GUIDELINES FOR ENGENDERING LEARNING MATERIAL

Content Page

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1. Preface

Making sense is seldom a casual experience; we struggle to make sense in order to make our world different, to make ourselves different.[1]

We all bring our preconceived understandings of the world to the workplace, and to this training programme. Often times, education only reinforces what we already know and what we already believe as "true", based on our current, preconceived knowledge and understandings. Moreover, we assume that everyone else shares this dominant view of the world and work. But this is not what learning is about.

Learning makes us aware that meaning is situational and constantly shifting. In a learning context, we find the space to question the origin and production of knowledge, the discourse that includes the larger social forces that both create meaning and influence practice. Learning is a commitment to making our world different; it is also a commitment to making ourselves different. Indeed, this is not a casual experience.

In developing these guidelines, a deliberate attempt is made to include interpretations of concepts and meanings reflecting the diversity of our nation and our world. We have also included views and interpretations that are not necessarily in the "main stream". Moreover, we have purposefully set about introducing "mainstream" gender equality perspectives in an effort to facilitate the development and presentation of learning free from gender bias and derogatory stereotypes.

This is by no means an accomplished task. Rather, attainment of this vision of developing training programmes that are sensitive to the diverse learning needs of the public service should be seen as an ongoing quest.[2] For future curriculum development, Palama envisions a much more in-depth and integrated inclusion of issues of gender and diversity in its training programmes. We believe the best learning is that which simultaneously troubles and beckons the imagination in a context where no less is at stake than the achievement of our collective commitment to democratic citizenship and justice.

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[1] Tappan, MB and Packer, MJ (eds) 1991. Narrative and storytellings. Implications for understanding moral development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
[2] Palama also presents a training programme "Mainstreaming Gender in the Public Service" based on the unit standard, No 244254, *Manage the mainstreaming of gender in programmes and projects.*

2. Introduction

The Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (Palama) has a mandate of providing public service training and development that will ensure increased capacity of service delivery and implementation of government initiatives aligned to national priorities. One of the key deliverables pertaining to gender mainstreaming is the engendering of curricula. In this regard, Palama has embarked on a systematic process of engendering current courses, particularly those regarded by the Academy as priority courses.

This includes the review and analysis of the learning materials, where the analysis should:

a. Identify the occurrence of gender bias such as sensitivity to social labelling, use of nouns and pronouns to describe gender, use of sexist language, sexual stereotyping, distortions, issues related to the use of male and female voices and unequal power relations in the text;

b. Determine whether the pictures, cartoons and illustrations are gender and culture sensitive; and

c. Assess whether the course material addresses issues of power relations between men and women, and between different race groups appropriately.

The analysis should further aim to address the following key areas:

1. ALIGNMENT with the transformation agenda of the South African public service and priorities and initiatives of the South African Government, converging across countries.

2. RELEVANCE in terms of:
   a. Challenges faced by senior managers with regard to the delivery of public services.
   b. The nature of politics, governance and the intersection with public policy.
   c. New technologies which re-define work processes and approaches.
   d. New labour market challenges.
   e. Budget reform, managing for results, accountability, monitoring and evaluation.
   f. NEPAD and other international imperatives, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Engendering learning material usually follows two processes, namely:

• Identification and removal of all forms of sexism, including gender bias, sexist stereotyping and sexist prejudice; and

• Integration of gender perspectives where relevant to the text, including women's voices, experiences, needs and concerns, as well as any other gender-responsive information,

gender-disaggregated data and research to illustrate government's gender mainstreaming policy, strategies and programmes.

3. Findings from the analysis of existing learning material

Existing learning material are often rife with gender bias and some of these include the following common biases:

1. Often learning material bear no reference to gender mainstreaming, women's rights as human rights or women empowerment.

2. Inclusions of women and women's voices could at best be described as benevolent sexism with multiple examples of overt and covert gender bias, sexist stereotyping and prejudice against women; and with concomitant reinforcement of unequal power relations between women and men with men continuing to dominate and women being disregarded, invisible or under-valued.

3. By and large, the material tends to be disconnected from the transformation agenda within the public service in general and the rights-based approach to development, service delivery, issues of diversity and the creation of an enabling environment in particular.

4. Resources, publicly available, and reports on the evaluation and functioning of the public service, parliament and intergovernmental relations, as well as support documents for senior managers and so forth, are not utilised optimally to inform the learning content. For example, only one of the analysed programmes referred to a State-of-the-Nation Address.

5. Consideration of the South African state's commitments to international, regional and sub-regional human rights and development instruments and its responsibilities to the Millennium Development Goals and other protocols and declarations in the material manuals is minimal. The preparation of reports to the UN, AU and SADC, in terms of the reporting obligations of the state, forms a key responsibility of government officials and this function needs to be dealt with in the learning content.

6. A bias that favoured private sector contexts and experiences in the use of case studies, readings and examples was evident, often with no reference to the public service.

4. Lessons learned and recommendations

Engendering' is an evasive concept and has, up to now, not been really clearly conceptualised. A working defining identifies some of its properties and examples illustrate its complex usage. 'Engendering', interpreted within the context of the mandate and vision of the PALAMA, comprises a two-step action:

a. Identification and removal of sexism: sexist stereotypes, sexist prejudice and sexist discrimination; and

b. Integration of gender perspectives to replace gender-blindness with gender awareness and gender responsiveness for transformation of gender relations. All of this falls squarely within the vision of South Africa's gender mainstreaming strategy for gender equality.

Over the years, general consensus has emerged pertaining to the meaning of 'engendering'. At the very least, 'engendering' denotes:

a. Removing offensive language, stereotypes in text and media, such as always using pictures or words depicting women as receptionist and men as executives.

b. Integrating women's voices, points of view and knowledge, and making women visible in literature.

c. De-bunking myths and exposing sexist stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

d. Replacing words such as 'people' with gender-specific words 'women and men'

e. Inserting concepts such as gender equality, discrimination and gender mainstreaming to integrate awareness of deeper and challenging gender issues and concerns.

f. Adding gender issues to inform and enrich gender-blind activities and assessments.

g. Providing ad hoc technical know-how such as gender analysis frameworks.

h. A strategic integration of technical know-how regarding mainstreaming of gender equality, connecting theory and praxis.

i. Alignment with international, regional and sub-regional women's rights treaties, instruments, benchmarks and targets.

'Engendering' cannot be seen as a 'once-off' event. The mandate for 'engendering' Palama training programmes originated from a Cabinet Lekgotla and instruction was given by the Minister to implement the decision. This calls for institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming for gender equality in every aspect of the organisation, notably in the following instances:

a. At policy level: the gender mainstreaming policy of the organisation should specify 'engendering' and stipulate a process, mechanisms and resources for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

b. At the strategic planning level: the organisation should articulate 'engendering' in its goals, objectives and programming; 'engendering'/gender mainstreaming should be firmly connected to the transformation and diversity agendas of the public service.

c. Resource allocation: the process of engendering Palama operational programmes, including learning programmes, calls for a phased roll-out leading to the eventual overhaul of programmes that are indeed gender-responsive. Planning and allocation of resources for this requires timely consideration Training and capacity building: 'engendering' is complex and requires an in-depth understanding of gender issues and South Africa's gender mainstreaming policy and strategy. It cannot be assumed that Palama staff and contractors (for example, curriculum developers) would be able to 'engender' programmes without proper training. The Palama learning programme 'Mainstreaming Gender in the Public Service' is ideal for this purpose. The attached 'Guidelines for Engendering' could be used as an additional resource for Palama staff and contractors.

d. Competency in the area of gender mainstreaming within the public sector should be a criterion for appointment of contractors and considered for the performance appraisal of Palama staff.

e. Monitoring and evaluation in relation to 'engendering' are critical to ensure appropriateness, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact. Systems and processes need to be put in place to institutionalise monitoring, evaluation and reporting in the organisation.

Curriculum developers who develop learning programmes based on Unit Standards registered within the NQF framework, need to take cognizance of the Critical Cross-field Outcomes (CCFOs) specified in the relevant Unit Standard. CCFOs are assessed as an integral part of the specific outcomes stated in the Unit Standard. Critical Cross-field Outcome number 8 which states: "Participate as a responsible citizen in the life of local, national and global communities and be sensitive to gender issues.

The Palama training programme mentioned above ('Mainstreaming Gender in the Public Service') should ideally become part of the package of the Executive Development Programme modules.

In the context of <u>gender mainstreaming</u>, engendering implies a multi-faceted, multi-layered, multi-pronged, integrated and holistic approach to gender mainstreaming for transformation of gender relations in which a gender equality perspective is embedded right from the very start of the process to the very end. The <u>goal of engendering training programmes is to</u> increase the capacity of public service officials to mainstream gender for gender equality and to eradicate all forms of unlawful discrimination against women. It involves a shift from 'gender blindness' to 'gender awareness' and to acknowledging transformation in gender relations.

5. Principles for engendering learning material

BACKGROUND

> **Making sense is seldom a casual experience; we struggle to make sense in order to make our world different, to make ourselves different.**[3]

We all transmit our preconceived, personal understandings of the world to our work. Whether we are course administrators, curriculum developers, authors, training facilitators or learners, we are inclined to see the world through the lens with which we are most familiar and that is congruent with our own values, norms and belief systems. Moreover, we assume that everyone else shares our view of the world.

Consequently, our writings and training programmes often reflect these personal beliefs, norms and values that we have internalised and, without any conscious or deliberate malice, our biases, stereotypes and prejudice are woven into our work. This happens in very subtle ways, more so because, in our writings and selection of material, we are inclined to use 'ordinary' language, 'everyday' examples and 'familiar' stories, so as to make our training content 'accessible' to learners. In so doing, we utilise, if not reinforce and perpetuate, the dominant patriarchal culture in which women and women's experiences are of lesser value and in many instances invisible and marginalised.

 The training programmes offered by Palama play a key role in equipping public officials with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet the vision of a transformed public service and the requirements of a developmental state. Mainstreaming of gender equality is firmly embedded in the vision and strategic objectives of the state, as reflected in national legislation. Moreover, the state is signatory to a number of human rights and women's rights instruments at various levels, such as the United Nations, the African Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), which obliges the state to comply with their regulations and reporting frameworks. Likewise, compliance with the requirements of

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[3] Tappan, MB and Packer, MJ (eds) 1991. Narrative and storytellings. Implications for understanding moral development. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

non-sexism and non-discriminatory becomes an obligation of all authors and curriculum developers associated with Palama.

The mandate for 'engendering' Palama training programmes originated from a Cabinet Lekgotla and the instruction was given by the Minister of Public Service and Administration at the time, to implement the decision. As far as future curriculum development is concerned, Palama envisions an in-depth and integrated inclusion of issues of gender and gendered power relations in its training programmes. We believe the best learning is that which simultaneously troubles and beckons the imagination in a context where no less is at stake than the achievement of our collective commitment to democratic citizenship and justice.

If you want to be a catalyst for change, your points of entry must be strategic and have the potential for significant impact on the system as a whole... Often it is not that people do not want to transform, but they may not know how to do the right things.

Dr Mamphele Ramphele, New Agenda, Issue 30, 2008

"The challenge to institutions in the public service is to change their organisational culture in order to be more responsive to the needs of women civil servants … recognize women as a separate interest group with specific interests and needs … put to rest the notion that gender mainstreaming is all about setting and achieving numerical targets. There is much to be done to ensure the empowerment of women in the workplace. Putting policies and processes in place is but one strategy that needs to be strengthened. Of more importance is to change attitudes and thereby create the commitment to operationalise such policies and processes in practice."[4]

The purpose of this document is to assist authors and curriculum developers in producing materials that are free from bias, stereotypes and prejudice and that give effect to the vision of non-sexism and gender equality.

There is a need to eliminate historical patriarchal attitudes, practices and stereotypes in the workplace, in order to eradicate any resultant marginalisation of women.

-Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi,
Former Minister for the Department of Public Service and Administration

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[4] The Gender Mainstreaming Initiative in the Public Service. Public Service Commission Report 2006, p. 54.

WHY ENGENDER LEARNING MATERIAL?

Inherent beliefs about what males and females can or cannot do are some of the manifestations of unequal gender relations in patriarchal societies. These patriarchal values are reflected in our actions, decisions, language and the knowledge we produce, be it in writing or in song.   Various research findings indicate that women and girls are often excluded or misrepresented in literature, including learning material at various levels of learning.

One of the most disempowering situations in learning is learning from material that reflect nothing familiar to a learner (exclusion), or material that shows undesirable images or messages about some learners. Such learning material may carry hidden but very powerful messages about who the learners are, their worth and their capabilities in different areas of learning. Furthermore, by virtue of alienating some learners, such material may exacerbate unequal access to learning opportunities.

Therefore, learning material need to be engendered not only as a legislative, transformation and human rights requirement, but also as a means to facilitate equal access to learning for women and men. There are various ways to promote equal access to learning, including:

- Identifying with content: Content reflects the experiences of both sexes.

- Inclusion: Women and men are equally represented in the text.

- Exposure to role models: Use of success stories for both sexes.

- Representation: Encouraging equal participation in all learning areas, as opposed to reinforcing stereotypes such as men are naturally good in engineering and women in nursing, for instance.

- Language: Expressions that indicate that equal value is given to both women and men.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

(a) 'ENGENDERING'

Dictionary meaning:
To make a feeling or situation exist.
Example: *The issue engendered controversy.*
Gender terminology:
To eliminate bias and stereotypes based on gender and/or to integrate a gender perspective.
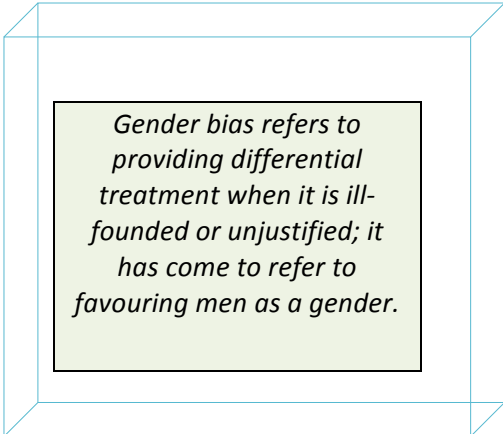Examples: Firemen - replace with *fire fighters*;
              People - replace with *women and men*
                Mankind – replace with *humankind*
                 Chairman – replace with *chairperson* and so on.

Sensitivity to gender is crucial, not only in life but also in learning. In developing curricula, we rarely have either men, or women, in mind. We realise that when this mental picture is either predominantly male or female, problems occur that can result in barriers to access and participation by one sex or the other. We also recognise that women's and men's learning styles can be different. They can respond differently and with different degrees of success to the modes of delivery. They can bring to the learning task different life experiences, expectations, skill bases and time available for study. Also, we realise that both overt (expressed) or covert (hidden) bias, based on gender, is unacceptable and must be eliminated in all training material. For all of this, we loosely use the word 'engendering', alongside a range of new jargon emanating from Women's and Gender Studies, such as gender-responsive, gender-sensitive, gender-blind, gender-neutral (see glossary).

In the context of gender mainstreaming, engendering implies a multi-faceted, multi-layered, multi-pronged, integrated and holistic approach to gender mainstreaming for transformation of gender relations in which a gender equality perspective is embedded right from the very beginning of the process to the very end.

Over the years, general consensus has emerged pertaining to a working definition of 'engendering'.   At the very least, 'engendering' denotes:

Gender bias refers to providing differential treatment when it is ill-founded or unjustified; it has come to refer to favouring men as a gender.

- Removing offensive language, stereotypes in text and media, such as always depicting women as receptionists and men as executives.
- Integrating women's voice, points of view and knowledge, and making women visible in texts.
- De-bunking myths and exposing sexist stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination.
- Replacing words such as 'people' with gender-specific words 'women and men'.
- Inserting concepts such as gender equality, discrimination and gender mainstreaming to integrate awareness of deeper and challenging gender issues and concerns.
- Adding gender issues to inform and enrich gender-blind activities and assessments
- Providing ad hoc technical know-how such as gender analysis frameworks.
- A strategic integration of technical know-how regarding mainstreaming of gender equality, connecting theory and praxis.
- Alignment with international, regional and sub-regional women's rights treaties, instruments, benchmarks and targets.

Mandate for engendering

The mandate to 'engender' Palama training programmes is an official directive (section 1 p.5) supported by government. Engendering is rooted in and informed by law and policy frameworks for women empowerment and gender equality.

The goal of engendering of training programmes is to increase the capacity of public service officials to mainstream gender for gender equality and to eradicate all forms of unlawful discrimination against women. It involves a shift from 'gender blindness' to 'gender awareness' (see below and also glossary of terms for definitions).
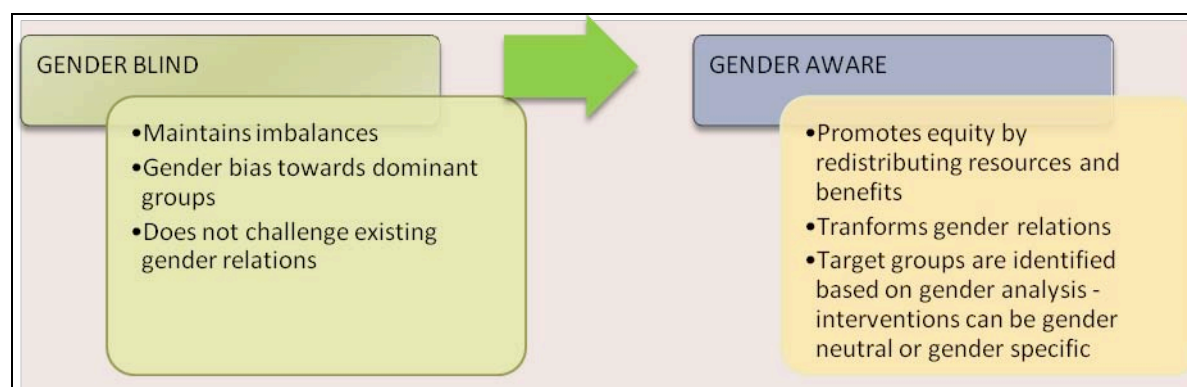
In South Africa, we need to work in a **gender-transformative way,** that is, we need to move from gender-blindness to gender-awareness for transformation of gender relations in pursuit of substantive gender equality or gender equity.

"Gender mainstreaming is transformational and therefore threatens the status quo, interfering with people's comfort zones in the process... An analysis of the context against your long term vision and aligning your short term with that vision will assist you as a gender manager and your team to select a course of action that is most likely to yield your desired results."

Thuli Madonsela, *Handbook on Gender Management and Leadership, 2002*

(b) SEXISM

A boy and his father were in a major car accident. The father was pronounced dead at the scene; meanwhile, the boy was rushed to the nearest hospital. A prominent surgeon was called to perform a life-saving operation. As the boy was being prepared for the surgery, the surgeon saw him and declared: 'I cannot operate. He's my son.' How can this be?[5]

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[5] The obvious solution eludes many and speaks volumes about how deep-seated sexism can be. We are likely to consider all sorts of outlandish possibilities before we challenge the misleading assumption that the surgeon is male.

'Sexism directed against women is the oppression or 'inhibition' of women, through a vast network of everyday practices, attitudes, assumptions, behaviours and institutional rules'[6]. Sexism has three interrelated, but conceptually distinct, parts: prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination.[7]

Sexist prejudice refers to negative as well as apparently positive attitudes toward women and girls that serve to oppress them.

Sexist stereotypes refer to the ascription of both positive and negative traits which characterise women and girls as well suited to restricted, less powerful and/or disliked roles.

Sexist discrimination describes overt negative acts directed toward women and girls as well as patronising acts that assert male superiority.

We are accustomed to thinking about prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination in completely negative terms. Sexism paradoxically may encompass feelings, beliefs and even actions that, on the surface, appear benevolent. The fundamental point that ties seemingly benevolent attitudes with overtly hostile ones is their consequences, regardless of intent – *feelings, thoughts and actions are sexist whenever they serve to oppress women and girls* by keeping them 'in their place'. [8] **The key issue is impact, not intent.**

Sometimes, sexism is so ingrained in our thinking that we are not even aware of it until we confront ambiguities such as those in the surgeon riddle. The definitions of sexism above resonate with the South African Labour Law with regard to sexual harassment, where the emphasis is also on IMPACT, and the UNWANTED and INAPPROPRIATE nature of communication. See text box below.

> **PROHIBITED ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION: LANGUAGE THAT MAY CONSTITUTE SEXUAL HARASSMENT**
>
> Verbal conduct includes unwelcome innuendos, suggestions, hints, sexual advances, comments with sexual overtones, sex-related jokes or insults, graphic comments about a person's body made in their presence or to them, inappropriate enquiries about a person's sex life, whistling of a sexual nature and the sending by electronic means or otherwise of sexually explicit text (See: Amended Code of Good Practice on the Handling of Sexual Harassment Cases in the Workplace. Published under GN 1357 in GG 27865 of 4 August 2005)

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[6] I.M. Young (1992) Five faces of oppression. In: T.E. Wartenberg (Ed) *Rethinking power.* Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.

[7] B. Lott (1995) Distancing from women: Interpersonal sexist discrimination. In: B. Lott & D. Maluso (Eds) *The social psychology of interpersonal discrimination.* New York: Guilford.

[8] P. Glick (1997) *Allport's afterthought: why prejudice cannot be defined as an antipathy.* Paper presented at the meeting of the Society of Experimental Social Psychology, Toronto.

(c) GENDER EQUALITY, INEQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION

Gender equality refers to a situation where women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential; are able to contribute equally to national political, economic, social and cultural development; and benefit equally from the results.

Gender equality entails that the underlying causes of discrimination are systematically identified and removed in order to give women and men equal opportunities. The concept of gender equality takes into account women's existing subordinate positions within social relations and aims at the restructuring of society so as to eradicate male domination. Therefore, equality is understood to include both **formal** equality and **substantive** equality; not merely simple equality to men.

- Formal gender equality requires that the law treat all persons alike; thus the goal is for gender-neutral laws and for their application wherein men and women are not treated differently.
- Substantive equality is a stage of **real equality** and refers to efforts to attain equal conditions for women to be able to contribute and to benefit politically, economically, socially and culturally; women are thus empowered as agents of change.
- Gender equity refers to treating men and women differently, or the same when appropriate, to achieve outcomes that satisfy the needs of both. It means the fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between 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 to eventually gain gender equality. Equity is the *means*; equality is the *result.*

Sociologists define gender inequality as the difference in the status, power and prestige women and men have in groups, collectives and societies. In thinking about gender inequality between women and men, one can ask the following questions:

- Do women and men have equal access to valued societal resources – for example food, money, decision-making power and time?
- Do women and men have similar life options / survival chances and opportunities to sustain their livelihood?
- Are women's and men's roles and activities valued similarly?

The Equality Act[9] defines discrimination as: "any act or omission, including a policy, law, rule, practice, condition or situation which directly or indirectly: imposes burdens, obligations or disadvantage on; or withholds benefits, opportunities or advantages from, any person on one or more of the prohibited grounds"[10].

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[9] The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, (the Equality Act.
[10] Section 1(viii) of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act.

The "prohibited grounds" [11] under the Act are extensive enough to cover all forms of discrimination against women, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth; or any other ground where discrimination based on that ground causes or perpetuates systemic disadvantage; undermines human dignity; or adversely affects the equal enjoyment of a person's rights and freedoms in a serious manner that is comparable to discrimination on a ground in paragraph(a)". For an act or omission to constitute **"unfair discrimination"** that is prohibited under the Act, it must be unfair in addition to satisfying the above definition of discrimination.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) defines discrimination against women and girls as:

"any distinction, exclusion, or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of marital status, on the basis of equality between women and men, of human rights or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social and cultural, civil, legal or any other field."

EXAMPLES

EXAMPLE 1: UNINTENTIONAL BENEVOLENT SEXISM

The following extract from a published article refers:

"The sheer intensity of Wendy Lucas-Bull's passion for transformation in First National Bank is almost disproportionate in relation to her petite physical stature. As CEO of FirstRand Retail, Lucas-Bull firmly believes that transformation is all about harnessing energy for change."[12]

If Lucas-Bull were a small man, would his passion for transformation be described as it is in this paragraph? Would his "petite physical stature" be seen as something of note to point out? If Lucas-Bull's physique was very large, would that had been seen as something desirable to point out? The fact that her passion was linked to her physical attributes also reflects the stereotypes and emphasis on women's physical appearance and the ways women are (mal)treated and (de-)valued.

The fact that her passion is "almost disproportionate" reflects another stereotype: men can be driven, passionate, strong leaders, disproportionate to any other aspect in their lives and it would not be mentioned. It is within the realm of acceptable behaviour for men.

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[11] Section 1(xxii) of the Act.
[12] Name of author withheld.

The choice of words and images the author used may not have been a conscious reflection of the sentiments discussed above. However, through social conditioning, such language and ideology have become acceptable to many people, if not normalised. If it goes unchallenged, these sub-conscious messages are reinforced. It remains blatant sexism.

The litmus test is easy. Would the same description or wording be used if Lucas-Bull were a man? If the author wrote about a male Minister, could something like this be said? 'The sheer intensity of the Minister's passion for transformation in the Department is disproportionate to his physical stature.' Probably not. In general, if language is inappropriate in relation to men or boys, then it is also inappropriate in relation to women and girls.

EXAMPLE 2: SEXIST STEREOTYPING AND UNEQUAL POWER RELATIONS

Learning materials teach far more than information. The tone, the way content is developed and the selection of illustrations encourage attitudes about race, religion, sex, occupations, life expectations and self-awareness. Women are frequently shown in traditional and mostly subservient roles, while men are often shown in authority positions or aggressive roles. In some cases, women are not even represented.

Take care in selecting graphics for instructional texts, such as photographs and illustrations:

- Select illustrations with a good mix of males and females of different races.

- Watch out for: Male-only images in positions of authority, for example, male doctors with female nurses only; illustrations of stereotyped women's and men's occupations, for example, housewives, nurses or mothers in caring roles; and tokenism, where you pay lip service to the "other" sex by including an example here and there.

The cartoon below refers:

This cartoon portrays women and men in their stereotypical roles, based on historical division of labour with concomitant unequal power relations and differential valuing of their roles, knowledge and opinions. Also, portrayal of the facial expression of the woman and her physique (unsociable, unkind, giving useless information, not knowledgeable) vis-à-vis that of the men (friendly, pleasant, knowing, experienced). This perpetuates sexism.

From a gender equality perspective, the group seeking information should comprise women as well as men, and the information should be sought both from a man and a woman. Also, check for racial balance in the selection of illustrations.

EXAMPLE 3: NEGATIVE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN

It was four o'clock in the afternoon, and Mr. Mafioso was involved with interviews for the positions of Deputy Director of corporate governance, and Deputy Director of compliance in the Department of Public Works. Mr. Jones had noticed two attractive women among the interviewees earlier that day. He told Mr. Mafoko about them and enquired how they had performed in their interviews. Mr. Mafoko stated that theirs was a case of "beauty without brains", otherwise it would have been a "blessing" to work with them. Mr. Jones stated that

they would have to compensate with their bodies for what they were unable to do with their brains.

Mr. Mafoko smiled and emphasised that the two women must be made to swear an oath of secrecy. They must never inform anybody about the deal otherwise they would all be the subjects of investigation by ad hoc bodies such as a commission of enquiry, and by the Office of the Public Protector. Mr. Jones said that his main fear was of appearing on the front page of the Sunday newspapers. Even though the allegations could be denied, there would always be those who'd say, "there is no smoke without fire".

Mr. Jones was worried about whether the Minister would support these appointments. Mr. Mafoko stated that the Minister would be the last person to turn them down, that he "knew how to handle him" and that they "have played this game with him for some time now". The interview went well.

There were two men who stood out, which was not surprising as they were highly experienced and well qualified for the positions in question. Most of the members of the panel voted for their appointment. Mr. Mafoko then advised that these two positions were actually meant to redress the gender imbalances in the directorate, and also in the department, hence women had to be employed. Some members of the panel were concerned about this development as this condition had not been made clear in the advertisement. They also indicated that other women who might have applied for the positions had been disadvantaged as they were not aware that the department wanted to promote gender equity.

Mr. Jones stated that Mr. Mafoko should write a strong letter of motivation to the Minister citing reasons why the two women should be appointed. He also suggested that the two men who performed well in the interview should be considered for future departmental positions. All the panel members, with the exception of Dr Maluleke from the University of Pretoria, accepted the move by Mr. Mafoko and Mr. Jones. Dr Maluleke stated that he wanted his objection to the appointment of the two women recorded. The Reverend Mthethwa, one of the outside independent experts, was tasked with handling all the questions that might be raised by the unsuccessful interviewees.

For the first three months, Mr. Mafoko worked well with the two women. During the fourth month, however, problems started to emerge. Both women failed to accomplish projects assigned to them in time. One of them, Mrs. Roberts, openly used intoxicating substances during office hours. Her dress code was unacceptable, and she was disorganised and had low self-esteem. She had apparently started using intoxicating substances in order to forget about her ailing relationship with her husband, which ran into difficulties after he found out that she was having a relationship with Mr. Mafoko.

This could well be regarded as strictly factual case study, devoid of any normative or value judgments. However, used to illustrate 'unethical behaviour', with normative, judgmental discussion questions, compounding the situation, this now suggests sexism[13]:

"What should be done with:

> (a) The two managers;
> (b) The interview panel; and
> (c) The women involved in the case study?"

The women are now portrayed as villains and troublemakers. The language used in the phrasing of the questions suggests guilt, not only of the men but also of the women involved in the case study.

Instead of this negative portrayal of women and of perpetuating the sexist notions of women, for example, that "*the women asked for it"; that they "tempted" or "invited" the men by not down-playing their looks*, an 'engendered' approach would sensitise learners on a range of issues pertaining to gender equality and gender-based violence. The following questions reflect a 'gender-responsive approach' to the same case study:

a. For a few minutes, reflect on what it would be like to be one of these two women. Do you think that the two women were truly afforded the opportunity for a fair interview or acceptable assessment of their skills? If so, why / why not? What kinds of pressures might have made them feel that they had had no choice in the matter?

b. If they did accept the positions, what impact could this experience have on their self-esteem, their view of themselves and their ability to do the tasks required of them? How would the latter affect their ability to improve their performance or reverse the position once in the job?

c. What kind of conversations do you think the women would have with one another? And the other women on the staff? How important would this be for the functioning of the team? And what about their interaction with other men in the Department? What could some of the value judgments be that some of the staff might make about the women, especially once they see that these women are not coping and that they are receiving a great deal of attention from their male colleagues? Do you think these judgements would be fair?

d. Who is responsible for keeping sexual behaviours out of the office? Should the women have taken the advertised positions? If they wanted to apply for the positions, but had also raised their concerns about the inappropriate advances made by the

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[13] These questions were not part of the original case study; these were added to apply this case study in a learning programme.

men, how do you think they would have been viewed? How would that affect the office climate?

Women are often "punished twice" – once by the offensive acts perpetrated against them, and then second, because there is a misconception that they 'asked for it'.

EXAMPLE 4: GOOD PRACTICE - MAKING WOMEN'S AND MEN'S EXPERIENCES AND SITUATIONS VISIBLE

The following extract illustrates a gender-responsive approach that acknowledges women's voice, experiences and views. It foregrounds women's commitment to advancement of their careers as equals to men:

There is no solid research evidence to support the contention that women are any more or less driven toward success than men, given similar opportunities for advancement. Many studies tried to prove that women are held back by a fear of success – and that women are their own greatest obstacle to career achievement. Research findings indicate that both men and women are held back by costs associated with gender occupational violations or deviance from socially acceptable norms regulating 'male-appropriate' (or inappropriate) and female-appropriate (or inappropriate) work. Women are more accepted in the nursing profession than in mining, while the opposite applies to men.

EXAMPLE 5: GOOD PRACTICE – CHALENGING AND TRANSFORMING TRADITIONAL GENDER RELATIONS

The insert below, a newspaper clipping, depicts a positive portrayal of women; it addresses historical inequalities between women and men in the area of political leadership and transforms stereotypical notions of women and men and the divisions between them:

DAKAR, Senegal, Nov. 11, 2005 - Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a Harvard-educated economist and former World Bank official who waged a fierce presidential campaign against the soccer star George Weah, emerged victorious on Friday in her quest to lead war-torn Liberia and become the first woman elected head of state in modern African history.

"Everything is on our side," said Morris Dukuly, a spokesman for Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf. "The voters have chosen a new and brighter future."
 With 97 percent of the runoff vote counted on Friday, Ms. Johnson- Sirleaf achieved an insurmountable lead with 59 percent, compared with Mr. Weah's 41 percent, in a nation where women make up more than half the electorate.

Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf's victory propels her into an old boys' club unlike any other. From the Cape to Cairo, from Dar es Salaam to Dakar, men have dominated African politics from the earliest days of the anti-colonial struggle.

"There are so many capable women," said Yassine Fall, a Senegalese economist and feminist working on women's rights in Africa. "But they just don't get the chance to lead."

Indeed, when supporters of Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf, 66, a onetime United Nations official and Liberian finance minister, marched through the broken streets of Monrovia in the final, frantic days of the campaign for Liberia's presidency, they shouted and waved signs that read, "Ellen - **she's our man.**"

Note the norm of 'man' as standard for success, especially in the case of a president; Ellen the woman becomes 'she is our man'. This kind of language is derogatory to women as it implies that they are not capable of success, leadership or other attributes that are deemed to be male domains by virtue of being women.

EXAMPLE 6: GOOD PRACTICE – REFER TO GENDER-SENSITIVE INDICATORS AND DISAGGREGATED DATA

Gender-sensitive indicators and disaggregated data provide information specific to women and men.

- A gender-sensitive indicator measures gender-related changes, e.g. female-male literacy gaps, percentage of a budget on gender-specific programmes, etc. Gender-sensitive indicators are useful because they are able to point to changes in the status and roles of women and men over time, and therefore to measure whether gender equity is being achieved. Example: "20% of rural women in South Africa are literate, as compared to 30% of rural men, and compared to 15% and 20% respectively five years ago." Note the reference group of men in this example. It could, for example, have been a different group of women.

- Gender statistics reflect the situation of women, e.g. "20% of rural women in South Africa are literate, as opposed to 15% five years ago". Here are some more examples of gender-sensitive indicators. Note that indicators can be quantitative or qualitative.
  - *Education*: school attendance rate by sex; improved gender content in curriculum
  - *Health*: increased wellness of reproductive health by sex; reduced infant mortality rate compared with national average
  - *Empowerment:* changes in % of property owned and controlled by sex .

GUIDELINES FOR NON-SEXIST LANGUAGE

Writing in a non-sexist, non-biased way is both ethically sound and effective. Non-sexist writing is necessary for most audiences; if you write in a sexist manner you may alienate many of your readers detracting them from your discussion and your writing will be much less effective.

- Language becomes sexist when we unnecessarily distinguish between women and men or exclude, diminish or demean either sex. Often we delimit what is considered to be the exception to the rule (e.g. the woman engineer and the male nurse).
- We also use gender forms that tend to trivialise women, such as girl for adult women. Probably the most pervasive form of sexist language is the exclusion of women, sometimes subtly and other times blatantly expressed (when '*all men are created equal*' was written, the vote had not yet been extended to women – nor to non-landholding men for that matter).

Gender bias in language can influence how women and men respond to the information. Research has shown that women remembered more when unbiased language was used compared to exclusive use of masculine forms. Language can also shape how we feel about matters of critical importance.

Ways to avoid sexist language
When people use sexist language they are actually showing bias, even if they are unaware of it or if it is unintentional. Language is sexist if you refer in general to doctors, managers, lawyers, company presidents, engineers, and other professionals as "he" or "him" while referring to nurses, secretaries and homemakers as "she" or "her." Our goal as communicators is to identify with our audience, not to inadvertently insult them. Follow these guidelines to eliminate sexist expressions from your communication, spoken and written:

1. Use neutral expressions:
      Use "chair," or "chairperson," rather than "chairman"
      Use "businessperson" rather than "businessman"
      Use "supervisor" rather than "foreman"
      Use "police officer" rather than "policeman"
      Use "letter carrier" rather than "postman"
      Use "homemaker" rather than "housewife"
      Use ''doctor'' rather than ''woman doctor''

2. Use plural forms. Instead of using "The manager . . . he," use "The managers . . . they."

3. When possible (as in directly addressing someone), use "you." For example, "You can begin to eliminate sexual bias by becoming aware of the problem." But **be careful** how you apply this technique of using "you" as it can create an undesirable tone in your writing, so choose your words carefully and phrase with caution.   If used too often, it can sound as if you're ordering your reader around.

4. Drop endings such as -ess and -ette used to denote females (e.g., poetess, authoress, bachelorette, majorette).

5. Avoid overuse of pairings (him or her, she or he, his or hers, he/she, s/he). Too many such pairings are awkward.

6. Avoid sexist salutations such as "Dear Sir", or "Gentlemen." It is always preferable to use the person's name. If you do not know whether a woman is married or not, use Ms. If you are unable to find out the sex of the person, use the position title on an attention line (Attention: Quality Assurance Supervisor) instead of a salutation.

7. Although MAN in its original sense carried the dual meaning of adult human and adult male, its meaning has come to be so closely identified with adult male that the generic use of MAN and other words with masculine markers should be avoided.

Original: mankind
Alternatives: humanity, people, human beings, humankind.

Original: man's achievements
Alternative: human achievements

Original: man-made
Alternatives: synthetic, manufactured, machine-made

Original: the common man
Alternatives: the average person, ordinary people

Original: man the stockroom
Alternative: staff the stockroom

Original: nine man-hours
Alternative: nine staff-hours