



# COMMONWEALTH NURSES AND MIDWIVES FEDERATION

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## GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX (GII)

No country in the world is on track to achieve gender equality by 2030 according to the first index to measure progress against a set of internationally agreed targets.

Gender inequality remains a major barrier to human development. The United Nations report that girls and women have made major strides since 1990, but they have not yet gained gender equity. The disadvantages facing women and girls are a major source of inequality. All too often, the UN say, women and girls are discriminated against, for example in health, education, political representation, and the labour market with negative consequences for development of their capabilities and their freedom of choice.

The GII is an inequality index. It measures gender inequalities in three important aspects of human development: reproductive health - measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment - measured by the proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by females and proportion of adult females and males aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status - expressed as labour market participation and measured by labour force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older. The GII measures the human development costs of gender inequality. Thus the higher the GII value the more disparities between females and males and the more loss to human development.

The table opposite shows the Gender Inequality Ranking for Commonwealth countries. The ranking demonstrates that there is a great deal of room for improvement. Nurses and midwives have a role to play in promoting gender equity to improve health outcomes for women and girls. The table also shows the ranking for the Human Development Index (HDI).

The HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone. The Human Development Index (HDI) measures the average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life; being knowledgeable; and have a decent standard of living.

There is no GII ranking for the Seychelles, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Nigeria, Nauru and Tuvalu.

## COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES RANKING

Commonwealth countries did not score well on the Gender Inequality Index. The table below shows the Commonwealth country rank for the GII and the corresponding rank for the Human Development Index (HDI).

COUNTRY	GII	HDI
Singapore	12	9
Cyprus	17	32
Canada	20	12
Australia	23	3
United Kingdom	25	14
New Zealand	34	16
Malta	45	29
Brunei Darussalam	51	39
Barbados	60	58
Malaysia	62	57
Trinidad and Tobago	73	69
St Lucia	74	90
Bahamas	75	54
Maldives	76	101
Fiji	79	92
Sri Lanka	80	76
Samoa	82	104
Mauritius	84	69
Rwanda	85	158
Jamaica	95	97
Tonga	96	98
Botswana	89	101
Belize	89	106
South Africa	90	113
Namibia	115	129
Guyana	122	125
Zambia	125	144
Uganda	126	162
India	127	130
Zimbabwe	128	156
Tanzania	130	154
Ghana	131	140
Pakistan	133	150
Bangladesh	134	136
Lesotho	135	159
Kenya	137	142
Mozambique	138	180
Eswatini (Swaziland)	141	144
Cameroon	141	151
Malawi	148	171
Gambia	149	174
Sierra Leone	150	184
Papua New Guinea	159	153

For more information go to:

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>



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## BAHAMAS REFORMS MENTAL HEALTH LEGISLATION



The Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas has established a National Mental Health Advisory Committee to oversee the writing of new mental health legislation. The Bahamas current legislation is dated 1969 and no longer reflects mental health practice in the Bahamas, nor compliance with the international human rights treaties the Bahamas has ratified. Writing new mental health legislation is an initiative of the Bahamas Minister for Health, the Hon Dr Duane Sands and the Ministry of Health. The CNMF and the Indian Law Society Centre for Mental Health Law and Policy are providing technical advice and support. Support for the initiative is also being provided by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Pan American Health Organisation.

The Lancet Commissions released a comprehensive mental health report at the end of last year in which they state that despite substantial research advances showing what can be done to prevent and treat mental disorders and to promote mental health, translation into real-world effects has been painfully slow. The global burden of disease attributable to mental disorders has risen in all countries. Human rights violations and abuses persist in many countries, with large numbers of people locked away in mental institutions or prisons, or living on the streets, often without legal protection. The quality of mental health services is routinely worse than the quality of those for physical health. Government investment and development assistance for mental health remain pitifully small. Collective failure to respond to this global health crisis results in monumental loss of human capabilities and avoidable suffering. Read the report at:

<https://www.thelancet.com/commissions/global-mental-health>.

## REGISTRATION OPENING SOON



### 5th Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference

Friday 6 and Saturday  
7 March 2020, London UK

Celebrate ...  
nurses and midwives,  
breaking down barriers,  
leaving no-one behind

<http://www.commonwealthnurses.org/conference2020>

Abstracts have now closed for the 5<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Nurses and Midwives Conference being held 6-7 March 2020 in London UK. Registration will open in July. For further information go to:

<http://www.commonwealthnurses.org/conference2020>

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## 24<sup>th</sup> CNMF Biennial Meeting 2020

### SAVE THE DATE

The CNMF Board have confirmed that the 24<sup>th</sup> CNMF Biennial Meeting of Members will be held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020 in London, United Kingdom. The Biennial Meeting of Members is the decision making body of the CNMF. All CNMF members are entitled to attend and participate in the debate and decision making. CNMF friends are welcome to attend as observers. The 2020 Biennial Meeting of Members will receive reports from the President, Executive Secretary and Treasurer; vote on constitutional changes; confirm position statements debated at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Biennial Meeting of Members; consider other CNMF position statements; and set CNMF directions for the following two years.

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