



BACKGROUND

In 1982, USAID became one of the first donors to articulate a policy that addressed women in development. Now, USAID's gender mainstreaming approach applies gender analysis to the whole range of technical issues in the Strategic Plan. Two questions form the basis of a gender analysis:

How will gender relations affect the sustainability of results?

How will the (proposed) results affect the relative status of men and women?

Gender roles and disparities affect the management and sustainability of activities in every sector. For this reason, gender is identified as a cross-cutting theme in USAID/Cambodia's strategy. A recent Gender Analysis sponsored by USAID/Cambodia is a review of critical gender issues in health, governance, and education. A Gender Assessment highlights issues and promising practises in some of USAID/Cambodia's activities.

Problems such as gender-based violence, enrollment of girls in secondary school and health risks for women reflect gender disparity in the current Cambodian environment. However, USAID/Cambodia recognizes that gender equality is not just a women's issue. Gender disparity is essentially a fundamental human rights issue that affects an entire society. Addressing such issues also goes beyond sector specific programs. Linking activities in health, education and governance support probable associations so that gender sensitive interventions complement each other.

An example is how programs link to struggle against gender based violence. Human rights programs emphasize strategies to combat gender-based human rights abuses such as domestic violence, rape, and trafficking. Health programs encourage behavior change that will reduce health risks for women who might be victims of gender-based violence. USAID/Cambodia's education program addresses gender sensitivity in curriculum for both male and female students and teachers.

With USAID/Cambodia's support to mainstreaming gender, partners can build more cohesive and efficient activities that promote both sustainability and gender equality for both men and women.

"Key Concepts and terms"

In development concepts, 'gender' and 'sex' are used as distinctly separate terms. 'Gender' points to economic, social, political and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female while 'sex' refers to the physical and biological differences that define males and females. Gender is determined by tasks, functions and roles that are ascribed to men and women in private and public social life.

Gender-blindness is a failure to recognize gender differences in both social roles and potential impact. In failing to recognize the differences, gender-blindness assumes gender is not a factor and so does not incorporate gender sensitivity into strategies and actions.

Gender sensitive approach acknowledges and highlights existing gender differences, issues and inequalities, and incorporates these into strategies and actions.

Gender Analysis assesses the differences between men's and women's activities by looking at roles and responsibilities, access to and control over resources, and political voice. Gender analysis is a step in identifying men's and women's practical and strategic needs along with the constraints and opportunities in addressing those needs. Gender analysis also takes into account differences of ethnicity, class, education, religion, age, livelihood, and other diversity issues.

Gender equality is more about equal opportunity than equal numbers. The intent of gender equality is that men and women are equally able to contribute and benefit from economic, social, cultural and political development in their society. World Bank calls attention to three dimensions of gender equality: "equality under the law, equality of opportunity... and equality of voice."

Processes that move towards the goal of gender equality:

- **Gender Integration** involves addressing gender issues during program or activity design.
- **Gender Mainstreaming** incorporates gender dimensions at all levels, including policy, planning, evaluation, budgeting and decision-making. Gender mainstreaming addresses institutional arrangements and ensures that gender issues are not treated separately from other development issues.