



What is Gender?

Gender is about the learned social attributes, differences and relationships associated with and applied to being either male or female in society.

Gender is not about biological differences between men and women. These are fixed and pre-determined. These differences do not change.

Gender is dynamic. It is subject to change; it is socially learned, constructed and applied within societies and environments.

Gender is influenced by many factors including, but not limited to, economy, age, ethnicity, religion and levels of education for men and women.

Gender should not represent men and women as two homogenous groups. Not all women are the same. Not all men are the same and stereotypical ideas of femininity and masculinity are often entrenched thereby shaping expectations often incorrectly.

Gender varies between and within societies and environments. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between men and women. These inequalities relate to expectations, decision-making opportunities, assigned responsibilities, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources and employment opportunities.

Gender can determine what is expected, allowed and valued in a man or a woman in a given context and environment.

Gender is about the relationships between women, men, girls and boys and how this impacts on individuals and communities in all societies and environments, both social and within the business community.

Gender is not a code word for 'women' or 'discrimination'. A common misconception is that Gender is only relevant for women. This is incorrect. Gender is about women's and men's socially described roles and how that affects their power, opportunities and resources.

Gender inequalities apply to men as equally as they do to women. This includes within the maritime environment, howsoever men or women are employed, or otherwise engaged within the maritime supply chain.

Gender equality as a principle should apply throughout the maritime environment, and it should be upheld as a management responsibility and integrated into all institutional structures and work strands.