GENDER & DEVELOPMENT NETWORK
Briefings
JULY 2016

Glossary of terms

Agency

The ability to make decisions about one's own life, and act on them to achieve a desired outcome, free of violence, retribution or fear.

Naila Kabeer writes, "Agency is about more than observable action; it also encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose which individuals bring to their activity, their *sense* of agency, or 'the power within'. While agency tends to be operationalized as 'decision-making' in the social science literature, it can take a number of other forms. It can take the form of bargaining and negotiation, deception and manipulation, subversion and resistance as well as more intangible, cognitive processes of reflection and analysis. It can be exercised by individuals as well as by collectivities."[1]

Care work and informal (unpaid) care

"Care work encompasses care provided to dependent children, the elderly, the sick and the disabled in care institutions or in the home of the person requiring care. Care policies and the provision of care services are intrinsically related to the achievement of equality between women and men. The lack of affordable, accessible and high quality care services and the fact that care work is not equally shared between women and men have a direct negative impact on women's ability to participate in all aspects of social, economic, cultural and political life."[2]

Informal or unpaid care work includes care for "dependent children, the elderly, ill or disabled persons carried out by family members or others. The responsibility of informal care work is taken up by women with major impacts on their health and well being. Informal care is largely invisible and the economic and social contributions of women carers unacknowledged. Over 75% of informal carers worldwide are women."[3]

Gender

Hazel Reeves and Sally Baden write, "Sex refers to the biological characteristics that categorise someone as either female or male; whereas gender refers to the socially determined ideas and practices of what it is to be female or male."[4]

Gender equality

"The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on

whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a 'women's issue' but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development."[5]

Intersectionality

Coined in 1989 by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality refers to how different forms of oppression overlap and interact. These forms can include, but are not limited to, gender, sexual identity and orientation, race, religion, ability and class. In practice, intersectionality calls on feminists to recognise the varying backgrounds, perspectives and needs of women from all walks of life and to accept that a singular understanding of feminism will never be sufficient. Gendered discrimination, like women themselves, is multidimensional.[6]

Patriarchy

"Systemic societal structures that institutionalise male physical, social and economic power over women."[7]

Social justice

"The idea of 'social justice' as the outcome of struggles against social inequalities implies change towards a more 'fair' society. This requires strategies to redress past injustices, violation of rights or persistent economic and social inequalities. […] Strategies towards social justice have often overlooked the specific gender injustice or discrimination, as well as wider social injustices, faced by women. The women's movement has been working to ensure that efforts to address injustice, through human rights measures, or economic and social policies, are informed by an understanding of gender inequalities."[8]

Social norm

An informal rule that governs social behaviour. In practice, a social norm is a pattern of behaviour to which individuals prefer to conform, on the condition that they believe that most people in their relevant network conform to it, or that most people in their relevant network believe they ought to conform to it.[9]

Solidarity economy

RIPESS describes this as "an ethical and values-based approach to economic development that prioritizes the welfare of people and planet, over profits and blind growth". A solidarity economy provides an alternative to the "neoliberal economic model that excludes persons and peoples, and reduces the motivations of economic activity to the quest for profit and self-interest, and so postulates the uncontrolled market economy as the only creator of wealth and employment". In its place, proponents envision "an economy that combines and balances logics of accumulation,

redistribution and reciprocity, expressed in a democratically regulated market, an equitable reassignment of resources by a participating State, and the affirmation of practices of mutual benefit in the framework of a society and a culture of solidarity."[10]

Women's and girls' human rights

"The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948 outlines what is considered in this century to be the fundamental consensus on the human rights of all people in relation to such matters as security of person, slavery, torture, protection of the law, freedom of movement & speech, religion, and assembly, and rights to social security, work, health, education, culture, & citizenship. It clearly stipulates that these human rights apply to all equally "without distinction of any kind such as race, color, sex, language... or other status" (Art. 2). Obviously, then, the human rights delineated by the Universal Declaration are to be understood as applying to women. However, tradition, prejudice, social, economic and political interests have combined to exclude women from prevailing definitions of 'general' human rights and to relegate women to secondary and/or 'special interest' status within human rights considerations. This marginalisation of women in the world of human rights has been a reflection of gender inequity in the world at large and has also had a formidable impact on women's lives."[11]

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[1] Kabeer, N. 1999. "Resources, agency, achievements: reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment", *Development and change* 30.3, 438.
[2] "Glossary of gender-related terms". 2009. *Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies*, 3. Available at: http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/AdvocacyEducationTools/genderglossary_migs_aug2005.pdf (accessed 16 Jun 2016).
[3] "Glossary of gender-related terms". 2009. *Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies*, 3. Available at: http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/AdvocacyEducationTools/genderglossary_migs_aug2005.pdf (accessed 16 Jun 2016).
[4] Reeves, H. and S. Baden. 2000. "Gender and development: concepts and definitions", BRIDGE report no. 55, 30. Available at: http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/sites/bridge.ids.ac.uk/files/reports/re55.pdf (accessed 13 Jun 2016).
[5] "Glossary of gender-related terms" 2009, 12.
[6] Crenshaw, K. 1989. "Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a black feminist critique of anti-discrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics", *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 140, 139-167.
[7] Reeves and Baden 2000, 27.
[8] Reeves and Baden 2000, 31.
[9] Mackie, G., F. Moneti, H. Shakya and E. Denny. 2015. "What are social norms? How are they measured?" UNICEF/Center on Global Justice, University of California, San Diego. Available at: http://www.unicef.org/protection/files/4_09_30_Whole_What_are_Social_Norms.pdf (accessed 13 June 2016).
[10] RIPESS. 2015. "Global vision for social solidarity economy: convergences and differences in concepts, definitions and frameworks". Available at: http://www.ripess.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/RIPESS_Global-Vision_EN.pdf (accessed 16 Jun 2016).
[11] Bunch, C. and S. Frost. 2000. "Women's human rights: an introduction." Available at: http://bit.ly/24LAxsw (accessed 13 Jun 2016).