



WHEC Update

Briefing of worldwide activity of the Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC)

May 2026; Vol. 21. No. 05

Sustainable Development

Openness in science is an essential component of the scientific process. Making science more accessible, affordable, inclusive, and equitable, especially in health and education sectors, is the way forward – and achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by 2030. We suggest avenues for providing universal health care (UHC), online quality educational platforms and use of artificial intelligence (AI) and Big Data management for low- and middle-income countries to accelerate SDGs.

The United Nations 2030 Agenda – is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedoms. We recognize that eradicating poverty in all forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is essential for building back better in rich and poor countries alike.

Imagine students in developing countries, simultaneously reviewing the same medical education, and learning from each other. That is, e-Learning at its BEST, in an *Internet Classrooms*. With this goal, Women's Health and Education Center (WHEC) in collaboration with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations (UN) had launched and Global e-Health, e-Learning, and e-Government Platform on 24th October 2002 – <http://www.WomensHealthSection.com> Today it is serving in 227 countries and territories, in six official languages of the UN via, Global Internet Locations of **WHEC's Global Health Line (WGHL)**. Our special focus is on Sustainable Development Goals # 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 16 and 17. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data presents opportunities for the advancement of all 17 SDGs and offers vast analytical possibilities to track and monitor progress of SDG indicators.

Initiatives of WHEC have an unique role to play in strengthening the health and educational systems worldwide. Cultural diversity is now the norm in each and every country. The e-Health, e-Learning and Mobile Health, are providing healthcare services and achieving better health outcomes, in both developed and developing countries. Access to reliable *Broadband Internet*, is becoming essential to Education & Health Sectors, in every country – rich and poor alike.

Open science encourages scientists to develop tools and method for managing data so that as much as possible can be shared, as appropriate. [LINK \(Learning, Innovating, Networking, for Knowledge\) Access Project](#) – *To provide access to reproductive health research worldwide*, aims to provide access to quality health and educational programs and the best practices, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNESCO. WHEC provides **free access** to educational and reproductive health research programs and courses to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), identified by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

WHEC's *Open Science* projects/programs are based the concepts of equality and inclusiveness:

1. Respecting ethical considerations of producing and using open resources;
2. Opening access while respecting intellectual property and other applicable legislation;
3. Building inclusive governance of *Open Science Infrastructure*; and
4. Creating two-way engagement with those affected by the policy.

WHEC's efforts are helpful in developing and enabling policy environment for *Open Science*. Share your opinions on **WGHL** ... Create an account.

Open Science for Building Back Better

Rita Luthra, MD



Your Questions, Our Reply

Is artificial intelligence (AI) essential to achieve Sustainable Development Goals? Is *Open Science* essential in capacity-building and inclusive infrastructure?

Leaving No One Behind: If we wish to plan and develop inclusive infrastructure and reduce the digital divide, we must ensure that we give voice and work to all. Moving governance away from private companies, private-public partnerships or impartial algorithms towards an economy of information that is open and transparent in civic engagement, which would integrate transnational data rights and privacy-based freedoms into publicly owned data systems and analytics.

When open-science, AI, and Big Data management meet the social reality of human coordination and governance, it becomes more sustainable, and might help to close the digital divide. In summary, our recommendations are:

1. The United Nations and its Agencies, like WHO and UNESCO, should provide the required funding to close the digital divide between developing countries and developed countries.
2. Algorithmic Accountability programs and Data-ecosystems, to ensure AI-based systems in health and education sectors, do not reinforce institutional bias, unequal power structures and inequalities. Establish consistent systemic examination of pre-, in-, and post-processing methods of data and AI.
3. Data Co-operatives for data management storage, with their obligations solely towards benefiting their members. Fund and/or provide required training to these co-operatives that allow them to operate independently.
4. Advance and establish effective good digital governance procedures and regulatory policies, which establish accountability for global societal data.
5. Ensure data-cooperatives and their practitioners are vital stakeholders in designing and implementing policies related to future SDGs decision-makings.
6. Data-Colonization has the possibility of drawing developing states into asymmetrical Global South – South trade and investment scenarios. Fund and/or provide NGOs and government partnerships to construct and scale up data co-operatives to foster community-driven data sovereignty – a concept of the ‘property-owning democracy.’

Why A Global Action is Needed for Ethical Implementation of AI?

The protection of human rights and dignity is the cornerstone of the work of the United Nations. Ethical recommendations in this document, are based on the advancement of fundamental principles such as transparency and fairness, always remembering the importance of human oversight of AI systems. However, what makes these recommendations exceptionally applicable are its extensive Policy Action Areas, which allow policymakers to translate the core values and principles into action with respect to data governance, environment and ecosystems, gender, education and research, and health and social wellbeing, among many other spheres.

While values and principles are crucial to establish a basis of any ethical AI framework, recent movements in AI ethics have emphasized the need to move beyond high-level principles and toward practical strategies. The next few years will see a need for elaborating ethical and legal frameworks that stimulate and regulate responsibility on both the human and artificial side (including the machine's manufacturer) such that a man-machine complex can be safely integrated into daily life.

By promoting science that is more accessible, inclusive and transparent, open science furthers the right of everyone to share in scientific advancement and its benefits as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



WHEC Participation @ UN: April and May



2026; 25th Session of CEPA – Written Statement 13 – 17 April 2026

Agenda item 3: Transformative, equitable, innovative and urgent actions to rebuild trust, revitalize institutions and realize the Sustainable Development Goals: an institutional and governance perspective anchored in multilateralism

Title: **Rebuilding Trust in Quality Education and Health Sectors Partnerships**
Women's Health and Education Center

http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/documents/CEPA-25th_Item%203_Womens-Health-and-Education-Center.pdf

WHEC @ CPD59

59th Session

COMMISSION ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Population, technology and research in the context of sustainable development

13-17 April 2026 | NEW YORK | unpopulation.org

United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Written Statement: UN Document: **E/CN.9/2026/NGO/4**

Achieving quality education and universal health coverage for 2030 Agenda

<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/documents/2026-Written-Statement-n2601190.pdf>

Virtual Side Event; April 16, 2026, from 8:30 am to 9:45 am

Knowledge Generation and Dissemination
Achieving Quality Education and Universal Health Coverage

<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/whec/cpd.php3>

WHEC @ STI 2026

11th Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

Virtual Side Event; ID: V-18; 6 May 2026; from 10 am to 11:15 am (EST)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Clinical Medical and Surgical Practices

<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/whec/sti.php3>

All are welcome! Join us!



United Nations at a Glance

Singapore became UN Member State on 21 September 1965



Singapore, officially the **Republic of Singapore**, is an island country and city-state in Southeast Asia. The country's territory is comprised on main island, 63 satellite islands and islets, and one outlying islet. It is about one degree of latitude (137 kilometers or 85 miles) north of the equator, off the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, bordering the Strait of Malacca to the west, the Singapore Strait to the south along the Riau Islands in Indonesia, the South China Sea to the east, and the Straits of Johor along with the State of Johor in Malaysia to the north.

In its early history, Singapore was a maritime emporium known as Temasek and subsequently a major constituent part of several successive thalassocratic empires. Singapore came under the direct control of Britain as part of the Straits Settlements.

During WWII, Singapore was occupied by Japan in 1942 and returned to British control as a Crown colony following Japan's surrender in 1945. Singapore gained self-governance in 1959, and in 1963, became part of the new federation of Malaysia, alongside Malaya, North Borneo, and Sarawak. Singapore became an independent sovereign country in 1965.

As a highly developed country, it has one of the highest PPP-adjusted GDP per capita. It is also identified as a tax haven. Singapore is the only country in Asia with a AAA Sovereign credit rating from all major rating agencies. It is a major aviation, financial, and maritime shipping hub and has consistently been ranked as one of the most expensive cities to live for expatriates and foreign workers. Singapore ranks highly in key social indicators: education, healthcare, quality of life, personal safety, infrastructure, and housing, with a home-ownership rate of 88%. It has the 3rd highest population density of any country, although there are numerous green and recreational spaces as a result of urban development.



Capital: Singapore; Official Languages: English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil;
National language: Malay; Ethnic groups: 75% Chinese, 14% Malay, 9% Indian; Religion: 32% Buddhism, 20%: no religion, 19% Christianity.
Population: 6 million (2024), Currency: Singapore dollar (S\$).

Singapore is a parliamentary republic based on the Westminster system. The Constitution of Singapore is the supreme law of the country, establishing the structure and responsibility of governance.

Singapore has a highly developed market economy, based historically on extended entrepôt trade. Along with Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan, Singapore is one of the Asian Tigers, and surpassed its peers in terms of GDP per capita.

The nation's best known global companies include Singapore Airlines, Changi Airport, and the Port of Singapore, all of which are among the most-awarded in the respective fields. Tourism is a major industry and contributes to the Singaporean economy, attracting 13.6 million international tourists in 2023, more than double the population of Singapore.

Details: <https://sdgs.un.org/statements/singapore-15971>

Collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO | Singapore



Overview

In Singapore, the population as of 2024 is about 6 million with a projected increase of 5% to 7 million by 2050. Life Expectancy at birth (years) has improved by 5.4 years from 78.5 (78.5 – 78.6) years in 2000 to 83.9 (83.9 – 78.6) years in 2019. Since 2019, life expectancy has decreased to 83.9 (83.8 – 83.9).

Singapore had total deaths in 2021; 75% of deaths were from non-communicable diseases; 22% were from communicable, maternal, perinatal and nutritional conditions; 3% were from injuries; and 0% were from other COVID-19 pandemic-related outcomes.

Overall progress towards universal health coverage (UHC)

- In 2012, the Ministry of Health launched the *Healthcare 2020 Masterplan*. Its goals were to improve access, affordability and quality of healthcare services for Singaporeans. A healthy living master plan was also launched in 2014 and was aimed to promote healthy living as accessible, natural, and effortless for all Singaporeans.
- Compared to other countries in Western Pacific Region, Singapore has high coverage of essential services.
- Singapore has a relatively low out-of-pocket spending, which suggests a relatively low risk of financial hardship.
- The UHC index indicates gaps in non-communicable disease (NCD) and infection disease prevention and control, specifically in the prevalence of raised blood pressure and in tobacco use, HIV treatment, and tuberculosis detection and treatment.

The majority of SDG 3 indicators are close to the target

- Compared to other countries in the Region of SDG 3 indicators, Singapore fared well in reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (RMNCH), as well as in progress in infectious diseases, urban and environmental health, and health system resources and service capacity.
- The equity dimension is not known either because the country may not have disaggregated data or because data have not been reported to WHO.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

World leaders committed to achieve the 17 SDGs by 2030 in an effort to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. SDG3 covers the unfinished Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) agenda and newer challenges such as NCDs, health security, tobacco and injuries

A primary health care study

This case study examines primary health care (PHC) in Singapore to inform future policy and practice, incorporating lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic between January 2022 to December 2022. Singapore ranks highly against standard measures of health as well as the efficiency of its health system. With a rapidly ageing population and rising rates of chronic disease, new investments in PHC prioritize the social determinants of health, including environmental factors and economic development.

Details: <https://www.who.int/countries/sgp/>



Singapore is UNESCO Member State since 2007



Singapore Botanic Gardens

Situated at the heart of the city of Singapore and demonstrates the evolution of a British tropical colonial botanic garden from a 'Pleasure Garden' in the English landscape Style, to a colonial Economic Garden with facilities for horticultural and botanical research, to a modern and world-class botanic garden, scientific institution and place of conservation, recreation and education. The Singapore Botanic Garden is a well-defined cultural landscape which include a rich variety of historic landscape features, plantings and buildings that clearly demonstrate the evolution of the Botanic Gardens since its establishment in 1859.

Through its well-preserved landscape design and continuity of purpose, the Singapore Botanic Gardens is an outstanding example of a British tropical botanic garden which has also played a key role in advances in scientific knowledge, particularly in the fields of tropical botany and horticulture, including the development of plantation rubber.



Cultural practices and expressions of intangible heritage – Singapore

Kebaya – It is a front-opening top often adorned with intricate embroidery and worn with fasteners such as brooches or buttons. It comes in various lengths and can be work with a matching sarong. Kebaya is a way of dressing that has evolved with the lifestyle of Southeast Asian women. It is worn at casual as well as formal festivals, social gatherings and festivals. It is also worn in the performing arts, such as in dance performances, theater and film.

Contemporary designs are featured in beauty pageants and award ceremonies to reflect the wearer's cultural identity.

Making kebaya involves specific skills and knowledge related to the preparation, design, selection and cutting the fabrics and accessories, as well as different sewing and embroidery styles. Traditionally, these skills and knowledge have been transmitted informally from mothers to daughters. Overtime, men have also become involved and formal training has become available through schools and workshops.

Kebaya is a significant part of the cultural heritage and identity of various communities in Southeast Asia. Despite variations in how kebaya is made and worn, it is a common cultural element the transcends ethnicity, religion and borders, facilitating dialogue and uniting communities.

Details: <https://www.unesco.org/en/countries/sq>

Education-for-All and Health-for-all

Bulletin Board

Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015

..... **Sustainable Development Goals** *Continued*

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.

15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.

15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation – neutral world.

15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.

15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed.

15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora, fauna, and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products.

15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species.

15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts.

15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystem.

15.b Mobilize significant resources from all resources and at all levels to finance substantial forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation.

15.c Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities.

To be continued.....



Collaboration with UN University (UNU)

UNU-WIDER (World Institute for Development Economics Research)

Expert Series on Health Economics

Growth Oriented Macroeconomic Policies for Small Islands Economies

Lessons from Singapore

Most small island economies or ‘microstates’ have distinct characteristics from larger developed countries. They are more open and vulnerable to external and environmental shocks, resulting in high output volatility. Most of them also suffer from locational disadvantage. Although a few small island economies have succeeded in generating sustained rapid growth and reducing poverty, most have dismal growth performance, resulting high unemployment and poverty. Although macroeconomic policies play an important role in growth and poverty reduction, there has been very little work on the issue for small island economies or microstates. Most work follows the conventional framework and finds no or very little effectiveness of macroeconomic policies in stabilization. They also concentrate on short-run macroeconomic management with a focus almost entirely on either price stability or external balance. The presumption is that price stability and external balance are prerequisite for sustained rapid growth. This paper aims to provide a critical survey of the extant literature on macroeconomic policies for small island economies in light of the available evidence on their growth performance. Given the high output volatility and its impact on poverty, this paper will argue for a balance between price and output stabilization goals of macroeconomic policy mix. Drawing on highly successful experience, pro-poor macroeconomic policies for small island economies / microstates.

One characteristic that small island economies share is vulnerability. This arises from a number of factors, such as small size, remoteness, proclivity to natural disasters. They are also open economies with a high-grade-GDP ratio, but their export base is very narrow, dominated by primary products and natural resources. They are largely dependent on external financial assistance, and their financial sector is extremely shallow. Thus, small island economies are subject to external disturbances from the world goods and financial markets. As a result, small island economies experience significant volatility in their economic growth.

Lessons from Singapore

The conventional wisdom is that Singapore pursues conservative macroeconomic policies as is evident from its large foreign reserves and budget surpluses. However, close observers of Singapore believe that the use of government budget surplus is misleading indicator of government’s fiscal stance due to the presence of various statutory boards and a large public sector.

Fiscal policy in Singapore is used predominantly to promote non-inflationary economic growth Supporting investment, entrepreneurship, and job creation. Singapore was able to undertake public sector investment in a massive scale without incurring unsustainable debt and inflationary pressure due to its savings policy. There are three aspects of its national savings policy. The first is the strict adherence to the principle of achieving a surplus. Second, the government followed the commercial principle of profit generation for the statutory bodies. Third, the scheme of compulsory contribution to the Central Provident Fund (CPF) forces every employee to save.

Publisher: UNU-WIDER; Authors: Patrick Guillaumont, Catherine Karochais, and Julie Subervie; Sponsors: UNU-WIDER gratefully acknowledges the contributions to its project on Fragility and Development from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and the UK Department for International Development—DFID.

Details of the paper can be accessed from the link of UNU-WIDER on CME Page
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/cme/>

Two Articles of Highest Impact, April 2026

Editors' Choice – Journal Club Discussions

Fully open-access with no article-processing charges

Our friendship has no boundaries. We welcome your contributions.

1. **Autism Spectrum Disorder: Part 1;**
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obsnc/AutismSpectrumDisorder-Part-1.pdf>
WHEC Publications. Funding: WHEC Global Initiatives are funded by a grant from an anonymous donor. Join us at WHEC Global Health Line for discussion and contributions.
2. **Sickle Cell Disease in Pregnancy;**
<http://www.womenshealthsection.com/content/obsmd/obsmd019.php3>
WHEC Publications. Funding: WHEC Global Initiatives are funded by a grant from an anonymous donor. Join us at WHEC Global Health Line for discussion and contributions.

**Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (World Health Organization)
PMNCH Member**

Worldwide service is provided by the WHEC Global Health Line

79th World Health Assembly, May 18 – 23 May 2026 Geneva, Switzerland

79th World Health Assembly (WHA) will be held in Geneva, Switzerland,

Proceedings will be webcast live from this web page. Simultaneous interpretation is available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

<https://www.who.int/about/governance/world-health-assembly>
https://apps.who.int/gb/e/e_WHA79.html#top

The Dominican Republic has been nominated to preside over this session, following WHO's rotational leadership system.

Location: WHO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland

Purpose: WHA79 will convene delegations from all WHO Member States to set global health priorities, approve the organization's budget, and adopt resolutions guiding international public health action.

Health and Climate Change at the 79th WHA

Human health is strongly determined by environmental health, such as through ecosystem goods and services, biodiversity, land degradation and desertification, water services and urban health. WHO monitors the environmental determinants of health, as well as the public health implications of global environmental change.

The growing urgency of and political momentum to tackle climate change is a crucial opportunity to improve health by ensuring climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable health systems, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting nature, and protecting health from the wide range of current and future impacts of climate change, including displacement and loss of livelihoods.

Achieving these goals will also require new types and new ways of generating research. We aim to close the gap between research and action to: 1) Increase engagement between the research community and the end-users of research evidence and 2) Spark a more demand-driven approach to research informed by the needs and priorities of decision-makers and local communities.



From Editor's Desk

WHEC Projects under Development

Justice and Accountability: Women, Life & In Pursuit of Freedom



Women and Gender Equality

Two and a half years since the protests began, women and girls in Iran continue to face persecution and discrimination. A new UN Human Rights Report by an independent investigation team has found that Iranian authorities persist in implementing new restrictions to curb the fundamental rights of women and girls, while intensifying crackdowns on others who supported the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement.

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session58/advance-version/a-hrc-58-63-AV.pdf>

Gender equality is at the heart of human rights and United Nations values. Gender-based discrimination is prohibited under almost every human rights treaty. Despite much progress made in securing women's rights globally, millions of women and girls continue to experience discrimination and violence, being denied of their quality, dignity and autonomy, and even a life.

This discrimination and violence against women and girls, deeply rooted in the fabric of societies, is persistent and systematic. And in recent years, there has been a recurrence of skepticism against and denial of international standards concerning women's human rights, gender equality and gender-based violence, while women and girls are increasingly raising voices to demand equality, including through feminist movements.

WHEC's Working Group on Discrimination against Women and girls

The Working Group focuses on poverty and socioeconomic inequality as outcomes of systematic failures that violate multiple human rights of women and girls. The Working Group analyses the cross-cutting conditions of gendered socioeconomic inequality and examines the structural discrimination and drives within political, economic, cultural and social systems which cause, perpetuate and deepen women's and girls' experiences of poverty and inequality. It draws attention to the deficiencies of dominant economic models and methods in accurately capturing, measuring and addressing the impact of poverty and socioeconomic inequality on the rights and substantive equality of women and girls, and it highlights promising alternative approaches.

Purpose of the mandate

Women and girls everywhere are still subject to significant disadvantage as the result of discriminatory laws and practices. Equality has not been achieved in any country in the world, and pledges to eliminate discriminatory laws have not been fulfilled. The mandate was created to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls throughout the world.

About the mandate

The Human Rights Council adopted by consensus **resolution 15/23** **Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council link:** <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/RES/15/23>

To establish a working group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice.

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 75 years ago, and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 30 years ago, significant progress has been made in advancing the human rights of women and girls. Despite this progress, gender equality remains an unfulfilled promise, demanding renewed commitment and urgent action. In fulfilling its mandate, demanding renewed commitment and urgent action. In fulfilling its mandate, The WHEC's Working Group on discrimination against women and girls, recognizing the discrimination and disparities they face as manifestations of broader systemic patterns of inequalities they face as manifestations of broader systemic patterns of inequality affecting women and girls, recognizing the discrimination and disparities they face as manifestations of broader systemic patterns of inequality in political, legal, social, economic and cultural life.

WHEC in its various publications reflects on decades of jurisprudence, academic scholarship and interpretative work, and most importantly, in the advocacy and successes of women and girls who have boldly asserted and defended their rights alongside and within their communities and organization. In this document, WHEC reflects on the formal and substantive approaches to equality and centrality of gender equality in international, regional and national laws, policies and practices and on the transformative pathways to achieving substantive gender equality and ensuring a life with dignity for all women and girls.

Substantive gender equality has materialized in different ways historically, enabling diverse States to make meaningful progress towards fully respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights women and girls.

WHEC introduces the CREATE Framework – a Human-Rights Based Tool – to be used across the spectrum of challenges to gender equality. The Framework provides a comprehensive and actionable road map for achieving transformative substantive gender equality; each letter of the acronym – CREATE – represents a pillar of action that States and other stakeholders are called upon to undertake, namely:

- (a) **C**ounter harmful social norms, discrimination, and violence;
- (b) **R**edress socioeconomic disadvantage;
- (c) **E**liminate legal and structural barriers;
- (d) **A**dopt proactive laws and policies;
- (e) **T**ransform institutionalized patriarchal power structures; and
- (f) **E**nhance the participation and agency of women and girls.

General Assembly Guidance

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 76 years ago, and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 30 years ago, significant progress has been made in advancing the human rights of women and girls. Despite this progress, gender equality remains an unfulfilled promise, the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls focuses on addressing gender inequality affecting women and girls, recognizing the discrimination and disparities they face as manifestations of broader systemic patterns of inequality in political, legal, social, economic and cultural life. The Working Group reflects on the formal and substantive approaches to equality and the centrality of gender equality in international, regional and national laws, policies and practices and on the transformative pathways to achieving substantive gender equality and ensuring a life with dignity of all women.

<https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/WG.11/42/1>



In The News

Over 122.6 million people are forcibly displaced globally – Where are they?



87%, live in Low- and Middle-Income Countries.
(Source: UNHCR Report 2025)

At the end of 2025 122.6 million people worldwide remained forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order. This represents an increase of 5%, or 5.3 million people, compared to the end of 2024.

For more than 12 years the number of people remaining forcibly displaced has continued to grow. By

the end of 2025 1 in 67 people worldwide remained forcibly displaced, almost double the 1 in 114 people a decade ago. Most forcibly displaced people, 87%, live in low- and middle-income countries. UNHCR estimates that forced displacement has increased further since 2025, and barring rapid positive developments in 1 or more large displacement situations, will continue to rise in 2026.

KEY FACTS

Over 122.6 million people are forcibly displaced from their homes.

1 in 67 – this equates to 1 in every 67 people on Earth.

87% - The majority of 87% reside in low- and middle-income countries.

Refugees and How many refugees are there Globally? How many Refugees Returned Home?

The global refugee population reached 43.7 million by mid-2025, an increase of 1% from the end of 2024. Just over one-third of all refugees under UNHCR's mandate, including other people in need of international protection, are hosted in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, Colombia, and Uganda at mid-2025 broadly consistent with the end of 2024.

Many of the world's refugees have remained displaced for years: of those under UNHCR's mandate, an estimated 25 million refugees and other people in need of international protection – accounting for 66% - were in protracted situations, and had been displaced for more than 5 years at mid-2025.

43.7 million were refugees globally by the end of 2025, and 433,600 refugees were able to return home by end of 2024. 66% of the refugees under UNHCR's mandate have been displaced for 5+ years.

Solutions and Reversing trends through solutions for refugees

Most refugees would like to return home if the security and living conditions are allowed. However. Unless peace can be achieved in one or more of the biggest displacement situations, large-scale of 2025 compared to the same period in previous years, this represents only 4% of the estimated 2.5 million people in need of resettlement.

Encouragingly, durable solutions have increased during the last four to five years compared to the previous decade, despite the challenges posed by new and intensifying crises. In the next few years, with a concentrated, collective effort by all States globally, the number of refugees globally could begin, at last, to decrease again.

Join the efforts!

Fire and Ice

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire
But if it has to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To know that for destruction ice
Is also great,
And would suffice.

- **Robert Frost** (26 March 1874 – 29 January 1963) American Poet and Playwright. Appointed United States Poet Laureate in 1958, he also received the Congressional Gold Medal in 1960 and in 1961 was named poet laureate of Vermont.

*Monthly newsletter of WHEC designed to keep you informed on
The latest UN and NGO activity*

<http://www.WomensHealthSection.com>

