



What's your task and how are you going to achieve it? And how will the learning, research and planning you do as you work through this Action Guide help you? This unit will help you to:

- define how using this Action Guide can help you achieve your task
- identify the elements of the Action Guide that meet your needs
- identify additional sources of information and support
- draw up a plan for working through the Action Guide

Allow about an hour to work through this unit (you will need extra time if you want to discuss your ideas with others).

Your task

First, to recap your task in relation to gender mainstreaming – which you started to look at in Unit 1 – think about these questions:

What is your task in relation to gender mainstreaming and establishing a gender management system (GMS)?

What are the steps you must take towards achieving your task?

What is the timeframe for achieving your task?

What are the gaps? What do you need in order to achieve your task?

ACTIVITY

Using the Action Guide

Here are some thumbnail sketches of some of the kinds of people who may want to use the Action Guide:

- a busy manager who has no time to study concepts
- a gender advocate who has passion but is looking for examples of good practice
- a gender trainer who knows the concepts but would benefit from new facilitation skills
- someone who has become a gender focal point and needs to learn from scratch

Do you recognise yourself on this list – or can you describe another type?

What do you hope to achieve by working through this Action Guide? Note down on the next page the three main things (try to do this without looking down the page first).

ACTIVITY

1

2

3

Did you mention some of the items on the following list? Tick them off, as well as any other things on it that you want to learn about.

ACTIVITY

- general background on gender mainstreaming
- understanding organisational development
- change management approaches
- more about gender issues in a specific sector
- understanding what's involved in setting up a GMS
- a refresher on gender issues
- a chance to review and reflect on work to date on gender equality
- understanding GMS structures
- developing gender policies and plans
- linking gender to organisational appraisal systems
- GMS processes
- GMS mechanisms
- carrying out a gender analysis
- developing skills for gender mainstreaming, e.g. networking, lobbying and advocacy
- chance to place practical work in theoretical framework
- chance to turn theoretical thinking into practical work
- organising gender training
- resources to run training
- improving approaches to training and facilitation
- clarifying own role and objectives
- improving own action planning skills
- resources to use to build capacity in others
- other? ...

What's in the Action Guide?

Here is an overview of the Action Guide, with an outline of what the units cover. Spend a few minutes now browsing through the overview and highlight the units that appear to meet your needs as identified above.



Action Guide units	Do this unit if you want to:
1 Experiences of gender	Clarify own role and objectives Review and reflect on work to date
2 Defining the task	Improve own action planning skills
3 Using the <i>GMS Handbook</i>	Get general background on gender training Understand more about what's involved in setting up a GMS Get a refresher on gender issues Understand GMS structures Place practical work in a theoretical framework
4 Using the <i>GMS sector manuals</i>	Understand more about gender issues in a specific sector Understand more about what's involved in setting up a GMS Get a refresher on gender issues Place practical work in a theoretical framework
5 GMS mechanisms: information	Understand more about what's involved in setting up a GMS Understand more about GMS mechanisms Start turning theoretical thinking into practical work Carry out a gender analysis
6 GMS mechanisms: planning	Understand more about what's involved in setting up a GMS Understand more about GMS mechanisms Start turning theoretical thinking into practical work Develop gender policies and plans Link gender to organisational appraisal systems
7 Change management	Improve understanding of organisational development Apply change management approaches
8 Using the <i>Trainer's Guide</i>	Find resources to run training Use resources to build capacity in others Organise gender training
9 Developing skills	Develop skills for gender management – such as networking, advocacy and lobbying
10 Action planning	Review and reflect on work to date Clarify own role and objectives Improve own action planning skills

In preparing to work through the Action Guide, think also about the following factors.

Getting support

You will want to find other resources and people to meet your needs. What and whom can you draw on locally, in your workplace, in the sector and in networks?

Timing

Each Action Guide unit takes about an hour, but often you will want extra time for follow up – for further reading of the manuals, to talk to people and to carry out more research.

Learning

How do you like to learn? Have you thought about your learning style? Which of the following describes you?

- an activist (active learning, welcoming new experiences)
- a reflector (assimilation, more cautious and thoughtful when learning)
- a theorist (studying in logical steps, methodical)
- a pragmatist (action learning, learning by trying out ideas in practice)

Or do you (like many adult learners) combine all these styles? Recognising your style or styles can help you learn more effectively. You can choose to learn in the ways that suit you best and adapt materials and activities accordingly. (Learning styles quoted from Honey, P and A Mumford (1992). *Manual of Learning*. 3rd ed. Maidenhead: P Honey.)

First steps*

New to the job? As any traveller knows, preparing for a journey is a job in itself. Here are some starting points for someone with the task of gender mainstreaming or the job of a gender focal point.

- 1 Read your terms of reference and see where you fit in your organisation or the network for gender mainstreaming; clarify your role and keep it in focus.
- 2 Meet with the last person in the post and get as much handover briefing as you can; if there's a reference manual for the job, get it (and if not, start one).
- 3 Review whatever materials are in the last person's reference collection (and if there isn't one, start one).
- 4 Meet with others who are working in the post, especially in formal bodies and networks; find out what's been done, is being done and needs to be done; talk informally with key contacts, both men and women.
- 5 Brief yourself on all relevant documents; begin to draw your own conclusions, keeping a list of documents to use later in developing or implementing a strategy for gender mainstreaming.
- 6 Find out about and review existing mechanisms, strategies, programmes and plans; consider your role in relation to them.
- 7 Do a self-assessment of your own capacity and that of the unit you're working with in relation to gender mainstreaming; use findings to inform the strategy.
- 8 Find out about reporting requirements and timeframes (when does your unit/office have to report?); if there are no formal requirements, plan to report annually and work out a reporting strategy including quarterly updates.
- 9 Take the time to meet with people in the key target groups for services, and others who have an interest in gender equality (civil society, women's groups and people from key sectors); get their input and compare it with the views obtained from internal perspectives.
- 10 Prepare a summary of the situation with which you're starting, as you see it, and validate it with key contacts, including senior management, to get their input before developing a strategy.

* Suggested by Patricia Keays, gender trainer.



Learning action plan

This activity brings together the questions you have thought about in this unit and will give you a plan for working through the Action Guide.

Your task

Purpose

Steps

Timeframe

What do you need to do this job?

What do you hope to get from the Action Guide?

What are your worries about using the Action Guide? What do you plan to do about them?

Which Action Guide units will meet your needs?

How do you learn best?

How much time will you set aside for working on the Action Guide? Over how many weeks?

How will you organise your learning time over these weeks?

What other resources and people can you draw on for support?

By the end of the time you have set yourself, how will you know you have succeeded in your objectives?

ACTIVITY

Further activity

Discuss your learning action plan with a mentor or manager and agree on ways in which they can support your learning.

Checklist

- Define how using this Action Guide can help you achieve your task.
- Identify the elements of the Action Guide that meet your needs.
- Identify additional sources of information and support.
- Draw up a plan for working through the Action Guide.





Use this page to make notes.