

AUGUST 2021

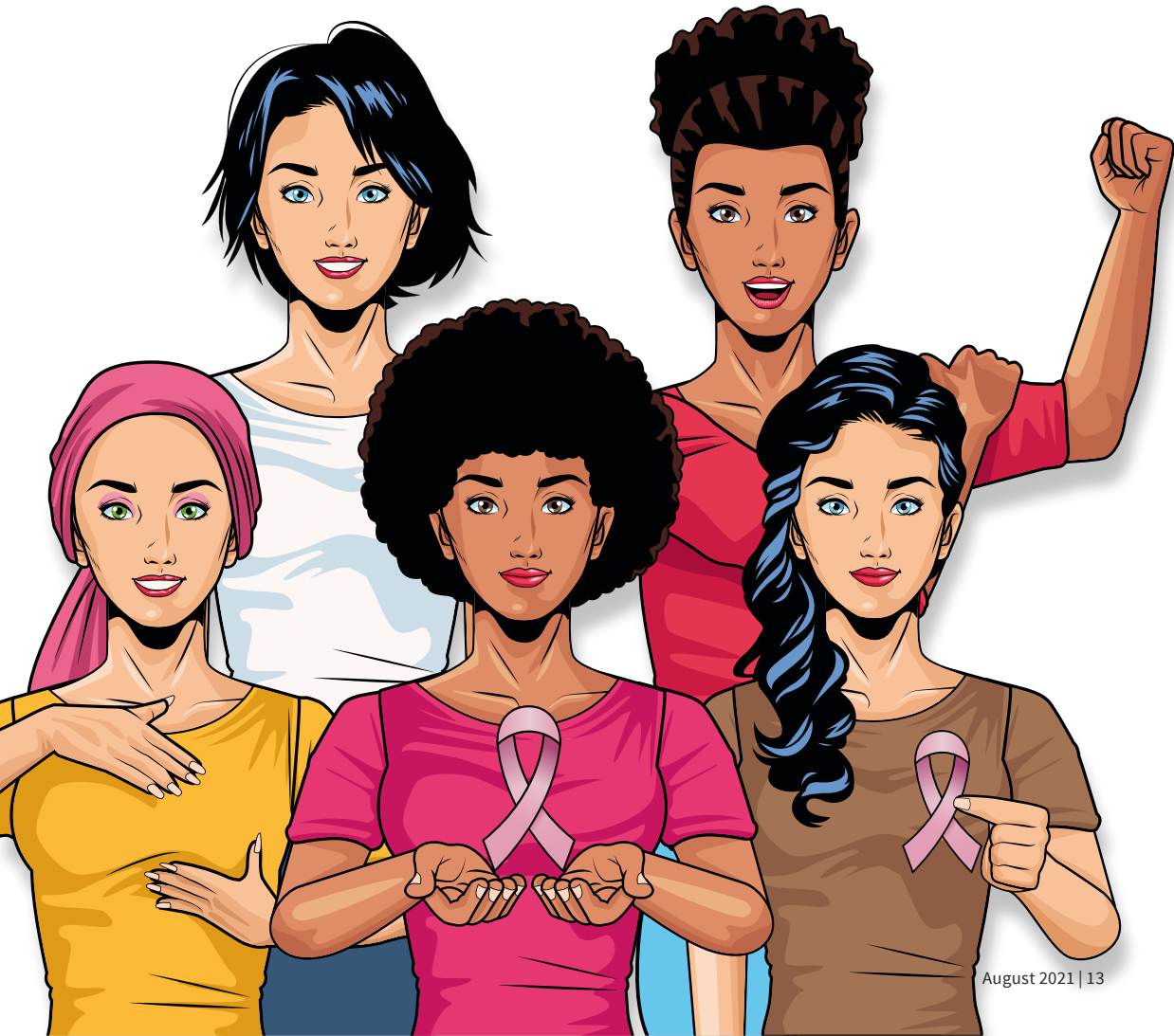
Rotary

AFRICA | south



EMPOWERED GIRLS *build society*

When women thrive, all of society benefits. Underpinning our efforts for 2021/22, is Rotary's focus on empowering girls and ensuring their access to education, resources, services and opportunities, writes Annemarie Mostert, Ambassador for Empowering Girls (Zone 22, Region 28).



Inspired by RI President Shekhar Mehta, we must use our belief as Rotarians that diversity, equity and inclusion is critical in all we do as a compass to guide this work, so that future generations of women leaders will have the tools they need to succeed.

From poverty and hunger to lack of education and employment opportunities, violence against women and access to decision making, Shekhar says, “There are many issues that girls face in different parts of the world, and you as leaders will ensure that we try to mitigate the disadvantage of the girl that they may have.”

Research has shown that over 140 million girls are not in school. According to UNICEF, one in 10 school-going girls in Africa misses school or drops out because of a lack of access to sanitary products.

Data from 68 countries indicates that a woman’s education is a key factor in determining a child’s survival, that only 39% of rural girls attend secondary school, and that, of the world’s 796 million illiterate people, women make up more than two thirds.

We need to focus on education and provide access to sanitary wear, as empowered girls are key to breaking the cycle of poverty for families around the world. They will stand up for their rights, marry and have children later in life and are more likely to have healthier and better educated children who will earn higher wages – helping to break the cycle of poverty. Every additional year of school increases girls’ eventual wages and helps to close the wage gap.

Let’s raise awareness about the exploitation of vulnerable girls. More rural women experience domestic violence and yet few seek services. Eighty percent of human trafficking victims are girls. It often starts with child, early and forced marriage or school-related gender-based violence.

Educated women are more likely to have greater decision-making power within their households. Let’s encourage our girls to be smart, to study science and mathematics, to have a positive body image, to step into leadership positions.

As people of action, we will be helping



Education is a key factor in determining a girl child’s survival

communities to break the cycle of poverty. By helping girls access quality education, we ensure economic independence, food security, resilience, environmental sustainability and a better world for all.

Our call to action is to leave no girl behind. Every Rotary club should implement at least one Empowering Girls project this year. Set up a Global Grant by focusing on Health, Education or Economic Independence. Partner with a Rotary Action group, share best practices, collaborate with other clubs and civil society. Showcase and share their story. Take that first step for the future of our girls today!

Share information, opportunities and collaboration contact Annemarie Mostert at:
annemarie@rotary9400.org.za

The Empowering Girls Initiative

Through the Empowering Girls Initiative, Rotary members worldwide can enhance girls' safety, health, education and wellbeing.



5 Reasons Why empowering girls matters to all of us

In South Africa, August is Women's Month and on October 11, people around the globe will celebrate the International Day of the Girl Child and the extraordinary power of girls in our world. To understand the importance of girls to achieving the global goals for sustainable development, we need to simply realise that to reach our global goals, we have to reach girls!

1. IT'S HER RIGHT.

Fundamentally, this is a human rights issue. Discrimination has no place in the 21st century, and every girl has the right to go to school, stay safe from violence, access health services, and fully participate in her community.

2. IT MAKES FAMILIES HEALTHIER

When girls are educated, healthy, and empowered, families are healthier. According to UNESCO, 2.1 million children under the age of five were saved between 1990 and 2009 because of improvements in girls' education. Closing the gap in the unmet need for family planning for the 225 million girls and women who want to delay or avoid pregnancy but aren't using modern contraception, would reduce maternal deaths by 67% and newborn deaths by 77%.

3. EMPOWERED GIRLS ARE KEY TO BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY.

Research from the Brookings Institution has found that every additional year of school increases a girls' eventual wages by an average of 12% – earnings she invests back into her family. Empowered, educated girls have healthier, better

educated children and earn higher wages, helping to break the cycle of poverty.

4. EMPOWERED GIRLS STRENGTHEN ECONOMIES.

According to the Brookings report, "Increasing the number of women completing secondary education by just one percent could increase a country's economic growth by 0.3 percent." Additionally, a report just released by the McKinsey Global Institute found that if women's level of participation in the labour market was the same as men's it would add up to \$28 trillion to annual global GDP in 2025.

5. DID WE MENTION IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO?

Every girl should be in charge of her own future and we have the collective obligation to protect her rights and promote her wellbeing.

Investing in girls is one of the smartest things we can do to promote a healthier, more prosperous world. More importantly, it's the right thing to do.

Source: unfoundation.org

Situation

Why empowering girls matters to all of us



A PREFERENCE FOR SONS

- A preference for sons can lead to sex selection through abortion, infanticide and other means.
- The world population is believed to lack an estimated 140 million women because of parents' preference for sons.
- In some regions, since the 1990s, up to 25% more males have been born than females.
- In more than 5 of 6 countries with available data, girls ages 10-14 are more likely than boys of the same age to spend 21 or more hours per week on household chores.

Sources: unfpa.org/gender-biased-sex-selection and data.unicef.org/topic/gender/covid-19/

NUTRITION

- In the past two decades, only minimal progress has been made in reducing the number of girls ages 5-19 who are moderately or severely underweight.
- In South Asia, where virtually no progress has been made since 1995, 1 in 5 girls is moderately or severely underweight.
- The proportion of girls ages 5-19 who are overweight has nearly doubled since 1995, from 9% to 17%.



HEALTH AND HYGIENE

- The number of girls ages 10-19 who are living with HIV has increased 31% since 1995. It's now 970 000.
- Globally, 500 million women and girls lack adequate facilities to properly manage their menstrual hygiene.
- Research finds that girls' inability to manage their menstrual hygiene in schools leads to absenteeism, which then has severe economic costs, both personally and societally.

Source: unicef.org

ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY

- Complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the world's leading cause of death for girls ages 15-19.
- Approximately 12 million adolescents ages 15-19 and at least 777 000 who are under 15 give birth in developing regions each year.
- Babies of adolescent mothers face higher risks of preterm delivery, low birth weight, and severe neonatal conditions.



CHILD MARRIAGE

- 1 in 5 girls around the world marries before age 18.
- Without stronger efforts to end child marriage, more than 120 million girls under age 18 will marry by 2030.
- Putting an end to child marriage would increase women's educational attainment and, with it, their potential earnings. It's estimated that ending child marriage could generate more than \$500 billion in benefits annually.

Sources: [unicef.org/protection/child-marriage](https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-marriage) and [unfpa.org/swop-2020#!/fgm-3](https://www.unfpa.org/swop-2020#!/fgm-3)



FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

- Female genital mutilation has been performed on at least 200 million girls and women in 31 countries across three continents.
- More than half of the affected girls live in Egypt, Ethiopia, or Indonesia.
- Each year, more than 4 million girls are at risk of genital mutilation. Most girls undergo it before age 15.

Source: [unicef.org/female genital mutilation](https://www.unicef.org/female-genital-mutilation)

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- The United Nations says 60 million girls worldwide have no access to basic education.
- Of the 960 million people who are illiterate worldwide, two thirds are women.
- In many regions, schools do not meet the safety, hygiene, or sanitation needs of girls.
- Globally, 1 in 4 girls ages 15-19 are neither employed nor in school, compared with 1 in 10 boys.

Source: [unicef.org/gender-equality](https://www.unicef.org/gender-equality)



VIOLENCE AGAINST GIRLS

- Of all human trafficking victims, 51% are women and 20% are girls.
- 1 in 20 girls ages 15-19, about 13 million globally, have been subjected to forced sex.
- Every year, an estimated 60 million girls are sexually assaulted on their way to school or at school.
- Nearly 4 in 10 adolescent girls think wife beating is justified in some circumstances.

Sources: [un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/12/report-majority-of-trafficking-victims-are-women-and-girls-one-third-children/](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/12/report-majority-of-trafficking-victims-are-women-and-girls-one-third-children/), [Unicef.org](https://www.unicef.org/), [worldbank.org/girlseducation](https://www.worldbank.org/girlseducation)

Action

Why empowering girls matters to all of us

WHAT CAN ROTARY DO?

Rotary clubs and districts can participate by creating and implementing projects that enhance the quality of life for girls and improves girls' chances of enjoying safe, healthy, and productive lives. They can also modify existing projects to include components that focus on empowering girls.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO GIRLS FACE IN OUR COMMUNITY?

- How can our club work with communities to find solutions to these challenges?
- What cultural norms in our area might keep girls from attending school?
- Which local organisations can we work with on projects that empower girls?
- How can we raise awareness of the need to empower girls within our communities and among our partners?
- Does our club empower women to take leadership roles?

THE LEGACY OF EMPOWERING GIRLS

The Empowering Girls initiative should be the start of Rotary making a lasting impact on a generation of girls. We can make a difference in girls' lives by:

- Advocating for the public and private sectors to support girls
- Raising awareness of girls' needs in our communities, our social networks and our partnerships as we've done with our polio eradication work

RESOURCES

- Empowering Girls' ambassadors
- Advocate for girls' empowerment.
- Act as a resource for clubs and districts.
- Collect and distribute success stories.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Visit the RI president's page to find ways to participate.
- Attend a presidential conference.

ROTARY ACTION GROUPS

- Find contact information on the RI president's page.
- Connect with action groups that can help.

THE CADRE OF TECHNICAL ADVISERS

Find an adviser who can help with initiatives to empower girls by writing to cadre@rotary.org.

ROTARY SHOWCASE

- Find ideas for projects or ways to work with other clubs to empower girls.
- Add your service activity or project to the Empowering Girls Campaign at Empowering Girls 2021 or EG2021.

PARTNERSHIPS

Work with our partner, the Global Partnership for Education, on projects that increase girls' access to education.



The Widening Gap

Another generation of women must wait for gender parity as an extra 36 years are added to the time remaining to close the gender gap. Despite progress in education and health, women face economic hurdles, declining political participation and workplace challenges according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021.

As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be felt, closing the global gender gap has increased by a generation from 99.5 years to 135.6 years.

Progress towards gender parity is stalling in several large economies and industries. This is partly due to women being more frequently employed in sectors hardest hit by lockdowns combined with the additional pressures of providing care at home.

The report, now in its 15th year, benchmarks the evolution of gender-based gaps in four areas: economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival; and political empowerment. It also examines the drivers of gender gaps and outlines the policies and practices needed for a gender-inclusive recovery.

The deterioration in 2021 is partly attributed to a widening political gender gap in several large population countries. Despite over half of the 156 indexed countries registering an improvement, women still hold only 26.1% of parliamentary seats and 22.6% of ministerial positions worldwide. On its current trajectory, the political gender gap is expected to take 145.5 years to close, compared to 95 years in the 2020 edition of the report, an increase of over 50%.

The economic gender gap has seen only a marginal improvement since the 2020 edition and is expected to take another 267.6 years to close. The slow progress is due to opposing trends – while the proportion of women among skilled professionals

continues to increase, income disparities persist and few women are represented in managerial positions.

Although these findings are sobering, gender gaps in education and health are nearly closed. In education, while 37 countries have reached gender parity, it will take another 14.2 years to close this gap completely due to slowing progress. In health, over 95% of this gender gap has been closed, registering a marginal decline since last year.

“The pandemic has fundamentally impacted gender equality in both the workplace and the home, rolling back years of progress. If we want a dynamic future economy, it is vital for women to be represented in the jobs of tomorrow. Now, more than ever, it is crucial to focus leadership attention, commit to firm targets and mobilise resources. This is the moment to embed gender parity by design into the recovery,” said Saadia Zahidi, Managing Director, World Economic Forum.

COVID-19'S IMPACT ON WOMEN

The pandemic has had a more negative impact on women than men, with women losing jobs at higher rates (5% vs 3.9% among men, International Labour Organisation), partly due to their disproportionate representation in sectors directly disrupted by lockdowns, such as the consumer sector. Data from the United States also indicates that women from historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups are worst affected.

Data from an Ipsos survey suggests that when care establishments closed, housework, childcare

and eldercare responsibilities fell disproportionately on women, contributing to higher levels of stress and lower levels of productivity.

As the job market recovers, LinkedIn data shows that women are being hired at a slower rate in multiple industries. They are also less likely to be hired for leadership roles, resulting in a reversal of up to two years' progress.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION: EMERGING JOBS

Sectors with historically low representation of women are also those with fast-growing “jobs of tomorrow”. In cloud computing, for example, women make up 14% of the workforce; in engineering, 20%; and in data and artificial intelligence, 32%; and it is more difficult for women to switch into these emerging roles than men.

While care and education roles also offer areas of future growth and women have stronger representation, they are often lower-paid roles than other jobs of tomorrow.

“Women aren't well represented in the majority of fast-growing roles, which means we are storing up even bigger gender representation problems as we emerge from the pandemic. These roles play a significant part in shaping all aspects of technology and how it is deployed in the world. We simply have to have women's voices and perspectives represented at this foundational stage, especially as digitisation is accelerating. Companies and governments need to build diversity, equity and inclusion into their plans for recovery. Assessing candidates on their



Women's hiring into senior management positions reverses in 2020



skills and potential, and not just their direct work experience and formal qualifications, is central to that. Skills-based hiring is key if we're going to make our economies and societies more inclusive," said Sue Duke, Head of Global Public Policy, at LinkedIn.

"The pandemic has exasperated the inequities on household responsibilities, compensation mechanisms and employment opportunities, even more so among specific groups of women including caregivers and those in part-time and inflexible work environments. The challenge for organisations is not just how to recover from the pandemic but to address the long-term systematic issues that create inequity across the workforce", said Natalie Lacey Chief Operating Officer, Global Affairs, IPSOS.

HOW TO SHAPE A GENDER EQUAL RECOVERY

The pandemic's combined effect of accelerated automation, the growing "double shift" of work and care, in parallel with other labour market dynamics such as occupational segregation, are likely to have a long-term impact on economic opportunities for women, risking inferior re-employment prospects and a persistent drop in income.

The report offers ways for countries to work towards closing their gender gaps. These include

further investment in the care sector and equitable access to care leave for working men and women, policies and practices that proactively focus on overcoming occupational segregation by gender, effective mid-career skills-development policies for women, and managerial practices that embed sound, unbiased hiring and promotion practices.

THE GLOBAL GENDER GAP IN 2021

For the 12th time, Iceland is once again the most gender-equal country in the world. The top 10 includes:

The five most improved countries in the overall index in 2021 are Lithuania, Serbia, Timor-Leste, Togo and United Arab Emirates, having narrowed their gender gaps by at least 4.4 percentage points or more. Timor-Leste and Togo also managed to close their economic gap by at least 17 full percentage points in the year. Three new countries have been assessed this year for the first time: Afghanistan (156th), Guyana (53rd) and Niger (138th).

Sub-Saharan Africa (67.2%) has made slow progress, such that it will take 121.7 years to close the gender gap. More than half of the countries in the region (20 out of 34) made progress in the past year, though only Namibia and Rwanda have closed at least 80% of their gaps.



The workshop was conducted by AG Sarita Sirohi (above) and PP Jacintha Merhoye.

Empowering School Girls

Menstrual Hygiene Day is celebrated each year on 28 May and the irony of it is that those who are most affected by menstrual hygiene are not even aware of its existence.

The Rotary Club of Durban Clairwood Park (D9370) conducted a Period Dignity workshop at Phoenix Secondary School to celebrate the day. Keeping in mind the safety norms for learners, their temperature was taken and hands sanitiser and face masks painted with menstrual bracelets (the global symbol of Menstrual Day) were given to them to wear.

The objective of the workshop is to create awareness among students about stigma, taboos and myths linked to menstruation and to educate them about their cycle and sanitary products.

There is an urgent need to educate girls to switch to a variety of reusable menstrual products from which they can choose the best that suits their daily activities and are comfortable. These also reduce the massive environmental and health risks associated with single-use products.

Girls were taught about how to use and made reusable products and group activities were organised to break the ice so that the participants felt comfortable talking to each other. To add their voice to end the period stigma, they Join the Menstruation Bracelet action by wearing the bracelet which is the global symbol for menstruation. Each participant was given a menstrual hygiene kit.



Marion Spence of Rotary Club of Durban Bay (D9370) believes that the education of girls in poverty is the key to uplifting them to take their place of fulfilment in society. During her and her husband, John's, annual six-month visit to their other home in USA D5020 (Pacific Northwest, USA and Vancouver Island, Canada) they have raised an average of \$3 500 annually to provide washable reusable sanitary pads obtained from Sue Barnes of Project Dignity.



**PEACEBUILDING AND
CONFLICT PREVENTION**



**DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT**



**WATER, SANITATION,
AND HYGIENE**



**MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH**



**BASIC EDUCATION
AND LITERACY**



**COMMUNITY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**



ENVIRONMENT

NEW

AREA OF FOCUS ICONS ARE NOW AVAILABLE IN THE BRAND CENTER

Rotary's area of focus icons promote the causes that reflect the critical humanitarian issues that Rotary clubs address worldwide.

The newly designed icons are available in a variety of colors and easier-to-use formats, both as grouped icons and as individual icons. Use these icons in your social media graphics, websites, and other materials to show the causes your club supports.

Download the icons and guidelines at brandcenter.rotary.org. Click **Logos** and then **Rotary Logos**.

Rotary 



At the District 9400 Governor induction are Hans and PDG Annemarie Mostert with DG Stella Anyangwe and Rotarian Carl Anyangwe. The ceremony was held on Saturday 26 June, with strict COVID-19 protocols, in Pretoria. Annemarie welcomed Stella as the first Black African Woman to become governor of 9400 in 100 years. During the ceremony Rotary Director Katerina Kotsali-Papadimitriou welcomed Stella and wished her well.

