

Gender and Sexuality Overview Report

Why are gender and sexuality important for policymakers, practitioners and activists? Sexuality and gender can combine to make a huge difference in people's lives - between well-being and ill-being, and sometimes between life and death. Sexuality can bring misery through sexual violence, HIV/AIDS, maternal mortality, female genital mutilation, or marginalisation of those who break the rules, such as non-macho men, single women, widows who re-marry, sex workers, people with same-sex sexualities, and transgender people. Sexuality can also bring joy, affirmation, intimacy and well-being. How can fulfilment, well-being and pleasure become more possible for all? New thinking on sexual rights seeks to provide answers with a recognition that we need to look at the positive and pleasurable sides of sexuality, and to make these more possible for all. This is particularly the case for those for whom gender norms obstruct opportunities to seek pleasure and fulfilment - such as many women; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people; people living with HIV/AIDS; and people with disabilities.

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