

TURNING PROMISES INTO ACTION:

GENDER EQUALITY
IN THE 2030 AGENDA
FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

The 2030 Agenda is clear: there can be no sustainable development without gender equality. *Turning promises into action: Gender equality in the 2030 agenda*, a global monitoring report by UN Women, asks: **How far have we come in turning this new development consensus into results for women and girls, and what is needed to bridge the remaining gaps between rhetoric and reality?**

New data analysis* in the report puts a spotlight on gender-based discrimination across all 17 SDGs. The goal-by-goal review shows that gender inequalities—deeply rooted and present across all countries—are pervasive in each and every dimension of sustainable development. **See goal-by-goal summary below.**

Using micro-level data, the report shows how across countries, women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination are often left behind and excluded from progress. These groups of women and girls are excluded not only from access to education and health, but also other key measures of well-being including access to clean water, fuel and housing. **See case studies summary below.**

Addressing these challenges requires dramatic advances in statistics, financing and policies for gender equality.

THE NEED FOR ACTION

The report identifies four key areas for action:

1. Harnessing policy synergies: the demands for implementation are huge—there are 17 goals and gender equality matters for all of them. Integrated approaches to implementation are pivotal to harnessing these synergies.
2. Improving gender data, statistics and analysis to effectively monitor progress for women and girls across all goals and targets.
3. Prioritizing gender-responsive investments, policies and programmes to align action with the principles, values and aspirations of the 2030 Agenda.
4. Strengthening accountability through gender-responsive processes and institutions to ensure an integrated approach to implementation, follow-up and review with gender equality at its core.

See Policy in Focus summary below.

* NOTE: Data presented are from global databases and may not reflect the most up-to-date country level information. In addition, data may differ from national figures due to harmonization processes performed for international comparability.

FACT SHEET – NORTHERN AFRICA AND WESTERN ASIA

Gender-based discrimination— deeply rooted and present across all countries—threatens to undermine the transformative potential of the 2030 Agenda in real and measurable ways:

1 NO POVERTY

Globally, there are 122 women aged 25-34 living in extreme poverty for every 100 men of the same age group.

2 ZERO HUNGER

In nearly two thirds of countries, women are more likely than men to report food insecurity.

In **Northern Africa and Western Asia**, 28.8% of women and 26.8% of men reported food insecurity – a gender gap of 2 percentage points. However, the gap is much higher in **Libya**, the country with the highest gender gap in food insecurity in the region, at 10 percentage points (34.8% of women and 25.4% of men).

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Globally, 303,000 women died from pregnancy-related causes in 2015. The rate of death is declining much too slowly to achieve Target 3.1.

In **Northern Africa and Western Asia**, there were 105 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015 – a figure much lower than the global average of 216.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

15 million girls of primary school age will never get the chance to learn to read or write in primary school, compared to 10 million boys.

In **Northern Africa and Western Asia**, 25.7% of girls are out of school, compared to 21.7% of boys.

5 GENDER EQUALITY

The 2030 Agenda promises to put an end to barriers that prevent women and girls from realizing their full potential. But significant challenges lie ahead:

5.1 In 18 countries, husbands can legally prevent their wives from working; in 39 countries, daughters and sons do not have equal inheritance rights; and 49 countries lack laws protecting women from domestic violence.

5.2 1 in 5 women and girls under the age of 50 reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner within a 12-month period. In the **Northern Africa and Western Asia** region, 12.4% of women and girls reported having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner within a 12-month period.

5.3 Globally, 750 million women and girls were married before the age of 18 and at least 200 million women and girls in 30 countries have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM).

In **Northern Africa and Western Asia**, 17% of women aged 20-24 were first married before the age of 18.

Data on FGM point to some improvements, as the prevalence among younger women is lower than among older women (based on cohort analysis of women aged 20-24 and 45-49 in 29 countries). While there has been a decline in FGM in **Egypt, Sudan, Iraq** and **Yemen**, prevalence rates remain very high in **Sudan** and **Egypt** (86% and 82% respectively for women aged 20-24). In **Iraq** and **Yemen**, FGM rates for women aged 20-24 are 8% and 17%, respectively. Unless progress is accelerated, the rate of decline will not keep up with population growth, and the number of women and girls undergoing FGM will increase over the next 15 years.

5.4 Women do 2.6 times the unpaid care and domestic work that men do. Within the Northern Africa and Western Asia region, **Iraq** stands out as the country with the largest gender difference in unpaid care and domestic work and **Qatar** with the lowest gender difference: In **Iraq** and **Qatar**, women spend 24.1% and 13.82% of their day on unpaid domestic and care work, respectively; men spend 4.17% and 7.64% of their day, respectively, on this work.

5.5 [As of September 2017](#), women hold just 23.7% of parliamentary seats, an increase of 10 percentage points from 2000 – but still way below parity. The corresponding figure is much lower for the **Northern Africa and Western Asia** region: only 18.1% of seats in national parliaments were held by women, as of September 2017. Within the region, **Tunisia** has the highest rates of female representation in parliament, at 31.3%. In contrast, in **Yemen** and **Qatar**, no parliamentary seats were held by women.

5.6 Based on data from 45 countries, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa, only 52% of women aged 15-49 married or in a union freely make their own decisions about sexual relations, contraceptive use and health care.

5.a Globally, women are just 13% of agricultural land holders.

5.b The benefits of internet and technology are accessible to men at a much higher rate than women, leaving women behind in Internet access and mobile phone ownership.

In **Northern Africa and Western Asia**, 55.3% of women have access to the internet compared to 59.5% of men.

5.c More than 100 countries have taken action to track budget allocations for gender equality.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Women and girls are responsible for water collection in 80% of the world's households without access to water on premises.

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

Indoor air pollution from using combustible fuels for household energy caused 4.3 million deaths in 2012, with women and girls accounting for 6 out of every 10 of these.

Based on available data for 11 countries that cover 56.8% of the region's population, countries in **Northern Africa and Western Asia** generally show substantially lower than average reliance on solid fuels, at 12.4% across the region.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Globally, the labour force participation rate among prime working-age women (aged 25–54) stands at 63% compared to 94% among their male counterparts.

The widest gender gap in LFPR is found in the **Northern Africa and Western Asia** region, where the gap is nearly 60 percentage points, and female participation rates are less than 35%. Data show that women's participation has increased only slightly in the last 20 years: from 29% in 1997 to 34% in 2017.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Women represent 28.8% of researchers worldwide. Only about 1 in 5 countries have achieved gender parity in this area. The **Northern Africa and Western Asia** region is still below parity, but is above the global average - 38.8% of researchers are women.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Up to 30% of income inequality is due to inequality within households, including between women and men. Women are also more likely than men to live below 50% of the median income.

As an example of this region, in **Egypt**, 19.4% of women and 17.7% of men live on less than 50% of the median income.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

The global population is becoming more urban, with opportunities and risks for women and girls: More than 50% of urban women in developing countries live in slum housing where they lack at least one of the following: access to clean water, improved sanitation facilities, durable housing or sufficient living area.

In the **Northern Africa and Western Asia** region, the corresponding figure is about 22% of urban women living in conditions where they lack at least one of their basic housing needs.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Investment in public transportation yields large benefits for women, who tend to rely on public transport more than men do.

13 CLIMATE ACTION

Climate change has a disproportionate impact on women and children, who are 14 times as likely as men to die during a disaster.

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

The contamination of freshwater and marine ecosystems negatively impacts women's and men's livelihoods, their health and the health of their children.

Occupational segregation in the fishing and aquaculture industry looms large in **Northern Africa and Western Asia**, where only 0.4% of people working in this sector are women.

15 LIFE ON LAND

Between 2010 and 2015, the world lost 3.3 million hectares of forest areas. Poor rural women depend on common pool resources and are especially affected by their depletion.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

In times of conflict, rates of homicide and other forms of violent crime increase significantly. While men are more likely to be killed on the battlefield, women are disproportionately subjected to sexual violence and abducted, tortured and forced to leave their homes.

In **Northern Africa and Western Asia**, the regional aggregate for intentional homicides is 1.2 per 100,000 people.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

In 2012, finances flowing out of developing countries were 2.5 times the amount of aid flowing in, and gender allocations paled in comparison.

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Leaving no one behind means the benefits of sustainable development reach everyone. Currently, across countries, it is those women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination who are often the furthest behind. For instance, women with disabilities are more deprived than women without disabilities or men with disabilities in a variety of dimensions of well-being. This compounded disadvantage of disability and gender is illustrated by the not in education or employment rates for female youth:

- In **Egypt**, 65.7% of women with disabilities aged 15-24 do not have access to education nor employment, compared to 58.3% of men with disabilities, 16.3% of women without disabilities and 4.6% of men without disabilities.
- In **Sudan**, 59.1% of women with disabilities aged 15-24 are excluded from education nor employment, compared to 36.8% of men with disabilities, 54.1% of women without disabilities and 22.7% of men without disabilities.
- In **Jordan**, 79.9% of women with disabilities aged 15-24 are left behind in education nor employment, compared to 71.4% of men with disabilities, 46.2% of women without disabilities and 23.1% of men without disabilities.

POLICY IN FOCUS

Harnessing policy synergies

Investments in accessible, affordable and quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) can contribute to the achievement of several gender- and child-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda by, for instance, reducing the time women spend on unpaid care by shifting some of it out of the family (Target 5.4), enabling women to increase their access to employment (Target 8.5) and enhancing school readiness (Target 4.2).

The need for global gender data availability

Gaps in gender data and the lack of trend data make it difficult to assess and monitor the direction and pace of progress for women and girls. The availability of data necessary for global monitoring of the gender-specific indicators is at a mere 26%. **Northern Africa and Western Asia**, at 28.7%, has higher-than-average data availability for monitoring progress on gender equality. However, this is still below the desired mark, and unless gender is mainstreamed into national statistical strategies, gender data scarcity will persist.

Prioritizing gender-responsive investments, policies and programmes

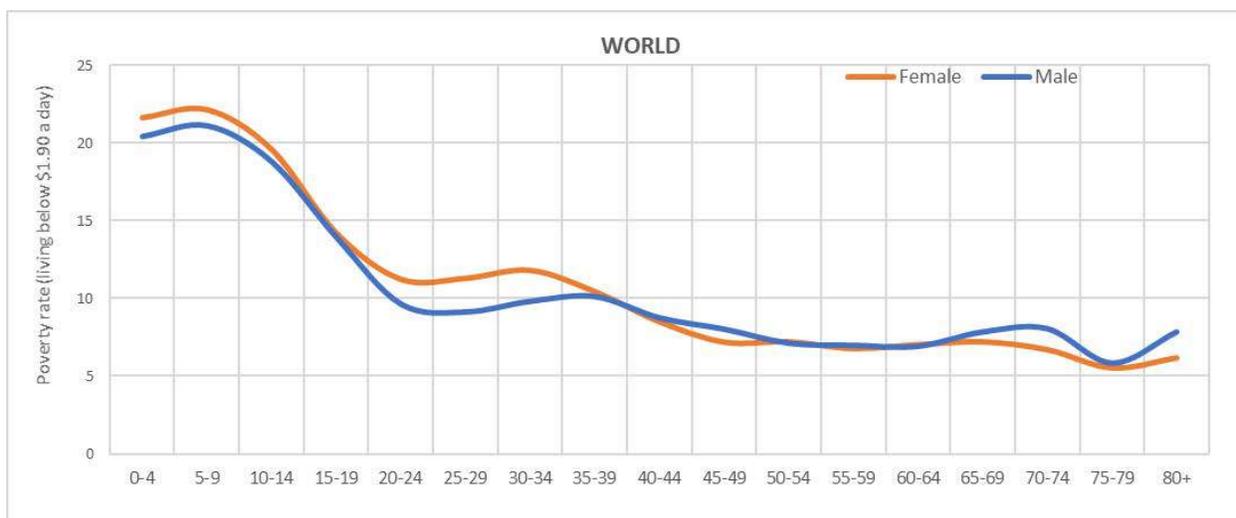
Prioritizing gender-responsive investments pays off. In South Africa, for instance, it is estimated that a gross annual investment of 3.2% of GDP in ECEC would not only result in universal coverage for all 0-5-year-old children, but also create 2.3 million new jobs, raising female employment by 10.1%.

APPENDIX

Note: The below represent a selection of illustrative examples for the Northern Africa and Western Asia region. Country-specific data may be available; if you are interested in country-specific data, please contact us at gender.data@unwomen.org using the subject line “SDG Report”.

1 NO POVERTY

Proportion of people living in extreme poverty^a by sex and age, 2009-2013^b



Source: World Bank calculations using Global Micro Database 2017.

Notes:

a – Living below \$1.90 a day.

b – Data refer to the most recent available during the period specified for 89 developing countries.

2 ZERO HUNGER

Gender gap in prevalence of food security in Northern Africa and Western Asia, 2014-2015

Country	% of females who are food insecure	% of males who are food insecure	Difference (f-m)
Algeria	7.01	5.83	1.18
Azerbaijan	6.12	5.72	0.4
Bahrain	16.46	16.97	-0.51
Cyprus	17.24	12.77	4.47
Egypt	26.1	21.24	4.86
Georgia	31.12	25.1	6.02
Iraq	43.1	42.51	0.59
Israel	5.32	5.63	-0.31
Jordan	31.23	24.95	6.28
Kuwait	10	13.57	-3.57
Lebanon	7.86	5.71	2.15
Libya	34.84	25.39	9.45
Morocco	25.43	26.73	-1.3
Saudi Arabia	21.69	23.99	-2.3
State of Palestine	29.31	27.6	1.71
Sudan	45.17	43.94	1.23
Syrian Arab Republic	48.71	44.16	4.55
Tunisia	18.58	19.12	-0.54
Turkey	31.64	31.99	-0.35

United Arab Emirates	13.98	11.3	2.68
Yemen	44.85	42.32	2.53

Source: UN Women calculations based on data from the FAO Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) survey (2014–2015).

Notes: The FIES measures the percentage of individuals in the national population who have experienced food insecurity at moderate or severe levels during the 12-month reference period. The analysis is based on data from 141 countries collected by FAO in the context of the Voices of the Hungry Project. FAO. 2017.

5 GENDER EQUALITY

Internet penetration rate by sex and region, 2017

SDG Regional Groupings	Female Internet users as % of total female population 2017	Male Internet users as % of total male population 2017
Australia and New Zealand	53.7	56.9
Central and Southern Asia	41.5	44.6
Eastern and South-eastern Asia	27.8	42.0
Europe and Northern America	75.2	82.0
Latin America and the Caribbean	66.7	65.2
Northern Africa and Western Asia	55.3	59.5
Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand)	53.7	56.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	18.4	24.6
World	44.7	50.6

Source: ITU (International Telecommunication Union). 2017. *ICT Facts and Figures 2017*. Geneva: ITU.

Note: Internet penetration rates refer to the number of women and men using the Internet, as a percentage of the respective total female and male population.

**5 GENDER
EQUALITY****Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, 2005-2015**

Country	Proportion of time spend by women	Proportion of time spend by men
Algeria	22.08	3.75
Armenia	21.67	4.38
Azerbaijan	25.42	8.89
Iraq	24.1	4.17
Morocco	20.83	2.99
Oman	19.03	7.99
Qatar	13.82	7.64
State of Palestine	19.17	3.06
Tunisia	21.94	2.71
Turkey	19.17	3.68

Source: UNSD 2017.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Proportion of women and girls aged 15–49 living in slums in Northern Africa and Western Asia, 2003-2010

Country	All four criteria	3 criteria of the four (no improved water sources, no improved sanitation facilities, overcrowding, insufficient housing)	At least one criteria	Year of survey
Armenia	0	0.19	31.14	2010
Azerbaijan	0.62	4.07	84.25	2006
Morocco	0.06	0.07	22.18	2003-04

Sources: UN Women calculation based on micro-data from Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) for 60 developing countries, latest available year.

Notes: SDG indicator 11.1.1 classifies 'slum household' as households that meet at least one out of five listed criteria: (1) Lack of access to improved water source, (2) Lack of access to improved sanitation facilities, (3) Lack of sufficient living area, (4) Lack of housing durability and (5) Lack of security of tenure. These criteria utilize the international definition of 'slum households' as agreed by UN Habitat-United Nations Statistics Division-UN Cities. However, in practice, methodology for measuring security of tenure is not in place; thus slum status is assessed using the first four criteria only. Sample of women and girls aged 15-49 has been used for all countries except Viet Nam, which is based on data for women aged 18-49.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Proportion of urban population living in slums (per cent)

Region	2014	2000
Australia and New Zealand	0.03	0.03
Central Asia and Southern Asia	31.89	46.05
Eastern Asia and South-eastern Asia	27.55	38.23
Landlocked Developing Countries	59.00	67.11
Latin America and The Caribbean	21.26	29.31
Least developed countries	62.16	77.97
Northern America and Europe	0.10	0.10
Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand)	24.15	24.19
Sub-Saharan Africa	55.99	65.04
Western Asia and Northern Africa	22.06	23.11
World	22.77	28.42

Source: UN-Habitat, 2017.