

Chapter 3

Assessing the Progress of Women: Linking Targets to Indicators



Introduction

There are many ways to assess the progress of women. One way is through women's personal stories; another is through statistics and indicators. A complete picture requires both narratives and numbers. A global assessment, however, can tell only a limited number of stories. Moreover, numerical indicators have proven to be powerful advocacy tools when linked to the fulfillment of specific commitments regarding women's progress. As Patricia Licuanan, of South East Asia Watch, explains:

The extent to which a country has been able to impact on women's specific issues and to narrow the existing gender gap is what may be called progress. 'Progress' indicates distance from or nearness to specific outcomes or targets desired/aimed for in each of the critical areas of concern (1999).

This report therefore emphasizes statistical measures, following the precedent of the Human Development Reports and Social Watch in presenting indicators derived from statistics in existing international databases (see Box 1). It also presents

at least part of the underlying complexity of women's experiences in brief personal stories, which form a counterpoint to the tables and charts.

The indicators include both those that are gender-sensitive (i.e., constructed so as to compare the position of women and men at a point in time and over time, and therefore focus on gender gaps) and those that are women-specific, recording the absolute position of women at particular points in time (see Box 2). The indicators are all quantitative, as qualitative indicators are not readily available for global comparisons and are more appropriate for local-level assessments (see Box 3 for definitions and examples).

"Statistics in the hands of activists have power."

— Ela Bhatt, SEWA, 1999

Box 2: Gender-Sensitive and Sex-Specific Indicators

Gender-sensitive indicators compare the situation of males to that of females, and show an aspect of their relative advantage (disadvantage). They can be constructed in several ways:

- Female share of a total (when it is evident that the total comprises the female share and the male share): 50% indicates gender equality.
Example: Women's share of seats in legislative bodies.
- Ratio between a female and a male characteristic: 1 indicates gender equality.
Example: The ratio between girls' and boys' school enrolment rates.
- Female characteristic as percentage of male characteristic: 100% indicates gender equality.
Example: Average female weekly earnings as percentage of male weekly earnings.
- Difference between the female characteristic and the male characteristic: 0 indicates gender equality.
Example: Average number of hours women spend on housework minus average number of hours men spend on housework.

Sex-specific indicators are also needed:

- Some conditions are experienced only by one sex.
Example: Maternal mortality.
- Knowledge is needed about absolute levels of achievement as well as gender gaps.
Example: Women's average real earnings; men's average real earnings.

Box 1: Social Watch

"The good news is that social indicators are showing significant progress in over 60 countries" – this was the conclusion of Social Watch, an organization set up to evaluate progress

towards fulfillment of commitments made at Copenhagen and Beijing at the end of five years. "The bad news is that progress is too slow to reach the goals in another 70 countries. Thirteen countries are in the same shape or worse off today than they were in 1990, and for almost 40 countries, the data is insufficient to say anything, which probably reflects an even worse situation."

Through its Annual Report, Social Watch contributes to a process of citizen oversight of governments, UN agencies and multilateral organizations in their implementation of the Beijing and Copenhagen agreements. In 1999 this report stated, as it had the previous year:

"While the goals targeted are feasible, many countries have failed to make a sufficient effort. The assistance promised has yet to materialize, the participation of citizens is paltry, and globalization is not benefiting those who need it most."

Source: *Social Watch* 1999.



Box 3: Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators

Quantitative indicators can be defined as measures of quantity, such as the number of people in a village who have obtained loans.

Qualitative indicators can be defined as people's judgements and perceptions about a subject, such as the extent to which loans have enabled them to improve their standard of living or bargaining power within the household.

Quantitative indicators focus on areas that are easier to quantify, such as employment rates or education levels. Because of this, quantitative indicators are usually constructed from formal surveys, such as censuses, labour-force surveys or administrative records. Quantitative indicators are useful for showing how typical an outcome is or what the average outcome is. Qualitative indicators, because they focus on attitudes and perceptions, are typically constructed from less formal sources, such as public hearings, attitude surveys, interviews, participatory rural appraisal, participant observation and sociological or anthropological fieldwork. Qualitative indicators are useful for understanding processes, but frequently do not show how typical or widespread are the views expressed.

Source: Adapted from Canadian International Development Agency 1996.

Time Frame for Assessment

Progress implies change over time. In this report, the time frame is from the mid-1980s to the latest year for which data is available (generally 1997). The aim is to cover the period since the Third World Conference on Women in 1985 in Nairobi. The period since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 is too short, given the time lags in the availability of statistics, which means that for most indicators 1997 is the latest year available. Within this time frame, long-term structural changes and cyclical changes and one-off changes are all interwoven. During this period, globalization intensified; there were financial crises in a number of countries in East Asia and elsewhere; countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union made the transition to market economies; and many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa were embroiled in armed conflict and burdened by increasing levels of debt.

Women will want to make assessments at different levels of aggregation and in different contexts.

- At the *local* level, women can conduct context-specific participatory assessments with an emphasis on the use of qualitative indicators. The smaller the locality, the easier it is to select a reasonably representative group.
- At the *national* level, women can draw upon nationally representative surveys such as censuses and household, enterprise and labour-force surveys, and press for statistics that are disaggregated not only by sex but also by age, class, ethnic group and location.
- At the *regional* level, women can prioritize indicators that reflect regional social, economic and political characteristics and use regional databases.

- At the *global* level, women can focus on a few key indicators for a wide range of countries.

A global assessment cannot capture the rich diversity of local-level and national-level assessments, but it can put each country into a global context. A global assessment also relies on global databases, which have some limitations, including differences in the ways in which data is collected in different countries (definitions, coverage, quality of enumeration) and uneven coverage (much more data is available for richer countries than for poorer countries). This report uses the Women's Indicators and Statistics Database (Wistat) compiled by the UN Statistical Division from data collected by UN agencies and other international bodies, and data from UNESCO and ILO databases and the Human Development Reports (see Annex: Technical Notes).

What Does This Report Try to Measure?

Measuring the empowerment of women is difficult, because the concept itself is complex and multidimensional, with both tangible and intangible dimensions. There is no universally agreed method for identifying and measuring its components. A recent study of micro-level attempts to measure women's empowerment for the UN Research Institute for Social Development highlights many of the problems and dangers (Kabeer 1999). The study distinguishes between resources available to women, the agency they are able to exercise in using these resources, and the achievements that are the outcome. It recommends that all three dimensions be considered simultaneously in assessments of women's empowerment.

A global assessment requires a different approach, since it is not possible to do an in-depth case study of the whole world. As discussed in



Box 4: OECD Working Set of Core Indicators

Economic well-being

- Incidence of extreme poverty: population below \$1 per day
- Poverty gap ratio: incidence times depth of poverty
- Inequality: poorest fifth's share of national consumption
- Child malnutrition: prevalence of underweight under 5 year-olds

Social development

- Net enrolment in primary education
- Completion of 4th grade of primary education
- Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds
- Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education
- Ratio of literate females to males (15-24 year-olds)
- Infant mortality rate
- Under 5 mortality rate
- Maternal mortality ratio
- Births attended by skilled health personnel
- Contraceptive prevalence rate
- HIV prevalence in 15-24 year-old pregnant women

Environmental sustainability and regeneration

- Countries with national sustainable development strategies
- Population with access to safe water
- Intensity of freshwater use
- Biodiversity: land area protected
- Energy efficiency: GDP per unit of energy use
- Carbon dioxide emissions
- Forest area as % of land area
- Mangrove areas
- Urban air pollution

Source: OECD Website: www.oecd.org/dac/indicators.

Chapter 1, this report is informed by the idea that progress for women requires a twofold empowerment of women: the creation of conditions (by a variety of social actors) to enable women to enjoy autonomy and exercise their human rights; and women themselves engaging in a process of critical and collective re-examination of their lives that changes their perceptions of who they are, what rights they have and what they can and should do. The report does not attempt to try to measure the second aspect of empowerment. It does not try to assess the extent to which women are experiencing increases in their self-esteem, their sense of their capacity to change their lives or their sense of being able to take greater control over their lives. Instead it focuses on measuring obstacles to women's ability to enjoy autonomy and exercise their human rights and the extent to which such obstacles are

increasing or diminishing. It thus follows the Human Development Reports in focusing on women's capabilities, on what women are actually doing and being.

The aim is to provide indicators not of the extent of women's self-empowerment but of the conditions in which their self-empowerment takes place, along with indicators that self-empowered women can use to hold governments, business corporations and international institutions accountable for the fulfilment of their commitments.

A number of indicators have already been proposed for monitoring the follow-up on UN conference commitments, including:

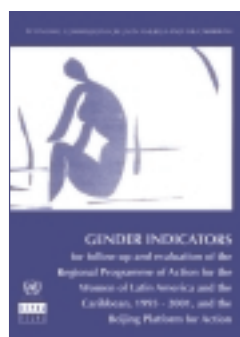
- OECD Development Indicators;
- Regional Initiatives to Monitor the Beijing Platform for Action;
- UN Common Country Assessment Indicators.

OECD Development Indicators

The OECD Development Assistance Committee has identified a set of 24 core indicators to measure progress in achieving the international development targets (see Box 4). While this indicator set is the most widely used in international development cooperation, it has a number of shortcomings in terms of accounting for women's progress. For example:

- Only 2 of the 24 are designed to measure progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment, both related to education.
- The indicators for measuring progress in reducing poverty are not specified in a way that addresses the extent to which poverty is "feminized," in the sense of women being disproportionately among the poor.
- There are no indicators on the gender balance in decision-making or on gender equality in the labour market.
- They are being applied to monitor progress only in recipient countries, not in donor countries.

Regional Initiatives to Monitor the Beijing Platform for Action



In 1999, two regional menus of potential indicators were designed to follow up on Platform for Action commitments. Neither included actual measurements, but both provide numerous ideas for governments and NGOs to draw upon. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the



Caribbean (ECLAC) produced a booklet identifying one or more gender-sensitive indicators for each of the Platform's twelve areas of concern, including a precise specification of the indicator and the type of instrument required to collect the data. Altogether just over 60 potential indicators are suggested, all of them quantitative and chosen on the basis of current availability of information and official statistics.

Eight countries in the region are already using this framework and have identified priority indicators from it to use in future monitoring of their performance. Constraints in the availability of statistics in the region mean that it will be much easier to monitor progress in urban areas than in rural areas. (For more information, see www.eclac.cl).

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific invited Patricia Licuanan, chair of South East Asia Watch, to produce a paper on Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies for the Empowerment of Women for the 1999 regional meeting to review implementation of the Platform. Licuanan suggests over 100 potential indicators, in the context of a framework for policy monitoring and evaluation, and the ways in which women's NGOs can make use of data to monitor and evaluate women's progress. For each critical area of concern, she presents examples of potential gender-sensitive indicators, which are divided into three types – input indicators, performance or process indicators and outcome or progress indicators (Licuanan 1999). She does not indicate the extent to which data is currently available in the region to actually operationalize these indicators.

Licuanan also recommends a qualitative approach to assessing women's empowerment, designed to reveal the extent to which a woman has a sense of control of her life, greater autonomy and independence, through a set of open-ended questions, such as: Looking at your life in the past few years, what has changed? What difference have laws and programmes introduced to implement the Platform made in your life? How do you feel about these changes? Focus groups can be used to discuss these questions at local and national levels. But it is a complex undertaking to collect qualitative data of this kind on a representative basis, even at a national level. And given the lack of national-level data, it was not feasible for UNIFEM to attempt to collect information of this kind for each country. Moreover, unless women have experienced a process of self-empowerment and are well-informed

about the content of the Platform, their answers may reflect resignation to constraints and impoverishment, a lifetime of "making the best of a bad job."

UN Common Country Assessment Indicator Framework

In 1999, the United Nations agencies selected a set of 40 indicators to guide the Common Country Assessments, made in partnership with countries in which UN development cooperation takes place, and to assist in monitoring follow-up to the UN conferences. The indicators cover income-poverty, food security and nutrition, health and mortality, reproductive health, child health and welfare, education, employment and sustainable livelihoods, housing and basic household amenities, environment, drug control and crime prevention and gender equality and women's empowerment (see Box 5, p. 66). This indicator framework measures progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment, in terms of political and economic as well as education indicators, and includes a commitment to disaggregate other indicators by sex. The framework is not designed to measure women's self-empowerment, and the selection of indicators was constrained by availability of national-level statistics. But it does contain many indicators for assessing the extent to which obstacles to women's ability to enjoy a range of ways of living their lives are diminishing.

Obstacles to Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women: Three UN Indicators

This report presents the first global assessment of obstacles to gender equality and women's empowerment using three key indicators identified in the UN indicator framework: the ratio of girls' enrolment ratio to boys' enrolment ratio in secondary education; women's share of parliamentary representation; and women's share of paid employment in industry and services (i.e., non-agricultural activities). It compares achievements across countries at one point in time, as well as progress within countries over time. Other organizations, such as UNFPA and UNICEF, are using other indicators in the UN framework to track improvements in women's and girls' health, reproductive rights and primary education.

To assess current achievements, the latest available data (usually 1997) is used, with countries in each region listed in tables of figures according to their level of achievement. (Ranking should be interpreted only as approximate, because data is not always strictly comparable). To assess progress over time, comparisons are made between the latest available data and data for 1985 (or the mid-80s, more generally). Information on progress is presented in a variety of charts and in relation to targets (where they exist).

Box 5: UN Common Country Assessment Indicators: UN Development Assistance Framework

Indicators (disaggregated by sex)

Income-Poverty

- Poverty headcount ratio (% of population below \$1 dollar a day)
- Poverty headcount ratio (% of population below national poverty line)
- Poverty gap ratio
- Poorest fifth's share of national consumption

Food Security and Nutrition

- % of children under age 5 suffering from malnutrition
- % of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (caloric intake in context of food balance sheet)
- % of household income spent on food for the poorest quintile

Health and Mortality

- % population with access to primary health care services
- Estimated HIV adult prevalence rate
- HIV prevalence in pregnant women under age 25 who receive antenatal care in capital cities/major urban areas
- Infant mortality rate
- Under 5 mortality rate

Reproductive Health

- Maternal mortality ratio
- % of births attended by skilled health personnel
- Contraceptive prevalence rate

Child Health and Welfare

- % of 1-year-old children immunized against measles
- % of children under age 15 who are working

Education

- Net primary enrolment or attendance ratio
- % of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5

- Adult literacy rate
- Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

- Ratio of girls to boys in secondary school enrolment
- Female share (%) of paid employment in non-agricultural activities
- % of seats held by women in national parliament

Employment and Sustainable Livelihood

- Ratio of employment to population of working age
- Unemployment rate
- Informal sector employment as % of total employment

Housing and Basic Household Amenities and Facilities

- No. of persons per room, or average floor area per person
- % of population with (sustainable) access to safe drinking water
- % of population with access to adequate sanitation

Environment (Indicator specification under review)

- Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita)
- Biodiversity: land area protected
- GDP per unit of energy use
- Arable land per capita
- % change in km² of forest land in past ten years
- % of population relying on traditional fuels for energy use

Drug Control and Crime Prevention

- Area under illegal cultivation of coca, opium poppy and cannabis
- Seizures of illicit drugs
- Prevalence of drug abuse
- No. of crimes per 100,000 inhabitants

Source: UN Website: www.dgo.org/index2.html.

Lagging School Enrolment

Education is essential for improving women's living standards and enabling women to exercise greater "voice" in decision-making in the family, the community, the place of paid work and the public arena of politics (see Box 6). Literacy and other basic skills are absolutely vital to women's empowerment; and without the skills acquired in secondary education, women cannot obtain better paid employment. As noted in Chapter 2, a target to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005 was adopted at both the Social Summit and the Beijing Women's Conference and has also been incorporated into the international development targets. The right to education is also one of the rights specified in the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

In general, enrolment ratios tend to give an over-optimistic picture of the degree to which young people are educated, and the distortion is probably greater for girls than for boys. In particular, data on enrolment ratios:

- show how many students enrol but not how many attend. Drop-out rates can be high, especially for girls, and tend to increase when economic conditions worsen;
- do not show whether the education girls and boys receive is free of gender stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequality;
- do not show how well-qualified young people are when they leave school.

Box 6: Girls' Education in India

Manju Senapaty carried out research on the implications of economic reform in India for the education of poor girls. She spent some time in Naktar village in Madhya Pradesh, where she talked with poor women about the education of their children. She reports:

"They all said that they wanted to educate both their daughters and their sons. But the reasons for educating a son and a daughter were different. They wanted to educate their daughters so that 'she will get some intelligence' and many mothers said that 'we do not want them to suffer as we did, she can at least write a letter when she is mistreated in her (in laws') house' [i.e., the house where she lives after marriage with her husband and his parents]. These reasons suggested clearly that women were reflecting on their own lives and the suffering they may have experienced because of their inability to even write to their own families in times of distress. For questions on their reasons for educating a son, the standard answer given by most women was that 'if he is educated, he might get some job,' with an implication that this would provide them with security in their old age."

Source: Senapaty 1997: 314.

Nevertheless, it is important to monitor enrolment ratios as an indicator of the strength of the barriers that keep girls out of school (including structural adjustment policies and family poverty as well as social and cultural norms).

As shown in Chart 3.1 (p. 68) the most serious gender gap in terms of secondary education enrolment is in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the relative disadvantage of girls has been eliminated in only 5 out of 34 countries listed. In Northern Africa the number is slightly higher, 1 out of 5 countries, while in Central and Western Asia it rises to 4 out of 11, and in Asia and the Pacific it is much the same, at 8 out of 21 countries. The Latin America and Caribbean region has a much higher success rate, with 18 out of 26 countries reporting a ratio of 100 or more. Eastern Europe appears to do best, with 8 out of 9 countries reaching a ratio of 100 or more, while Western Europe and Other Developed Countries are somewhat lower with 19 out of 23 countries reaching this level.

Chart 3.1 also shows a disparity to the disadvantage of boys (ratio greater than 100) in numerous countries, including some in every region except Northern Africa. In all, 38 per cent of the countries listed have a female/male ratio of more than 100. In 11 per cent of the countries there is equality with a ratio of 100, and in 51 per cent girls



Doranne Jacobson



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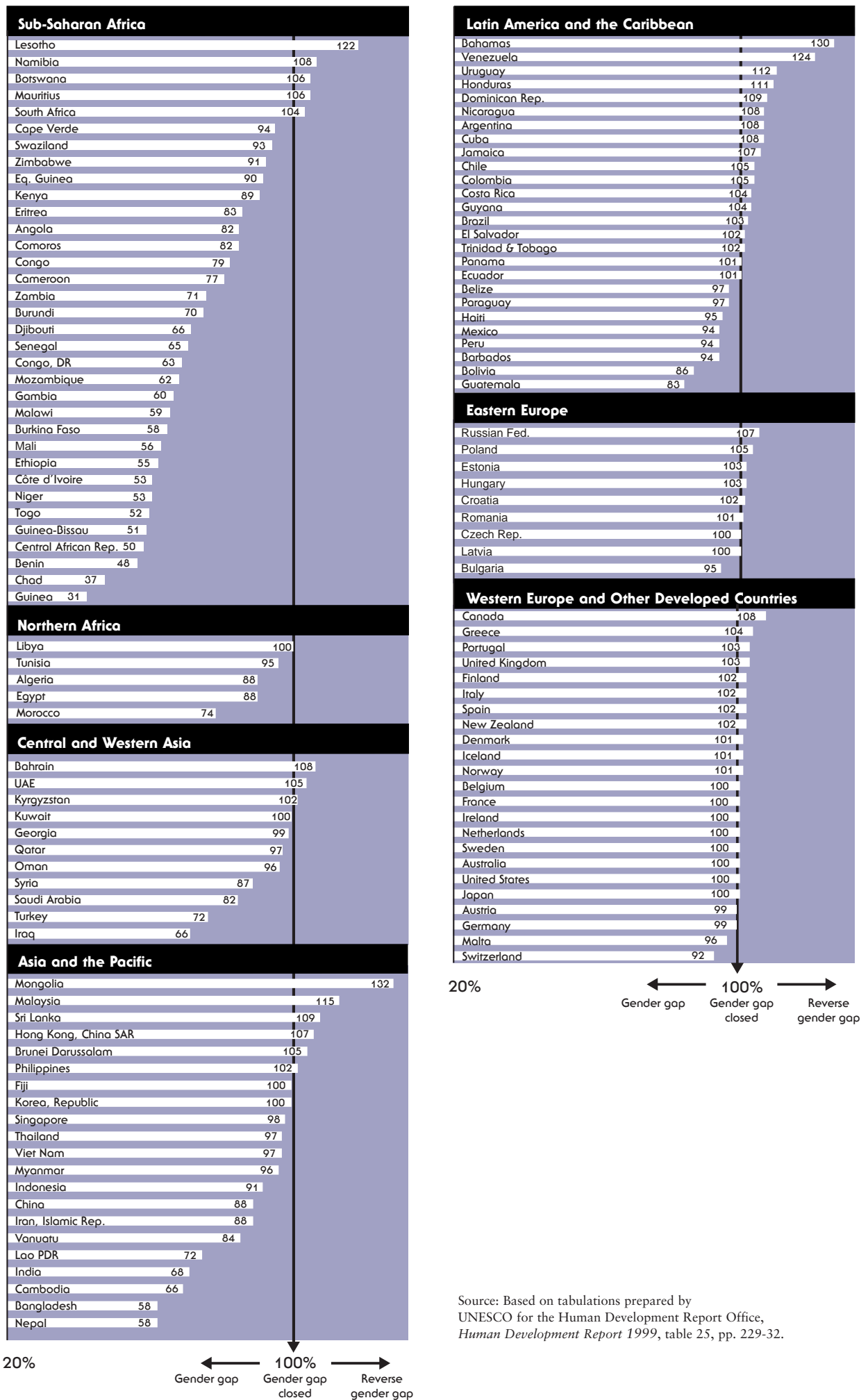
are still at a disadvantage. This "reverse gender gap" is particularly pronounced in Latin America and the Caribbean, where 18 out of 26 countries for which data is available have ratios greater than 100. It appears that in some countries, especially more rural countries, boys may be called upon to join the labour force at an earlier age than girls, while recent studies in some more urbanized countries suggest that cultural factors — such as prevalent cultural ideas of masculinity — are encouraging boys to drop out at greater rates (Kimmel 2000).

Table 3.1 (p. 69) presents the absolute level of girls' net enrolment in secondary school in 1997 where available, and otherwise uses the gross enrolment ratio in 1996. (For a few countries neither type of data was available from the UNESCO database.) It shows that within each of the developing regions, some countries have achieved a high level of enrolment, comparable with that in the developed countries. This is true even in Sub-Saharan Africa, where levels are for the most part very low.

Comparing enrolment levels in Table 3.1 with girls' enrolment ratios in Chart 3.1 shows that in some countries, the gender gap has been almost eliminated but at very low levels. Examples include Haiti, where the girls' to boys' enrolment ratio is 95 but the girls' net enrolment ratio is only 33.2; Cape Verde, where the girls' to boys' enrolment ratio is 94 but the girls' net enrolment ratio is only 35.5; and El Salvador, where the girls' to boys' enrolment ratio is 102 but the girls' net enrolment ratio is 36.7.

Chart 3.2 (pp. 70-71) shows progress in female enrolment at the secondary level. While the majority of countries have made progress, some report deterioration. In fact, the data suggest that the only region where there has been no deterioration is Northern Africa. In every other region female enrolment ratios have declined: in 10 out of 33 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa; 7 out of 11 in

Chart 3.1: Secondary Net Enrolment Ratio, female/male, 1997



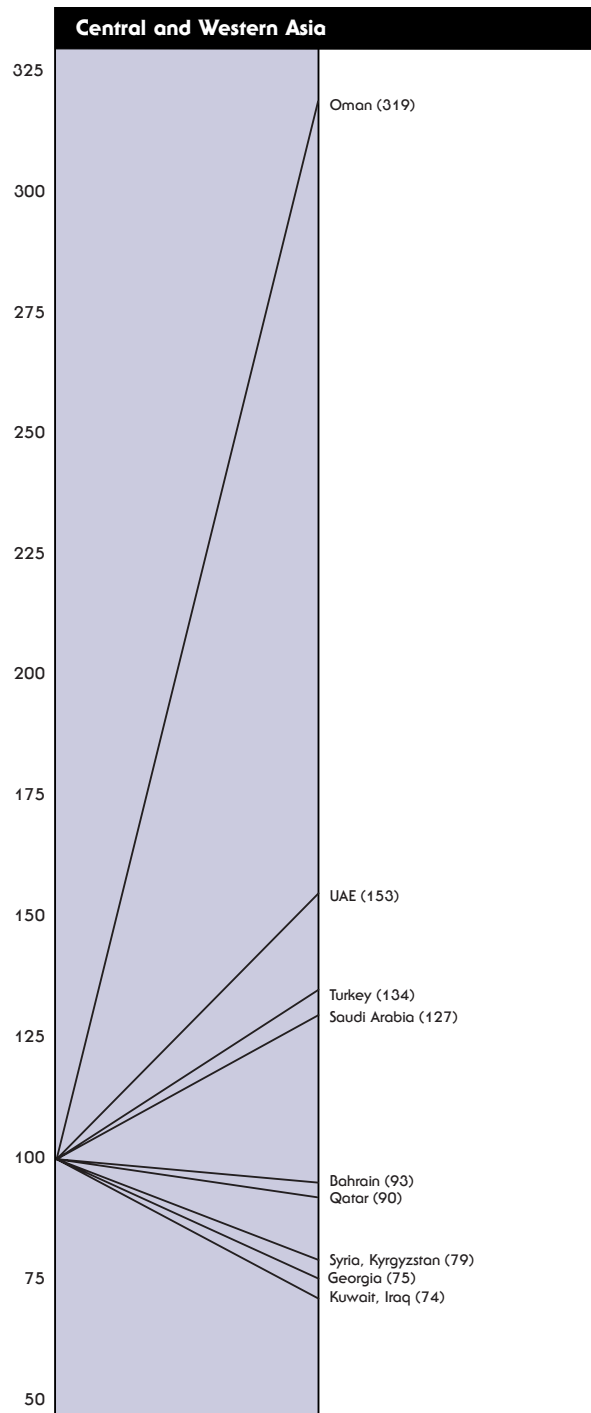
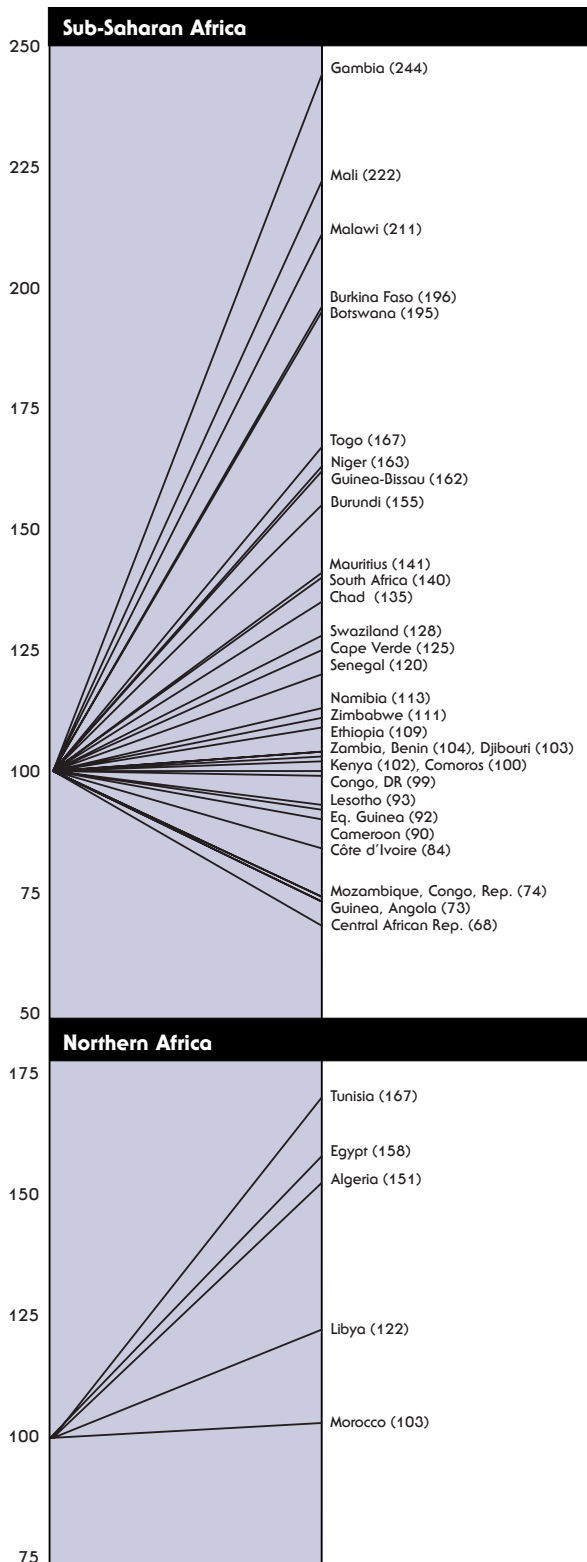
Source: Based on tabulations prepared by UNESCO for the Human Development Report Office, *Human Development Report 1999*, table 25, pp. 229-32.

Table 3.1: Female Enrolment in Secondary Education, 1997, 1996

Sub-Saharan Africa							
Net Ratio, 1997		Georgia	75.3	Cuba	72.6		
South Africa	96.9	Qatar	72.0	Trinidad & Tobago	72.2		
Botswana	91.3	Oman	65.1	Jamaica	72.1		
Namibia	83.9	Kuwait	63.2	Panama	71.7		
Lesotho	80.3	Saudi Arabia	52.9	Brazil	67.0		
Swaziland	78.8	Turkey	48.5	Mexico	64.0		
Congo, Republic	74.3	Syria	39.4	Belize	62.6		
Mauritius	69.9	Iraq	33.8	Paraguay	60.1		
Eq. Guinea	64.8	Gross Ratio, 1996		Costa Rica	56.9		
Kenya	57.4	Turkmenistan	111.1	Venezuela	54.2		
Zimbabwe	56.3	Kazakhstan	88.9	Nicaragua	52.6		
Malawi	53.9	Uzbekistan	87.6	Ecuador	51.3		
Togo	40.0	Israel	87.4	Honduras	37.9		
Cape Verde	35.5	Armenia	85.9	Bolivia	37.1		
Zambia	34.9	Lebanon	85.5	El Salvador	36.7		
Cameroon	34.7	Azerbaijan	81.1	Haiti	33.2		
Eritrea	34.3	Tajikistan	71.7	Guatemala	31.7		
Comoros	32.2	Yemen	14.3				
Congo, DR	28.6	Eastern Europe					
Angola	28.0	Net Ratio, 1997		Net Ratio, 1997			
Gambia	25.1	Korea, Republic		Czech Rep.	99.9		
Côte d'Ivoire	23.6	Fiji		Hungary	98.2		
Benin	18.3	Brunei Darussalam		Russian Fed.	90.7		
Ethiopia	17.5	Sri Lanka		Poland	88.5		
Mozambique	17.1	Philippines		Estonia	87.4		
Guinea-Bissau	16.4	Iran, I.R.		Larvia	80.5		
Djibouti	15.6	Singapore		Romania	76.3		
Senegal	15.5	Hong Kong, China		Bulgaria	75.4		
Burundi	14.1	Malaysia		Croatia	73.0		
Mali	12.9	China		Gross Ratio, 1996			
Central African Republic	12.7	Mongolia		Slovakia	96.0		
Chad	9.6	Viet Nam		Ukraine	95.6		
Burkina Faso	9.4	Indonesia		Belarus	95.4		
Guinea	6.9	Myanmar		Slovenia	93.9		
Niger	6.5	Lao, PDR		Lithuania	87.5		
Gross Ratio, 1996		India		Moldova, Republic	80.7		
Nigeria	31.1	Thailand		Macedonia, FYR	51.1		
Ghana	24.1	Net Ratio, 1997		Albania	35.7		
Sudan	19.1	Nepal		Western Europe and Other Developed Countries			
Madagascar	12.7	Vanuatu		Net Ratio, 1997			
Sierra Leone	12.1	Cambodia		Sweden	99.9		
Rwanda	11.5	Bangladesh		Netherlands	99.9		
Mauritania	11.0	Gross Ratio, 1996		Japan	99.9		
Uganda	8.7	Samoa (Western)		Ireland	99.9		
Liberia	8.1	Maldives		Belgium	99.9		
Tanzania, UR	4.9	Pakistan		France	98.6		
Somalia	3.5	Afghanistan		Norway	98.0		
Northern Africa		Papua New Guinea		Austria	97.1		
Net Ratio, 1997		Latin America and the Caribbean		United States	96.2		
Libya	99.9	Net Ratio, 1997		Finland	96.2		
Tunisia	72.4	Bahamas		Iraly	96.0		
Egypt	70.1	Uruguay		Australia	96.0		
Algeria	64.0	Chile		Denmark	95.4		
Morocco	31.9	Barbados		Germany	94.9		
Central and Western Asia		Dominican Rep.		Canada	94.4		
Net Ratio, 1997		Peru		New Zealand	94.0		
Bahrain	90.8	Argentina		United Kingdom	93.2		
UAE	79.9	Colombia		Greece	93.1		
Kyrgyzstan	78.7	Guyana		Spain	93.0		
				Portugal	91.0		
				Iceland	88.1		
				Malta	83.3		
				Switzerland	80.3		

Sources: Net enrolment data is based on tabulations prepared by UNESCO for the Human Development Report Office, *Human Development Report, 1999*, table 25, pp. 229-32; gross enrolment data: UNESCO Website:<http://unesco.org>.

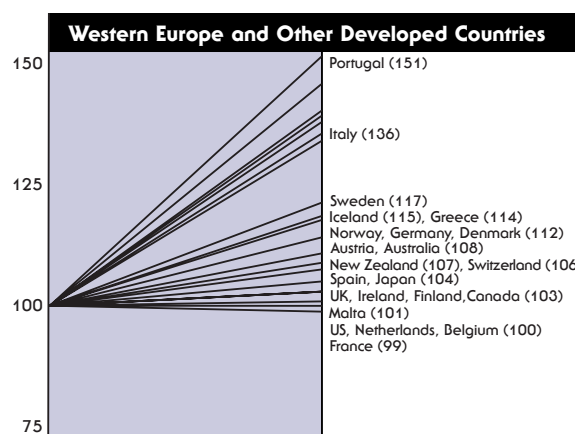
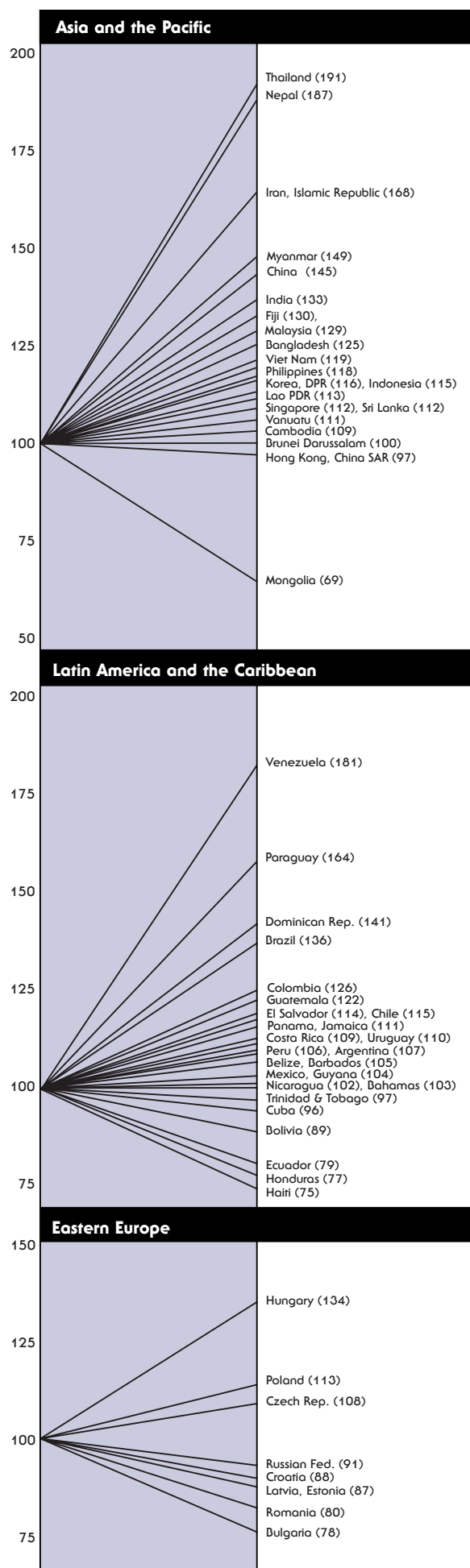
Chart 3.2: Change in Secondary Level Female Net Enrolment Ratio, 1985-1997 (1985=100)



Source: Based on tabulations prepared by UNESCO for the Human Development Report Office, *Human Development Report, 1999*, table 25, pp. 229-32



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Central and Western Asia; 2 out of 21 in Asia and the Pacific; and 6 out of 26 in Latin America and the Caribbean. In Eastern Europe, the ratio declined in as many as 6 out of 9 countries. Western Europe and Other Developed Countries managed to more or less stand still: a decline was shown in 1 out of 23 countries.

Enrolment is only the first step in education. Gender-sensitive indicators are also needed for completion rates and on patterns of study, but they are not yet widely available. Closing the gender gap in education is necessary for achieving gender equality but it is far from sufficient. Moreover, despite the link between education and income, studies from all regions indicate that equal years of education do not translate into equality of job opportunities for women and men (see Box 7, p. 72). Males everywhere tend to get better jobs than women with the same years of education. One reason for this is the persistence of a gender gap in science and technology, while others pertain to on-going gender discrimination in employment.

Unequal Shares of Wage and Salaried Employment

There are no internationally agreed quantitative, time-bound targets for gender equality and women's empowerment in employment. Employment, like education, is multidimensional, and there are many relevant indicators — but for many of them data is available only for a limited number of countries or not at all. For instance, there is no indicator available in UN databases of women's and men's average real earnings (i.e., adjusted for price increases) or of the proportion of women and men who have employment that pays a living wage and offers social protection.

The UN Indicator Framework selected women's share of paid employment in industry and services as the indicator to track progress towards gender equality in employment. (Agriculture was excluded because data on wage and salaried work in agriculture are particularly unreliable, and most wage and salaried work tends to be outside agriculture.) It is important to note that this indicator does not,



Box 7: Gender Differences in Financial Returns to Education

In Jamaica, girls are better educated than boys. At the primary level, there is equality in enrolment, but at the secondary level, more girls are enrolled than boys (almost 75 per cent of Jamaican girls are enrolled in secondary school). On average, girls and young women obtain better examination results than boys and young men. But in the labour market, women experience higher levels of unemployment than men do, and are much more concentrated than men are in low-paying occupations: 80 per cent of women are reported as being at the lowest salary level, compared to 20 per cent of men (Jamaica Employees Federation 1995).

A similar picture emerges for the Philippines. About 56 per cent of university students are women, but a 1992 report from the Government Institute of Labour Studies reports that more college-educated women than college-educated men earn below the minimum wage. In the top three industries for average salaries, men make up the majority of the workforce. Beatrice Cabrera, head of the Guidance and Counseling Center of Far Eastern University, reports that "the companies that come in to recruit sometimes do have a preference for males or females. Women, for example, are wanted for clerks and executive secretaries, since they are (deemed) more patient than men" (Balgos 1998).

In Latin America, where girls have reached higher levels of education in many countries, research has shown that the belief that women's lower earnings result from their lower levels of education is a myth. On average, women in the labour market have a higher level of education than men. At the highest educational level (13+years of schooling), women's labour-force participation is almost the same as that of men, but their incomes are well below those of men. In no country do men and women with the same level of education receive identical wages (Arriagada 1998).

"The relative disadvantage in terms of hourly pay between adult women and men is equivalent to some four years formal education" (ECLAC1993).

and is not intended to show improvements or declines in women's standard of living, either on average or for particular groups. Rather, it shows whether women are being enabled to occupy a higher proportion of waged and salaried employment (rather than, for instance, employment on an unpaid basis in family enterprises). It signals the extent to which obstacles to women working in such jobs are crumbling.

The advantage of this indicator is that:

- it focuses on women's share of paid jobs in areas of expanding employment;
- because of the way the data are collected, it is more likely to reflect women's share of better paying formal employment than informal employment;
- it includes employment across the occupational spectrum, not just in "elite" jobs.

The indicator has several limitations, including:

- an increase in women's share of paid employment will not usually be matched by an equivalent increase in women's share of national income because women tend to be paid less than men;

- an increase in women's share of paid employment generally adds to women's total workload, taking into account women's unpaid care-giving work for family members as well as their paid work. Women gain in terms of cash, but lose in terms of time;
- women from less well-off families are often pressured to take poor-quality, low-paying jobs in industry and services to make up for falling family income, rather than through their own choice. This is particularly likely in situations of economic crisis and structural adjustment.

Table 3.2 presents women's share of paid employment, using the latest available ILO data. It is evident that little ILO data is available for this employment indicator for countries in Africa, about



80 per cent of which lack data, and countries in Central and Western Asia, about 74 per cent of which lack data. In addition, data is available for only 46 per cent of the countries of Asia and the Pacific. The gap between the availability of data in UN databases for the gender equality in education indicator and the gender equality in paid employment indicator is striking. There is, however, even less data available for other employment indicators.

There are only a few countries in the world where women's share of paid employment is around 50 per cent, and a handful in which it is somewhat higher than 50 per cent.

Chart 3.3 (p. 74) shows changes in female share of paid employment in industry and services. In most countries for which data is available the share has increased or stayed the same. It has fallen in the Ukraine, and in Lithuania and Estonia (see Box 8). The biggest increases (15 or more percentage points) were in Italy (23% to 38%), Portugal (30% to 46%), Slovenia (34% to 49%) and Sri Lanka (24% to 44%).

Women's entry into waged and salaried work in industry and services does not necessarily mean that they escape from subordination within their families.

Box 8: Women's Employment in Transition Economies

The proportion of adult women who are members of the labour force (the female participation rate or economic activity rate) was lower in 1997 than in 1985 in all transition countries. In some countries, men's participation rates fell too, but not by as much as women's rates. Women's employment fell by 40 per cent in Hungary, 31 per cent in Estonia, 33 per cent in Latvia, 24 per cent in Lithuania, 21 per cent in the Russian Federation, 16 per cent in Slovenia, 12 per cent in the Czech Republic and 13 per cent in Poland.

Women in the labour force lost jobs in the expanding and remunerative sectors of banking, insurance and real estate and became more concentrated in low-paid public services such as education and health. Women, despite high levels of education, are generally doing worse than men under increased competition in the labour market.

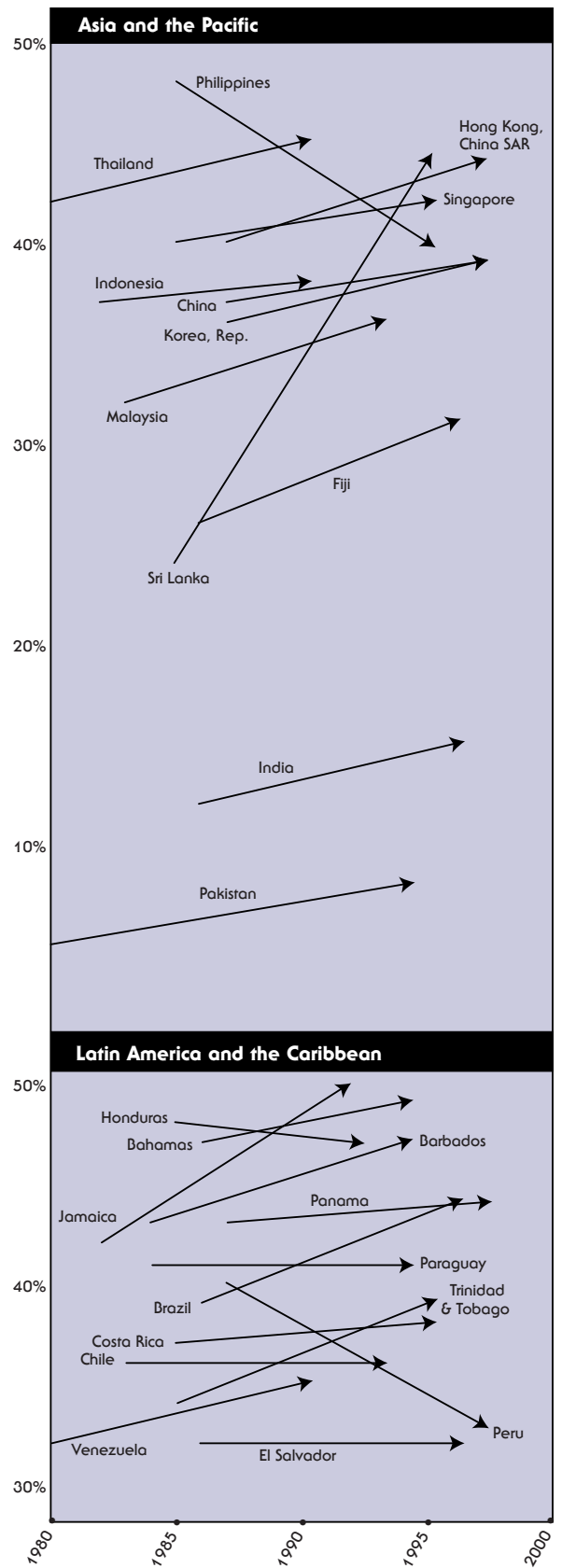
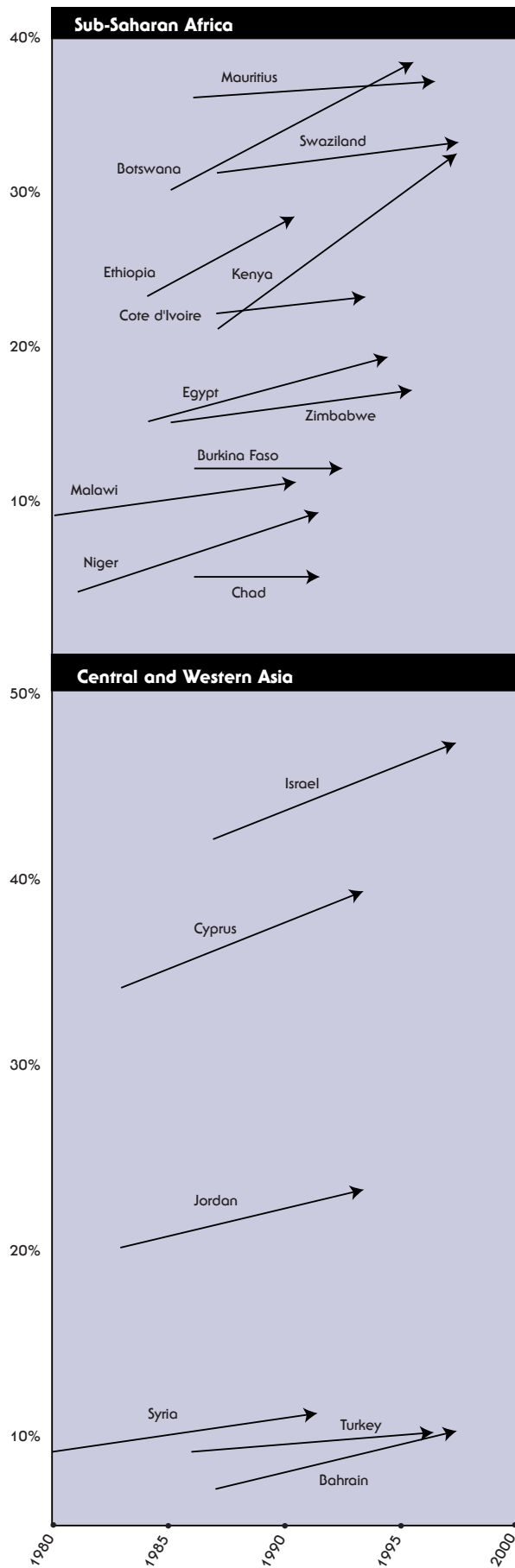
Source: Ruminksa-Zimny 1999.

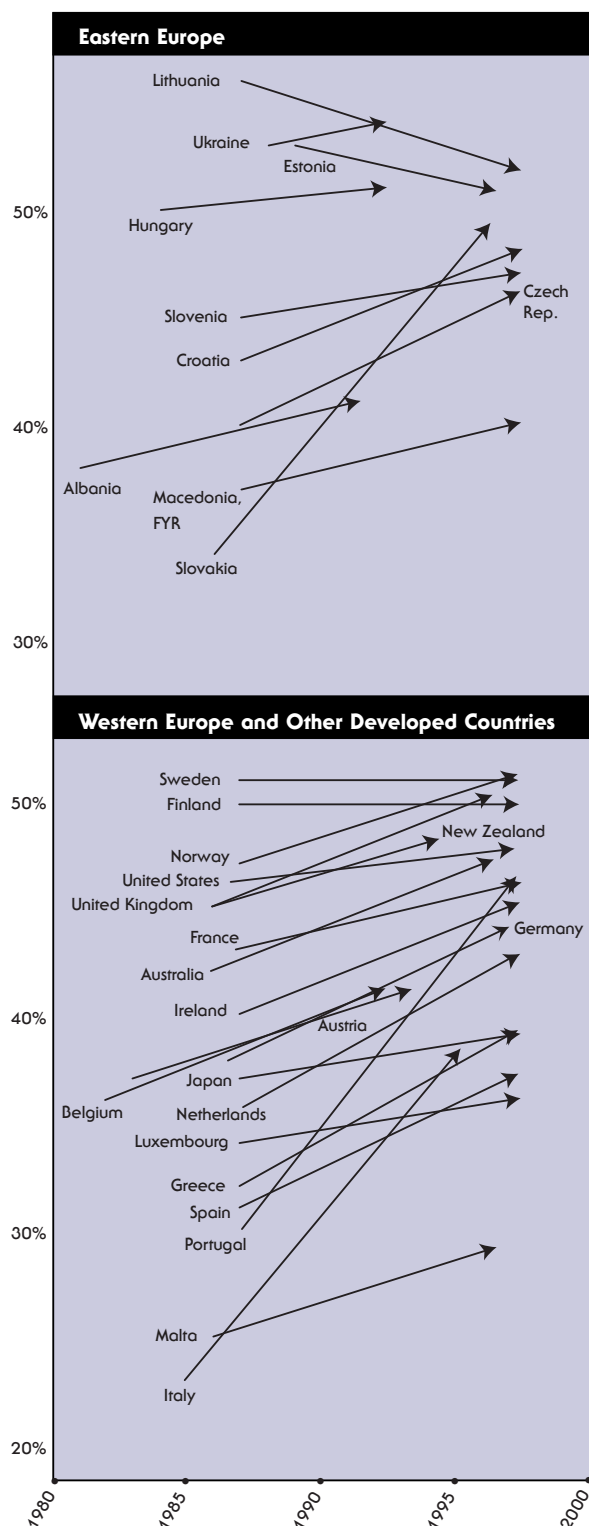
Table 3.2: Female Share of Paid Employment in Industry and Services (latest data available)

Female share (%)	Female share (%)
Sub-Saharan Africa	Eastern Europe
Botswana 38	Ukraine 54
Mauritius 37	Latvia 54
Swaziland 33	Lithuania 53
Kenya 32	Hungary 51
Ethiopia 28	Estonia 51
Côte d'Ivoire 23	Slovakia 49
Zimbabwe 17	Croatia 48
Burkina Faso 12	Slovenia 47
Malawi 11	Poland 47
Niger 9	Czech Rep. 46
Chad 5	Romania 43
	Albania 41
	Macedonia FYR 40
Northern Africa	Western Europe and Other Developed Countries
Egypt 19	Iceland 52
	Sweden 51
Central and Western Asia	Norway 51
Israel 47	United Kingdom 50
Cyprus 39	Finland 50
Jordan 23	United States 48
Syria 11	New Zealand 48
Turkey 10	Denmark 48
Bahrain 10	Canada 48
	Australia 47
Asia and the Pacific	Portugal 46
Thailand 45	France 46
Sri Lanka 44	Ireland 45
Singapore 44	Germany 44
Hong Kong, China SAR 42	Netherlands 43
Philippines 40	Belgium 41
Korea, Republic 39	Austria 41
China 39	Switzerland 40
Indonesia 38	Japan 39
Malaysia 36	Greece 39
Fiji 31	Italy 38
India 15	Spain 37
Pakistan 8	Luxembourg 36
	Malta 29
Latin America and the Caribbean	
Jamaica 50	
Bahamas 49	
Honduras 47	
Barbados 47	
Colombia 46	
Panama 44	
Brazil 44	
Paraguay 41	
Ecuador 40	
Argentina 40	
Trinidad & Tobago 39	
Costa Rica 38	
Bolivia 37	
Mexico 36	
Chile 36	
Venezuela 35	
Peru 33	
El Salvador 32	

Sources: ILO Website: <http://laborsta.ilo.org> and various ILO labour statistics yearbooks.

Chart 3.3: Change in Female Share of Paid Employment in Industry and Services (%), 1980-1997





Sources: Based on ILO Website: <http://laborsta.ilo.org> and various ILO labour statistics yearbooks.

Moreover, they are often subject to new forms of subordination in the workplace (see Box 9). At the same time as women's share of paid employment in industry and services is rising, the rights associated with such employment are often falling.

The past two decades have witnessed the emergence of 'non-standard' forms of work in some sectors, which used to be characterized by regular wage employment. Among these, the most important numerically have been part-time employment and temporary work. They usually offer lower levels of social security coverage and of employment rights than regular jobs. Part-time and temporary work is also usually associated with lower wages and limited training opportunities or career prospects. Many forms of non-standard jobs... pose a real risk of marginalization in the labour market (UN 1999d).

Box 9: Limitations of Empowerment: Women's Entry into Paid Employment

Paid jobs do not necessarily free women from oppression in their families. Jasmine, age 13, lives in Bangladesh. She wrote to the UNICEF Web Forum Working Group on Girls:

"I have an older sister who was married off at the age of 15. She is pregnant and yet has to work in a garment factory from very early morning to very late at night because her husband refuses to work. She had to give 20,000 takas, plus some jewelry to her husband's family so that she could get married, but she is treated no better than a servant. She also has to do most of the housework, such as cooking and cleaning whenever she is not working."

Paid jobs do not necessarily give women control over their working conditions. Jill Carino describes how workers are treated in two factories in export processing zones in the Philippines:

"The management are very strict as to how the workers act in the workplace, for example, they are not allowed to talk to each other. If they do they are given a black mark in their record. That's why they are not given any masks, so that the supervisors can see if their lips are moving or not..."

"In times of shipment, some people have to stay for up to 48 hours in the factory. They get one hour for eating and 1 hour for sleep in every 24 hours. However, when orders have stopped workers are laid off for 3 weeks to 1 month without salary."

And at a factory in Manila, where workers receive slightly above the minimum wage, \$3.75 per day, management finds other ways to reduce costs. One is to deduct for taxes and social security without forwarding the money to the government, leaving workers without benefits at retirement.

Another is making the workers do other jobs outside their regular jobs: "Some workers [in a garment factory] are asked to report earlier by 30 minutes and leave 30 minutes later so that they can clean the workplace, because the company saves money by not hiring any workers to clean..."

Source: www.unicef.org/voy/meeting/gir/girhome.html; Women Working Worldwide 1998.

A critical issue for future progress of women is how the expansion of women's paid employment can be combined with the protection, promotion and fulfilment of women's human rights at work. One problem is the lack of indicators on the quality of employment, as distinct from the quantity of employment. The ILO's Key Indicators of the Labour Market do include indicators on extent of part-time work, hours of work and urban informal sector employment (based on a somewhat restricted definition of the informal sector). But there is no indicator for the extent to which workers enjoy social protection of their human rights at work. This is not an easy thing to measure. But without such a measure, the extent to which the increases in women's share of paid employment indicates progress of women will remain ambiguous.

Absence from Parliament

Greater equality in the numbers of women holding political office is important not only in its own right, but also because it may give women more of a voice in determining the laws and policies which regulate women's progress in other areas of life, such as the economy. A World Bank study on corruption and women in government concluded that higher rates of female participation in government are associated with lower levels of corruption, suggesting that women may be more concerned with the common good (Dollar et al. 1999). The target of women holding at least 30 per cent of political positions has been endorsed by both women's NGOs and governmental bodies, including the UN Economic and Social Council, and was reiterated in the Platform for Action. Global data on women's share of seats in national legislatures is updated regularly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Table 3.3 shows women's share of seats in national parliaments in January 2000. This share is 30 per cent or above in only a few countries: Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Finland, Norway, Iceland, the Netherlands and South Africa. In most regions of the world, there is a wide range. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, women hold 30 per cent of seats in South Africa, whereas their share is no more than 2 per cent in Ethiopia and Togo. There is a similar range in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. In Western Europe and Other Developed Countries the range is even wider – from Sweden, which is the only country in the world approaching parity of seats between women and men, to Greece, where women's share is only just over 6 per cent.

The wide variation within regions is in large part due to wide variations in electoral systems. Some countries have also established quotas for women's representation (see Box 10).

Box 10: Quotas for Women in Politics

"Constitutionally entrenched quotas are the best way of ensuring that targets for increasing the representation of women are met."

— Commonwealth Secretariat (1998)

In an effort to increase the political representation of women several countries have introduced some form of quota system: legal or constitutional quotas, covering candidate lists for seats in national or local assemblies, or quotas adopted by political parties. As of March 2000, the former, typically from 20 to 30 per cent, had been adopted in at least 25 countries: Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Eritrea, Finland, Ghana, Guyana, India, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Nepal, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Senegal, Sweden, Tanzania, Uganda and Venezuela. In France, a 1999 constitutional amendment instructs political parties to nominate equal numbers of men and women. And in the Philippines, an executive order encourages a minimum of 30 per cent representation of women in bagangay (municipal) assemblies.

In addition, one or more major political parties have adopted quotas for women candidates in at least 6 countries: Austria, Germany, Italy, Mozambique, South Africa and Turkey. The Labour Party in Australia introduced a "target" (as opposed to "quota") that 35 per cent of winnable seats in state and federal elections be allocated to women by 2002.

Comparing this list with Table 3.3 shows a clear correlation between countries with quotas and countries where women's representation is highest. But quotas are not popular everywhere. In Bangladesh, for example, women politicians reported that the system leads to nepotism and favouritism in the choice of women to run (Commonwealth Secretariat 1998). Favouritism was also widely believed to have characterized the selection of women candidates by the Communist Party in countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, where legislatures themselves were seen as mere "rubber stamps" for the party. With the change in political system and the marginalization of the Communist Party, quotas disappeared – along with women's representation. Since then, there have been efforts to introduce quotas in some countries: Uzbekistan adopted a quota regarding the number of women in executive bodies in 1994. But quotas for women in electoral lists were rejected in Latvia, Poland and the Republic of Moldova. And rejection of quotas is not limited to countries with prior experience of quotas, as quota legislation was recently rejected in Switzerland (*New York Times*, 13 March 2000).

Sources: Commonwealth Secretariat 1998; ECLAC 1999b; UN 2000b.



Table 3.3: Women's Share of Seats in National Parliament, January 2000

Percentage of seats held by women	Percentage of seats held by women	Percentage of seats held by women		
Sub-Saharan Africa				
South Africa	30.0	Honduras	9.4	
Mozambique	25.2	Chile	8.9	
Seychelles	23.5	Paraguay	8.0	
Namibia	18.3	Guatemala	7.1	
Uganda	17.9	Brazil	5.9	
Rwanda	17.1	Haiti	3.6	
United Rep. of Tanzania	16.4	Eastern Europe		
Angola	15.5	Bosnia-Herzegovina	21.0	
Eritrea	14.7	Estonia	17.8	
Senegal	14.0	Lithuania	17.5	
Zimbabwe	14.0	Larvia	17.0	
Mali	12.2	Czech Rep.	13.8	
Congo	12.0	Belarus	13.2	
Lesotho	10.7	Slovakia	12.7	
Burkina Faso	10.4	Poland	12.6	
Zambia	10.1	Bulgaria	10.8	
Guinea-Bissau	10.0	Moldova, Republic	8.9	
Gabon	9.4	Hungary	8.3	
Ghana	9.0	Ukraine	7.8	
Sierra Leone	8.8	Slovenia	7.8	
Guinea	8.8	Macedonia, FYR	7.5	
Botswana	8.5	Croatia	7.1	
Malawi	8.3	Yugoslavia	6.1	
Madagascar	8.0	Russian Fed.	5.6	
Côte d'Ivoire	8.0	Romania	5.6	
Mauritius	7.6	Albania	5.2	
Central African Rep.	7.3	Western Europe and Other Developed Countries		
Nigeria	7.3	Sweden	42.7	
Swaziland	6.3	Denmark	37.4	
Burundi	6.0	Finland	37.0	
Benin	6.0	Norway	36.4	
Cameroon	5.6	Iceland	34.9	
Sudan	5.3	Germany	33.6	
Eq. Guinea	5.0	Netherlands	32.8	
Kenya	3.6	New Zealand	29.2	
Chad	2.4	Austria	25.0	
Mauritania	2.2	Belgium	24.8	
Gambia	2.0	Canada	23.1	
Comoros	2.0	Australia	22.4	
Ethiopia	2.0	Switzerland	22.3	
Niger	1.2	Portugal	18.7	
Togo	1.2	United Kingdom	18.4	
Djibouti	0.0	Spain	18.0	
Northern Africa			Luxembourg	16.7
Tunisia	11.5	Ireland	13.7	
Algeria	3.8	United States	12.5	
Egypt	2.0	Italy	10.0	
Morocco	0.6	Malta	9.2	
Central and Western Asia			France	9.1
Turkmenistan	26.0	Japan	8.3	
Azerbaijan	12.0	Greece	6.3	
Israel	11.7	Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union		
Kazakhstan	11.2	Website: http://www.ipu.org .		
Syria	10.7			
Georgia	7.2			
Uzbekistan	6.8			
Asia and the Pacific				
Iraq	6.4			
Cyprus	5.4			
Kyrgyzstan	4.7			
Turkey	4.2			
Armenia	3.1			
Tajikistan	2.8			
Jordan	2.5			
Lebanon	2.3			
Yemen	0.7			
Kuwait	0.0			
UAE	0.0			
Latin America and the Caribbean				
Viet Nam	26.0			
China	21.8			
Lao PDR	21.2			
Korea, DPR.	20.1			
Philippines	12.9			
Indonesia	11.4			
Fiji	10.7			
Malaysia	10.3			
Bangladesh	9.1			
India	8.9			
Samoa	8.2			
Cambodia	8.2			
Mongolia	7.9			
Thailand	6.6			
Nepal	6.4			
Maldives	6.3			
Sri Lanka	4.9			
Iran, Islamic Republic.	4.9			
Singapore	4.3			
Korea, Republic	3.7			
Bhutan	2.0			
Pakistan	2.0			
Papua New Guinea	1.8			
Vanuatu	0.0			



Progress in women's share of seats in the legislature is shown in Chart 3.4 (pp. 79-80). Fewer countries are included than in Table 3.3, owing to lack of recent data. The majority of countries show progress, but there are important regional differences. In Eastern Europe and Mongolia, for example, the elimination of quotas that accompanied the shift to democracy has resulted in dramatic falls in women's share of parliamentary seats. The most dramatic increase, by contrast, occurred in South Africa following the end of apartheid (1% to 30%). Increases of 10 to 15 percent occurred in countries in both the developed and developing world and were especially striking in countries that started at very low levels of participation, such as Uganda (1% to 17.9%), Ecuador (1% to 17.4%), Bahamas (4% to 19.6%) and Barbados (4% to 20.4%). However, progress could also be seen in countries where levels were higher to begin with, such as Austria (11% to 25%), New Zealand (14% to 29.2%), Iceland (21% to 34.9%) and Sweden (31% to 42.7%).

Comparisons between countries are complicated by several factors:

- legislatures in some countries may have little independent decision-making power, due to control exercised by political parties or by the executive arm of government;
- women representatives may come from a limited range of social backgrounds and pursue policies that benefit their own social group (including women) rather than policies designed to improve the lives of the majority of women;
- women representatives may be unable to change pre-existing policy agendas because officials lack an understanding of how these agendas operate to disadvantage women.

It is also true that just as more women are winning seats in national parliaments, the power to make decisions about economic policy has moved elsewhere. Not only has the balance of such power shifted between the state and the corporate sector, as discussed further in Chapter 5, but within governments themselves, decision-making power about macroeconomic policy has moved away from legislatures and has become concentrated in the financial ministries and the central banks (Sen 1999).

While it is not yet possible to present a global picture, substantial progress has been made in women's share of seats in local councils in at least some parts of the world. For instance in India, 33 per cent of the seats in local decision-making bodies are now reserved for women, following an amendment to the national constitution in 1992. And in Uganda, the 1995 constitution stipulated that a minimum of one-third of all seats in local councils must be filled by women.

The International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) reports that in general, the proportion of women elected representatives is probably higher at the local level than at the national level, but it emphasizes the lack of reliable information (IULA 1998). Committed to making equal the number of women and men in decision-making bodies at all levels and in all policy areas, IULA aims to construct a global database on women in local government, and has already distributed a questionnaire to its members (Website: www.iula.org).

"If local government is to meet the needs of both women and men, it must build on the experiences of both women and men, through an equal representation at all levels and in all fields of decision making..."

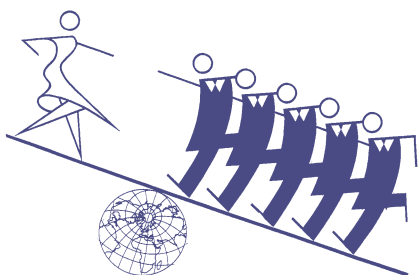
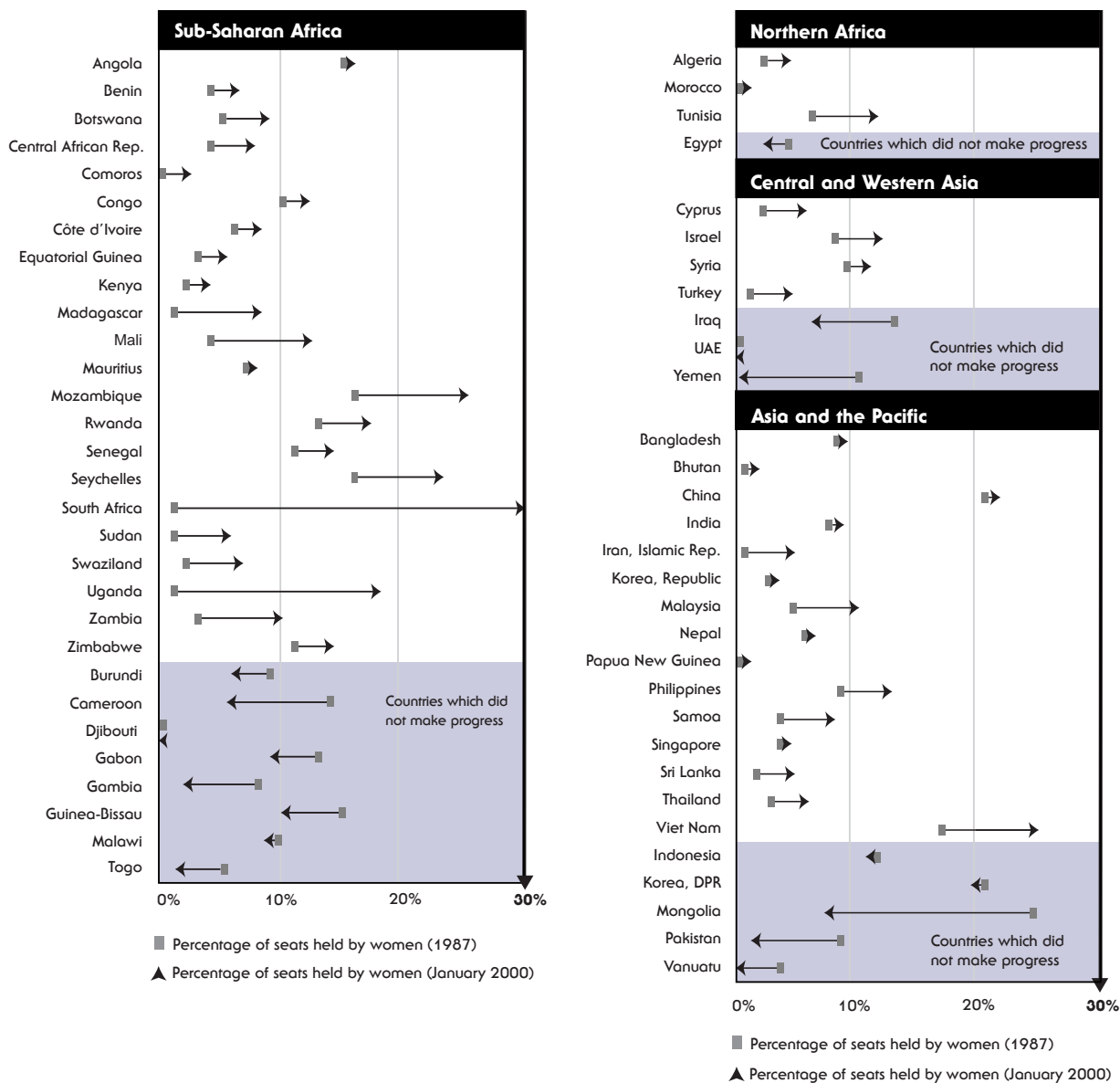
— International Union of Local Authorities, Harare, 1998

At the regional level, a multidimensional picture of women's participation in decision-making in Latin America and the Caribbean has been put together by ECLAC, covering not only government and political parties, but also trade unions, professional and employers organizations and women's social organizations (ECLAC 1999). If this survey is repeated at appropriate intervals, it will provide a good way of tracking progress over time.

The barriers to women occupying more decision-making positions are deep-seated, and often women are reluctant to put themselves forward for such positions. Many fear the hostility, sometimes organized, which they will almost certainly face, while others are reluctant to take on additional responsibilities owing to their obligations to take care of family and neighbours. Yet these barriers



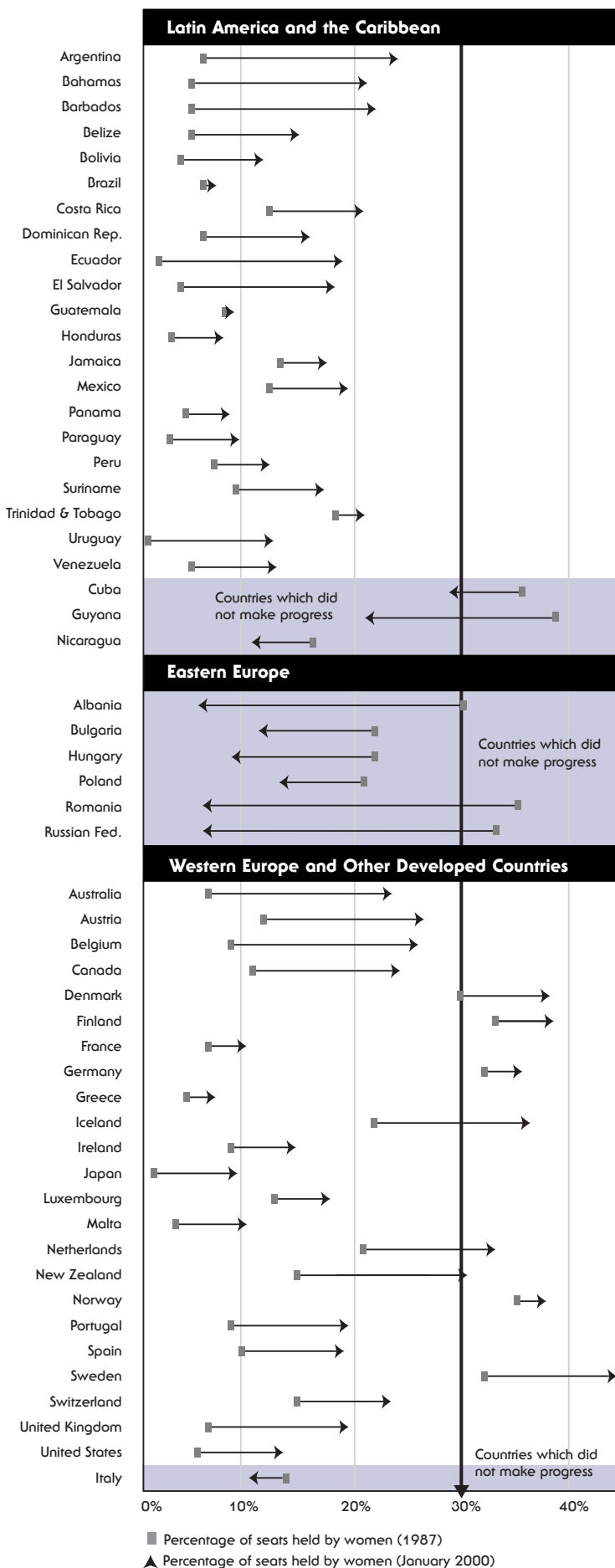
Chart 3.4: Change in Women's Share of Seats in National Parliament, 1987-2000



"The concept of democracy will only assume true and dynamic significance when political policies and national legislation are decided upon jointly by men and women with equitable regard for the interests and aptitudes of both halves of the population."

— Inter-Parliamentary Council, Resolution on "Women and Political Power," April 1992

Chart 3.4, continued



can be overcome with determined policies which open doors to women, provide women with support in both their public and private roles, and encourage men to take a greater share of caring responsibilities and to take pride in the public accomplishments of their wives and daughters (see Box 11).

Meeting Platform Targets for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Applying the indicators to the agreed-upon targets for gender equality in education and parliament makes it possible to identify countries that have made progress in achieving the targets. Because of the underlying variability in the education enrolment data, it is wise to allow some leeway; and because of the fact that gender gaps can be eliminated at low, as well as at high levels of girls' enrolment, it is important to take absolute levels of girls' enrolment into account too. The judgement used here is that a country has met the target for gender equality in secondary education if the ratio of girls to boys' enrolment is between 95 and 105 and the level of girls' enrolment is 95 or higher.

In the case of women's share of seats in national legislatures, the underlying data are not subject to the same degree of error. So the judgement here is that a country has achieved the current target if 30 per cent or more of the seats are held by women. There is no target for women's share of paid employment, but it seems reasonable to consider a figure in the range of 45-55 per cent as indicating an equal share, given the variability of the data.

Table 3.4 lists those countries that have achieved the target for gender equality in education and the target for share of seats in national legislatures, together with a high share of women's paid employment in industry and services. It also includes countries that have come very close. This comparison shows that only four countries, all in Northern Europe, have accomplished all three goals. To date, one developing country, South Africa, and three additional European countries have also met both the target for gender equality in education and the target for share of political representatives. These achievements should be celebrated. But they should be taken as a signal not that nothing more needs to be done in these countries but that they are in a position to adopt more demanding targets.

Box 11: Awards to Supportive Men

Following the first free election in Nigeria after the downfall of the military regime, stories of hostility to women running for office or seeking senior government or party positions were rife. The new president, General Abasanjo, was credited with trying to promote women for appointed office, but had made little progress, owing to a pervasive patriarchal culture that views women as unqualified, regardless of their education or training. This is particularly true in the predominantly Muslim north, where representation of women is lower than elsewhere.

In an effort to promote new male role models, UNIFEM established an award to be given to men who supported their wives for political office:

The case of one award winner, Alhaji Salisu Soda, was most remarkable, as he is an illiterate who relentlessly pursues the empowerment of his wife at home, within the community and nation. Alhaji Salisu Soda, whom all participants hailed as the “Real Man,” is an indigene of Kano state, born in 1941. He is a seasoned and honest businessman with little or no education. He met and married his wife, Hajiya Halima, in 1974. She has remained his one and only wife. The couple is happily married with four children. With his support and in defiance of the African culture that encourages denial of education for women, his wife decided to take a career in nursing which necessitated her being posted to various local governments. He encouraged her to return to school and further her education. The result was a Diploma in Public Administration. In his quest for academic excellence for his wife, he urged her to go back to school again to bag a degree. She has recently concluded her final examinations.

His encouragement was not limited to education but extended to participation in governance. He supported his wife in all her political endeavours. In 1979-80, he watched with pride, as Hajiya Halima Soda became the first married woman to be a card-carrying member of the People’s Redemptive Party (PRP). She was later appointed Commissioner for Health, and currently is Commissioner for Women Affairs in Kano.

Alhaji Salisu Soda enabled his wife to become economically secure by introducing her into his business. Today, under his tutelage, she owns two companies, H.H. Soda Enterprises and G.U.S.F. Enterprises...UNIFEM salutes Alhaji Salisu Soda for his positive role modelling for the advancement of gender equality. He was not threatened by the fact that educating his wife might make her more “powerful.”

Source: report to UNIFEM *Currents*, October 1999.

Table 3.4: Levels of Achievement in Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Country	Target: 30% women’s seats in national legislatures	Target: 95-105% f/m ratio net secondary school enrolment	Female net enrolment ratio in secondary school	45-55% women’s share of paid employment in industry and services
Sweden	42.7%	100	99.9	51.0%
Denmark	37.4%	101	95.4	48.0%
Finland	37.0%	102	96.2	50.0%
Norway	36.4%	101	98.0	51.0%
Iceland	34.9%	101	88.1	52.0%
Netherlands	31.5%	100	99.9	31.5%
Germany	33.6%	99	94.9	44.0%
South Africa	30.0%	104	96.9	41.0%

Reducing Obstacles to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Increases in girls' enrolment in secondary school, in women's share of paid employment in industry and services, and of women's seats in parliament need to be situated in the context of changes in the level of per-capita income in different countries and the distribution of this income. Improvements in women's access to education, paid employment and political decision-making are hollow if the standard of living of women is not improving.

There is no one indicator that can adequately capture what is happening to women's standard of living. However, improvement is likely to depend upon the distribution of resources within and among countries, the national rate of growth of per-capita income and the level of national external debt. In particular, poor women are unlikely to benefit very much from a reduction in gender gaps, if the level of per-capita income in the country is falling, if income distribution in the country is worsening, and if the country is becoming more indebted.

Table 3.5 (pp. 83-84) presents a scoreboard that situates changes in the three UN indicators of gender equality and women's empowerment in the broader context of national economies. (It also shows the extent of information, and lack of it, in UN and other international databases, especially for Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Western Asia.) The scoreboard shows improvement on all three gender equality indicators for 17 countries. Of these, only Jamaica also showed improvement in per-capita income and income equality indicators. Of the rest, 13 showed improvement in per-capita income but of these, 4 showed deterioration in income equality, 2 showed improvement, 2 showed no change and for 5 there was no income inequality data available from the World Institute for Economic Development.

"Scoreboards are particularly useful in... conveying more immediately an ongoing sense of the monitoring process. The concept of 'scoring', be it on a scoreboard, a score card or a record card, is readily grasped by most people and is thus more easily owned."

— International Women's Tribune Centre (2000)

The deterioration in economic conditions facing women in Sub-Saharan Africa is very evident. In 19 out of 48 countries, real per-capita income fell.

(The UN database had no information on changes in income inequality in most countries.) This was also true in Eastern Europe, where 9 out of 19 countries experienced a fall in real per-capita income and 15 experienced a rise in income inequality.

Increased indebtedness is also very striking: increases occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa (22 countries out of 48), Asia and the Pacific (10 countries out of 28) and Northern Africa (2 countries out of 5). Increased indebtedness seems to be associated with a deterioration in girls' enrolment in secondary school. An examination of countries with data available for both the education and the debt variables reveal that of the 16 in which girls' enrolment declined, 12 also experienced increased indebtedness. In Western Europe and Other Developed Countries there is no problem of external debt and per-capita real income on average increased. But in 12 out of 24 countries there was a deterioration in income equality.

Conclusions

Over the last two decades there has been progress in removing many obstacles to women's participation in education, in market-based production and in political decision-making. But in two regions, some obstacles have increased:

- to women's participation in secondary education in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa;
- to women's participation in paid employment and political life in the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union which have made the transition to market-based economies.

Moreover, where women have made inroads into secondary schooling and the market economy and into parliaments, they have found paradoxes:

- more women obtaining secondary educational qualifications but tending to receive a lower financial return for their qualifications than do men;
- more women entering into paid employment but at a time when the quality of jobs, in terms of social protection and rights to organize, are declining;
- more women taking legislative decisions but at a time when economic decision-making power is moving away from legislatures.

Further progress for the world's women requires a stronger commitment to place women's empowerment and gender justice at the heart of national and international development agendas.

Table 3.5: Progress of Women Scoreboard, mid 1980s - late 1990s

Country	Educa-tion	Employ-ment	Parlia-ment	Per capita income	Income equality	Debt reduction	Country	Educa-tion	Employ-ment	Parlia-ment	Per capita income	Income equality	Debt reduction
Sub-Saharan Africa							Central and Western Asia						
Angola	-	?	=	-	?	-	Armenia	?	?	?	-	-	?
Benin	=	?	+	-	?	+	Azerbaijan	?	?	?	-	-	?
Botswana	+	+	+	+	?	+	Bahrain	-	+	?	+	?	-
Burkina Faso	+	=	?	+	?	-	Cyprus	?	+	+	?	?	?
Burundi	+	?	-	-	?	-	Georgia	-	?	?	?	?	?
Cameroon	-	?	-	-	?	-	Iraq	-	?	-	-	?	?
Cape Verde	+	?	+	?	+	?	Israel	?	+	+	+	=	?
Central African Rep.	-	?	+	-	?	-	Jordan	?	+	?	-	-	-
Chad	+	=	?	-	?	-	Kazakhstan	?	?	?	-	-	?
Comoros	-	?	+	-	?	+	Kuwait	-	?	?	+	?	na
Congo	-	?	+	-	?	-	Kyrgyzstan	-	?	?	-	-	?
Cote d'Ivoire	-	=	+	-	?	-	Lebanon	?	?	?	?	?	?
Congo, DR	=	?	?	-	?	-	Oman	+	?	?	=	?	?
Djibouti	=	?	=	?	?	?	Qatar	-	?	?	?	?	?
Equatorial Guinea	-	?	+	+	?	+	Saudi Arabia	+	?	?	-	?	+
Eritrea	?	?	?	?	?	?	Syria	-	+	+	+	?	-
Ethiopia	+	+	?	+	-	-	Tajikistan	?	?	?	-	?	?
Gabon	?	?	-	-	?	-	Turkey	+	=	+	+	?	?
Gambia	+	?	-	-	?	+	Turkmenistan	?	?	?	?	?	?
Ghana	?	?	?	+	+	-	UAE	+	?	=	-	?	?
Guinea	-	?	?	+	?	?	Uzbekistan	?	?	?	?	?	?
Guinea-Bissau	+	?	-	+	?	-	Yemen	?	?	-	?	?	?
Kenya	=	+	+	+	?	+	Asia and the Pacific						
Lesotho	-	?	?	+	?	-	Afghanistan	?	?	?	?	?	?
Liberia	?	?	?	?	?	?	Bangladesh	+	?	=	+	+	-
Madagascar	?	?	+	-	?	-	Bhutan	?	?	=	=	?	-
Malawi	+	+	-	-	?	+	Brunei Darussalam	=	?	?	-	?	?
Mali	+	?	+	+	?	=	Cambodia	+	?	?	+	?	?
Mauritania	?	?	?	+	+	=	China	+	+	=	+	-	-
Mauritius	+	=	=	+	?	+	Fiji	+	+	?	+	?	+
Mozambique	-	?	+	+	?	-	Hong Kong, China SAR	=	+	?	+	-	na
Namibia	+	?	?	+	?	=	India	+	+	=	+	=	-
Niger	+	+	?	-	?	=	Indonesia	+	=	=	+	-	-
Nigeria	?	?	?	+	-	-	Iran, Islamic Republic	+	?	+	-	?	-
Reunion	?	?	?	?	?	?	Korea, Republic	+	+	=	+	?	+
Rwanda	?	?	+	-	?	-	Lao PDR	+	?	?	+	?	-
Senegal	+	?	+	=	?	+	Malaysia	+	+	+	+	?	+
Seychelles	?	?	+	+	?	+	Maldives	?	?	?	+	?	+
Sierra Leone	?	?	?	-	?	-	Mongolia	-	?	-	?	?	?
Somalia	?	?	?	?	?	?	Myanmar	+	?	?	?	?	?
South Africa	+	?	+	-	+	?	Nepal	+	?	=	+	?	-
Sudan	?	?	+	=	?	-	Pakistan	?	+	-	+	-	=
Swaziland	+	+	+	+	?	+	Papua New Guinea	?	?	+	+	?	+
Togo	+	?	-	-	?	+	Philippines	+	-	+	+	-	+
Uganda	?	?	+	+	-	-	Samoa (Western)	?	?	+	=	?	+
Tanzania, UR	?	?	?	?	+	?	Singapore	+	+	=	+	=	?
Zambia	=	?	+	-	-	+	Sri Lanka	+	+	+	+	?	+
Zimbabwe	+	+	+	=	?	-	Thailand	+	+	+	+	+	-
Northern Africa							Tonga	?	?	?	?	?	?
Algeria	+	?	+	-	+	?	Vanuatu	+	?	-	-	?	-
Egypt	+	+	-	+	+	+	Viet Nam	+	?	+	?	?	?
Libya	+	?	?	-	?	-							
Morocco	=	?	=	+	=	+							
Tunisia	+	?	+	+	+	-							

Table 3.5: Progress of Women Scoreboard

Country	Education	Employment	Parliament	Per capita income	Income equality	Debt reduction	Country	Education	Employment	Parliament	Per capita income	Income equality	Debt reduction
Latin America and the Caribbean							Western Europe and Other Developed Countries						
Argentina	+	?	+	+	-	+	Australia	+	+	+	+	-	na
Bahamas	=	+	+	-	+	?	Austria	+	+	+	+	=	na
Barbados	=	+	+	+	?	?	Belgium	=	+	+	+	+	na
Belize	=	?	+	+	?	=	Canada	=	?	+	+	+	na
Bolivia	-	?	+	+	+	+	Denmark	+	?	+	+	-	na
Brazil	+	+	=	+	-	+	Finland	=	=	+	+	-	na
Chile	+	=	?	+	=	+	France	=	+	+	+	-	na
Colombia	+	?	?	+	-	+	Germany	+	+	+	?	-	na
Costa Rica	+	=	+	+	-	+	Greece	+	+	+	+	=	na
Cuba	=	?	-	?	?	?	Iceland	+	?	+	+	?	na
Dominican Rep.	+	?	+	+	-	+	Ireland	=	+	+	+	-	na
Ecuador	-	?	+	=	?	-	Italy	+	+	-	+	?	na
El Salvador	+	=	+	+	?	+	Luxembourg	?	=	+	+	?	na
Guatemala	+	?	=	+	-	+	Japan	=	+	+	+	=	na
Guyana	=	?	-	+	?	+	Malta	=	+	+	+	?	?
Haiti	-	?	?	-	?	=	Netherlands	=	+	+	+	=	na
Honduras	-	=	+	=	=	-	New Zealand	+	+	+	+	=	na
Jamaica	+	+	+	+	+	+	Norway	+	+	+	+	-	na
Mexico	=	?	+	=	-	+	Portugal	+	+	+	+	=	na
Nicaragua	=	?	-	-	?	-	Spain	=	+	+	+	+	na
Panama	+	=	+	=	?	+	Sweden	+	=	+	+	-	na
Paraguay	+	=	+	=	-	+	Switzerland	+	?	+	=	?	na
Peru	+	-	+	+	+	+	United Kingdom	=	+	+	+	-	na
Suriname	?	?	+	?	?	-	United States	=	+	+	+	-	na
Trinidad & Tobago	=	+	+	-	?	-							
Uruguay	+	?	+	+	=	+							
Venezuela	+	+	+	=	-	+							
Eastern Europe													
Albania	?	+	-	-	?	?							
Belarus	?	?	?	-	+	?							
Bosnia-Herzegovina	?	?	?	?	?	?							
Bulgaria	-	?	-	-	-	-							
Croatia	-	+	?	?	-	?							
Czech Rep.	+	+	?	=	-	-							
Estonia	-	-	?	-	-	?							
Hungary	+	=	-	=	=	+							
Larvia	-	?	?	-	-	?							
Lithuania	?	-	?	-	-	?							
Macedonia FYR	?	+	?	?	-	?							
Poland	+	?	-	+	-	+							
Moldova, Rep.	?	?	?	?	-	?							
Romania	-	?	-	-	-	?							
Russian Fed.	-	?	-	-	-	?							
Slovakia	?	+	?	=	-	-							
Slovenia	?	+	?	?	-	?							
Ukraine	?	=	?	-	-	?							
Yugoslavia	?	?	?	?	=	?							

Reading the Scores:

Education: Change in female net enrolment at secondary level, 1985-1997

Employment: Change in women's share of paid employment in industry and services, early 1980s to mid 1990s

Parliament: Change in women's share of seats in national parliament, 1987-2000

Per capita income: Annual average change in real per capita GDP, 1985-1997

Income equality: Change in distribution of income as measured by the gini coefficient, 1980s to 1990s

Debt reduction: A reduction in the debt burden as measured by the ratio of external debt to GNP, 1985-1997

+ an increase or improvement (dark purple)

= little or no change (light purple)

- a decrease or deterioration (grey)

? no data was available (black)

n.a not applicable; no external debt

For more details on indicators and sources, see Technical Annex