

CULTURE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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WHAT IS PRIORITY GENDER EQUALITY?

Gender Equality, one of UNESCO's two global priorities, underpins all of the Organization's actions on education, culture, natural science, the social and human sciences and communications. UNESCO promotes gender equality through a two-pronged approach – gender-specific programmes and gender mainstreaming – and coordinates these efforts through the Division for Gender Equality, located in the Cabinet of the Director-General.

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WHY CULTURE FOR GENDER EQUALITY?

Despite notable progress in recent decades, women are underrepresented in almost all cultural fields, including film, music, museums, art, heritage and digital media, particularly in leadership positions. Moreover, according to *Re/Shaping Cultural Policies*, the Global Monitoring Report for the 2005 Convention, women in culture are paid significantly less than their male counterparts, and have limited access to resources, training and mentorship. These gender disparities in the field of culture frequently reinforce and perpetuate gender inequalities in society at large. Yet strengthening women's participation in and access to culture can also be a powerful means of promoting gender equality. That is why UNESCO is working to integrate any awareness of gender into all its programmes and activities, including in the field of culture, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the ultimate goal of closing this gender gap and achieving gender equality.

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HOW DOES THE CULTURE SECTOR WORK TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY?

- i. **Researching the gender gap.** *Re/Shaping Cultural Policies* found that a multifaceted gender gap persists in all cultural fields and reaffirmed that the Convention calls for States Parties to integrate a gender perspective into all cultural policies and measures. In 2014, UNESCO published *Gender Equality, Heritage and Creativity*, providing a global snapshot of the current challenges and opportunities for gender equality in cultural life. Among its recommendations, the Report specifically called for countries to improve the collection of sex-disaggregated data within the culture sector.
- ii. **Supporting female creators.** UNESCO's *International Fund for Cultural Diversity* has launched the first of two special calls for project proposals under the "U40 Empowered" project, which aims to support women entrepreneurs under the age of 40 by expanding their access to funding, infrastructure, and co-production opportunities in the digital creative industries. UNESCO and Fondation CHANEL are working to further vocational education and training in sustainable tourism for women in the communities surrounding the Tsingy Nature Reserve in Madagascar, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- iii. **Mobilizing its Conventions.** Under the 1972 World Heritage Convention, World Heritage sites such as Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo are ensuring that women have access to every level of site management, including the park ranger positions typically held by men. Through the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, UNESCO works to ensure that all gender groups can fully participate in the safeguarding and transmission of their intangible heritage.
- iv. **Encouraging cooperation and exchange.** To mark the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development 2018 and the 70th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, UNESCO brought together a panel of UN representatives, artists, tech leaders, and experts to answer a simple question: How can we ensure that everyone, regardless of age, gender, income or nationality, has the right to access culture?

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KEY MESSAGES

-  **Gender issues permeate all areas of cultural life.** As part of the DNA of communities, culture provides a unique space where gender roles and social norms are constantly questioned, challenged, reinforced and reimagined.
-  **A gendered look at the state of heritage and creativity** reveals the same challenges found in other areas of socioeconomic life: limited participation of women in decision-making positions; segregation into certain activities; restricted opportunities for training, capacity-building and networking; women's unequal share of unpaid care work; as well as gender stereotypes and fixed ideas about culturally appropriate roles for women and men.
-  **Women are under-represented in creative fields** such as publishing, contemporary music and the visual arts, particularly in leadership positions. Less than a quarter of the crew members and only 5 percent of the directors who worked on the 2,000 highest grossing films over the last two decades were women. Out of the world's top 150 classical music conductors, only 3 percent are women. 82% of management positions in cultural administration are occupied by men.
-  **A lack of sex-disaggregated cultural data** often conceal gender gaps and challenges from policy-makers and decision-makers.
-  **Nearly all heritage sites are gendered.** Many cultures have segregated entrances to buildings, and assign women and men different places in certain religious monuments. Similarly, in some sacred natural spaces of indigenous communities, women and men use different areas for their rituals. In general, the attribution of space to men and women is based on societal and other arrangement that form, produce and replicate gendered structures.
-  **Few sites on the World Heritage List are directly related to the history and lives of women,** although there are exceptions, such as the Flemish Béguinages. When preparing nominations for World Heritage sites, site managers, local communities, national agencies and others should be encouraged to document and analyse the experiences of women and men in relation to these sites.
-  **UNESCO's position is clear:** culture can be a powerful ally for achieving gender equality and building more sustainable and inclusive societies.

For more information, visit: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/themes/gender-equality/>