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*Touching tribute: A mural to Giulia Cecchettin, murdered days before getting her university degree.*

**Is gender equality really possible? Women have burst through glass ceilings and broken countless records this year, but patriarchal attitudes remain entrenched around the world.**

## What's happening?

"I think women are foolish to pretend they are equal to men," **pondered** the Nobel Prize-winning British writer William Golding, "they are far superior and always have been."

This may have been a light-hearted joke, but women have many things to be proud of from 2023. This year, Christina Koch became the first female astronaut assigned to a **lunar** mission. Claudia Goldin became the first solo woman awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics. Greta Gerwig and Taylor Swift made huge achievements in pop culture.

## Find out more

The UN's Gender Snapshot 2023 warns that over 340 million women and girls — 8% of the world's female population — will live in extreme **poverty** by 2030. Women do the majority of the world's unpaid work and are promoted less regularly than men.

Women also face violence worldwide. November saw the tragic case of Giulia Cecchettin, an Italian woman who was murdered, allegedly by her ex-boyfriend. Protesters held vigils which remembered all 106 women killed in Italy so far this year.

But there are plenty of things to celebrate this year too. Women's sport became more popular than ever, particularly football after the FIFA Women's World Cup.

Women may be hitting the headlines for their fantastic achievements. But they are also **disproportionately** subject to violence, harassment, abuse and economic **exclusion**. Some say that equality looks further away than ever.

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Yes! It will take cooperation from all around the world, but we can fix gender inequality so long as we have the desire to.

## Is gender equality really possible?

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## Others think

### Some say

No! There will always be a level of discrimination between genders. We can hope to reduce it, but never get rid of it entirely.

### Some people say

*"The connections between and among women are the most feared, the most problematic, and the most potentially transforming force on the planet."*

**Adrienne Rich (1929 – 2012), American poet, essayist and feminist**

*What do you think?*

### Six steps to discovery

#### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** - What women have inspired you this year?

#### 2. Wonder

**What questions do you have?** - For example: What other records did women break this year?

#### 3. Investigate

**What are the facts?** - Name five women who you can think of who have achieved something big this year.

#### 4. Construct

**What is your point of view?** - You are in charge of UN Women. What big initiative do you launch in 2024?

#### 5. Express

**What do others believe?** - As a class, debate the following statement: To give women more rights, we must take them from men.

#### 6. Reflect

**What might happen next?** - Write a calendar of predictions for 2024 in women's news. Write at least one prediction per month. Keep your calendar so that you can reflect on it at the end of next year.

### Glossary

**Pondered** - Think about something carefully and reflectively.

**Lunar** - To do with the Moon.

**Poverty** - The state of being very poor.

**Disproportionately** - To an extent that is too large or too small in comparison with something else.

**Exclusion** - The process of excluding or the state of being excluded.