

## Glossary

**Adaptation (adaptive capacity and adaptive strategies)** refers to the ability of livelihood systems to cope with or adapt to change by reducing their vulnerability through strategies such as livelihood diversification by developing the requisite skills and capacities as well as access to supporting resources such as micro-credit.

**Disaster** is a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community to cope using its own resources. A disaster is a function of the risk process: hazards + vulnerability.

**Empowerment** is about people – both women and men – taking control over their lives: setting their own agendas, gaining skills, building self-confidence, solving problems and developing self-reliance. No one can empower another: only the individual can empower herself or himself to make choices or to speak out. However, institutions including international cooperation agencies can support processes that can nurture self-empowerment of individuals or groups.

**Gender** is the culturally specific set of characteristics that identifies the social behaviour of women and men and the **relationship** between them. Gender, therefore, refers not simply to women or men, but to the relationship between them, and the way it is socially constructed. Because it is a relational term, gender must include women **and** men. Like the concepts of class, race and ethnicity, gender is an analytical tool for understanding social processes (Status of Women, Canada, 1996).

**Gender Analysis** is a systematic way of looking at the different roles of women and men in development and at the different impacts of development on women and men. Essentially, gender analysis asks the 'who' question: who does what, has access to and control over what, benefits from what, for both sexes in different age groups, classes, religions, ethnic groups, races and castes? Gender analysis also means that in every major demographic, socio-economic and cultural group, data are separated by sex and analysed separately by sex. A gender focus - that is looking at males and females separately, is needed in every stage of the development process. One must always ask how a particular activity, decision or plan will affect men differently from women, and some women or men differently from other women and men (Rani Parker, 1993). Looking at how water management tasks are divided across the sexes and age groups shows for example on which aspects water projects need to work with women or with men, as within families, different categories of women, and men, tend to have different tasks, decision-making power and knowledge (van Wijk, 1998).

**Gender Equality** means that women and men enjoy the same status. Gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential to contribute to national, political, economic, social and cultural development, and to benefit from the results. Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of both the similarities and differences between women and men, and the varying roles that they play as for example the different roles of women and men in water resources management.

**Gender Equity** is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field. Equity leads to equality.

In the water sectors gender equity often requires specific policies that focus on the technical capacity development of women and the hiring and promotion of women in water resources management to address their historical disadvantage in decision making in these sectors.

**Gender Mainstreaming** is the process of accessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality [*by transforming the mainstream*] (ECOSOC, 1997, emphasis added).

**Gender Relations** constitute and are constructed by a range of institutions such as the family, legal systems, or the market. Gender relations are hierarchical relations of power between women and men and tend to disadvantage women. These hierarchies are often accepted as “natural” but are socially determined relations, culturally based, and are subject to change over time.

**Hazard** is a natural or human-made phenomenon that may cause physical damage, economic loss and threaten human life and well-being.

**Integrated Water Resources Management** or IWRM is a process which promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. (Global Water Partnership/Technical Advisory Committee.)

**Intersectionality** is about recognising that women experience discrimination and violations of human rights not only on the basis of their gender but also from other power relations that are due to their race, ethnicity, caste, class, age, ability/disability, religion, and a multiplicity of other reasons including if they are indigenous.

**Livelihoods** comprises the capabilities, assets (material and social) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood can be said to be sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets without undermining the natural resource base.

**Resilience** is the capacity of a system, community or society to resist or to change in order that it may obtain an acceptable level in functioning and structure. This is determined by the degree to which the social system is capable of organising itself, and the ability to increase its capacity for learning and adaptation, including the capacity to recover from a disaster (self-organise).

**Risk** is the expected damage or loss due to the combination of vulnerability and hazards. People are considered at risk when they are unable to cope with a disaster.

**Stakeholders** are those who have an interest in a particular decision, either as individuals or as representatives of a group. This includes people who influence a decision, or can influence it, as well as those affected by it.

***Vulnerability*** defines a set of conditions and processes resulting from physical, social, economic and environmental factors which increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.