

# GENDER AGENTS

## **Equality**

**...is the (political) objective**

## **Gender Mainstreaming**

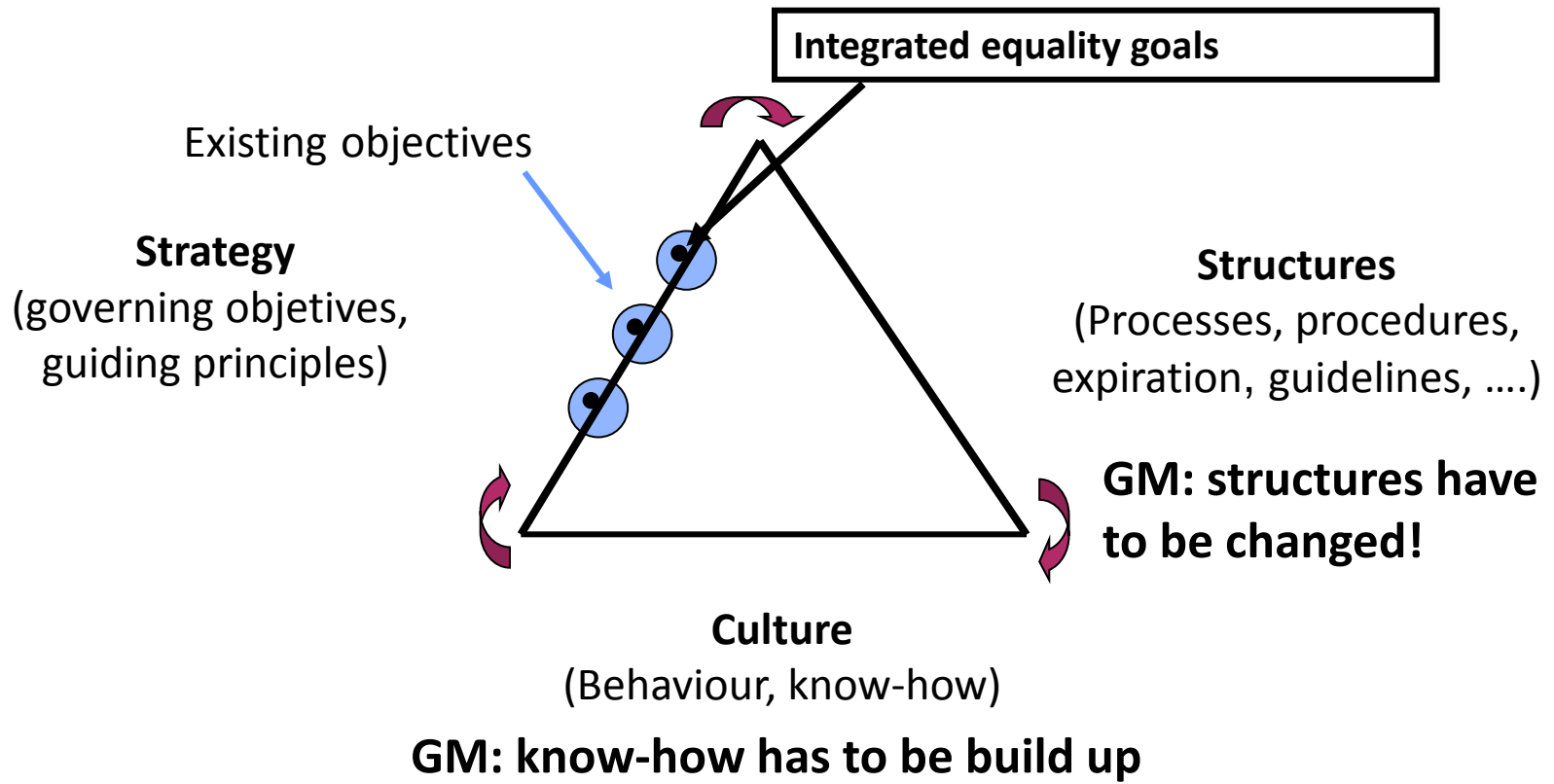
**...is the technique to achieve the objective**

## **Promotion of women or men**

**... is an option to compensate existing in-equality**

# Concept of Intervention

## Dimensions of Organisations



## Requirements for GM

Our experience in Austria was:

There are people with high Gender expertise who deliver so called "Gender trainings", mostly to increase awareness of women issues, discrimination or ascriptions.

There are people with excellent Know How about change processes, strategy development or organisational issues – who deliver training or counselling for managers and senior staff regarding this tasks.

### **Gender Mainstreaming requires both!**

To link link Gender issues to strategies, structures, tools and instruments of organisational development, project management, HR-management, quality management of an organisation /a company.

Gender mainstreaming is intended to look at structures and processes.

Therefore, the implementation of GM challenges organizations in their potential for change.

## Requirements for GM

Gender Mainstreaming is not interested in “private lifeconcepts and opinions about women and men or in personal feelings or a mental state”.

Gender Mainstreaming requires people in their professional position to observe the impact of gender equality in their own sphere of action and to eliminate the reproduction of existing gender roles.

Gender Mainstreaming is about changing discriminatory or preferential structures and processes in all systems and at all levels.

Sometimes the reason why the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming is not really successful is the lack of knowledge how to work towards equality goals. Sometimes it is a lack of clear orders and responsibility within organisations. Sometimes benefits of promoting equality between women and men cannot be identified and so each effort in association with this issue seems to be just a waste of time and money.

## Training for Gender Agents

To foster the Gender Mainstreaming process it is very important to have internal Gender Agents in the relevant internal staff/positions who have Gender Mainstreaming expertise.

Therefore we designed the qualification for “Gender Agents”.

A seminar with duration of 12 days.

Target groups are people in leading positions who are expected to be able to change organizational structures or to support the responsible management in the change process.

It aims at understanding GM as an organizational management process and finding tailor-made solutions (elaborated during the training) to implement GM in an organization/structure.

## Training for Gender Agents

In the past five years about 70 executive managers, internal consultants, HR-managers, Quality-managers and CEOs of private businesses, politicians, senior staff of the City of Graz, of other municipalities, of the regional administration of the county of Styria, of regional managements, key figures of the Trade Union, Employment Service and Federal Social Welfare Office, research institutions, universities and education institutions have been trained as Gender Agents.

All these Gender Agents have started to implement Gender Mainstreaming in their organisations and systems – Gender Agents affect various systems of economy, labour market, business, education, social partners and public administration. And they have built up networks

## Gender Agents on political level

Within the all-embracing 3-years project to implement Gender Mainstreaming /Gender Budgeting into the Styrian government and administration this seminar was provided for political players. It aims at supporting gender mainstreaming processes throughout the legislative level in the Austrian province of Styria.

The 12-days training was designed for the members of the Styrian regional government from all political parties and their staff.



## Content of the seminar

### Intervention concept of GM – position of Gender Budgeting

- Participants get a clear understanding of the terminology and a common understanding of the concept of Gender Mainstreaming and learn about Gender Budgeting as a result of GM.

### Basics of change management, organizational development

- Participants learn about the phases, functions and roles in a process of change.
- Participants learn how to initiate and design successful implementation projects in theory and practice.
- Simulation projects will be processed within the group.
- Different ways of resistance which are inherent in any change process will be examined.

## Content of the seminar

### **Instruments for diagnosis, analysis, process design, monitoring**

- Participants learn about different instruments and procedures and how to use them in their daily work

### **Role and function of Gender Agents**

- Participants learn how to define clear mandates, objectives and allocation of responsibilities.

### **Gender-fair performance – internal and external**

- Participants deal with the power of images and language in context of equality and meet methods and procedures.

### **GM in the legislature**

## Gender Agents on political level

Although these politicians have different views of life, from a gender perspective they saw the same problems. This created a real connection across party lines.

The fact that they had different ideologies and political strategies was not seen as an obstacle. Participants were held together by the assurance not to work against each other but to find different (political) ways to reach gender equality.

Furthermore, the participants recognized that in all political parties the same mechanisms and phenomena can be observed - just to a varying extent.

This gave the opportunity for all participants in political parties to introduce motions and/or legislation together and across all party lines.

## Results

- Change in the approach to/perception of gender issues/gender mainstreaming; there is a great consensus for the need for GM: Gender Agent as a 'tool' has been widely accepted and 'Gender' became a topic throughout all political agendas on provincial level.
- Enhancing gender mainstreaming capacity within the organization/institution.
- The Styrian parliament decided on 9 June 2009 that a working group "gender mainstreaming" is set up, which ensures, under the control of presidents, the implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming.