



Take home messages - Lesson Two

In Lesson Two you delved into an extensive discussion on the manifestations of, and impacts of, gender stereotypes in five policy areas: Education; The Economy; Political Participation; Health; and Violence Against Women. Here is a reminder of some of the key points:

Gender stereotypes in the education sector

- Schooling is a powerful vehicle for socialisation, where children and young people learn expected gender roles and norms, and the price of transgressing such norms;
- Gender stereotypes populate textbooks, the curriculum, teaching methods, study and careers advice, in formal and informal educational settings.

Gender stereotypes and the economy

- Gender stereotypes can reinforce inequalities, narrow career options and limit the future that young people, particularly girls, can imagine for themselves;
- Ideas on women and men's roles are formed in childhood and can influence an individual's career choice as well as their perception of others' career and life choices;
- The economic impacts of gender stereotypes include choice of occupation, salary and career mobility;
- The gender pay gap affects women all over the world;
- Women are less likely to participate in science, mathematics and technology related occupations due to gender stereotypes;

- Men may suffer from discrimination if they hold jobs that are viewed as designated for women.

Gender stereotypes and the political arena

- Gender stereotypes such as women being 'too emotional' for public office impact women's political participation. The private lives and choices of women in politics also tend to fall under greater public scrutiny;
- In pre-colonial Africa, women occupied a range of leadership roles, including positions as monarchs, spiritual leaders and heads of cultural institutions such as secret societies. This changed during the course of colonisation;
- The media plays a role in reproducing gender stereotypes about female politicians;
- Women in public office are often expected to focus on 'gender appropriate' mandates, and to help 'clean up' corruption;
- While the number of women politicians is increasing, women often face the challenge of balancing a variety of responsibilities in both their public and private lives.

Gender stereotypes and the health sector

- In the health sector, health workers can be responsible for creating and perpetuating pernicious stereotypes;
- Men face pressure to conform to socially sanctioned norms that may deter them from seeking out sexual health information;
- Women's bodies are often viewed as the property of men;

- Gender stereotypes (and related stereotypes around other social statuses and identities such as religion, class, sexuality and disability) contribute to the design, delivery and effectiveness of sexual and reproductive health information and services. They can determine whose needs are met, whose are ignored, who can access services and who cannot, and what treatment and care is considered appropriate for which groups.

Gender stereotypes and violence against women

- Gender stereotypes can become embedded in legislation which condones or ignores gendered violence;
- Women who are viewed as transgressing gender norms and stereotypes can be subject to violence;
- Media can help to perpetuate stereotypes such as the idea that violence against women is caused by women and girls not acting 'appropriately';
- Stereotypes of masculinity can impact how men view violence against women;
- In times of conflict, gender stereotypes can intersect with racial or ethnic
- stereotypes of the 'enemy', to fuel and justify violence against specific groups of women.