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SNAPSHOT

A PUBLIC SECTOR GUIDE TOWARDS gender EQUITY

inclusion

M A T T E R S



Government of South Australia
Office for Women

contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS + COPYRIGHT	2
GUIDING LEGISLATION + POLICY INITIATIVES	3
SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PLAN [SASP]	3
1. GENDER	4
2. WHAT IS GENDER ANALYSIS?	7
3. WHAT IS CULTURAL ANALYSIS?	9
4. VISUAL RESOURCES + LANGUAGE	10

Office for Women acknowledges that we are on Kaurna land and pays respect to the traditional owners of this land.

acknowledgements

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format

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guiding legislation + policy initiatives

Gender analysis builds on the South Australian Government's commitment to fairness and equality for all South Australians, enshrined in the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 [as amended]. It helps guarantee that South Australian legislation fulfils federal commitments to non-discrimination and equal opportunity as outlined in the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984, the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 and the Race Discrimination Act 1975.

In addition, Australia is a signatory to a number of international agreements relating to equality for women. These include the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women [CEDAW] and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action.

south australia's strategic plan [sasp]

South Australia's Strategic Plan [SASP] was first launched in 2004 and updated in January 2007. SASP provides a mechanism to benchmark progress in South Australia in relation to six specific objectives that are based on the idea of 'creating opportunity' for all South Australians. Ninety-eight targets are incorporated into these objectives including specific targets to increase participation of women in leadership positions; address cultural engagement strategies; and improve work / life balance.

Progress on SASP will be reported on every four years. Reports every two years will be produced by the Independent Audit Committee providing disaggregated targets by Aboriginality, gender, age and region.

1. gender

The South Australian Government is committed to the full and equal participation of women and men in all aspects of social, political and economic life. Achieving this goal requires the development of inclusive policy that recognises the role that gender and gender relations play in ensuring the delivery of effective services. Policies, programs and services that do not consider gender and the specific cultural and socio-economic based experiences of gender, run the risk of failing to deliver on this commitment and of producing ineffective policy. Understanding gender analysis will lead to better and more equitable policy outcomes for all South Australians.

what is sex + what is gender?

Sex: refers to the classification of people into female and male, depending on physical characteristics, sex organs and hormonal make-up. It is also acknowledged that there are a number of different realities for women and men, for example, identifying as intersex, transgender or transvestite.

Sex is not the same as sexuality, which refers to people's sexual orientation, activities and imaginings.

Gender + Gender Roles: people are born female or male, but learn to be girls and boys who grow up into women and men. Young girls and boys learn what appropriate behaviour and attitudes, roles and activities are expected of them and how they should relate to other people. This learned behaviour is what makes up gender identity and determines gender roles. Gender roles and differences are formed by cultural practices and are influenced by class and race. Gender roles also change over time and from culture to culture.

how is gender identity represented and reinforced?

The representation of gender identity is reinforced by learned behaviour and the dominant construction of women and men in the community.

- What is your first reaction to this image - do you think the drawing represents 2 girls / 2 boys / a girl and a boy? Why?
- How has the construction of gender informed your decision?



what is gender equity?

Gender equity is being fair and impartial to both women and men. This is different to gender equality which means equal participation and visibility of women and men in all spheres of public and private life. Employing gender equity strategies will provide an inclusive and equitable response to issues. To achieve gender equity in policies, programs and services it may be necessary to develop a range of strategies to ensure positive outcomes for a diverse range of people within the community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

how do gender roles affect gender equity?

In the process of understanding gender roles and the impact they have on women's and men's lives the following questions, for example, are raised:

- Paid labour is often considered more important than unpaid labour. Who is engaged in the majority of unpaid labour and why?
- Are caring responsibilities considered as work? Who is engaged in the majority of caring roles and why?
- Are responsibilities to extended family and kinship recognised? Who is engaged in the majority of these responsibilities and why?

- Is it assumed that women are financially dependent on men? If so, why?
- Do women have the same access to and control over resources as men?
If not, why not?

Increasing gender equity relies on careful consideration of the differences in women's and men's lives and in recognising that different approaches may be required to produce equitable outcomes. There are many different realities for women and men in South Australia. These realities are informed by gender and also by age, race, socio-economic status, national and ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, language and religion. The difference is that when we talk about the impact of gender relations we are talking about the whole population, not a subset of the population.

reversing gender roles - world upside down

[The Oxfam Gender Training Manual 1994]

Have you ever been bothered by the way the word 'man' is used to include all people? Does it bother you, for instance, that when people refer to the 'rights of all men or mankind', they really mean the rights of men and women, or the rights of all people?

Imagine a world that is similar to our own, but slightly different. In this imaginary world, 'woman' is the term that refers to all people. That is, when we use the word 'woman', we mean everyone.

Imagine that when you read the daily newspaper or listen to the radio, what you see or hear about are women politicians, women trade union leaders and women directors of large companies.

Imagine a world in which most books, plays, films, poems and songs have women as their heroes.

Imagine that women are the people you learn about when you study the great scientists, historians, journalists and revolutionaries.

Imagine that it is women who will be making major decisions about the future in this different world.

In the world we are imagining, girls are raised as free and self confident beings. They play, they run, climb trees and take risks with the encouragement of all adults around them. The family puts a priority on the physical and intellectual development of girls, since they are the ones who will ultimately be responsible for the future of our society.

Boys, on the other hand, are raised to be timid and obedient. They are encouraged to play quiet games in the home which will prepare them for their life as caretakers of the family. From an early age, they are expected to help their fathers. They learn to look up to women, to try to please and care for them. They are taught to become the mirror in which the strength of women can be reflected.

- What were your feelings as you listened to the story - were you angry, amused or confused? Did any part of the story make you laugh?
- How does this imaginary world compare with the one we live in?
- If we put 'man' in each place that 'woman' was mentioned would we have an accurate description of the world we live in? Why? Why not?

2. what is gender analysis?

Most people understand that women and men do not occupy equal positions in society and that there are ongoing differences in the responsibilities assumed by women and men in home, family, work and community life that translate into vastly different life experiences.

Looking at gender roles and the different experiences of women and men is critical in understanding how to develop effective policies and programs. Issues and policies impact on and can be experienced by women and men of different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds in different ways. This guide has been designed to reflect and respect this fact.

Understanding gender relations and the impact of cultural and socio economic factors on women and men's lives will provide information on how to develop policy that is respectful and equitable to all members of the community. Extensive community engagement and consultation will also provide invaluable information on what services / projects are required in the community and who requires them.

Gender analysis is broader than equal opportunity which aims to increase women's participation in places where they are under-represented. Gender analysis supplements equal opportunity by ensuring that all policies, programs and services reflect the role that gender relations play in achieving a fair and equitable society.

what is the aim of gender analysis?

- To look at the role gender plays in our lives and how it effects the way we live and work in the community;
- To look at how gender roles are socially and culturally constructed;
- To look at how issues impact differently on women and men in our community;
- To look at how gender analysis can be used to benefit the whole community; and
- To look at how to design a policy or program that provides greater assurance of equitable outcomes for all beneficiaries.

what are the benefits of gender analysis?

Gender analysis contributes to the development of more effective policies, programs and projects by:

- Ensuring that policies meet the needs of specific groups of people in the community, including both women and men;
- Enabling more precise targeting to produce maximum outcomes for policies, programs and services;
- Improving democratic processes by encouraging widespread and meaningful consultation with women's organisations and other stakeholder groups; and
- More efficient allocation of scarce economic resources to achieve specified policy and program outcomes.

what is required for effective gender analysis?

A number of factors need to be present to enable the development of effective policies, including:

- A statement of government commitment and leadership;
- An awareness of the benefits that using gender analysis can bring;
- Resources and capacity building for those implementing it;
- Solid qualitative and quantitative research, informed by sex disaggregated data; and
- Well-planned, culturally appropriate community engagement and consultation.

what is sex disaggregated data?

Data broken down by sex - female and male. This data measures the representation of both women and men and allows us to see if policies, programs and services have different outcomes for women and men.

gender indicators online [gio]

The GIO website provides sex disaggregated data online. This data reflects the realities of how women and men are represented within our community.

GIO data is categorised under twelve broad themes, including: crime and justice; education and training; employment; informal networks and community engagement; health; income; leadership and decision making; population and demographics; and recreation and leisure.

www.aisr.adelaide.edu.au/gio



3. what is cultural analysis?

Race and cultural analysis broadens the ‘gender based’ framework to include and reflect the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men, and of women and men from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. All discussions about equality, equity or disadvantage must be inclusive of discussions about diversity and human rights¹.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are extremely diverse. There is no one kind of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community or person². An Aboriginal woman living in Adelaide will have different experiences and needs to an Aboriginal woman living in Pukatja [Ernabella] on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands [APY Lands].

It is essential that the complexity of identity and the diversity of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including their relationship to land / country, colonial histories, rural / remote / regional / urban experiences, cultural knowledge, life experiences, kinship, clan and language groups is recognised.

It is important to also acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women’s concerns regarding ‘equity’ are most often driven not by the desire for equality with men [and in this context ‘white men’], but by community based issues and fundamental human rights that include land and cultural rights, and the right to health, education and employment status equal to other Australians.

Whenever a policy is written, a program or service is designed, or a proposal developed it is necessary to demonstrate that the direct or indirect impacts upon Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and men are considered³. In a cultural context ‘gender’ based initiatives are not just about increasing the status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, but the whole community.

Similarly, women and men from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have their own understanding, expectations and experiences. South Australians come from over 200 countries with more than 180 languages spoken, excluding those spoken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples⁴. A range of complex cultural factors need to be taken into account when policies, programs and services are being designed to ensure that traditions, the role women and men play in the community and attitudes to leadership and family and community reputation are respected⁵.

A multiplicity of realities exist for women and men in the community. Cultural analysis acknowledges these realities and informs the development of culturally appropriate, gender sensitive policies, programs and services.

¹ Harris A, 1990 & Ma Rhee Z, 2000

² Marcia Langton, 1993

³ SA Department of Health, Aboriginal Impact Statement, 2006

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006

⁵ Multicultural SA

4. visual resources + language

Developing appropriate visual imagery and language is important in determining the success of a targeted policy, program and service.

A number of key points need to be taken into account when resources are produced:

- Are culturally appropriate images and language being used? If you are developing information for a specific cultural group, consultation with members of the group is essential to ensure that cultural protocols are respected.
- Are the images and language appropriate for the groups you are targeting? There may need to be quite different images and messages if you are wanting to engage with, for example, young people, the elderly, same sex attracted people or people with disabilities.

Example: In 2009 the Women's Information Service consulted with the State Aboriginal Young Women's Committee and respected Aboriginal Elders within the community to produce a culturally appropriate brochure advertising the service.

Women's Information Service provides a culturally respectful and safe place for all women. You don't have to have an issue to come in, you can just drop in to have a yarn with other sistas or have a cup of tea or coffee.

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A free information, referral and support service for all sistas in South Australia

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