



Gender Terms and Definitions

Training Option 1 – Understanding Gender¹²

Learner Objectives	By the end of this session participants will be able to <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify early memories of when and how they learned about being male or female2. Identify gender role expectations and gender stereotypes3. Define gender4. Describe how institutions and systems in their culture create and maintain gender stereotypes
Time	4 hours
Session Overview	A. Early Memories of Being Male or Female1 hour, 45 minutes B. Gender Role Expectations and Stereotypes 45 minutes C. Defining Gender 30 minutes D. Institutional/System Influences on Gender Stereotypes1 hour
Materials	Flipchart and paper Markers
Handouts	2A Sex and Gender
Special Preparation	Draw chart on "Sex and Gender" on newsprint.

Purpose Of This session

This session provides a broad introduction to the basic concepts of gender and gender-role stereotyping. The exercises are intended to stimulate thinking on critical incidents which have shaped participants' behavior. Participants begin to personalize the experience of gender role expectations and consider the major influences on gender in their society. The concept of gender is defined and distinguished from the concept of sex.

A. Early Memories of Being Male or Female (1 hour, 45 minutes)

¹² Source: CEDPA Gender and Development Training Manual.

Step 1 As a warm-up and introduction to the session, ask participants to demonstrate a stance or a posture which depicts how men and women are perceived in their society.

For a mixed group, ask men to adopt postures depicting men, and women to adopt postures depicting women; in a single sex group, ask all participants to depict male postures, then ask all participants to depict female postures.

Step 2 Ask each participant to describe what his or her stance or posture shows. Ask them to consider what the stance or posture reflects about society's perceptions of men and women.

Step 3 Introduce the main part of the session by explaining that throughout the gender workshop, but particularly in this session, participants will be asked to share personal memories and experiences related to gender, and that these memories and experiences may at times be painful or difficult to discuss.

Emphasize that the success of the session and the workshop depends on the willingness of participants to share, but that nobody will be required to share if they do not feel comfortable doing so.

Step 4 Ask participants to divide themselves into approximately four small, single-sex groups. Explain that they should form groups of their own choosing to ensure that they are with participants with whom they feel comfortable sharing personal experiences.

Step 5 Introduce Task #1:

TASK #1

1. Individually, recall your earliest, most significant and meaningful memory of an experience related to discovering you were male or female and therefore different from the other sex.
2. After a few minutes of individual reflection, share this experience with other members of your group.
3. As a group, develop a drama, picture, collage, poem, song, story, or dance that reflects the memories shared within the group.

Time: 35 minutes

Step 6 Ask each group to present its drama, picture, collage, poem, song, or

dance. Ask questions about the individual memories shared within the group that will encourage discussion:

- How did you feel during the experience?
- What did the experience tell you about being female? about being male? about life?
- What were your family's expectations of you? society's expectations?
- What were your expectations and aspirations for yourself?
- What conclusions and lessons did you draw from the experience?

B. Gender Role Expectations and Stereotypes (45 minutes)

Step 1 Divide participants into small, single-sex groups. Give each group two sheets of newsprint with headings as follows:

For the women: 1. "(In my culture) because I am a woman, I must..."
2. "If I were a man, I could..."

For the men: 1. "(In my culture) because I am a man, I must..."
2. "If I were a woman, I could..."

Step 2 Assign the following task:

TASK #2

1. Brainstorm responses to the statements.
2. Write them under the headings.
3. Prepare to report out to the large group.

Time: 15 minutes

Step 3 Ask each group to share its list. Lead a discussion about the implications for individuals of the roles and responsibilities assigned to men and to women. Following are some questions to stimulate discussion:

- Do women and men have to be, or do, the things that you wrote down?
- Can women and men do things expected of the opposite sex?
- How do these roles and responsibilities affect life choices?

Be sure to point out that both men and women are limited in their behaviors, responsibilities, and life choices because of culturally assigned roles and responsibilities.

Step 4 Write the phrase, "The human in me wants to..." on a flipchart, and ask participants to brainstorm responses to complete the phrase.

Step 5 Ask participants to summarize what they learned from the activity.

C. Defining Gender (30 minutes)

Step 1 Ask participants, "Based on all that you have learned so far, how would you define *gender*?"

Step 2 Write the definitions on a flipchart. Combine and refine the definitions to create one operational definition.

Step 3 Post the "Sex and Gender" chart you have drawn.