Reducing period poverty

Sustainable UCL and UCL Students’ Union are working together to reduce ‘period poverty’ by providing sustainable period products to staff and student who need them.

At the same time, the initiative is aiming to raise awareness of the pros and cons of different disposable and reusable menstrual products, including their impact on health and the environment.

“We want to allow individuals to make informed choices of which sanitary products to use and help break the taboo around periods,” says Emma Shirbon (Sustainable UCL).

Project Period began in 2018, when the Women’s Officer at Student’s Union UCL began stocking free sanitary towels and tampons in all the female toilets in its building and for collection from its main office.

Helping to achieve Target 5.6

Tackling school-related gender-based violence in Africa

A collaboration between the UCL Institution of Education (IOE), UNICEF and governments in Africa has implemented policies and action plans to tackle gender-based violence in schools in Africa.

“Studies show that social inequalities, cultural norms, exclusions and stigma contribute to the prevalence of school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV) in Africa, but evidence that points to ways to tackle the problem has been lacking,” says Professor Jenny Parkes (UCL IOE).

As part of the initiative, Professor Parkes established a team to collate the evidence needed to address the issue. Colleagues in the IOE worked with educational organisations and governments in Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Togo and Zambia.

The team scoped out what policies and practices were already in place to protect young people from violence at school and identify gaps, and then went on to develop a framework to strengthen national action on SRGBV.

Helping to achieve Target 5.2

Shining a light on child marriage

Child marriage is a global issue that extends beyond country borders, cultures and religion. It affects 14 million children every year, one-fifth of them boys.

The cross-disciplinary UCL Institute for Global Health (IGH) is home to the Global Network on Mental Health and Child Marriage. The network collaborates with partners across Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas to reduce the burden.
of forced and child marriage on mental health by improving policy, research and advocacy.

“Despite most countries recognising that early and forced marriage can have serious health consequences for the individuals concerned, mental health rarely makes it to any list, and if it does, responses and supports are lacking,” explains Dr Rochelle Burgess (UCL IGH), who is leading the network.

In one study, network member Dr Delan Devakumar (UCL IGH) collaborated with local partners in Nepal to produce a documentary telling the stories of couples who were married young and how child marriage affected their lives physically and psychologically. The film, accompanied by facilitated discussions, has reached more than 1,800 people living in village communities in the rural plains of Nepal where child marriage is common.

Boasting more than 100 members, the society holds career and personal development events, including career panels, CV clinics and networking nights. These bring together current female leaders in professional industries and provide opportunities for its members to prepare for becoming leaders themselves.

Empowering tomorrow's leaders

Students at UCL have formed an inclusive community focusing on empowerment, gender equity and personal development.

The UCL Leading Women Society aims to empower people of all genders and help its members strive for the careers they deserve.
**648**
SDG5-related policy citations in 2016–20
Source: Overton – see methodology

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**Number of UCL’s research publications supporting SDG5 by faculty in 2016–20**

Graph based on keywords searches of publication databases using a set of SDG keywords developed by Elsevier. Read more about the methodology used on the SDGs Initiative website.

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“**This latest award is a further indication of UCL’s founding commitment to equity and inclusion.”**

Professor Sasha Roseneil, Pro-Provost (Equity & Inclusion)

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**21.7%**
of UCL’s SDG5-related publications are in the top 10% most cited for all research of similar papers in 2016–20
Source: Scopus and Clarivate – see methodology

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**60.3%**
of UCL’s SDG5-related research publications are international collaborations, 2016–20
Source: Scopus and Clarivate – see methodology

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**DISCOVER MORE**
Read more on these activities and other examples of how UCL is helping to achieve SDG5 are on the UCL SDGs Initiative website.