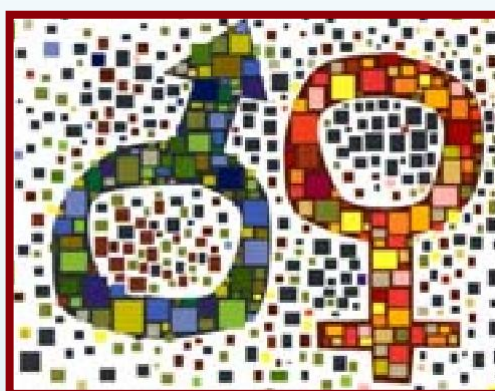


INTEGRATING GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN THE WORK OF PRISM

GENDER POLICY OF PRISM



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Chairperson's Executive Statement on The Gender Policy of PRISM:

Integrating Gender Perspectives in the Work of PRISM

Integrating gender perspectives will help to strengthen the impact and coverage of our work. I take this opportunity to share with you the new PRISM Gender Policy and ask you all to give it your full attention. I expect all volunteers to be fully accountable to me on progress in this area.

Gender is a cross-cutting issue and the implementation of the Gender Policy will require the commitment, participation and contribution of everyone associated with the organization. Our commitment to integrating gender perspectives will need to be reflected in work plans and budgeting. These action plans will be used to monitor progress.

I will be deputing a senior level Task Force to facilitate and support the implementation of PRISM's work on gender, and to ensure its overall coherence. This Task Force will report to me on progress.

I look forward to seeing PRISM's work in this area further strengthened and consolidated.

Aniruddha Dey

Chairperson

GENDER POLICY of PRISM

Integrating Gender Perspectives in the work of PRISM

Background and rationale

1. "The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of living is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition". Twenty years after this resolution was adopted, it is increasingly well recognized that there are differences in the factors determining the standard of living and the burden of ill-health, inaccessibility, lack of information, education and other impoverishment processes for women and men. The dynamics of gender in development and to alleviate poverty are of profound importance in this regard and they have long been overlooked.
 2. Society prescribes to women and men different roles in different social contexts. There are also differences in the opportunities and resources available to women and men, and in their ability to make decisions and exercise their human rights. Gender roles and unequal gender relations interact with other social and economic variables, resulting in different and sometimes inequitable patterns of exposure to risks, and in differential access to and utilization of information, care and services. These differences, in turn have clear impact on outcomes. Evidence documenting the multiple connections between gender and poverty is rapidly growing.
 3. Responding to this reality and in line with its long-standing concern with equity PRISM will, as a matter of policy, integrate gender considerations in all facets of its work. This action is also in harmony with the decision, now being implemented across the UN system, that integration of gender considerations, that is gender mainstreaming, must become standard practice in all policies and programs. It will be the Organization's policy to ensure that all research, policies, programs, projects, and initiatives with PRISM involvement address gender issues. This will contribute to increasing the coverage, effectiveness, efficiency and ultimately the impact of interventions for both women and men, while at the same time contributing to achievement of the broader UN goal of social justice.
 4. PRISM is also committed to advancing gender equality in its own workforce, as well as in scientific and technical advisory bodies, and among temporary advisers and consultants. Strategies to close the gender gap by the end of this decade fall into the broader context of diversity, and are in line with PRISM's policy on the "Employment and Participation of Women in the Work of PRISM" and other resolutions of the WHA and the UN General Assembly.
- Integrating gender

Goal and objectives

1. The **goal** of this policy is to contribute to improve the standard of living for both women and men, through research, policies and programs which give due attention to gender considerations and promote equity and equality between women and men. PRISM will analyze and address gender issues in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programs, projects and research in order to achieve the following **objectives**:
 - a. increase coverage, effectiveness and efficiency of interventions;
 - b. promote equity and equality between women and men, throughout the life course, and ensure that interventions do not promote inequitable gender roles relations; and
 - c. provide qualitative and quantitative information on the influence of gender on all areas of life.
2. These objectives will be achieved through the incorporation of gender analysis in the work of PRISM at Headquarters, and in area offices. This analysis will examine the differences in the relationships between women and men and their roles, and how these differences impact on:
 - a. protective and risk factors;
 - b. access to resources to promote and protect livelihood assets, mental and physical health, including information, education, technology and services;
 - c. the manifestations, severity and frequency of disease, as well as health outcomes;
 - d. the social and cultural conditions plays important roles in sustainable development;
 - e. the response of government systems and services;
 - f. the roles of women and men as formal and informal development partners.
3. This analysis will include identification of ways to overcome constraints so that improved living for women and men can be achieved.

Organizational arrangements for implementation

1. Successful realization of this policy will require consistent and active participation by all volunteers of PRISM. Responsibilities and actions will require collaboration and effective linkages across different programs of PRISM.
2. Senior management will take the necessary steps to ensure the policy is translated into action in both technical and management aspects of PRISM programs. They will transmit the policy to volunteers and consultants and monitor its consistent and effective application throughout the work for which they are responsible. They will be accountable to the Chairperson for successful incorporation of gender considerations in their work.

3. This policy applies to all work throughout the Organization: research, program planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, human resource management, and budgeting. Effective implementation of the policy will require senior level commitment and validation, organizational support for activities to advance the knowledge and skills of volunteers for efficient gender analysis in their area of work. Senior management will be expected to institutionalize mechanisms for building capacity among the field level volunteers providing, information, training or technical support needed to assure the policy's success.
4. General guidance and support will initially be provided by the Gender Task Force of PRISM, in collaboration with gender focal points in other programs and area offices. However, all programs will be expected to collect disaggregated data by sex, review and reflect on the gender aspects of their respective areas of work, and initiate work to develop content-specific materials. This analysis will help ensure the integration of gender considerations in all work with which PRISM is associated in different technical fields.
5. Head quarter and area offices will be expected to develop their own mechanisms, appropriately resourced, and collaborate with HQ to develop strategies to promote the integration of gender issues in all activities.
6. The Gender Task Force will assist and support the development of methodologies and materials for gender analysis, standardized terminology to ensure coherent communication about gender issues, a strategy for appropriate capacity building across the Organization, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. The Gender Task Force will also have responsibility for on-going collection and dissemination of information, such as case studies of "good practice" in mainstreaming gender, as well as contributing to the building of an appropriate evidence-base on gender-related development issues in the Organization. The Gender Task Force will collaborate with gender focal points throughout the Organization, to ensure continuous implementation of this policy and the above activities.
7. The resources and administrative and operational mechanisms for implementation and monitoring effectiveness of this policy throughout the Organization will be set forth in directives of the Chairperson.

GENDER GLOSSARY

Gender is used to describe those characteristics of women and men, which are socially constructed, while **sex** refers to those which are biologically determined. People are born female or male but learn to be girls and boys who grow into women and men. This learned behavior makes up gender identity and determines gender roles.

Gender analysis identifies, analyses and informs action to address inequalities that arise from the different roles of women and men, or the unequal power relationships between them, and the consequences of these inequalities on their lives, their health and well-being. The way power is distributed in most societies means that women have less access to and control over resources to protect their life and are less likely to be involved in decision making. Gender analysis in sustainable development and resilience building often highlights how inequalities disadvantage women folk in all walks of life, the constraints women face to attain their survival needs and ways to address and overcome these. Gender analysis also reveals risks and problems which men face as a result of the social construction of their roles.

Gender equality is the absence of discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in opportunities, in the allocation of resources and benefits or in access to services.

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognizes that women and men have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between the sexes.

Gender mainstreaming The ECOSOC Resolution defines mainstreaming gender as "...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, 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 programs in all political, economic and social spheres, such that inequality between men and women is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality"¹.

"Mainstreaming gender is both a technical and a political process which requires shifts in organizational cultures and ways of thinking, as well as in the goals, structures and resource allocations Mainstreaming requires changes at different levels within institutions, in agenda setting, policy making, planning, implementation and evaluation. Instruments for the mainstreaming effort include new staffing and budgeting practices, training programs, policy procedures and guidelines"².

¹ (E/1997/L.30 Para Adopted by ECOSOC 14.7.97.)

² (*Development and Gender, Issue 5: Approaches to institutionalizing gender, Gender in Brief, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, England, May 1997.*)