

Refugee Women and Girls, the Key to Implementing Commitments made in the Global Compact on Refugees

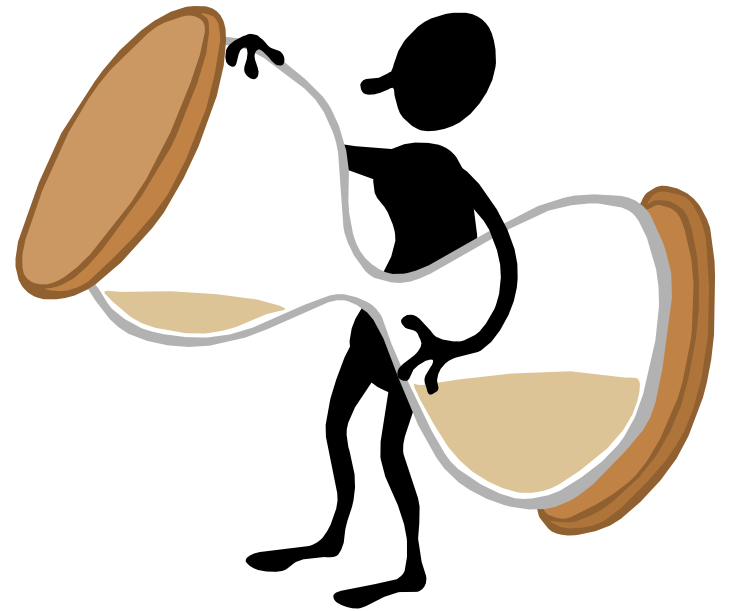
Session 2

What do we mean by 'Gender Equality'?



Aim of the session

The aim of the session is to provide a baseline against which we can use when discussing gender equality in the context of refugee women and girls.



What is gender?

In this resource kit, we are referring to gender as social and cultural attributes and roles assigned to women and girls, men and boys.

It is not about the biological sex we are assigned at birth, but the way in which this shapes our lives

It examines the social relationship between men and women, and how this affects our place in family and community, the kind of work we do, who makes decisions.



Gender...

is about beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and obligations regarding 'men' and 'women' – what they do, how they look, how they behave, what they have access to. Gender differences are imposed by society.



How does this affect us?

Norms and values about men's and women's roles inform how we relate to each other as human beings.

Expectations about gender-related behaviors are also perpetuated by social institutions: the household, the community, the state, legal structures, schools, workplaces, in aid, development and assistance programs and within the UN itself.

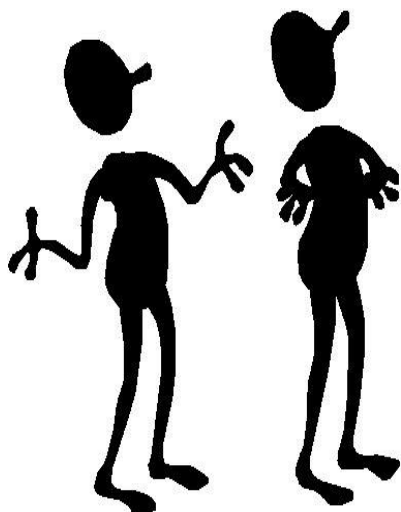


Gender and power

Gender is about how power is used and shared

It influences economic, political, and social roles, interactions with others and our needs.

It determines who can access resources and decision making within a society.



Public/Private Divide



Women have less power because their biological ability to have children *and the associated social roles* often confine them to the home and family.

This often excludes them from decision making and leadership roles outside the home.

Gender Inequality

Differences in access to resources and decision-making based on gender, results in *Gender Inequality*



Patriarchy and gender inequality

Gender differences based on patriarchal values that privilege male power and 'masculinity' over 'femininity' result in gender bias, inequality and systematic disadvantage and discrimination for women and for those who do not comply with social expectations about male and female accepted roles, appearance and behaviour.



Universally, men have more power than women

Gender & culture

- Understanding and beliefs about gender roles are shaped by culture, religion and ideology
- Ideas about gender are formed from childhood and are often unconscious
- We have assumptions and expectations about our lives and the lives of others that come from our own ideas about gender and gender roles – Gender is about our IDENTITY

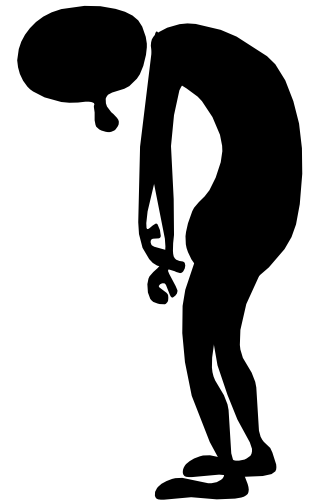


- Gender ‘norms’ are closely tied to gender identities and sexuality
- They are not “fixed” – and change over time and vary between places.

Gendered effects of Globalisation



- Globalisation is inherently gendered and is ‘restructuring social relations on a large scale.’
- Industrialisation, urbanisation and labour force flows have led to the *feminisation of poverty*, a rise in human trafficking, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
- These effects are rooted in deep-seated patriarchal values and gender inequalities.



Exercise

Gender norms and inequality are maintained by social, cultural, economic, religious, legal and political systems

Identify the differences between men/boys and women/girls in one of the following areas:

- 1. Culture**
- 2. Religion**
- 3. Law**
- 4. Access to Resources**
- 5. Politics and decision making**
- 6. Access to Power**



Include examples from your own experience or from other situations you are aware of .

How do these differences in treatment create difficulties for women leaders?

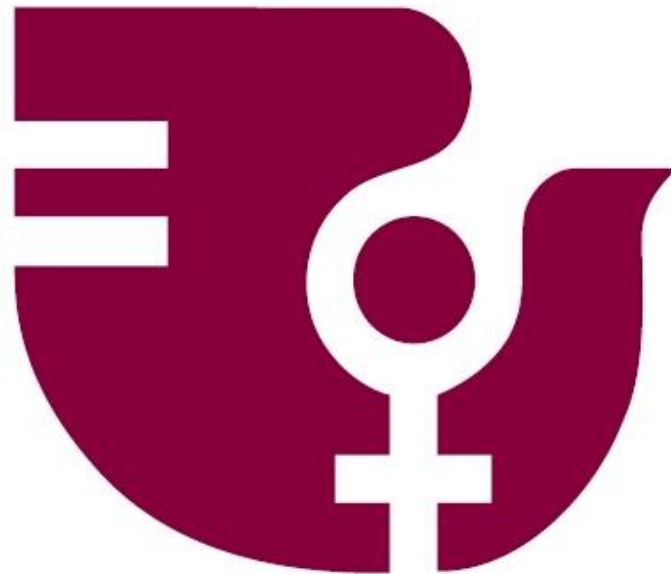
How do we overcome this?



This is why Women have their own human rights convention.

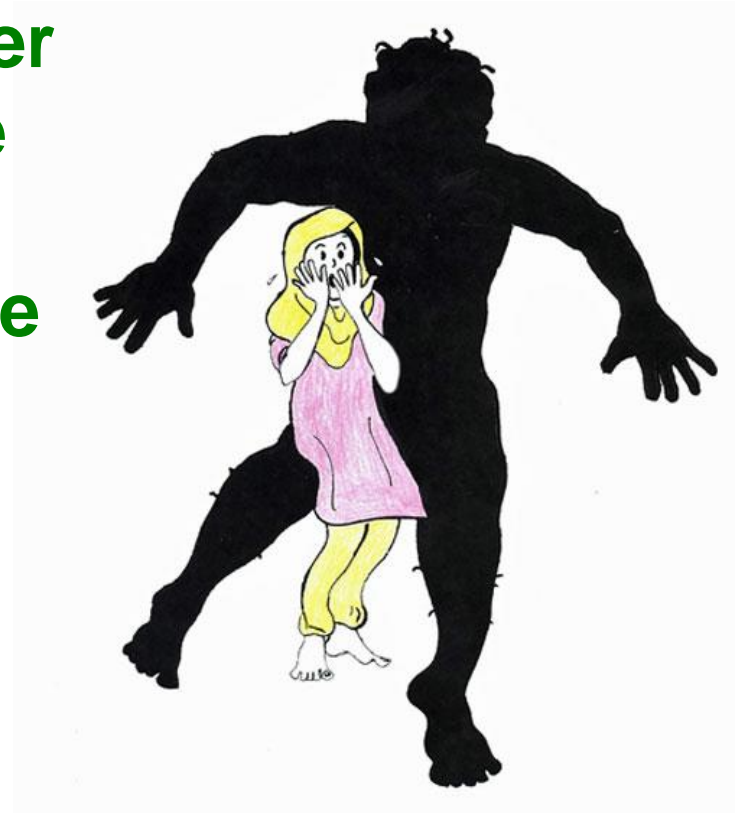
Their rights are set out in the **Convention to Eliminate Discrimination against Women** (CEDAW)

(and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)



They Include

The rights of women to be free from sexual and gender-based violence and to live free from FEAR of sexual and gender-based violence



and

The rights of women to participate in decision making and political processes, and the right to life-long education.



Exercise

In small groups, share a story from your own experience where gender inequality has been a significant factor.

It can be a story from your personal life or your work. It can be your story or the story of someone you know or have heard about.

Consider what the gender issues were, what impact they had on the situation.

Suggest ways in which this could be changed.

