

What are Human Rights?



Namaste, everyone. My name is Asha, I live in a village in India.

Will you join me to talk about the stories in each of our lives?



I am a teacher - I love teaching the children of my village. As I tell my students, we all have a different story. Even those from the same village, the same caste, the same family. We all experience life differently.



There are certain aspects of life which are essential to be able to live up to your full potential; things like education, health, equality and a life free from violence. All of these things are connected.

But perhaps the foundation of all of them is education. Being educated allows one to have more opportunities in life- it allowed me to realize my goal of becoming a teacher.

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But it's not only education that allows us to have more control over our lives. Our bodies need to be healthy as well. We can do our work, learn and live fully only if we are healthy and have access to the services we need.

आंगनवाड़ी
सेन्टर

Education has increased my confidence and made me self-reliant. My opinions are now respected on all issues, large and small.



We cannot treat our children differently because they are a boy or a girl, or people differently because they are from a certain caste.



And a life free from violence means that we can be safe and happy at home.



These are examples of some of the rights which we are entitled to as humans. But as you know, these rights don't come easy for everyone. Some people have little or no access to them at all.



Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, Article 14/15, Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

You've probably heard about these human rights, but did you know that the Indian government has signed national laws and international declarations promising to protect these rights?



At times we also have to protect our rights within our own households. And every action to strengthen our rights, whether small or big, can bring a positive change.

In addition to the laws, I have heard quite a few stories over the years of some of our sisters and brothers resisting injustice.



Forming groups and discussing issues on a regular basis has been a useful starting point for us. We are able to see that our problems are not just our own, and addressing them as a community helps.

There are many ways that we can claim our human rights—whether it's through the law, formings groups, or taking control of our lives in small ways.

Perhaps it's most important to simply start with a dialogue. It could be the first step towards changing the world. So, how and when are you going to start the conversation?

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