Laws that discriminate can be changed. To do so, people need to know their rights, make discrimination visible and mobilize support and the effective use of legal means. Below are some steps and actions that you can take to change discriminatory laws.

**Know Your Rights**
Everyone has rights, either guaranteed by national constitutions and charters or by international treaties and conventions. Every Member State of the United Nations is obliged to respect, protect and fulfill the rights outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Use those rights to challenge discriminatory laws.

- The right to education
- The right to privacy
- The right to freedom of association, assembly, and speech
- The right to a fair trial
- The right to health
- The right to freedom from discrimination
- The right to freedom from discriminatory laws
- The right to access to reproductive services for human rights
- The right to freedom of association, assembly, and speech
- The right to privacy
- The right to freedom from discriminatory laws
- The right to education
- The right to health
- The right to freedom from discrimination
- The right to access to reproductive services for human rights

**Recognize Discrimination**
Identifying conditions or requirements that criminalize acts or discriminate against a specific group of people is the first step.

- Discriminatory conditions or requirements can be found in:  
  - Marriage and civil union laws.
  - Parental consent laws that affect young people’s access to services.
  - Laws that govern the workplace or the education or health sector.
  - Laws that limit access to services and that exclude certain people based on, among other things, their gender, race, nationality or socioeconomic status.
  - Banking and insurance laws.
  - Migration and citizenship laws.
  - Public order and security laws.
  - Property and inheritance laws.
  - Laws that regulate sexual conduct.
  - Laws that regulate access to reproductive health services.
  - Laws that punish people owing to their health status, such as HIV or pregnancy.
  - Laws on drug use and possession.

**Make Discrimination Visible**
Laws change when there is widespread awareness of the discrimination among the general public and key influencers, including awareness of its effects and a belief that such discrimination is wrong.

- Develop an awareness campaign to make the general public aware of the discrimination.
- Give it a human face: the experiences of people affected by the discriminatory laws are important in shaping the opinions of decision-makers and communities.
- Speak out through the media: get your voice heard on radio, print, television and social media.
- Ask a popular celebrity or opinion-maker to endorse your cause.
- Organize regular policy briefings, for example, for civil society organizations.
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- Organize regular policy briefings, for example, for civil society organizations.
- Define how you will take the case forward:
  - An organization may be able to make a complaint.
  - An individual may want to show that he or she is unfairly affected by the law.
  - Work with a coalition of allies.
  - Sensitive legal structures on discrimination reach out to legal structures and judges.

**Make Your Case**
You will need to gather evidence and supporting information to make your case.

- Identify high-profile examples from other countries.
- Collect and analyse the facts about the impact of the discrimination on the health or safety of the people affected.
- Find compelling stories.
- Seek out legal advice and support from pro bono services for human rights.
- Organize public events, for example demonstrations.

**Strategic Litigation**
In many countries, the courts have the power to strike down laws that may contradict constitutionally enshrined human rights principles. This often takes the form of a court case taken forward by a person or an organization affected by the law.

- Identify precedent: have courts ruled on the issue before?
- Identify examples from courts in other countries.
- Define how you will take the case forward:
  - An organization may be able to make a complaint.
  - An individual may want to show that he or she is unfairly affected by the law.
  - Work with a coalition of allies.
  - Sensitive legal structures on discrimination reach out to legal structures and judges.

**Public Consultation and a Referendum**
In some countries, people can propose law reform through a petition and request a referendum.

- Request clear information from your local authority on what is needed for law reform through a petition.
- Create a coalition with other organizations and political leaders.
- Develop a call for change: what needs to be changed, why and how?
- Collect signatures, either online or physically.
- Make an official request.
- Campaign for the change that you want in the media, online and elsewhere.

**Parliamentary Process**
Laws that discriminate can be abolished through the legislature under the leadership of your government and through the votes of parliamentarians.

- Identify a parliamentarian or parliamentary group that may lead on the issue.
- Make it easy: draft the law that you want to see enacted.
- Reach out to political leaders on all sides who may be supportive.
- Identify influencers, such as community leaders or media personalities.
- Work with one or more civil society organizations.
- Involve the people affected by the law from the very beginning.
- Organize public events, for example demonstrations.

**Don’t Give Up**
Law reform can sometimes take years.

- Establish non-negotiable and negotiable positions.
- Be ready to adjust your argument.
- Test your messages.
- Evaluate progress regularly.
- Look for the small wins as well as the big ones.

When you win, make it known online and elsewhere.

- Develop a call for change: what needs to be changed, why and how?
- Collect signatures, either online or physically.
- Make an official request.
- Campaign for the change that you want in the media, online and elsewhere.

**ACT**
Discriminatory laws can be removed in a number of ways. Choose the best method based on the best option for the local context.