# FEMINISM - LIVE DISCUSSION MASTER SHEET

**FACT FIRST • SIMPLE LANGUAGE • SOURCE DIRECTLY UNDER EACH CLAIM**

**WHAT IS FEMINISM?** A movement for women's social, political, legal and economic rights equal to men's. It addresses discrimination, safety, opportunity and power. Its traditions and priorities vary; equality does not mean people are biologically identical. **PATRIARCHY =** social norms and institutions that privilege men over women.
**SOURCE:** https://interactive.unwomen.org/multimedia/timeline/womenunite/en/index.html | https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsandefinitions.htm

## 1. EQUALITY / NOT SUPERIORITY

**Core purpose:** Feminism advocates women's social, political, legal and economic rights equal to men's.
**SOURCE:**
https://interactive.unwomen.org/multimedia/timeline/womenunite/en/index.html

**Equal rights:** Equality means rights and opportunity should not depend on being born male or female; it does not mean everyone is identical.
**SOURCE:** https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsandefinitions.htm

## 2. HISTORY / FEMINIST WAVES

**Historical roots:** Women's movements fought for suffrage, civic rights and education; the 1848 Seneca Falls convention was one U.S. milestone.
**SOURCE:**
https://interactive.unwomen.org/multimedia/timeline/womenunite/en/index.html

**Not one single wave:** "Waves" are a useful historical shorthand, but feminist movements have had different priorities across places and generations.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/05/discussion-paper-new-feminist-activism-waves-and-generations

## 3. PATRIARCHY / GENDER NORMS

**Patriarchal norms:** The term describes social norms and systems that privilege men over women; it is not a claim that every man is powerful or abusive.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/how-men-and-boys-can-push-for-gender-equality

**Social bias:** A UNDP index found nearly 9 in 10 surveyed men and women held at least one fundamental bias against women.
**SOURCE:** https://hdr.undp.org/content/2023-gender-social-norms-index-gsni

## 4. PAY GAP / EQUAL PAY

**Global average:** ILO estimates women earn about 18% less than men on average globally; the gap narrowed only slightly since 2018.
**SOURCE:**
https://www.ilo.org/resource/news/gender-pay-gap-narrows-just-two-percentage-points-decade

**Important distinction:** An overall ("raw") pay gap is not itself a same-job pay comparison; hours, occupations and discrimination may all contribute.
**SOURCE:** https://www.ilo.org/resource/73-effects-gender-pay-gaps

## 5. UNPAID CARE / PARENTHOOD

**Unequal load:** Women perform more than three-quarters of the world's unpaid care work - more than three times as much as men.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/statement/2026/10/un-women-statement-for-the-international-day-of-care-and-support-2026

**Lost opportunity:** Unpaid care responsibilities keep an estimated 708 million women and 40 million men out of the labour force.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/statement/2026/10/un-women-statement-for-the-international-day-of-care-and-support-2026

## 6. VIOLENCE / COERCION

**Scale:** Nearly one in three women globally have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate-partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.
**SOURCE:**
https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women

**What counts:** Coercion, threats and abuse can be part of gender-based violence; prevention and survivor support are human-rights issues.
**SOURCE:**
https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women

## 7. LEGAL RIGHTS / ENFORCEMENT

**Laws still differ:** UN figures indicate women enjoy only about 64% of the legal rights afforded to men worldwide, across measured legal frameworks.
**SOURCE:** https://www.un.org/observances/womens-day

**Rights on paper:** Passing laws is not enough: gaps in enforcement and access to justice can prevent people from exercising existing rights.
**SOURCE:** https://www.un.org/observances/womens-day

## 8. EDUCATION / OPPORTUNITY

**Global progress:** Worldwide, girls' and boys' school enrolment is now similar from pre-primary through secondary education.
**SOURCE:**
https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/gender-gaps-education-narrow-globally-yet-early-marriage-remains-major-barrier-girls-education-new

**Remaining barriers:** Early marriage, adolescent pregnancy and exclusion after childbirth still keep many girls from completing school.
**SOURCE:**
https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/gender-gaps-education-narrow-globally-yet-early-marriage-remains-major-barrier-girls-education-new

## 9. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

**Parliament:** Women held 27.5% of national parliamentary seats worldwide as of 1 January 2026.
**SOURCE:**
https://www.ipu.org/news/press-releases/2026-03/womens-representation-in-parliament-sees-sluggish-gains

**Leadership:** Women made up 19.9% of parliamentary presiding officers at the same date; changes remain gradual.
**SOURCE:**
https://www.ipu.org/news/press-releases/2026-03/womens-representation-in-parliament-sees-sluggish-gains

## 10. BODILY AUTONOMY / HEALTH

**Decision-making:** UN estimates say almost half of married or partnered women lack full autonomy over sex, contraception and health decisions.
**SOURCE:** https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/goal-05

**Health care:** WHO publishes evidence-based guidance for quality abortion care; laws and policy vary across countries.
**SOURCE:** https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240104204

## 11. INTERSECTIONALITY

**Meaning:** Overlapping factors such as race, disability and class can combine with sexism to affect a person's experiences.
**SOURCE:** https://unwomen.org.au/our-work/focus-area/intersectionality-explained/

**Origin:** Legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined "intersectionality" in 1989 to examine interacting forms of inequality.
**SOURCE:** https://unwomen.org.au/our-work/focus-area/intersectionality-explained/

## 12. MEN / MASCULINITY

**Everyone has a role:** UN Women explains that greater gender equality benefits men and boys as well as women and girls.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/how-men-and-boys-can-push-for-gender-equality

**Rigid expectations:** Norms that discourage men from showing vulnerability or caregiving can also harm men's well-being.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/how-men-and-boys-can-push-for-gender-equality

## 13. ONLINE ABUSE / HARASSMENT

**Digital harm:** Sex-based harassment, intimidation and threats online can reduce women's safety and participation in public life.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/online-safety-101-what-every-woman-and-girl-should-know

**New forms:** Non-consensual image sharing, deepfakes and doxxing are documented forms of technology-facilitated abuse.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/11/brief-guidance-for-police-on-addressing-technology-facilitated-violence-against-women-and-girls

## 14. DIVERSITY / DISAGREEMENT

**Different approaches:** Feminist movements differ across generations and societies about priorities, theories and tactics.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/05/discussion-paper-new-feminist-activism-waves-and-generations

**No single spokesperson:** A single activist's conduct or opinion cannot establish what every feminist believes. This is an inference from movement diversity.
**SOURCE:**
https://chile.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/05/discussion-paper-new-feminist-activism-waves-and-generations

## 15. PROGRESS / MEASUREMENT

**2026 benchmark:** The World Economic Forum reports the global gender gap is 69.2% closed across 145 economies, on four measured dimensions.
**SOURCE:** https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2026

**Trend, not destiny:** At the pace seen across its long-running sample, WEF projects roughly 120 years to full parity; this is a projection, not certainty.
**SOURCE:** https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2026