

Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 5: Gender equality



As the UN explains gender equality: "Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but also a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world."

The official wording of SDG 5 is "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". Women and girls represent half of the world's population, and therefore half of its potential. However, today gender inequality exists everywhere and social progress is stagnating. Women are still underrepresented at all levels of political leadership.

Advancing gender equality is key to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education, protection and well-being of girls and boys.

Why is it important?

All over the world, women and girls perform a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic work. Inequalities faced by girls can begin at birth and follow them throughout their lives. In some countries, girls are deprived of access to health care or proper nutrition, leading to higher mortality rates.

Empowering women and girls is critical to expanding economic growth and promoting social development. Full participation of women in the labor force would add percentages to most national growth rates – double digits in many cases.

Worldwide, 35 percent of women between the ages of 15 and 49 have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner or non-partner sexual violence. 1 in 3 girls aged 15-19 have experienced some form of female genital mutilation/circumcision in 30 countries in Africa and the Middle East, where the harmful practice is most common with a high risk of prolonged bleeding, infection (including HIV), complications of childbirth, infertility and death.

International commitments to advance gender equality have brought improvements in some areas: child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) have declined in recent years, and women's representation in the political arena is greater than ever before.

But the promise of a world where every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and where all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment are removed remains unfulfilled.

Progress has been made in recent decades: more girls are going to school, fewer girls are being forced into early marriage, more women are working in parliament and in leadership positions, and laws are being reformed to advance gender equality.

How to solve the problem?

If you're a girl, you can stay in school, help empower your female classmates to do the same, and fight for your right to access sexual and reproductive health services.

If you are a woman, you can address the unconscious biases and implicit associations that create an unintentional and often invisible barrier to equal opportunity.

If you are a man or a boy, you can work together with women and girls to achieve gender equality and embrace healthy and respectful relationships.



References:

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/5_Why-It-Matters-2020.pdf

https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/E_Infographic_05.pdf