



GLOBAL ISSUES: GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT:

Women's empowerment can be defined to promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and others. It is closely aligned with female empowerment – a fundamental human right that's also key to achieving a more peaceful, prosperous world. In Western countries, female empowerment is often associated with specific phases of the women's rights movement in history. This movement tends to be split into three waves, the first beginning in the 19th and early 20th century where suffrage was a key feature. The second wave of the 1960s included the sexual revolution and the role of women in society. Third wave feminism is often seen as beginning in the 1990s. Women's empowerment and promoting women's rights have emerged as a part of a major global movement and is continuing to break new ground in recent years. Days like International Women's Empowerment Day are also gaining momentum. Globally, women have fewer opportunities for economic participation than men, less access to basic and higher education, greater health and safety risks, and less political representation. Guaranteeing the rights of women and giving them opportunities to reach their full potential is critical not only for attaining gender equality, but also for meeting a wide range of international development goals. Empowered women and girls contribute to the health and productivity of their families, communities, and countries, creating a ripple effect that benefits everyone.

The word gender describes the socially-constructed roles and responsibilities that societies consider appropriate for men and women. Gender equality means that men and women have equal power and equal opportunities for financial independence, education, and personal development. Women's empowerment is a critical aspect of achieving gender equality. It includes increasing a woman's sense of self-worth, her decision-making power, her access

to opportunities and resources, her power and control over her own life inside and outside the home, and her ability to effect change. Yet gender issues are not focused on women alone, but on the relationship between men and women in society. The actions and attitudes of men and boys play an essential role in achieving gender equality.

INTRODUCTION:

Education is a key area of focus. Although the world is making progress in achieving gender parity in education, girls still make up a higher percentage of out-of-school children than boys. Approximately one quarter of girls in the developing world do not attend school. Typically, families with limited means who cannot afford costs such as school fees, uniforms, and supplies for all of their children will prioritize education for their sons. Families may also rely on girls' labor for household chores, carrying water, and childcare, leaving limited time for schooling. But prioritizing girls' education provides perhaps the single highest return on investment in the developing world. An educated girl is more likely to postpone marriage, raise a smaller family, have healthier children, and send her own children to school. She has more opportunities to earn an income and to participate in political processes, and she is less likely to become infected with HIV.

Women's health and safety is another important area. HIV/AIDS is becoming an increasingly impactful issue for women. This can be related to women having fewer opportunities for health education, unequal power in sexual partnership, or as a result of gender-based violence. Maternal health is also an issue of specific concern. In many countries, women have limited access to prenatal and infant care, and are more likely to experience complications during pregnancy and childbirth. This is a critical concern in countries where girls marry and have children before they are ready; often well before the age of 18. Quality maternal health care can provide an important entry point for information and services that empower mothers as informed decision-makers concerning their own health and the health of their children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

A final area of focus in attaining gender equality is women's economic and political empowerment. Though women comprise more than 50% of the world's population, they only own 1% of the world's wealth. Throughout the world, women and girls perform long hours of unpaid domestic work. In some places,

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women still lack rights to own land or to inherit property, obtain access to credit, earn income, or to move up in their workplace, free from job discrimination. At all levels, including at home and in the public arena, women are widely underrepresented as decision-makers. In legislatures around the world, women are outnumbered 4 to 1, yet women's political participation is crucial for achieving gender equality and genuine democracy.

The World Economic Forum recently ranked the United States as 19th in the world on its gender gap index. With women comprising less than one fifth of elected members of Congress, the report identifies political empowerment as the greatest gender equity issue for the United States. The U.S. ranked higher in economic empowerment, but women's earning power remains approximately 20% lower than men's. Women in the United States have a very high ranking of educational attainment, though, with high levels of literacy and enrolment in primary, secondary, and university education. At present, there are more U.S. women attending college than men.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Standing with and investing in women is an important start. From workplaces and schools to homes and communities, women.

Gender equality underpins all of World Vision's work – and there are many great activities you can get involved in to support the rights of women in developing countries.

1. Sponsor a girl: When you sponsor a girl, you can give her the tools to gain an education and take back the rights she deserves. This is a key way that girls can be empowered to grow up and influence their generation – and the next.
2. Educate yourself by finding out about issues that affect girls – for instance, child marriage.
3. Learn about what World Vision is doing to make change. Read more about our approach to helping girls escape gender inequality.
4. Buy women's empowerment gifts. World Vision offers a variety of gifts that contribute to investing in and building up women and girls.

DISCUSSION:

Globally, no country has fully attained gender equality. Scandinavian countries like Iceland, Norway, Finland, and Sweden lead the world in their progress toward closing the gender gap. In these countries, there is relatively

equitable distribution of available income, resources, and opportunities for men and women. The greatest gender gaps are identified primarily in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. However, a number of countries in these regions, including Lesotho, South Africa, and Sri Lanka outrank the United States in gender equality.

Around the world, Peace Corps Volunteers are working with communities to address gender equality and empower women and girls. In 1974, Congress signed the Percy Amendment requiring Peace Corps Volunteers to actively integrate women into the economic, political, and social development of their countries. Many Peace Corps Volunteers implement the Camp GLOW program, or Girls Leading Our World, to help girls develop self-esteem and leadership skills. Recognizing that men and boys must be equal partners in achieving gender equality, Volunteers also teach leadership and life skills to boys through Teaching Our Boys Excellence (TOBE) camps. Peace Corps Volunteers promote gender equality and women's empowerment through health education, business development, and by raising awareness of women's rights and contributions to their communities

CONCLUSION:

Women have been the ones who are doing so much work behind the scenes and are never credited for it. Our grandmothers, mothers and sisters play such an important and integral role in our lives and sadly they are reduced to just that and no one even values or appreciates them. Valuing them by empowering and paying heed to their voices is very important. And this can be done by putting them in positions of power where they get to make decisions. Only then will we see real change and there will be growth. In this article on women empowerment speech, we will delve into its meaning and importance. And different ways to deliver a women empowerment speech in English. It can be a long or a short speech on women's empowerment.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES:

The most crucial form being educational empowerment because education is truly a leveller and it brings all on equal footing. When one is educated it should not matter whether they are men or women as long as they get the jobs done. And that is why education should not be denied to girls which is still an unfortunate truth in many parts of India. It is these educated girls who become women with self-confidence, intellect and conscience who excel in every field and

can also become heads of the department and be decision-makers. Education is a great tool to empower women as it will bridge all other gaps in our society and we as a nation will prosper.

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