

Gender Discrimination and Advocacy Handbook





Acknowledgements

The idea of this handbook came from non government organisations in Cambodia working on gender issues. Almost without exception these gender issues involve **gender discrimination**.

The Advocacy and Policy Institute wishes to thank the many people in Kampong Chhang Province and Phnom Penh, Cambodia and Scotland, in the Ministry of Women's Affairs, United Nation's organisations and international and local non government organisations for sharing their concerns and experiences.

They have all helped us to produce a handbook with Cambodia's gender discrimination issue at its heart.

The Advocacy and Policy Institute appreciates the support of Voluntary Service Overseas and the work of volunteer, Lin Collis, who is the author of this handbook.

Supported by:



Contents

	Pages
Gender, discrimination, advocacy: the aims of the book	2
Who is this handbook for?.....	3
Definitions	
What is gender?.....	4
What is discrimination?.....	5
What is advocacy?.....	9
Gender and the legal framework	
Human Rights.....	10
The Millennium Development Goals.....	11
Cambodian Law.....	12
Gender discrimination in Cambodia	
The causes of gender discrimination.....	13
The effects of gender discrimination.....	13
What does advocacy against gender discrimination involve?	
What can I do?.....	14
What can organisations do?.....	15
What can communities do?	16
What can the Government do?	17
The gender advocacy campaign	
What prevents action against gender discrimination?.....	18
Personal advocacy campaigns.....	20
Organisation support for advocacy actions.....	21
Conclusion	22
Glossary	23
Bibliography	24

Gender, discrimination, advocacy

This book is a tool to help people to understand and take advocacy actions against **gender discrimination** in Cambodia. It looks at ways to advocate for the reduction and elimination of gender discriminatory practices at work and in communities and how we can influence policy change. It may encourage people to start taking action towards a law against gender discrimination in Cambodia.

The handbook is a tool to help reach out and advocate against gender discrimination in Cambodia.

Everyone is an individual with varying abilities and potential.



Gender budgeting in the Government and Commune Councils, public, private and non government organisations.

Women can be as skilled at engineering as men.



All children go to school.



Equal pay for equal work at construction sites and at all work places.

Men make good househusbands.

Gender discrimination reaches all sections of society and affects all people. In Cambodia, many people are treated differently because of their gender. The majority of these people are women however there is also discrimination against men and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities.

Who is this handbook for?

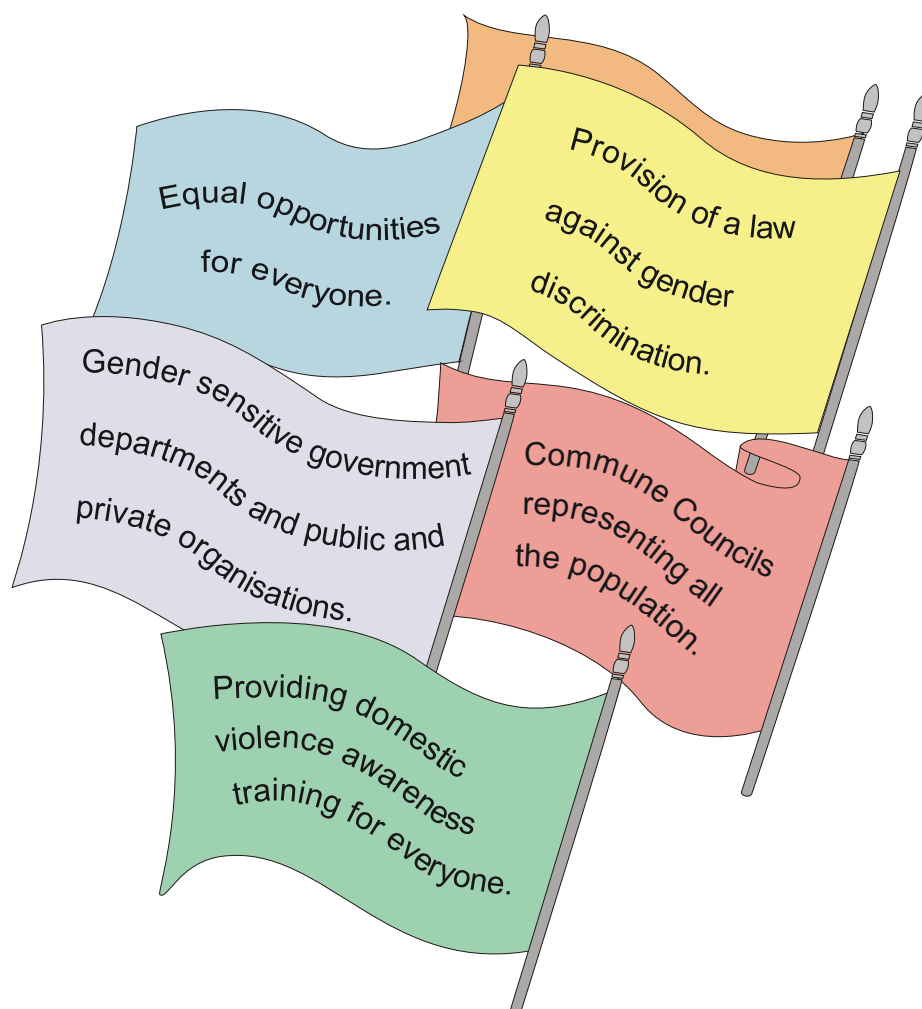
This handbook is for anyone interested in reducing gender discrimination, particularly those people in Cambodia who want to see change and are prepared to make change happen.

This handbook is for use by everyone who is aware of situations causing gender discrimination and for everyone who wants to see it stopped.

This handbook is for communities and organisations wanting to advocate on issues of gender discrimination.

This handbook helps to increase understanding of gender discrimination and the planning and actions used by gender advocates.

**There are many different gender issues
requiring advocacy actions.**



Definitions

What is gender?

Many people are confused by the word '**gender**'. Some people think it means the same as 'women' while others think the word means equality. In this book we use the word '**gender**' to include all people regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity: women, of course, but equally important are men and people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender.

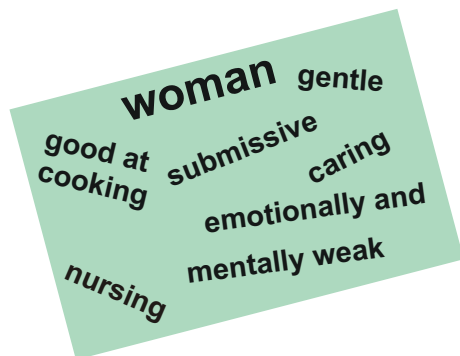
Gender is a concept made by society.

It refers to feminine and masculine qualities, behaviour, roles and responsibilities which we are given by our family, society and culture.



As soon as a child is born the family start the process of 'gendering'.

We think different things about people because of their gender...we expect certain characteristics and behaviour. We stereotype and prejudge. Our thoughts reinforce our attitudes to gender.



Understanding gender is important because it shows how discrimination can occur: women's subordination, male domination. These roles are not fixed forever or biologically predetermined. They can change over time and within and between cultures.

Definitions

What is discrimination?

In the broadest sense, discrimination means being treated differently.

There are four types of discrimination: direct, indirect, victimisation and harassment and the accompanying actions of stereotyping and prejudice. All have a serious effect on gender equity.

Direct discrimination

is treating a person or group less favourably than you would treat another person or group, based on their age/colour/disability/gender/marital status/nationality/religion/sexual orientation/etc.

Male Commune Councillors refuse to allow a successfully elected person a position on the Council because she is a woman.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

We are International School and are seeking for of ENGLISH TEACHER

REQUIREMENT:

- Well trained teacher, in area of Kinder, Primary or Secondary
 - At least 2-year teaching experience
 - American, Australian, British and Canadian are highly preferred
 - Christian and foreigner only
- To apply please send your CV and expected salary to email: [REDACTED]

7. Engineer & Provincial Technician (10 positions)
Requirements:
- Male, 22 years old over
- Diploma/Bachelor degree in Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication or related fields
- 1-2 years work experience in technical work or fresh graduated students are welcomed
- Ability to communicate in English
- Computer literacy in Microsoft Office
- Candidate who can work at provincial site is a priority

A hospital doctor refuses to treat a patient because he is gay.

A man loses his job because he is a transvestite.

Refusing a person promotion because she is pregnant.

1. Customer Services Staff (10 positions)
Requirements:
- Female, 18 years old over
- High school or bachelor degree
- Good looking, service mind, good communication skill and can work in flexible time
- Can communicate in English
- Computer literacy in Microsoft Office

Examples of direct discrimination

Indirect discrimination

This happens when requirements, rules or conditions are put in place which at first appear to be fair, but:-

- once the requirement/rule/condition is applied, it places some people at a disadvantage,
- the requirement/rule/condition cannot be justified,
- the requirement/rule/condition causes unfair indirect discrimination to take place.

Examples

- Only people with five years continuous employment can apply for promotion.
- Only mothers can work in the children's nursery/children's centre.
- Only people who weigh more than seventy five kilos can work in this security firm.
- All chefs/cooks in this hotel must have short hair.

Victimisation

A type of discrimination which occurs at work when: a person makes a complaint about discrimination

or

it is suspected that she/he is going to make a complaint about discrimination

or

he/she is going to provide evidence about discrimination

and

as a result, they are treated 'less favourably' at work -

they have been victimised.



A man gives evidence of sexual harassment happening to one of his colleagues. He is not given promotion.....he is victimised.

Definitions

Harassment

A type of discrimination occurring when a person or group of people come under pressure/become disturbed due to the actions of another person or group.

The person being harassed has his/her dignity violated

or

The person/group is subjected to intimidation, hostile, degrading, humiliating behaviour or an offensive environment.



A new young gay employee is always being picked upon by colleagues

'A Fair Share for Women: Cambodia Gender Assessment 2008' notes: 'Legal prohibitions against sexual harassment can not be enforced, as victims do not field complaints against those in higher positions or against their colleagues out of fear that they will be blamed, shunned or fired.'
(They are victimised.)

Sexual harassment

Harassment is based on the gender of the person and happens at work.

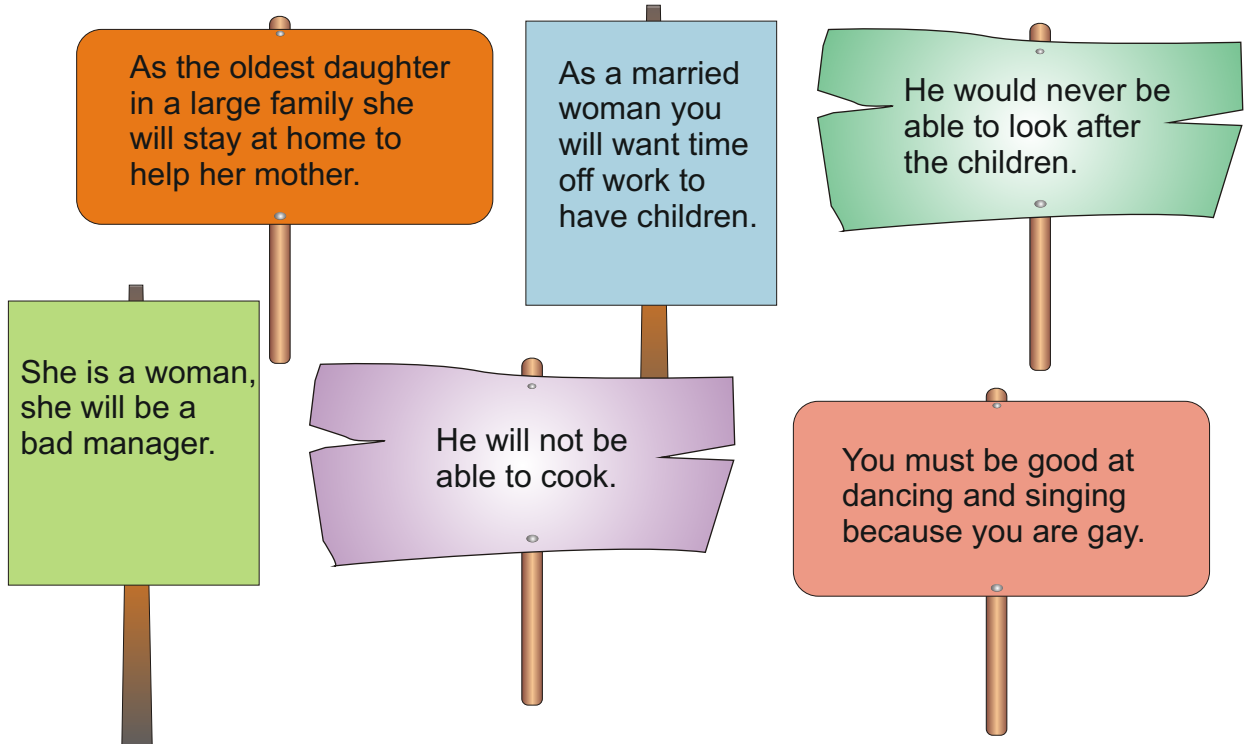


A male worker often makes excuses/reasons to stand close to/touch a female worker.

Definitions

Prejudice

Making a prejudgment about something or somebody before experiencing or fully examining it or getting to know that person.



Stereotyping

Making general assumptions about a person or group which are often based on false or misleading information. These assumptions are accepted and applied to the person or group.

Examples

- Khmer women do not want a career.
- All taxi drivers are men.
- Gay men are professional makeup workers and hairdressers.
- Educated women put work before the home.
- All men beat their wives.
- Women's output at work is less than men's.
- Men do not like housework and caring for children.
- All wives control the family money.
- Men don't like women with university degrees.

Definitions

What is advocacy ?

Advocacy is a word many Khmer feel uncomfortable with and do not like to use. The dictionary meaning of advocacy is 'support, encouragement, backing, sponsorship and promotion'. Today, in Cambodia, the word advocacy has come to mean actions for a change/solution to a common (social) issue by influencing decision makers to make a positive change. Advocacy action could mean working with the Government and other stakeholders. Advocacy does not mean working against the Government.

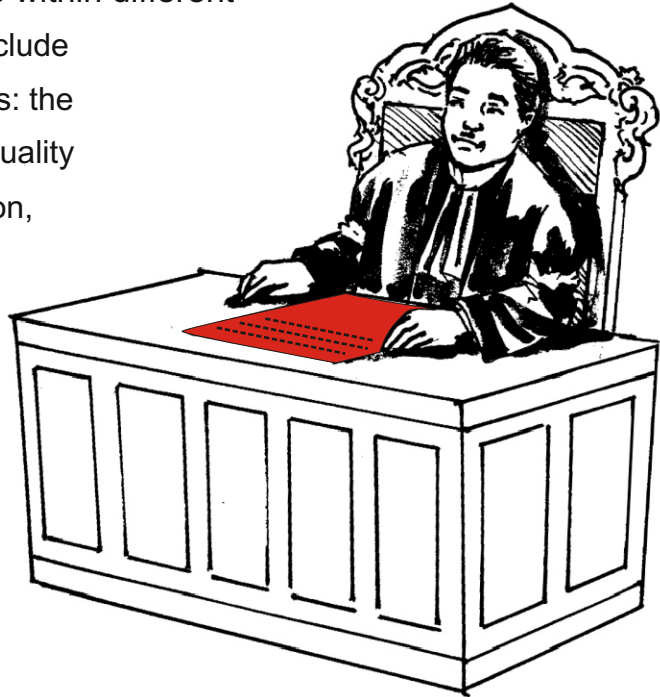


Gender advocacy is the action of seeking a solution to a gender discrimination problem through behaviour change, raising awareness, lobbying and influencing decision makers in the Government, non government, public and private sector organisations.

Human rights

These are rights that many people within different societies feel are important. They include cultural, economic and political rights: the right to life, liberty, education and equality before the law, the right of association, belief, free speech, information, religion, movement and nationality.

These **rights** have not been created by anybody and in theory cannot be taken away by anybody or by any government.

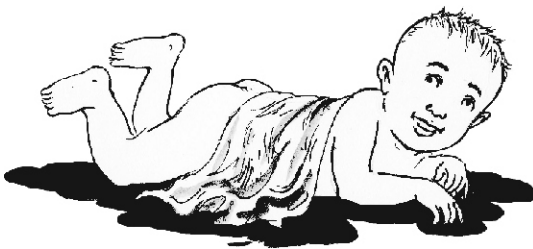


Human Rights are not laws and governments are not bound to act on them in any country.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights sets basic minimum international standards for the protection of the rights and freedoms of the individual.

The Declaration begins by laying down its basic principle:-

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is part of Cambodian National Law under Article 31 of the Cambodian Constitution.

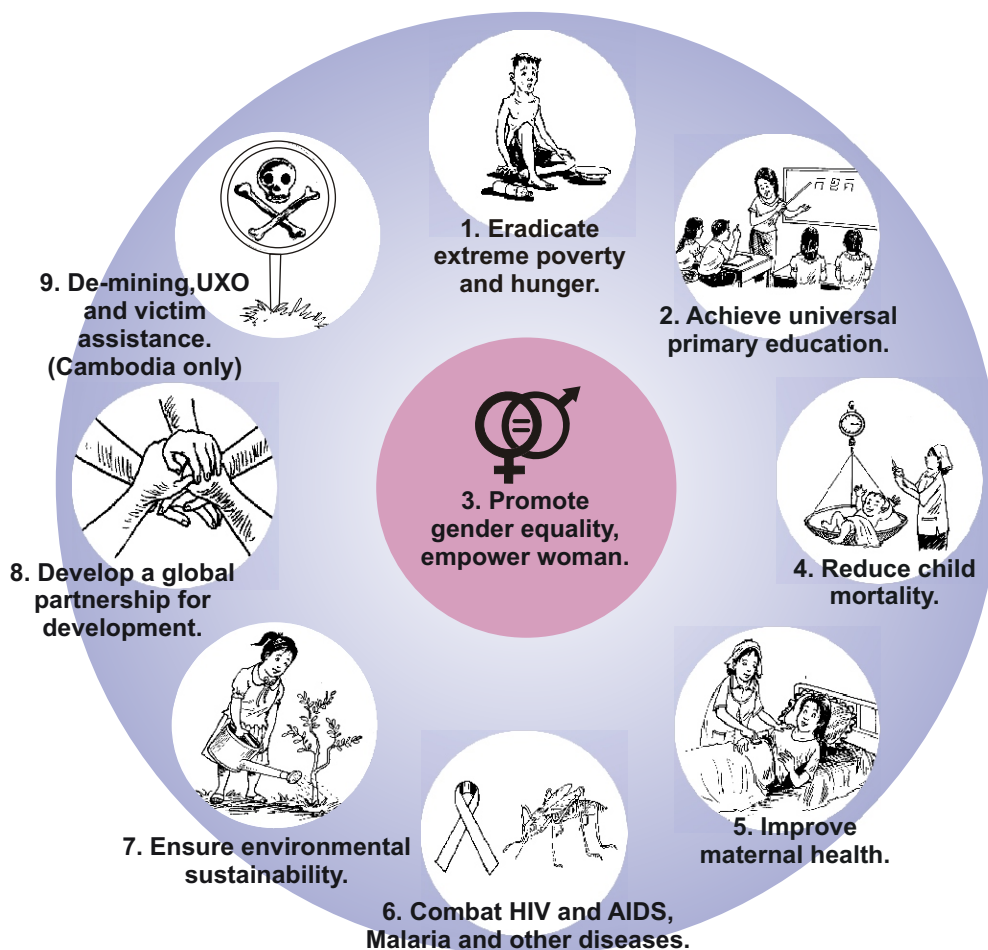
The Millennium Development Goals

The Goals are based on the rights of every person to health, education, shelter and security as pledged in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Millennium Development Goals were agreed in September 2000 by the United Nations General Assembly and the world's leading development institutions and form a plan to eradicate the worst of the world's poverty. They apply to all developing countries, including Cambodia.

There are eight Millennium Development Goals, however, in Cambodia there are nine, an additional one for de-mining, UXO and victim assistance. The target year for all the Goals is 2015.

The third Millennium Development Goal addresses gender specifically. It aims to eliminate gender inequality in all aspects of social, political and economic life. Gender is a factor within all the Millennium Development Goals.



All the Millennium Development Goals can be achieved in Cambodia if there is a law against gender discrimination which is fully implemented and which holds people who discriminate to account.

Cambodian law



The Royal Government of Cambodia has signed international human rights agreements and has a constitution and laws to protect and promote the rights of all Cambodians.

The Royal Cambodian Government has ratified a number of human rights international instruments including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The Royal Cambodian Constitution: Article 31

- (1) The Kingdom of Cambodia recognises and respects **human rights** as stipulated in the United Nations' Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the covenants and conventions related to human rights, women's and children's rights.
- (2) **Every Khmer citizen is equal before the law**, enjoying the same rights and freedom and fulfilling the same obligations regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religious belief, political tendency, birth origin, social status, wealth or other status.
- (3) The exercise of personal rights and freedom by any individual **may not adversely affect the rights and freedom of others**. The exercise of such rights and freedom must be in accordance with law.

The Cambodian Constitution states that everybody is equal. To support this there are laws prohibiting discrimination based on race and religious beliefs... **but there is no law prohibiting gender discrimination.**

There is not a law specifying gender discrimination as a criminal offence.... **there is the statement that everybody is equal but nothing about when a person is not treated equally.**

Gender discrimination

The causes of gender discrimination

The causes of gender discrimination lie in people's attitudes which are influenced by the widespread traditional Cambodian views on the position of women and men in society as seen in the 'Chbap Srey' which today still influences and affects all attempts at change:

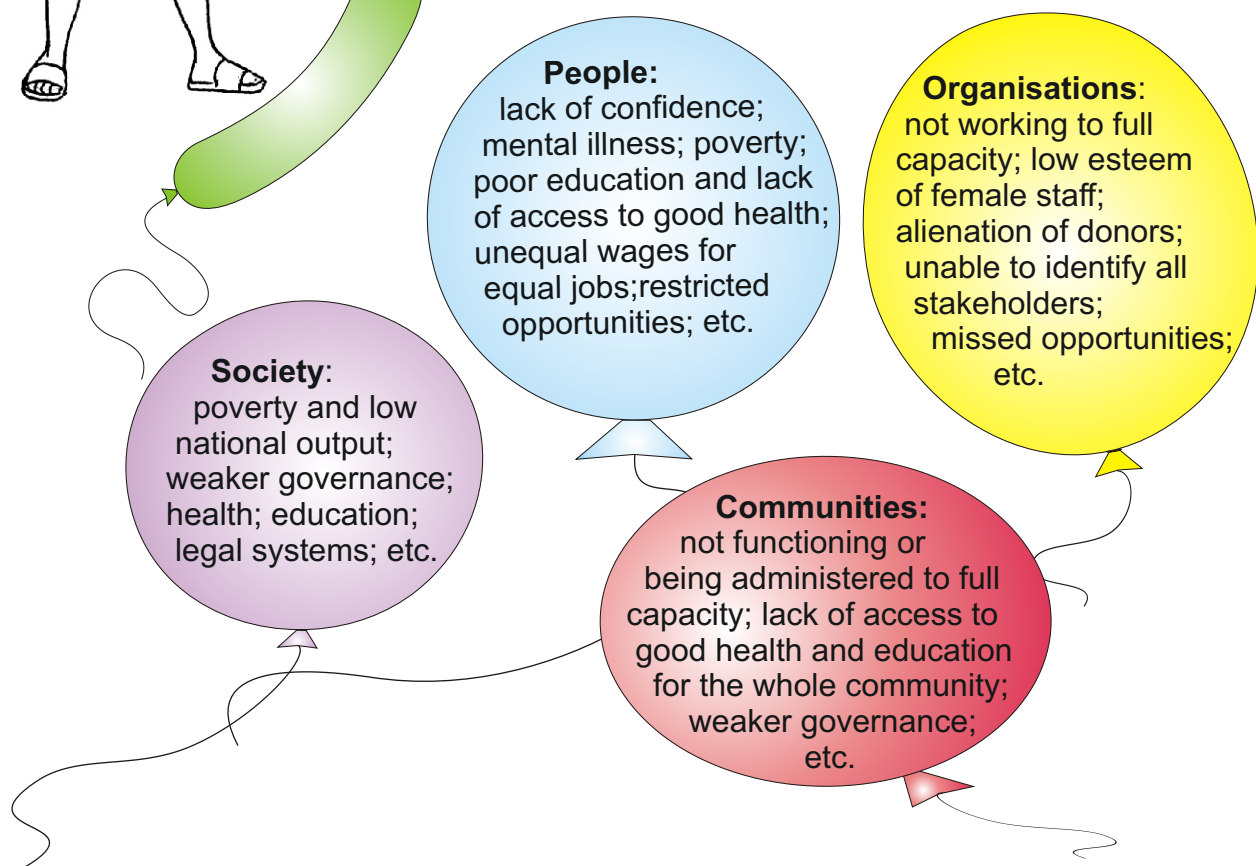
Attitudes are slowly changing however poverty and poor education continue to reinforce the traditional ways.



- Women are traditionally assigned a lower status.
- Women receive lower levels of education and parents still invest in their sons' education at the expense of daughters'.
- Women are not responsible in the decision making process outside (and sometimes inside) the home.
- Men are expected to be strong brave and not show their feelings.
- Men are not required to support their families by doing household tasks, shopping, cooking and looking after children.
- Homosexuality is not acknowledged or discussed.

The effects of gender discrimination...

... are seen in every aspect of Cambodian life.



What does advocacy against gender discrimination involve?

Each individual, the smallest and the largest communities, private, public and non government organisations, large and small local companies, big multinational organisations and the Government need to consider gender equality and....the opposite ... gender discrimination.

It is vitally important for you, your organisation, the community and the Government to fully understand what gender discrimination is about.

- Understand the term discrimination **and act.**
- Be aware and recognise the four main ways discrimination can occur **and act.**
- Recognise the factors hindering gender equality **and act.**
- Recognise the effects of discrimination, prejudice and stereotyping **and act.**

What can I do?

As individuals, we are responsible for our own actions and we can influence our families, friends and colleagues to stop gender discrimination.



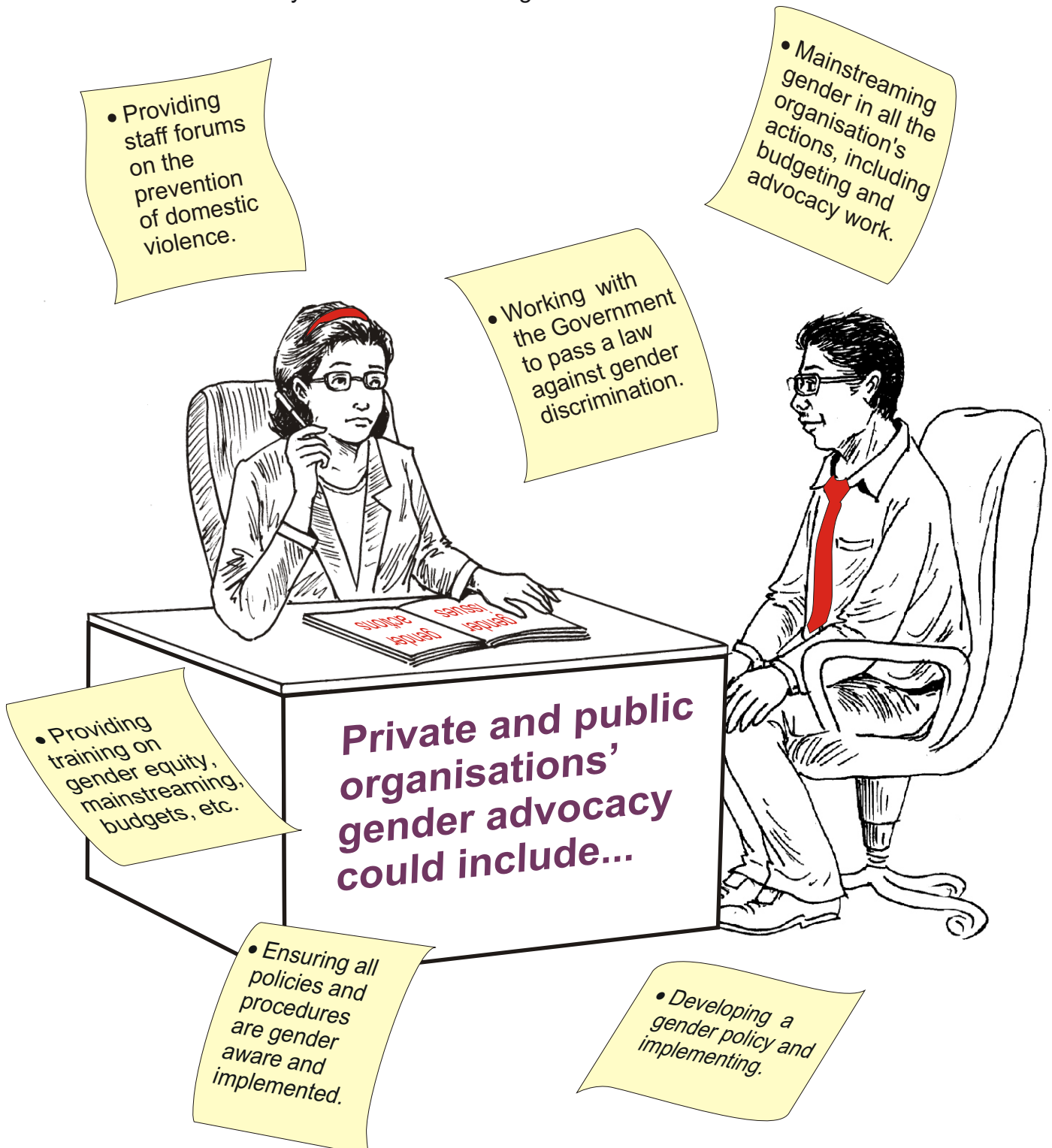
Personal gender advocacy

- ✓ Value diversity.
- ✓ Make sure that I do not discriminate, prejudice or stereotype.
- ✓ Correct misinformation.
- ✓ Talk to friends and colleagues.
- ✓ Challenge discriminatory behaviour, practices and negative images.
- ✓ Push for gender mainstreaming to be practiced where I work.
- ✓ Empower people to end the culture of silence and/or compliance and.... **speak up myself.**

Advocacy

What can organisations do?

Private and public organisations are ideally placed to advocate against gender discrimination by supporting communities in their advocacy campaigns and in influencing and supporting the Government's gender initiatives. The majority of public and private organisations in Cambodia need to look at their own attitude to gender. How can these organisations support advocacy against gender discrimination if they themselves are not gender sensitive?



What can communities do?

Communities can work through their communes and solicit the support of local, private, public and non government organisations to advocate for action against numerous gender issues affecting them. By encouraging Commune Councils to be fully representative of their constituents, gender discrimination issues are more likely to be solved effectively. Gender sensitive Commune Councils are well placed to influence and act as role models to bring about gender equity in the community and put pressure on the Government to pass a law against gender discrimination.

Community gender advocacy could include:-

- Helping the whole community understand the concept of gender.
- Encouraging representation from the whole community on Commune Councils.
- Improving access to local education to meet the needs of every child.
- Promoting equal pay for everyone doing the same job in a local industry.
- Training for women and men to promote local skills.
- Implementing the law against domestic violence.



What can the Government do?

The Royal Cambodian Government understands the effects of gender discrimination and is attempting to take gender equality into consideration in all its activities. The Government has established a Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan to promote gender mainstreaming in the entire spectrum of Cambodian society and in its National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010 identifies poverty reduction and gender issues.

The National Gender Action Plan is looking at mainstreaming gender into mine clearance activities.



Government actions

- ✓ Adopt and implement a law against gender discrimination.
- ✓ Give full support and resources to the Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan.
- ✓ Ensure all ministries gender mainstream their policies, actions and budgeting.
- ✓ Provide gender awareness training for all government staff and elected members....from the cleaners to the top.
- ✓ Continue working towards the Millennium Development Goals.

If there is a law to prevent gender discrimination and this is enforced there would be more gender equity and equality. There is no such law. It is up to all of us...to our actions.

The gender advocacy campaign

All advocacy campaigns, rely on the same basic principles and goals to bring about change.

Advocacy campaigns need to gender mainstream their own activities.

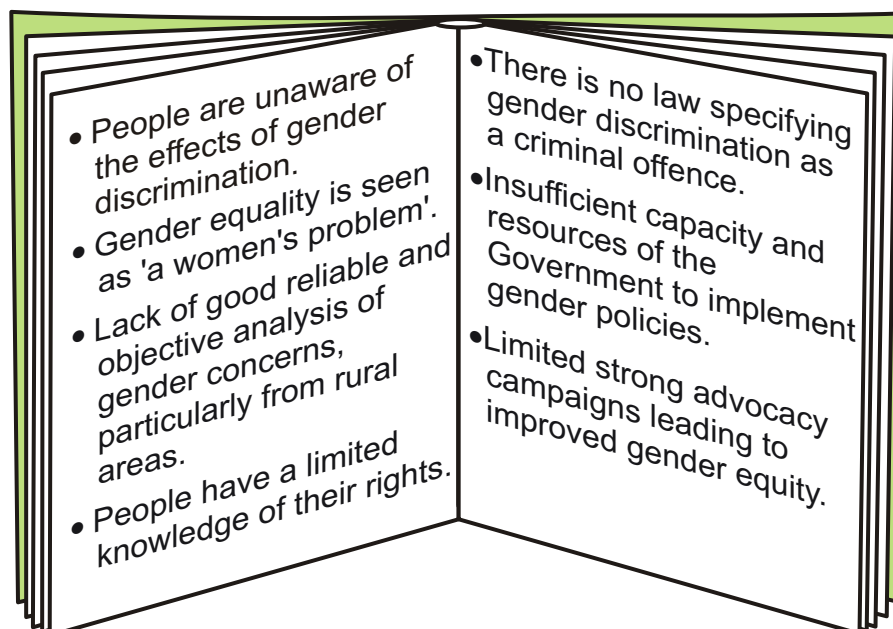
Does your advocacy campaign have?

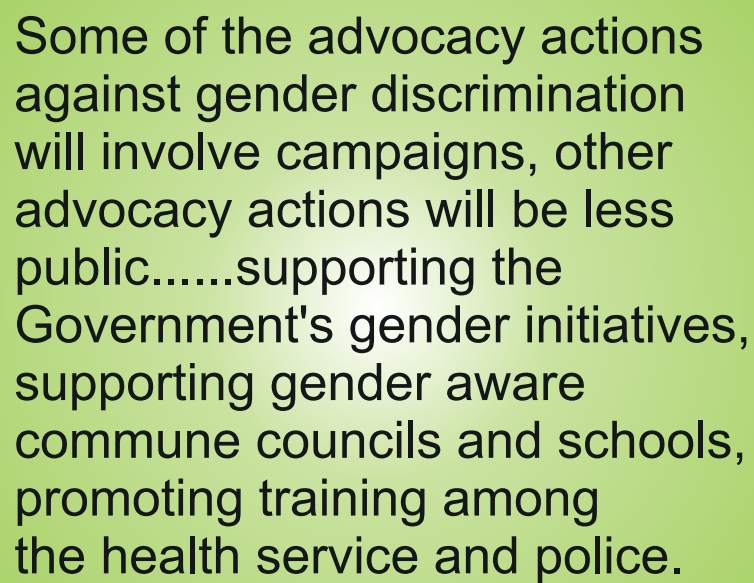
- ✓ An effective, trustworthy, neutral leader(s).
- ✓ Reliable and objective information.
- ✓ A common issue/ problem and a target.
- ✓ A plan of action.
- ✓ People and organisations that can bring about the change.
- ✓ A sustained and considered approach through a series of actions.
- ✓ Good communication and networking skills.
- ✓ Good working relationships with the media.
- ✓ Good documentation and research skills.
- ✓ The means to spread information.
- ✓ Active non-violence.

Advocacy campaigns are not always straight forward and often require repeating actions and/or trying other approaches.

What prevents action against gender discrimination?

Gender discrimination is all about attitudes. Until people become truly convinced of the need for gender equity, change to reduce gender discrimination will be slow.





Some of the advocacy actions against gender discrimination will involve campaigns, other advocacy actions will be less public.....supporting the Government's gender initiatives, supporting gender aware commune councils and schools, promoting training among the health service and police.

The gender advocacy campaign

The personal gender advocacy campaign.

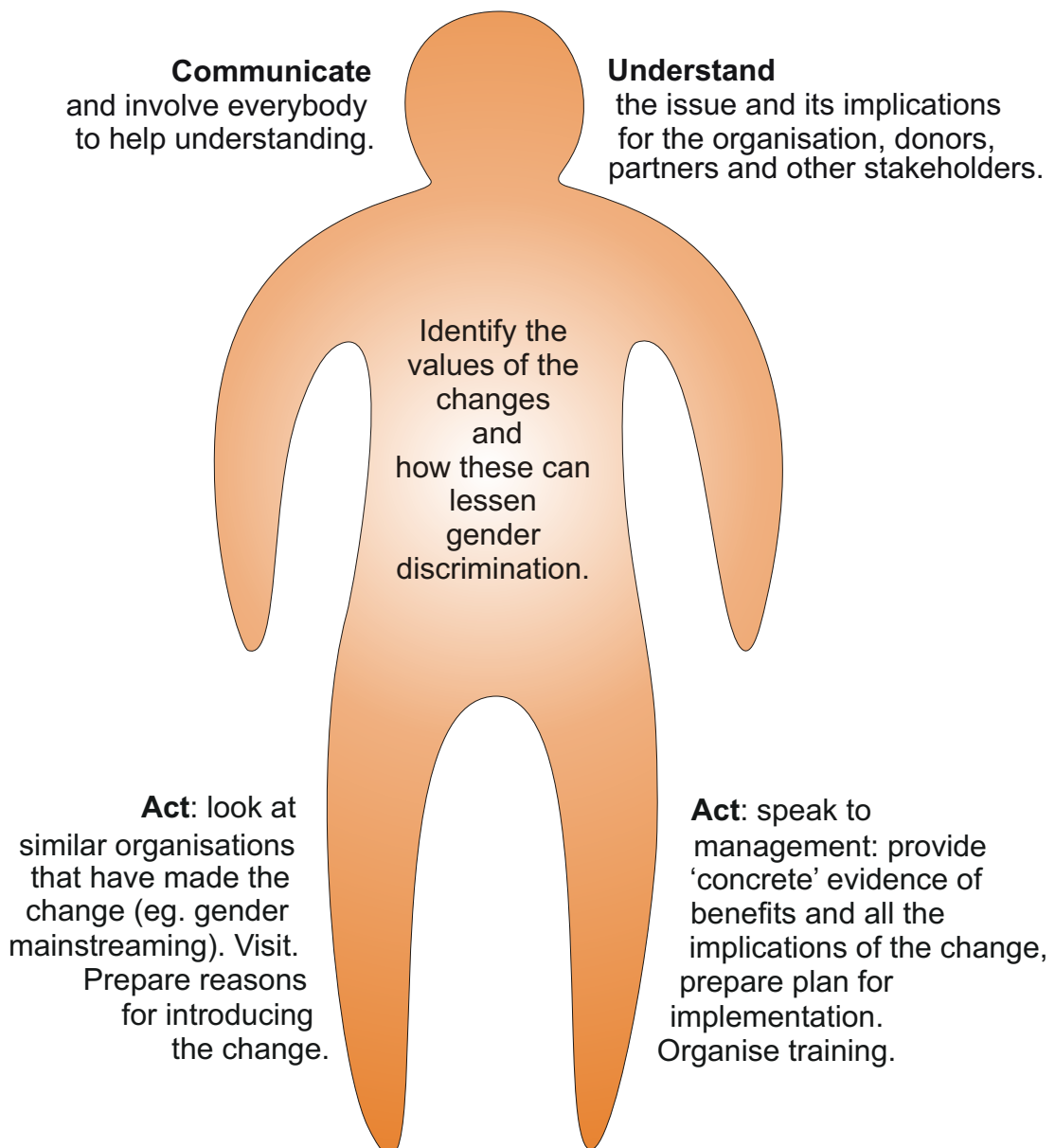
As individuals we can understand and practice gender equity with our family and friends. We are also in a prime position to take advocacy action towards gender equity in the work place...to support our organisations to be fully gender aware.

This means more than ensuring that all staff receive gender equity training.

It means creating an organisation with staff who are not only fully aware and understand gender equity issues but are prepared to take action by mainstreaming gender equity into all the organisation's actions.

Gender aware staff can also make certain gender is mainstreamed into all advocacy campaigns whatever the issue.

We need to make changes....take action...we need to:-



The gender advocacy campaign

Organisation support for gender advocacy action.

Organisations with staff who understand and practice gender equity are able to give positive support to the Government's gender initiatives as well as community gender advocacy campaigns. Gender aware staff can also ensure gender is mainstreamed into all advocacy campaigns, whatever the issue.

An advocacy campaign about a gender equity issue uses the same basic principles and actions as any other advocacy campaign (effective networking, efficient and accurate documentation, peaceful demonstrations, lobbying, working with the media, writing reports and letters, identifying a leader, key speakers, people and groups who can help, active non violence, etc).

The plan shows the overall importance of documentation and the crucial need to network with other organisations to support your gender advocacy actions.



If you would like to learn more please see the **Advocacy Expert Series handbooks** listed in the bibliography and visit the **Advocacy and Policy Institute's website** to find out about training opportunities:

www.apiinstitute.org

Conclusion

In the future Cambodia will have a law to prevent gender discrimination and this law will be implemented. Until that day we can all support advocacy actions and encourage organisations, communities and the Government to work towards gender equity.



Glossary

advocacy : see page 9 and the Advocacy Expert series of six books.

advocate (noun) : someone who publicly supports someone or something.

advocate (verb) : to speak or write in support or urge by argument; recommend publicly.

bisexual: someone who is emotionally and sexually attracted to women and men.

discrimination: see page 5.

equality: when all people have the same rights, advantages, etc.

equity: when all people are treated equally and fairly.

gay: someone (usually a man) who is emotionally and sexually attracted to people of the same gender.

gender: see page 4.

gender awareness: understanding and being aware of the effects of actions on gender equality and equity.

gender budgeting: producing a budget which attempts to breakdown/look at the budget according to its impact on women and men.

gender mainstreaming: a strategy for promoting gender equity by ensuring gender perspectives and gender equality are central to all activities, policies, strategies, etc.

human rights: see page 10.

lesbian: a woman who is emotionally and sexually attracted to other women.

lobby: to try to influence the actions of public officials.

Millennium Development Goals: see page 11.

prejudice: see page 8.

sexual orientation: the gender or genders a person is attracted to.

stereotyping: see page 8.

transgender: The all-embracing term for those whose gender identity or presentation is different from the 'norms' expected by the society in which they live.

transsexual: A person whose self-perceived gender is the opposite to the gender he/she assumed to be at birth on the basis of physical characteristics. Transsexualism is medically recognised.

Transvestite: A person who dresses and acts in a style or manner traditionally associated with the opposite sex.

Some useful publications and websites

There are many interesting and useful publications and websites looking at gender and discrimination. This is just a sample.

Gender definitions

Equality website.

This is a clear easy to understand glossary of terms used in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality in Scotland and used in Scottish and European politics. It's intended to be both amusing and informative.

www.equality-network.org

UNESCO

The organisation's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework's baseline definitions of key concepts and terms is particularly clear and understandable.

www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/appeal/gender/Gender%20Definitions.doc.

Gender mainstreaming

A list of useful websites about the progress of mainstreaming gender in East Asia, including Cambodia, and the problems to be solved.

www.gender.go.jp/eastasia

The Millennium Development Goals and Gender

Asia Development Bank

Pursuing gender equality through the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: A useful report showing Cambodia's progress alongside other countries in Asia and the Pacific.

www.adb.org/documents/books/pursuing-gender-equality/pursuing-gender-equality.pdf -

Gender and Cambodia: general information

A Fair Share for Women, Cambodia Gender Assessment 2008.

Published by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, March 2008

Asian Development Bank,

Cambodia: Country Gender Assessment. A valuable look at social, legal and political institutions perpetuating gender discrimination and vulnerability ...

www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/Country-Gender-Assessments/cam.

Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination

Against Women: Cambodia, 16 January-3 February 2006, published by the

United Nations Development Fund for Women.

Gender and Development for Cambodia, Decade Report 1997-2007.

Gender Statistics and Indicators in Cambodia. Japan International Cooperation

Agency project on Gender Mainstreaming, June 2007

Men Who Have Sex with Men in Cambodia: HIV and AIDs Vulnerability, Stigma and Discrimination, Kha Sovannara and Chris Ward, January 2004.

More Than White Cloth? Women's Rights in Cambodia. Nakagawa Kasumi, Cambodian Defenders Project, 2006.

UNIFEM

The UNIFEM website holds useful information about international women's issues and corresponding action.

www.unifem.org/

Some useful publications and websites

Advocacy

Advocacy Handbook: a practical guide to increasing democracy in Cambodia: information on strategies and techniques for advocates, published by Pact Cambodia, April 2003.

A Grassroots Advocacy Handbook: support to grassroots advocacy campaigns, published by Pact Cambodia and the Advocacy and Policy Programme, 2nd edition, February 2007.

Six handbooks: The Advocacy Expert Series published by Pact Cambodia and the Advocacy and Policy Programme. These are available from Pact's Phnom Penh office and on their website: www.pactcambodia.org/publications.

1. Advocacy Campaign Management: explores advocacy: its meaning, principles, the role of an advocate and the advocacy cycle. 3rd edition, July 2004

2. Building Relationships with the Government: examines communication with the Government, lobbying and legislation. 2nd edition, October 2004

3. Working with the Media: looks at the role of the media in society and how to work with the media, 3rd edition, May 2006

4. Building and Maintaining Coalitions: identifies what is a coalition and how it can be effective and assessed, 3rd edition, May 2004

5. Advocacy Through Legal Services: explains the law and the legal system and how to advocate through the judicial system, 2nd edition, November 2004

6. Community Mobilisation: looks at community rights, taking collective action and tactics, 1st edition, October 2006

**Gender Discrimination and Advocacy Handbook
first edition
published November 2008**

**Please share this handbook with other people.
You are welcome to copy any part or all of it.**

