



GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN NIGERIA: ENVISIONING A GLOBAL FUTURE

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Abstract

In a world grappling with various challenges, the pursuit of gender equality and the protection of human rights stand at the front burner of the global discourse. Nigeria's progress towards achieving gender equality and promoting human rights remains hindered by entrenched patriarchal norms, inadequate policy frameworks, and insufficient implementation. This study examines the nexus between gender equality and human rights in Nigeria, with a focus on envisioning a global future where these rights are universally recognised and respected. Thus, grounded in the framework of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), this research adopts the qualitative method of research, and shows the benefits of advancing gender equality and human rights as it leads to increased social cohesion, economic growth, and enhanced well-being for individuals and communities. The findings highlight the persistence of gender-based discrimination and socio-cultural barriers that perpetuate inequality and human rights abuses. The study recommends a multi-faceted approach to addressing these challenges, including policy reforms, education and awareness creation that promotes gender equality and human rights. Ultimately, this research contributes to the on-going discourse on gender equality and human rights in Nigeria, emphasizing the need for a transformative and inclusive approach that prioritizes the empowerment of women, and envisions a future where human rights are universally respected and protected.

Keywords: Gender equality, human rights, social inclusion, justice, equitability, sustainable development

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Introduction

The concept of gender equality no doubt is perceived as a global issue as it is obviously the fifth item in the seventeen millennium development goals (MDGs) of the United Nations (UN), and as such, it is among the key issues in the international arena. Advancing gender equality and protecting human rights are critical components of building a just and inclusive global society. The journey towards achieving these goals has been long and arduous, marked by struggles, progress, setbacks, and marked by persistent challenges. As we stand at the threshold of the future, envisioning a world where every individual is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness irrespective of their gender or social status, it is imperative to reflect on the path we have travelled and chart a course for a more equitable and sustainable future.

According to Naila Kabeer (2005, p.13), “Gender equality is an intrinsic rather than an instrumental goal, explicitly valued as an end in itself rather than as an instrument for achieving other goals.” The principle of equality is a central commitment in international human rights instruments. Gender oppression and human rights violations continue to pervade communities and societies worldwide, reinforcing harmful power dynamics and perpetuating discrimination and marginalization. Women, girls, and other marginalized groups face barriers to education, employment, healthcare, and political participation, therefore limiting their agency and opportunities for advancement. The denial of basic human rights, such as the right to live free from violence, discrimination, and oppression, further undermines human freedoms and dignity.

However, amidst these challenges, there are rays of hope and resilience as this paper seeks

to assert. Grassroots movements, advocacy efforts, policy reforms, and international commitments have propelled the agenda for gender equality and human rights onto the global stage. According to Fredman and Goldblatt (2015, p.3), the right to equality is generally defined in open-textured terms. The central covenants simply refer to an obligation on States to ensure human rights without 'distinction', 'discrimination', 'exclusion', 'restriction' or 'on the basis of equality' as between men and women. The open-textured nature of this principle has been elaborated through the concluding observations, general recommendations, general comments and case law of the treaty bodies, as well as through the reports of experts operating under the special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

This paper adopts the qualitative approach towards realizing the objective of the study. It looks at some of the challenges hindering gender equality and human rights, some policies of government as solutions to gender inequality, before drawing conclusion.

Definition of Terms

For a better understanding of the subject matter, it is imperative to first look at the conceptual definition of the terms “gender and gender equality” on the one hand and “human rights” on the other.

Gender and Gender Equality

In a general perspective, gender is a socially constructed definition of women and men which is determined by the conception of tasks, functions and roles attributed to women and men in the society and in public and private life of the people. It is the state of being male or female and typically used with reference to social and cultural differences of the people rather than biological ones in the society and appears to manifest as hierarchical

relations with men above women and women being regarded as inferior and less valuable in family and other social relationships in African states.

The meaning of gender varies across cultures, social groups and time because, nothing about the body including women's reproductive organs, determines univocally how social division could be shaped when talking about gender stratification. According to Dickson, Aloba and Inyang (2014, pp.15-20), gender can be generally referred to as the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviors, values, influence and relative power which the society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. It is an acquired identity that is learned, and it could change over time. It varies where biological gender is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics, widely within and across cultures that is embedded in all social processes of everyday life and social organisations. It refers to the various characteristics associated with and distinguishing masculinity and femininity, which may be influenced by biological sex (such as being male, female, or an intersex variation that can complicate sex assignment), sex-based social structures (including gender roles and other societal roles), or gender identity. Additionally, some cultures recognise specific gender roles that differ from the conventional male and female classifications in social settings (Kelechen, 2014, p.56).

Gender equality on the other hand according to the UNICEF action plan (2017, p.2), is the concept that women and men, girls and boys have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realising their full potential, human rights and dignity, and for contributing to (and benefitting from) economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is, therefore, the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the

differences of men and women, and the roles they play in society. It is based on women and men being full partners in the home, community and society. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men and girls and boys are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups, and that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes and prejudices about gender roles. Gender equality is a matter of human rights and is considered a precondition for, and indicator of sustainable people-centered development.

In Nigeria, the issue of gender inequality has become a recurrent decimal because of the general believe that womanhood is supposed to be best placed in the kitchen and the other room for their husbands. Makama (2013, p.87) observed that this trend has brought about tremendous misrepresentation of women's right at the level of the family down to the circular society. The Nigerian society although, patriarchal in nature is a structure of a set of social relations with material base which enables men to dominate women and discriminate against women in terms of socio-economic related issues, acquisition of formal education in some cases, attainment of political positions and contribution to religious matters in the society. With this development, an average Nigerian woman is seen as an available object for prostitution, forced marriage, street hawking, and instrument of wide-range trafficking and a misfit personality towards socio-economic development in the society, especially when compared to the advanced countries of the world.

Makama (2013, p.88) further states that this development gradually promotes gender disparity between men and women in formal and informal sectors of our society. The growing acknowledgements of gender rights and equality, all over the world, is juxtaposed with the correspondent increase in reporting of various forms of violence against women such as rape, trafficking, assault, social exclusion in Nigeria which run contrary to the general convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly which was tagged “Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW, 1979). The discrimination according to CEDAW (1979) is defined as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex either in the civil, cultural, political, economic, social, or any other related matters in the society.”

Gender highlights fundamental differences used to justify individual behavior concerning cross-cultural, literary, and scientific perspectives, which are socially constructed to reinforce gender stratification in society. According to Miller (2001, p.12), gender can be understood as a form of economic, social, and cultural segregation that distinguishes between males and females, providing a social rationale for their roles. It also serves as a key factor in shaping experiences of poverty, access to wealth creation, rights or individual capabilities. These opportunities, resources, and decision-making powers are often determined by social-cultural norms.

Scott (1988) sees gender as a system of roles relationship between women and men. These roles are determined not biologically but by the social, political and economic contexts. It is the social organisation of sexual differences which do not mean gender reflection or

implement fixed and natural physical differences between women and men; rather, it is the knowledge that establishes meaning for bodily differences. From these definitions, there are two major observations of what gender is all about. Firstly, it is for the state of being male or female which is typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones in social setting while the second is the array of socially constructed roles and relationships that discriminating against the women in the society contrary to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) which Nigeria is a signatory.

Gender equality therefore refers to the equal rights, opportunities, and empowerment of all genders. It requires dismantling societal norms and stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination and prejudice against a particular class of gender. Achieving gender equality means eliminating gender-based violence, ensuring equal access to education and healthcare, promoting equal representation and participation in decision-making processes, and bridging economic gaps between male and female.

Human Rights

In order to maintain focus, we shall not delve too much on the history of human rights. Rights shall be discussed on the basis of its adoption and concept. It is a common phenomenon that human beings everywhere, demand the realisation of diverse values to ensure their individual and collective well-being. However, these demands or rights are in some cases or situations denied through exploitation, oppression, persecution, etc, in many countries of the world. Human rights gained attention at the international arena following the Second World War (World War II), where millions of people lost their lives. Horrified

by the devastation of life caused by the Second World War, members of the United Nations (UN) took measures for the achievement of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedom for all. The term 'human rights' which has been used since World War II, gained importance in contemporary debates and became a universal discourse. After the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on December 10, 1948 by the United Nations, it was seen by many as a sign of optimism for the better protection, promotion and enforcement of human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, laid the foundation for the recognition and protection of basic human rights worldwide.

Thus, there are various contemporary definitions of human rights. The UN defined human rights as those rights which are inherent in our state of nature and without which we cannot live as human beings (Mishra, 2000, p.4). Human rights belong to every person and do not depend on the specifics of the individual or the relationship between the right-holder and the right guarantor (Coicaud et al. 2003, p.25). Human rights are the rights that everyone has equally by virtue of their humanity. It is grounded on the appeal to our human nature.

In the words of Michael Freedon (quoted in Biswal Tapan, 2006, p.44),

A human right is a conceptual device, expressed in linguistic form that assigns priority to certain human or social attributes regarded as essential to the adequate functioning of a human being that is intended to serve as a protective capsule for those attributes; and that appeals for a deliberate action to ensure such a protection.

In the context of the present study, human rights can be defined as those rights without which human beings cannot live with dignity, freedom (political, economic, social and cultural) and justice in any nation or state regardless of colour, place of birth, ethnicity, race,

religion or sex or any other such considerations. These rights are inherent in human nature and are therefore guaranteed and protected by the state without discrimination of any sort.

When such rights are denied to an individual, whether by the state or non-state actors, it constitutes human rights violations. When large scale violations of such rights occur, it constitutes human rights abuses. Human rights abuses in this context could refer to large-scale violations committed repeatedly by state or non-state actors on any community or group of people in their everyday lives. Further, the concept human rights can be understood as universal, incontrovertible and subjective. Human rights are universal since they belong to every human being without any distinction in terms of ethnicity, race, gender, religion, or type of government. It is incontrovertible, that is, they are given and innate. Human rights are subjective as they are properties of individuals who possess them because of their capacity for rationality, agency and autonomy (O'Byrne and Darren, 2005, p.5).

Today, the concept of human rights includes civil and political rights or public liberties, economic, social and cultural needs particularly with regard to development, the environment and self-determination. As postulated earlier, it is the state's responsibility to protect and promote human rights. It is also the duty of the state to create conditions for peaceful co-existence which enable human rights to be enjoyed by every individual in that state. However, despite substantial progress, numerous challenges persist. Discrimination based on gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and other factors persists, denying individuals their inherent rights.

The Nuance between Gender Equality and Human Rights

In reality, one cannot actually talk about gender equality without reference to human rights as the right of individuals is what determines or defines the human person whose rights are deemed violated in relation to sex or gender appertaining thereto. Thus, equality when talked about points to the rights of the individual, as rights also may indirectly reflect equality as the case may be. Hence, the principle of equality in international human rights instruments is expressed in very general and open-textured terms. Thus, Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) provides that every human being is entitled to all the rights and freedoms within the Declaration 'without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status' (UN General Assembly 1948). Similarly the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) requires States to respect and ensure the rights in the Covenant 'without distinction' (UN General Assembly 1966a, article 2), while the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) requires State parties to guarantee that the rights enunciated in the Covenant will be exercised without discrimination of any kind on the grounds mentioned in the UDHR (UN General Assembly 1966b, article 2(2)). Both the ICCPR (article 3) and ICESCR (article 3) have specific provisions for the 'equal right' of women and men to the enjoyment of all rights in the respective Covenants. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) focuses specifically on women, stating that 'discrimination against women' shall mean 'any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the

political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field' (UN General Assembly 1979, article 1). Thus, it is safe to say that gender equality as the fifth millennium development goal is a fundamental human right that need not be negotiated.

Challenges that Militate against Gender Equality and Human Rights in Nigeria

While it is seen in some quarters that giant strides have been made in the area of gender equality and human rights, achieving true gender equality and respect for the rights of every individual remains an on-going challenge. Such challenges that abound are gender-based discrimination and violence (such as rape, trafficking, and assault) which persist in various forms, including but not limited to; unequal wages, limited access to healthcare, unequal religious rights and religious leadership, career advancement mostly in male dominated industries and leadership positions, unequal political representation. According to Raheem, Amidu and Rasheed (2017, p.158), the nature of Nigerian politics discourages women's participation in the political process. Political meetings are often held late at night on an ad hoc basis, making attendance difficult for women, who face greater personal risk in travelling alone at night and often have to arrange for assistance to care for their families. Women who do attend such meetings have, according to numerous anonymous sources, been labeled as prostitutes. More generally, politics is considered to be a 'dangerous' pursuit in Nigeria and female politicians are most often considered as having dubious moral character, given their desire to be involved in this profession.

Societal norms and cultural attitudes is often seen as a tool against gender equality, re-enforcing traditional gender roles and limiting opportunities for women, denying women the right to inheritance (as women are only allowed a limited right to inheritance). Inter-

sectionality and other forms of discrimination against women further compounds the challenges faced by marginalised women including but not limited to those faced by racial and ethnic communities, stereotyped roles causing increased vulnerability and marginalisation.

It is right to say that women play a very vital role in the sustainable development of the society and equality in this sphere cannot be overemphasised. However, they are unable to reach their full potential due to discriminatory norms, policies and laws. In the Northern part of the country for example, women are less likely to own their own land except with the express permission of their husbands or male relative as the case may be. Property laws discriminate against women inheriting family property, widows are discarded in their rights to inherit from their deceased husband or relative; and custom and patriarchal social norms often favor male relatives. These barriers threaten women's food security, forcing them to migrate to areas where they could search for livelihoods. Discriminatory laws and policies which prevent women throughout the life-course from controlling their productive resources lock them in a cycle of poverty and prevent them from being economically empowered.

Women are lifelong agents of change in their families, typically investing 90% of their time and earnings into their families and communities compared to 35% by men, thus more likely to break the inter-generational cycle of poverty (Carolyn Hannan, 2001).

For the Soroptimist International (an NGO that advocates for Women and Girls), Governments are not living up to their international commitment to protect women from

discrimination, as the gap between de jure and de facto discrimination persists. Women still find it more difficult to access basic education and vocational (secondary) education provision; as girls are expected to assist with family routines such as fetching and carrying firewood and water. According to the UNESCO 2016 Global Education Monitoring Report, some 63% of women, predominantly living in sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab States and in South and West Asia, have not attained even minimal literacy skills. Education provides a major key to lifting women and girls out of poverty and enabling them to achieve their true potential.

Kay (2008) observes that gender equality is a condition where women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including the area of economic participation, decision making, and process through which the needs of women and men are equally valued and favored.

Progress Made in the Promotion of Gender Equality and Human Rights

It is a truism that a lot of progress have been made towards the actualisation of gender equality and human rights actualisation for all for a more sustainable global future, given the fact that Nigeria has been part of and has partnered with a lot of civil societies, international NGOs and intergovernmental organisations to see to it that the rights of every individual, regardless of your gender or minority group is upheld in order to ensure a more sustainable development for the global future. Thus, Nigeria has been signatory to relevant international treaties and has also domesticated such treaties and also reeled out relevant gender policies to that effect.

Hence, a national gender policy was adopted in 2006 stating strategic implementation framework and plan as policy documents to guide the federal government of Nigeria in the implementation of various regional treaties, such as New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) African Union (AU), African Protocol on People's Rights and the Rights of Women (APRRW) and National Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). It also includes the Global Commitment such as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS), and Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

These instruments have always emphasised that member States put in place the necessary mechanisms needed to eliminate gender discriminations, and ensure equality and human dignity to all men and women. As a result, the National Gender Policy (2006, pp.26-27) focuses on the following basic principles which aim at promoting gender equity in Nigeria. This includes:

- 1) Identification of gender mainstreaming as a development approach and tools for achieving social transformation, agenda for economic reform, value reorientation and evidence-based planning,
- 2) Arealisation that results and efficient focused policy implementation required from all stakeholders a cooperative and comprehensive interaction,
- 3) Recognition of gender issues are central to and critical to the achievement of National Development Goals and objectives and a requirement for all policy to be reviewed to reflect gender implication and strategies as contained in the gender policy and implementation modalities specified in the National Gender Strategic Framework and,

- 4) Promotion and protection of human rights, social justice and equity. (Raheem, Amidu and Rasheed 2017, pp.158-159)

In order to achieve the objectives of the National Gender Policy, the following strategies have been employed by the government:

- 1) Partnership, policy and programme reforms through mainstreaming of gender concerns at all levels;
- 2) Agenda of economic restructuring reforms for enhanced productivity and sustainable development, which addresses the needs of women and children, and other vulnerable groups;
- 3) In an attempt to enhance required technical expertise and positive gender culture, the policy advocated for the provision for capacity building and gender education;
- 4) Legislative reform to guarantee gender justice and respect for human rights.

Gender Strategies for Global Transformation

The only constant feature in life is *change* and as such, changes produced by globalisation in today's world are so immense and rapid that they are shifting the reference points used to interpret reality. One of these reference points is the belief that women naturally occupied a subordinate position and that their province of the private world, has changed so radically that there is now recognition not only of the possibility of changing the culturally constructed relationships that give rise to discrimination against women, but of the need for this change to take place. Governments, often in collaboration with civil societies, have implemented numerous strategies to apply the gender approach across board in the design of public policies, adopting cross-disciplinary, inter-sectoral and participatory approaches

for this purpose. Thus, the major global strategy adopted inter-governmentally for the global transformation in achieving gender equality is “Gender Mainstreaming”.

The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 established gender mainstreaming as the global strategy for promoting gender equality. The outcome document of this Conference, the Beijing Platform for Action, identified twelve critical areas of concern for urgent action to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men. In each of these areas of concern, the Beijing Platform for Action calls on governments and other actors to “promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes, so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively”.

Accordingly, in 1997, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in their agreed conclusions 1997/2, defined gender mainstreaming as:

...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality... Gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted, women-specific policies and programmes or positive legislation, nor does it substitute for gender units or gender focal points.

Since then, several United Nations inter-governmental resolutions, mandates and decisions have continued to reaffirm the commitment to gender mainstreaming, and the goal of

gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. These include the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement. Gender mainstreaming remains widely accepted as the most practical means to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. It moves gender equality and the empowerment of women from the margins to the mainstream of decision-making, integrating gender perspectives into all policies, programmes, functions and structures of an institution.

For Hannan (2001), mainstreaming is not about adding on 'women's component', or even a 'gender equality component', to an existing activity. It involves more than increasing women's participation. Mainstreaming situates gender equality issues at the centre of policy decisions, medium-term plans, programme budgets, and institutional structures and processes. Mainstreaming entails bringing the perceptions, experience, knowledge and interests of women as well as men to bear on policy-making, planning, and decision-making. Mainstreaming can reveal a need for changes in goals, strategies and actions to ensure that both women and men can influence, participate in and benefit from development processes. It can require changes in organisations – structures, procedures and cultures – to create organisational environments which are conducive to the promotion of gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming involves women's empowerment.

For Kabeer (2005, p.14), one way of thinking about power is in terms of the ability to make choices. To be disempowered means to be denied choice, while empowerment refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such

ability. In other words, empowerment entails change. People who exercise a great deal of choice in their lives may be very powerful, but they are not empowered, hence the sense in which the word “empowerment” is used.

Gender mainstreaming involves women's access to education as there is considerable evidence for the claim that access to education can bring about changes in cognitive ability, which is essential to women's capacity to question, to reflect on, and to act on the conditions of their lives and to gain access to knowledge, information, and new ideas that will help them to do so. This is evident in everyday instances as educated women are less likely to suffer from domestic violence.

There is a solid body of evidence to show that access to paid work can increase women's agency in strategic ways. Paid work carried out in the home has the potential to shift the balance of power within the family. A detailed study of women engaged in industrial homework in Mexico City noted that in households where women's economic contribution was critical to household survival, women had been able to negotiate a greater degree of respect (Kabeer 2005, p.18).

The last of the indicators for monitoring progress on gender equality and women's empowerment is in the area of politics, which relates to the number of seats held by women in national parliaments (Kabeer 2005, p.18). It moves the focus of empowerment into the arena of politics, and the struggle for participation and representation in decision making. Rwanda is a perfect example in this sense.

As half of the population, women are clearly entitled to at least half the seats in parliament. Such an achievement could, with certain qualifications, represent the most ambitious of the three forms of change singled out to measure progress on women's empowerment and could have the greatest potential for transformation. Furthermore, with certain qualifications, it could potentially address many of the constraints that limit the life chances of vulnerable women. However, because these qualifications relate to the same constraints that have prevented women from all social classes and groups from having a 'strategic presence' in national parliaments, it is also the form of social change least likely to be achieved in the near future. A review of the relevant statistics suggests that, regardless of political systems, the proportion of women in national parliaments around the world is extremely low, averaging 13.8 per cent in 2000 (Goetz 2003, p.87).

Gender mainstreaming thus propels progress towards the ultimate goal of attaining gender equality. It transforms society positively through the elimination of discriminatory laws, norms and practices that limit women's and girls' voices, choices, and opportunities that impede them from achieving their full potential.

Conclusion

As we look ahead to the global future, the imperative to advance gender equality and human rights becomes even more pressing as rapid technological advancements, climate change, political upheavals, and economic transformations pose complex challenges that intersect with and exacerbate existing inequalities. To navigate this rapidly changing landscape and build a future that is truly equitable and just, societies must centre gender equality and human rights in policies, practices, and narratives. By fostering solidarity, promoting social

justice, and upholding the inherent dignity of every individual, societies can pave the way for a more inclusive, peaceful, and sustainable world where everyone can thrive and fulfil their potential. It is therefore evident that gender equality and human rights are essential for envisioning a future where all have equal opportunities. Achieving true equality requires a collective effort from individuals, communities, governments, and organisations worldwide. By addressing systematic barriers, promoting education and awareness, and advocating for inclusive policies, we can work towards creating a more just and equitable global society. It is imperative therefore, that we continue to push for progress and strive for a future where every person, regardless of gender, is empowered to reach their full potential. Only through sustained dedication can we actually build a world where gender equality and human rights are truly universal.

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