

# Gender Diversity and Inclusion: A Guide for Explorers

## Terms and Definitions



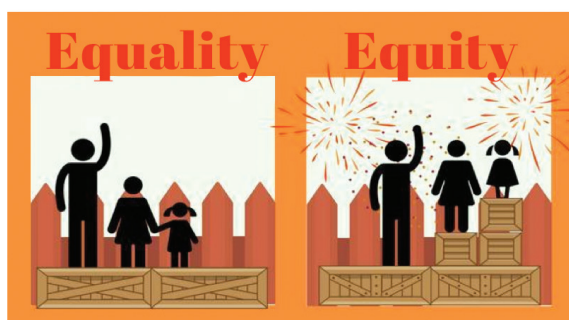
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## Understanding Gender: Terms and Definitions

Gender is a dynamic concept that refers to the roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for “men” and “women”. In most societies, there exist differences and inequalities between women and men with regards to assignment of responsibilities, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender roles are part of a given society’s broader socio-cultural context and can change over time.

To begin improving gender equality in the workplace and in our community engagement practices, it is important to understand some key terminology:

**Gender equality** refers to equal chances or opportunities for groups of people, regardless of gender, to access and control social, economic and political resources, including protection under the law (such as health services, education and voting rights). Gender equality means that we all enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. Because power structures in societies across the world mostly privilege boys and men, advancing gender equality most often requires addressing disadvantages faced by girls and women. At the same time, gender inequality pervades personal, family and social relationships and institutions, and affects not only women and girls, but also men and boys, and requires the engagement of all sexes to make progress towards justice and equality. Shifts in gender equality require not only awareness and behaviour change, but also changes in the fundamental power dynamics that define gender norms and relationships.



**Equality** focuses on creating the same starting line for everyone, while **equity** has the goal of providing everyone with the full range of opportunities and benefits to reach the same finish line.

**Gender diversity** is an umbrella term that refers to a wide range of gender-related identities and ways of expression. Gender inclusion is acknowledging that everyone deserves to be treated with respect regardless of gender identity and expression, and ensuring that systems and processes treat all genders equally.

**Sex** refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define male, female and intersex persons. A person’s sex is most often designated by a medical assessment at the moment of birth. This is also referred to as birth-assigned sex.

**Sexual orientation** is the direction of one’s sexual interests or attraction.

**Gender** is a multidimensional concept which broadly refers to the roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society assigns to male and female persons. Such expectations are referred to as gender norms. While gender norms are typically rigid in the dichotomy of masculine/feminine, gender is in fact fluid and exists along a spectrum.

**Gender binary** is the classification of gender into two rigid options of either man or woman. Within a gender binary, each option is granted specific and exclusive characteristics. Most notably, masculinity is associated with men, and femininity with women. Gender binaries are exclusionary and do not reflect how gender operates and fluctuates across a spectrum.

**Gender identity** is each person’s internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of self as a woman, a man, both, or neither. A person’s gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. Furthermore, gender identity can be fluid

and transcend along the gender spectrum. Gender identity is fundamentally different from a person's sexual orientation.

**Gender expression** refers to how a person publicly presents gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as manner of dress, hair, make-up, walk, mannerisms, body language and voice. A person's chosen name and pronouns are common ways of expressing their gender.

**LGBTQ2** is an acronym standing for the categories of lesbian, gay, bisexual (those who are attracted to both men and women), transgender, intersex, **queer** (a self-identifying term used in some gay communities, typically by younger persons) and **two-spirit**. There are many different acronyms that may be used by various communities. It should be noted that acronyms like these may combine sex, gender and sexual orientation attributes into one community. This combination may or may not be appropriate in all circumstances, specificity should be used when possible.

**Intersex** is defined as a congenital anomaly of the reproductive and sexual system. Intersex people are born with any of several variations in sex characteristics, including chromosomes, sex hormones, genitalia, or sex organs that do not fit the typical definitions of male or female bodies.

**Trans or transgender** is an umbrella term that refers to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that may differ from stereotypical expectations based on sex or gender norms, and/or do not correspond with their birth-assigned sex. It includes, but is not limited to, people who identify as transgender, trans woman (male-to-female), trans man (female-to-male), gender non-conforming, or **gender queer**.

**Gender queer** is a term used by some individuals to depict how they identify outside of the gender binary of man/woman. It is also used as an umbrella term for many gender non-conforming or non-binary identities.

**Two-spirit** is a term used by some Indigenous cultures for a person who displays any of the gender characteristics in the LGBTQ2 categories. It may refer to sex, gender or sexual orientation, or a combination of these.

**Gender and biological sex** are not the same, nor are they interchangeable. Sex is rooted in biology and reflected in chromosomes and primary and secondary sex characteristics. Whereas, gender is a product of the society we live in and should be understood as a dynamic, emergent, local, variable and fluctuating social construction of what it means to be a "man" and a "woman."

Have you ever felt pressured to fit into a construction of what a "man" should be or what a "woman" should be? Society's expectations of men and women are the root of some of the gender issues we face on a daily basis in the mineral sector.