

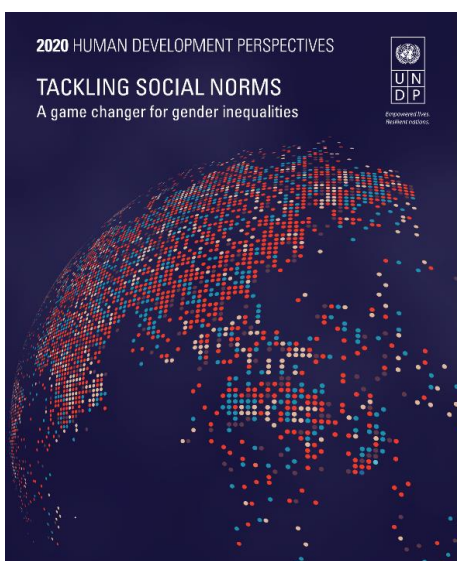
## Key Messages



Empoderando vidas.  
Fortalecendo nações.

## Commemoration of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+25)

### *UNDP Global Campaign “Time for Gender Equality”*



**5 de Março** – The global campaign “Time for Gender Equality” is part of UNDP’s engagement plan for Beijing+25. This campaign is based on the 2019 Human Development Report’s findings on gender inequalities, which show the urgent need to tackle gender bias and prejudices and transform social norms. Messages are aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan and the Secretary-General’s Report on Beijing+25. Subtopics of this campaign are gender-responsive environmental policies and planning, and the need to strengthen institutions to deliver on a new generation of gender-responsive policies.

#### ELEVATOR PITCH:

In this era of the #MeToo movement, the silence around the abuse of women and girls is finally breaking, but the glass ceiling is not. Today, the fight for gender equality and women’s rights is a story of bias and prejudices. At the very time when progress is meant to be accelerating to reach global goals on gender by 2030, it is slowing down in some areas. Bias against gender equality remains all too common, and the glass ceiling for women is still hard to break. The opportunities for gender equality based on current strategies are shrinking in part because of social norms: about 50 percent of men and women interviewed across 75 countries say they think men make better political leaders than women, while more than 40 percent felt that men made better business executives. In some countries, these attitudes seem to be deteriorating over time. Unless the barriers of bias are addressed, progress towards gender equality, including more gender-responsive environmental climate policies and closing the digital gender gap, will be increasingly hard. This year, as we reflect on the 25th anniversary of the most visionary agenda on women’s empowerment, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+25), it’s clear that policies and programs that tackle these barriers could be a game changer. This isn’t just a gender gap. It’s a power gap.

#### **Key messages:**

1. Gender equality and women’s rights have progressed immensely since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 25 years ago, but feminist demonstrations across the world today signal that new alternatives for a different world are needed. Progress towards gender equality

is slowing down and is not happening at the speed and scale needed. Reducing long-standing gender inequalities is possible: we have a choice.

- Progress in the education and health outcomes of women and girls is one of the major success stories of the past 25 years: More girls are in school than ever before; more countries have reached gender parity in educational enrolment; and global literacy rates have improved, especially among youth. The global maternal mortality ratio declined by 38 percent from 2000 to 2017. Over the past decade, the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel increased by 12 percentage points. [Source: <https://undocs.org/E/CN.6/2020/3>]
- Globally, the proportion of women in parliament has doubled since 1995. [Source: <https://undocs.org/E/CN.6/2020/3>]
- Today, more than three quarters of countries have laws on domestic violence in place. [Source: <https://undocs.org/E/CN.6/2020/3>]
- However, the 2019 Gender Inequality Index, a measure of women's empowerment in health, education and economic status, shows that overall progress has slowed in recent years.
- And new types of gender inequalities are fast emerging, such as those related to climate change—which disproportionately impact women and girls—and the technological revolution.
  - o Women tend to be responsible for getting and providing food in their households and are the primary workers engaged in subsistence agriculture, all of which are impacted by climate change.
  - o Globally, more men have access to the Internet than women: 48 percent of women use the internet compared to 58 percent of men.

2. The glass ceiling for women to progress is still difficult to break. As the 2019 Human Development Report highlights, in the past two decades, gender gaps are closing for basic inequalities in areas like education and health, where the social or economic power is lower. However, in areas where women have greater responsibility, political leadership and social payoffs, gender inequalities persist, and women face a glass ceiling.

- For example, women and men vote in elections at similar rates, but there are only 10 female heads of government out of 193 [Source: HDR 2019, Figure 4.4 from UN Women and IPU 2019], and only under a quarter of parliamentary seats worldwide are held by women. [Source: HDR 2019, Table 5: Gender Inequality Index]
- Women are less likely to be in management positions - only 5.8 percent of CEOs in S&P 500 companies are female. [Source: Catalyst, Pyramid: Women in S&P 500 Companies, January 15, 2020] Although women work more hours than men, they are much less likely to be paid for that work. When they are paid, they earn less than men. [Source: HDR 2019, Dashboard 2: Life-course Gender Gap]
- In education, more girls are in school than ever before, and in many countries, there is parity in enrollment rates. Yet, large differences persist in what people study and the professions they choose. For instance, the share of female graduates in STEM is lower than 15 percent in most countries. [Source: HDR 2019, Dashboard 3: Women's Empowerment]

- On average, women comprise 43 percent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries while the share of female farm owners barely reaches 18 percent. [Source: HDR 2019, Box 4.5 from FAO Stat]

3. Social norms and attitudes against gender equality and women's rights are one of the major obstacles to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the SDGs, 45 targets and 54 specific indicators are focused on gender equality.

- According to the Gender Social Norms Index, which uses data from the World Values Survey and covers 81 percent of the world's population, 91 percent of men and 86 percent of women show at least one clear bias against gender equality in areas such as politics, economics, education, and physical integrity (which includes data on intimate partner violence and a proxy for women's reproductive rights).
- 47 percent of men and women interviewed across 75 countries say they think men make better political leaders than women, while more than 41 percent felt that men made better business executives.
- The top 5 countries with the highest percentage of their population showing any kind of bias against gender equality are: Pakistan, Qatar, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Jordan.
- The bottom 5 countries with the lowest percentage of their population showing any kind of bias are: Andorra, Sweden, Netherlands, Norway and New Zealand.
- Once again, bias against gender equality is typically greater in areas that most challenge power relations.

4. The pushback against women's rights is becoming stronger. In some countries, bias against gender equality is worsening and there is a quantifiable negative trend in attitudes among both men and women. This pushback is putting hard-won gains at risk. Sweden, Germany, India and Mexico showed the highest deterioration among men, but there were improvements in Chile, Australia, the U.S. and the Netherlands.

- According to the latest available data, the proportion of people biased against gender equality grew over the last few years in 15 countries (out of 31 with data available for two points in time).
  - In these 31 countries, the share of both women and men with moderate to intense gender biases—showing two bias or more—grew from 57 percent to 60 percent for women and from 70 percent to 71 percent for men.
  - Sweden, Germany, India and Mexico showed the highest deterioration among men. However, there were improvements in Chile, Australia, the U.S. and the Netherlands.
  - In many countries, there was also a deterioration among women, led by Sweden, India, South Africa and Romania. However, there were notable improvements in the Netherlands, Chile, and Australia.

5. We must act now. Progress on gender equality at the speed and scale we need requires addressing discriminatory beliefs and practices. Institutions should go through transformational changes and governments must enact laws, policies and programs that can change mindsets and address these discriminatory widespread biases, social norms and power structures embedded deep within their histories.

- Current government policies will only take us so far. Governments must promote policies that converge basic and enhanced capacities and consider the gender lifecycle, including exclusion and historical disadvantages.
- To achieve the objectives of the Beijing Declaration, governments must enact laws, policies and programs that can change mindsets and address these deep-seated biases, prejudices and social norms against gender equality. These can include policies that directly target social norms and address three dimensions: increasing awareness, education and the provision of incentives. Examples include:
  - o Creating policies and programs to tackle adverse social norms that impact women's and girls' confidence, positive identity and motivation.
  - o Leveraging the role of education and the media to promote positive norms that support gender equality and challenge stereotypes.
  - o Increasing government support for community-based women's rights organizations, which have historically played a critical part in shifting social norms.
  - o Encouraging media and technology providers to ensure they don't promote harmful gender stereotypes and social norms.

#### Others

- o Enacting laws that prohibit stereotyped portrayals of men and women in media and the gender pay gap (e.g. Iceland).
- o Using taxes and incentives to redistribute child-care responsibilities and other unpaid care and domestic work.
- o Adopting temporary and special measures to address the gender power gap in institutions, government, parliament and corporate boards and businesses.
- o Creating or changing incentives to encourage women and girls to get educated and to enter traditionally male-dominated sectors, such as the police force, army, IT, etc.
- o Men and boys have a key role to play in challenging discriminatory social norms and must be fully engaged as allies in achieving gender equality. Initiatives designed for women, men, girls and boys together have proven more effective than those for men and boys alone.

#### **Human stories: a life cycle approach to gender bias**

- Discrimination shows in how households share resources. Girls and women sometimes eat last and least in the household.
- Early marriage condemns girls to a life with heavily restricted choices. In low human development countries, 39 percent of women between the ages of 20 and 24 were married before

their 18th birthday. By region, the highest rates are registered in sub-Saharan Africa with 36 percent of women being married before their 18th birthday, and South Asia, with 29 percent, with significant variations among countries. [Source: HDR 2019, Dashboard 3: Women's empowerment]

- Among children attending school, determinants of occupational choices appear very early. Girls are less likely to study subjects such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, while boys are a minority of those studying health and education. For example, in OECD countries, on average, among STEM graduates, only 32.6 percent are women. [Source: HDR 2019, Dashboard 3: Women's empowerment]
- Adulthood: the labour force participation rate for women is consistently lower than for men, both globally and by human development grouping. In 2018, the global labour force participation rate was around 75 percent for men and 48 percent for women. [Source: HDR 2019, Table 5: Gender Inequality Index]

### **Background Information:**

On the Social Norms Index:

- The Gender Social Norms Index captures how social beliefs can obstruct gender equality along multiple dimensions. The Index is available for 75 countries, covering 81 percent of the world's population.
- This Index uses data from the World Values Survey wave 5 (2005-2009) and 6 (2010-2014).
- Trends over time are available for 31 countries covering 59 percent of the global population.

On the Gender Inequality Index:

- The 2019 Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures gaps in reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market between women and men.
- At the global level, 44 percent of combined achievements in these dimensions is lost due to their unequal distributions across women and men.
- Among developing regions, Europe and Central Asia have the smallest inequality between men and women (with a GII of 27.6 percent). Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest GII (of 57.3 percent), followed by the Arab States (53.1 percent) and South Asia (51 percent).
- 2019 GII rank is available here: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/table-5-gender-inequalityindex-gii>