



WHAT IS GOAL 5 – GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. There has been progress over the last decades, but the world is not on track to achieve gender equality by 2030.

Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potential. But gender inequality persists everywhere and stagnates social progress. On average, women in the labor market still earn 23 percent less than men globally and women spend about three times as many hours in unpaid domestic and care work as men.

Sexual violence and exploitation, the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work, and discrimination in public office, all remain huge barriers. All these areas of inequality have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic: there has been a surge in reports of sexual violence, women have taken on more care work due to school closures, and 70% of health and social workers globally are women.

At the current rate, it will take an estimated 300 years to end child marriage, 286 years to close gaps in legal protection and remove discriminatory laws, 140 years for women to be represented equally in positions of power and leadership in the workplace, and 47 years to achieve equal representation in national parliaments.



Political leadership, investments and comprehensive policy reforms are needed to dismantle systemic barriers to achieving Goal 5. Gender equality is a cross-cutting objective and must be a key focus of national policies, budgets and institutions.

HOW MUCH PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE?

International commitments to advance gender equality have brought about 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 higher than ever before. But the promise of a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality, and where all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed, remains unfulfilled. In fact, that goal is probably even more distant than before, since women and girls are being hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.





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ARE THERE ANY OTHER GENDER-RELATED CHALLENGES?

Yes. Worldwide, nearly half of married women lack decision-making power over their sexual and reproductive health and rights. 35 per cent of women between 15-49 years of age have experienced physical and/ or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. 1 in 3 girls aged 15-19 have experienced some form of female genital mutilation/cutting in the 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), childbirth complications, infertility and death.

This type of violence doesn't just harm individual women and girls; it also undermines their overall quality of life and hinders their active involvement in society.

WHY SHOULD GENDER EQUALITY MATTER TO ME?

Regardless of where you live in, gender equality is a fundamental human right. Advancing gender equality is critical to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education, protection and the well-being of girls and boys.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

If you are 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 unconscious biases and implicit associations that form an unintended and often an invisible barrier to equal opportunity.

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

You can fund education campaigns to curb cultural practices like female genital mutilation and change harmful laws that limit the rights of women and girls and prevent them from achieving their full potential.

The Spotlight Initiative is an EU/UN partnership, and a global, multi-year initiative focused on eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls – the world's largest targeted effort to end all forms of violence against women and girls..

To find out more about Goal #5 and other Sustainable Development Goals, visit:

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>

