

The Fundamentals of Gender Equality

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Overview:

This curriculum was inspired and developed from field work (interviews, observations, filed notes) conducted in Wolaita, Sodo, Ethiopia over the course of four weeks as part of the 2017 Fulbright Hays Ethiopia Curriculum project in combination with secondary sources. This is intended to be used in Gender Clubs throughout the U.S. and Ethiopia to educate students about the importance and urgency of gender equality.

Learning Objectives:

1. For students to gain awareness about the fundamentals of gender equality/equity.
2. For students to gain a stronger sense of themselves as socially gendered beings through the awareness and analysis of gender definitions, roles and the goals of gender equality.
3. For students to gain a better understanding and appreciation for their civil and human rights through the examination of gender related articles of the Ethiopian, U.S.A constitutions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Teacher Preparation: (tools/materials)

1. Familiarity with terms and definitions of key concepts in gender equality/equity work
2. Familiarity with gender related articles of the Ethiopian, U.S.A. constitutions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
3. Previewing gender equality video (noting talking points) or familiarity with an anecdotal example of gender (in)equality

Instruction:

1. For teachers with access to internet and equipment necessary to show a video, teachers can introduce the lesson by viewing this short video on Gender Equality (on Youtube) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4viXOGvuu0Y>, for those teachers who do not, they can tell a fictional or non-fictional anecdote/story/account related to gender equality to their students.
2. Lead an open discussion with the students on what they noticed in the video or that stood out in the anecdote.
3. Distribute handouts: (1) Key Concepts; (2) Simplified version of UDHR; (3) Constitutional articles
4. On handout #1: “Key Concepts – Gender Equality/Equity” (included), for each key concept, ask for volunteers to read the definitions aloud. After each definition, discuss and check for understanding.
5. On handout #2: “Simplified Version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (included), for each article/declaration, ask for volunteers to read them aloud. Analyze and/or deconstruct the terms, language, tones and content of each article that

pertains to gender; and ask students why they think these articles/declarations were conceived and enacted.

6. On handout #3: “Gender-related Articles from the Ethiopian and U.S. Constitutions” (included), have students read each article aloud, and lead a discussion about why these articles needed to be articulated and passed into laws. Ask students if they think these laws are being effectively enacted. Why or why not?
7. Optional activity to complement “Instruction #6”. For teachers who have access to internet, open/download this 2014 Huffington Post article: “Wait, Women Don’t Have Equal Rights in the United States” found at the following url:
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/tabby-biddle/wait-women-dont-have-equa_b_6098120.html Read the article in class and discuss it.

Handout #1: **Key Concepts – Gender Equality/Equity***

Gender Terms

- **Gender** refers to a set of qualities and behaviors expected from males and females by society.
- **Gender roles** are socially determined and can be affected by factors such as education or economics. They vary widely within and between cultures and often evolve over time.

Student-Friendly Language

- **Gender** describes the differences in the way that men and boys and women and girls are expected to behave: their dress, the work they do, the way they speak and their status. These differences are created by our culture and not nature, and we can change them.
- **Gender roles** describe what men and boys and women and girls are supposed to do in their culture. For example, in some cultures, a man is expected to cut down trees and a woman is expected to cook and take care of the children.
- **Gender equality** refers to a state where there is no discrimination on the basis of a person's sex in the allocation of resources and in the access to various services in a society. In other words, when men and women are valued equally and they have equal access to and control of resources, opportunities and benefits despite their differences, there is gender equality.
- **Gender equity** refers to the strategies or processes used to achieve gender equality. It involves fairness in representation, participation and benefits afforded to males and females. This does not mean that boys and girls should necessarily receive the same treatment, as individual differences among them demand different interventions, or that one group should receive preferential treatment. Both boys and girls should have a fair chance of having their needs met and have equal access to opportunities for realizing their full potentials as human beings. Equity is the means; equality is the result.
- **Gender norms** refer to standard patterns of behavior for men and women that are considered normal in a society. Narrowly defined gender norms can often limit the rights, opportunities and capabilities of women and girls resulting in discrimination, exploitation or inequality. Boys and young men can also be restricted in some decision-making and choices because of how society expects them to behave.
- **Sex** refers to the biological differences between males and females. Sex differences are concerned with males' and females' physiology and generally remain constant across cultures and over time. Sex tells us about the differences between men and women in their bodies. Only females can menstruate, get pregnant, give birth to children and breast-feed. Only males can produce sperm and make women pregnant. These differences are the work of nature, and we cannot change them.

*Sourced from USAID, *Doorways I: Student Training Manual – On School-Related Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response*. March 2009

Handout #1 – pt. 2: **The Main Goals of Gender Equality**

- Reducing and eliminating the gap between males' and females' access to education.**
- Reducing and eliminating the gap between males' and females' opportunities for work, jobs, careers and equal pay/salaries.**
- Reducing and eliminating the gap between men and women in political participation.**
- Reducing and eliminating the common obstacles that impede the progress of females such as unfair distribution of household labor and the lack of hygienic necessities such as modus.**

Handout #2: **Simplified Version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights***

A Summary of Preamble

The General Assembly recognizes that:

- the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.
- human rights should be protected by the rule of law.
- friendly relations between nations must be fostered.

Member States of the United Nations have affirmed:

- their faith in human rights.
- the dignity and the worth of the human person.
- the equal rights of men and women.
- to promote social progress, better standards of life and larger freedom.
- to promote human rights and a common understanding of these rights.

A Summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Article 1: Everyone is free and we should all be treated in the same way.

Article 2: Everyone is equal despite differences in skin color, sex, religion or language, for example.

Article 3: Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.

Article 4: No one shall be held in slavery and slavery is prohibited.

Article 5: No one has the right to hurt you or to torture you.

Article 6: Everyone has the right to be treated equally by the law.

Article 7: The law is the same for everyone; it should be applied in the same way to all.

Article 8: Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when his or her rights are not respected.

Article 9: No one has the right to imprison you unjustly or expel you from your own country.

Article 10: Everyone has the right to a fair and public trial. **Article 11:** Everyone is considered innocent until guilt is proved.

Article 12: Everyone has the right to ask for help if someone tries to harm you, but no one can enter your home, open your letters or bother you or your family without a good reason.

Article 13: Everyone has the right to travel as desired.

Article 14: Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if being persecuted or in danger of being persecuted.

Article 15: Everyone has the right to belong to a country. No one has the right to prevent you from belonging to another country if you wish to.

Article 16: Everyone has the right to marry and have a family. **Article 17:** Everyone has the right to own property and possessions.

Article 18: Everyone has the right to practice and observe all aspects of his or her own religion and change his or her religion if he or she wants to.

Article 19: Everyone has the right to say what he or she thinks and to give and receive information.

Article 20: Everyone has the right to take part in meetings and to join associations in a peaceful way.

Article 21: Everyone has the right to help choose and take part in the government of his or her country.

Article 22: Everyone has the right to social security and to opportunities to develop skills.

Article 23: Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and to join a trade union.

Article 24: Everyone has the right to rest and leisure.

Article 25: Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living and medical help when ill.

Article 26: Everyone has the right to go to school.

Article 27: Everyone has the right to share in his or her community's cultural life.

Article 28: Everyone must respect the 'social order' that is necessary for all these rights to be available.

Article 29: Everyone must respect the rights of others, the community and public property.

Article 30: No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.

* Adapted from Human Rights Education Associates (HREA), *Simplified Version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

Handout #3: **Gender-related Articles from the Ethiopian and U.S. Constitutions**

The Federal Constitution of Ethiopia - 1993

Article 35 of the Federal Constitution of Ethiopia states:

- Women shall enjoy the same rights and protections as men.
- Women have equal rights with men in marriage.
- Women in Ethiopia are entitled to affirmative measures in order to remedy the historical legacy of inequality and discrimination.
- The State has prohibited and shall enforce the right of women to eliminate laws, customs and practices that oppress or cause bodily or mental harm to women.

Articles 41 and 42 Federal Constitution of Ethiopia state:

- Every Ethiopian has the right to choose his or her means of livelihood, occupation or profession (41-2).
- Women workers have the right to equal pay for equal work (42-d).

The United States Constitution - 1789

The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, adopted in 1920, states:

- The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.
- Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.