

# ISSUES AND ACTIONS

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

## ON THE PATH OF MERCY: LISTENING TO THE CRY OF THE EARTH AND THE CRY OF THE POOR.

The urgency of the cry of the Earth and the cry of the Poor that we hear daily is set before the church and the world by Pope Francis in his Encyclical *Laudato Si'* and his call to explore MERCY anew.

The Paris meetings on Climate Change that took place in December 2015, and the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) in January 2016 have set us on a new path to address these issues.

*We are faced not with two separate crises,  
one environmental and one social,  
but rather with one complex crisis  
which is both social and environmental.*

*Laudato Si'* (139)

As we move forward on this new path it is important we remain aware that every one of the UN Goals is linked to solving our Climate Crisis. Keeping this in mind might help us not to become

overwhelmed with information. It is also helpful as we explore these issues further, so we can take appropriate action steps individually as well as a congregation. To help us in this process we will continue to use information from Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'* and the Sustainable Development Goals for our own education, reflection, prayer and action.



## IMPACT ON THE POOR

**Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effect of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest.**

*Laudate Si' (48)*

The reality is that those who are already disadvantaged by poverty — those with the fewest resources for coping — are likely to face some of the most immediate dangers of climate change. Protecting the planet and protecting the most vulnerable go hand-in-hand and both can be achieved if we all act now.

As we move forward it is important we take whatever steps possible to create a world where all people — women and men alike — freely enjoy their fundamental human rights. No matter their age, income or ethnic background, women and men must have the freedoms and opportunities to pursue their own paths in a world defined by equality, social responsibility and environmental integrity.

## IMPACT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

Women and girls make up more than half of the world's population, and their concerns constitute the heart of the global development agenda. Because they live at the front lines of their societies, women and girls are often more vulnerable and therefore more deeply impacted by poverty, climate change, food insecurity, lack of healthcare, and global economic crises. Their contributions and leadership are central to finding solutions.

The following is a snapshot of SDGs, as they impact women and girls:



### Goal 1. Poverty

Of the billion people who live in extreme poverty an estimated 70% are girls and women. Eradicating poverty and hunger are largely women's issues.



### Goal 3. Good Health and Well Being

Maternal mortality is the second leading cause of death of girls aged 15-19 and 70,000 adolescent girls in developing countries die annually of causes related to pregnancy.



### Goal 4. Quality Education

Sixty two million girls around the world are out of school, and two-thirds of the world's illiterate population are women. Education is the **ULTIMATE KEY** to a higher standard of living. Ensuring the education of all girls by the year 2030 ensures a life of greater opportunity.

*Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach o combatting poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.*

*Laudato Si' (139)*



#### Goal 5. Gender Equality

Trying to achieve sustainable development without addressing the stark impositions of inequality and discrimination on girls and women is like trying to farm without water. Without water, crops cannot thrive; without equality, development will falter and fail.



#### Goal 6. Clean Water and Sanitation

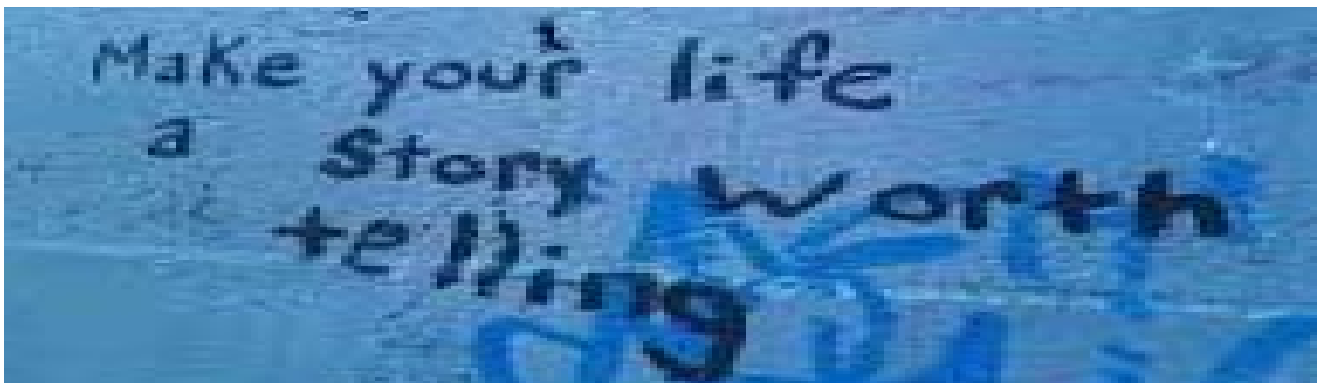
Girls and women are often the ones who are responsible for fetching water for their families. When a girl has improved access to clean water, she can spend more time in school learning and less time walking far distances to collect drinking water for her family.

Sustainable development requires integrating gender perspectives into all development sectors. Addressing deep-rooted barriers to sustainable development requires investing in women and girls. We must embrace and act on the knowledge that concrete social change can take place only when all members of society have equal opportunities and rights. If the SDGs' agenda can promote the empowerment of women and girls, the scope for achievement of its goals will be unprecedented.

The United Nations Sustainable Goals have given us a road map to look at these issues in a comprehensive way. There are 17 Global goals. Visit the website to identify which are most important to you, and what might be creative ways that we can act on them. We can't do it all, but we certainly can take some action.

*Everything is related and we human beings are united . . .  
on a wonderful pilgrimage woven together  
by the love God has for each of his creatures .*

*Laudato Si' (92)*



## RESOURCES

Websites that can be helpful in exploring the issues further:

[www.globalgoals.org](http://www.globalgoals.org). United Nations, 17 Sustainable Development Goals

[www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org). This website showcases data, stories, videos and publications to illustrate the impact of each SDG's on women and girls.

[www.one.org](http://www.one.org). Click on "The Issues." An international campaign & advocacy organization to end extreme poverty and preventable diseases.

[www.climaterealityproject.org](http://www.climaterealityproject.org). A global cultural movement demanding action on the climate crisis.

[www.catholicclimatemovement.org](http://www.catholicclimatemovement.org). A global movement for God's creation, the poor and future generations.

## SUGGESTED ACTIONS

⇒ Study further the issues by visiting the suggested websites.

⇒ Read a book:

I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban,

by Malala Yousafazi, and Christina Lamb

Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide,

by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

The Name of God is Mercy, by Pope Francis

⇒ Make a contribution to an organization that works for the empowerment of women and girls.

⇒ Start a discussion group using Climate Change: Our Call to Conversion. A four session process for faith communities. Copies can be requested by contacting Elaine Marie Sanchez.

⇒ Include the following in your daily prayer :

A prayer for our Earth

All powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and  
in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.

Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace that we may live as brothers and sisters,  
harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,  
so precious in your eyes.

Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it,  
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.

We thank you for being with us each day.

Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.

Adapted from *Laudato Si'* Pope Francis, (246)

Please let us hear your comments, suggestions, and actions that you may be taking so that we can share with others. We all have the ability to inspire others.

Prepared by the Peace and Justice Committee