

## Global Disparities and Racism

### FIGO position on issue:

FIGO (International Federation Gynecology and Obstetrics) is dedicated to the improvement of girl's and women's health and rights and to the reduction of disparities in healthcare available to girls, women and newborns.

FIGO's vision is that women of the world achieve the highest possible standards of physical, mental, reproductive and sexual health and well-being throughout their lives.

This statement is made regardless of colour, age, gender assignment, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, personal circumstances, political or religious affiliation, migrant status, of economic standing, or country of origin.

At these most troubled times, FIGO stands with those who speak for equity and equality.

FIGO acknowledges the pain, anxiety and suffering of so many who have experienced racism and bias. Because of the work we do, we are deeply aware of the inequities experienced by women of colour and other minority groups, and the political and economic structures that perpetuate and maintain these inequities. We support women to improve the health and living conditions for themselves and their families.

The disparities we see in health and well-being are numerous, and FIGO pledges to work with those to remove the disparities, dismantle harmful structures, and improve social and health conditions. We believe that women's health and well-being are most often compromised NOT because of a lack of medical knowledge, but rather because of a violation of basic human rights, including the right to health.

We stand for a global reduction in maternal mortality and morbidity. Maternal morbidity and mortality impact women of colour and women from under-resourced countries in a disproportionate fashion.

FIGO stands for the global elimination of cervical cancer, a cancer that disproportionately impacts women of colour and women from under-resourced countries.

We stand for sexual and reproductive rights for all. Universal access to health care and sexual and reproductive health furthers the needs of all women around the world, including women of colour and women in under-resourced countries where access is limited.

Women are essential for the social and economic stability and progress across all societies.

FIGO recognizes the negative impact of poverty, social exclusion and discrimination, of girls and women of colour, the indigenous peoples, the blacks, the Afro-descendants, sexual minorities, the migrants and those in areas of conflict.

Health care professionals including Obstetricians and Gynaecologists have a significant social responsibility and play a prominent role in society based on their knowledge and skills. They have the means to impact social and health decisions.

FIGO states that all women seeking health care must be treated with respect, regardless of ethnicity, age, marital status, political affiliation, race, religion, economic status or disability.

All women should be respected. Justice addresses what entitlements are due to patients for their health care. Justice demands that we develop a system that provides equitable access to resources and healthcare with no regard to economic, political, or social disadvantages.

FIGO: Current Ethical Challenges in Obstetric and Gynaecologic Practice, Research and Education [https://issuu.com/figohq/docs/binder1-dr.\\_frank\\_chervenak](https://issuu.com/figohq/docs/binder1-dr._frank_chervenak)

### **FIGO commits to taking the following actions:**

1. Improve the health and well-being of women across their life course worldwide.
2. Enhance the status of women across their life course, enabling them to realise their full potential of education, sexual and reproductive rights, and opportunities.
3. Advance the practice of obstetrics and gynaecology through education, training, research and advocacy, employing high ethical and professional standards.
4. Strengthen the role of FIGO in world health and development.

### **About FIGO**

FIGO is a professional organisation that brings together obstetrical and gynaecological associations from all over the world.

FIGO's vision is that women of the world achieve the highest possible standards of physical, mental, reproductive and sexual health and wellbeing throughout their lives. We lead on global programme activities, with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia.

FIGO advocates on a global stage, especially in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) pertaining to reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and non-communicable diseases (SDG3). We also work to raise the status of women and enable their active participation to achieve their reproductive and sexual rights, including addressing FGM and gender-based violence (SDG5).

We also provide education and training for our Member Societies and build capacities of those from low-resource countries through strengthening leadership, good practice and promotion of policy dialogues.

FIGO is in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) and a consultative status with the United Nations (UN).