



A QUICK PRIMER ON
WOMEN'S RIGHTS

USAPANG BABAE

If men and women are equal,
why do we need women's rights?

Yes, **human rights are universal**. Women are human beings as much as men. Equality and equity between the genders is a fundamental human right guaranteed by international law.¹

However, **the rights of women around the world are routinely violated**. Women face discrimination, oppression, and violence daily—including harassment, sexual and domestic abuse, lower pay, and restricted access to education and opportunity.²

Every woman has the right to live free from these violations. Therefore, **women's rights are human rights**. The emphasis on women reflects that women, to this day, have yet to be accorded the same rights as men.

This **injustice is why we must fight for women's rights**. Our **rights as human beings will never be truly upheld until the rights of every individual—regardless of gender—are honored by all**.





Where are we now in the fight For women's rights?

Much progress has been made in the Philippines. Filipinas are often at par with men in the academe, in politics, and at the workplace.²

Legislation has been passed towards the fulfillment of women's human rights.

- Republic Act 9710, or the Magna Carta of Women, “seeks to eliminate discrimination through the recognition, protection, fulfillment, and promotion of the rights of Filipino women, especially those belonging in the marginalized sectors.”³
- Republic Act 9262, the Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act, recognizes women as victims of abuse and provides for their protection.⁴
- The Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995⁵ and the Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act of 1998⁶ are also wins for women, as they are much more likely to be victims of harassment and rape—and are often blamed for being victims.⁷

Despite these achievements, we have a long way to go.

Thousands of Filipinas are still victims of harassment, exploitation, discrimination, forced displacement, forced marriage, and violence.²

Much of the crisis can be attributed to prevailing attitudes towards women. Many Filipinos still see women as weaker than men or as sexual objects,⁸ and still strongly associate women with their traditional roles: mother, wife, and housekeeper.²





What can we do to uphold women's rights?



Educate yourself and others. Unlearn toxic attitudes towards

women: know your human rights and when they are being infringed upon. Educate your friends and relatives about women's rights—and what constitutes a violation of women's rights.



Speak out against discrimination, harassment, or violence.

Learn about local organizations and institutions to whom you can report acts of abuse against women, such as your workplace's Committee on Decorum and Investigation (CODI) of Sexual Harassment Cases.



Support your local women's organizations

, such as Women's Rights Online-Philippines (@WomensRightsOnlinePH), the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (@WGNRR), and the Young Feminists Collective (@YoungFemCollective).



Vote wisely in the coming elections.

Get to know your local and national candidates and their positions on women rights. Examine their track records and past behavior. Look for genuine champions for women.



Share the work!

Worldwide, women perform more than twice as much unpaid labor as men, limiting their access to other opportunities.⁹ If you're a man, do your fair share of household chores, childcare, and the unpaid work traditionally-and unfairly—assigned to women.



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