

What is the definition of gender-based violence?

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Working to eliminate gender-based violence and increase gender equality means we sometimes must explain what is considered gender-based violence, its forms, and what gendered issues are.

Gender-based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender. It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power, and harmful norms. The term is primarily used to underscore that structural, gender-based power differentials place women and girls at risk for multiple forms of violence. The term is also sometimes used to describe targeted violence against gender- and sexually-diverse populations. Gender-based violence encompasses, but is not limited to, physical, sexual, and psychological violence in the family or the general community.

Femicide is the most extreme form of violence against women and girls. Its definition varies across disciplines and world regions but broadly captures the killing of women and girls, primarily by men, because they are female. It includes, for example, the killing of intimate partners (current or former), the killing of mothers by sons, and the killing of girls by fathers or brothers.

Intimate partner violence is any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse, and controlling behaviours. Within intimate partner violence, several types of abusive behaviour fall into broad categories: coercion and threats, intimidation; emotional abuse; economic abuse; using children; using male privilege; isolation, minimizing, denying, and blaming.

It should be understood that there can be some overlap between the above definitions. For instance, intimate partner violence can include rape, and intimate partner violence can also lead to femicide.

Many women, particularly women politicians, journalists, and women who speak on issues related to feminism, are subjected to online harassment, abuse, and violence. Online harassment, online violence, or cyber violence are described as online behaviours that criminally or non-criminally assault or can lead to the assault of a person's physical, psychological, or emotional well-being. It can be done or experienced by an individual or group and happen online, through smartphones, during Internet games, on social media, etc. Even though cyber violence takes place online, it affects people offline and has real-world implications.

Gender issues include all aspects and concerns related to women's and men's lives and situation in society: how they interrelate, their differences in access to and use of resources, their activities, and how they react to changes, interventions, and policies.

Strictly speaking, this is an accurate definition of gendered issues. Issues related to women's and men's lives.

More generally, the things that come to mind when thinking about gendered issues are: Childcare. The gender wage gap. Sexual harassment. The double shift. Feminine hygiene products. The glass ceiling. Maternity leave. Lack of political representation. Maternal health. Beauty standards.

When we hear about or think of gendered issues, we typically think of women's issues. But what about snow plowing? What about how neighbourhoods are built? What about economic recovery? What about medical research?

It is important to consider all the ways in which issues are gendered and disproportionately impact groups that do not fit the mould of what some authors call the default male.

Discussing gender-based violence and gendered issues and ensuring gender equity in news coverage is not about being an activist journalist or taking a feminist approach; it is simply good journalism, as it aims to give everyone equitable representation in news coverage.