

GENDER

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Main objectives:

- Introducing the topic of gender and image of women created by our culture

During the workshops participants will (specific objectives):

- Consider the differences between (biological) sex and (socio-cultural) gender.
- Analyze songs, proverbs and other elements of culture considering what kind of image of women and girls they present.
- Learn to be critical toward the media, especially advertisements, and to see not only the products or services they advertise, but also the cultural message they give, especially in relation to gender.
- Get to know examples of positive actions, initiatives and social campaigns related to gender equality.

Time:

3h

Place:

indoor

Materials:

- Stationery – pens, paper (preferably recycled)
- Equipment – computer, speakers, blackboard or flipchart
- To prepare before the meeting – cut out from magazines advertisements showing girls and women

Note: You can also run this workshop in two separate meetings: one about gender and one about advertisements and images of women presented in them.



Course:

1. Introduction

Invite participants to the introductory round, during which they will say a few words about themselves and their expectations towards the workshop. Verify the expectations by informing which of them are likely to be met, which are not and, if possible, where participants can look for answers to expectations that are not related to the content of this workshop.

2. Sex versus gender

Divide the board / flipchart into two columns, writing "women" on the top of the first one and "men" on the top of the second one. Ask participants to tell what women are like and what men are like (for example: sensitive, emotional, lazy, reasonable, strong, mothers, fighters, aggressive, always in control, etc). We will rely on stereotypes here, which may raise objections from some of the participants, but ask them to reflect for a moment on what common beliefs about men and women can be found in our society. Write them all down in the proper column, with no judgment. When the list is complete, ask the participants to identify those terms from the board/flipchart that are 100% related to biology, that are natural – that is, common to all women or all men no matter where and under what conditions they were born. It will turn out that there are very few (if any) such terms that can be unequivocally attributed to biology, and therefore biological sex. Natural, biological features are, for example, giving birth to children, breastfeeding, but caring for children or greater willingness to care is already questionable. All those features that cannot be clearly ascribed to biology are called gender (in other words – socio-cultural sex). That's all we learn about being male and female after we are born.



3. How do we learn it?

Divide the participants into groups of a few people and ask them to write down all the sayings, proverbs, songs, and jokes about women and girls that come to their mind. These can be sayings or quotes in which the word woman appears directly (e.g. no women no cry), but also those in which there is another word clearly indicating a woman (for example jokes about blonde). After a few minutes, ask the groups to pass the quotes and sayings they wrote to the group on their right. The next task will be to create an image of a woman that emerges from quotes and sayings written by another group. What is the woman like according to what is written on the sheet of paper they received from the other group? What information does a woman/girl receive about who she should be, how to behave, what to do and what not to do? Finally, ask the groups to present the results of their work and discuss their conclusions. Very often images which emerge are contradictory – on one hand women should be modest, caring, virgin, good mothers and wife, on the other sexual, provocative, experienced and independent.

If the group needs a break, this is a good moment for it.

4. Killing us softly – movie

Invite the participants to the screening of the film "Killing us softly" – <https://www.killingussoftly4.org/> or another film related to the image of women in the media and in advertising. After the film, ask participants about their impressions, thoughts, doubts.



5. Ads around us

Divide the participants into new groups. Give each group a few ads featuring women, cut from available magazines. If you are working with a group that you know better, you can ask the participants to cut out such advertisements themselves or to take pictures of billboards and posters with images of women in preparation for the workshop. Based on the information from the video, ask the participants in the groups to analyze the ads, wondering what, apart from the product, each of them sells? What is the cultural message of the advertisement, what does it tell us about the role of women? How does this affect us, our girlfriends, our daughters?

6. Positive examples

Although there is still much to be done in the topic of this workshop, it's worth noticing that there is significant progress. Show the participants a few social campaigns devoted to the topics (you can get inspired by the links below). You can also share female related changemaker stories

(<https://www.exchangetheworld.info/changemakers/tags/women>), finishing the workshop with a bit of hope, inspiration and motivation.

Examples of social campaigns:

- Dream Gap Project: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_xU7VbF09I&ab_channel=Barbie
- Dove | Real Beauty Sketches: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpaOjMXyJGk&ab_channel=DoveUS
- Run like a girl: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjJQBjWYDTs&ab_channel=Always



7. Summary

Invite the participants to the final round, ask about their learnings and impressions after the workshop. Take care to give a voice to every participant to express whatever needs to be expressed before the workshop ends.

Bibliography (and materials to share with participants after the workshop):

- Fundacja Autonomia (<https://autonomia.org.pl/publikacje/delikatnie-nas-zabijaja-3-Images-kobiet-w-reklamach/>)
- Antydyskryminacja. Pakiet edukacyjny, wydawnictwo CODN (<http://bc.ore.edu.pl/Content/190/antydiskryminacja.pdf>)
- Killing us softly (<https://www.killingussoftly4.org/>)
- ExChange The World (<https://www.exchangetheworld.info/changemakers/tags/women>)

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