



# EQUALITY NOW

*"Equality Now provides community, it magnifies strength, it gives you accurate information and it allows you to become a force in the world."*

*— Gloria Steinem, Writer, Activist & Equality Now Board Member*

## WHO WE ARE

Founded in 1992, Equality Now works to protect and promote the human rights of women and girls around the world. With offices in New York, Nairobi and London, and a presence in Amman, Jordan and Washington, DC, our areas of focus include **Discrimination in Law**, **Sexual Violence**, **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**, and **Sex Trafficking**. Combining grassroots activism with international, regional and national legal advocacy, we envision a world in which women and men have equal rights under the law and full enjoyment of those rights.

## WHY WE ARE NECESSARY

Millions of women and girls around the world face discrimination and violence, even death, simply for being born female. And, according to the United Nations, one out of three women will be abused, raped or beaten in her lifetime. This situation is unacceptable and cannot be allowed to continue. We believe that every woman and girl should be valued and her fundamental human rights must be recognized and protected.

## OUR WORK

### DISCRIMINATION IN LAW

Law is the fundamental expression of government policy. Therefore laws that discriminate against women and girls prevent them from fully enjoying their human rights and leave them vulnerable to abuse. Equality Now advocates for the repeal or amendment of all laws that discriminate against women and girls, and for equal access to justice at all levels of governance. By strengthening international and regional human rights law and mechanisms, we provide women and girls with the necessary legal tools to promote and defend their rights.

### SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence is perpetrated around the world on girls and women of all ages and all backgrounds and takes many different forms including rape, sexual assault, incest, and harmful traditional practices. Violence against women is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality. Equality Now combats sexual violence by addressing its underlying causes. By advocating for proper investigation, prosecution and punishments, we strive to hold governments accountable to national, regional and international legal standards.

[www.equalitynow.org](http://www.equalitynow.org)

## FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a harmful traditional practice that involves the partial or total removal of the genitalia. It is estimated that between 100 and 140 million girls and women around the world have undergone genital mutilation. The physical and psychological effects are extensive and irreversible, and negatively impact the sexual, reproductive and mental health and well-being of its victims. Furthermore, FGM reinforces the inequalities suffered by women and girls in the communities where it is practiced. Equality Now supports the work of grassroots groups to end FGM and in particular focuses on the enactment and effective implementation of legislation against FGM in relevant countries. Additionally we work to ensure that the international community views the practice for the human rights violation that it is and addresses it as such.

## TRAFFICKING

Every year, millions of women and girls around the world suffer grave human rights violations at the hands of traffickers and pimps who profit from the trade in human beings, and from the "johns" or buyers who exploit them and fuel this multibillion dollar illegal enterprise. According to the UN, 79% of identified cases of human trafficking involve sexual exploitation and the majority of the victims are women and children. It is a prevalent and pervasive crime that transcends international borders and occurs not only between countries, but also within countries, states, cities and neighbourhoods. Equality Now believes that the most effective way to end sex trafficking is to curb demand for commercial sex by criminalizing traffickers and buyers of sex while decriminalizing and protecting the rights of women and girls vulnerable to trafficking and sexual exploitation, and providing them with necessary services and support.

## OUR METHODS

- Create campaigns to raise awareness by highlighting individual cases of pervasive and severe violations against women and girls and mobilize our network, encompassing individuals and organizations in more than 190 countries, to take action
- Build partnerships and coalitions with grassroots groups to amplify local and global advocacy
- Conduct strategic litigation at regional, national and international levels
- Mobilize financial and capacity-building support for our partners on the ground

*Photo credits: Lena Stein for Apne Aap, Natalie Jackson Safe Spaces Zambia*



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