



THE
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FEDERATION

Department for Planning
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lutheranworld.org

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Further information

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Gender equality and women's empowerment must be realized

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As the global community reflects on 25 years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) strongly urges the international community to safeguard the gains made in gender equality and women's empowerment and to commit to further action.

We celebrate the milestones made, but lament the slow pace of progress, the gaps that remain, and the backlash against women's rights driven by state and non-state actors opposed to gender equality.

Twenty-five years after Beijing, women and girls continue to experience multiple forms of gender-based discrimination and violence. Globally, women and girls are underrepresented socio-economically and in public life. They are more prone to living in poverty and often lack access to and ownership of productive resources. Girls' access to education is severely threatened and an estimated 130 million girls worldwide remain out of school.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing gender inequalities and turned a spotlight on new dimensions of inequality and discrimination. Available statistics reveal that domestic and partner violence has increased sharply during COVID-19, and lack of access to response services has further aggravated the situation.

There is a great need for concrete action and strategies to ensure that gender justice is upheld and the rights of women and girls are protected during this time.

The LWF therefore calls on all governments and the international community to:

- Fully implement commitments and obligations for the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls as stated in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- Address, prevent and protect women and girls from all forms of gender-based violence
- Prioritize and support women and girls affected by COVID-19 by addressing its impact on their health and livelihoods

- Ensure women's equal and effective participation in leadership and decision-making in governance, economy and all aspects of public and private life
- Design strategies to counter the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and girls, and implement the Paris Agreement
- Promote the engagement and participation of men and boys in gender equality efforts
- Ensure the inclusion of civil society and faith-based organizations as equal partners during this decade of action, acknowledging their critical role in achieving these commitments

Gender justice and women's empowerment is a long-standing commitment for the LWF, culminating in the adoption of a gender justice policy in 2013. The policy is a tool for the global communion and its member churches to work towards gender justice and women's empowerment. LWF re-affirmed its commitment to gender justice at its 12th Assembly in 2017.

The Lutheran World Federation is a global communion of 148 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing over 77 million Christians in 99 countries. The LWF acts on behalf of its member churches in areas of ecumenical and interfaith relations, theology, humanitarian assistance, human rights, communication and the various aspects of mission and development.

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