



Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

# CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW) FOR YOUTH



# CEDAW IN BRIEF

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, or CEDAW, is an international legal instrument that requires countries to eliminate discrimination against women in all areas and promotes women's equal rights. **CEDAW is often described as the international bill of rights for women.** The United Nations adopted CEDAW on 18 December 1979. As of 2016, **189 countries have ratified CEDAW.**

<p><b>Article 1 Definition of Discrimination against Women and Girls:</b> Discrimination against women and girls means different treatment from men and boys that prevents them from enjoying their human rights. It includes both direct and indirect discrimination.</p>	<p><b>Article 11 Employment:</b> Countries must eliminate discrimination against women in employment, including ensuring equal opportunities to choose one's profession and receive equal pay for work of equal value.</p>
<p><b>Article 2 Obligations to Eliminate Discrimination:</b> Countries are obligated to take action to end discrimination against women and girls in all its forms, by establishing laws and policies to protect women and girls from discrimination and including the principle of equality in constitutions and other national laws.</p>	<p><b>Article 12 Health Care and Family Planning:</b> Countries must guarantee equal access to health care and ensure women and girls are not discriminated against in health care and have access to services for family planning and reproductive health.</p>
<p><b>Article 3 Appropriate Measures:</b> Countries must take all appropriate measures to guarantee that women and girls can enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms in every aspect of society.</p>	<p><b>Article 13 Economic and Social Life:</b> Countries must eliminate discrimination against women and girls in economic and social life.</p>
<p><b>Article 4 Temporary Special Measures:</b> Countries should adopt temporary special measures to accelerate progress towards gender equality and end discrimination against women and girls.</p>	<p><b>Article 14 Rural Women and Girls:</b> Countries must take account of the specific problems and important role that rural women and girls play in the survival of their families.</p>
<p><b>Article 5 Gender Stereotypes:</b> Countries must work to change harmful gender stereotypes about women and girls and men and boys that perpetuate discrimination and limit opportunities for women and girls to achieve their full potential.</p>	<p><b>Article 15 Equality before the Law:</b> Countries must guarantee women and girls equality with men and boys before the law, including equal access to legal counsel, services, and resources.</p>
<p><b>Article 6 Trafficking and Exploitation of Prostitution:</b> Countries must end the exploitation of prostitution and trafficking in women and girls.</p>	<p><b>Article 16 Marriage and Family Life:</b> Countries must eliminate discrimination against women in marriage and family relations. Countries must ensure that women have equal rights as men in their choice of whom to marry and whether to marry, and any matters relating to the birth, adoption, and raising of children. The marriage of a child has no legal effect and countries should take steps to set a minimum age for marriage.</p>
<p><b>Article 7 Political and Public Life:</b> Countries must eliminate discrimination against women and girls in political and public life.</p>	<p><b>Articles 17 to 22</b> These articles detail how the CEDAW Committee works, including its role in monitoring the implementation of CEDAW in countries that have ratified CEDAW.</p>
<p><b>Article 8 Participation at International Level:</b> Countries must ensure that women and girls have equal rights to represent their country at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.</p>	<p><b>Articles 23 to 30</b> These articles deal with the administration of CEDAW.</p>
<p><b>Article 9 Nationality:</b> Countries must guarantee that women have equal rights with men to acquire, retain or change their nationality, and the nationality of their children. Countries must allow women to pass their nationality to their foreign spouses on an equal basis with men.</p>	<p><b>Optional Protocol</b> The Optional Protocol introduces additional mechanisms for the implementation of CEDAW, including an inquiry procedure for the CEDAW Committee to address systematic violations and a way for women and girls to submit complaints directly to the CEDAW Committee if they consider their human rights protected by CEDAW are violated.</p>
<p><b>Article 10 Education:</b> Countries must end discrimination against women and girls and ensure equal rights in education.</p>	