

A Climate Asia & Arthan Foundation Initiative

# EquiLead's Gender Equity Initiative

## Stereotypes at Workplace Handbook

Featuring Zee and Yulu





Hey Zee!  
What are  
stereotypes?



Stereotypes are  
oversimplified ideas about  
people based on their race,  
caste, gender, disability,  
class, age or any other socio-  
economic-geographic factor.



### Let me explain a bit more!

Instead of seeing each person as unique, we make guesses about them based on pre-existing generalizations. Imagine you meet someone for the first time and you automatically think you know everything about them based on their gender/ other background & where they come from. It causes misunderstanding and unfair treatment as a result.



We were old school  
back then,  
How does it play out in  
today's modern world?



Do you know, women still  
make upto **43%** of global  
agriculture labour force but  
earn **18.2%** less than men  
because of the gender  
stereotypes which leads to  
such discrimination



### We stereotype people based on:

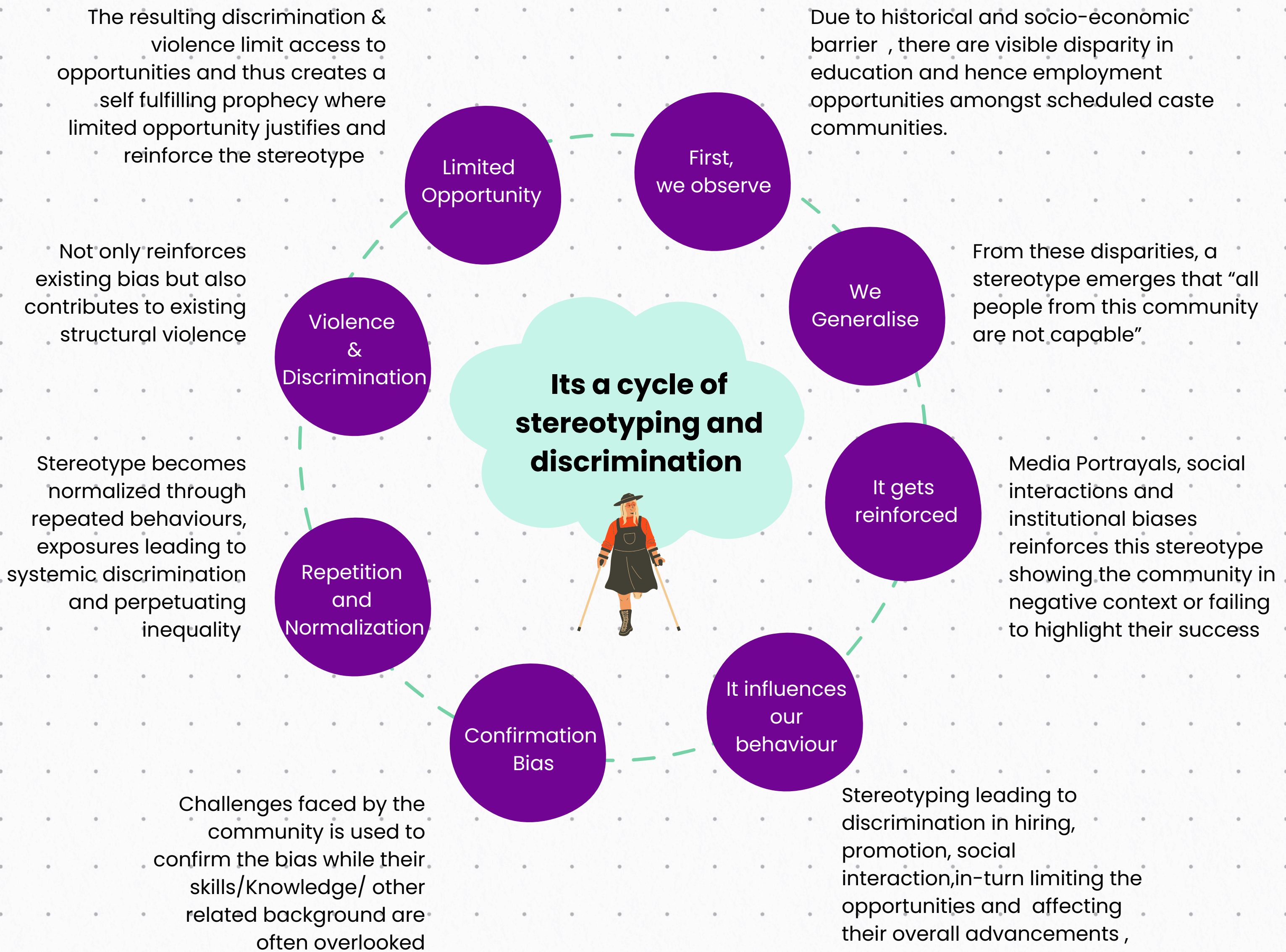
- Race & Ethnicity
- Age
- Social Class & Caste
- Disability
- Occupation
- Religion
- Gender
- Physical Appearance & so on...



*That's a lot!  
How does it  
work?*



Let’s take an example to understand the Cycle of Stereotyping & Discrimination



Identifying Stereotype in action at Workplaces

Unequal Opportunity

- **Stereotype:** Men are seen as natural leaders while women+ are great supporters for assigned tasks.
- **Manifestation:** Are women+ getting fewer positions, leadership roles or trainings?
- **Challenge it:** Push for equal or contextualized training, mentorship program for women+, bias free promotions (based on merit not potential)

- **Stereotype:** “She’s better with people; he’s better with systems and strategy.”
- **Manifestation:** Are certain tasks always given to women+, like organising or helping, while men get technical or decision-making roles?
- **Challenge it:** Assign work based on skills and interest, not gender.

Stereotypical Job roles



## Different Standards for different genders

- **Stereotype:** Men are great decision makers than women+
- **Manifestation:** Men are praised for being more assertive while women+ are labelled as aggressive for the same behaviour.
- **Challenge it:** Call out double standards & create equal treatment for everyone

- **Statement:** "He is a family man"
- **Manifestation:** Such statements are said positively for men while for women+ family becomes distraction from work
- **Challenge it:** Leaders of all genders should visibly take leave, attend to family responsibilities, or set boundaries, have equitable parental policies and call it out with gender neutral language and reflections.

## Gendered Language

## Uneven emotional Workload

- **Statement:** "women+ are naturally nurturing,"
- **Indicator:** Is emotional labour like team support, conflict resolution, or mentoring mainly expected from women+, often without appreciation or reward?
- **Challenge it:** Make sure emotional work is shared fairly and recognized as valuable.

- **Statement:** "She gives mixed signals, how can you blame only the guy?"
- **Indicator:** The burden of preventing harassment is placed on women+, survivors are silenced or second-guessed or women+ self-police to avoid being judged, creates gossip culture and normalizes casual sexism
- **Challenge it:** Design for safety in process and decision making, regular listening systems, redesign norms through rituals and languages.

## Victim Blaming in Harassment

## Power Imbalances

- **Statement:** "She cries too easily , how can they handle the pressure?"
- **Indicator:** Are men talking more, making most decisions, or interrupting women+ in meetings or discussions?
- **Challenge it:** Facilitate inclusive communication norm.

- **Statement:** He didn't mean anything by it, he's just like that with everyone."
- **Indicator:** Unequal standards of behaviour expectations, active bystander culture, lack of clear or safe reporting channels.
- **Challenge it:** Codify clear expectation in policies and culture, train managers to interrupt bias, rebuild the Feedback & Grievance Ecosystem

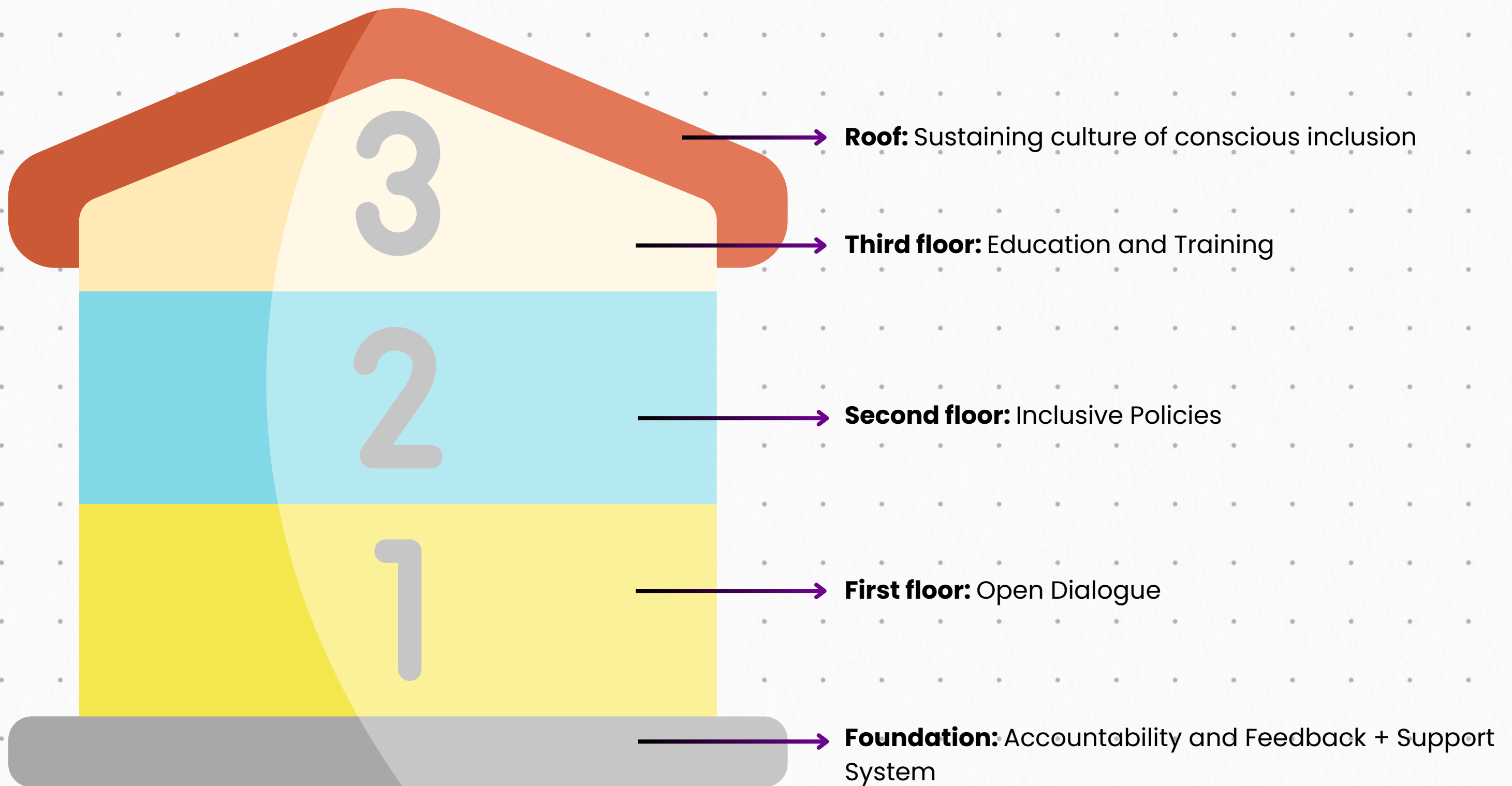
## Tolerance of Bullying, Harassment





# Addressing and overcoming Gender Stereotypes at Organization Level

## Creating a culture of conscious Inclusion



### Why it works:

- Reinforces the idea that inclusion is structural, not optional
- Emphasizes foundation-first thinking: without accountability & support, everything else collapses

### 1. Accountability & Feedback:

- Use anonymous feedback, DEI dashboards, and leadership KPIs to track impact. Make inclusion everyone's responsibility—not just HR's.

### 2. Support Systems:

- Include Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), mental health allies, and bias-reporting process/technologies.
- Offer peer support through ERGs, coaching, mental health allies, and digital channels for reporting bias. Embed care in your org DNA.

### 3. Open Dialogue

- Normalize inclusion check-ins during team meetings. Create psychologically safe spaces—like listening circles and cross-level mentoring, to talk about lived experiences and challenge bias constructively.

### 4. Inclusive Policies

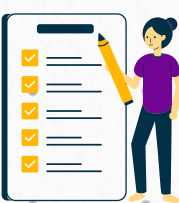
- Include pay equity audits, parental leave redesign and similar inclusion policies.
- Gender-decoding in JDs and feedback analysis.
- Embed fairness across hiring, reviews, and conflict resolution.

### 5. Education & Training

- Add bias interruption training: Teach real-time responses to microaggressions.
- Include scenario-based learning (e.g., simulations, role plays).
- Offer role-specific, scenario-based learning through live sessions, micro-modules, and real-time bias interruption practice. Customize training to tackle your org's specific patterns.







Self- Assessment & Checklist for Leaders

Self-Assessment Quiz: Reflect on your individual biases and behaviors that may shape your leadership decisions.

- 1) When considering job candidates, do you find yourself favoring those with similar backgrounds or interests as you?
  - Yes, I connect more easily with people like me.
  - I try to evaluate everyone equally.
- 2) How often do you catch yourself making assumptions based on gender, age, or ethnicity?
  - Frequently, even unintentionally.
  - Rarely—I focus on individual actions and merit.
- 3) In team discussions, do you listen more attentively to certain voices?
  - Sometimes, to those who seem more confirming or confident or like me.
  - I aim to give equal attention to all.
- 4) How comfortable are you with challenging stereotypes and biases when they arise?
  - I find it difficult and tend to avoid it.
  - I address and discuss them openly.
- 5) How do you react to someone from a different background?
  - I may feel unsure or uneasy.
  - I’m curious and open to learning.



How to Use This Tool

- Use the quiz as a personal reflection tool before leadership or team decisions.
- Use the checklist in org design reviews, team meetings, or DEI audits to identify gaps and plan next steps.



Organizational Checklist for Gender Equity

Evaluate your systems and culture using this quick-reference guide:

Area	Key equity question
Job Descriptions	Are they gender-neutral and free from biased language and assumptions?
Recruitment Practices	Are strategies in place to attract diverse candidates?
Leadership Representation	Are there equal representation in decision-making and leadership roles?
Pay Equity	Are compensation structures equitable across genders for similar roles?
Promotion Opportunities	Are career development pathways accessible and equitable for all genders?
Training & Development	Do you offer targeted programs and mentorship to support women+’s advancement?
Workplace Policies	Do they support flexibility, parental leave, and work-life balance equitably?
Feedback & Reporting	Is there a safe, confidential process for raising gender-related concerns?
Bias Training	Are employees regularly trained on bias and sensitivity, including leaders?
Inclusive Culture	Are diverse voices valued and included in decisions, not just represented?

**Disclaimer :**  
This document has been compiled for organizations seeking to integrate gender considerations into their workplaces. The examples, checklists, and self-assessments are based on publicly available information and are indicative, not exhaustive. They are intended solely for learning and inspiration, and do not represent any specific organization.

**Source:**  
Handbook on Addressing Gender Stereotypes, Sakshi & IDH, 2024