

## WOMEN AND CHILD RIGHTS

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A right is a freedom of some kind. It is something to which you are entitled to by virtue of being human. No one can take that freedom from you, it is the duty of the state to preserve and modify that freedom in the best possible manner by making various laws and regulations. Women and child rights is matter of concern all over the globe. Even in the present era there exist various atrocities and inequality when it comes to women and child rights. Protecting the rights of women and children is the responsibility of the government of a country.

According to international law, a 'child' means every human being below the age of 18 years. This is a universally accepted definition of a child and comes from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), an international legal instrument accepted and ratified by most countries. Every child whether a boy or girl irrespective of age is unique and has value importance as a person with a right for their human dignity to be respected. All children need special care and attention as they are more vulnerable to the social evils and the conditions that they live in. Their incapacity to decide of what is best for them and the lack of awareness of one's own rights make them vulnerable to exploitation. They are exploited by being forced into labor, human trafficking and child marriage. It is thus important to preserve their rights and safeguard them from such exploitation. Protecting the upcoming generation is important to achieve the goals of development and attaining a bright future. The Charter of Child Rights is built on the principle that "All children are born with fundamental freedoms and all human beings have some inherent rights".

**The Charter confers the following four basic rights on all children across the world: -**

- **The Right to Survival** – they have the right to life, health, nutrition, name and nationality. The right to survival entails the right to a healthy life, get adequate nutrition and be provided quality healthcare. Various programs are to be launched by the respective governments to combat the diseases that are prevalent in children. The state is to focus on curtailing Infant and child mortality and malnourishment should not be a concern.
- **The Right to Development** - they have the right to education, care, leisure, recreation and social security. Every child has the right to development that lets the child explore their full potential. Education is necessary to lead the child to a path of learning, which promotes understanding, mental development, consciousness, tolerance and friendship.
- **The Right to Protection** - they have the right to be protected from exploitation, abuse and neglect. Right to Protection entails that all children be nurtured and protected from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation in any form. A child's right to be protected from, having to work forcefully or face any kind of physical or mental abuse and to have a caring family. The abolishment of child labor, child marriage and human trafficking is a necessary.
- **The Right to Participation** - they have the right to expression, information, thought and religion. The child has the right to take decisions about her/his life and has the space to develop and express their independent thought. The freedom of expression and thought are crucial in their mental growth.

All children deserve equality, despite their differences. They are entitled to all of these rights, no matter what race, color, religion, language, ethnicity, gender define them. Their rights are to be protected and preserved.

Women have for long fought hard in order to gain freedom and certain rights for themselves. Women are subjected to various discriminations and atrocities by the society. Problems like female infanticide, human trafficking and sexual

abuse have become a matter of concern and are to be dealt with firmness. The women led the feminist movement that refers to a series of political campaigns for reforms on issues such as reproductive rights, domestic violence, maternity leave, equal pay, women's suffrage, sexual harassment, and sexual violence, all of which fall under the label of feminism and the feminist movement. This movement focuses on achieving equal rights as men and to be treated equally in the society and in front of law. In many areas of the world women are harassed, suppressed, mistreated and are even denied the basic human rights like; right to vote, education, right to freedom of expression and so on.

There have been various international conventions like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, which is often described as an international bill of rights for women. It defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end it and bring about equality in law as well as the society. Every person has the right to be treated equally and enjoy the same treatment as all. Gender equality is, first and foremost, a human right. A woman is entitled to live in dignity and in freedom from want and from fear. Empowering women is also an indispensable tool for advancing development and reducing poverty.

Empowered women contribute to the health and productivity of whole families and communities and to improved prospects for the next generation. The importance of gender equality is underscored as one of the development goals. Yet discrimination against women and girls - including gender-based violence, economic discrimination, reproductive health inequities, and harmful traditional practices - remains the most pervasive and persistent form of inequality. Women and girls bear enormous hardship during and after humanitarian emergencies, especially armed conflicts. There have been several organizations and institutions advocating for women, promoting legal and policy reforms and

gender-sensitive data collection, and supporting projects that improve women's health and expand their choices in life.

Despite many international agreements affirming their human rights, women are still much more likely than men to be poor and illiterate. When women are empowered, whole families benefit, and these benefits often have ripple effects to future generations. Thus, empowering women and promoting women rights is important in the contemporary times. Spreading awareness is also a crucial task in achieving the objectives of women rights.

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