

International Women's Day 2022

Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow

United Nations
March 8, 2022

The theme for the United Nations Observance of International Women's Day 2022 (IWD 2022) is Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow.

The year 2022 is pivotal for achieving gender equality in the context of climate change, and environmental and disaster risk reduction, which are some of the greatest global challenges of the twenty-first century. Without gender equality today, a sustainable future, and an equal future, remains beyond our reach.

This year's IWD Observance was in recognition and celebration of the women and girls who are leading the charge on climate change adaptation and response, and to honor their leadership and contribution towards a sustainable future.

Special guests include climate icon Dr. Jane Goodall, and two women that Time magazine has named among the 15 women who will save the world, Dr. Katharine Wilkinson and Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim.

Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE, Founder of Jane Goodall Institute and UN Messenger of Peace

We cannot ignore this earth that feeds us, replenishes our bodies and souls, where animals, plants, water, we are all interconnected... people, animals, our environment. When nature suffers we suffer. Live your life so when you look back over your journey you can truly say I did make a difference. We need to take a moment to collectively apologize to the earth.

Jane's mother gave her a wonderful start in life. As a child she was curious, she didn't think of being a scientist because that wasn't allowed back then. At 10 she wanted to live in Africa and study animals and her mom believed in her and told her it was possible. Jane lived with chimpanzees and studied them and her mother thought that women were the best fit for this kind of work because they are more patient.

If we don't make a change we are going to have longer droughts, more hurricanes, and flooding. All around the world... Women are responsible for farming, selling produce, and collecting firewood and water and this is becoming harder and harder with climate change. In 1960 in Tanzania she worked with a village to help make a living as farmers without destroying their environment. Community led conservation is focused on working with the local population to

improve farming methods and water management. It also requires access to microcredit opportunities to build viable businesses.

Jane also strongly sees the value and need to provide scholarships for girls in these villages. One way out of poverty is an education. Once people understand that protecting the environment is directly related to their future they become interested.

Ms. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, President, Association for Indigenous Women and Peoples of Chad

Indigenous women protect 80% of the world's biodiversity through farming. It is time for scientists to listen to indigenous women. Ms. Hindou believes that we need to give indigenous women money to help make the needed changes, on the ground level in Chad. She stressed that \$1.7 billion has been given to Chad to help with their people and environmental issues, but none of this has been given to her community. NGO's and countries need to follow through to make sure that the funds they donate are received by the groups they're intended for. Women need to be trusted with power and in turn be appointed as leaders in their communities. **We need to give women rights to the land.** We need to partner with the elders in these communities to ensure they have buy-in on any initiatives that are trying to be accomplished. Today, girls in Chad don't have the right to go to school, choose their husbands, and own land... this needs to change! We need to move from this darkness and move to the light.

Ms. Katharine Wilkinson, Author and Environmentalist; Leader of The All We Can Save Project

It is critical that women and girls are at the heart of all discussions about climate change. Our climate crisis has emerged from a society that is based on patriarchy and control. Research shows that underrepresentation of women remains a persistent problem in virtually every space where we are making decisions about climate action. Research shows that climate changes are more successful when women are represented equally. Despite burdens and barriers women and girls are leading the way in climate change boldly. What can we do to help with climate change? This is the question to work on and continue asking. We are all called to be part of earth's healing. Here are three areas that we can all focus on: Home - what can I do in my home and community, Professional - how does climate connect with your skills, and Political - participation in policy advocacy.

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