

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND UN HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

from a feminist perspective

SDGs & THE TWIN COVENANTS

Women's Major Group

The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), also known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all." It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 and is intended to be achieved by 2030.

The ICCPR and ICESCR because of their extensive reach have clear connections to many of the systemic and structural issues that the SDGs aim to address.

Sustainable development and women's human rights cannot be achieved without us being able to exercise all of our human rights, including economic, civil and political rights.

Much of the root causes of structural gender inequality that exists today are connected to the failure of governments in advancing civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and the SDGs agenda.

DID YOU KNOW?

Efforts to formulate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) into legally binding treaties eventually resulted in the development and adoption of the Twin Covenants of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The UDHR together with the Twin Covenants form what is generally known as the International Bill of Human Rights.

WHAT ARE THE SDGs?

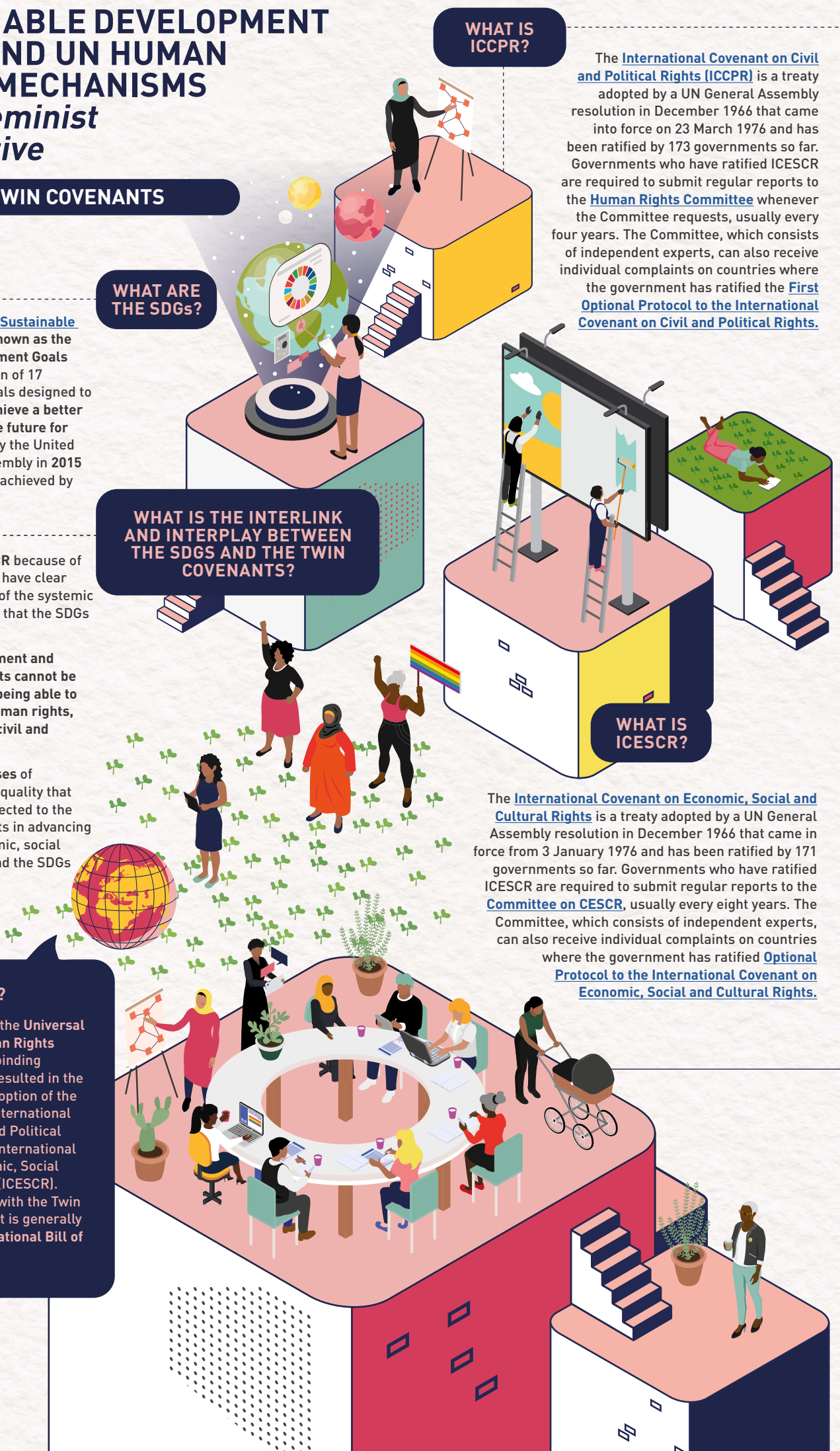
WHAT IS THE INTERLINK AND INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE SDGs AND THE TWIN COVENANTS?

WHAT IS ICCPR?

The [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights \(ICCPR\)](#) is a treaty adopted by a UN General Assembly resolution in December 1966 that came into force on 23 March 1976 and has been ratified by 113 governments so far. Governments who have ratified ICESCR are required to submit regular reports to the [Human Rights Committee](#) whenever the Committee requests, usually every four years. The Committee, which consists of independent experts, can also receive individual complaints on countries where the government has ratified the [First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#).

WHAT IS ICESCR?

The [International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) is a treaty adopted by a UN General Assembly resolution in December 1966 that came into force from 3 January 1976 and has been ratified by 111 governments so far. Governments who have ratified ICESCR are required to submit regular reports to the [Committee on CESCR](#), usually every eight years. The Committee, which consists of independent experts, can also receive individual complaints on countries where the government has ratified [Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#).



WHO COULD YOU REACH OUT TO?

The **Women's Major Group** facilitates participation and inputs CSOs working to promote human rights based sustainable development with a focus on women's human rights at the UN

ICCPR

The **Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR Centre)** is an NGO working and supporting CSOs before, during and after their state is reviewed by the Human Rights Committee.

The **International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA)** is the world federation of national and local organisations dedicated to achieving equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people across the globe.

ICESCR

International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net) connects over 280 NGOs, grassroots groups, social movements and advocates across more than 75 countries to build a global movement to make human rights and social justice a reality for all.

GI-ESCR is a non-governmental organisation that promotes transformative change to end endemic problems of social and economic injustice through a human rights lens.

ICCPR

CCPR Center provides a **guideline** on CSOs participation in the reporting process to the Human Rights Committee.

ILGA has numerous resources for those who are raising a wide range of SOGIESC human rights issues to various treaty bodies such as its **Treaty Bodies Strategic Litigation Toolkit** and its annual **Treaty Bodies Reports**, where you can find disaggregated analysis of the committees' SOGIESC references.

ICESCR

A manual on **Claiming Women's ESC Rights Using OP-CEDAW and OP-ICESCR** developed by ESCR-Net and IWRAP-Asia Pacific provides practical guide to using both CEDAW and ICESCR as well as their complaints mechanisms to demand recognition and implementation of women's economic, social and cultural rights.

TOOLS TO CHECK OUT

A **report** by GI-ESCR and the Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies highlighting how CSOs can utilize concluding observations from treaty bodies to advance women's rights to land and property.

TIPS FROM THE MOVEMENTS

Many governments sign on to or ratify multiple international mechanisms, treaties and instruments with many of these often overlapping and complementing each other. Use these overlaps as much as possible in bringing your point across to governments whenever you are doing your advocacies and engagements.

If you do not see an explicit reference to, for example, LGBTI people or sex workers or Indigenous women in a particular treaty or mechanism, that does not mean that you should stop working on or utilizing these treaties and mechanisms. You can develop your own feminist analysis on the various articles of treaties and conventions so it can be utilized to advance the intersectional issues that you are working on or applied on the diverse and intersectional communities of women that you work with.

ICCPR

SDG 5 which calls for "achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls" is very clearly linked to Article 3 of ICCPR which calls on governments to "undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all civil and political rights set forth in the present Covenant."

However, there are other Articles of ICCPR which can also be linked to other Targets under SDG 5. SDG 5 Target 2 on "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation" can be linked to Article 7 of ICCPR which prohibits torture.

SDG 5 Target 5 on "Ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life," can be linked to Article 25 of ICCPR, which outlines every persons' rights to participation in public affairs.

ICESCR

SDG 5 which calls for "achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls" actually has no targets and indicators which mentions women's participation in labour and employment.

While several Indicators under SDG 8 which calls for "promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all" makes some mention of equal pay for work of equal value, prohibition of forced labour and modern slavery and protecting labour rights and promoting safe and secure working environments for all.

However multiples articles of ICESCR outlines in more detail the right to work including, among others, the right to technical and vocational guidance and training programmes (Article 6), the right to unionize (Article 8) and the right to social security, including before and after childbirth for women (Article 10).