
UNIT 12: CROSS SECTORAL CONCERN

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12.1 INTRODUCTION

This Unit describes main trends in different sectors and particular policy area, and highlights how and why these trends and issues are in fact “gender issues.” While goals exist at many levels, attention here is focused on the policy goal: i.e. what policy makers should be striving to achieve. Where other levels of goals or objectives are noted, this is specifically explained. This Unit also presents arguments for why policy-makers should adopt a gender mainstreaming approach in regard to the particular issue at hand. For a more detailed description of these

categories of arguments, as well as for tips on how and when to use them, refer to Unit 4 of this Course.

12.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Describe the main trends in different sector;
- Explain the linkages between each sector in policy making to mainstream gender;
- Analyze the need for adopting gender mainstreaming in policy making in different sectors; and
- Suggest indicators that could measure progress in various sectors.

12.3 SECTORS

The major sectors in which gender mainstreaming can be done through policy making are:

- Education: Professional education is often the starting point for occupational segregation in many different sectors.
- Environment: Like gender, environment is a “cross-cutting” issue that needs to be integrated into all policy areas.
- Governance and Participation: Questions of gender balance and decision-making power are important in every sector.
- Justice and Human Rights: Legislation is an issue for every policy sector. Furthermore, a human rights approach to gender equality is something that should be integrated into all sectors.
- Labour: Ensuring equal employment opportunities and limiting occupational segregation concerns all jobs and professions, across all sectors.
- Macroeconomics and Trade: Every sector is to some extent dependent on macroeconomic policies. Gender equitable budgets must be fostered at every level, in every sector.
- Media: Policy makers in all sectors will need to communicate their policies through mass media. The media is also a crucial link in terms of upholding

(or alternatively, challenging) gender stereotypes which lie at the root of gender-based issues in all sectors.

- Science, Research and ICT: All policy makers rely on research and analysis in preparing policy. ICT plays an increasingly paramount in all sectors.

12.4 MACROECONOMICS AND TRADE

This section examines ways to mainstream a gender perspective into macroeconomic and trade policies. Because macroeconomic policies to a large extent set the “tone”, priorities and overall direction of public policy, progress at this level will greatly assist the task of gender mainstreaming in line ministries and specific sectors.

Traditionally, the goal of macroeconomic analysis has been to point out what is hindering economic growth; the goal of macroeconomic policy has been to prescribe solutions that will reverse negative trends and result in positive growth. Macroeconomists, in cooperation with governments, strive to achieve these goals by developing a conceptual framework of how markets are constituted and interact, establishing hypothetical models and testing these, and then ultimately developing and implementing policy on the basis of these conclusions. Until very recently, social justice was not considered to be a concern for macroeconomic analysis or policy. Since “human development” has become increasingly recognized as an overarching policy goal of nations, attempts have been made to introduce a social justice dimension, including the reduction of poverty and gender inequality, into macroeconomics.

At the same time, it has been recognized that macroeconomic policy, which purports to be “gender-blind”, is not: macroeconomic policies, even if they do not address gender issues directly, nonetheless result in gender-differentiated outcomes at the meso- and micro-levels. Means of integrating gender and other social justice issues, however, require long-term investments and commitments by policymakers, and more often than not, a shift in the way macroeconomics are approached.

Social justice cannot be simply “added on” as a “bonus” to economic concerns by implementing formulaic technical exercises, as some recent examples of integration have tried to do. Instead, the goal of macroeconomic policies needs to be transformed, whereby their soundness will be judged not by market based-criteria, but in terms of whether they ultimately succeed in

promoting social justice, including gender equality.

The specific goal for the formulations of macroeconomic policy in general must therefore be twofold:

- first, social justice and gender equality issues must be integrated into macroeconomic policy content; and
- second, new macroeconomic policy targets must be set, whereby success will be determined by social justice criteria.

Why Bother?

Justice: Economic and social rights are an integral part of many major human rights treaties. States can only be considered to have fulfilled their internationally mandated obligations if their macroeconomic policies recognize economic and social equality, including a gender dimension, as an explicit goal.

Efficiency: Research reveals that greater gender equality is most often correlated with greater economic growth. Conversely, unequal social relations are an obstacle to sustainable and high rates of growth. It thus follows that investment in gender equality and social justice issues at the macro-level will facilitate stable growth, benefiting the nation as a whole.

Sustainability and Quality of Life: Research shows that significant gender gaps and inequalities can persist in a country despite economic progress. This is because growth does not automatically “trickle down” equally to all segments of the population. If macroeconomic policy were to include issues of social justice and equality as an integral dimension of its content (rather than as an “added bonus”), these inequalities could be addressed from the outset. This would result in a better quality of life for all inhabitants, rather than for a privileged few.

Moreover, macroeconomic policies that traditionally focus only on reducing budget deficits and inflation often subscribe to the myth that high growth will automatically reduce poverty and income disparities over time. However, lack of social protection leaves vulnerable groups increasingly vulnerable in times of crisis. Macroeconomic policies must include measures to guarantee some level of economic security to vulnerable groups in order to avoid catastrophic

consequences during economic crises.

Note: a) Use the space given below to answer the questions.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) How to integrate gender in macroeconomic policy?

12.5 GOVERNANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Governance can be defined as “the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels.” It is manifest in the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which decisions are negotiated and implemented. Gender balanced participation in governance processes not only refers to the physical presence of men and women “around the decision-making table”, but also to the quality of participation, i.e. meaningful engagement which stems from a mutual respect for diverse opinions and standpoints.

As this section highlights, governance refers not only to formal public decision-making structures and processes (i.e. national and local government), but includes decision-making within the family, community and private sector as well. Mainstreaming a “gender perspective” into governance thus entails addressing the ways in which both genders participate in and are affected by various systems of governance, as well as the interaction between these various systems.

A gendered analysis of governance immediately highlights the issue of participation and representation. A presumed “commonality of interests” between men and women, as well as their needs and perspectives, has often been used to legitimize an overwhelming presence of

men in formal governance structures at the national level – i.e. parliament and government (or Cabinet of Ministers).

However, a gender analysis of political processes and policies reveals that men and women do not always share the same needs and perspectives, and that it is thus crucial that women be represented as well, so that their interests – as half of the population – are adequately addressed. Thus once this “commonality of interests” is challenged, a mandate emerges for more balanced participation of men and women, to ensure that both genders participate in the decisions and actions that affect them.

At the same time, it is crucial that to understand that more balanced participation will not come about simply from a formal mandate or invitation to women. The systemic barriers that often keep women out of major public governance structures are profound, and must be addressed before any serious progress can be made.

As mentioned above, the objective of more balanced participation in national governing structures is less an end in itself than a means towards improved quality of governance – increased participation of women should help foster gender-awareness in political processes and policy practice. At the same time, we need to remember that a critical understanding of gender issues does not come naturally to professionals, whether women or men. Therefore, real change in how a government approaches gender requires attention to three issues:

- **Critical mass:** In order for a group with common interests (in this case, women) to be heard and taken into account, it has been proven that a presence of not less than 30% is necessary.
- **Capacity Building:** Because gender-based planning is not something anybody is competent at instinctively, training and capacity-building are essential – for both women and men. The goal of mainstreaming a gender perspective into issues of governance and participation at the national level is therefore two-fold:
 - to ensure balanced participation between men and women in governance, which includes removal of structural and systemic barriers to women’s participation;
 - to ensure that gender issues are integrated into decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of governance initiatives.

12.6 LABOUR

Labour, or work, is gendered at every level. This section highlights some of the many ways to integrate a gender perspective into labour policies and the workplace itself. This set of country-wide indicators were developed by the ILO with the hope of monitoring new labour market trends. Although a special effort to highlight gender dimensions of each indicator was made, many practitioners will recognize that gender-disaggregated data is not always readily available or accessible. Gender mainstreaming efforts should seek to correct this problem.

1. Labour force participation rate
2. Employment-to-population ratio
3. Status in employment
4. Employment by sector
5. Part-time workers
6. Hours of work
7. Urban informal sector employment
8. Unemployment
9. Youth unemployment
10. Long-term unemployment
11. Unemployment by educational attainment
12. Time-related underemployment
13. Inactivity rate
14. Educational attainment and illiteracy
15. Real manufacturing wage indices
16. Hourly compensation costs
17. Labour productivity and unit labour cost
18. Poverty and income distribution

12.7 EDUCATION

Targeting education is a vital part of any gender mainstreaming strategy. As this section highlights, education can be examined as an indicator of gender equality within the sector, both among students and education professionals. Equally important, however, is approaching the education sector as a potential entry point for challenging the gender stereotypes that largely contribute to sustained gender inequalities in society more broadly. Globally, the standard measure of gender equality in the education sector is the number of girls enrolled in school and/or who have completed school (at all levels) in comparison to the number of boys.

In many countries in the Southern hemisphere, girls' enrolment lags behind boys', and the obvious objective here is to attain balance between boys' and girls' enrolment. In European and other countries, on the other hand, the gap in overall enrolment statistics is narrow, and in some cases, boys enrolment is even starting to fall behind that of girls at some levels. At the same time, equal overall enrolment rates often hide persevering inequalities in specific types of education and fields of study. For example, girls typically still lag far behind boys in information technology programmes, while there are fewer boys than girls enrolled in humanities, education, cultural programmes and in some countries, medicine and social work.

Even where completion rates are somewhat equal for boys and girls, detailed analysis is needed to identify specific gender-based problems: do more boys than girls drop out to enter the labour force? Are girls leaving school due to teenage pregnancy? Are more boys than girls from poor homes becoming truant? Successful programmes and projects that address non-completion should address specific reasons why boys and girls drop out of school.

As regards enrolment and completion rates, the goal should thus be two-fold:

- equal enrolment (45%-55%) between boys and girls in all faculties, programmes of study, and levels of education;
 - equal completion rates between boys and girls in all faculties, programmes of study and levels of education.
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12.8 HEALTH

Because biology and physiology are two of the few ways in which men and women irrefutably differ, health policies and programmes are logical entry points for the integration of a gender perspective.

At the same time, we know that health is not simply the lack of physical infirmity, nor is it a simple question of bodily parts and functions – it is a holistic state of well-being, and is thus profoundly influenced by psychological and social factors. For this reason, an analysis of health must go beyond male and female bodies to the institutions, traditions and attitudes that play a crucial role in determining quality of care, and root causes of poor health. As many of these institutions and factors are premised upon the different roles of men and women in society, a gender perspective here is critical.

Life expectancy at birth is one of the few health-related statistics that is widely available and gender disaggregated. Gender plays an important and irrefutable role in life-expectancy. Worldwide and as a group, women tend to live longer than men, and Eastern Europe maintains the highest gap between male and female life expectancy in the world.

Some important causes and factors of low male life expectancy include:

- deaths in armed conflicts and street violence;
- high mortality rates from accidents, including traffic accidents in particular;
- occupational hazards and accidents;
- high rates of suicide;
- alcoholism-related death.

Thus while biology may play a role, it is evident that male life expectancy can be dramatically affected by different environments in which men and women operate, by their different choices of coping mechanisms – all related to the social and economic gender roles assumed by men and women assume throughout their lifetimes.

The reason for examining life expectancy from a gender perspective is to provide important

insight into gender disparities in the health and well-being of the population. The ultimate goal in regards to life expectancy is: to close the gap between male and female life expectancy at birth, aiming for maximum life expectancy whereby both men and women can enjoy healthy and productive lives.

The mere existence of health services does not necessarily mean that those requiring them will have access to them, and research on access issues has highlighted that gender can play a critical role.

Several aspects of access which need to be examined from a gender perspective include:

Availability and Location of Services: Time is a valuable resource, and can determine the accessibility of services. For example, services only offered during regular office hours pose obstacles to those unable to take time off from paid employment, or for parents who have to care for young children during the day. Additionally, the location of services may make them more or less accessible to different segments of the population. People living in rural areas in particular are faced with great barriers, in terms of both time and cost required for travel. Because of different roles men and women play at home and in the workforce, they are likely to have different needs regarding the availability and location of services.

Quality of Care and Provider Attitudes: The quality of services that clients receive will also play a role in determining access – if clients do not perceive that their needs are being adequately or appropriately met, they may discontinue use of services. Gender insensitivity from medical practitioners is a very critical factor here.

Economic Determinants: Poverty (which affects men and women differently) has been strongly correlated to poor health. While on the one hand, poor health may increase poverty, on the other hand, poverty also limits access to high quality and appropriate services. This may be because costs of services or medication are prohibitive to some users. Even women who are not technically “poor” generally do not have the same access to economic resources as men, which can affect their access to health care as well.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2:

Note: a) Use the space given below to answer the questions.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) What are the factors associated with low male life expectancy at birth?

12.9 POVERTY

Addressing and combating poverty is a multisectoral concern, which needs to be integrated into many programmes and policies. At the same time, it is important to examine poverty as an issue in its own right, particularly as regards the conceptual and methodological frameworks that guide the development and implementation of poverty alleviation initiatives.

Poverty is gendered. In other words, men and women experience poverty differently:

- men's and women's poverty is often caused by different overall factors;
- the results of poverty often differ for men and women;
- men and women often adopt different strategies to cope with poverty.

The way a policy or programme defines and understands poverty will greatly influence the role that gender plays in poverty alleviation programmes. A very narrow understanding of poverty will not reveal the complex interplay of factors which create gender inequality, and thus make it difficult to address the gendered nature of poverty. Issues to consider when defining poverty include:

Poverty of What?

Conventionally poverty was considered to be largely consumption and income poverty – that is, to be poor meant to have a lack of income and thus a lack of means to consume goods and

services. This approach restricts the gender analysis of poverty, as even if men and women have similar incomes, research has shown that their experiences in terms of poverty can be vastly different, particularly considering their different responsibilities and capabilities in the context of consumption patterns.

However, in recent years the definition of poverty has been expanded and reshaped as “human poverty” – which refers to the denial of opportunities and choices, or “capabilities” for living a most basic or “tolerable” life.⁷⁷ This approach can thus elucidate not only the symptoms of poverty, but also its causes. It also facilitates a better appreciation of the way in which gender affects poverty, as it includes issues such as poverty of decision-making power, poverty of time, poverty of means of self-determination – all capabilities which are greatly influenced by one’s gender.

Poverty: Outcome or Process?

Understanding poverty as a static “outcome” limits the development of appropriate interventions. Poverty must instead be understood as a “process”, and the complex interactions of a wide range of factors that lead to poverty need to be examined. While the first approach simply asks “who is poor?”, the second more vitally asks “why are they poor?”.

This is particularly important for integrating a gender analysis, as simply comparing male and female poverty outcomes tell us little about the social, economic and cultural institutions that cause men and women to experience poverty differently. This analysis is vital for developing effective alleviation strategies that transform these institutions, rather than simply providing “band-aid” solutions.

Reciprocal links: Gender and Poverty

It is vital to consider how poverty is a “gender issue”, but we must also consider how gender equality (and women’s empowerment) is a poverty issue. In other words, any strategies to enhance gender equality must consider poverty also contributes to gender inequality. In summary, the goal of gender mainstreaming in terms of conceptualizing and defining poverty should be:

- to ensure that a gender perspective be integrated into the way in which poverty is understood in a policy context

- to ensure that poverty is defined and understood as human rather than merely income poverty, and as a complex process instead of an outcome - both of which will better elucidate the complex gender dimensions of poverty.

12.10 JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

This Gender Brief examines how a gender perspective can be integrated into justice systems and human rights monitoring and protection mechanisms. Gender mainstreaming not only strengthens the legitimacy of the state, but also enhances efficiency of governments and quality of life of the population.

Legislation (such as constitutional law, criminal law, civil law, labour law, regional or local ordinances) provides the basis of legal rights to gender equality. Laws in and of themselves are important as a statement of political will and a state's commitment to the principles outlined in that law. Furthermore, existence of legislation can draw attention to certain issues (such as gender equality) and serve as a catalyst for other types of changes.

A crucial fact: "Gender-neutral" (gender-blind) legislation does not result in the specific promotion of gender equality and the elimination of discrimination. For this reason, many countries have adopted legislation aimed at guaranteeing gender equality. Oftentimes, this a constitutional provision prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex. However, while a constitutional provision can sometimes compensate for the lack of more specific legislation, practice has often showed that explicit and concrete attention to gender equality and gender-based discrimination is necessary for the true protection of legal rights to gender equality. Examples of legislation that more fully protects legal rights to gender equality include:

- general anti-discrimination law (of which gender-based discrimination is one aspect);
- specific sex discrimination bills;
- equal opportunities act, or more specifically – equal opportunities employment act;
- women's rights laws, often based upon CEDAW;
- local ordinances that implement CEDAW principles.

These laws all have different focuses and represent a variety of approaches to gender equality law. It is important that countries adopt a model that is most appropriate to their specific needs and situation.

Moreover, it is not uncommon to note contradictions between general constitutional provisions that “guarantee” gender equality, and other more specific laws, where specific instances of gender discrimination might emerge (for example, in regards to inheritance or property rights). Even more common are cases where certain laws indirectly impede de facto equality (for example, laws on maternity and paternity leave or laws that restrict employment for women). This is why it is essential to apply gender analysis when drafting, passing and reviewing legislation.

Finally, special laws on specific gender issues may be necessary to attain full gender equality. For example, lack of legal provisions on marital rape and domestic violence do not afford full protection to a country’s inhabitants, and is a barrier to gender equality.

The goal of gender mainstreaming in the context of legislation and legal rights is thus two-fold:

- to ensure that any instances of gender discrimination are identified and removed from existing legislation;
- to ensure that legislation on gender equality offers adequate legal protection from gender discrimination and demonstrates strong political will to promote equality.

12.11 SCIENCE, RESEARCH and INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)

Sound policy relies on sound research, data and analysis. Furthermore, the rapid development of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) is changing the way that governments, the private sector and civil society all conduct their daily business. Science, research and ICTs are often considered highly “technical” subjects (better left to the “experts”), but in fact they affect public policy (and the lives of individual men and women) in many elementary ways. This Brief considers ways to gender mainstream in these sectors.

Powerful critiques have recently emerged that expose a variety of gender biases in research, in both the social and natural sciences. These biases often stem from the failure to address gender as an important scientific variable. The result of such bias is not only flawed research, but ineffectual interventions designed on the basis of this research. These biases can take a number of forms:

- In the natural sciences, failure to include a gender perspective in research design may mean that differences between male and female research subjects are overlooked. For instance, pharmaceutical research that once proclaimed certain drugs to be safe for women is now being reconsidered, as clinical trials were only performed on men.
- In the social sciences, a biased understanding of gender roles and responsibilities will also lead to bias in the design of research projects and their results.

This is important for policy makers, as it is upon this research that they base their policies and programmes. Policy makers need to be capable of evaluating the credibility and accuracy of research presented to them. Furthermore, governments, via various science and research councils, sponsor a significant amount of the research produced. Steps should be taken to ensure that gender as a scientific variable is taken into account when evaluating research proposals.

The ultimate goal is thus:

- ensuring the inclusion of gender as a scientific variable as a criterion for evaluating the soundness of research proposals and research projects.

12.12 MASS MEDIA

This section examines how gender mainstreaming is relevant to production, dissemination and use of print, radio and television mass media.

While media cannot be held responsible for the actions, attitudes or behaviour of individuals, media is irrefutably powerful in shaping public opinion, bringing new issues or perspectives to light, and defining the terms of public debate. While policy makers within a democracy do not (or should not) control the media, they can take actions to promote gender mainstreaming within

media outlets. This should include attention to representations of gender roles and stereotypes, as well as access and structural issues within media outlets and companies, such as participation of men and women, censorship and licensing.

Media play a crucial role in reflecting gender roles and stereotypes: this is perhaps the most important reason for gender mainstreaming in this sector. The perpetuation of negative or stereotyped images of women and men, particularly in the media, “does not provide an accurate or realistic picture of women’s and men’s multiple roles in and contribution to a changing world,” and that the elimination of societal stereotypes is “paramount for the establishment of gender equality.” This is because gender stereotypes can restrict social, political and economic opportunities for both men and women. This issue concerns both the producers of media content, as well as its users of media.

Producers of Media Content

Producers of the media can control how men and women are portrayed in the media – these portrayals can either enforce negative gender stereotypes or challenge them. For example, prominent female and male politicians are often portrayed in very different ways: Aggressive political tactics on the part of men can be described as “decisive” and “displaying strong leadership qualities,” while such behaviour in women is often portrayed as unbecoming. Furthermore, media tend to focus heavily on the physical appearance of female politicians and their “emotional” side.

While censorship is clearly a violation of the right to freedom of expression (see part II of this Brief - Media Control, Participation and Access, below), content regulation remains a matter of editorial policy. Editors have a great amount of power and influence in determining what “slant” or perspective will be adopted when covering stories. They also determine the prominence of issues within their media outlet. These questions are often guided by either informal or official editorial policy. Unfortunately, a commitment to furthering gender equality and eliminating negative gender stereotypes is rarely a part of such policy, and experience shows that without an explicit commitment to gender equality issues, they are readily undermined. Use of non-sexist language is another issue that can be regulated by editorial policy.

At the same time, the ethics of journalists themselves can affect the perpetuation of negative gender stereotypes. For example, the way in which journalists report on issues like domestic violence and sexual assault can perpetuate myths, for instance that a woman is responsible for

sexual violence perpetrated against her. This is an issue that needs to be addressed not only within the journalist profession, but also in journalism training (i.e. colleges and universities).

Regulation of advertising raises similar issues. Editorial boards often have policies that restrict some types of advertising (including classified ads) that their media will run. Governments, as well, can impose advertising restrictions – for example, some governments have restricted where and how ads for cigarettes or alcohol can be featured, in the name of public health. Similar approaches could be adopted for promoting gender equality.

At the same time, advertising companies themselves wield considerable power in enforcing gender stereotypes or challenging them. Unfortunately, at present advertisers seem to enforce more stereotypes than they break down. For example, ads for household products will feature women, while ads for business or financial services will feature men.

Users of Media

While media outlets make most decisions about how genders are portrayed, this issue also needs to be addressed by people who use the media to disseminate information or opinions. Governments in particular should therefore become aware of the way they themselves promote or enforce gender stereotypes through the information that they channel through or feed to the media. This concerns public service announcements, informational campaigns, political campaigning, and general reflection of government policies and action in media releases and press conferences. For example, highlighting the important role of women politicians in areas of finance, economics and multilateral diplomatic negotiations can help challenge existing stereotypes.

Government-appointed panels that serve as media watchdogs (to ensure that media regulations and standards are being implemented), can also play an important role in identifying and monitoring gender stereotypes and discrimination in the media, as well as the use of non-sexist language.

The goal in relation to gender roles and stereotypes within the media is thus:

- to promote the integration of a gender perspective into the production and use of media,

for the ultimate goal of:

- eliminating gender stereotypes as a barrier to the full participation of men and women in all aspects of economic, political, social and cultural life.

12.13 THE GENDERED IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN-UP

Women and men are often differently affected by local and regional environmental degradation because the tasks and work patterns of women and men (in both the workforce and the household) are likely to differ. For instance, men often suffer more from exposure to environmental hazards related to their employment (e.g. driving to work, working mining or other potentially hazardous industries – even participation in armed conflict), while women often suffer more from environmental hazards in the home environment (e.g. exposure to gas or wood-fire stove smoke).

Degradation can also lead to the implementation of environmental protection policies that can drastically affect livelihoods, and the effects are often different for men and women. For example, certain sectors of the work force have undergone radical change in order to protect fragile, abused or depleted natural environments. These sectors include:

- forestry
- mining
- fisheries
- agriculture

Many of these sectors are heavily dominated by male labourers, and apart from the obvious economic crisis such change can bring, the psychological crisis wrought by loss of livelihood is not insignificant. This crisis can also influence the way that men view environmental protection overall, and may make them less responsive to environmental protection or clean-up policies in other spheres of their lives.

The goals of gender mainstreaming here are thus:

- to ensure that men and women are afforded equal protection from environmental hazards;
- in the context of environmental clean-up, to consider the diverse needs of and effects on men and women.

12.14 DEFENSE, CONFLICT AND PEACE-BUILDING

This section examines gender mainstreaming in the context of defense, conflict and peace-building. In many ways, adopting a gender approach here is about recognizing the value and positive benefits of adding a female perspective in what is often a male-dominated sector. At the same time, this sector is a particularly good example of the urgency for addressing male identity and men's gender needs in policy interventions.

Military and defense institutions, forces and structures are most often male-dominated. This has much to do with stereotypes about the roles of men and women in society: it is commonly held that it is "man's place" to defend the country – and to protect its women and children. For example, many countries have compulsory service for men, but not for women.

Various arguments are often put forward as to why women should not serve in the armed forces, most of which are based on the claim that women are physically inferior to men and ineffective in a battle situation. However, evidence shows that equal training and treatment of women can lead to equally effective female military personnel.

Furthermore, the changing nature of "warfare" means that the roles which need to be filled within military institutions are changing, too – sheer brawn is not sufficient. At the same time, to assume that every man will automatically make a "good soldier" is also flawed. This assumption depends on male stereotypes that may not hold up in reality. Thus gender should not be a deciding factor in determining roles for men and women in military institutions.

Approached from another point of view, the situation of men serving in military institutions also needs to be examined from a gender mainstreaming perspective. In many transition countries these men have extremely low levels of education and may have very poor health (physical and mental). Thus ensuring equal social opportunities and protection of men within the military should also be a focus of policy-makers.

In summary, the goals of gender mainstreaming in terms of military and defense institutions should be:

- elimination of discrimination on the sole basis of gender within defense and military institutions;
- integration of a gender perspective into research, policy and practice of defense and military institutions.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3:

Note: a) Use the space given below to answer the questions.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) How alliances of various kinds help women in informal economy?

12.15 SUMMING UP

Recent reviews and evaluations show a huge gap between policy commitments made at Beijing and actual implementation. In fact, evaluators assert that policy commitments to gender mainstreaming “evaporated” or became “invisible” in planning and implementation. Other assessments describe implementation as “patchy” and “embryonic.” The gap is most pronounced in mainstreaming gender into operations. Care should be taken while implementing policy and as discussed in this Unit, cross sectoral concern should be given while framing and implementing policies.

12.16 GLOSSARY

Gender Perspective or Gender Lens: Using a „gender perspective“ means approaching or examining an issue, paying particular attention to the potentially different ways that men and women are or might be impacted. This is also called using or looking through a „gender lens.“

In a sense, it is exactly that: a tilter or a lens that specifically highlights real or potential differences between men and women.

Gender Questions: Gender questions are the starting point of any gender analysis. They seek to uncover the assumptions inherent in any statement or situation, and look below the surface to reveal hidden (potential or existing) differences between men and women. Gender questions can only be asked once gender stereotypes and assumptions about gender roles have been acknowledged and overturned.

Gender Stereotypes: Gender stereotypes arise from (often outdated) presumptions about the roles, abilities and attributes of men and women. While in some specific situations, such stereotypes can be found to have a basis in reality, stereotypes become problematic when they are then assumed to apply to all men or all women. This can lead to both material and psychological barriers that prevent women and men from making choices and fully enjoying their rights.

12.17 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1:

1.
 - first, social justice and gender equality issues must be integrated into macroeconomic policy content; and
 - second, new macroeconomic policy targets must be set, whereby success will be determined by social justice criteria.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2:

1.
 - deaths in armed conflicts and street violence;
 - high mortality rates from accidents, including traffic accidents in particular;
 - occupational hazards and accidents;
 - high rates of suicide;
 - alcoholism-related death.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3:

1. The goal in relation to gender roles and stereotypes within the media is thus:
 - to promote the integration of a gender perspective into the production and use of media, for the ultimate goal of:
 - eliminating gender stereotypes as a barrier to the full participation of men and women in all aspects of economic, political, social and cultural life.

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12.19 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND PRACTICE

1. Describe the trend prevailing in education and health sector to mainstream gender.
2. Why policy makers should adopt a gender mainstreaming approach?
3. Analyze the gendered impact of environmental degradation.