

# HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

**Women's Rights = Human Rights**  
Women are entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of all their human rights and to be free from all forms of discrimination.

**CEDAW: The Women's Bill of Rights**

**What is it?**

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is considered THE women's Bill of Rights.

**Very importantly, it:**

- Defines the meaning of discrimination against women
- Identifies and prohibits the various forms of discrimination against women in public and private life, including:
- to achieve substantive equality where women are due to enjoy their human rights in practice and are entitled to the same protection under law or enabling achievement to achieve equal outcomes

**Defined by 189 countries**

The most successful international human rights treaty.

**Constitutional Overview**

**184 out of 194 countries** guarantee equality between women and men in their Constitutions as of 2016.

**Yet, discrimination against women persists in many areas.**

**This includes through:**

Law and Policies, Social Norms and Practices, Gender-Based Stereotypes

**It can be both direct and indirect**

**DIRECT DISCRIMINATION**  
Different treatment explicitly based on the grounds of sex and gender difference

**INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION**  
Criteria that is formally gender neutral but that, in practice, has a disproportionately negative impact on women

**Example: Indirect Discrimination**

**Pension Scheme**  
A retirement pension scheme allows both women and men to participate; however, they **must be full-time workers**.

**The Reality**  
Women are more likely to work part-time due to disproportionate responsibilities for unpaid care and domestic work and occupational stereotypes, among other factors.

**As a Result**  
Women who work part-time are excluded from the pension scheme and are more likely to struggle with financial planning in retirement.

**Multiple Forms of Discrimination**

Women and girls are NOT a homogeneous group. Many experience multiple forms of discrimination and are often some of the most deprived and disadvantaged within marginalized groups. Multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination can be based on, for instance:

Place of Birth, Nationality, Sex or Gender, Religious Beliefs, Age, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Economic or Social Status, Race & Ethnicity, and many other factors.

**The Data**

Gender discrimination has far-reaching and profound effects on the lives of women and girls.

**NATIONALITY**  
In more than 50 countries, women are denied the right to choose their own nationality.

**EMPLOYMENT**  
Women earn 23% less per hour than men.

**FAMILY**  
In 28 out of 187 countries, husbands are the legally designated heads of households.

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION & GENDER IDENTITY**  
68 countries criminalize same-sex relationships.

**EDUCATION**  
Globally, 750 million girls have never attended primary school.

**UNPAID CARE & DOMESTIC WORK**  
Women spend 3x as many hours on unpaid care and domestic work.

**INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**  
1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner.

**FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION**  
1 in 3 girls aged 15-49 years old have undergone FGM in 30 countries where the practice is most prevalent.

**HEALTH**  
More than 1 in 10 women aged 15-49 in developing countries have an unmet need for family planning services.

**POLITICS**  
Women hold only 24% of parliamentary seats.

**UNSONG HEROES: WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS**

Globally, women's human rights defenders are true heroes, leaving obstacles and threats to stand up and speak out so women can live a life free from discrimination and violence.

**INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS**

International Day for Women's Human Rights Defenders is observed annually on 20 July. It honours the memory of the 129 human rights defenders killed in 2013, and marks the 10th anniversary of the UN General Assembly's adoption of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

**UN WOMEN**

[www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/)

[www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/infographic.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/infographic.htm)

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