Beyond the binary: Gender training covering the full spectrum of sex & gender

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Advancing Gender Training to Support Effective Gender Mainstreaming
Vilnius, 13 November 2012
Key questions

- Can gender mainstreaming be complete if we do not challenge the sex/gender binary?

- Which genders are being mainstreamed by current gender mainstreaming strategies and gender training programmes?

- How can we build on what we have and make it better for all?
Key definitions
Sex ≠ gender

- **Sex** refers to the biological makeup such as primary and secondary sexual characteristics, genes, and hormones.

- **Gender** refers to people’s internal perception and experience of maleness and femaleness, and the social construction that allocates certain behaviours to male and female roles which vary across history, societies, cultures and classes.
Sexual orientation refers to each person’s capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender.
Gender identity refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of the body (which may involve, if freely chosen, modifications of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerism.
Gender expression refers to people's manifestation of their gender identity, and the one that is perceived by others. Typically, people seek to make their gender expression or presentation match their gender identity, irrespective of the sex that they were assigned at birth.
Lesbian, gay & bisexual

- **Lesbian**: a woman who is sexually and emotionally attracted to other females.

- **Gay**: a person who feels sexual and/or emotional desire exclusively or predominantly for persons of her or his own gender.

- **Bisexual**: when a person is emotionally and/or sexually attracted to persons of more than one gender.
Trans

Trans (or trans*) is an inclusive umbrella term referring to those people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differ from the sex they were assigned at birth.

Intersex (or inter*) refers to those people who have genetic, hormonal and physical features that are neither exclusively male nor exclusively female, but are typical of both at once or not clearly defined as either.
Sex/gender
binary model
Sex/gender binary model refers to the norms derived from the simplistic idea of a dichotomy of two mutually exclusive and biologically defined sexes to whom different roles and behaviour are traditionally ascribed.
Impact of sex/gender binary model

- The sex/gender binary model classifies both sex and gender into two distinct and exclusive forms of male/masculine and female/feminine identities.

- Negative attitudes towards trans and intersex people (and all other persons that do not fit neatly e.g. LGB) are directly correlated to the importance that a determinate society places on the gender binary model as well as the level of gender stereotypes, sexism and gender inequalities that exist within it.
Binary representation of humankind
Sex segregation symbols
Reproduction of gender norms
The big question

BOY? or Girl
Impact of this model
Most reasons behind discrimination against LGBTI people are a result of society's various practices and institutions that legitimise and privilege those who are comfortable in the gender belonging to the sex assigned to them at birth and adopt roles that are perceived to be appropriate (or preferable) for their sex.
Legal and social definitions of ‘sex’ are often binary and mutually exclusive ‘male’ & ‘female’ categories and are hence problematic for LGBTI people e.g. gender recognition law, marriage law etc. as well as boys’ scouts / girl guides etc.

Non-binary people fall between the cracks.
Diversity in training
Accommodation for sex/gender diversity

- Ask whether the definitions that you are using are exclusive of some identities either through *direct exclusion* or *omission*
- Question the use of binaries
- Be proactive – ask whether you need to do to be more inclusive of diversity
- Think how to do that best in the context that you are working in
- Refer to tools / exercises that are already available
Visual aides

The Genderbread Person

Gender Identity
- Woman
- Genderqueer
- Man

Gender identity is how you, in your head, think about yourself. It's the chemistry that composes you (e.g., hormonal levels) and how you interpret what that means.

Gender Expression
- Feminine
- Androgynous
- Masculine

Gender expression is how you demonstrate your gender (based on traditional gender roles) through the ways you act, dress, behave, and interact.

Biological Sex
- Female
- Intersex
- Male

Biological sex refers to the objectively measurable organs, hormones, and chromosomes. Female = vagina, ovaries, XX chromosomes; male = penis, testes, XY chromosomes; intersex = a combination of the two.

Sexual Orientation
- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Homosexual

Sexual orientation is who you are physically, spiritually, and emotionally attracted to, based on their sex/gender in relation to your own.
Best practice examples
1 School & adult learning
Gender in the Blender (Flanders, BE)
Gender in the Blender – overview

- Educational tool for training on gender diversity and trans issues in secondary schools.
- It moves away from M/F binary and focuses on the individual make-up: sex, culture, sexual orientation etc.
- The blender symbolizing the individual mix.
- The underlying goal being the recognition and valuing of diversity by students.
- The ultimate goal being greater self-awareness and respect of others.
Gender in the Blender – issues covered

- Definitions – gender variant; cross dresser; transgender; transsexual.
- 23 exercises were included in a pack for students & made available to teachers – covering theoretical aspects, valuing of diversity and self-discovery.
a Gender in the Blender – e.g. tools

- Rotary sex, gender identity, gender role & sexual orientation
Fritt Fram / All Clear (Sweden)

www.frittfram.se
EQUAL project on sexual orientation at the workplace.

The goal was to provide all with the possibility to be open about themselves at the workplace.

It addressed normativity and its acceptance:

- heterosexuals speak freely about their partners, children and things they do together. *Can gays & lesbians do the same?*
- Are gay jokes funny? Who pays the price?
2 Information provision
Equality Ombudsman (Sweden)

www.do.se
Equality Ombudsman – Strategies

- Internal working team has presented strategies and plan of action for the ombudsman
- Education of strategic target groups and key actors to motivate them to take their responsibility for facilitating equal rights and opportunities for everybody
- Mutual development of knowledge in co-operation with NGOs
Specific communication strategies concerning gender identity and expression

Internal training in norm criticism from a LGBTQ perspective

In-service training for employees at the local anti-discrimination agencies

Pride seminars, launch events and reception
2 Equality Ombudsman (Sweden)

Excerpt from information leaflet:

Gender Identity and Gender Expression

Freedom from discrimination on grounds of gender identity or gender expression is not about the right to be different – it is about the right to be yourself.

In a society in which a deep-rooted two-gender norm prevails – female and male – and where other gender identities are often not respected, there is much to be done before people’s right to be themselves is as natural as it should be.

Since January 2009 when the law prohibiting discrimination on grounds of gender identity or gender expression was introduced, only a few complaints have been filed with the Equality Ombudsman. Yet we know that, unfortunately, discrimination and harassment are features of many transpersons’ everyday lives. It is my hope that the Equality Ombudsman can contribute to raise awareness both about the rights that people have and how they may exercise them. This is vital if we are to realise the Equality Ombudsman’s vision of a society that respects the principle of the equality in dignity and rights of all people.
3 Raising awareness
Kein Mensch passt in eine Schublade!

Werden Sie aufgrund Ihres Geschlechts diskriminiert? Lassen Sie sich beraten unter: beratung@bg.bund.de / 030/15 555-1865

www.anti-diskriminierungs-stelle.de
www.facebook.com/anti-diskriminierungs-stelle
Some think I should dress more like a woman. Some think I should dress more like a man.

I may not fit some ideas about gender, and I am a proud part of DC.

Please treat me the same way any person would want to be treated: with courtesy and respect.

Discrimination based on gender identity and expression is illegal in the District of Columbia.

If you think you've been the target of discrimination, visit www.ohr.dc.gov or call (202) 727-4559.
Part of DC (District of Columbia, USA)

I love wandering through Smithsonian museums, eating on H Street with friends, and going to shows at Howard Theatre.

I’m a transgender woman and I’m part of DC.
In Bogota you can be ... (Colombia)
Conclusions
Sex/gender diversity mainstreaming

Binary

Men/women only

Diverse

All sexes/genders
Thank you

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