

"The States Parties to this Constitution declare, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, that the following principles are basic to the happiness, harmonious relations and security of all people:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition."

WHO Constitution



This month, as part of the current reform process, the World Health Organization (WHO) launches a new approach to promote and facilitate the institutional mainstreaming of gender, equity and human rights across the Organization. It will build upon the work that has already been done on these areas at the three levels of the Organization.

In the context of the WHO reform the decision was made to jointly mainstream these areas of work and ensure that gender, equity and human rights approaches become an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all WHO work. In the words of the Director-General Dr Margaret Chan the goal is "to achieve a WHO in which each staff member has the core value of gender, equity and human right in his/her DNA."

A coherent approach to mainstream all three areas will be reflected in the way WHO works and what it delivers – through technical cooperation, policy advice and dialogue, setting norms and standards, knowledge generation and sharing, convening stakeholders, and other enabling functions. Particular efforts will be geared

Gender, Equity and Human Rights at the core of the health response

towards enhancing WHO Country Office capacity to support countries in incorporating gender, equity and human rights within their (national) strategic health plans, other policies and activities on the ground, and monitoring efforts. The mainstreaming process will be carried out jointly by all the clusters in HQ, the Regional and Country Offices, and will be rolled out in a spirit of joint accountability.

A new Gender, Equity and Human Rights (GER) team has been created to help facilitate this process and to ensure shared accountability for mainstreaming across the Organization. It is located in the Office of the Assistant Director-General, Family, Women's and Children's Health Cluster in WHO Headquarters.

In this context it is timely to bring gender, equity and human rights together within WHO, and coordinate efforts to mainstream these across the organization. As a result, these cross-cutting areas will inform all research, policy and programme development,

and measurement of impact undertaken by WHO.

The Gender, Equity and Human Rights team welcomes input and ideas. The team can be contacted at:

Gender, Equity and Human Rights (GER)

Family, Women's and Children's Health (FWC)

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"Mainstreaming Gender, Equity and Human Rights at the core of the health response"

You are invited to join us at our lunchtime event on

**Monday 21 May,
1.15-2.15pm,
Room XXIV, Palais des Nations,**

to launch the Gender, Equity and Human Rights mainstreaming process in WHO.