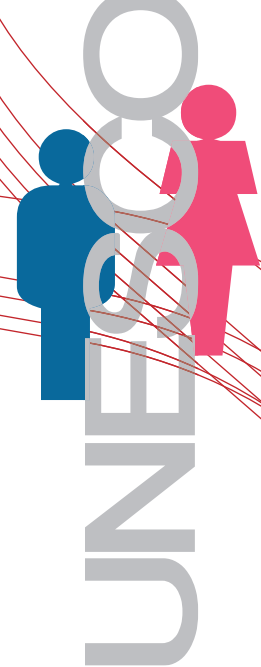
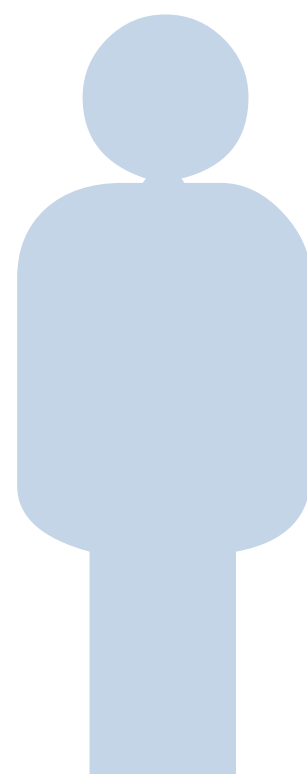


Ministry of Education



Educating for Gender Equality in Educational Settings



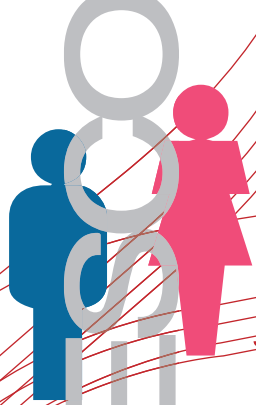
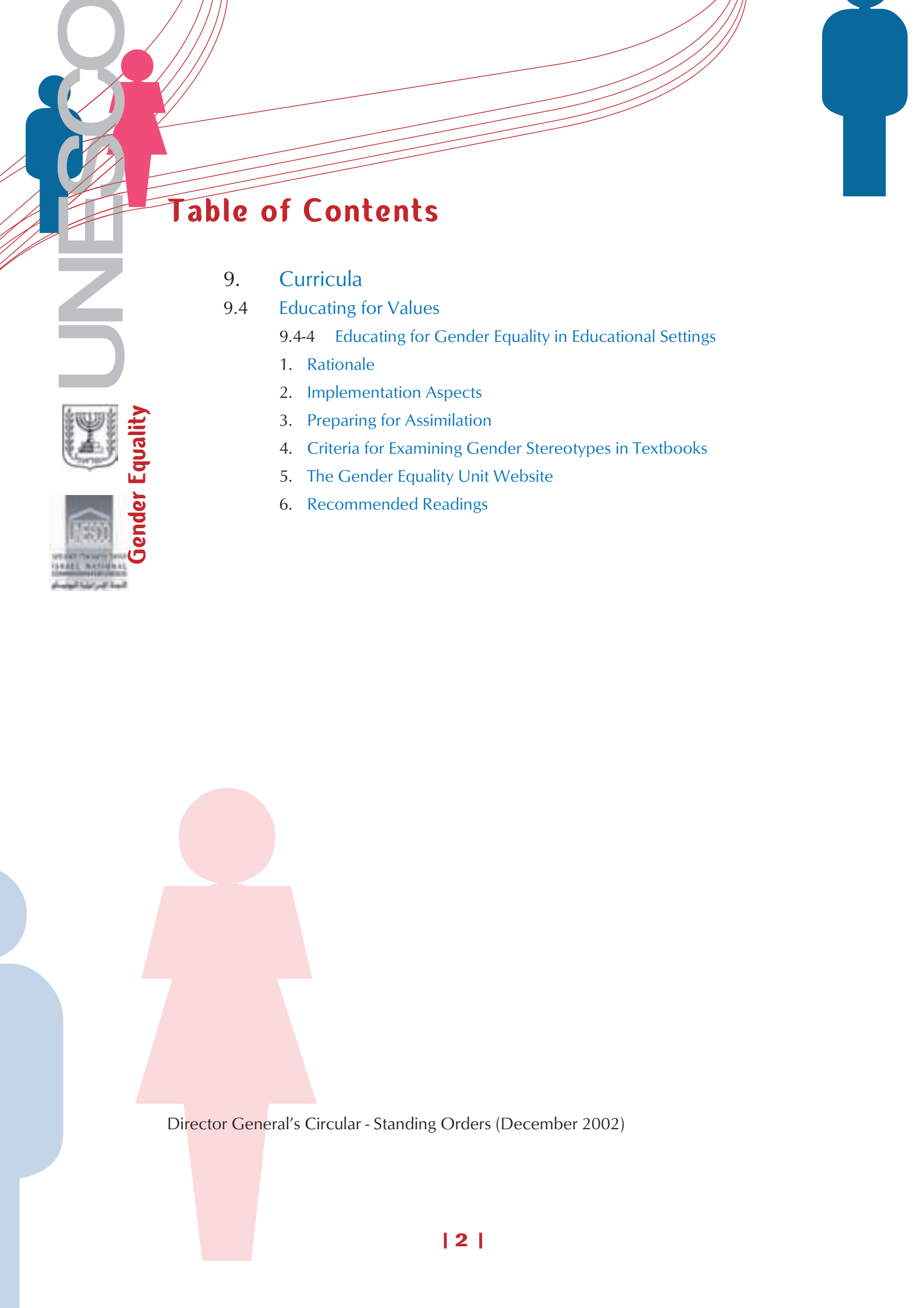
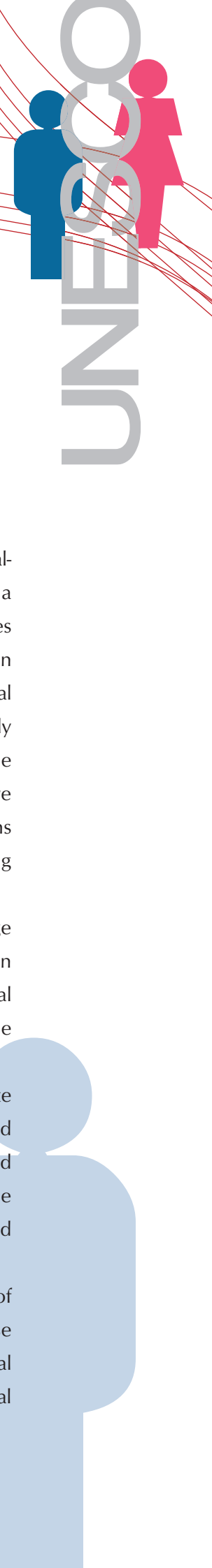
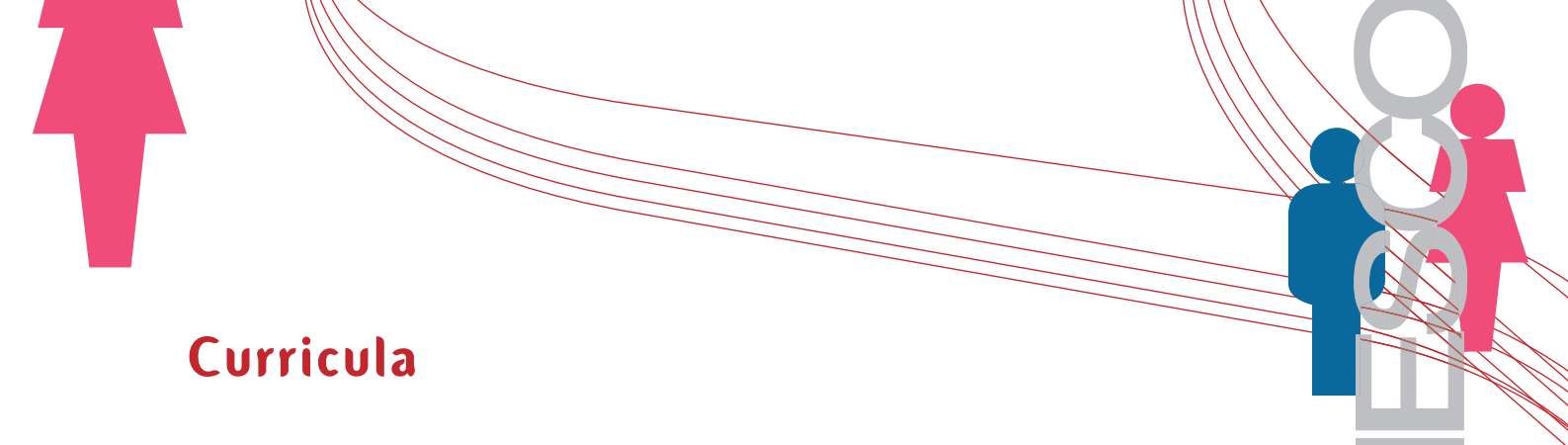


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Director General's Circular - Standing Orders (December 2002)



Curricula

9.4 Educating for Values

9.4.4 Educating for Gender Equality in Educational Settings

1. Rationale

1.1 General

Equal opportunities in education for both sexes means creating an educational-cultural environment and an educational climate that ensure – not only on a declarative level but also in practice – equal access to diverse educational experiences and encouragement and advancement of both male and female students based on their abilities, skills and individual adjustment, in a substantive and not stereotypical manner. A truly egalitarian approach, expressed in actual behavior and not only in formal declarations, commits educators and teacher trainers to develop the individual potential of each student, regardless of gender, to ensure they are rewarded on a strictly skill basis and to coach them in considering diverse options in terms of higher education, occupational and career opportunities, while avoiding non-realistic expectations.

Educating for equal opportunities means a commitment to improving the self-image of both students and educators, and giving equal opportunities for self-realization in the present as the groundwork for individual and social well-being and for individual achievements in line with the abilities and aspirations of both female and male students as they reach adulthood.

In order to accomplish these objectives, the educational institution will formulate a policy based on the values of equality among human beings, respect and appreciation for the other, tolerance, social equity, personal involvement and mutual accountability. This policy is to be implemented in all its aspects: the school organization, the socio-academic climate, the well-being of the learning and teaching community, and the curricula.

Importantly, the educational discourse will comprise continuous discussion of gender-related issues in education and follow-up on studies exposing the diverse and subtle ways in which girls and boys are channeled into separate educational trajectories, which in turn perpetuate the existing gender gaps in educational



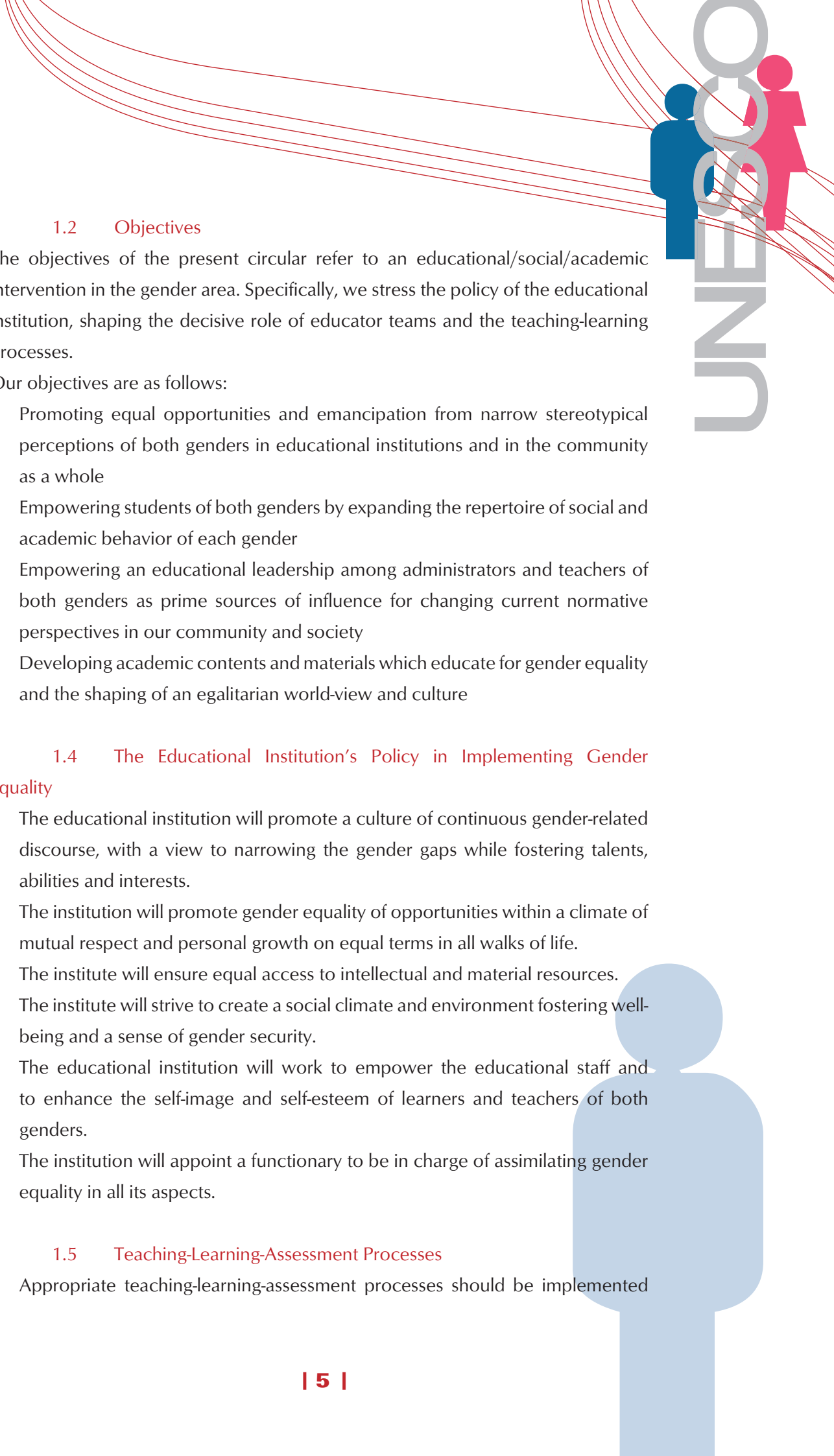
attainments, social status, income, managerial positions and representation in decision-making circles. Awareness of gender issues may change the pervasive distribution of educational and career accomplishments, in which certain disciplines and professions are still being perceived as strictly male or female territories.

In order to free students of both sexes of limiting stereotypical perceptions and inequities, which prevent them from freely developing their preferences and talents, we must nurture a greater sensibility for tracing the phenomenon of covert sexism. Lack of equal opportunities may persist in various aspects of the educational process, and is mostly derived from the educators being unaware of the various overt and covert messages they express in daily life. Therefore, such discourse must be critically and continuously scrutinized, and all educational players should be involved in such scrutiny and all the changes required thereof.

Experience shows that educators who are exposed during their pre- and in-service training to critical thinking and to the normative, humanistic and democratic perspectives of egalitarian education develop an increased awareness to their patterns of interaction with male and female students, which used to be characterized by distinct expectations from both genders.

Educating for gender equality is based on continuous research and accumulated knowledge, which prove that the gender differences between children and adults in the education system in society in general are a consequence of societal structuring. An egalitarian approach to education does not cancel out our traditional values or the conceptions affecting behaviors, the cultivation of talents, achievements, or selective processes, but rather strives for expanding the options for both genders and for increasing the chances for the realization of the unique individual potential of each boy and girl.

Educating for gender equality is founded on the principles of feminist pedagogy, which include nurturing each student regardless of gender, concern and care for both male and female students and cultivation of close and meaningful interpersonal relationships in order to enhance the quality of community and societal life. It may be said that the teachers in the educational system hold the key for changing the current societal structuring. Changing the educational approach to boys and girls from toddlerhood to adulthood will contribute to greater realization of individual potential and aspirations by both genders and to a more egalitarian and equitable society.



1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the present circular refer to an educational/social/academic intervention in the gender area. Specifically, we stress the policy of the educational institution, shaping the decisive role of educator teams and the teaching-learning processes.

Our objectives are as follows:

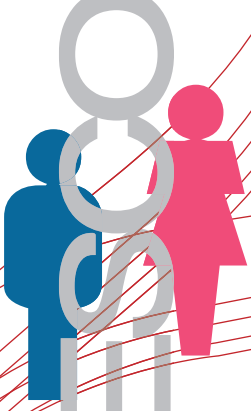
- Promoting equal opportunities and emancipation from narrow stereotypical perceptions of both genders in educational institutions and in the community as a whole
- Empowering students of both genders by expanding the repertoire of social and academic behavior of each gender
- Empowering an educational leadership among administrators and teachers of both genders as prime sources of influence for changing current normative perspectives in our community and society
- Developing academic contents and materials which educate for gender equality and the shaping of an egalitarian world-view and culture

1.4 The Educational Institution's Policy in Implementing Gender Equality

- The educational institution will promote a culture of continuous gender-related discourse, with a view to narrowing the gender gaps while fostering talents, abilities and interests.
- The institution will promote gender equality of opportunities within a climate of mutual respect and personal growth on equal terms in all walks of life.
- The institute will ensure equal access to intellectual and material resources.
- The institute will strive to create a social climate and environment fostering well-being and a sense of gender security.
- The educational institution will work to empower the educational staff and to enhance the self-image and self-esteem of learners and teachers of both genders.
- The institution will appoint a functionary to be in charge of assimilating gender equality in all its aspects.

1.5 Teaching-Learning-Assessment Processes

- Appropriate teaching-learning-assessment processes should be implemented



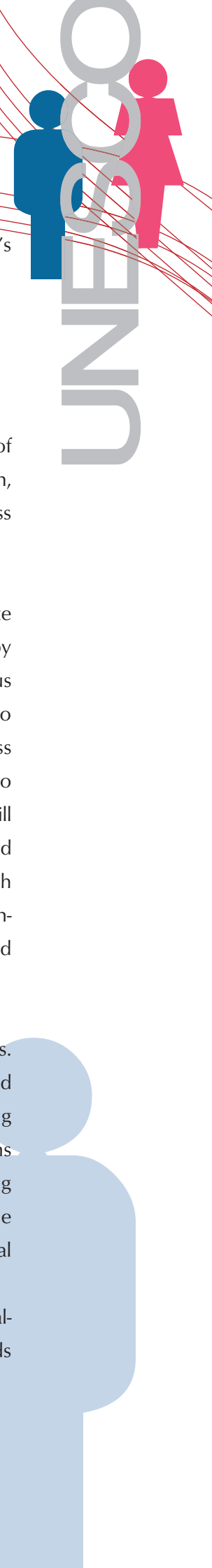
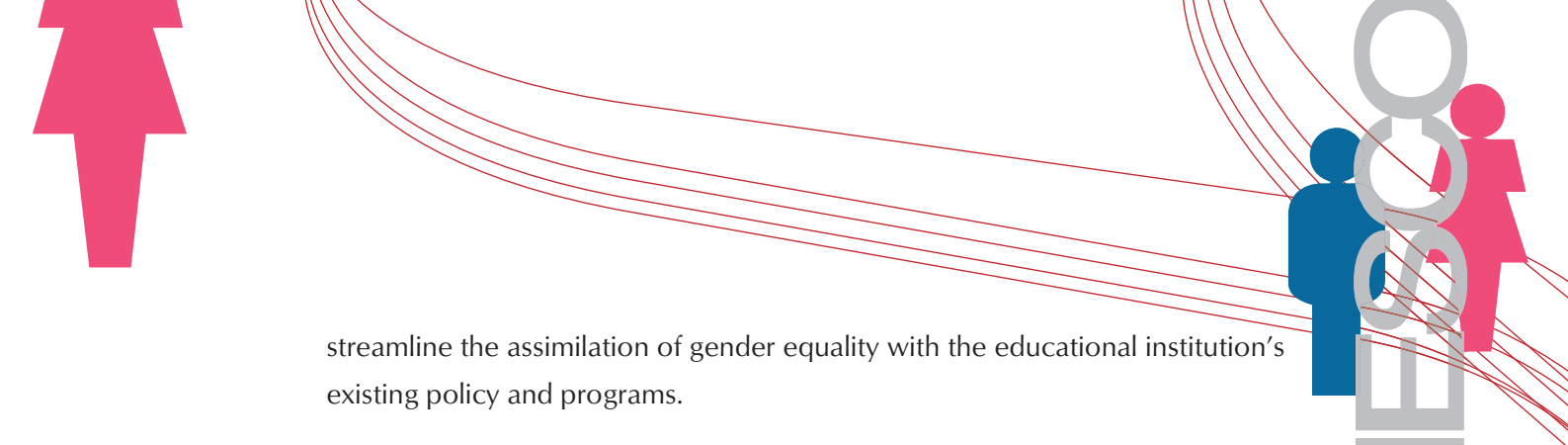
so as to allow for equality of opportunities, in attunement to the learning styles, needs and interests of both girls and boys.

- The existing learning materials and discussions on current affairs relevant to gender issues should be critically examined.
- Teaching units focusing on gender issues should be developed.
- Both genders should be equally referred to both in spoken and in written language

1.6 Foreseeable Difficulties

Since we live in a multicultural society, we must be prepared for difficulties in changing gender-related perspectives and gendered roles in family and society:

- The requisite change touches on covert emotional strata; we must therefore take into account the fact that we are dealing with a complex change process, and not only with informed decisions concerning change. Coping with this difficulty may entail a socio-emotional stress in the educational institutions, which must be dealt with wisely and sensibly.
- The need to have the families and community participate in the projected egalitarian processes necessitates much sensitivity and respect for current educational norms, derived from a traditional education spanning centuries. In the intercultural encounter between the educational institution and student families, disagreements may arise as to gender equality. Dealing with these disagreements calls for respect and empathy.
- The assimilation of gender equality confronts the educational staff with empirical results and new insights concerning their significant role as educators in the promotion of equity. These insights may arouse defensive “resistance” to change, which calls for professional guidance sensitive to interpersonal and group processes entailed in the acceptance and assimilation of the need for change. Moreover, conflicts may arise between gendered behavior in one’s personal life and the normative and educational changes required in the educational institution.
- The staff and students might view the change effort as a passing fad, thus missing the objectives and weakening the continuous and consistent striving needed for assimilating gender equality in the education system, and in life in general.
- The staff and students might view the required effort as an addition to their multiple existing tasks and thus feel overburdened. It is therefore important to



streamline the assimilation of gender equality with the educational institution's existing policy and programs.

2. Implementation Aspects

2.1 Implementing Gender Equality in Educational Institutions

The required normative change is meant to be assimilated in the various levels of the complex educational system: on the organizational level – the administration, steering committees and senior staff; on the staff level – various functionaries, class and subject-matter teachers; on the individual level – classes and learner groups.

The Organizational Level

The policy and explicit culture of the educational institution should create a climate of mutual respect and a life of gender equality. The change will be assimilated by administrations and senior staffs in charge of allocating resources to the various activities and populations within the system. In their decisions, they are to put into effect egalitarian approaches and allow male and female students equal access to system resources. (Examples: (1) Deciding on grouping learners according to different academic needs so that grouping according to gender considerations will be one of the options, even should that entail a different allocation of resources and teaching periods. (2) Allotting periods for developing new academic subjects which stress the feminine narrative). In educational institutions that delegate decision-making authority to student representatives on this level, these must be mobilized in preparation for that change.

The Educational Staffs and Student Groups Level

Opportunities must be given for current and planned gender-related experiences. Pedagogical and subject-matter coordinators will examine learning materials and contents to ensure that they are consistent with equity standards and lacking stereotypical, gendered and otherwise biased perspectives. Their learning programs will integrate (verbal and other) texts relevant to gender issues, while, in planning learning-teaching processes, they will include various gender-related aspects, while applying evaluative and critical thinking, though showing respect for the cultural and social context of male and female students.

The cultural and social coordinators will promote exposure of learners to social-community and artistic experiences reflecting varied interests matching the needs of both genders.



The educational and teaching staffs, in collaboration with the student groups, will be trained for the requisite change by taking part in enrichment and awareness workshops in order to acquire updated knowledge on gender in society and education and insights on their own gender values, standpoints and experiences, so as to be able to influence the systemic change process. This change will be expressed in a gender-unbiased climate, in a gender-unbiased language and in gender-unbiased communication between teachers and students, and among the teachers themselves.

The Individual Learners and Instructors Level

The change will be assimilated through the acquisition of new intrapersonal insights and experience with new behavior resulting thereof, and through the integration of an egalitarian approach to learning-teaching-assessment processes in social interactions and in the quality of life within the various extracurricular social circles.

Gender equality should be dealt with in two dimensions:

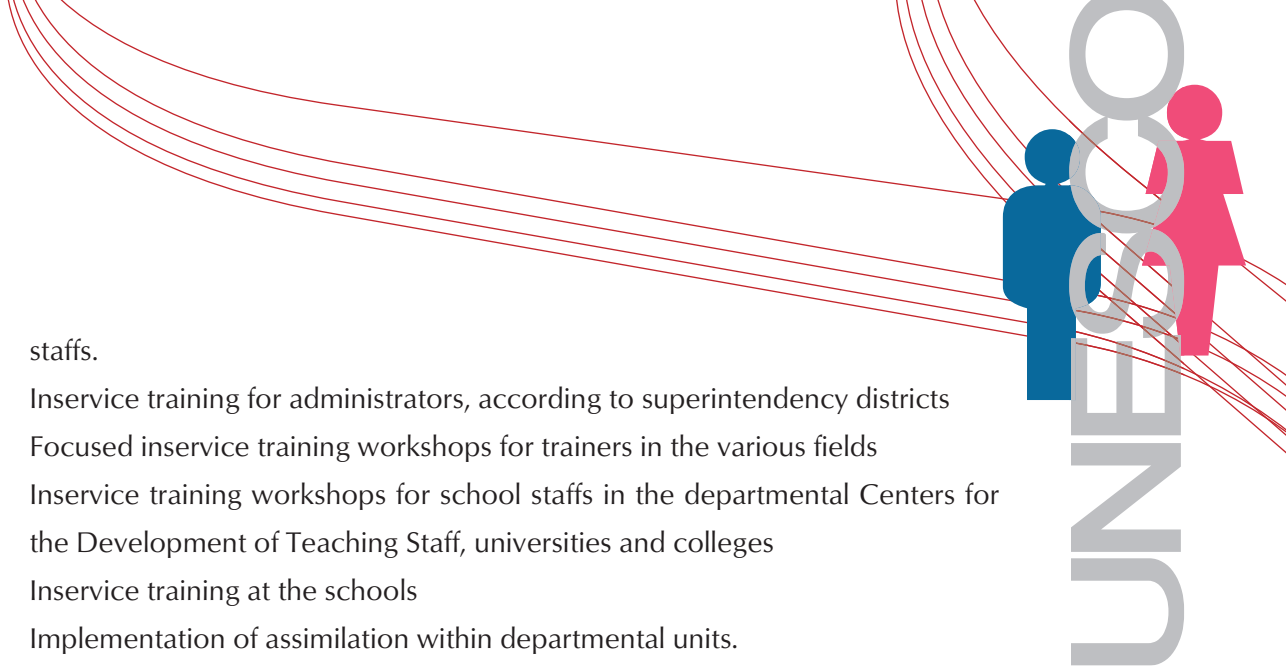
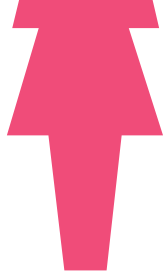
- a. The gender knowledge dimension: Conceiving gender equality as a subject-matter for learning and research, as part and parcel of social studies and the humanities;
- b. The behavioral dimension: Conceiving gender equality as a socio-cultural goal, as a way of life, which means putting it to daily practice.

These two dimensions are mutually supportive: empiric, theoretical and pragmatic knowledge constitutes an essential groundwork for changing points of view and resultant behaviors. These changes will promote a living culture allowing equal opportunities to both genders and a generally egalitarian lifestyle. Additionally, our daily lives require us to constantly grope with gender-related issues and access both theoretical and pragmatic knowledge.

In this context, it is important to stress the need for a special effort to connect and relate gender-related knowledge and behaviors that promote a lifestyle of gender equality in the education system. These links are not to be taken for granted, and continuous discussion must take place to examine the realization of gender-related objectives and accomplishments. Empirical results and theoretical references must be shown to have practical consequences. Obviously, dealing with only one dimension is never enough.

The assimilation initiated by the Department is carried out in:

- Conferences of administrative, superintendency and professional supervision

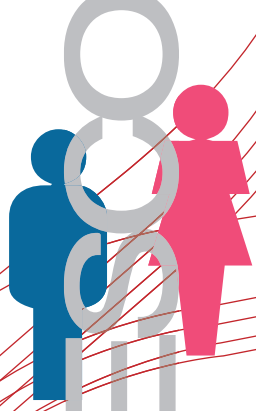


staffs.

- Inservice training for administrators, according to superintendency districts
- Focused inservice training workshops for trainers in the various fields
- Inservice training workshops for school staffs in the departmental Centers for the Development of Teaching Staff, universities and colleges
- Inservice training at the schools
- Implementation of assimilation within departmental units.

The following is an illustrative model of the change process:





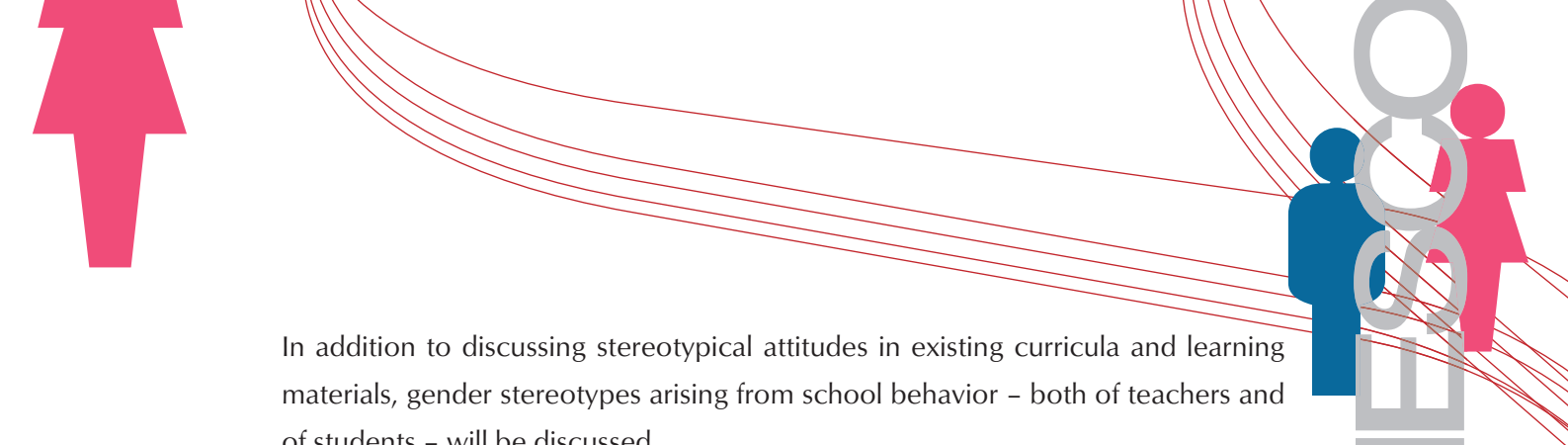
2.2 Activities to be Carried Out in the Educational Institution

- 1.1.1 The objectives and activity planning of each school will represent gender-equality and otherwise egalitarian values.
- 1.1.2 The gender-equality viewpoint should be integrated in the implementation of curricula and school programs: these programs will be formulated and examined “with a view to gender equality”.
- 1.1.3 The language in texts by the educational institution will meet gender-equality standards.
- 1.1.4 Resources will be allocated equitably between boys and girls in academic, technological and physical settings.
- 1.1.5 Girls and boys will enjoy equal use of public spaces. Small spaces may be used as “play corners”, allowing for gender equality.
- 1.1.6 The contents of special events, ceremonies and festivals will stress gender equality.
- 1.1.7 All educational activity in the school will be free of gender stereotypes in terms of division of labor.
- 1.1.8 The school curriculum will be balanced in terms of gender equality and allow for learning and discussion opportunities concerning gender issues.
- 1.1.9 The school will organize an available database on gender equality, comprising papers, videocassettes, films, educational activity materials and sources for reference and research.
- 1.1.10 Measures of success should be developed together with all those involved in the process. These measures will relate to the normative and social essences deriving from the institutional activity as a whole.

2.3 Gender-Oriented Approach – Activities and Programs

2.3.1 Update and Enhancement of Theoretical and Empirical Knowledge
It is recommended to establish a routine of collecting information sources from the literature and media, publishing and discussing them. This activity will enable the creation of a knowledge base founded on reliable information, and call for continuous and regular debates on the issue as part of the educational agenda; moreover, it will reinforce the motivation for and interest in the issue, thus allowing for a more informed discussion thereof.

2.3.2 Dealing with Gender Stereotypes



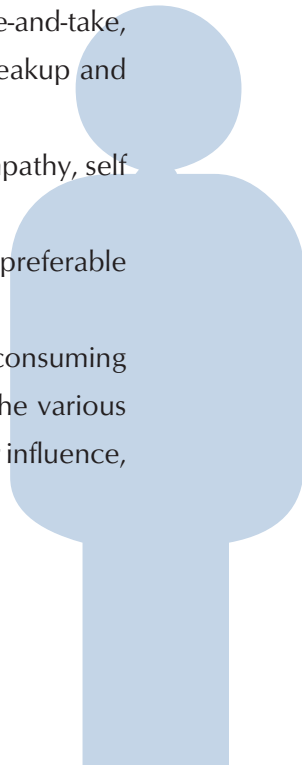
In addition to discussing stereotypical attitudes in existing curricula and learning materials, gender stereotypes arising from school behavior – both of teachers and of students – will be discussed.

Importantly, academic and social activities allowing for constant grappling with stereotypes and prejudice – such as role-plays and value-clarifying discussions – should also take place at school.

2.3.3 Interpersonal and Group Communication

We suggest holding workshops on gender issues. Groups of communication circles may be formed, stressing a communicative style respectful of both genders as part of the group contract.

Suggested themes:

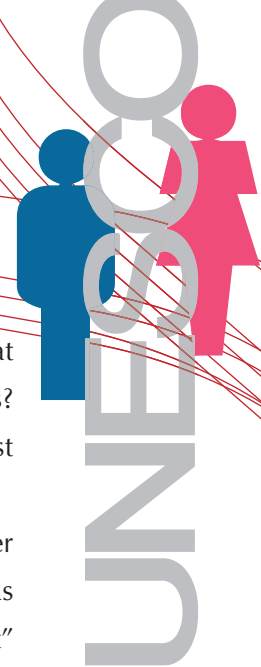
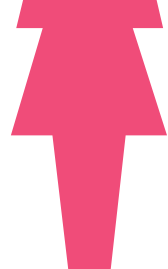
- Family: A variety of family structures, relationships in the family, parental authority, ways of life, the family discourse
 - Learning: Preferable interest areas, styles, preferred teaching-learning systems, dealing with failure or success, significant others, creativity, efficacy
 - Career development in both genders
 - Various social roles: In the family, class, school, workplace, etc.
 - Decision-making in various contexts: Who are the decision makers? What is the decision-making style? What other inputs may contribute?
 - Coping with difficulties (anger, change, crisis...): Interpretation, insight, help seeking, interpersonally oriented activities, giving feedback
 - Friendship within and between genders: The nature of the relationship, discourse and its contents, consistency and commitment, give-and-take, reciprocity, respect and appreciation, conflict resolution, breakup and separation
 - Emotional communication: Various modes of expression, empathy, self control
 - Conflict resolution: Controversial issues, conflict intensity, preferable approaches to resolution
 - Leisure culture: How we spend our free time, habits of consuming commodities and culture, the impact of advertisements in the various media, resisting peer pressure, choosing role models and their influence, investing emotional and other resources.
- 

2.3.4 Gender-Oriented Discussions

The purpose of these is to change the school community's behavior: staff, students and parents.

The following are series of questions to examine the process of changing the (intrapersonal and interpersonal) approach to gender in learning groups comprised of staff, students and parents:

- Acknowledging the existence of a situation to be dealt with or a difficulty to be coped with: To what extent do we, members of the educational staff, strive for gender equality (in all aspects of the school experience)? How does the staff experience equality in the system? How do the children experience equality in the system? (Or, how would they answer these questions?).
- Acknowledging the relevance of the situation or the difficulty experienced by coping individuals: How much does inequality bother me? To what extent is it relevant to me, to my role, to my class? How much am I affected or affecting in the gender issue? How often do I experience gender inequality (as the offending/offended party)?
- Access to internal and external resources: What childhood memories to I have that concern gender (an attempt at coping)? What previous experience do I have, as an adult, with gender equality? What other change process have I already lead or participated in? What previous attempt at change have I made in the area of educating for gender equality? How capable and effective do I feel as a leader of such a change? What role models have influenced me in this area? How did a role model influence my actual implementation of such a change process? Who can I identify as partners in moving the change process? What community organizations can be approached to assist in this? What are the preferred sources of assistance?
- Attempts at dealing with change in the environment, atmosphere and perspectives: What are the required changes in the system? What forces advance or hamper (individual and environmental) change? How may one deal with them? Do you have a plan to



change your own behavior and that of others in the system? What is it? How did the changes mentioned above affect other changes? To what a degree does your social circle assist or resist? Who must be mobilized to make the change a reality?

- Assessment: How much did recent activities change your gender perceptions? Please rate the change on a scale of 1 to 10, as relating to “cognitive acknowledgement”, “emotional involvement” and “behavior”. How committed are you to continuous change, normatively and operationally?

2.3.5 Girls Leading Change

Girls Leading Change is an empowerment and leadership program for high-school students. It is co-administered by the Israeli Women’s Lobby and the Ministry of Education, through the officer in charge of gender equality. The program’s goals are: empowerment and leadership development, acquisition of a broad knowledge base concerning gender inequality, and development of self-awareness and perspective change in the area of promoting equal opportunities for both genders.

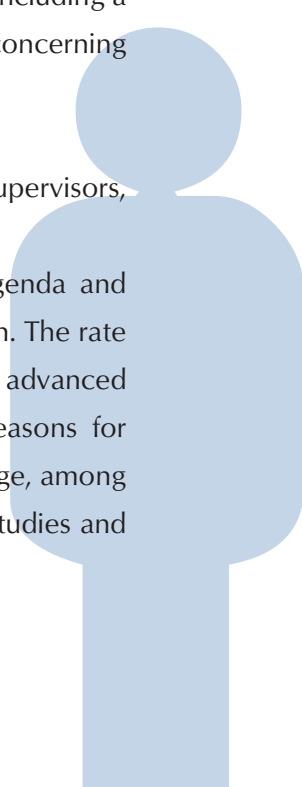
The program strives for changing perceptions and perspectives of high-school students regarding gender equality, instilling knowledge and developing awareness of social inequality, fostering leadership among the girls and encouraging them to plan for a professional career.

The program has been expanded to include boys as well. The purpose of this program is to change perceptions and perspectives of high-school students in order to acquire a broader perception of manhood, including a wide range of traits and behaviors and egalitarian perspectives concerning themselves, women, career and other societal issues.

2.3.6 Promoting Girls in Math and Advanced Sciences

This program is jointly administered by the science bureau, district supervisors, grade sections and the officer in charge of gender equality in education.

Promoting math studies for girls in Israel is on the public agenda and constitutes a central area of activity for the Ministry of Education. The rate of participation of girls in the study of math and sciences in an advanced level is low. Research points to a variety of socio-cultural reasons for avoiding math studies, such as lack of information and knowledge, among girls, concerning the centrality of math in the access to future studies and





employment, lack of confidence in their ability to study math and sciences, and lack of encouragement by teachers, parents and society in general.

Program goals

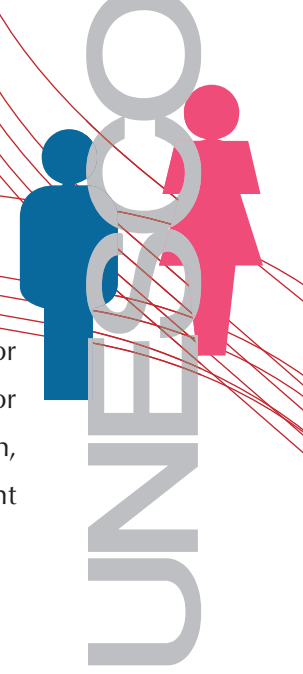
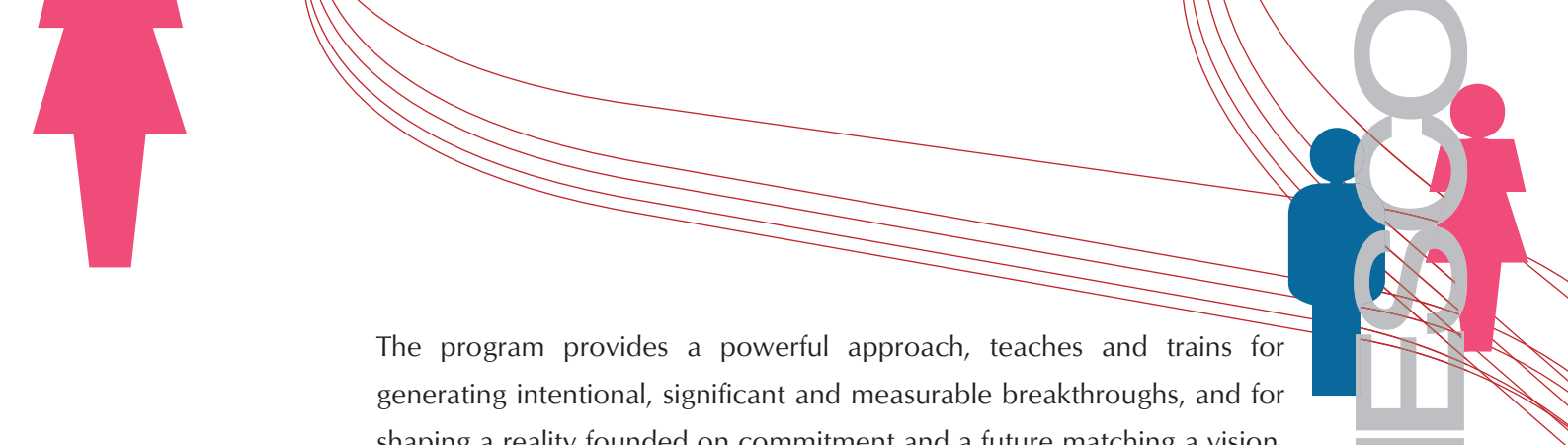
- To present the centrality and prestige of math and science studies and the overall socioeconomic significance of such studies for the girls' future
- To present, on the one hand, career obstacles, and on the other, the students' true abilities
- To present practical ways of change in order to encourage and energize the girls to dare and chose mathematics and other scientific majors.

2.3.7 Femininity and Masculinity – the Next Arena

As part of the promotion and assimilation of the egalitarian approach, we are currently studying and developing a new program aimed at a breakthrough in the area of management and leadership in particular, and the construction and design of a more normative, humane and human education system, in general.

For years, management and leadership have been shaped on the basis of exclusively masculine perceptions and perspectives, without allowing for any expression of feminine points of view, qualities and styles. Educational institutions are currently dealing with changing and developing new management strategies, world-views, quality programs and standards. These issues are related to the area of organizational culture. Women and men who perceive and develop themselves as leaders, and educational institutions which acknowledge the value and opportunities inherent in feminine leadership, side-by-side and integrated with masculine leadership, will have to cope not only with the pervasive organizational culture, but also with the institution's attitude towards women as leaders and attendant myths.

The program aims at shaping and creating a new reality in the schools and the education system, a reality in which results are reached in an extent and quality that have heretofore seemed impossible. Such results have now been made possible thanks to unprecedented expression of both feminine and masculine qualities, and gender collaboration. The program connects the academic knowledge and insights with the organizational and personal development of staff as the generators of a new reality.



The program provides a powerful approach, teaches and trains for generating intentional, significant and measurable breakthroughs, and for shaping a reality founded on commitment and a future matching a vision, while also training for accountability and for leading processes in an extent and quality unparalleled hitherto.

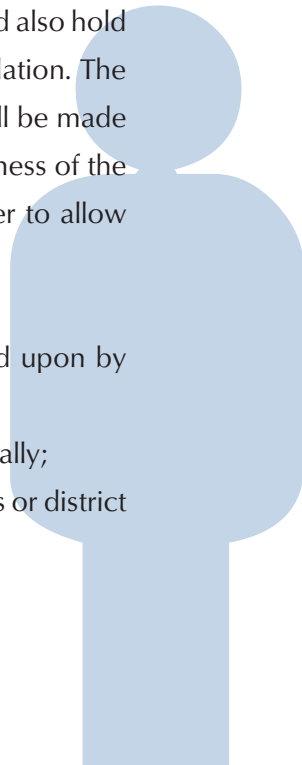
3. Preparation for Assimilation

3.1 Preparation at Headquarters Level

The Head Office will enable the promotion of gender equality education through joint and coordinated activity of all Ministry units, each unit working within its own area of responsibility and expertise:

- 1.1.1 Formulation of policy statements articulating the pedagogic concept guiding the policy and suggestions for getting organized.
- 1.1.2 Preparation of supervisors for planning and controlling activity results in each district, in line with Ministry policy.
- 1.1.3 Establishment of targets and standards for evaluating results.
- 1.1.4 Development of instruments to assess on-site implementation.

3.2 Preparation at District Level

- 1.1.1 Each school district will appoint a supervisor/issue referent, and determine “operational work principles” together with district supervision for all education institutes in the district.
 - 1.1.2 The districts will employ district instructors for coordinating the work of the instructors’ group. This group will coach in preschools, schools and Centers for the Development of Teaching Staff. In addition, they will consult preschool and school teachers, either personally or in groups, and also hold meetings in order to broach the subject and promote its assimilation. The coordinators and instructors on gender equality in education will be made available for any district-level activity in order to increase awareness of the subject among preschool and school teachers, and also in order to allow for localized and profound interventions.
 - 1.1.3 The superintendency and professional supervision will
 - A. Be committed to implementing Ministry policies as decided upon by Ministry directors;
 - B. Steer policy implementation pedagogically and organizationally;
 - C. Apply the assessment instruments developed at headquarters or district level;
- 



D. Be in charge of monitoring, feedback and instruments for measuring results of on-site activities.

3.3 Preparation at Site Level

- 1.1.1 A leadership team for constructing a school program grounded on educating for humanistic-democratic values – particularly gender equality – will be set up. The program will match the needs of the school community and the head office /district/ locality policies.
- 1.1.2 Officers will be made accountable for implementing the chosen policy, for defining behaviors representing successful implementation and for learning from the results.
- 1.1.3 The school board, the administrative staff and the teaching staff will conduct procedures of oversight, self-examination and constant learning of experiential processes (with a view to answering questions such as “What have I promoted?”, “What have I planned and not implemented?”, and “What can I learn from this?”, and an attempt to identify weaknesses and strength and to subsequently redefine targets).

3.4 Parental and Community Involvement

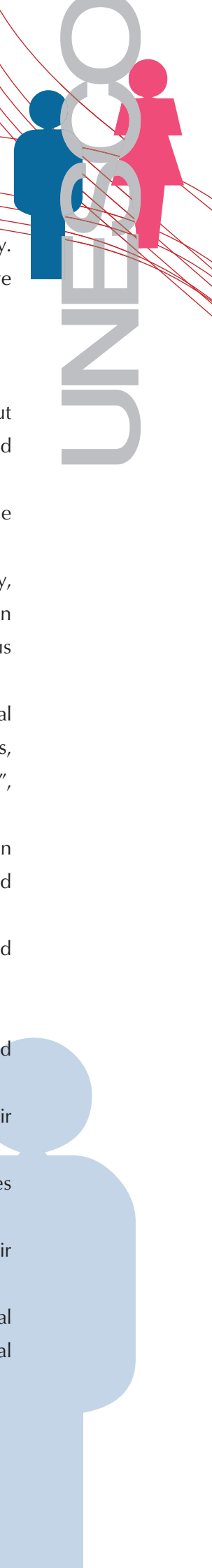
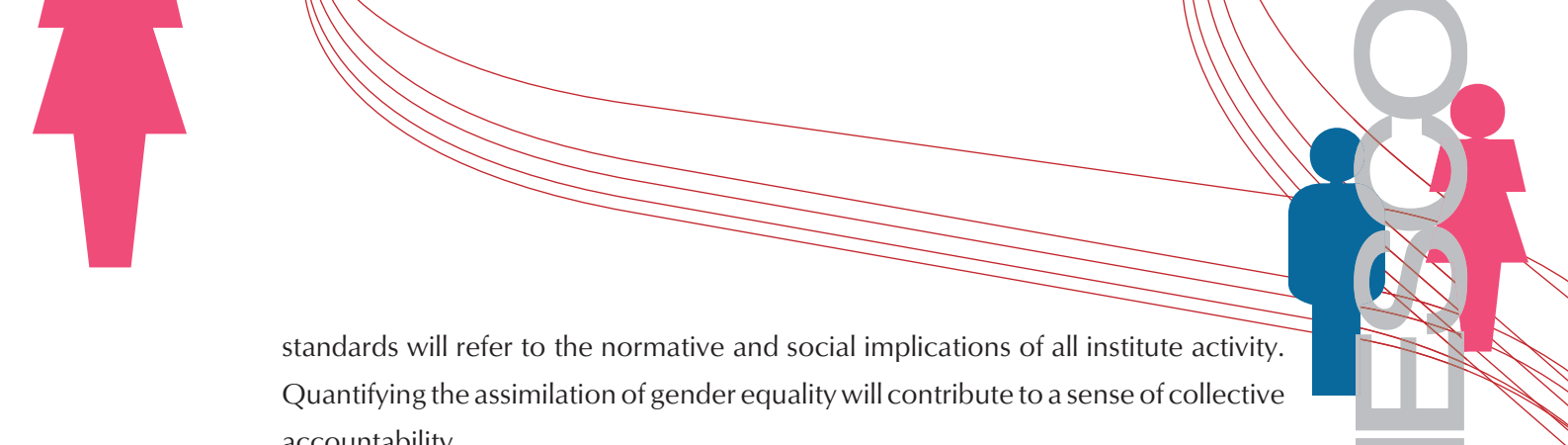
Children and adolescents are heavily influenced by parental values and relationship patterns and internalize them. The parents are the most critical and significant factor in the educational process. Their influence stems both from their overt and from their covert messages to their children. These messages determine the boys’ and girls’ self-perception of abilities, life options and social, mental and intellectual growth.

In striving to create a new social reality in the education system, finally devoid of sexist stereotypes, the school staff must keep several presuppositions in mind:

- A. The main factors affecting students’ behavior are the home environment, the school and the social sphere, including the various media and the entertainment and leisure culture.
- B. Comprehension and acknowledgement of the unique value of the diverse cultures in the community surrounding the educational institution – and showing respect for them – are the key for true dialog with the parents and their increased involvement in joint activities by the school, the family and the community.

3.5 Quantifying Success

Standards of success are to be determined by all parties to the effort. These



standards will refer to the normative and social implications of all institute activity. Quantifying the assimilation of gender equality will contribute to a sense of collective accountability.

3.6 Expected Outputs in the Education System

3.6.1 Short-Term Outputs

- Official documents, brochures, textbooks and tests formulated without gender stereotypes, given that language shapes consciousness and culture and delivers covert, as well as overt messages
- Changing the math and sciences curricula in order to allow the promotion of girl students in these subject-matters
- Changing the curricula in social sciences and the humanities (sociology, history, literature, biblical studies) so as to emphasize the contribution of women in each of those fields, on the one hand, and raise the status of humanistic and democratic values, on the other
- Allocating special periods for focused activities to promote equal educational opportunities for both genders (such as educator periods, special activity days along the year, “gender week” or “women’s week”, etc.), as part and parcel of the yearlong activity
- Publishing an auxiliary teacher’s kit on the achievements of women in the various learning areas, such as social studies, history, art and literature
- Integrating the parents and community in localized on-site and communal projects

3.6.2 Long-Term Outputs

- Girls will acknowledge their value and capabilities, and their added value as women.
- Boys will acknowledge the value and capabilities of girls, and their added value as women.
- Girls and boys will acknowledge their own diverse “feminine” qualities and skills, unaffected by pervasive norms in their society.
- Both genders will value the special opportunities inherent in their mutual collaboration.
- Boys and girls will let themselves expand their roles and behavioral repertoire in order to produce better results for their personal advancement and well-being.



- Girls and boys will initiate joint activities, in which everyone will contribute according to their abilities and inclinations, not necessarily on a traditionally gendered basis.

4. Criteria for Assessing Gender Stereotypes in Textbooks

In school year 2000/2001, the Minister of Education, Knesset Member Limor Livnat, nominated a committee for assessing gender stereotypes in textbooks used by the Israeli education system.

The following are the committee recommendations for updating existing Ministry orders concerning criteria for approving textbooks from a gender equality point of view. These recommendations are universally binding in the Israeli education system.

The recommendations include the following sections:

- Elaboration of criterion
- Stamping an approval mark
- Deepening awareness
- Strict use of approved materials only

1.1 Elaboration of Criterion

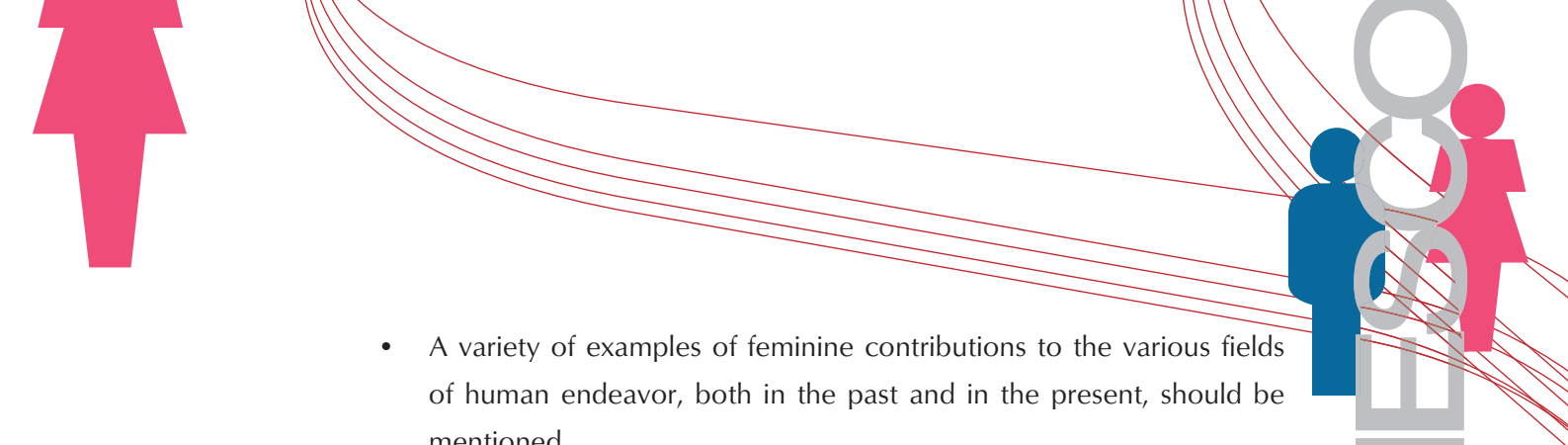
The committee recommends an elaboration of the single criterion referring to gender equality in the orders pertaining to textbook approval, in the following aspects:

4.1.1 The Substantive Aspect

4.1.1.1 Inclusion of Information

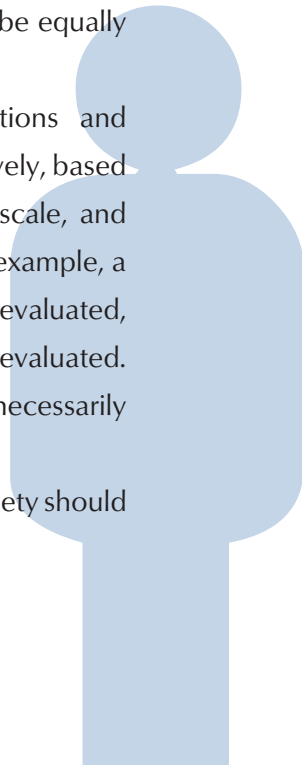
Equal reference to both genders will be felt in all disciplines. This means positive inclusion of information about the activity of men and women, girls and boys, individually and collectively, while attaching equal value to their activities and achievements. More specifically,

- Knowledge gaps concerning women and men in all dimensions of human culture (literature, history, science, art, etc.) and their biographies should be bridged. This includes proper mention of outstanding persons, who've made important contribution to the textbook's particular field. The part played by women should be emphasized, and their contribution to culture and society along the ages presented side-by-side with that of men. The presentation will be reliable, factual and unbiased.
- Creators of both genders should be presented in a balanced manner.

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- A variety of examples of feminine contributions to the various fields of human endeavor, both in the past and in the present, should be mentioned.
 - The current curricula include literary masterpieces, some of which are laden with explicit or implicit gender stereotypes as a result of the time and social context in which they were written. The committee hereby emphasizes that teaching these masterpieces should not stop, but that, nevertheless, the teachers must sharpen and deepen the students' awareness of gender stereotyping in these texts, which are no longer relevant to the present social context.

It is safe to assume that the Jewish-Mainstream, Jewish-Religious, Jewish-Orthodox and Arab education systems will adopt different approaches to the Holy Scriptures and secular masterpieces. This diversity is inherent to the nature of these sectors of Israeli society.

4.1.1.2 Avoidance of Stereotyping

- Teachers should avoid any generalized attribution of traits to any single gender, and positive traits evaluated by society should be attributed to both. For example, women in general should not be presented as characterized by qualities such as emotional thinking, inconsistency, weakness, a tendency to cry and excessive emotionality, while men in general should not be characterized as determined, enterprising, rational, harsh, etc.
 - Roles related to housekeeping and childcare should not be presented stereotypically, but as functions required of both spouses. Qualities of the traditional unique roles played by both genders should be equally evaluated.
 - Teachers should avoid rating professions and occupations and evaluating those who chose them, either positively or negatively, based on gender stereotyping, according to any social prestige scale, and attributing them exclusively to this gender or the other. For example, a woman choosing to be a housewife should not be negatively evaluated, nor should a woman choosing to be a pilot be positively evaluated. Likewise, a factory manager should not be presented as necessarily male, or a teacher as necessarily female.
 - The variety of roles played by women and men in today's society should
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be appropriately described, as opposed to a focus on traditional roles.

- In learning materials, the culture of games and toys should be referred to on an egalitarian, non-gendered, basis. For example, games related to housekeeping, nursing and nurturing should not be attributed exclusively to girls and women, nor should games related to the corporate world, transportation or the military be attributed exclusively to boys and men.

4.1.2 The Didactic Aspect

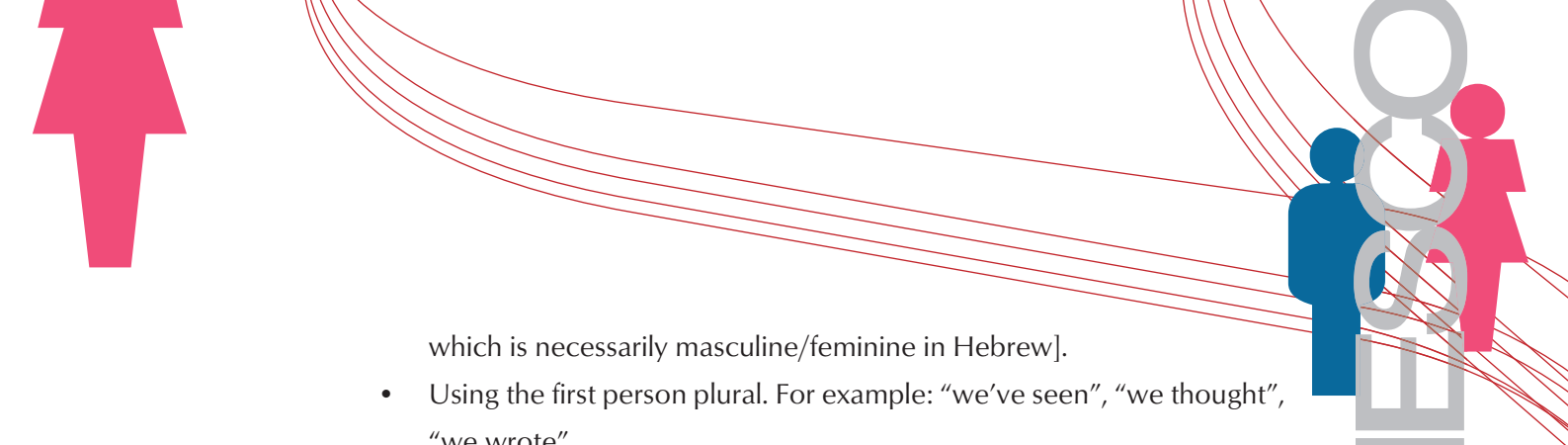
Tasks undertaken to practice skills should be framed equitably, in the following ways:

- Quantitatively and qualitatively balanced representation of both genders.
- Avoidance of any directly or indirectly stereotyped representation of a social situation which does not correspond with the present manifest values of Israel
- In operative tasks – avoidance of a gendered division of labor
- Intentional inclusion of tasks identifying the use of gender stereotypes in society – their sources, expressions, implications and significance
- Intentional inclusion of activities for developing sensitivity to and awareness of the representation or non-representation of both genders in information sources of all kinds (“Which human experiences are lacking in the descriptions above, and why?”; “What happened to women during that time/situation?”).

4.1.3 The Linguistic Aspect

Both genders will be addressed in a balanced manner, as elaborated below:

- Using grammatical structures [in Hebrew] that may be read both as the feminine and as the masculine voice.
- Using the plural [neutral] form in directives.
- Using the masculine or feminine voice in accordance with a picture or the story associated with it. For example, the caption under a drawing of a girl will be phrased in the feminine voice.
- Using present simple or continuous to refer to the neutral voice, especially in directive texts. For example, “We now open the book”, or “Opening the book on page...”, instead of “Open the book” [a form



which is necessarily masculine/feminine in Hebrew].

- Using the first person plural. For example: “we’ve seen”, “we thought”, “we wrote”.
- Using both the masculine and feminine voice side by side. For example: “He/she thought”, “A five year-old boy/girl”.

4.1.4 The Graphic Aspect

Refers to paintings, drawings, photographs or comics

4.1.4.1 The Substantive Element

- Drawings, paintings or photographs accompanying characters all along the book may not present the characters stereotypically. For example, a girl/woman crying or otherwise helpless holding a doll or a baby, as opposed to an “educated” boy/man looking through the telescope or reading a book/newspaper or lecturing by the blackboard or holding a toy.
- Both genders should be presented in a balanced manner in terms of clothing, general appearance and environmental background, in accordance with their role and the period in which they lived, and not based on pervasive stereotypes. For example, women will not be presented wearing only aprons while men will not be presented wearing only overalls; likewise, no women only near a crib or in a kitchen and no men only next to a computer or in the synagogue.
- Women may not be sexually objectified in terms of dress, pose or facial expression.

4.1.4.2 The Quantitative Element

- The number of female versus male characters in learning materials should be balanced as in the present social reality.

1.1 Stamping an Approval Mark

The committee hereby recommends creating an approval mark logo for textbooks, to be stamped on all approved learning materials. The mark will include the year of approval, and its existence should be made public. Using this mark will heighten the awareness of parents, teachers and students to the message it represents and will also facilitate enforcement.

1.2 Deepening Awareness

The committee recommends a range of activities to deepen the awareness and sensitivity to covert and overt stereotyping. These activities are to be conducted



by supervisors, principals, teachers, teaching trainers, parents, textbook writers, publishers, students and others, in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of the importance of assimilating the desired criteria in the learning materials and of developing a genuine commitment to their maintenance.

These activities will be as follows:

- The Ministry's policy will be clarified and explicated in special discussions during conventions for supervisors and principals in the districts, in regional and community meetings, and during preschool and school teachers' inservice training sessions.
- The issue will be raised in local and national PTA meetings and in writers' and publishers' conventions, as part of a socio-cultural educative effort.
- The issue will be raised in official Ministry publications intended for all its employees and the public at large, including the MoE Website.

1.1 Strict Use of Approved Materials Only

The committee attaches great importance to instituting the following procedures:

- 1.1.1 School principals are responsible for strict use of exclusively approved textbooks in their institutions.
- 1.1.2 Teachers are committed to teach only from approved textbooks. They are required to examine the books prior to handing out reading lists.
- 1.1.3 Supervisors will assist principals in selecting textbooks and seeing that only approved books are used.
- 1.1.4 Enforcement should be undertaken by district-level supervisors and the superintendency: supervisors should instruct principals to use only approved books. District-level supervisors should publicize a circular – intended particularly for subject-matter coordinators – including a comprehensive list of approved textbooks (based on the Director General's circular on textbook approval).
- 1.1.5 District management has to ensure that all district schools use only the approved textbooks.
- 1.1.6 The approved reading list must be made public, so that publishers will be motivated to comply with the criteria.
- 1.1.7 A body within the Ministry of Education should be made in charge of the overall enforcement of the approved reading list.
- 1.1.8 The staff responsible for approving textbooks should include a specialist on gender equality, to be put in charge of identifying covert and overt stereotyping in learning materials.

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- 1.1.9 An exemptions committee will be established in order to decide on cases of appeals or objections to (dis)approval of learning materials.
- 1.1.10 A follow-up committee will be established in order to assist the Ministry in implementing the stated gender equality policy, in view of suggestions made in the present document.

5. The Unit for Gender Equality Website

The unit for gender equality website – <http://www.education.gov.il/gender.html> – presents basic, recent and relevant information for practitioners.

The site allows informational access to the complete activities of the unit for gender equality in education, including information concerning extracurricular activities, conventions and inservice training. The site also offers links to activities for the promotion of gender equality, composed by staff instructors and preschool and school teachers undergoing training in this field. In addition, the site offers bibliographic databases containing empirical and theoretical essays and literary texts, plus links to electronic journals, a movie library, children's literature, catalogues of academic libraries in Israel and abroad, publications by the unit for gender equality, journey books, reports and findings and a selection of translated articles. Through the site, you can also be informed about initiatives and national and district-level projects, such as Girls Leading Change and other breakthrough projects included in the Femininity and Masculinity – the Next Arena program.

The site is an additional means of keeping in touch with the unit and practitioners. It is also used as a virtual meeting place for the instruction staff as a learning community and as another medium for online discussions based on information sharing and mutual exchange of ideas.

For further information, please contact Ms. Miriam Shechter, in charge of Gender Equality in Education. Tel. 972-2-5603290/1; 972-56-282281.