

What is gender-biased sex selection?

It is when a couple or family prefers having a son over having a daughter

It is a harmful practice and a manifestation of gender inequality. And it directly impacts the sex ratio at birth between girls and boys

Today, around 142 million women and girls are believed to be missing as a result of son preference and gender-biased sex selection



Myths about gender-biased sex selection?

- 1 "Having a boy is better than having a girl, so they can take care of their parents when they get old."
- 2 "A son will work and provide for his parents when we get old, while a daughter will be married off into another family."
- 3 "A son will give the image of power and prestige on the family."
- 4 "A woman who gives birth to only girls is of no use."

Gender-biased sex selection:

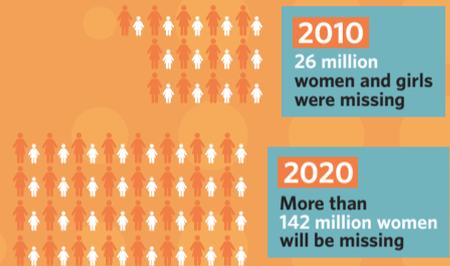
Gender-biased sex selection takes place

BEFORE BIRTH

by choosing the sex of the baby before conception or deciding to keep or terminate the pregnancy

AFTER BIRTH

through infanticide, or differential treatment in maternal nutrition and childcare



How do we know gender-biased sex selection is taking place?

The biological normal sex ratio at birth is

102 to 106 males



Since the 1980s, the ratio increased to

110 to 130 males



per 100 females birth

per 100 female births in affected countries

Affected countries are primarily grouped in

East and South Asia, the South Caucasus and Southeast Europe

Why is gender-biased sex selection happening?



In the family

Sons continue the family line. They are responsible for their parents in their old age.

Men who do not have a son may face humiliation in some cultures.

Daughters are considered to be a burden as they marry into someone else's family.

Women who do not give birth to a son may face ill-treatment or abandonment.



In the society

Men's role and contribution is valued more highly than women's.

Economic opportunities are often more available to men.

Families may not invest in girls' education to the same extent as that of boys.

How to address gender-biased sex selection?

- Addressing gender inequality and harmful social norms
- Empowering girls
- Changing perceptions around the value of daughters
- Galvanizing strong political will and commitment

- Increasing women's education, employment and political representation
- Creating laws and policies on social protection and insurance
- Amplifying access to sexual and reproductive health services



We are seeing change.

A global decline in gender-biased sex selection rates is reported with differential levels of sex ratios at birth.

