

# Sustainability and Women's Rights

Viscous Flow (Jon Raybin and Julia Murphy)  
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University of Chicago  
Username: jraybin  
Email: [jraybin@uchicago.edu](mailto:jraybin@uchicago.edu)

# Women's Rights

Gender inequality is a critical social issue around the world. However, I was surprised to learn that poor access to education and family planning have a substantial environmental impact as well. According to *Drawdown*, addressing these issues would offset nearly 120 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

This strategy not only helps preserve the environment; it improves women's health and well-being.



Women in Bangladesh learning strategies for resilience against climate change.

**Image Credit:**

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/9/bangladesh-climate-change>

# Educational Equality



Rural Kenyan women have poor access to education.

**Image Credit:**

<https://gemreportunesco.wordpress.com/2012/03/05/rural-women-miss-out-on-education-and-decent-jobs/>

Even as access to education in the developing world has improved, significant gender inequalities persist. Two-thirds of the planet's 750 million illiterate adults are women.

Education is a worthwhile investment. As economic opportunities improve, women have healthier children and become healthier themselves. Education improves farming productivity and sustainability.

# Reproductive Rights

Women should have the right to safe and voluntary family planning. In addition to improving women's health and economic opportunities, family planning is also one of the most effective methods for mitigating future greenhouse gas emissions. Population growth in the developing world will place major strain on the Earth's resources.

In the developing world, 84% percent of unintended pregnancies are due to poor access to birth control. Startlingly, even in the United States 45% of pregnancies are unplanned.



A Senegalese mother waits in line for clinic access.

**Image Credit:**

<https://www.impatientoptimists.org/Posts/2012/10/Increased-Access-to-Family-Planning-A-Health-Provider-in-Yeumbeul-Goes-the-Extra-Mile#.WfTuqmiPJPY>