LESSON PLAN

CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE: PROTECTING THE DIGNITY OF GIRLS AND WOMEN

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CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This three-session curriculum explores God's love for girls and women, examines the impact of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and equips participants to take faithful action that promotes dignity, justice, and healing. Through Scripture, discussion, reflection, and action planning, participants will learn how Christian discipleship calls us to protect girls, support women, and challenge practices that undermine human dignity.

Facilitator should note that this curriculum addresses Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), a sensitive topic that may affect participants personally or through family, community, or cultural experiences. Facilitators should create a safe, respectful, and nonjudgmental environment where participants feel valued and heard.

The purpose of this curriculum is not to criticize cultures or individuals but to explore how Christian faith calls us to uphold human dignity, protect girls and women, and seek justice with compassion.

Participants should never be pressured to share personal experiences. Facilitators are encouraged to use person-centered and trauma-informed approaches throughout the sessions and to be aware of local resources for pastoral care, counseling, or support if needed.

SESSION 1

God Values Girls and Young Women

Scripture

· Mark 10:13–16

· Genesis 1:27

Main Theme

Every girl is created in God's image, loved by Christ, and worthy of dignity, protection, and opportunity.

Objectives

By the end of this session participants will:

1. Understand God's love and care for children and young people.
2. Reflect on the dignity and worth of girls and young women.
3. Identify challenges facing girls in their communities.
4. Explore the church's responsibility to nurture and protect girls.

Supplies

Bibles

Flip chart paper

Markers

Sticky notes

Pens

Centering Moment (5 Minutes)

Facilitator Says:
"Today we begin by reflecting on how God sees girls and young women. In many places around the world, girls face challenges that limit their opportunities and threaten their well-being. Yet Scripture reminds us that every person is created in God's image and deeply loved by God."

Invite participants to complete:
"One hope I have for girls and young women in my community is..."

Opening Prayer
"Loving God, thank you for creating each person in your image. Help us recognize the dignity, gifts, and potential of every girl and young woman. Open our hearts and minds as we learn together. Amen."

Scripture Study (20 Minutes)

Read Mark 10:13-16

Discussion Questions:
1. Why did Jesus welcome the children?
2. What does this teach us about God's concern for young people?
3. How can churches demonstrate the same care today?

Read Genesis 1:27

"So God created humankind in his image."

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be created in God's image?
2. How should this shape the way we treat girls and women?
3. What barriers prevent girls from reaching their full potential?

Activity: Dreams and Barriers (20 Minutes)

Participants write:

• Dreams—What opportunities should every girl have?

• Barriers—What challenges prevent girls from achieving these opportunities?

Discuss ways churches and communities can help remove barriers.

Reflection (10 Minutes)

Ask:

1. What gifts do girls and women bring to families, churches, and communities?
2. How can the church better support them?

Closing Prayer

Key Takeaway

Every girl is created in God's image and deserves dignity, opportunity, and protection.

SESSION 2

Protecting Dignity: Understanding Female Genital Mutilation

Scriptures

· Psalm 139:13-14

· Genesis 1:27

Main Theme

God created girls and women with dignity and worth. Christians are called to challenge practices that cause harm and promote healing and justice.

Objectives

Participants will:

1. Understand what FGM is.
2. Learn key facts about FGM.
3. Explore the impact of FGM on girls, women, families, and communities.
4. Reflect on how faith communities can respond.

Supplies

· Bibles

· Participant handouts

· Flip chart paper

· Markers

Centering Moment (5 Minutes)

Invite participants to share:
"One quality I admire in women who have positively influenced my life."

Understanding the Issue (10 Minutes)
Facilitator Explains:
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or injure female genital organs for non- medical reasons. It is often performed during childhood or adolescence.

Key Facts
1. More than 250 million girls and women worldwide have undergone FGM.
2. FGM has no health benefits.
3. FGM can cause severe bleeding, infection, infertility, childbirth complications, and long-term psychological trauma.
4. Kenya has made progress through education, legislation, community engagement, and faith- based advocacy, though some communities are still doing the practice.

Discussion:
1. What surprised you about these facts?
2. Why might communities continue practices that can cause harm?
Scripture Study (15 Minutes)

Read Psalm 139:13-14
"I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

Discussion Questions:

1. What does this passage teach about God's creation?
2. How does it affirm the dignity of girls and women?

Read Genesis 1:27

Discussion Questions:

1. How does being created in God's image influence our understanding of human dignity?
2. How should Christians respond when dignity is threatened?

United Methodist Social Principles Connection

We affirm the dignity and worth of all women and girls...we ask the same bodies to ensure their right to live free from gendered expectations that limit their full development as human beings and from harassment, discrimination, violence, domestic or workplace abuse, human trafficking and other forms of gender-based violence in all times and places."
(The United Methodist Church, Social Principles 2020/2024, ¶163D)

"Advocate for an end to harmful traditional practices, such as child marriage, polygamy, and female genital mutilation."
(The United Methodist Church, Book of Resolutions 2020/2024, Resolution 3355, "Eradicating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence")

Group Activity: Walking in Her Shoes (20 Minutes)

Amina's Story

Amina is a 13-year-old girl living in a community where FGM is practiced as an important cultural rite of passage. As the school

SESSION 3

Women, Justice, and the Church's Response

Scripture

Micah 6:8

Main Theme

Christian faith calls us not only to learn about justice but also to work for justice on behalf of girls and women.

Objectives

Participants will:

1. Reflect on lessons learned from Sessions 1 and 2.
2. Identify challenges facing girls and women in their communities.
3. Develop practical church responses.
4. Commit to promoting dignity, equality, and justice.

Supplies

1. Bibles
2. Flip chart paper
3. Markers
4. Sticky notes

Centering Moment (5 Minutes)

Ask:

"What is one thing you learned about girls' dignity and well-being during the previous sessions?"

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