

From Statistics to Analysis and Improvement

Swedish gender equality policy

What?

Policy – Gender equality objectives

Swedish gender equality policy consists of the national gender equality objectives. More exactly, there is one central aim divided into four objectives supported across the political spectrum.

The national gender equality objectives

Central aim: Women and men are to have the same power to shape society and their own lives

Objectives

1. Equal division of power and influence

Women and men must have the same rights and opportunities to be active citizens and to shape the conditions for decision-making

2. Economic equality

Women and men must have the same opportunities and conditions as regards education and paid work which give economic independence throughout life

3. Equal distribution of unpaid housework and provision of care

Women and men must have the same responsibility for housework and have the opportunity to give and receive care on equal terms

4. An end to men's violence against women

Women and men, girls and boys, must have the same right and opportunity to physical integrity

How?

Strategy – Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the official strategy in place to achieve the national gender equality objectives. There is a focus on externally oriented work and not on staff issues such as salaries and representation among managers.

Why?

Theory – The gender system

Concept coined by researcher Yvonne Hirdman according to which we separate between women and men and value the genders differently, which leads to gender inequality in society.

For discussion

What does the gender system look like in your workplace – how are women and men separated and valued differently?

Starting points for gender equality work

Swedish gender equality work is generally based on a number of central principles:

1. Sweden has not achieved gender equality. This is supported by research and statistics
2. Gender is an area of knowledge. There is also a research field: gender studies
3. Gender equality concerns both women and men (and individuals who define themselves as neither a man nor a woman)
4. Gender inequality does not benefit anybody – see for example the Swedish government's report *Män och jämställdhet* [men and gender equality]: <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/18285/a/233945>
5. Gender equality is a prerequisite for equal treatment – equal treatment cannot be achieved without gender equality
6. Everybody is entitled to services of equally high quality, regardless of gender
7. Equality in service provision must be ensured regardless of the gender distribution of the staff group
8. We do not know whether we have achieved equality in service provision unless we find out – it is not enough to merely believe or feel a certain way. What does the situation really look like?
9. The dilemma of gender equality work: we must bring attention to differences and stereotypes linked to gender in order to invalidate them – gender equality is not achieved by not talking about them

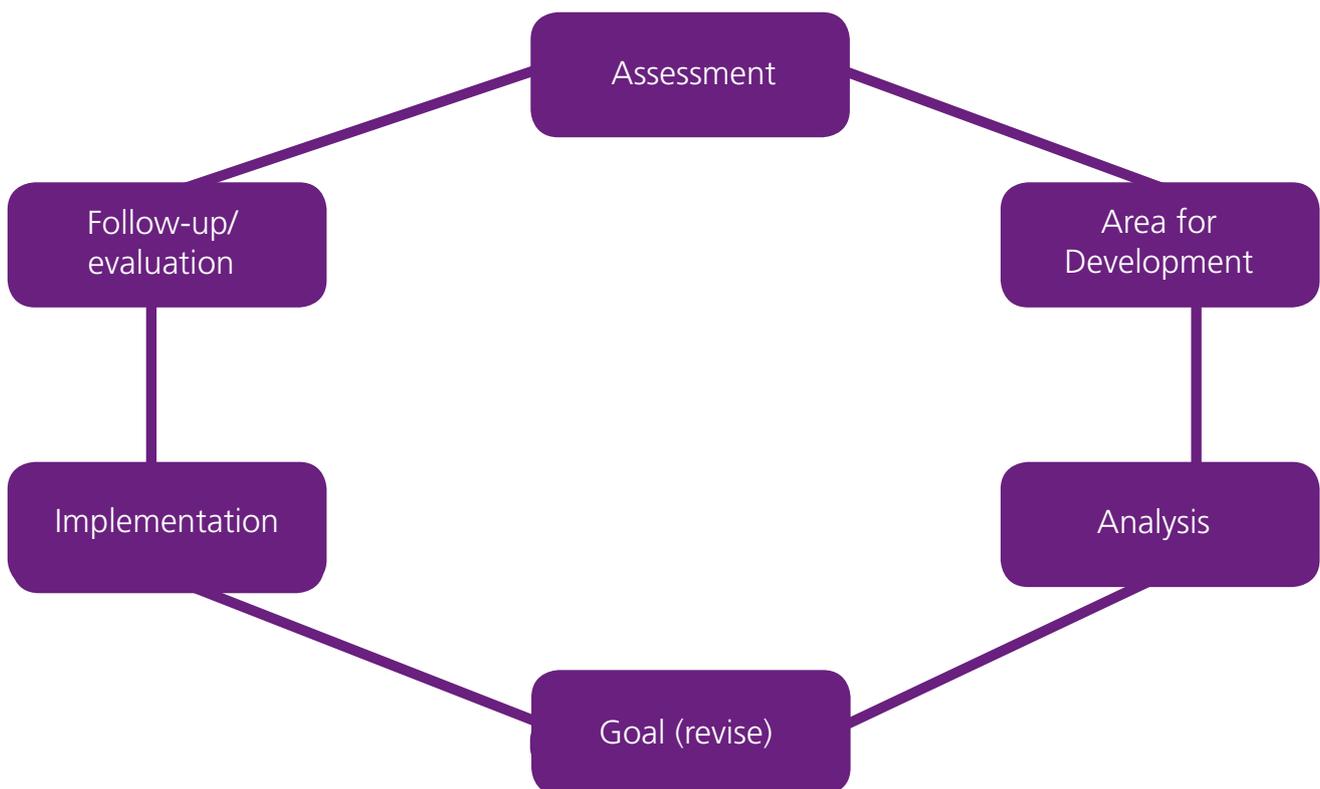
Definition of gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is the (re)organization, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies, at all levels and at all stages by the actors normally involved in policy making.

Source: Council of Europe

(...) a strategy aimed to ensure that services and resources in society are distributed on the same terms to women and men, girls and boys.

Source: Swedish Government Official Reports 2007: Stöd för framtiden: Om förutsättningar för jämställdhetsintegrering.



Sex-disaggregated statistics

A generic model for operational development is illustrated above. A gender equality perspective must be present throughout the chain. In this material we focus on assessment and analysis but will also address the other parts in order to get a comprehensive view and a context.

Definition of analysis

'Analysing data implies making comparisons in order to discover patterns or explore relationships between different variables. The task is to convert meaningless data into meaningful information. This requires active involvement in the problem at hand; otherwise the statistical analysis is degenerated to mere mechanical calculation.'

Source: Undersökningar och statistik, Anders and Britt Wallgren, Natur och Kultur 1983

Statistics and analysis

Knowledge about gender equality problems in society is often lacking. This knowledge can be obtained by means of sex-disaggregated statistics.

Effective gender equality work requires access to sex-disaggregated statistics and good analyses. More precisely, sex-disaggregated statistics and good analyses are essential in any attempt to create meaning, discover patterns and relationships as well as create an understanding of gender patterns, or of the conditions women and men face, how they are connected and what they stem from.

'Official statistics based on individuals shall be disaggregated by sex unless there are special reasons for not doing so.'

Section 14 of the Swedish Official Statistics Ordinance (2001:100)

Sweden requires all individual-based statistics to be disaggregated by sex. This means that women and men, girls and boys, must be visible in the statistics. All statistics related to individuals must be collected, analysed and presented by sex. The purpose of this is that we need to know what society looks like in order to design effective policy.

What can be assessed/analysed?

- Resources (how are time, money, staff etc. distributed in relation to gender)
- Quality (quickness, precision, attention)
- Interpersonal approach (satisfaction, level of explanation)
- Decision (consequences for women and men, respectively)
- Information material (representation, pictures)
- Regulatory/policy documents (degree of gender mainstreaming)

A good example of an assessment can be found in the City of Malmö's development plan: <http://video.malmo.se/?bctid=2172695078001>

Potential weaknesses

- Appendix tables tend to report sex-disaggregated statistics to a greater extent than 'quick statistics' in the running text
- Tables tend to be disaggregated by sex to a larger extent than diagrams
- Statistics reported via maps are usually not disaggregated by sex
- When statistics are reported in the form of time series, there is a tendency to only sex-disaggregate data for the most recent year

- Statistics are sometimes reported for one group at a time. Some groups are often reported without sex disaggregation
- When data are presented geographically, disaggregation by sex is more common at the larger scale than at the smaller scale

When should disaggregation by sex be avoided?

There are a few good reasons for not always disaggregating data by sex:

1. When doing so will threaten the anonymity of the data
2. When a sample survey does not allow for disaggregation by sex in combination with disaggregation by for example age and level of education. In these cases, ask yourself whether a detailed report really is necessary

Different roles – what should be kept in mind?

1. Person or organisation requesting the information – start out right; request the exact statistics you need for the analysis.
2. Assessor – are tables and diagrams disaggregated by sex? Has a gender equality perspective been integrated?
3. Write report – are women and men present from the beginning to the end?
4. Present and analyse – is sex a primary basis of disaggregation?
5. Share information – provide sex-disaggregated statistics also when not requested. Once people and organisations are exposed to it, they will start requesting it more.

For discussion:

Which gender equality issues can your organisation contribute knowledge about?

Assessment/analysis methods

There are several established methods for assessment and analysis. Some examples can be found at www.includegender.org. You should first and foremost use methods already in place and add a gender perspective to them. Base the choice of methods on the object of analysis and the nature of the assignment.

Examples of assessment/analysis methods

The 3R method, the 4R method, wage pilot analysis, fishbone diagrams, gender equality objectives, focus group, gender budgeting, gender coaching, JämKART, JämKAS Basic, JämKAS Plus, gender impact assessment, gender statistics, observation, process mapping, studying the operational processes, the greenhouse.

Two methods

Seven questions – method for gender equality analysis

The seven questions method is useful for anybody working to improve an organisation or an activity in a gender equality perspective. The questions help you get a good overview of relevant gender equality challenges and what you can do to deal with them.

Write down all answers.

1. How is the organisation's assignment formulated?

First of all you need to understand your organisation's assignment. For whom does it exist? What services is it expected to provide? The assignment may already have been formulated in your operational plans. Otherwise you can refer to the official regulatory document or the relevant legislation.

2. What gender equality challenge can be found within the organisation and the services it provides?

Think about gender equality challenges in your organisation. Refer to previous research for ideas (see for example the fact sheets included in the training material), or maybe you have some own experiences that may be relevant. Perhaps you are already aware of some gender equality challenges. If so, start with one of those. Alternatively, you may think of what is generally considered your organisation's primary challenge and then apply a gender equality perspective on it.

Here are some questions that can help you apply a gender equality perspective:

- Is your organisation fulfilling its objectives equally well for women and men?
- Do women and men have equal opportunities to influence the organisation and its activities?
- Are resources (education, material, work hours, facilities etc.) distributed equally between women and men?

3. What is your question?

Now you need to formulate a question. It must be based on the gender equality challenge you identified above.

4. Which clues can help you answer the question?

Examples of clues include statistics, reports, photos, interviews, questionnaires and observations. Do you have the material you need to answer your question? Do you need more clues to be able to answer the question? Are you going to look for more material or are you going to conduct a study to obtain complementary information?

A great number of clues may be available. You need to be able to motivate your choice of material (as well as why you decide not to use certain information). Don't be afraid to reject material, it will save you a lot of time.

5. What do the clues say?

This is where you actually answer your question from point 3. Study your material and answer the questions: 'What does it say?' and 'What does it not say?' What gender patterns can you see? Compare the results with previous results if there are any. Compare with other known studies, national results or relevant research. Interpret your clues in a gender perspective. Are the patterns a problem? What's the reason for them? What consequences do they have? What needs to be done?

Write down your reasoning and answer the question from point 3.

In order for others to follow your thoughts, you need to document your work. Write down what you have done and explain your thoughts.

Focus on what is specific to your organisation and its activities. Definitions of for example the gender system, gender equality, gender equality policy and gender/sex can be found at www.Includegender.org.

- Document each step of the seven-question method.
- Describe in writing what graphs and tables show.
- Be sure to include all relevant references in the text.
- Write the text so that an interested layperson can understand it. Have a colleague read your draft.

It is important to document the analysis as it makes your reasoning clearer to both yourself and others. Another reason for documenting the analyses is to make them available in the organisation for a long time to come.

6. Analysis completed – suggest appropriate measures

The analysis has now been completed and areas of improvement identified. You should be able to see what measures need to be undertaken. Present the analysis and discuss the measures with both the management and relevant staff. The purpose of presenting the analysis to your colleagues is to enable you to plan measures together. In order for the measures to be successful, a plan specifying who does what, a timeframe, a budget and relevant objectives must be developed. The measures need to be realistic in both the short and longer term. They need to be feasible given the nature of the organisation, and must be aimed to improve the overall achievement of objectives.

7. Evaluate suggested measures

The evaluation should be based on whether they are easy or difficult to implement and whether they can be expected to yield a small or large effect. The best measures – of course – are the ones that are easy to implement at the same as they yield a large effect. To compare the different suggestions, you can plot them in a coordinate system, where the y-axis runs from 'difficult' to 'easy' and the x-axis runs from 'small effect' to 'large effect'.

The 4R method

The 4R method can provide:

- information on the distribution of women and men in the various parts of the organisation.
- information on how resources are allocated to women and men.
- an idea of the gender patterns that exist in the organisation, and their impact.
- a plan for remedying shortcomings.

1. Representation – Target group – gender representation at all levels:

- Who are the users/customers/receivers?
- Who makes the decisions?
- Who implements the decisions?

2. Resources

- How are common resources distributed between women and men?
- Examples of factors to assess: time, facilities, money, information, interventions, development opportunities etc.

3. Realia

- What gender patterns do we see?
- Whose needs are being met?
- Are the needs and wishes of women and men met to an equal degree?
- What are the reasons for the gender distribution of representation and resource allocation?
- On what terms are women and men able to influence the design of and benefit from the activities?
- Is the current situation a problem?

4. Realisation

- Decide what measures are necessary to adjust distorted gender patterns.
- Decide a completion date for achievement of the objectives.
- Decide when, and in what way, evaluation and follow-up are to take place.
- Allocate resources.

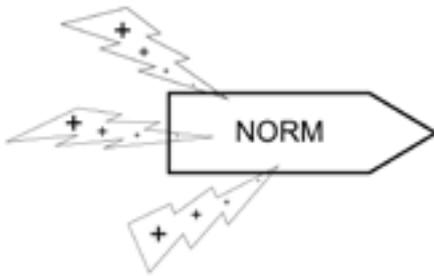
Analysis for change

Once the statistics have been disaggregated by sex, they need to be put to use. Only then is real improvement possible. Thus, the results need to be returned into the core activities of the organisation.

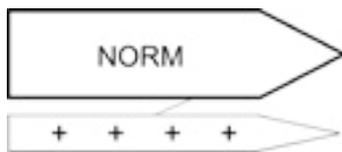
Why should we look for gender?

- In order to include instead of (un)consciously excluding.
- In order to enable those who have internalised the norm to understand, see and feel.
- In order to create a norm of gender equality.

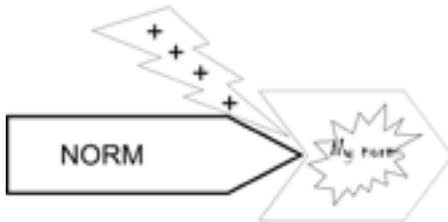
Some models for integration:



Assimilation – normalisation – the knowledge is assimilated into the norms and culture of the core activities without any resulting change/improvement.



Marginalisation – the knowledge is disconnected from and ends up next to the core activities.



Transformation – successful gender mainstreaming – creation of a new gender-equal norm and culture.

Making gender visible – what should we look for?

1. Hirdman's gender system – horizontal and vertical sex segregation – what is valued more and less and how is it gender typed? Where can women be found and where are the men, both in the hierarchy and across sectors? When you have found the answers in the statistics, think about what you want to achieve, what your gender equality objective is. In this case it is to break the glass ceiling and deal with the unequal conditions in the labour market and in life at large.
2. Symbols, preconceptions and discourses related to gender. It is not enough to just look at the obvious, such as who holds a certain position; we must also see what goes on under the surface. Formal conditions can be assessed via rules (may/must, regulatory documents/legislation), and informal aspects via norms (should, values) and culture (how it is actually done). How do we talk about gender? Which preconceptions do we rely on? Gender equality objective: eliminate stereotypical gender limitations.
3. Unequal interaction between women and men – power relations – what do they look like? Who has the power? Gender equality objective: overcome domination techniques with democracy techniques, ensure that everybody has access to information when decisions are prepared, that everybody is given room to speak and act etc.
4. The individual's identity in relation to what is expected – what should a real woman or a real man be like? Gender equality objective: that the individual has the power to shape his/her own identity.

Only one aspect is visible in the statistics – the first one. The other ones require qualitative assessments. This implies that gender relations must be investigated empirically in each context. Why are things the way they are? For example, why are there so few male preschool teachers? It varies with the context.

Gender mainstreaming as an objective and an outcome

How can gender equality be integrated in the management and core activities?
What are the consequences?

The flow of a core activity can be described as follows: resources – processes – performance – effects.

Performance management and management by objectives focus on performance and effects, for example the national gender equality objectives. One way to work with management by objectives is to use the SMART criteria, meaning to focus on whether the objective is specific, measurable, accepted, realistic and time-related. In a next step, the policy objectives are converted to more short-term operational objectives.

But what really is measurable? There is something called the measurability trap: more equal gender distribution does not always imply improved gender equality. The SMART criteria reduce qualities to numerical values that may be irrelevant. It is important to put on your gender spectacles.

Compare for example the number of women and men who participated in a meeting with how the meeting progressed: who talked a lot, who made the decisions, who was granted the right of interpretation etc.

Performance management and management by objectives may lead statistics to a dead end and reduce gender equality to a quantitative perspective on gender instead of a qualitative gender perspective on the core activities.

The advantage of the model is that it can bring gender equality issues to the agenda and that statistics and key figures can bring attention to important issues. But it is not enough to just produce statistics; we need to discuss them too.

Successful models for integration in core activities

Gender-mainstreamed resource management, knowledge about gender as a resource, management of gender-equal values in the working procedures:

- Gender budgeting: gender budgeting makes it possible to trace how money is distributed between the sexes.
- Count the training opportunities and participants who have received training on gender and gender equality – can form a basis for management by values.

Process and action control:

- Count the action plans and checklists developed for gender mainstreaming of core activities

Performance measurement:

- Count heads, not bodies – don't forget experiences, where do the various suggestions come from, who is listened to etc.
- Count activities completed for the purpose of gender mainstreaming – be careful in the analysis, have we really done what we were supposed to do?

Effects:

- Follow-up and use sex-disaggregated statistics to identify trends over time

Discussion material

Part 1

- Which type of individual-based data do you use?
- To what extent is the data disaggregated by sex?
- To what extent do you analyse the data?
- To what extent do you analyse the data in relation to gender?

Part 2

- Identify four obstacles to obtaining existing statistics that are more sex-disaggregated than today
- Identify four ways to overcome each obstacle

Part 3

- Identify four obstacles to analysing individual-based statistics by sex to a greater extent than today
- Identify four ways to overcome each obstacle

Would you like to read more?

Find the handbook Engendering Statistics: A Tool for Change

<http://www.scb.se/sv/Hitta-statistik/Publiceringskalender/Visa-detaljerad-information/?PublObjId=2018>

About this material

This material was developed 23 April 2014 at the training titled 'Från statistik och analys till förbättring' [from statistics and analysis to improvement] within the framework of the Gender Mainstreaming in Government Agencies project. Lillemor Dahlgren and Mikael Almén from the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research led the training. Helena Löf from Statistics Sweden and Eva Wittbom from the Academy for Performance Management in Central Government at Stockholm Business School contributed as lecturers. The material has been compiled by Cecilia Köljning, Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research.