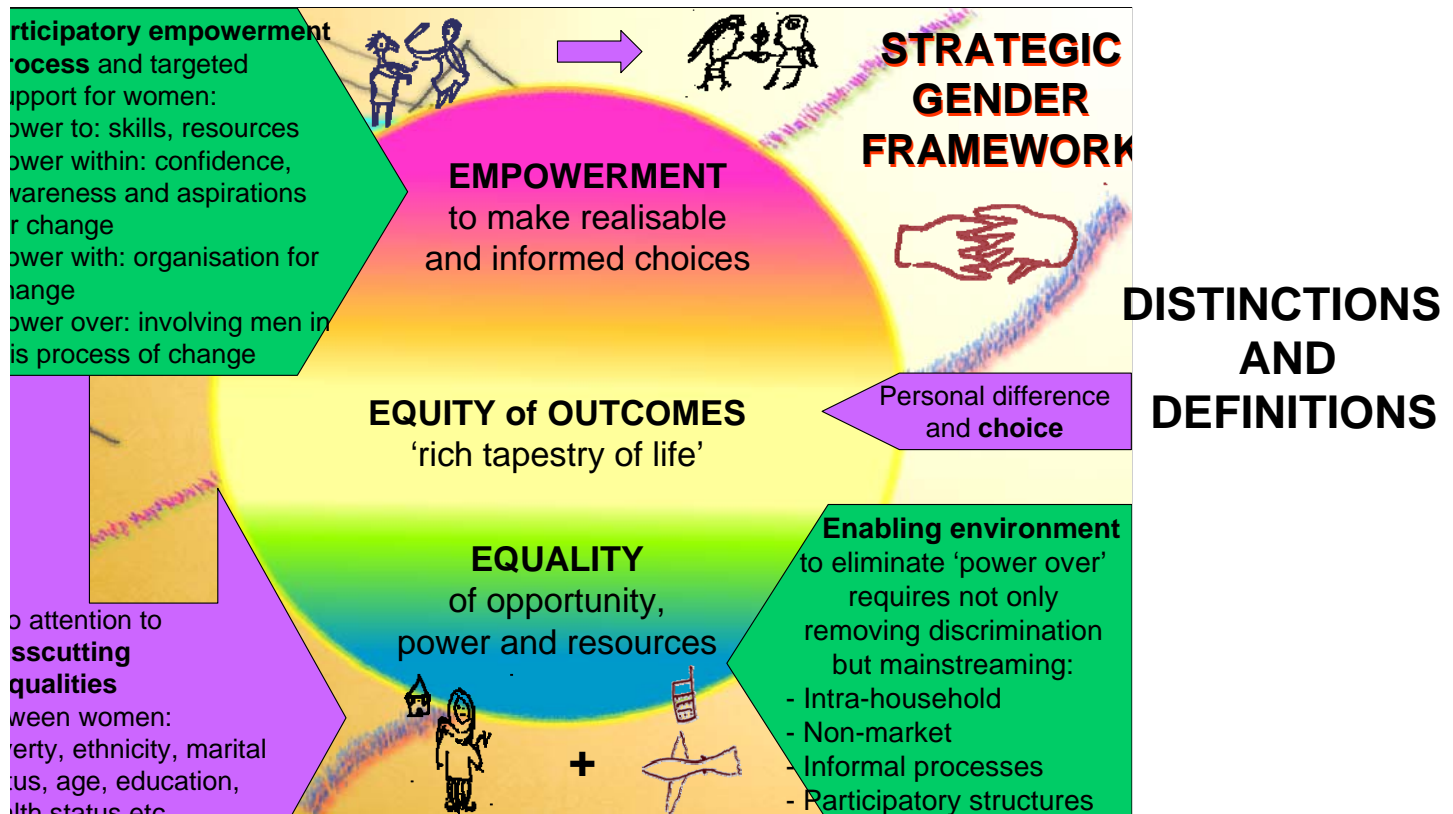
Gender means both women and men:

Discrimination based on gender affects both women and men adversely.

Addressing gender inequality to redress discrimination against both women and men requires actions by both women and men to challenge their existing attitudes, privilege and practice.

BUT Gender also means prioritising the interests of the currently most disadvantaged sex ie women

In the current situation gender inequality affects women more adversely than men. This justifies prioritizing attention to those inequalities which affect women, whether this is in the form of strategies targeting women or strategies targeting men to help men to change and promote gender equality.



Building on gender debates it is useful to conceptualise the goal of gender policy in terms of three aspects:

- 1) At the base is a solid foundation of **GENDER EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**: *elimination of those differences which perpetuate unequal power and resources and ascribe lower value to women's choices*. It may also be used to refer to those more limited areas where men's choices and access to power and resources are limited. *Gender is no longer a basis for discrimination and inequality between people*.

This means turning the 'malestream' blue into a really gender neutral green.

- 2) This supports and is complemented by active promotion of **WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**: is the participatory process through which women, who are currently most discriminated against, achieve gender equality and equity. Where the extent of women's disadvantage means that they are unable to fully promote their own interests, this will require support by development agencies at household, community and macro levels. This will include support for men to change those aspects of their behaviour, roles and privileges which currently discriminate against women.

This means turning the angry and shocking pink into a happy glowing orange through helping women identify and achieve their aspirations.


At both levels it also means addressing other dimensions of inequality between women: poverty, ethnic identity poverty, ethnicity, marital status, age, education, health status etc which affect women's opportunities and choices as well as power and resources.

- 3) The bright sunrise goal in the middle, if these two dimensions are achieved, is **GENDER EQUITY OF OUTCOMES**: whereby, based on equality of opportunity and empowerment women and men may make different, free and realisable life choices. In a gender equitable society both women and men enjoy equal status, rights, levels of responsibility, and access to power and resources. This enables them to make their own informed, realisable and free life choices.

This does not mean everyone will be the same. Or that on average women and men may not make different life choices. There may still be **GENDER DIFFERENCE**: but only *those differences between women and men which are freely chosen and value-neutral*. Most current 'differences' between men and women, even where they may involve an element of choice (e.g. what to wear) are nevertheless *embedded in structures of gender inequality* which generally ascribe lower value to women's choices and perpetuate unequal access to power and resources. In a gender equitable society no such inequalities would result from gender difference.

Some examples for clarification:

- *Gandhi and a beggar: Gandhi was poor through choice, a beggar is not. For Gandhi poverty is equitable, for a beggar it is not.*
- *A woman may choose to stay at home to look after children, but this is only an equitable outcome if she had a real choice including equal opportunity to well-paid work and anxiety-free childcare which is good for the children and equal assistance with unpaid household work.*
- *A woman may choose to take only a small loan. But this is only equitable if she has equal access to large loans as men, the qualifying criteria do not discriminate against women (programme question) and she has equal possibilities of using and benefiting from a large loan (context question).*



GENDER MAINSTREAMING

- ◆ A strategy for making women's concerns and experiences equally integral to the
 - ◆ design,
 - ◆ implementation,
 - ◆ monitoring and evaluation
- ◆ of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres.
- ◆ Its goals are gender equitable development outcomes through ensuring gender equality of opportunity and empowerment of women as well as men.
- ◆ It involves both:
 - ◆ mainstreaming gender considerations in priorities, policies and programmes to ensure equality of opportunity
 - ◆ explicit empowerment strategies targeting women as participants and/or beneficiaries.

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GENDER MAINSTREAMING: INTERNATIONAL DEFINITION

WHAT IS GENDER MAINSTREAMING?

The definition used here is based on the 1997 international declaration on gender mainstreaming signed by ECOSOC (the umbrella body for UN organisations).

ECOSOC DEFINITION

“Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality” (p2).

ECOSOC FRAMEWORK

“Mainstreaming practice requires **more than designing and implementing “add-on” projects for women.** Currently, United Nations development entities that actively address gender issues in their work, in general take a two-pronged approach:

- (a) mainstreaming gender considerations in priorities, policies and programmes and***
- (b) targeting women as participants and/or beneficiaries through women- and girl-specific programmes.***

Mainstreaming and targeting are not mutually exclusive, but complementary strategies both having the achievement of gender-sensitive outcomes as their objective. Increasingly, women-specific projects are linked to mainstreaming efforts.” (pp11-15)

Detailed ECOSOC guidelines cover a number of different dimensions of policy:

- ***vision***
- ***organisational structure for policy formation and implementation***
- ***guidelines and incentives at programme level***
- ***continued support for women's projects and programmes***
- ***commitment to participatory processes.***

But the definition used here incorporates also subsequent distinctions between ‘gender equality of opportunity’ and ‘gender equity of outcomes’ rather than conflating these in the terms ‘gender equality’ or ‘gender equity’.