

# Gender and rights in medicine

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Yaoundé, Nov 2007



# Overview

1. Key concepts
2. Why is a gender and rights approach important ?
3. Applying a gender sensitive approach to medicine

# 1. Key concepts

The term gender is used to describe a set of qualities and behaviours expected from men and women by their societies.

These expectations stem from **the idea** that certain qualities, behaviour, characteristics, needs and roles are natural for men, while certain other qualities and roles are natural for women.

# 1. Key concepts

The biological differences between women and men, boys and girls, are limited to the differences in their sexual and reproductive organs and functions.

Sex is unchanging and universal.

Gender is contextual and variable.

# 1. Key concepts

GENDER has been defined and constructed in different cultures and at different periods of history.

Social norms and expectations of what women and men should be and should do, and about their roles and rights change according to generation, culture and even family

# 1. Key concepts

## GENDER

- Socially defined roles
- Change over time
- Influenced by education, income level, religion...
- Are different among women and men

## SEX

- Biological characteristics with which women and men are born
- Do not vary
- Are not influenced by economic or social factors
- Are the same for men and women

# Questions ?

GENDER

- 

SEX

-

## 2. Why is a gender & rights approach important ?

To be defined :

**GENDER RELATIONS** : interactions

**GENDER EQUALITY** : absence of discrimination on the basis of sex

**GENDER EQUITY** : equal access to and control over resources



## 2. Why is a gender & rights approach important ?

### ICPD Programme of Action (1994)

- Shift from reducing birth rate to a population approach.
- Women's right to reproductive and sexual health is a Human Rights issue
- Shift from provision of contraceptives to quality of care systems and RH rights
- Integration of gender equality and equity : elimination of discrimination and empowerment
- Shift to a holistic approach of RH (life stage)

## 2. Why is a gender & rights approach important ?

### The Human Rights of women



Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979

- guarantee basic HR and freedoms
- participation in political and public life
- legal status of women and marriage
- Non discrimination in education, employment, health, economic and social activities.

## 2. Why is a gender & rights approach important ?

### Article 12 - The Right to Health

- States to ensure equal access to health care services, including family planning for men and women
- Ensure appropriate services for pregnancy and post natal period, including adequate nutrition
- Place a gender perspective at centre of all policies and programmes affecting women's health

## 2. Why is a gender & rights approach important ?

### Reproductive health as a human right

- Life : positive obligation of states to reduce MM
- Liberty and security (SGBV ...)
- The best attainable standard of health (physical and mental)
- Non discrimination in provision of health care
- Marriage and Family
- Freedom from arbitrary interference
- Enjoyment of scientific progress
- Sexual non discrimination
- Equal access to family planning
- Information and counselling

# Questions ?

Reproductive health as a human right

Gender equality / equity

# 3. Applying a gender sensitive approach to medicine and research

**WHO ?**

**WHEN ?**

**HOW ?**

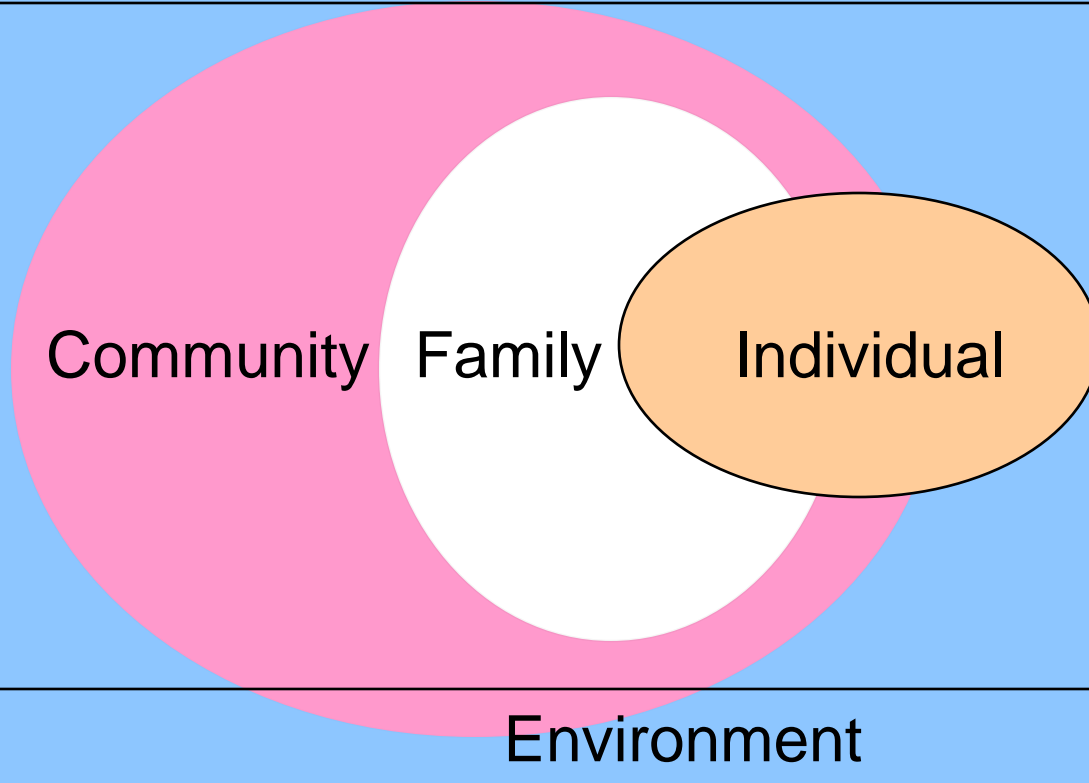
### 3. Applying a gender sensitive approach to medicine and research

**Gender analysis** is a method of socio-economic analysis that reveals the gender dimensions of a particular development or health problem.

Identify, interpret and measure the extent and nature of gender-based differences and inequalities.

# 3. Applying a gender sensitive approach to medicine and research

Political, economic, social and legal factors





### 3. Applying a gender sensitive approach to medicine and research

#### **10 Key questions for Gender analysis**

1. Who does what ? (activities)
2. How ? (Access to resources)
3. Who owns what ? (ownership)
4. Who is responsible ? (obligations)
5. Who is entitled to what? (rights)
6. Who controls ? (income...)
7. Who decides ? (power)
8. Who receives what ? (distribution)
9. Who gains/loses ?
10. Why ? (Rules, norms, customs...)

# 3. Applying a gender sensitive approach to medicine and research

## **Key indicators**

1. Sex and age disaggregated data (census, surveys, studies )
2. Quantitative or qualitative : indicators must reflect the perceptions of the people at study

Examples from ICPD :

- By 2015, all primary health care facilities to offer widest available range of safe and effective FP methods and essential obstetric care, prevention and management of STI.
- By 2015, 90% of births to be attended by skilled attendants
- At least 90% of young men and women aged 15-24 to have access to preventive methods for HIV

# Questions ?

- Applying a gender sensitive approach to medicine
- Where to find information ?

[www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org)

[www.unhchr.ch](http://www.unhchr.ch)

# Thank you for your attention

