Introduction

The Papua New Guinea National Department of Education recently developed its policy on gender equity in education. It is now developing strategies to help put this policy into practice. However the National Department of Education has already done a great deal of work on gender equity. A gender officer was appointed in 1999. Posters and other resources have been produced and all the joint NDoE/AusAID education projects follow the principles of gender equity.

This booklet brings together some of the work of the gender advisers, officers with responsibility for gender and their counterparts in four NDoE/AusAID projects.

• Elementary Teacher Education Support Project (ETESP)
• Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Project (PASTEP)
• Curriculum Reform Implementation Project (CRIP)
• Basic Education Infrastructure Curriculum Materials Project (BEICMP)

This work will help you to begin thinking about how to integrate gender equity principles into your classroom.

The aims of this booklet are to:

• help you understand what is meant by gender and gender equity;
• describe gender-inclusive curriculum and practices;
• discuss why gender inclusive curriculum practices are important for you and your students;
• show you some ways to promote the principles of gender equity in your classroom.

Because this booklet will be distributed to all teachers from elementary, primary and secondary schools it mainly gives general ideas and not specific lessons.

The Constitution of PNG calls for equality for all its citizens, women and men. The aim is that everyone should have the opportunity to develop fully and to participate in all political, economic, social and religious activities.

Good teaching aims to develop the individual talents and abilities of both girls and boys and to treat them fairly or equitably. In this way we as teachers are practising gender equity. This will encourage girls and boys of today to grow up to be women and men of tomorrow who will be able to respect each other and live and work happily together.

You as teachers are very important role models for your students. Your attitudes and values will have a great effect. By implementing a gender fair classroom, you will help to create a more equitable and fair PNG, for the benefit of all our children.
Section 1. Thinking about gender and gender equity

In the first section, we discuss what is meant by gender and gender equity. You can think about what gender means in your own life, and consider your own values and attitudes. You might find it useful to gather together people in your school who are interested in this topic to discuss some of the ideas.

First, ask the following questions:
Why do we use the word gender and not sex?
What do we mean by gender?
The word sex refers to the physical or biological differences that we are born with, such as, women can give birth to children. The word gender includes differences that we learn. For example, some people believe women cannot drive cars very well.

Gender is a new concept which refers to shared ideas, expectations and beliefs about women and men held by a community or a particular cultural group. Gender refers to ideas about what it means to be a man or a woman in everyday life.

Gender has a great effect on every aspect of our lives. The main ideas and beliefs about gender are so taken for granted that we usually see them as ‘natural’ and biological.

There is however a great deal of research which shows that what we believe about gender depends very much on our culture and our position within it; whether we are poor or rich, live in a town or in remote areas, and the cultural group to which we belong. What is expected in one culture may not be allowed in another. For example, it is acceptable for two men to hold hands walking along the streets in PNG but not in Australia. A boy and girl however can walk along the street holding hands in Australia without anyone commenting but this is not acceptable in PNG.

The main gender expectations and beliefs, unlike someone’s sex, can change over time. For example, there are some games that used to be played only by girls or boys. Now it is acceptable for both boys and girls to play these games. Examples include playing with marbles or catching stones.

We learn the dominant expectations of our culture from our families, our community, school, religious activities, workplaces and the media such as newspapers and television. When growing up we may take things for granted and find it difficult to believe that things could be different. But as cultures change, there are very different and often conflicting ideas about the proper ways to be a man or a woman so some people may resist dominant ideas or expectations. If they do not follow dominant rules for their gender and challenge or resist them, they may be punished in different ways: physically or emotionally, such as being made fun of or bullied. But people still choose to challenge dominant ideas.
I was born in the 1960s and since then there has been a tremendous change in gender roles and gender equity in my society at Lihir Island in the New Ireland Province.

Pregnancy and child birth
During pregnancy the mothers and other females will aid the pregnant mother until birth and until the child is about to walk. Then the father and other males have to hold and carry the child. Today this has changed. My children have been carried and looked after since birth by their father. This is a great experience for men carrying very young infants.

If the child was a boy he would be with the other men, sleep in the haus boi, eat in the haus boi. The girls will sleep with women in the family’s house. Now my children, husband and other males are sleeping in the family house. The haus boi is not used often as a sleeping place but as a meeting haus for men for leisure times.

Dressing
I had few clothes, skirts and blouse from stores for school and Sunday liturgy and often laplaps. What clothes boys wore were not allowed for girls. Today our four daughters are always in boys’ clothes. Often they mistake them for boys as they are always wearing shorts and ‘T’ shirts!

Education
This is another area that has had a great influence on gender roles. My father didn’t agree with my doing grades seven to ten. He thought that because I was clever and would have the chance of getting a job, I would get pregnant quickly and would follow someone from another province, which he didn’t like. But I proved him wrong because I flew him on the Big Plane and bought him a lot of things he requested before he passed away. Now the boys and girls both learn sewing, cooking, martial arts and home management both theory and practice.

Work attitudes
I stayed with mother because I was a female and helped in cooking, washing pots, cups and plates, feeding pigs, collecting firewood and attending to visitors. My brothers and father would stay in the haus boi. They would expect us to cook them food and attend to other small odd jobs. Now educated couples are showing the example and the men, boys, women and girls are doing the cooking feeding the pigs, helping to chop wood, just like my husband is caring for our children and doing other odd jobs.
I was brought up in the mid nineteen seventies with three brothers and three sisters. During those days in my area the culture of my community was very harsh and there was strict separation between the females and males. The women were regarded as low class citizens in our community. Every activity which was of importance in the community was male-oriented. Women were only allowed to do simple work or labour such as looking after children, weeding the garden, fetching water, collecting firewood leaves and stones for the mumu.

Moreover special yams gardens were made by males alone. A special place in the village was the spirit house (Haus Tambaran). Women and girls were not allowed to go there. If they do the penalty is death or marrying a very old man. Men who had been to the spirit house were not allowed to be given or cooked food by their wives or women.

My sisters were treated in this way during those days because my village and the community were still regarding the traditional cultural values as an important aspect of life. If these rules were not followed then we might not have plenty to eat or we will become the poor family and it will degrade our family status.

Today everything in my village has changed. No more Haus Tambaran are built. There are no more gardening rules and women’s restrictions within certain or important activities in the village. Women and girls are allowed to go to school and become councillors and leaders of their own choice. Women and girls are free to play games, plant food, cook food together, eat together and do other social activities together.

As you can see from these stories, females have often been more restricted than males and have not always had the same opportunities as males. Think about this in relation to your own life and talk with a friend or colleague about the gender expectations you learnt when you were growing up and if they have changed.

In today’s PNG, as the Constitution says, we want to make sure that everyone, whether they are women or men, boys or girls have equal opportunities to participate in the development of the country and to share equally in the benefits. This is what we mean by gender equity; treating everyone fairly, regardless of their gender.

Research has shown that schools, often without realising it, are not always gender fair. In section 2, we will show you ideas about how you can make sure that your school practises gender equity because we have the ability to change our behaviour to improve the situation if we try.
Here are some stories that show you how people can make choices about the ways they behave.

**Case study 1**
(Note: This case study is not a true story)

Api is a married man with three children, two boys and a girl. He is a professional man working within education. He was at home one day when he noticed that his first born – a boy – was speaking in a very rude manner to his mother, Api’s wife. Api was shocked; he did not think that his son should be speaking like this to anyone, but especially to the woman who is his mother and cares for him in so many ways.

Api thought about why this might be so. He realised that this may be as a result of some of his own cultural ways of behaving, and Api made a conscious decision to look at himself very carefully and to be sure that his own attitudes and behaviour towards his wife (and to all women) are respectful. He made a conscious decision that he would teach these attitudes to his children by his example. Api also decided to change another aspect of his behaviour and to take a much greater role in family matters, spending more time with his children and making sure that their values, behaviours and attitudes included respecting and valuing women and girls, particularly their mother.

This person made a conscious decision to change his behaviour and attitude.

**Case study 2**
(Note: This case study is not a true story)

A female head teacher in a large community school is confident, assertive and goal-oriented and practises gender equity in her work. She is a firm leader at school. Her colleagues define her femininity (ways of being a woman) with these characteristics. However when she is at home with her family of four children and her old father, she is loving, caring and easy going, and spends time building her relationships with her family.

This teacher behaves differently in her home than at work. In different places and with different people this woman is choosing different patterns of gendered behaviour.

This shows how people can choose the way they are going to act out their roles and behaviour according to the situation they are in or the people they are with. Of course not all the changes to culture are good ones but we do know that cultures are changing all the time, sometimes quickly and sometimes slowly.
Section 2. Making the curriculum gender-inclusive

In this section we look at what we mean by a gender-inclusive curriculum and offer guidelines and examples to help you give your students a gender inclusive curriculum.

When in class students receive important messages about themselves and others. These messages come from the activities they do that are described or defined in the curriculum materials. Even the type of language and pictures used in textbooks give students messages about themselves.

All these messages – whatever the students’ gender, abilities, language, culture and where they live – should promote:

- equal access for all children
- equal participation of all children
- equal learning outcomes for all children

When a curriculum does this, we say it is an inclusive curriculum. If we are thinking about it being fair to girls and boys in particular, we say it is a gender-inclusive curriculum.

At present, the curriculum in many schools is not gender-inclusive and makes assumptions about what people can do because of their gender. Sometimes we make assumptions about what someone can do because of their gender. For example, some people might think only men can learn to be engineers.

This is called having stereotypical ideas. If we have stereotypical ideas about what students can do, this will limit our expectations of their ability or limit their access, participation and learning outcomes.

An inclusive curriculum is fair to girls, boys and children with special needs.
Developing a gender-inclusive curriculum: some general principles

There are four approaches to gender equity in the curriculum. These are:

1. promoting access and equity
2. valuing female knowledge and experience
3. acknowledging differences
4. examining society critically.

These approaches require different strategies.

Promoting access and equity

Access and equity means that all students have real access to education. This includes access to resources such as teacher time, space in classrooms and playgrounds, equipment, and opportunities.

What you can do

• Encourage girls to go to school as well as boys.

Not all girls get the opportunity to begin school. Many that do begin, leave before they complete the full course. A great deal of research has been done to find out the reasons why girls do not attend school. These include families valuing boys more than girls, so that if there is only enough money for one child the boy in the family is usually given preference; girls being kept home to help the mother in the garden or to look after younger children; and parents being worried about the safety of their daughters on the way to school and also in school. In addition, girls do not always feel valued at school because they are not listened to or because the topics are not of interest to them.

• Make sure no one is left out or ignored in your classroom.

Research around the world has found that boys get more of the teachers’ attention than girls do. Many teachers do not believe this is so, until their classroom has been monitored. Table 1 (on page 8) is a checklist you can use to monitor what happens in your classroom.

Students who only get a little attention from the teacher often feel that their contributions are not wanted. If after you have been monitored you find that females are often ignored in your classroom, you should try to ask a girl to answer a question, then a boy and then a girl again. By taking turns in this way, girls will not be ignored.

• Help the girls as much as you do the boys.

Often when there are not enough resources to go around the girls miss out.

• Distribute resources like books and paper fairly.
A checklist for assessing teacher practices

Here is a simple way to find out if you are giving equal attention to girls and boys in your classroom. Ask another teacher who you like, to come and watch you teach for about 15 minutes. Get them to tick in the appropriate box on the checklist (below) every time you do one of the listed activities. Remember to act and teach in your normal way when they are watching.

Afterwards, add up the ticks and work out if you are giving equal attention to girls and boys. First record the number of girls in the class and the number of boys in the class.

Ask your colleagues to monitor your lessons to see how much attention boys and girls are given in your classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Girl</th>
<th>Boy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teacher asks a question of a girl/boy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Teacher accepts an answer from a girl/boy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Teacher gives individual help or encouragement to a girl/boy</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Teacher tells off a girl/boy</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. A girl/boy asks the teacher a question</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. A girl/boy speaks individually with the teacher.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• Rotate tasks and responsibilities so that all students have opportunities to do a range of different tasks.

When jobs are given out, usually the girls are given responsibility for the cleaning up while the boys are given tasks like carrying heavy loads. Make sure that the classroom jobs are fairly distributed. You could draw up a roster.

• Rewrite sexist texts so that they are less sexist and more gender-inclusive.

Many of the stories that we use do not have female characters in them. If they do, they usually show females in very limited stereotypical ways (eg. as mothers), while the males are shown in a variety of roles and are usually very active. On page 21 in Table 2 there is a checklist to help you check if texts or other resources are sexist. Try to create materials that are more inclusive.

• Provide opportunities for girls and boys to take leadership roles.

Often when children are organised in groups, a boy is usually made the leader of the group while note taking is usually given to a girl. Try to give all the children the opportunity to have a go at all the roles in the group.

• Ensure discipline methods are fair to boys and girls.

It has also been found that boys in PNG get punished more often and more severely than girls for some behaviours – they are more likely to get beaten than are the girls. Physical punishment is not acceptable at all. Try to use the same discipline methods for boys and girls.

• Encourage girls in physically active play.
• Expect boys as well as girls to show caring, sensitive behaviour.
• Provide examples of role models of successful women and men.
• Provide special programs sometimes for specific groups of students to ensure that girls and boys achieve equally across the full range of skills and understandings.

Here is another case study showing how a school can adjust its curriculum to make it more gender inclusive.

**Case study 3** *(Note: This case study is not a true story)*

In a secondary school the principal realised that there were very few girls doing well in mathematics. He had a talk with the mathematics teachers and found out they had much lower expectations of the girls. So, he decided to make some changes to his school.

First of all he introduced the ideas of gender equity to his whole staff. He pointed out that being female or male defines an individual students’ capacity to learn and to achieve.

Then he started a girls only mathematics class for year 10 students, and asked one of his teachers (who was very interested in gender equity) to teach that class. The girls were taught as though they were top mathematics students and were expected to go on to the teachers college.

The results from that class were amazing; almost all the girls improved and went on to take mathematics at a higher level. This happened because of the change in the teacher’s attitude, he believed that the girls could do very well in mathematics. It happened also because of the special treatment that was provided for this group of girls. The principal is thinking of continuing this special treatment for a while.

You might want to discuss this with your colleagues.
Valuing female knowledge and experience

Girls and boys bring different experiences into the classroom. However, the experiences and skills of the girls have not always been acknowledged in the curriculum. We, as teachers, need to recognise the strengths that girls have developed so that we can provide a curriculum that acknowledges the many and different contributions that women, as well as men, have made to our culture.

What you can do

- Make sure what you teach, how you teach and how you assess is inclusive of all students.

Research suggests that teachers have very different expectations of girls and boys. This results in them rewarding them for different things. For example, girls are usually praised by teachers for being quiet and obedient, hardworking and neat. Boys are more likely to be allowed to be noisy and demanding. This results in them getting more attention from the teacher. Many girls are overlooked so they do not get the help that they need. People also think girls are not as bright as the boys, whereas boys are considered to be bright and eager to learn.

- Ensure the curriculum reflects women’s and girls’ contributions more accurately.

Use community resources to explore females’ contributions and skills. For example, when you are doing work on arts and crafts bring in a woman to demonstrate her skills at weaving.

- Choose topics that will interest boys and girls.

Units of work that are sexist (that is they only provide experiences that are of interest to boys), will be less interesting for girls, so that the input they make and their learning development will be reduced.

- Build on and give approval to girls’ skills and enable them to feel proud of their own achievements.

Assessment criteria should be fair to boys and girls.

The curriculum should acknowledge girls’ skills.
Acknowledging the differences amongst women and girls as well as men and boys

Educators need to understand and value the differences among girls as well as among boys. Teachers need to encourage students to explore and appreciate real diversity. For example, you as teachers need to provide learning experiences and opportunities that will allow students to move beyond a limited view of themselves and develop learning goals that are meaningful to them, individually as well as collectively.

What you can do

• Encourage students to think about their own learning and set themselves goals.
• Provide a classroom where differences of opinion are listened to respectfully and valued.

This is important because if a student is made fun of, they will lose confidence and may not speak up again.
Examine society critically
Look at what happens in society and the classroom and note what is harmful and what is good for women and girls, men and boys. Discuss both positive and negative issues.

Talk about the changes that are taking place in society. For example, women are now achieving roles of leadership and authority.

Think about fear and violence in society. What happens in your classroom?

You can examine your classroom to see ways in which some students silence, intimidate or humiliate other students by shouting them down.

What you can do

• Encourage students to develop skills that will enable them to work together and think about what gender equity means for them.

For example, this would include listening carefully and not interrupting.

• Encourage students to understand that gender is not fixed but rather changes over time, from place to place and from individual to individual.

Students need to understand that they play an active role in making meaning from their experiences and in deciding to adopt or reject certain ways of behaving. You might read them the stories on pages 3-4 in this booklet or make up your own to show students how things have changed.

• Value equally the different roles of women and men and the contributions they make to society.

In the past, teachers often organised games according to gender which encouraged competition between boys and girls rather than cooperation. It is better to encourage cooperation between girls and boys.

• Provide opportunities for students to learn and put into practice positive relationship skills.

• Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and to be creative thinkers.

• Address issues of bullying, sexual harassment and violence against girls and women.

Everyone has the right to feel safe all the time. Schools should provide an environment in which children feel safe.
This means that not only should the buildings and grounds be physically safe but that children should feel safe from violent behaviour and feel they will get help if they have to deal with experiences of violence in or out of school. Violence is an unacceptable way of dealing with problems as it is a way of exercising power over someone. Violence at school makes it difficult for boys and girls to learn properly. Unfortunately violence in schools, particularly boys against girls, is very common. As a result, many girls go through school feeling fearful and afraid to take chances, and are more likely to drop out of school.

Physical punishment of children whether they are boys or girls, is not permissible. If children are to learn to respect and value others, then they must be treated with respect and valued. Just as parents must not abuse children in any way neither must teachers. Other ways of disciplining children should be used. Children should be taught that problems cannot be settled by fighting. Instead they should be taught other ways of dealing with conflict. Remember teachers are very important role models for children so the way you treat them will strongly influence their behaviour.

All teachers have a responsibility to monitor children in their class to ensure that they are being treated appropriately at home. Teachers should therefore look out for any danger signs such as bruising, withdrawing, time away from school or other unusual behaviour.

As teachers you should also look out for bullying or sexual harassment of boys and girls. Bullying and teasing can lead to girls and boys being afraid to speak up in class and withdrawing from school activities. Often boys can intimidate girls and make them feel unvalued, reducing the likelihood of them being successful.

**Personal safety**

As has already been said, everyone has the right to feel safe and that includes you as a teacher. Some of you may feel that you are not safe because another adult is bothering you, sometimes in a sexual way, which does not stop when you show you do not like it and you have asked them to stop. This is called sexual harassment.

**What can you do if this is happening to you?**

Firstly you must make quite sure that the person understands that you are not interested and want them to stop. Take a deep breath, speak firmly and clearly, and tell them you want the behaviour to stop.

If the harassment continues, speak to someone who you trust and feel comfortable with. Ask them to talk to the person either with you or on their own.

It is important for everyone to know that such behaviour will not be tolerated. Your school should state clearly what kind of help the victims of bullying and all forms of harassment can receive and what they can do about the problem. Make sure these issues are raised at staff meetings and a policy is worked out.
Challenging gender stereotypes: some lesson ideas

**Topic: world of work**

When you are talking about the world of work make sure that you have up-to-date information about what jobs women and men are doing in present day PNG. Use plenty of illustrations to show men and women in a variety of roles.

You could discuss with students their ideas about who does what jobs. They might have stereotypical ideas about what is men's work and what is women's work.

You could invite women and men from a variety of jobs to come to the school and talk about what they do.

If you are working with older children discuss promotion and maternity issues.

**Topic: the family**

When discussing the family, encourage respect for the mother’s role by presenting it in a positive way and not using stereotypes. Encourage respect for the father’s role by presenting him as a loving and caring individual involved in his children’s activities, as well as a worker.
Include girls’ and women’s experiences in the curriculum

It has been found in many countries that children, both boys and girls, think of science as something that only men can do. What we as teachers want to do, is to show children that science is an activity that is carried out by all people in their everyday lives. Women and girls have always been involved with science by experimenting with different materials, for example, in cooking.

We want children to have a positive attitude to science and to take an active part.

Make the children aware of the following:

1. Science is used in everyday life.
2. Women are involved in science in many ways in the home and in the garden.
3. Girls and boys should have equal rights to any materials or equipment and they should all participate equally.

Mathematics, like science, has been regarded as something that males do. You therefore need to ensure that girls in particular see mathematics as something that women and men use everyday.

Here is a specific example you could use. You have introduced the theme of linear measurement to the children. Part of the theme could include talking about how people use measurement every day.

Steps to follow:

1. Ask the children to tell you how linear measurement is used in every day life.
2. Make sure that you can suggest examples of the ways that men and women use measurement.
**Gender and pictures**

Pictures or images like those in books or posters and on television are powerful in influencing students’ views about the world. It is important to ensure that the images you use in your materials show the diversity of people in the community and show both males and females in active and meaningful roles.

**What you can do**

In the curriculum materials:

- Show females and males as competent in all aspects of life (for example, don't just show females in passive household roles and males in active situations or positions of authority).
- Provide a balance of female and male images in different roles and situations.
- Show men and women and boys and girls performing the same tasks and both females and males in significant roles.
- Show men, women and children making major decisions.
- Ensure that the images reflect the multicultural nature of PNG and the different roles of men and women within our cultures.
- Encourage students to critically analyse visual images in order to identify the sorts of messages popular images give students about being a man or woman in PNG.

**Show females and males as competent in all aspects of life!**

*Sapos ol meri na man sindaun wantaim ol bai inap wokim GUTPELA DISISEN!*

*Helivim yumi long kirapim Besik Edukesen*
**Guidelines for Analysis of Materials**

**Gender Inclusive Checklist**

The checklist below gives you a way to look at all your resources to see if they are gender inclusive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREAS</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls and women are shown as active in a variety of roles, that is not only as mothers or grandmothers or sisters, or doing cooking or nursing an infant. They are represented as the main character sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of materials used reflects women's as well as men's experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language used is inclusive so use people or human beings not mankind, he/she and head-teacher/principal instead of headmaster/mistress, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values and respects what women and girls do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids stereotypical roles for men/boys and women/girls i.e. allows women &amp; girls to speak up in classrooms, meetings or big gatherings, to be the leader etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material has a fair representation of girls'/women’s and boys'/men’s participation.</td>
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</table>
Gender and the use of language

One of the ways we give meaning to our experiences is through our use of language. Our everyday language can reinforce gender roles and provide powerful messages about how we as teachers think about the roles of women and men in society and how we expect boys and girls to behave. It is important for you as a teacher to be able to identify how spoken and written language creates and maintains gender differences. Here are some ideas about the way you can change your language to make it gender-inclusive or non-sexist.

What you can do

1. Make sure that girls and women are not invisible

   Use of ‘he’, ‘him’ and ‘his’

   When the words ‘he’, ‘his’ and ‘him’ are used to refer to both males and females, it has the effect of making girls invisible.

   Example: The student must hand in his work on the due date.

   You can avoid the use of ‘he’, ‘him’ and ‘his’ by:

   • Using ‘his’ and ‘her’
     Example: The student must hand in his or her work on the due date.

   • Changing the subjects into plural form.
     Example: Students must hand in their work on the due date.

   • Deleting the pronoun
     Example: The student must hand in work on the due date.

   • Changing the sentence using ‘you’
     Example: You must hand in your work on the due date.

   Use of ‘man’

   Historically the term ‘man’ in the English language was used to mean ‘human being’.

   Example: Modern man is inventing new technologies every day.

   Over time, however, the term ‘man’ came to mean a male. When people hear words such as ‘businessman’ they imagine a male, not a female. You need to avoid the use of generic ‘man’ and replace it with terms such as: human beings, humans, women and men, people, or individuals.

   Use of ‘man’ in phrases and words

   The use of the generic term ‘man’ in common everyday phrases and words also has the effect of making girls and women invisible. It should be avoided when you want to refer to both females and males.

   Examples:

   • The best man for the job change to the best person for the job
   • Businessman change to business person, business executive
   • Foreman change to supervisor
   • Manpower change to labour, staff
   • Manmade change to handmade
   • Policeman change to police officer
   • Headmaster change to head teacher or principal
2. Check for unnecessary references to gender

Sometimes women are referred to unnecessarily in the text, which makes them seem somehow different or inferior.

*Examples:*

*The new company boss was a woman from Milne Bay who tried her best to make things happen.*

**Use of occupational terms which refer to girls and women**

Female job titles are often based on male occupational titles. This gives the impression that girls’ and women’s work is not as important as boys’ and men’s work. The following alternatives are recommended:

- *Cleaning lady* change to *cleaner*
- *Sales girl* change to *sales assistant* or *sales person*
- *Actress* change to *actor*
- *Air hostess* change to *flight attendant*

**Unnecessary reference to gender**

In many contexts, girls and women are described in terms of their gender when this is quite unnecessary.

*Examples:*

- *Female lawyer defends provincial administrator...*  
- *Nine people, including a women, were involved...*

This sort of language should be avoided. It does not allow females to be viewed as equal human beings because they are seen as different to males. In the example above, the reader sees the lawyer described in terms of a ‘female lawyer’, which suggests that the job of a lawyer for women is an exception not a normal practice.

3. Avoid unequal forms of address

Inconsistent use of titles and forms of address create the impression that girls and women are less important than boys and men. Titles and forms of address should be used consistently.

*Examples:*

- *John Arva and Mary Barike*
- *Not John Arva and Miss Barike*
- *David Beraro and Joyce Wingawi*
- *Not David and Wingawi*

4. Avoid stereotyped images

Stereotyping in language means using a form of language that describes one gender in inferior terms relative to the other. Stereotyped images define men’s or women’s social positions in negative and inaccurate terms.
Defining either sex in terms of their marital status independent of other skills and attributes they may have

Examples:
- Helen Talei, mother of two, wins council election.
- Lois Tanito, grandmother, appointed president of the National Sports Council.

By contrast, you would rarely see these descriptions:
- Max Pala, father of four, wins council election.
- William Tara, grandfather, appointed director of National Fisheries Development.

Talking about either sex in terms of their physical appearance as a measure of social worth

Examples:
- The prime minister and his attractive wife.

By contrast, you would rarely see this.
- The prime minister and her handsome husband.

Having gender-based expectations about male and female characteristics, behaviours and achievements

Some language use creates and maintains stereotyped beliefs about what it means to be male or female and prevents children from realising their full potential.

Examples:
- Girls are good workers. They are neat, tidy, quiet and well-behaved.
- Boys are trouble-makers. They are not neat. They are noisy and argue with the teacher.
- Boys are better leaders than girls are. Girls are gentle and weak. Boys are strong and tough.
- Boys don’t cry, but girls do.

Make sure the language you and your students use is gender inclusive.
### Guidelines for a gender inclusive classroom

#### Gender Inclusive Checklist

We hope this booklet will help you with ideas about how to create a gender inclusive classroom. The following checklist will also help you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I need to make sure that</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I ask the girls questions as well as the boys.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I get the girls to answer questions.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I have girls as group leaders as well as the boys.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I often have mixed groups of boys and girls with rotation of roles at end and rotate roles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Everyone shares the jobs to be done in the classroom.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I choose games for boys and girls together as far as possible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I do not punish boys and girls differently.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I use gender inclusive language.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I share resources fairly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I assess girls and boys using the same criteria.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I encourage boys and girls to respect each other and cooperate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I value the knowledge and skills of females as well as males.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Make your classroom a gender inclusive learning environment.*
DEFINITIONS

What does GENDER mean?
Gender refers to all our understandings and beliefs about what it means to be a woman (femininity) or a man (masculinity) that we learn as we grow up. The behaviours and characteristics of women and men are learned. They are not biologically determined and they are not fixed in time. Instead our beliefs develop, change and are challenged all the time. Such understandings are learned over time and in different contexts.

How we become a MAN or WOMAN
The most recent theory of how we become a man or woman is based on the idea that gender is socially constructed. This means our beliefs are built up or constructed through our involvement with society and its collective beliefs. This construction of gender is the process by which individuals actively build a sense of themselves as male or female. Increasingly boys and girls are presented with many different expectations and ideas about ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ within their world. They are not passively shaped by these examples. They actively select, adapt and reject those ideas which fit into their own beliefs. In this way gender is dynamic and changing.

Whereas the sex of a person is biologically determined, a person’s gender is reinforced, maintained and reconstructed over time through social and cultural practices.

What does GENDER EQUITY mean?
Equity means fairness and without bias. Gender equity exists when there is fair and just sharing of benefits and opportunities for both females and males. It happens when equal opportunities are provided to both males and females to follow a range of interests and lifestyles. Gender equity is not present when there is gender discrimination. Gender discrimination means treating the sexes differently in ways that suggest that one sex is less important than the other. Gender discrimination leads to an imbalance of economic and social benefits in the community. Equity supports special measures to develop and extend particular disadvantaged groups.

What does EQUALITY mean?
Equality is different from equity and means every person receiving the same treatment regardless of who or where he or she may be.

What does GENDER ROLE or SEX ROLE STEREOTYPE mean?
Gender role or sex role stereotypes reflect dominant or main ideas about what men and women can do and ought to do because of the gender they belong to. So it is often thought that only men can and ought to be police officers, only women should be nurses, and that only girls can be responsible for cleaning up and cooking. Such stereotypes limit the potential of girls and boys.

What is a GENDER-INCLUSIVE curriculum?
A gender-inclusive curriculum is a curriculum which by its content, language and methods gives value and validity to girls and to women as well as to boys and men. It values girls’ and women’s knowledge and experiences, equally with boys’ and men’s knowledge and experience.

What does SEXISM mean?
It means believing that people’s abilities are defined by their sex. It results in people being treated on the basis of that belief. It usually has within it the belief that one gender is always superior to the other.
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Gender Advisers and their Counterparts in four NDoE/AusAID projects for their writing input:

- Elementary Teacher Education Support Project (ETESP)
- Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Project (PASTEP)
- Curriculum Reform Implementation Project (CRIP)
- Basic Education Infrastructure Curriculum Materials Project (BEICMP)

The majority of the photographs in this booklet were provided by the four projects above. The remainder are from the IEA, photographed by Bruce Duncan.

© NDOE/AusAID 2003
Published by the Papua New Guinea Department of Education and AusAID

Compiled by Maureen Dyer
Design, layout and editorial input by Uramina and Nelson
Printed by Moore Printing
ISBN 9980-9968-5-4
National Library Service of Papua New Guinea