



## Gender Terms and Definitions; Gender Continuum



**IGWG**

### Terms and Definitions

**Gender** refers to the economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male. The social definitions of what it means to be female or male vary among cultures and changes over time.

**Sex** refers to the biological differences between women and men. Sex differences are concerned with women and men's physiology.

**Gender Equity** is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Gender equity strategies are used eventually to gain gender equality. Equity is the means; equality is the result.

**Gender Equality** permits women and men equal enjoyment of human rights, socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and of the benefits from development results.

**Gender Integration** means taking into account both the differences and the inequalities between women and men in program planning, implementation and evaluation. The roles of women and men and their relative power affect who does what in carrying out an activity and who benefits.

### Gender Continuum

The IGWG has identified a continuum of how gender is approached in projects: on one end it is harmful and promotes gender inequality, gradually moving towards actively trying to influence equality between the genders.

**Exploitative:** Projects that **exploit gender inequalities** and stereotypes in pursuit of health and demographic outcomes.

**Neutral:** Gender is not considered relevant to health and demographic outcomes.

**Accommodating:** Projects that **accommodate gender differences** in pursuit of health and demographic outcomes.

**Transformative:** Projects that seek to **transform gender relations** to promote equity as a means to reach health outcomes.