

FACT SHEET

ZERO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

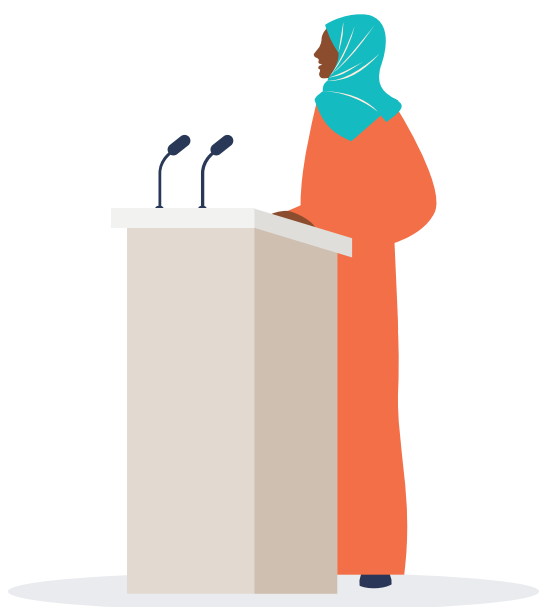


#ZERO DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

ZERO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Gender inequalities and harmful gender norms drive the systematic denial of women's rights and block the advancement and empowerment of women. They are also powerful factors in the HIV epidemic that must be squarely addressed in order to achieve a world free from AIDS.

On Zero Discrimination Day and as part of the global movement for equality for women and girls, UNAIDS is highlighting seven areas where discrimination against women and girls persists, raising awareness and calling for change.



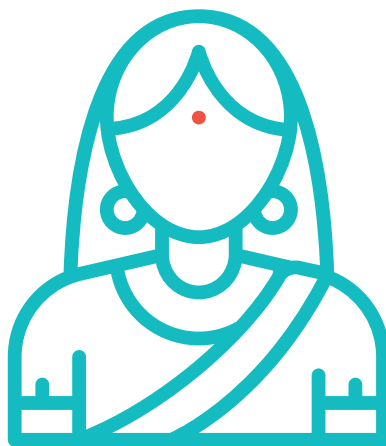
1. EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE

- Globally, only 24.5% of parliamentarians are women.¹
- As of June 2019, 11 women were serving as a head of state and 12 were serving as a head of government.²

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2. HUMAN RIGHTS AND LAWS THAT EMPOWER

- At least 117 countries permitted girls to be legally married before the age of 18 years in 2015.
- Discriminatory laws affect an estimated 2.5 billion women and girls around the world.³
- Existing statutory and customary laws limit women's access to land and other types of property in most countries in Africa and in about half the countries in Asia.⁴
- Globally, more than one in five women are child brides: on average, more than one in five women are first married by the age of 18 years. This varies significantly across and within regions. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have the highest rates, at 34% and 29%, respectively.⁵
- In more than 50 reporting countries, the minimum legal age of marriage is lower for women than men.⁶



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3. ECONOMIC JUSTICE—EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK

- Only 88 of 190 countries have laws mandating equal pay for work of equal value.
- Globally, women carry out three quarters of care work in the household.
- Fifty countries have no legislation addressing sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Households of lone mothers with young children are more likely to be poor than households of lone fathers with young children.⁷
- Women earn, on average, 20% less than men.⁸
- Women are less likely to participate in the labour market than men and are more likely to be unemployed in most parts of the world—for every 10 men in a job, only six women are in employment.⁹
- Thirty-six of 190 reporting countries lack any laws to counter gender-based discrimination in employment.
- Fifty countries have no legislation addressing sexual harassment in the workplace.

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4. END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- At least one in three women and girls has experienced physical and/or sexual violence.
- More than 1 billion women lack legal protection against domestic violence.
- Young women are at a greater risk of intimate partner violence than adult women overall. One third of women aged 18–24 years reported being sexually abused during childhood in Kenya (32%), Uganda (35%) and Eswatini (38%).

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- Women with disabilities are estimated to be up to 10 times more likely to experience sexual violence compared with other women.
- An estimated 14 million refugees and displaced women and girls were targets of sexual violence in 2019.¹⁰



5. ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE WITHOUT STIGMA OR BARRIERS, INCLUDING BODILY AUTONOMY AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

- In low- and middle-income countries, nearly 230 million women and adolescent girls who want to be able to avoid pregnancy are not accessing modern methods of contraception.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, almost 50% of adult women have unmet needs for modern contraception, a gap that widens to 60% among adolescent girls (15–19 years).
- Every day in 2017, approximately 810 women died from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth —94% of all maternal deaths occur in low- and lower-middle-income countries.¹¹

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- In almost half of 31 reporting countries, less than 50% of adult women (15–49 years) who were married or in a union and using contraceptives said they controlled decisions about sexual relations, contraceptive use and health-care needs.¹²
- While the exact number of girls and women worldwide who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting remains unknown, at least 200 million girls and women in 30 countries have been subjected to the practice. Of these 200 million, more than half live in just three countries, Indonesia, Egypt and Ethiopia; 44 million are girls below the age of 15 years.¹³

6. EQUAL AND FREE ACCESS TO PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

- In 2018, an estimated 258 million children, adolescents and young people were not in school, representing one sixth of the global population of this age group.
- In 2018, there were 32.2 million out-of-school girls of primary school age and 26.8 million out-of-school boys of the same age.¹⁴
- Nearly one in three adolescent girls (10–19 years) from the poorest households around the world has never been to school.
- Globally, 9 million girls of primary school age will never have the opportunity to learn to read and write in primary school, compared to about 3 million boys.¹⁵
- Across sub-Saharan Africa, 4 million girls will never attend school, compared to 2 million boys.
- It has been estimated that universal secondary education for girls in sub-Saharan Africa could save as many as 1.8 million lives annually.¹⁶
- A child raised by a woman who can read is 50% more likely to survive beyond the age of 5 years.

**ACROSS SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA,
4 MILLION
GIRLS WILL NEVER ATTEND SCHOOL,
COMPARED TO 2 MILLION BOYS.**



7. CLIMATE JUSTICE

- Women disproportionately suffer the impacts of climate change and other environmental hazards, especially in developing countries.
- Climate change has a disproportionate impact on women and children, who are up to 14 times more likely than men to die during a climate-related disaster.¹⁷



WOMEN, GIRLS AND HIV

- Globally, in 2018 an estimated 18.8 million women aged 15 years and older were living with HIV. That is 52% of all people aged 15 years and older living with HIV.
- The world is still a long way from achieving the global target of reducing new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women to fewer than 100 000 by 2020: in 2018, that number stood at 310 000 [190 000–460 000], three times higher than the target.
- Every week, around 6000 young women aged 15–24 years become infected with HIV. That's 860 every day.
- Globally, adolescent girls and young women accounted for 60% of the estimated 510 000 [300 000–740 000] new HIV infections in that age group in 2018.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, the region with the largest HIV epidemics in the world, women accounted for 59% of new HIV infections among adults (older than 15 years) in 2018.
- AIDS-related illnesses remain the leading cause of death among women of reproductive age.
- Nearly 82% [62– >95%] of pregnant women living with HIV worldwide were receiving antiretroviral therapy, which also prevents transmission of HIV to their child, in 2018.
- Intimate partner violence has been found to increase the risks of women acquiring HIV by 50% in areas with high HIV prevalence.
- Female and transgender sex workers are 11 times more likely to be living with HIV than other women. Women in prison are five times more likely than other women to be living with HIV. Women who inject drugs are 17 times more likely than other women to be living with HIV.



- Surveys in low- and middle-income countries with data for 2013–2018 show that fewer than one in three young people had accurate knowledge about HIV transmission and prevention. In sub-Saharan Africa, seven in 10 young women do not have comprehensive knowledge about HIV.
- In 2019, adolescents younger than 18 years needed explicit parental consent in 105 of 142 countries in order to take an HIV test, and in 86 of 138 reporting countries they needed such consent to access HIV treatment and care.
- Sex work is criminalized or otherwise punished in at least 88 countries.
- Transgender people are criminalized and/or prosecuted in 19 countries.
- Same-sex sexual relations are criminalized in at least 66 countries and are punishable by death in at least 10 countries.
- Laws criminalizing HIV transmission, non-disclosure or exposure existed in 82 of 119 reporting countries in 2019.
- Six countries reported that vertical transmission of HIV remains a criminal offence.
- Thirteen countries reported that they have laws, regulations or policies in place on mandatory HIV testing for marriage in 2019.
- In 2019, only 45 of 106 reporting countries had needle-syringe programmes for people who inject drugs, and only 48 (of 134 reporting countries) provided opioid substitution therapy.
- There were 2.57 million people living with HIV affected by humanitarian emergencies globally in 2016, at least half of whom were women.


END

VIOLENCE

AGAINST

WOMEN

AND GIRLS.



**“WE ARE EITHER GOING TO
HAVE A FUTURE WHERE WOMEN
LEAD THE WAY TO MAKE PEACE
WITH THE EARTH, OR WE
ARE NOT GOING TO HAVE A
HUMAN FUTURE AT ALL.”**

VANDANA SHIVA

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UNAIDS

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Learn more at unaids.org and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

¹ <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm> (October 2019).

² UN Women calculation based on information provided by permanent missions to the United Nations. Some leaders hold positions of both head of government and head of state. Only elected heads of state have been taken into account. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures>.

³ <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/equality-in%20law-for-women-and-girls-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5600>.

⁴ <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/worldswomen/documents/Poverty.pdf>.

⁵ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opedata/love-marriage-and-development-4-observations>.

⁶ Women, business and the law. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018 (<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/reports>, accessed 10 January 2020).

⁷ <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/worldswomen/documents/Poverty.pdf>.

⁸ World employment social outlook—Trends for women 2018. ILO.

⁹ https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_619119/lang-en/index.htm.

¹⁰ UNAIDS. We've got the power: women, adolescent girls and the HIV response. Geneva: UNAIDS, 2020.

¹¹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>.

¹² UNAIDS. We've got the power: women, adolescent girls and the HIV response. Geneva: UNAIDS, 2020.

¹³ https://www.unicef.org/media/files/FGMC_2016_brochure_final_UNICEF_SPREAD.pdf.

¹⁴ <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/new-methodology-shows-258-million-children-adolescents-and-youth-are-out-school.pdf>.

¹⁵ <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/new-methodology-shows-258-million-children-adolescents-and-youth-are-out-school.pdf>.

¹⁶ <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000192470>.

¹⁷ <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2018/sdg-report-gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018-en.pdf?la=en&vs=948>.