



EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

SIGI REGIONAL REPORT

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ADB	Asian Development Bank
BCG	Boston Consulting Group
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSO	Civil society organisation
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GDP	Gross domestic product
GGG	Global Gender Gap Index
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoEF	The Ministry of Economy and Finance of Cambodia
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SA	South Asia
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIGI	Social Institutions and Gender Index
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Resolution
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organization



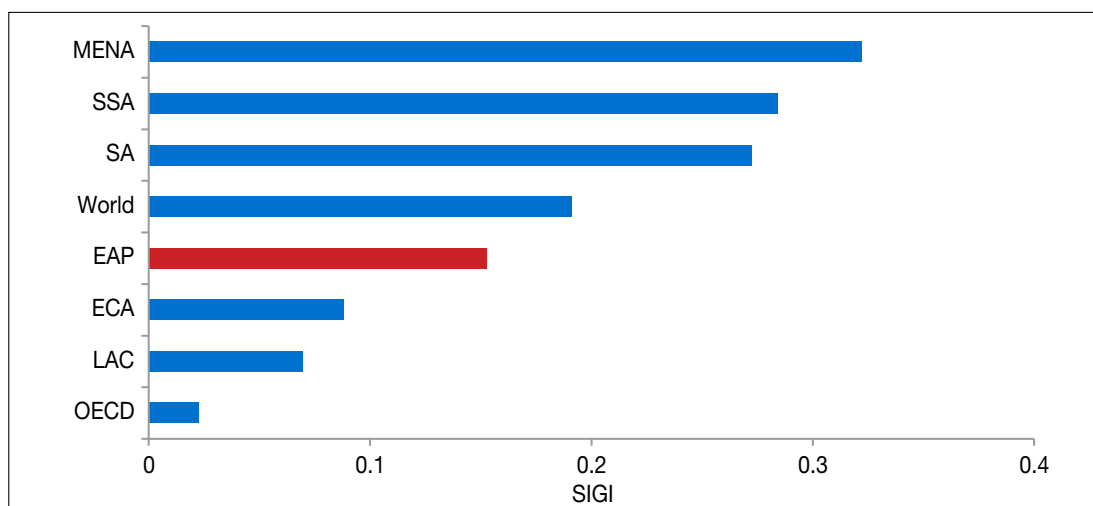
**The SIGI in East Asia
and the Pacific**



Regional overview

The East Asia and the Pacific region is the third best performing region in the 2014 edition of the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) (Figure 1.1). The region has benefited from its cultural diversity and economic dynamism to advance gender equality, courtesy of political commitments and growing recognition of gender equality's positive impact on development. Yet, progress remains mixed and slow across the region with clear challenges in overcoming barriers to women's public leadership and economic empowerment, and in tackling gender-based violence. Half of the countries are characterised by medium levels of discrimination in social institutions: directly tackling these underlying drivers of gender inequality could accelerate regional progress towards both gender equality as well as human and economic development goals.

Figure 1.1. SIGI scores by region



Note: This figure presents the average SIGI scores by region. Higher SIGI values indicate higher inequality: the SIGI ranges from 0 for very low discrimination to 1 for very high discrimination. The regions are: Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), South Asia (SA), East Asia and the Pacific (EAP), Europe and Central Asia (ECA) and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). This regional classification excludes Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, which are represented as a stand-alone group.

Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

Discriminatory social institutions are formal and informal laws, social norms and practices that restrict or exclude women and consequently curtail their access to rights, justice, resources and empowerment opportunities.

Economic growth over the past decades has created unprecedented opportunities to achieve gender equality in all areas of social, political and economic life. Home to many of the fastest growing economies in the world, the region boasts a growth rate of 6.5% for 2015, well above the global rate of 2.4% (World Bank, 2016). The region's economic dynamism has opened important new doors for women's empowerment across the region (ADB, 2015). Over half of the region's economic growth for the past 50 years can be attributed to gains in education. Increased gender equality in years of schooling and more girls in higher education, in particular, have created a highly educated workforce (OECD, 2014b). While labour force participation rates of women have decreased (from 65% in 2000 to 61% in 2013), they remain above the global average (50%) (World Bank, n.d). Gender parity has been achieved in all levels of education (2013 EAP Gender Parity ratio), with some countries showing reverse gender gaps (e.g. Mongolia and Thailand) in terms of enrolment and completion rates at secondary and

tertiary levels (World Bank, 2015a; OECD, 2014b). Falling maternal mortality rates (71 per 1000 births in 2013 from 120 in 2000) are also testament of improved dedicated health services and infrastructure, and progress towards universal health insurance (UNESCAP, 2014a). The gender pay gap across the region has halved since 1998, albeit with significant differences depending on country, sector and level of education (World Bank, 2012a).

Political commitments and legislative reforms offer a promising framework for anchoring gender equality as the new norm. All countries in the region have either introduced new measures or strengthened their legislative frameworks with the aim to promote gender equality in all areas of social, economic and political life. The Magna Carta of the Philippines (2008) and Mongolia's Law on the Promotion of Gender Equality (2011), for example, mirror the region's concrete engagement to enshrine gender equality as a core principle in national laws and policies, offering comprehensive legal protection in areas related to domestic violence or civic rights, such as political quotas. Other policies and actions to strengthen women's rights and access to land, justice, or financial inclusion have mushroomed, expanding equal opportunities for empowerment and equality.

***Discrimination against women** is defined as follows in Article 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women:*

(it) shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

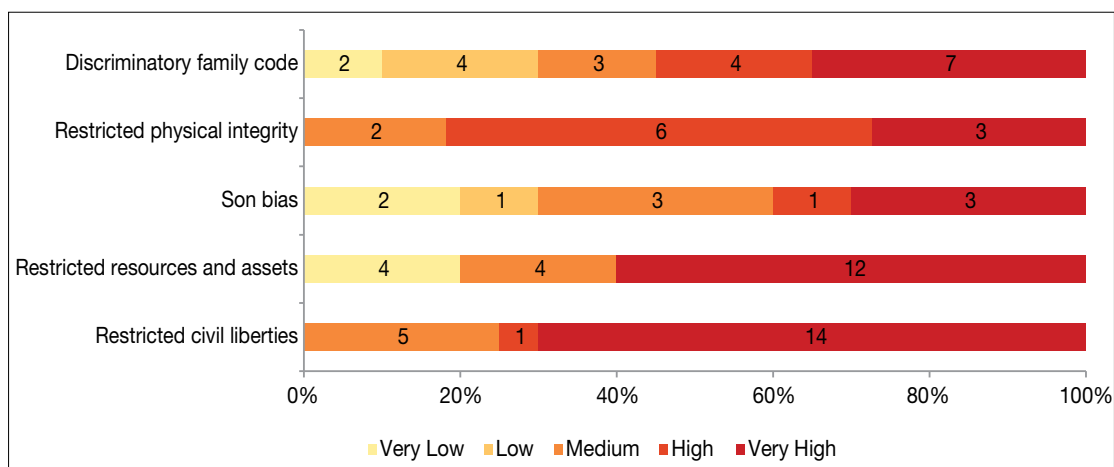
Yet, neither economic growth nor legislative reforms have managed to wipe out gender inequalities. In the 20th anniversary review of the achievements since the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), regional governments identified economic empowerment, violence against women and girls, and public leadership as three ongoing challenges to gender equality (UNESCAP, 2014a). The high female labour force participation rates conceal major regional diversity. The gender gap in labour force participation in 2013 was close to 30 percentage points across the region (ADB, 2015). Women still face “sticky floors” that exacerbate gender wage gaps and keep them in low-income and/or vulnerable employment (World Bank, 2012a). Violence against women cuts across all socio-economic groups, affecting as many as 68% of women in Papua New Guinea (Fulu, et al., 2013). “Glass ceilings” prevent women from reaching senior leadership positions in the public and private sectors: the region has one of the lowest percentages of women in parliament in the world (e.g. 6% in Myanmar). Similar barriers are mirrored in the share of women in corporate boards (e.g. 2% in South Korea) (Korn Ferry, 2015).

Social norms offer a critical lens to understand the region's mixed record on gender equality. There is growing evidence that discriminatory laws, attitudes and practices undermine the region's gender-responsive legislative efforts and limit women's ability to take advantage of its economic dynamism. Social expectations on women's maternal roles, traditional gender stereotypes, attitudes that promote boys in favour of girls, or formal and customary laws that fail to protect women's equal economic rights are all manifestations of discriminatory social institutions. As this SIGI Regional Report highlights, the unequal treatment of women at home, in the workplace, or in public decision-making fora has adverse effects on women as well as on countries' human development and economic growth (see Section 3).

As this Regional Report shows, discriminatory social institutions in East Asia and the Pacific are of particular concern in the areas of women's political voice, gender-based violence and access to land. The twenty countries classified in the SIGI show stronger performances in the son bias and discriminatory family code sub-indices, but display medium to very high levels of discrimination in the restricted civil liberties, restricted physical integrity and restricted resources and assets sub-indices (Figure 1.2). Discriminatory laws and/or practices in regard to land ownership, poor enforcement of violence against women legislation and stubborn traditional norms around women's public leadership or care responsibilities are some common characteristics explaining these results.

Integrating a social norm lens approach to policy making is an effective means to overcome systematic and structural barriers to gender equality and to support inclusive growth and social transformation. Gender equality is increasingly recognised by governments as critical to facing national and regional economic and demographic challenges. Gender-sensitive policies have been proposed to address issues such as ageing populations, migration or slowing economies (UNESCAP, 2014a; ADB, 2015). Yet, without factoring the role social norms in impeding or accelerating progress towards substantive equality, the region will not be able to fully benefit from such policies.

Figure 1.2. **Regional overview of SIGI performance by sub-index**



Note: This figure presents the share and number of countries in EAP by level of discrimination in the SIGI sub-indices. 11 out of the 20 countries in the East Asia and the Pacific region are classified in the restricted physical integrity sub-index and 10 out of the 20 countries in the East Asia and the Pacific region are classified in the son bias sub-index (see Annex on page 63).

Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

The SIGI Regional Report on East Asia and the Pacific offers insights into why progress has stagnated or been limited on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and its consequences for national and regional development objectives. The Report adds to the growing evidence that discriminatory laws, attitudes and practices undermine the region’s gender-responsive legislative efforts and limit women’s ability to take advantage of economic empowerment opportunities. Analysis of the SIGI data reveals strong linkages between levels of discrimination and a country’s development potential in terms of human development (e.g. education, employment or health) or economic growth (see Section 3). Moreover, the Report also provides best practices to transform discriminatory social norms – successful policies and initiatives that have challenged the gender equality status quo.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly on 25 September 2015. Among the 17 goals focusing on the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) is one stand-alone goal on gender equality and women’s empowerment (SDG 5). Gender equality is mainstreamed in other goals (cf. SDG 1, 6, and 8) (UN, 2015c).¹

Investing in gender equality and positive social transformation is both timely in terms of current economic and demographic challenges, and also in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This Report provides benchmarks and recommendations for the region and its countries in respect to its commitments to achieve the SDGs. Social norms feature strongly and are mainstreamed throughout the targets set under SDG 5 on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: e.g. early marriage, elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, political participation and unpaid care work have been flagged. The SIGI highlights the importance of concerted and co-ordinated policy action amongst key public, private and civil society actors to advance gender equality in such challenging areas: this will also be critical for the achievement of the SDG targets by 2030.

Key messages

1. Discriminatory social institutions represent an important cost for the region's economic development. New evidence based on the SIGI points to the adverse impacts of discriminatory social institutions on long-term growth. Overall, gender-based discrimination in social institutions is estimated to represent income losses of USD 2 440 billion across the region. Promoting gender equality in legislative frameworks, practices and attitudes fosters inclusive and dynamic economies, and is important to boost the region's development ambitions.

2. Targeting discriminatory social institutions should be an economic and political priority for regional governments in order to remove the remaining barriers to women's economic empowerment. The declining labour force of women suggests that they are only partially benefiting from EAP's economic vibrancy due to legal discrimination and social norms curbing their empowerment opportunities. The SIGI puts the spotlight on several discriminatory social institutions that shape these limitations on women's economic rights, such as important gender inequalities in their ownership rights over land and assets, the unequal time spent on unpaid care activities, and traditional social expectations regarding women's roles within the family and the marketplace. Maximising women's full potential for their economies will require gender-responsive policies and legislative reform that target such stubborn norms and the negative consequences for women's economic empowerment.

3. Policies and laws can make important inroads into challenging entrenched discrimination against women but they require implementation and enforcement to make a difference. The SIGI Regional Report gives examples of how laws can challenge discriminatory social institutions: the introduction of laws has seen positive impacts for reversing the unequal sex ratio in certain countries (cf. Korea). The region could further build on its solid track record on gender equality by investing in the quality of the legislative framework: ongoing gaps (e.g. limited definitions, harmonisation with customary laws, coverage, absent measures) and poor enforcement in the region's laws and policies reflect and often reinforce the unequal status quo. Introducing laws (e.g. quotas, legal age of marriage) that are accompanied by comprehensive and wide-ranging measures and services (e.g. legal services for survivors of gender-based violence; training for justice systems) as well as appropriate budgets will ensure that laws live up their expectations and intentions.

4. Challenging traditional gender roles and social expectations can help shatter the glass ceilings and walls to women's empowerment. The traditional association of women as primary caregivers in the household, negative attitudes towards their public leadership positions and lower value given to the girl child within the family are reoccurring themes in the SIGI country profiles for the region, and go far to explaining gender inequalities across all areas of public and private life. Fostering inclusive economies and societies will require a mix of policy responses that can address these deep-rooted biases: recognising, reducing and redistributing (the three "Rs") unpaid care work, encouraging girls and women to enter traditionally "male" domains (e.g. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects), offering incentives to families to discourage early marriage of girls, and working with men and boys to combat gender-based violence are some regional and global good practices.

5. The business, development and human rights case for investing in gender equality has grown from strength to strength: now political commitments, strategies and action must follow. The growing evidence base on the multiple channels by which gender equality and women's empowerment positively contributes to building more inclusive and equitable economies calls for new approaches to challenging the gender status quo. The establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) combined with the region's economic dynamism offer an important opportunity to accelerate progress on the gender agenda for current and future generations of women and girls. The SDG targets under SDG 5 cover many of the sticking points identified in the SIGI Regional Report for EAP: unpaid care, violence against women, political leadership, access to productive resources, inter alia. What is needed to achieve gender equality is becoming clearer but will require renewed political commitments, additional resources and multi-stakeholder action (including the private sector, civil society, and men and boys).

Key results

Discriminatory family code

Early marriage: Women's equal rights with men in the family are vulnerable to conflicting civil, religious and customary legal codes found in many countries in the region. All but two countries have established the legal age of marriage at 18 for girls (Indonesia and Japan); however, this is contradicted by discriminatory practices and customary laws found in ten countries under which girls may marry at a younger age (Australia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, People's Republic of China, Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam). While early marriage rates are lower than the global average (7% regionally compared to 13% globally), this masks differences between countries, with less than 1% of girls married before the age of 18 in six countries (Australia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Hong Kong (China), Japan, Korea and Singapore) compared to 20% of girls in Lao PDR.

Restricted physical integrity

Violence against women: Addressing violence against women is a serious challenge for the region. Significant gaps in legislation concerning violence against women make it difficult for women to seek justice with 10 countries having inadequate legislation concerning domestic violence and 13 countries not recognising marital rape as a crime. On average, one in four women in the region has experienced domestic violence. Social acceptance of domestic violence is widespread, with over 81% of women in Lao PDR and 86% in Timor-Leste agreeing that a husband is justified in hitting his wife under certain circumstances.

Son bias

Missing women: Missing women continues to be a concern for ten countries in the region. Skewed sex ratios at birth, with more boys than girls being born than would be expected naturally, point to high rates of sex-selective abortion. Government action has proved effective in challenging these trends: South Korea successfully reversed unequal sex ratios by enforcing laws against sex-selective abortions and implementing pro-active policy measures to address negative attitudes towards the girl child (see Good practices on page 34).

Restricted resources and assets

Women's access to productive resources: Discrimination against women's rights to own, use and control land and non-land assets was found in over two-thirds of the countries in the region. Women face various obstacles to accessing land and non-land assets including low legal literacy, discriminatory gender stereotypes around land ownership and legal discrimination under customary law.

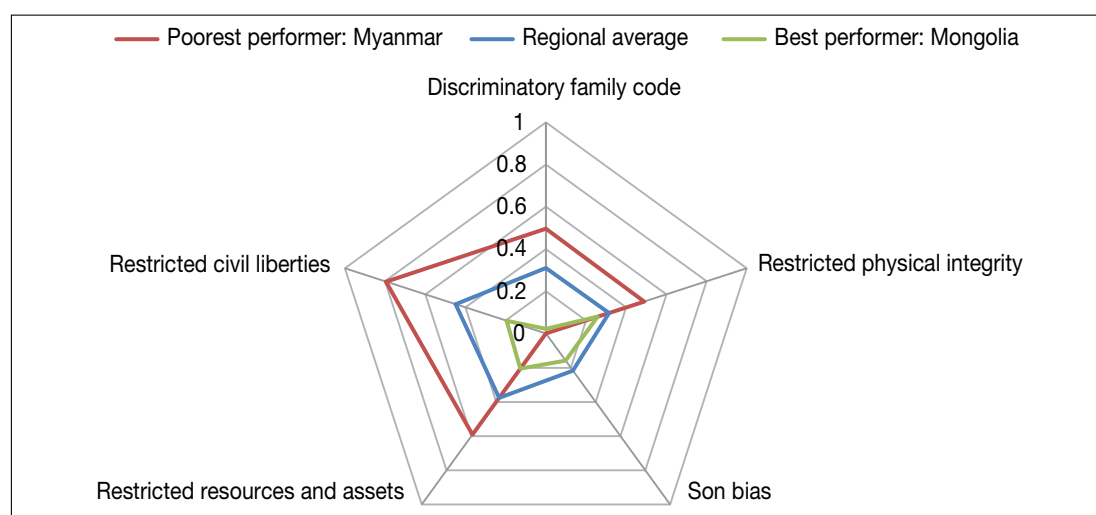
Restricted civil liberties

Women's political representation: Women's political voice remains weak in the region with women holding only 3% of parliamentary seats in Papua New Guinea and 6% in Myanmar. While quotas have proven effective in promoting women's political voice in countries such as Timor-Leste (39%), governments in the region have been slow to implement them: only six countries have introduced legislated quotas, and only three have quotas at both the national and sub-national levels (Indonesia, Korea and Mongolia).

Tackling gender discrimination in social institutions: Learning from Mongolia

Mongolia is one of the strongest performing countries in the region in the 2014 edition of the SIGI, courtesy of a comprehensive legislative framework protecting women's economic and social rights (Figure 1.3). Gender equality is enshrined in Mongolia's Constitution (1992) and was reinforced as a national priority in 2011 with the introduction of the Law on the Promotion of Gender Equality. This provides a national framework to achieve gender equality in "political, legal, economic, social, cultural and family relations". This helps to explain very low discrimination in the discriminatory family code sub-index and low levels of discrimination in the restricted resources and assets and the restricted civil liberties sub-indices. Nevertheless, discriminatory gender stereotypes continue to block women's economic empowerment pathways and perpetuate high rates of violence against women.

Figure 1.3. Regional average, best and poorest performers by SIGI sub-index



Note: This figure presents SIGI sub-index scores of the regional average, the best (Mongolia) and poorest (Myanmar) performers in the SIGI. Higher SIGI values indicate higher inequality: the SIGI ranges from 0 for low discrimination to 1 for very high discrimination. Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

Women and men enjoy equal legal rights within the family, including equal inheritance rights and parental authority (Civil Code [2002]) and the same legal age of marriage (Family Law [1999]). Data on early marriage suggest the practice is declining: the percentage of girls aged 15-19 who are married, divorced or widowed has dropped from 15% in 1979 to 0.04% in 2014 (UN, 2012; OECD, 2014a)

Legislative reforms in Mongolia have aimed to strengthen women's access to justice. The 2005 Law on Fighting Domestic Violence includes requirements for police to investigate complaints, a victim-support hotline and education and awareness programmes for perpetrators of violence. However, a budget has not been allocated to implement and enforce this law (CEDAW, 2014). Moreover, prevalence rates are high and remain widely justified by discriminatory social norms: in 2010, one in three Mongolian women had experienced domestic violence (The Advocates for Human Rights, 2012) while one in five women aged 15-49 considered that a husband was justified in beating his wife or partner in certain circumstances. While the Criminal Code (2002) imposes strict penalties on rape, marital rape is not yet recognised, representing an important lacuna in Mongolia's legislative framework. The Law on Gender Equality (2011) covers sexual harassment in the workplace but does not reference public spaces or educational institutions.

Missing women is not a concern for Mongolia. Sex ratios at birth show a slight fertility preference for sons with 52% of youngest children being sons among women who do not wish to have more children.

Mongolia has achieved near parity in primary, secondary and tertiary education (World Bank, 2015a). There is a reverse gender gap in tertiary education and women make up almost half of all researchers (49%) (UNESCO, 2015). The government has committed to reducing barriers to girls' education such as adolescent pregnancy. Mongolia has an adolescent fertility rate of 16 births per 1 000 women aged 15-19 (World Bank, 2015a). The Mongolian government has set up 360 life-long education centres for young mothers who may find it difficult to continue their education due to social stigma and the responsibilities of motherhood (CEDAW, 2016b). The CEDAW committee has questioned the effectiveness of this approach, though, as it may further stigmatise young mothers instead of reintegrating them into the formal education system (CEDAW, 2016a).

The Constitution (1992) grants women and men equal rights to access land, non-land assets and financial services. The Law on Land (2002) requires joint-titling of land for households. Despite gender equality in the law, the privatisation of land in the 1990s benefited men more than women: the requirement of joint-titling was waived in many cases and almost half of all land titles were accorded to men only (USAID, 2010).

Although **women's political participation remains relatively low in Mongolia**, there are positive signs that this is changing. In 2011, the Law on Election of the Parliament introduced quotas of 20% for women on candidate lists. This was followed by an increase in women's share of parliamentary seats to 15% in 2012 from 4% in 2008 (IPU, 2016). The Law on Gender Equality (2011) establishes a 40% quota across government agencies including the military and the police. The most recent CEDAW report for Mongolia (2016a) raised concerns over deep-rooted gender stereotypes which subordinate women in society and inhibit their ability to exercise their political voice.

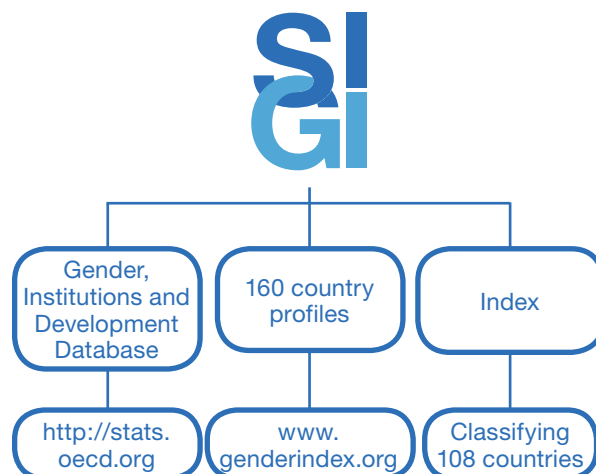
Women in Mongolia benefit from 120 days of **maternity leave** paid at their normal salary for 90 days and at 50% of their salary for an additional 30 days. This exceeds the minimum standards established by the ILO Convention 183 on Maternity Protection. There is no legislation on paternity leave.

Mongolia has prioritised eliminating gender-based discrimination in the workplace with the passage of 18 amendments since 1999 aimed at promoting gender equality at work (CEDAW, 2016b). For example, under the Gender Equality Law (2011), companies are required to report on their implementation of gender equality initiatives and the situation of sexual harassment in the workplace. Nevertheless, women still face certain legal restrictions in the workplace such as the type of work they can undertake and the hours they can work. This bars women from seeking employment in more high-paying sectors including mining, one of the most important economic sectors in Mongolia (CEDAW, 2016a). Gender gaps remain in key employment outcomes and women are generally concentrated in low-paid jobs (CEDAW, 2016a). The gender wage gap is 15% (UN Women, 2015) and women's labour force participation rate is 61% compared to 72% for men (World Bank, 2015a).

About the SIGI

The Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) measures gender-based discrimination in social norms, practices and laws across 160 countries. The SIGI comprises country profiles, a classification of countries and a database; it serves as a research, policy and advocacy tool for the development community and policy makers (Figure 1.4). The SIGI covers five dimensions, spanning major socio-economic areas that affect the life course of a girl and woman: discriminatory family code, restricted physical integrity, son bias, restricted resources and assets, and restricted civil liberties (Figure 1.5). These dimensions look at the gaps that legislation, prevalence and attitudes create between women and men in terms of rights and opportunities.

Figure 1.4. The composition of the SIGI



As a composite index, the SIGI scores countries on 14 indicators. As shown by Figure 1.5, the indicators are grouped into five sub-indices that measure one dimension of social institutions related to gender inequality.

The SIGI is an unweighted average (of a non-linear function) of the following five sub-indices: discriminatory family code, restricted physical integrity, son bias, restricted resources and assets, and restricted civil liberties. The SIGI and its sub-indices values are between 0 and 1, with 0 indicating no inequality and 1 indicating complete inequality (cf. Methodology in the Annex or the full methodological background paper available at www.genderindex.org).

Discriminatory family code

This sub-index captures social institutions that limit women's decision-making power and undervalue their status in the household and the family. These formal and informal laws, social norms and practices co-exist in different types of legal systems including civil or common law, customary law, and religious laws and cover areas such as marriage, parental authority and inheritance. Women's decision-making power and status determine both their ability to choose their own development pathways and the well-being of their families.

Restricted physical integrity

This sub-index captures social institutions that limit women's and girls' control over their bodies, that increase women's vulnerability, and that normalise attitudes toward gender-based violence. This includes formal and informal laws, norms and practices that fail to protect women's physical integrity and reproductive autonomy and that allow violence and female genital mutilation. Restricted physical integrity due to gender-based violence and to a lack of reproductive autonomy has serious impacts on health outcomes for women and their children and on economic and social development indicators by increasing women's vulnerability to poverty.

Son bias

This sub-index captures unequal intra-household investments in caring for, nurturing and allocating resources to sons and daughters reflecting the lower value given to girls. A family preference for sons over daughters can manifest itself in different ways, including higher mortality, worse health status or lower educational attainment among girls. Consequences of social norms and practices that devalue daughters are various: missing women, under-investment in the health and nutrition of girls leading to infant mortality, under-investment in girls' education, etc.

Restricted resources and assets

This sub-index captures discrimination in women's rights to access and make decisions over natural and economic resources. This includes discriminatory practices which undermine women's rights to own, control or use land and non-land assets; discriminatory practices that restrict women's access to financial services; and social norms imposing that women's assets be mediated only by men. Insecure or weak rights to land, non-land assets and financial services reduce income-generating opportunities for women, lower decision-making power for women within the household, increase food insecurity for women and their families, and make women and families more vulnerable to poverty.

Restricted civil liberties

This sub-index captures discriminatory laws and practices that restrict women's access to public space, their political voice and their participation in all aspects of public life. This includes a lack of freedom of movement, the inability to vote or run for election, and negative attitudes toward women as public figures or as leaders. This sub-index highlights the importance of women's participation in community actions and public decision making for a range of development outcomes such as governance, health and education.

Figure 1.5. **The five dimensions of the SIGI**

Social Institutions and Gender Index				
Discriminatory family code	Restricted physical integrity	Son bias	Restricted resources and assets	Restricted civil liberties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal age of marriage • Early marriage • Parental authority • Inheritance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence against women • Female genital mutilation • Reproductive autonomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing women • Fertility preferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure access to land • Secure access to non-land assets • Access to financial services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to public space • Political voice

Note: For more information, please refer to the methodology in Annex (see page 63) or the full methodological background paper available at www.genderindex.org.

SIGI classification

The 2014 edition of the SIGI scores 108 countries according to their level of discrimination in social institutions. It classifies them into five groups, from very low levels of discrimination in social institutions (15% of the countries, with a SIGI average of 0.02) to very high levels (16% of the countries). This classification groups countries having a similar level of discrimination in the SIGI by minimising differences between countries' SIGI scores in the same class and maximising the differences between classes.

The scores for the EAP region from the 2014 edition of the SIGI and its five sub-indices are presented in the Annex (see page 63).

Classifications for all 108 countries according to the sub-indices are as follows:

- The discriminatory family code sub-index classifies 159 countries. Top performers are Australia, Korea and South Africa, among others, while the poorest performers include Afghanistan, India and Mali.
- The restricted physical integrity sub-index classifies 120 countries. Top performers are France, the United States and Uruguay, among others, while the poorest performers include Mauritania, Somalia and Sudan.
- The son bias sub-index classifies 129 countries. Top performers are Costa Rica, Haiti and Swaziland, among others, while the poorest performers include Azerbaijan, Nepal and Pakistan.

- The restricted resources and assets sub-index classifies 160 countries. Top performers are Mauritius, Sweden and Ukraine, among others, while the poorest performers include Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Papua New Guinea.
- The restricted civil liberties sub-index classifies 160 countries. Top performers are Bolivia, Lesotho and Zimbabwe, among others, while the poorest performers include Iran, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

Countries with very low levels of gender discrimination in social institutions (SIGI < 0.04)

These countries are characterised by robust legal frameworks and measures that provide equal rights in the family code and in access to resources and assets and that promote women's civil liberties. In most of these countries, women and men have equal parental and inheritance rights, and early marriage is not a common practice. Women do not face restrictions on their access to public space or their participation in politics. Neither missing women nor female genital mutilation is a concern. However, the countries lack laws to protect women from violence and measures to implement them, and women need better access to justice. On average 20% of women in these countries have been victims of domestic violence in their lifetime.

Countries with low levels of gender discrimination in social institutions (0.04 < SIGI < 0.12)

These countries are characterised by strong laws providing equal rights for women and men in the family code, in access to resources and assets, and in civil liberties. Both sexes enjoy equal opportunities to own and make decisions over land and other resources. Female genital mutilation is not practiced, and most women have reproductive autonomy. These countries have inadequate legal frameworks regarding violence against women. On average 31% of women have been victims of domestic violence in their lifetime, and more than 29% of women agree that domestic violence is justified under certain circumstances.

Countries with medium levels of gender discrimination in social institutions (0.12 < SIGI < 0.22)

These countries are characterised by inconsistent or conflicting legal frameworks covering the family code, women's access to resources and assets, and civil liberties. The strong influence of customary practices perpetuates discrimination in these areas. Specifically, women face discrimination in terms of the legal age of marriage, parental authority, inheritance, and rights to land and financial services. Women are restricted in their access to public space, as well as in their participation in political life due to the absence of quotas at the national and/or sub-national levels. Legal frameworks addressing violence against women are inadequate (e.g. certain types of violence are not included). On average, 39% of women agree that domestic violence is justified under certain circumstances.

Countries with high levels of gender discrimination in social institutions (0.22 < SIGI < 0.35)

These countries are characterised by discrimination embedded in customary laws, social norms and practices and by inappropriate legal protection against gender discrimination in all dimensions of social institutions. The legal frameworks and/or the customary laws discriminate against women in respect to the legal age of marriage, parental authority and inheritance. Women's physical integrity is restricted due to inadequate legal frameworks to address violence against women and high levels of acceptance of domestic violence. Moreover, female genital mutilation is a common practice. Most of these countries have medium to very high levels of devaluation of daughters and preference for sons, as shown by the numbers of missing women or the unbalanced sex ratios at last birth. Finally, women's access to public space and resources is limited. On average 32% of women have been victims of domestic violence in their lifetime, and more than 49% of women agree that domestic violence is justified under certain circumstances.

Countries with very high levels of gender discrimination in social institutions (SIGI > 0.35)

These countries are characterised by very high levels of discrimination in legal frameworks and customary practices across most sub-indices and by very poor implementation measures. The family code greatly discriminates against women: almost one third of girls younger than 19 are married, and women face severe discrimination in their parental authority and inheritance rights. Women's rights to own and control land and other resources and to access public space are extremely limited. There are serious infringements on their physical integrity matched by high levels of acceptance and prevalence of domestic violence: 44% of women have been victims of domestic violence, and 59% accept that it is justified under certain circumstances.

East Asia and the Pacific countries

- Australia
- Cambodia
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- Fiji
- Hong Kong, China
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Korea
- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Malaysia
- Mongolia
- Myanmar
- New Zealand
- Papua New Guinea
- People's Republic of China
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Viet Nam



SIGI 2014 results for East Asia and the Pacific





SI GI

SI GI sub-index analysis





Discriminatory family code

The discriminatory family code sub-index captures the restrictions on women’s decision-making power and their status in the household and the family.

This sub-index measures the prevalence of early marriage, gender discrimination in the legal age of marriage, parental authority and inheritance rights.

Women’s and girls’ rights in the family are compromised by gaps and discrepancies within plural legal systems and the existence of discriminatory customary practices that affect their rights to parental authority and inheritance, and perpetuate relatively high rates of early marriage. While nine countries show very low to low levels of discrimination, four were found to have high levels.

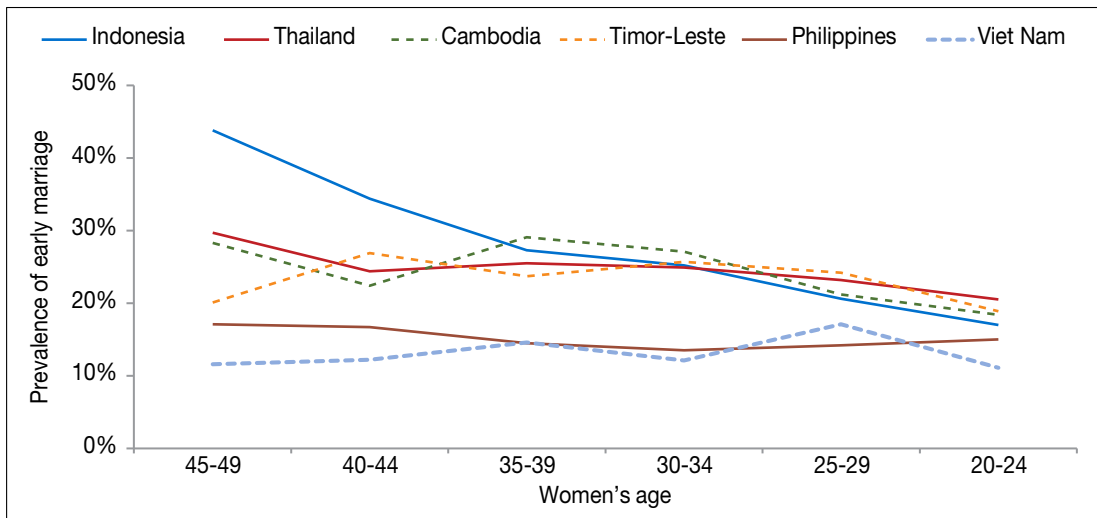


Discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls in the household were highlighted as barriers to gender equality by multiple countries in their national reviews of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (UNESCAP, 2014a). The status of women and girls within the family varies greatly within the region: 3 out of the 20 countries have very low levels of discrimination against women (Korea, Mongolia and New Zealand) while 1 country has very high levels of discrimination (Indonesia). While many countries have introduced legal revisions, customary laws and practices continue to discriminate against women and girls, in particular in the areas of inheritance and divorce.

Over the past decade, governments in the region have promoted gender equality in the family through legislative measures. These include notably the Philippines’ adoption of the Magna Carta on Women (2009) and Viet Nam’s Law on Gender Equality (2006) granting women and men equal rights in all matters related to family relations and marriage. In Viet Nam the law states in Article 18, “Wife and husband are equal in civil relations and other relations related to family matters”. Across the region, there remain discrepancies in women’s rights in the family and the household due to multiple laws governing household relations. In Indonesia, Myanmar and Malaysia the recognition of multiple religious and customary laws governing the family code means that not all women have the same rights throughout the country. For example, in Myanmar, marriage is covered under the Islamic Marriage Act, the Christian Marriage Act, and the Hindu Customary Law, and the Myanmar Buddhist Woman Special Marriage and Succession Act (1954), which allows for girls to marry at the age of 14. In Indonesia, family law is governed by the Marriage Law (1974) and the Compilation of Islamic Law, which have different divorce proceedings for women (e.g. under the Compilation of Islamic Law, a woman must wait four months and ten days before she can marry after a divorce, where a man may marry immediately). Therefore, within certain groups in these countries, inconsistencies in the legal framework compromise women’s rights in the household.

The region has relatively low levels of **early marriage** compared to the global average and other developing regions (e.g. sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia). On average 7% of women in the region between the ages of 15-19 are married, divorced or widowed, compared to 13% globally. At the regional level, this ranges from less than 1% in some countries (e.g. Australia and China) to 20% in Lao PDR. While countries have seen a decline in the number of early marriages over the past two decades, reduction has been slow: in the Philippines for example, 17% of women aged 45 to 49 were married before turning 18, compared to 15% of women aged 20-24 (Figure 2.1.1).

Figure 2.1.1. **Decreasing early marriage prevalence**



Note: This figure presents the prevalence rate of early marriage among women, measured as the percentage of women in a union before the age of 18, by age cohort.

Source: Demographic and Health Surveys (1987-2013), *Demographic and Health Surveys*, <http://dhsprogram.com/data/>.

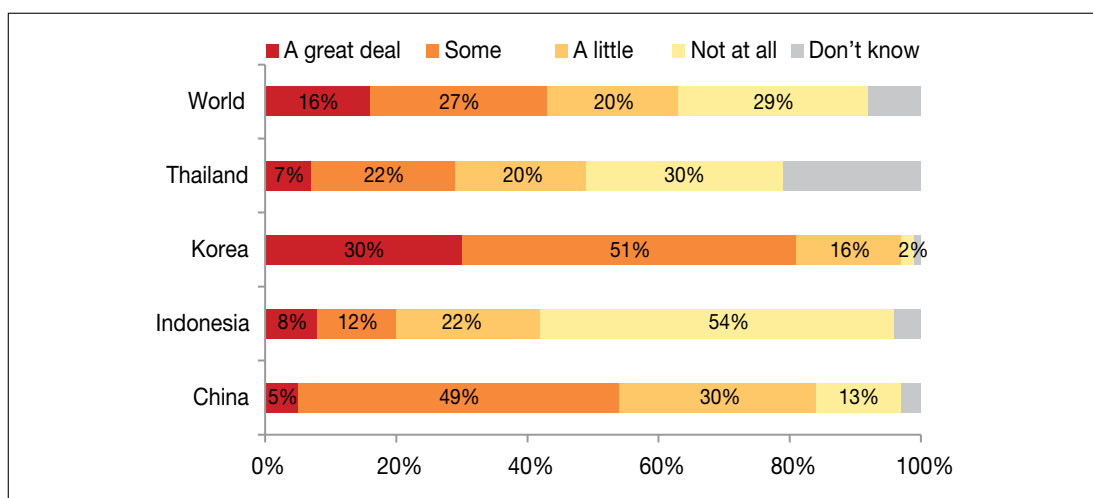
Discriminatory laws and practices in 12 countries addressing girls' **legal age of marriage** compromise the region's efforts to lower rates of early marriage. In Japan and Indonesia, for example, the legal age of marriage is 16 compared to 20 and 18 for boys respectively. Positive advances in legislation include the Marriage Act (2009) in Fiji, which raised the minimum age of marriage to 18 and removed the clause that allowed minors to marry with parental consent.

Early marriage is defined as a formal marriage or informal union before the recommended minimum age as established by a number of international declarations and conventions. It is measured as the percentage of girls aged 15-19 who are married, divorced, widowed or in informal unions.

In general, the region is characterised by a comprehensive legal framework addressing women's rights regarding **parental authority** both during marriage and after divorce. The majority of countries in the region (13 out of 20) guarantee women and men equal rights in law and in practice. In 7 of the 20 countries in the region, women face discrimination with regard to parental authority both during marriage and after divorce in law and/or practice. Discrimination within the household takes various forms from legal discrimination in civil and customary law to restrictive gender roles within the household that limit women's ability to exercise their parental authority (ADB, 2015). In the Philippines, the Family Code (1997) states that, "in case of disagreement, the father's decision shall prevail, unless there is a judicial order to the contrary". In other countries, plural legal systems complicate the application of equal parental authority for mothers and fathers where customary or religious laws contradict civil law and discriminate against women (e.g. Indonesia and Malaysia).

In 12 of the 20 countries in the region, women and daughters face discrimination concerning **inheritance rights** in both law and in practice. This is due in part to the legal recognition of customary and civil laws concerning the family code, which include clauses that discriminate against women's and girls' rights to inheriting equal shares to men and boys (e.g. Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand). For example, the CEDAW NGO shadow report for Malaysia (2012) highlighted the persistence of discriminatory customary inheritance practices that give women and girls half of the share inherited by their male counterparts. Even where the legal code does not discriminate, discriminatory practices in some countries (e.g. China, Indonesia and Lao PDR) mean that women and girls may receive a smaller share of the inheritance than their male relatives or none at all. A recent survey shows that such discrimination against widows is pervasive but to varying degrees throughout the region. In China, for example, 54% of respondents thought widows were mistreated either a great deal or some, and this reaches 81% in Korea (Figure 2.1.2). Research has highlighted the specific negative impact that these practices have on women's ability to inherit land, an important method of transmitting wealth and economic resources in the region. This compromises women's economic prospects given the region's large farming and agriculture sector (FAO, 2014; World Bank, 2011b).

Figure 2.1.2. **Opinions towards discrimination against widows**



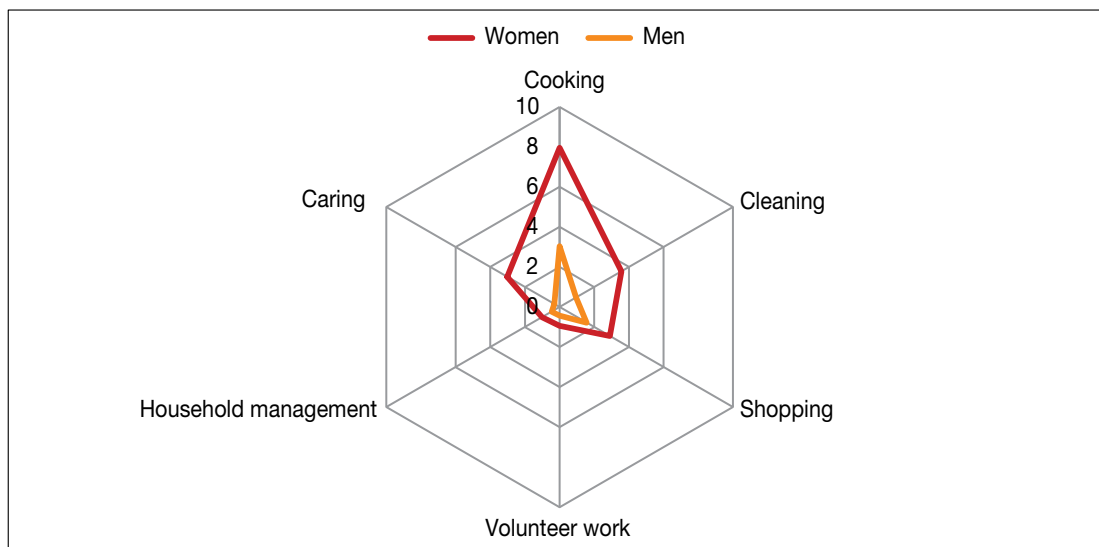
Note: This figure presents the share of respondents declaring various levels of widow's disadvantage in answer to the question "To what degree are women in [country] who are widowed treated worse than other women: a great deal, some, a little, or not at all?". World is the average of the 17 countries in the sample. See Section 9 of the 2015 Global Widows Report for recommendations for programme and policy level interventions to improve the living conditions of widows and their children.

Source: World Public Opinion (2008), Poll: Across the world many see discrimination against widows and divorced women, <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org>.

The majority of countries in the region grant women and men equal **rights to initiate divorce**, but barriers remain concerning women's ability to exercise this right. In particular, women's rights to divorce are weakened by restrictions that limit when they can legally file for divorce. For example, the law may prohibit women from filing for divorce when they are pregnant (e.g. Myanmar), exclude divorce in circumstances of adultery (e.g. Thailand) or only allow women to file for divorce under certain circumstances such as domestic violence (e.g. the Philippines). In addition to discrepancies in the law, high financial costs (e.g. Indonesia and Mongolia) have also been cited as restrictions to women's equal rights to divorce (World Bank, 2012a). There are reports that the threat of stigmatisation and negative attitudes regarding divorce may deter women from seeking divorce (e.g. Indonesia, Lao PDR). In Hong Kong, China and Singapore, research by NGOs shows that divorced single mothers face further difficulties as child custody payments may not be well enforced. To help single mothers who may face discrimination after divorce, Singapore opened a drop-in centre to provide advice, assistance and counselling for problems related to divorce and child custody.

Women continue to undertake the bulk of **unpaid care work** in the region due to the persistence of discriminatory attitudes and stereotypes that perceive women as the primary care givers. In the eight countries where data is available for the region, women’s disproportionate time spent on unpaid care work ranges from two times more than men (e.g. Australia and Mongolia) to five times more in Korea and Japan. OECD research (2014) shows that women in the region spend almost five hours per day on average on unpaid work including household and caring responsibilities while men spend an average of 1.6 hours per day. In China for example, men spend on average 9 hours on unpaid care work each week, compared to 21 hours for women (Qi and Dong, 2013) (Figure 2.1.3). To address the unequal distribution of care work in the family, Viet Nam included in its Law on Gender Equality (2006) the responsibility of the family to “educate their members to share and divide housework among themselves in an appropriate manner”.

Figure 2.1.3. **Time spent on unpaid care activities by women and men in China**



Note: This figure presents the time spent on housework by Chinese women and men, expressed in hours per week.

Source: Qi, L. and X. Y. Dong (2013), “Housework Burdens, Quality of Market Work Time, and Men’s and Women’s Earnings in China”, University of Winnipeg.

The unequal distribution of care activities is connected to discriminatory perceptions of gender roles. In Cambodia, 93% of women and 82% of men believe that a woman’s most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family (Fulu et al., 2013). Restrictive gender stereotypes in the family lead to poorer outcomes outside of the household, as women’s disproportionate share of unpaid care work is a major driver of gender gaps in labour force outcomes (Ferrant, Nowacka and Pesando, 2014) (See section 3.2).

Good practices

- Reducing the “burden” of unpaid care work through improved infrastructure:** The ADB-supported Mongolia Urban Development Sector Project (UDSP) aimed to increase urban communities’ access to clean water with new or improved water kiosks made available to 41 611 households across the country. The use of a Gender Action Plan ensured that women’s needs, as the main collectors of water for households, were properly addressed throughout the project. The introduction of centrally-located kiosks reduced the time burden of water collection on women and provided economic opportunities through the creation of jobs since almost half of the employees at the water kiosks are women (ADB, 2015).

Box 2.1. Plan International: Because I am a Girl

Plan International launched the international Because I am a Girl (BIAAG) campaign in 2007 to improve the lives of girls in developing countries. The BIAAG programmes are implemented at the country level to empower girls to become change agents to tackle restrictive social norms. Plan International launched the Viet Nam BIAAG programme in 2011 with the objectives of improving girls' education outcomes and reducing child marriage rates. The Viet Nam BIAAG programme works at the community level to address discriminatory attitudes towards the girl child, including awareness-raising campaigns and capacity-building initiatives for local governments. Working with eight different ethnic groups in two districts of Viet Nam, Meo Vac and Yen Minh, the BIAAG Viet Nam programme has reached around 56 000 people.



Girls' clubs are a key component of the BIAAG programme in Viet Nam. They provide safe spaces for girls aged 12-18 to share and discuss their experiences and build their self-confidence. Each club works with between 20 to 30 girls and is either attached to a school or takes place as part of a community initiative to reach out-of-school girls. Through a mix of open discussions, video presentations, role plays, theatre for development and games, the girls clubs provide gender-rights education particularly with regard to child marriage and education. The role-playing games are an opportunity for girls to practise communicating the negative effects of child marriage to their parents and the broader community. At the end of 2015, there were 70 girls' clubs throughout 2 districts of Ha Giang province.

An evaluation of the BIAAG girls' clubs in Viet Nam by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) found that girls who had participated became more committed to remain in school. The girls' clubs also challenged the young girls' ideas regarding the acceptable age of marriage: participants stated their desire to delay marriage and support their peers to do the same.



'Hmong people ... we think we will get married at 17. But since I joined the club, I think that I will try to study to become a teacher, and only get married when I'm 20 years old.'

- Participant in BIAAG girls club

In addition, the BIAAG programme has established parenting groups to equip parents with knowledge and skills in the areas of gender equality and the risks associated with early marriage and child trafficking. Plan International Viet Nam has also supported the implementation of child protection boards which seek to ensure legal protection from child marriage and the enforcement of laws and policies against child marriage.

Source: Jones, N. et al. (2015), 'You must be bold enough to tell your own story': Programming to empower Viet Nam's Hmong girls, Overseas Development Institute, London.



Restricted physical integrity

The restricted physical integrity sub-index measures the following: prevalence of violence against women; attitudes towards violence against women; laws addressing domestic violence, rape (including spousal rape) and sexual harassment; and the prevalence of female genital mutilation (FGM).

It also measures women’s reproductive autonomy.

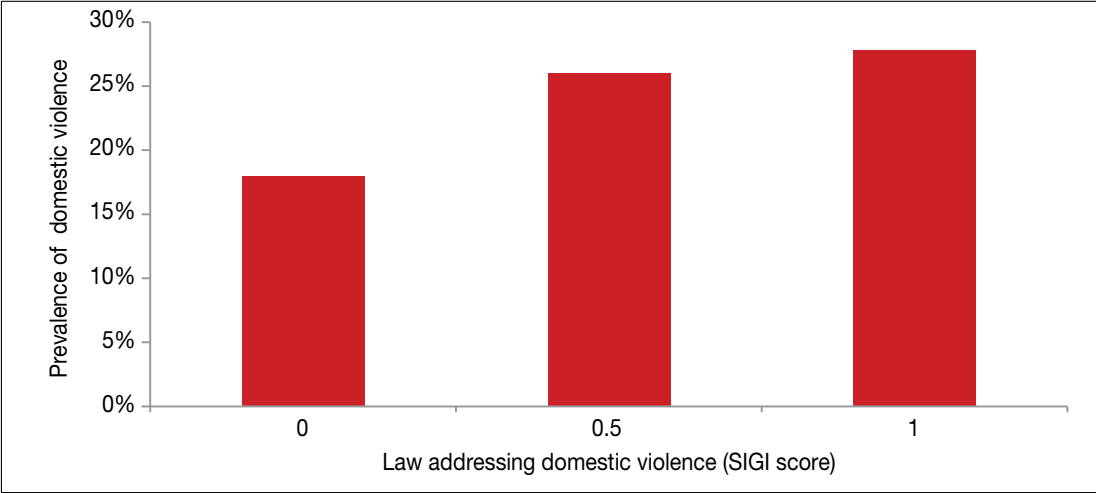
Women’s freedom from violence has been prioritised in the legal frameworks of the region; yet their rights in practice are compromised by poor enforcement of laws and widespread acceptance that gender-based violence is “private”. There are important data gaps on the prevalence of violence and on women’s unmet need for family planning.



Women’s right to live free from violence and to exercise reproductive autonomy is largely well-protected in the region’s legislative frameworks but continues to be compromised by discriminatory social norms, weak implementation measures and traditional biases in justice systems. Regionally, the majority of governments have introduced and/or strengthened laws addressing domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment. However, implementation issues and gaps are found across all countries which weakens the efficiency and enforcement of these laws. Widespread social acceptance of violence as a private matter, which is seen as justified under certain circumstances, also helps explain the high prevalence rates in some countries.

All countries in the region have introduced a law covering **domestic violence** in their legislative frameworks in the past decade, indicating the extent to which ending this form of gender-based violence has emerged as a policy priority. Existing data suggests the scale of the issue in the region: on average, one in four women has experienced domestic violence, with prevalence rates ranging from 9% to 38% (in countries with available data). SIGI data shows that comprehensive laws are a first step to reduce violence against women: in countries where legal frameworks adequately address domestic violence against women without problems of implementation, 18% of women are victims of domestic violence compared to 28% in countries where the law is inadequate (Figure 2.2.1).

Figure 2.2.1. Prevalence of domestic violence against women by strength of legal framework



Note: This figure presents the prevalence of domestic violence against women, measured as the percentage of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner at some time in their lives, by levels of discrimination in the law addressing domestic violence against women as measured in the SIGI (see the Annex on page 63).

Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

Three countries offer comprehensive protection in the legal definition and criminal penalties, and have invested in establishing gender-responsive justice systems and complaints mechanisms (Australia, Korea and New Zealand). In Australia, for example, the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022, included provisions for specialised training for police, and all states offer specialised family violence courts, legal aid services, and financial support for applicants. In Korea, a specific Act (2011) was introduced which penalised domestic violence with a maximum of five years in jail and a fine of KRW 7 million. The law also gives police the right to evict perpetrators or enforce a telecommunication ban, upon the request of the victim; female survivors have access to a 24-hour hotline and one-stop centres for legal and medical support.

Other good practices in domestic violence legislation can also be found across the region. For example, the Philippines is credited as having one of the most comprehensive domestic violence legislations in the region (UN Women, 2013). The Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act (2004) offers women comprehensive support through civil protection orders, temporary custody orders and restitution for damages. In addition, the Act recognises women’s right to legal assistance and support services, and includes awareness-raising and training programmes. Other countries in the region (e.g. Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam) also include education and awareness-raising programmes within their respective laws in order to strengthen women’s legal literacy. Protection orders have also been introduced across many countries (e.g. Indonesia, Singapore).

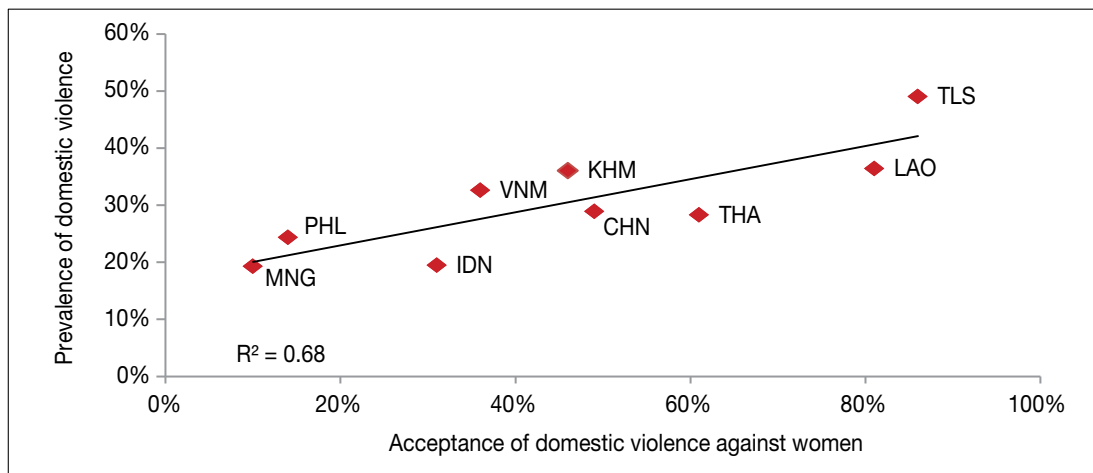
Despite this, the majority (17 out of 20) of national legislations have limitations in their scope and penalties. For example, some countries treat domestic violence only as an example of bodily violence under other general anti-violence laws and fail to recognise it as a gender-specific act (e.g. Myanmar). Close to a quarter of countries still have a general definition of domestic violence that either does not include emotional, psychosocial or economic violence (e.g. China, Lao PDR and Papua New Guinea), or applies only to existing matrimonial relationships (e.g. Cambodia and Japan). Recent changes include Malaysia’s Domestic Violence Act (2011), which recognised domestic violence for the first time as a crime, subject to criminal sanctions, including imprisonment.

Underfunding and ineffective enforcement measures are common challenges across the region. An insufficient number of support services, notably shelters, especially in rural areas, and provision of legal aid or psychological support have been noted across most countries of the region. Country profiles for Cambodia and Viet Nam, for example, indicate that services are concentrated in cities, and

rural women are often unaware of existing laws and services. Inadequate service provision particularly affects women from indigenous or minority communities, with reports suggesting that such groups are at higher risk of vulnerability to violence (e.g. Japan and New Zealand) and have less access to justice.

Widespread perception that domestic violence is a private matter, which should be preferably resolved within the family, explains chronic underreporting and traditional biases of justice systems. In Fiji, 58% of women surveyed believed that external actors should not intervene in domestic violence cases (FWCC, 2013). Such discriminatory traditional perceptions are reflected in the laws of certain countries (e.g. Indonesia, Mongolia and Papua New Guinea) as well as in the biases of justice systems, which stress the importance of “family unity” in the resolution of domestic violence cases, limiting women’s legal recourse to community or family decision-making structures. This is fuelled by views that domestic violence is justified under certain circumstances, which remains high in some countries (e.g. 81% in Lao PDR, 61% in Thailand, and 86% in Timor-Leste) (Figure 2.2.2). In addition, social pressure and a perception that it is a private matter are two commonly cited factors in attitudinal surveys explaining women’s reluctance to report: studies in Malaysia and New Zealand suggest only 23% and 18% of cases respectively are reported (Women’s Aid Organization, 2012; Family Violence Death Review Committee, 2010).

Figure 2.2.2. Higher acceptance of domestic violence against women, higher prevalence rates



Note: This figure presents the relationship between prevalence of and acceptance of violence against women, controlling for GDP per capita and laws against rape, domestic violence and sexual harassment. Prevalence of sexual violence refers to the percentage of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner at some time in their lives. Attitudes are the percentage of women that justify domestic violence under certain conditions. See the list of country ISO codes on page 69.

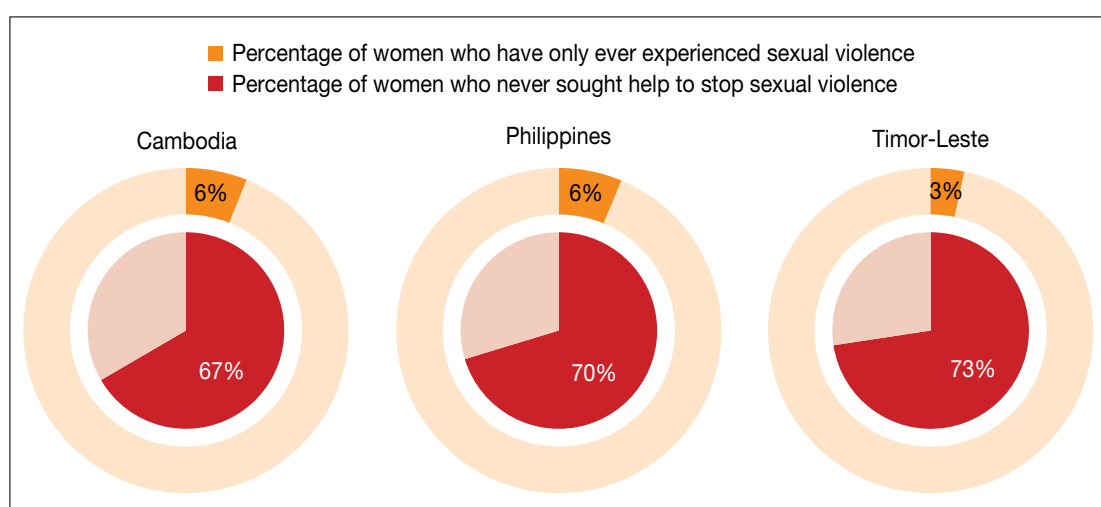
Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>; World Bank (2015a), *World Development Indicators*, <http://data.worldbank.org>.

Legislation on **rape** remains patchy across the region, with certain notable exceptions (e.g. Australia, Hong Kong, China, and New Zealand). Thirteen countries in the region do not include marital rape in their legal definition (e.g. China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia and Singapore), or allow perpetrators to escape prosecution if they marry the victim (e.g. Philippines). In Myanmar, only rape of minors (under the age of 14) is recognised as a criminal offence. Criminal penalties for rape depend on its severity and the age of the victim; they range from fines (e.g. Thailand), prison sentences (e.g. up to thirty years in Malaysia), to corporal punishment.

Many governments have carried out legislative reform to strengthen legislation and its enforcement: for example, Cambodia revised its anti-rape law in 2010 and enacted a second national action plan to combat violence against women, which included rape (2014-2017). New Zealand established a National Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence to support enforcement of legislation; in Korea, the 2010 Act on the Prevention of Sexual Assault and Protection of Victims Thereof included provisions for counselling centres which offer support to female victims, including accompanying them to medical services, courts, or to protective agencies.

Sense of entitlement, social stigma and lack of gender-sensitive justice systems are some of the discriminatory social institutions that continue to perpetuate sexual violence against women in the region. In Cambodia, for example, 20% of women have been the victim of physical and/or sexual violence from their partner, and 6% have experienced only sexual violence: however, 67% of these women have never sought help or told anyone to stop the sexual violence (Figure 2.2.3). A UN Multi-country Study on Men and Violence in Asia found that sense of entitlement was commonly cited by men for justifying rape, including marital rape (Fulu et al., 2013). High underreporting is attributed to social stigma, which includes attributing blame to the victim, and perceptions that rape within marriage is justifiable (Fulu et al., 2013). In New Zealand, a government study suggests that rape is the most underreported crime with only 9% of victims reporting to the police. Similarly, a 2011 survey in Hong Kong, China indicates that only 3% of victims reported sexual violence. Legal hurdles, such as high court costs (e.g. Cambodia) or the onus on the victim to prove lack of consent (e.g. Japan, the Philippines and Viet Nam), as opposed to positive consent (e.g. Australia), further impede women's access to justice.

Figure 2.2.3. **Prevalence of sexual violence and share of unreported cases**



Note: This figure presents prevalence of lifetime sexual partner violence, as measured by the percentage of ever-married women age 15-49 who have experienced only sexual violence in their lifetime by their husband/partner, and the extent to which such violence was unreported, as measured by the percentage of women aged 15-49 who have ever experienced sexual violence from an intimate partner and never sought help from any source to end the sexual violence.

Source: Demographic and Health Surveys (2009-2014), *Demographic and Health Surveys*, <http://dhsprogram.com/data/>.

Despite underreporting and lack of data, studies suggest that women continue to experience high levels of **sexual harassment** in the workplace or in educational establishments. UN Women estimated that close to 40% of women in Korea had suffered from sexual harassment; a national survey by Women's Watch China suggests that at least one in five women had been affected. Public commitment to tackling this violation of women's rights has seen a majority of countries introducing some form of anti-sexual harassment legislation over the past 15 years, with the exception of Papua New Guinea, which is the only country in the region with no legal provision for sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is covered in a range of legislation in the region: general provisions in labour or criminal codes (e.g. Indonesia and Malaysia), gender equality legislation (e.g. Mongolia) or specific legislation (e.g. Australia, Japan, Korea, New Zealand and the Philippines). Specific legislation tends to offer more comprehensive protection and include preventative awareness-raising measures aiming to challenge underlying discriminatory social norms. For example, in Korea, sexual harassment is covered in three different laws (the Framework Act on Women's Development, the Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Reconciliation, and the National Human Rights Commission Act), offering comprehensive protection and penalties, including education and awareness-raising programmes and putting responsibilities on employers to introduce preventative measures as well as penalties.

Legal loopholes and poor enforcement of the law have limited the efficacy of these measures. For instance, in Malaysia, the law places the responsibility only on the employer to conduct an inquiry,

and does not offer any compensation other than offering the victim the opportunity to resign with full benefits. Low uptake by employers to enforce legislation further weakens this protection of women's rights: in Hong Kong, China, the Equality Commission reported that less than half of employers had a sexual harassment policy.

Reproductive autonomy is measured as the percentage of married women aged 15-49 with an unmet need for family planning.

There is a mixed picture for women's **reproductive autonomy** in the region. Women's access to family planning services that guarantee their reproductive autonomy in China and Thailand benefit from comprehensive state-funded programmes, and unmet need for family planning is under 5% in both countries. However, one in four women in Malaysia, and close to one in three women in Timor-Leste has an unmet need for family planning. Nine countries do not collect data concerning women's access to family planning. In addition, no country in the region criminalises abortion although restrictions exist in 14 countries.

Sex trafficking of women and girls is a major issue in the region as countries are both a source and a destination for trafficking victims. To address the issue, Thailand and Lao PDR signed a Memorandum of Understanding to combat trafficking especially of women and children. However, many countries do not comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking (e.g. China, Hong Kong [China], and Cambodia).

Good practices

- **Partnering with men to tackle violence against women:** A "Male Advocacy" programme created over ten years ago by the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre to educate men on the causes of violence against women has shown positive results. The programme trained key male community leaders, police officers and service providers to challenge their own discriminatory behaviour and influence other men in the community to change unacceptable behaviour. Over 100 men graduated from the programme in Fiji, after receiving training by women's rights activists and a masculinities expert. The programme has since expanded to the Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu (FWCC, 2013).
- **Addressing gender-based violence in school settings:** in Viet Nam, a school-based violence prevention project called "Hành trình Yêu th ơng" (The Love Journey) was carried out from 2012 until 2014 in Da Nang by the NGO Paz y Desarrollo (PyD) and the Danang Department of Education and Training (DOET). The project's main objective was to create a favourable school environment for the prevention of gender-based violence through advocacy among secondary-school students and teachers. The project was based on ICRW's Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS) model, which had previously been implemented in Mumbai, India with positive results. The GEMS programme uses a mix of participatory methodologies, role play, games and debates to encourage equal relationships between girls and boys, explore the social norms that define gender roles, and question violence. Results from a questionnaire developed by the research team found that the programme successfully challenged students' negative gender stereotypes leading to greater awareness of gender-based discrimination (Partners for Prevention, 2013).
- **Providing specialised training for the judiciary to tackle gender-based violence:** The Governance in Justice Sector Reform Programme in the Philippines, funded by the Asian Development Bank, worked with multiple actors in the judiciary to remove barriers to women's access to justice. Following the adoption of a gender action plan by the Supreme Court of the Philippines, the programme provided gender-sensitive training for judges, lawyers, court clerks, and legal researchers to ensure its proper implementation. A procedural manual for dealing with gender-based violence was also developed. In addition, the National Police is required to establish 1 700 women and children desks at police stations, provide adequate training to police desk officers handling gender-based violence cases, and implement a solid monitoring and evaluation system for the desks (ADB, 2014b).

Box 2.2. Cambodia: An inclusive approach to developing VAW policy

One in five Cambodian women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner.¹ With support from UN Women, the Royal Government of Cambodia adopted the Second National Action Plan on Violence against Women (2nd NAPVAW) in 2014. The inclusive and participatory drafting process of the National Action Plan resulted in a comprehensive, evidence-based approach towards ending violence against women that meets international standards of best practice.



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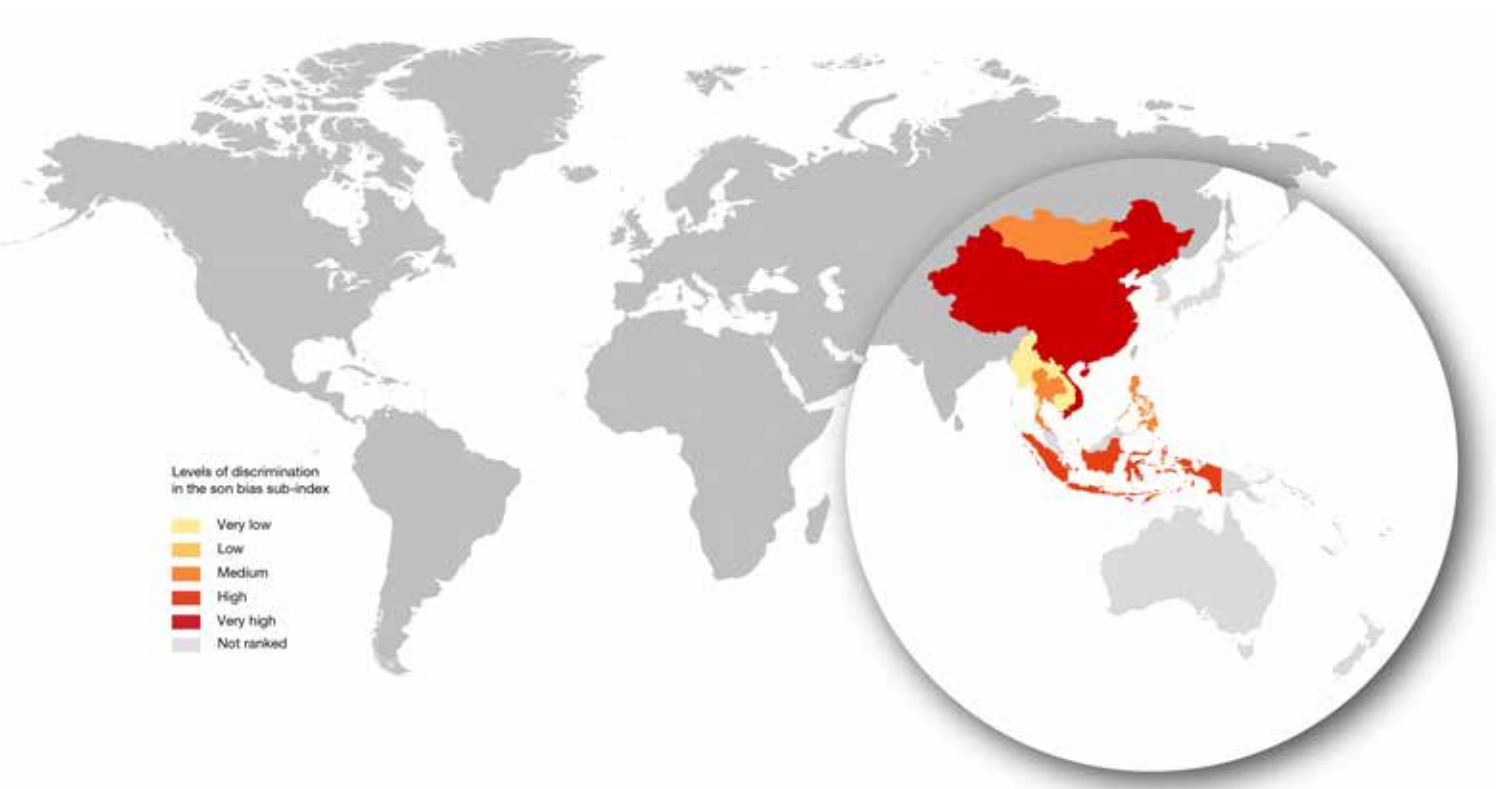
Funded by the Australian Government, the formulation of the Action Plan was informed by research and stakeholders from different sectors and, most importantly, the voices of gender-based violence survivors to ensure that the plan responds to the needs of Cambodian women. The Royal Government of Cambodia, non-state service providers, gender equality advocates, grassroots women including marginalised women and survivors of GBV

participated in 13 national-level consultations and 10 provincial-level consultations. With the support of UN Women civil society was also strongly represented in the process. The resulting Action Plan focuses on primary prevention and multi-sectoral responses to VAW and aims to advance Cambodia from awareness-raising to more effective implementation that meets the needs of women.

The participatory process for developing the Action Plan strengthened co-operation across sectors and has facilitated implementation. A multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group on Gender and Gender-Based Violence led by the Ministry of Women's Affairs guides the implementation of the 2nd NAPVAW. As of May 2016, outputs of the Action Plan included an assessment on GBV Minimum Service Standards; seven knowledge resources to improve the quality of the implementation of the NAPVAW; 14 workshops throughout Cambodia providing NAPVAW training for provincial offices of the Ministry of Women's Affairs; the drafting of a strategy on primary and secondary prevention to end violence against women and the adoption of an Annual Operations Plan by the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

A survey of the process found that UN Women's role in ensuring an open and inclusive policy process and providing technical support was well appreciated. Participants reported improved technical knowledge as well as relationship skills, both seen as equally fundamental to participatory policy formulation. In an evaluation survey, 85% of respondents reported improved capacities to formulate or influence government policies.

Source: UN Women (2014) UN Women Asia and the Pacific website, <http://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2014/11/cambodia-takes-multi-pronged-approach>.



Son bias

The son bias sub-index captures the unequal value given to daughters and sons in the household. Variables measure the phenomenon of missing women and fertility preferences.

The region showed the lowest levels of discrimination in this sub-index but significant data gaps remain, limiting the understanding of the scope and impact of discrimination.

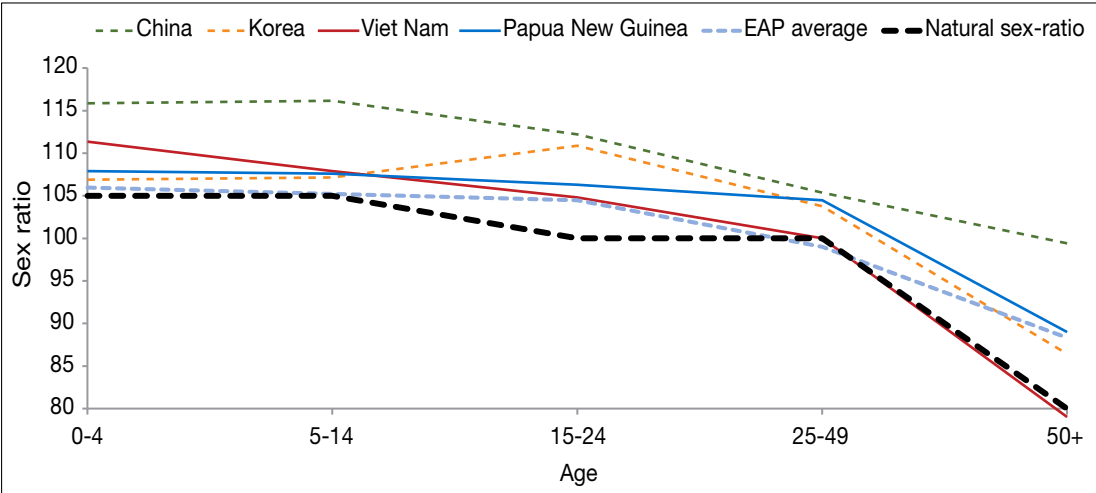
Missing women is a serious concern for seven countries, which show medium to very high levels of discrimination in this sub-index.

Son bias continues to be a major issue for some countries in the region that show high levels of fertility preference for sons and strong evidence of missing women. Girls' inferior status in the family and discriminatory gender stereotypes affect women throughout their life course. This manifests itself in skewed sex ratios, gender gaps in secondary and tertiary education attainment, and poorer health outcomes. Despite these alarming trends at the country-level, the SIGI results bring to light the heterogeneity within the region concerning son bias: three countries have very low levels of discrimination (Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar) while two show very high levels of discrimination (China and Viet Nam).

Government interventions and shifting social norms have led to a decline in the overall number of **missing women** since 2012. However, missing women continue to be a concern in 10 of the 20 countries in the region (Figure 2.3.1). Elevated sex ratios have declined in Korea while they continue to rise in other countries including most markedly China and Viet Nam (ADB, 2015). Skewed sex ratios at birth are in part caused by sex-selective abortions, deliberate infanticide or infanticide due to neglect (e.g. China and Papua New Guinea) (World Bank, 2012a; ADB, 2015). As Figure 2.3.2 shows, sex ratios are more extreme as the birth order increases indicating that preference for sons grows stronger for the second and third child if the previous children were girls (UNFPA, 2012). UNFPA (2012) estimates that about 25% of women in China resort to sex selection when they have not previously had a son. In Korea, which has reversed skewed birth ratios for the first and second child there is a large spike for the third and fourth child suggesting that fertility preference for sons has not been completely erased (UNFPA, 2012).



Figure 2.3.1. Sex ratio by age cohort



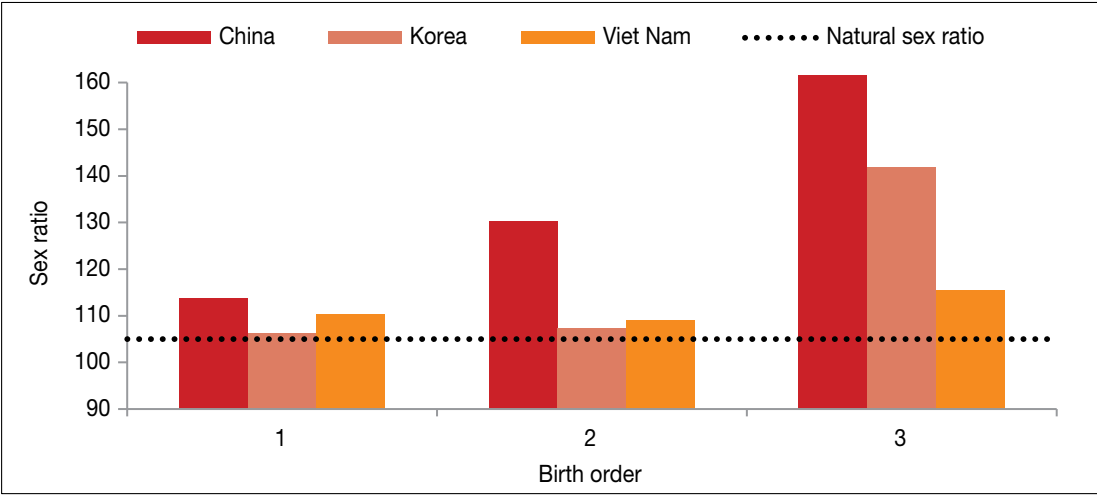
Note: Sex ratio is defined as the average number of men per 100 women by age group.
 Source: UNDP (2015a), *World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision*, DVD Edition.

The SIGI results show that **fertility preference** for sons is a concern in 8 of the 20 countries in the region. For example, in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, women have reported feeling social pressure to have boys and may continue to have children until they give birth to a boy (CEDAW, 2002). Parent’s fertility preference depends in part on the economic opportunities associated with sons and daughters (ADB, 2015). Discriminatory inheritance practices that favour sons or customary practices where sons are expected to care for ageing parents may influence parents’ gender preferences (UNFPA, 2012). Falling fertility rates and strict family planning policies have further entrenched social norms favouring sons. Moreover, prenatal sex selection has become easier due to increased access to ultrasound technology that reveals the sex of the foetus (ADB, 2015).

The concept of **“missing women”** was first introduced by Amartya Sen in 1990. He hypothesised that over 100 million women were missing due to excess mortality of women from inequality and neglect (Sen, 1990). Missing women is calculated by the shortfall in the number of women in sex ratios for ages 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-64 and 64+ relative to the expected number if there were no sex-selective abortions, no female infanticide or similar levels of health and nutrition, correcting for natural biological and physiological differences. Computed by Professor Stephan Klasen using the method discussed in Klasen and Wink (2002).

Government actions taken at the national level such as legislation and public policy are proving successful in changing discriminatory attitudes around fertility preference and reversing unequal sex ratios. Outlawing sex-selective abortions and ultrasounds are key first steps to tackling these issues, but do not address the underlying drivers of missing women and fertility preference. Korea’s experience as the first country to reverse unequal sex ratios highlights the importance of adequate implementation of these laws, including severe penalties for medical practitioners, and the need to address social norms which devalue daughters, in Korea’s case through mass media campaigns (UNFPA, 2005). However, as Figure 2.3.2 shows, fertility preference for sons persists in certain cases. More recently, China and Viet Nam have used media campaigns to change discriminatory attitudes towards daughters. For example, Care for Girls, a media campaign carried out by China’s National Population and Family Planning Commission focused on promoting overall gender equality and highlighted the advantages of daughters (Hesketh et al., 2011). Governments have also recognised the need to legally address inheritance practices which discriminate against girls and reinforce fertility preference for sons. For example, Korea amended its law concerning inheritance in 1992 granting sons and daughters equal rights to inheritance. Lao PDR, the Philippines and Viet Nam have provisions for children to inherit equal shares under the law.

Figure 2.3.2. Fertility preference by birth order

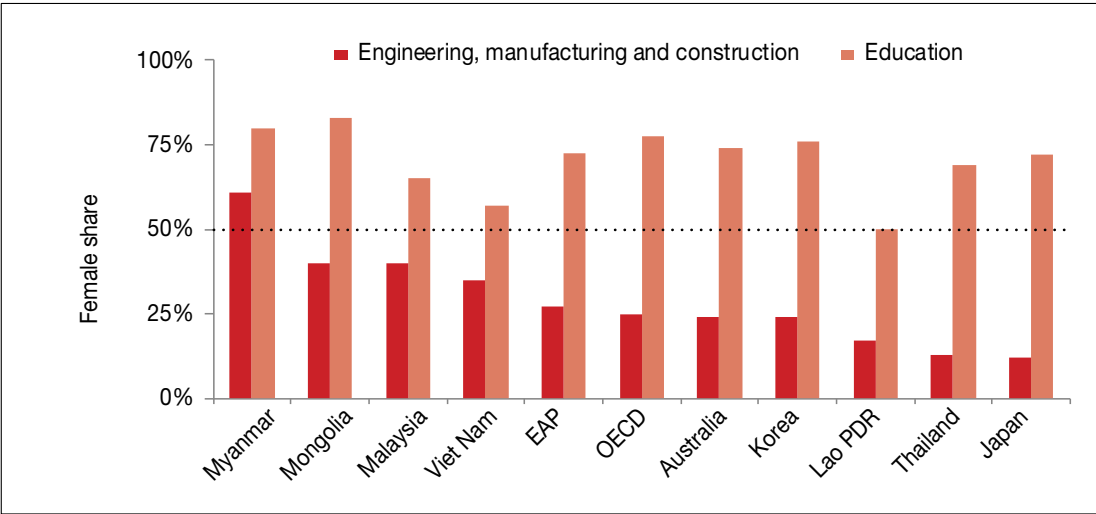


Note: This figure presents the sex ratio by birth order in selected countries. Birth order is the chronological order of sibling births in a family.
 Source: UNFPA Asia and the Pacific Regional Office (2012), *Sex imbalances at birth: current trends, consequences and policy implications*, United Nations, Bangkok.

Across East Asia and the Pacific, countries have made great advances in closing gender gaps in education. The region has performed better than any other developing region in increasing overall enrolment rates and reducing gender gaps in male and female enrolment ratios (World Bank, 2012a). The majority of countries in the region have reached gender parity at all levels of education, although the SIGI shows that discriminatory attitudes that justify **son preference in education** remain in some countries. For example, in Malaysia 43% of people believe that university is more important for boys than girls, and in the Philippines, 39% of people agree with that statement. There remain gender gaps in secondary education (e.g. Lao PDR and Papua New Guinea) and in tertiary education (e.g. Japan and Viet Nam) (World Bank, 2015a). For example in Papua New Guinea, 46% of boys are enrolled in secondary education compared to 34% of girls (World Bank, 2015a). In many countries in the region, such as Fiji, New Zealand, and Thailand, the trend is reversed with more girls than boys reaching secondary school (OECD, 2014b). Regarding tertiary education, OECD research (2014) reveals a 4% gender gap in favour of men in the region. Large gender differences remain in the fields of study chosen by young men and women. Women are more likely to graduate with an education degree than any other degree for most economies in 2011, while they are underrepresented among graduates of degrees in the STEM fields of study (OECD, 2014b) (Figure 2.3.3).

Where gender parity has not been reached, discriminatory social norms help explain gender gaps in educational attainment. OECD research (2014) shows that discriminatory social norms including early marriage and violence against girls restrict their access to education in the region. State reports on the implementation of CEDAW for Cambodia and Timor-Leste (2013a; 2013b) specifically mention early pregnancy and early marriage as contributing to gender gaps in secondary and tertiary education. Unpaid care work also limits girls' ability to pursue education as girls perform more unpaid care activities including household chores than boys (e.g. Mongolia and the Philippines). In Mongolia, research shows that rural teenage boys spend fewer than 18 hours per week on household tasks, while rural teenage girls spend up to 30 hours per week. Girls in indigenous and minority communities are reported to face additional barriers to education exacerbated by higher poverty levels and marginalisation (e.g. Australia and Japan).

Figure 2.3.3. Gender imbalance in graduate studies



Note: This figure presents the female share in graduate students enrolled in education or engineering, manufacturing and construction programmes.

Source: UIS (2014a), *Education: Participation*, UIS Database, <http://data.uis.unesco.org> (accessed 21 April 2016).

Good practices

- A holistic approach to ending son preference:** In 2008, UNFPA supported the village of Zhousan, China in a pilot programme to address discriminatory village regulations and long-standing gender biases that perpetuate son preference. This included awareness-raising campaigns with the help of prominent community leaders, school initiatives to support girls’ education, town-hall style meetings to openly discuss the negative implications of son preference, and implementation of quotas for women in the village leadership bodies. Residents who participated in the programme reported having more positive attitudes towards girls’ education. In addition, the programme has since been replicated in other villages in the area (UNFPA, 2013).
- Working in partnership with all stakeholders to raise awareness on the value of the girl child:** In Viet Nam, the General Office for Population and Family Planning, Ministry of Health in collaboration with UNFPA launched the first national campaign in 2014 called “Chiên Dich” (Join hands to address the Sex Ratio at Birth imbalance). The 10-day campaign aimed to raise awareness on the causes and consequences of gender-biased sex selection and called for stronger efforts at all levels to bring an end to son preference. The campaign brought together the government, civil society organisations, the private sector and development partners to raise awareness on the negative impacts of son preference. It consisted of workshops, engagement with civil society, public mobilisation in the streets and social media and mass media coverage (UNFPA, 2014).



Restricted resources and assets

The restricted resources and assets sub-index captures discrimination in women's rights to and control over land and non-land assets. It measures whether women and men have equal and secure access to use, control and own land and non-land assets, and equal access to financial services from formal institutions.

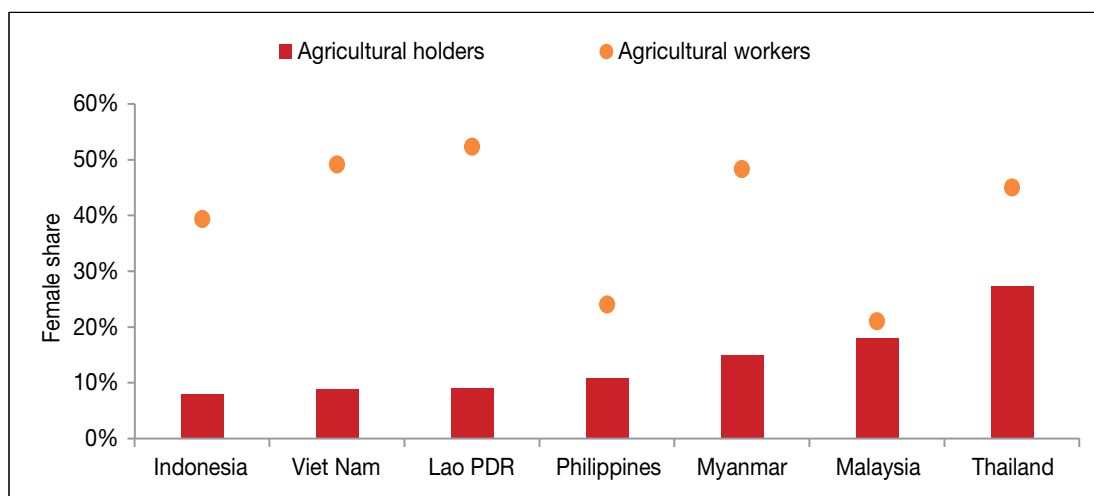
The region has a mixed picture of women's land rights and access to other productive and financial resources. Five countries have high to very high levels of discrimination. In contrast seven showed very low to low levels.

Government efforts to facilitate women's access to productive and economic resources have been important first steps to support women's economic empowerment in the region. The majority of countries in the East Asia and the Pacific region boast a comprehensive legal framework protecting and enabling women's secure access to resources. All countries in the region but one guarantee women and men the same legal rights to access land, non-land assets and financial services. Governments in the region have recognised the need to support women's economic empowerment by increasing access to land and financial services. To this end, legislation reforms in land titling and policies increasing women's access to financial services are positive steps supporting women's economic rights and potential. However, the SIGI results show that discriminatory practices continue to limit women's economic rights and autonomy. Women in the region are less likely to own land and have limited access to formal financial institutions.

All countries in the region except for one guarantee women and men equal **access to land**; however, 13 of the 20 countries in region have discriminatory practices. In Papua New Guinea, the Land Act (1996) does not cover customary land, hence making women's land rights more vulnerable. A lack of knowledge of property rights coupled with low legal literacy (e.g. Cambodia and Mongolia) may inhibit women from claiming their land rights. Access to land is an important issue across the region for the large rural and farming populations. The region holds over 44% of the world's farms with the vast majority being small and family-owned (FAO, 2014). Women make up a large share of agricultural workers, and in many countries women's agricultural employment is increasing as men's declines (e.g. China, Cambodia and Viet Nam) (World Bank, 2012a). In Cambodia, for example, over 50% of the population works in agriculture, including 53% of Cambodian women compared to 49% of men (World Bank, 2015a). While women are disproportionately represented as agricultural workers, few women own land and female-headed households are less likely than men to own land (ADB, 2015) (Figure 2.4.1).



Figure 2.4.1. **Women in agriculture**



Note: This figure presents the female share of agricultural holders and workers as a percentage of total agricultural holders and workers, respectively.

Sources: Agricultural censuses (2001-2005), http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/data-map/statistics/en/?sta_id=982; FAO (2011), *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010–11. Women in Agriculture: Closing the Gender Gap for Development*.

Research shows that land ownership can serve as a path to economic empowerment for women, but female land ownership remains low in the region, ranging from 9% in Indonesia to 27% in Thailand. In addition, female-headed households own substantially less land than male-headed households (World Bank, 2012a). To boost women’s access to land, governments have introduced legislation granting women and men equal rights to own land. Positive advances include the Law of Mongolia on Land (2002) which grants all Mongolian citizens the right to own land and the Philippines’ Magna Carta of Women (2009) which states, “Equal status shall be given to women and men, whether married or not, in the titling of the land”. The Magna Carta of Women (2009) also requires the Department of Agriculture to ensure active participation of rural women’s groups in policy and programme formation, and to promote new technology among women farmers.

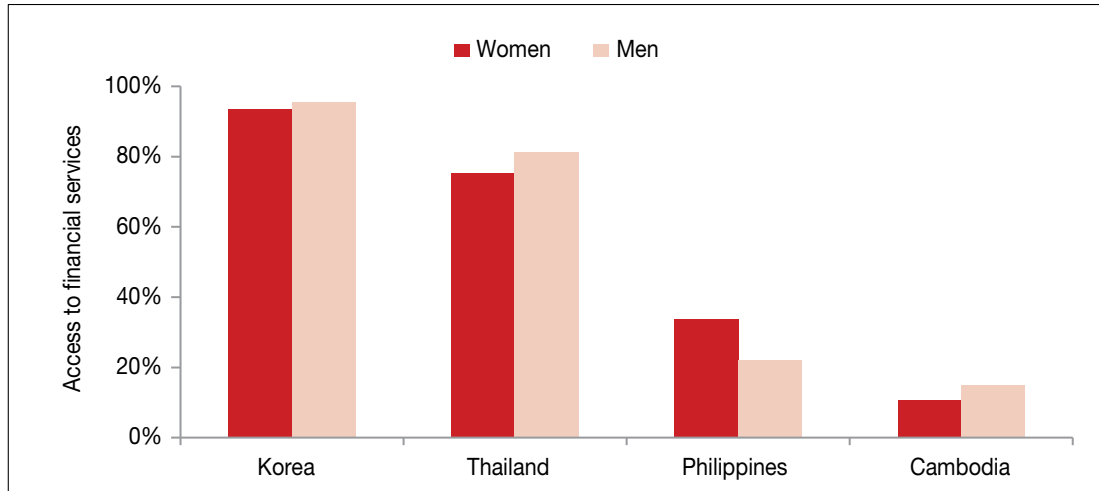
In addition to legal frameworks, secure land access is also shaped by gender stereotypes that discriminate against women’s land rights. Discriminatory practices, including patrilineal inheritance, influence ownership and inheritance laws in some countries (e.g. Fiji and Myanmar). In Timor-Leste, research found patriarchal practices to be the driving factor that limited women’s ability to own and control land (CEPAD, 2014). There are reports that indigenous women are especially likely to face discrimination in accessing land and non-land assets both within their community and from the larger population (e.g. Australia; Hong Kong, China; and Viet Nam).

Governments have taken actions to redress traditional perceptions of land ownership. The government of Lao PDR in association with the Lao PDR Women’s Union worked at the grass-roots level to educate women about amendments to the Land Law (2003) which grants women the right to retain control over property that belonged to her before marriage and property that she inherits from her family (World Bank, 2014a). Indonesia and Viet Nam have worked to increase women’s land ownership with the introduction of land titling reforms that allow joint registration of land titles, instead of only registering under a husband’s name. To promote proper implementation of the law, Indonesia worked with local NGOs to educate women on land rights and registered over 60 000 land titles to women either individually or jointly (World Bank, 2011a). Since the introduction of the Land Law (2003) in Viet Nam, over 90% of land titles have been registered jointly.

All 20 countries in the region grant women and men equal **access to non-land assets** giving them the right to own and control property and assets. Moreover, in 8 of the 20 countries covered in the region, women’s rights to non-land assets are guaranteed by law as well as in practice (e.g. Singapore and Thailand). In China, where one-third of women own property compared to two-thirds of men, the government eliminated taxes associated with registering a second name on title deeds to encourage joint registration under the Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests of the People’s Republic of China (revised 2005).

However, a regional review on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action highlighted restrictive family structures which recognise the man as the head of household. This negatively affects women's ability to fully realise their rights concerning non-land assets as legal ownership is often conferred to the head of household (APWLD, 2014). This may be further exacerbated after a divorce, where women have reportedly been forced to leave all of their belongings with their former husband (e.g. Myanmar).

Figure 2.4.2. **Access to financial services by gender**



Note: This figure presents the access to financial services by gender, as measured by the percentage of women and men aged 15 and above reporting having an account by themselves or together with someone else at a bank or another type of financial institution by country.

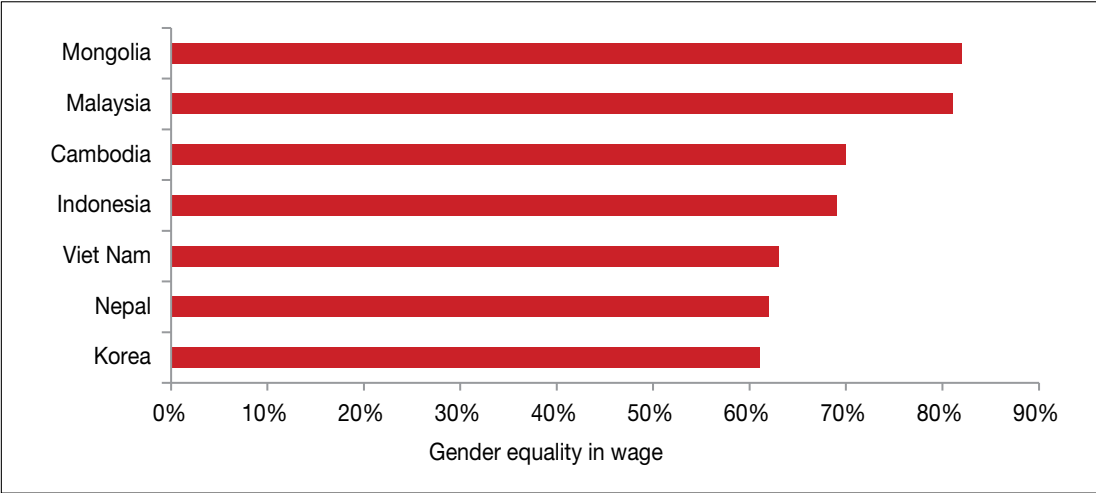
Source: World Bank (2014b), *Global Financial Inclusion Database*, <http://datatopics.worldbank.org/financialinclusion>.

Access to financial services can increase women's economic empowerment by supporting income-generating activities and enhancing women's decision-making power over their income. The SIGI results show that women and men have equal access to financial institutions in law and practice in 13 of the 20 countries in the region. In Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Thailand the same percentage of women as men hold bank accounts, and similar percentages of women and men have taken out loans from a financial institution (World Bank, 2014b). In the seven other countries in the region, the laws granting equal access to financial services are not fully guaranteed, and women face barriers to financial services. In Myanmar for example, 28% of men have a bank account compared to 17% of women (Figure 2.4.2). Banks may require a husband's signature for a woman to open an account or receive a loan (e.g. Indonesia) or women's concentration in lower-paying jobs may make it difficult for them to provide collateral or an initial deposit that is often required to receive a loan (e.g. China, Fiji and Mongolia).

Governments in the region are working to increase women's access to financial services through legislation, policies and programmes specifically targeting women. Recognising that women face discrimination in accessing loans, China and Japan have targeted loan programmes for women. The Philippines conditional cash transfer programme, Pantawid Familyang Pilipino, increased women's access to financial services by ensuring that women open a bank account under their own names, reaching over 4 000 women. Other countries including Malaysia and Myanmar have offered microcredit loans to rural and poor women. The programme in Myanmar has provided loans to over 8 000 women.

The persistence of the gender wage gap in the region also reflects the influence of discriminatory social institutions on other aspects of women's economic empowerment. Despite exceptional economic advances in the past decade and increased female labour force participation, the East Asia and the Pacific region has seen little progress in improving the income discrepancy between women and men. Women still earn less than men in nearly all sectors in all countries in the region: women for example earn 20% less than men in Mongolia, 40% in Korea (Figure 2.4.3). Gender disparities in education endowments, experience, and industrial and occupational segregation explain up to 30% of observed gender wage disparities in the region, suggesting a high share of discrimination in the explanation of the gender wage gap (Sakellariou, 2011).

Figure 2.4.3. Gender equality in wage



Note: This figure presents the wage differences between women and men in selected countries, measured as the ratio of female to male wages. Equality is achieved when the ratio is equal to 1.

Source: WEF (2014), *Global Gender Gap Report*.

Good practices

- Facilitating women’s access to land through land titling:** the World Bank implemented the Land Management and Policy Development Project (LMPDP, 2004-2009) in Indonesia to accelerate systematic land titling. Recognising that official land titles can improve a woman’s economic status, the programme made a considerable effort to grant titles to women land owners. Throughout the five-year programme, over 23% of titles were issued to women owners and 4% were issued jointly to women and men. The number of land titles issued to women increased over the course of the programme with 46% of the titles distributed to women in 2009. A survey assessment of the programme found that respondents were favourable to women’s land titling and saw it as an important tool to promote the rights of women in the target areas (World Bank, 2014a; World Bank 2011).
- Ensuring gender equality in land projects to improve women’s socio-economic status:** After identifying gender-specific concerns to accessing land and financial services in Cambodia, the FAO integrated a gender component into its Supplemental Land Administration Project (2002–2007). One aspect of this was to encourage joint land titling: overall, 78% of new land titles were issued jointly to husbands and wives during the project. To ensure women were able to benefit from their land rights, the project also included legal literacy programmes and reforms to secure access to credit and extension services. Women’s participation was encouraged in both the design and implementation stages of the project; gender-awareness training sessions were conducted for both women and men (including land administration and management officials); and gender advisers were hired to support the implementation team (FAO, 2013).
- Training rural women in leadership to advance their economic rights:** IFAD, with support from the Government of Norway, implemented a Rural Women’s Leadership Programme (RWLP) in the Philippines in 2010 to strengthen the role and voice of women leaders in rural organisations.² A total of 239 women and 88 men were trained in advocacy or negotiation, but also more technical subjects such as financial management and accounting. Gender sensitivity sessions for both women and men used storytelling methods to tackle preconceptions on traditional gender roles and show concrete models of women leaders. The programme resulted in increased awareness about laws that protect women’s rights, as well as increased self-confidence and motivation for women to take action to protect their rights (IFAD, 2014).



The restricted civil liberties sub-index captures discriminatory laws and practices that limit women’s access to public space, their political voice and participation in public life. It measures access to public space and political voice, which includes quotas to promote women’s political representation at the national and sub-national levels and the percentage of women in national parliaments.

This is the poorest performing sub-index for the region. Low levels of women’s political participation are compounded by the absence of legislative quotas. Eight countries have high to very high levels of discrimination. No country is classified with very low levels of discrimination against women.



Restricted civil liberties

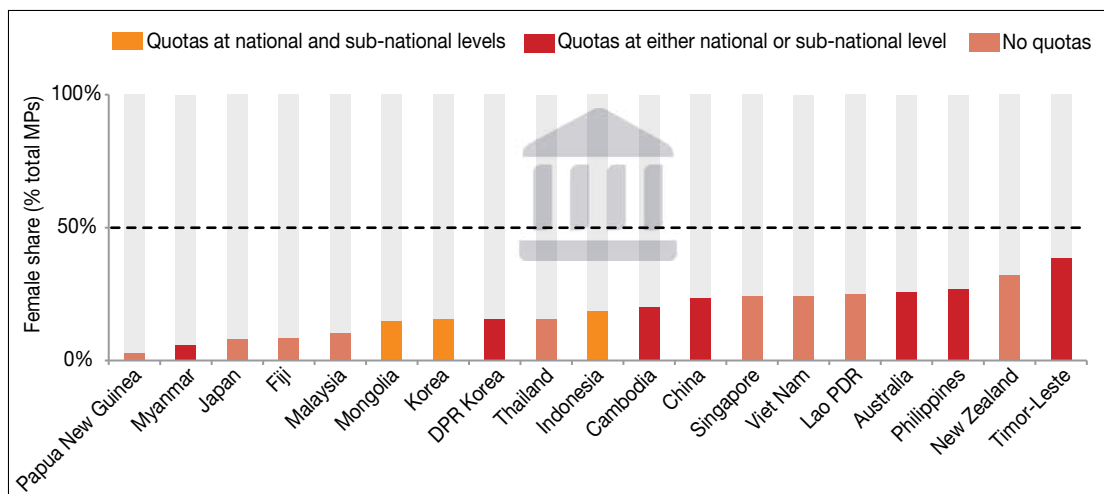
Women in the East Asia and the Pacific region face the highest levels of discrimination accessing public space and the political sphere compared to the four other sub-indices measured in the SIGI. Women’s freedom of movement is restricted by negative gender stereotypes and high levels of violence against women. A growing civil society network in the region has worked to address gender discrimination at the national and local levels. Nevertheless, women’s political representation remains low with few women in parliaments and few public policies, such as quotas, to promote women’s political participation.

In 19 of the 20 countries in the region, women face no legal restrictions to their **access to public space** which includes freedom of movement, ability to choose their place of residence, visit their families or friends and apply for a passport. However, legal access to public space may not translate into equal access for women in practice in all countries in the region. Discriminatory practices undermine the gender-equal legal provisions in 8 of the 20 countries, including reports of high rates of violence against women in public spaces and the threat of human trafficking (e.g. Mongolia, Myanmar and the Philippines). There are also reports that female political activists and human rights defenders face specific threats and acts of violence in the region (e.g. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Myanmar).

Women's **political voice** is weak in the region, although government measures to promote women's political representation have shown positive results. On average, women in the region hold 19% of national parliament seats, slightly lower than the global average of 21%. There is an important spectrum at the national level, ranging from 3% (Papua New Guinea) to 39% in Timor-Leste.

Mandated government measures for women's political participation, including **quotas**, have resulted in positive increases in women's involvement at the national and sub-national levels (Figure 2.5.1). For example, in Mongolia the percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments increased from 7% in 2005 to 15% in 2015 after the introduction of legislated quotas (UN, n.d.). In Timor-Leste, the Parliamentarian Electoral Law (2011) established quotas at the national level and saw women's share of seats increase from 29% in 2010 to 39% in 2013. China and the Philippines have instituted quotas at the local level, giving promising results. China's quotas for women on village committees saw an increase in female participation from 15% in 2004 to 23% in 2009. Nevertheless, many countries have yet to take pro-active measures such as quotas to promote women's political voice and only three countries, Indonesia, Korea and Mongolia, have them at both the national and sub-national levels. In addition, country profiles for the region point to restrictive gender stereotypes that exclude women from the public sphere and limit their political voice (e.g. Indonesia, Japan and Thailand).

Figure 2.5.1. **Women's political representation**



Note: This figure presents the share of women in national parliaments, distinguishing countries with no quotas, countries with legal quotas to promote women's political participation either at the national or at the sub-national level and countries with legal quotas to promote women's political participation at both the national and sub-national levels.

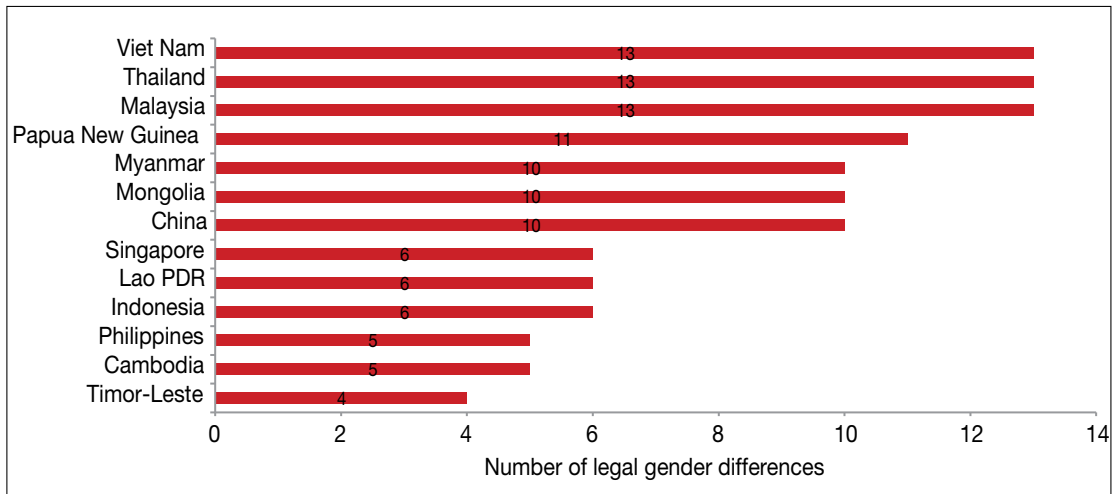
Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

Women's civil society organisations (CSOs) play an important role in the region by promoting women's political voice at the community and national levels. Overall there has been an increase in women's CSOs in the region over the last two decades owing in large part to greater co-operation between governments and CSOs (World Bank, 2012a). Many countries in the region have strong women's civil society movements (e.g. Fiji, Indonesia and the Philippines). Women's CSOs fill many purposes including providing social services and microcredit to women in Papua New Guinea and supporting victims of gender-based violence in Fiji (World Bank, 2012a). To promote women's role in civil society, Lao PDR passed the Decree on Associations (2009), which legalised civil associations following recommendations from the Committee on the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

To address gender discrimination in the workplace, governments have used legislation and policy as means to tackle gender gaps and support working women. The Labour Code (2012) in Timor-Leste and the Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Reconciliation (2011) in Korea both aim to advance gender equality by outlawing gender discrimination in the workplace. To increase women's representation in managerial and board positions, Malaysia instituted a 30% target for

women in decision-making positions in the corporate sector and the government requires publicly listed companies to create action plans on how they will achieve this goal (NGO-CEDAW, 2012). Nevertheless, legal restrictions on women’s rights to get a job remain in all countries in the region, from 4 legal restrictions in Timor-Leste to 13 in Viet Nam, Thailand and Malaysia (Figure 2.5.2).

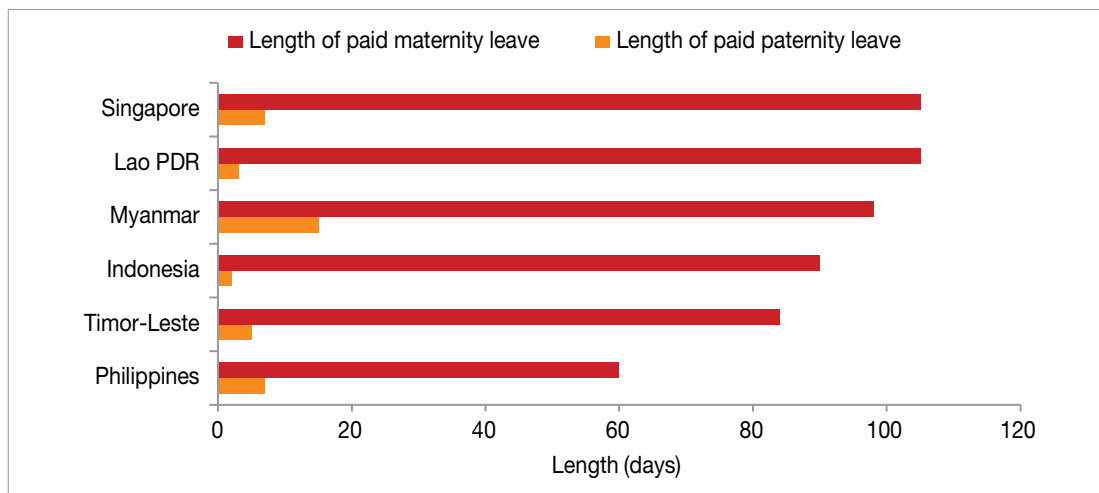
Figure 2.5.2. **Number of legal restrictions on women in “getting a job”**



Note: This figure presents the number of legal restrictions on women “getting a job” by country.
 Source: World Bank (2015b), *Women Business and the Law 2016: Getting to Equal*, <http://wbl.worldbank.org>.

Countries in the region have introduced maternity leave legislation, although this does not always cover all women workers (Figure 2.5.3). The Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Reconciliation (2011) in Korea calls for the Ministry of Employment and Labour to support the smooth implementation of maternity protection programmes and to “conduct projects, such as surveys, research and publicity”. In Indonesia, the Law on Manpower Affairs (2003) applies to all workers and labourers who work for a wage and prohibits employers from terminating employment if a women is absent from work, “because she is pregnant, giving birth to a baby, having a miscarriage, or breast-feeding her baby.” However, this does not cover domestic workers. In Cambodia and Thailand, maternity leave laws exclude wage labourers in the informal sector. These gaps in the legislation primarily effect women as domestic work is the most common type of female employment in the region (APWLD, 2014).

Figure 2.5.3. **Length of maternity and paternity leave by country**



Note: This figure presents the legislated lengths of maternity and paternity leaves by country (in days).
 Source: World Bank (2015b), *Women Business and the Law 2016: Getting to Equal*, <http://wbl.worldbank.org>.

Good practices

- **Capacity building to support women in local councils:** The ADB's Commune Council Development Project helped to increase women's political participation in local commune councils through the creation of a more efficient national registration system, facilitation of women's access to elections, and training of female councillors. Civil registration, which is required to run in official elections, was uncommon in Cambodia before the launch of the project with only 5% of births registered nationally. The project involved simplifying the civil registration process, training personnel and providing mobile civil registration possibilities for remote areas. Over 89% of the population was registered by the end of the project. In addition, trainings were offered to elected women covering a range of topics such as the functions of the commune councils, advocacy and networking skills, and planning and organisation skills. Participants reported increased knowledge about the commune councils and improved communication and collaboration skills. Women were subsequently appointed to strategic commune committees such as the Commune Investment Planning Committee and the Commune Development Planning Committee (ADB, 2014a).
- **Promoting women's voices as advocates for good governance:** With support from UN Women, women in Cambodia advocated for greater public accountability and transparency of the national budget. In response, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF) hosted a landmark high-profile consultation with the women's rights groups. This resulted in the creation of the "budget for citizens", a mechanism to give citizens the opportunity to openly review information on national expenditures. The programme aims to provide a non-technical presentation of the government budget to facilitate public understanding. "Budget for Citizens" supports the democratic process in Cambodia by giving citizens the ability to give recommendations to the MoEF (The NGO Forum on Cambodia, n.d.).



**The development cost
of discriminatory
social institutions**

**SI
GI**

The cost of gender-based discrimination in East Asia and the Pacific

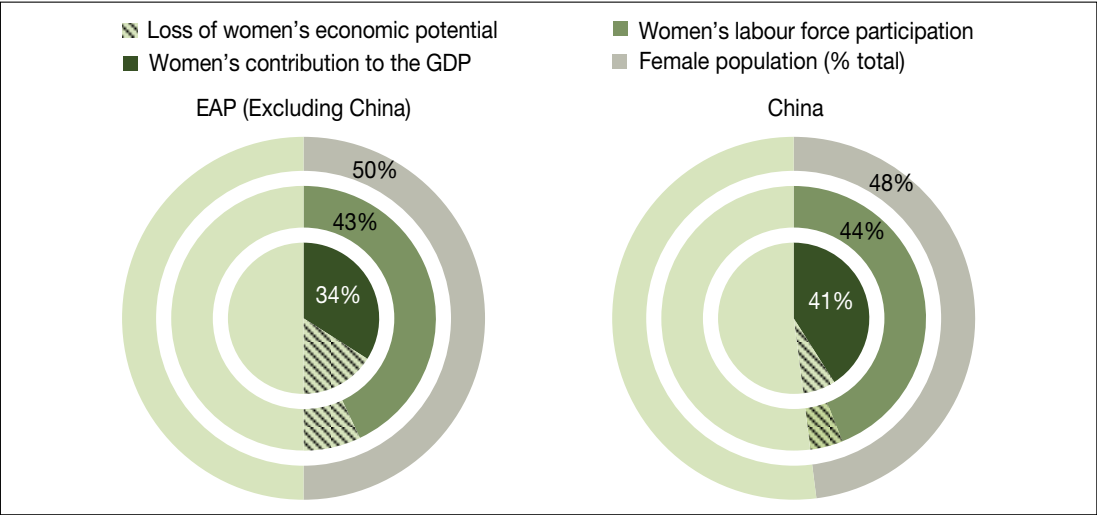
Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a critical economic opportunity, leading to positive economic and human development outcomes including improvements in health and education (Branisa, Klasen and Ziegler, 2013), more efficient labour markets (IMF, 2013), and economic growth (Ferrant, 2015). It is recognised as “smart economics”: the global economy cannot operate at its full potential with constraints holding back half of the population (World Bank, 2012b). Increasing women’s opportunities and rights would benefit all: closing gender gaps would improve women’s well-being as well as increase countries’ monetary living standards, as measured by their income per capita.

All forms of gender discrimination represent an economic cost for countries since they reduce income per capita. Restricting women’s economic contribution through both lower involvement in the workforce and discrimination in social institutions is costly for countries. Hence, narrowing gender gaps in the workforce as well as tackling discriminatory social institutions represent a macroeconomic opportunity for inclusive growth. Economic gains from parity emerge from equal outcomes in education and work (OECD 2012) and are also linked to socially transformative change aiming at eradicating discriminatory social institutions (Ferrant and Kolev, 2016).

The economic cost of gender gaps in labour force participation

Although women make up half of the world’s population, their economic contributions are highly restricted. If one were only to factor their participation in the market economy, women generate 37% of the global GDP, considerably lower than their 50% share of the global working-age population suggests is possible (Woetzel et al., 2015). This lower contribution of women compared to their potential is mainly explained by underuse of the female workforce: women have lower labour force participation rates and are overrepresented in part-time and low-productivity jobs compared to their male counterpart. Therefore, the female workforce represents a huge potential for economic growth: 865 million women worldwide have the potential to contribute more fully to their national economies (Aguirre et al., 2012). Even if women already participate in large numbers in EAP, they have yet to achieve parity in labour markets: they account for 43% of the labour force and work 92% as many hours as men since many are in part-time roles, while being disproportionately represented in lower-productivity sectors (accounted for by their GDP contribution per worker) such as education, health care and agriculture. Therefore, female workers currently generate about 34% of the region’s GDP (excluding China), despite accounting for 43% of the workforce (Woetzel et al., 2015) and 50% of the working-age population (Figure 3.1.1).

Figure 3.1.1. **Women in the workforce: An unfulfilled potential in EAP and China**



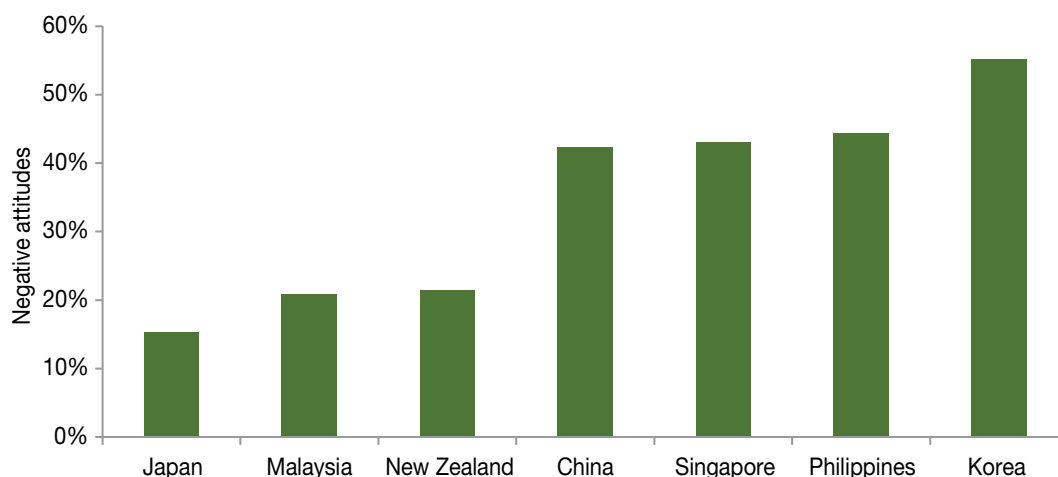
Note: This figure presents the imbalance between the share of women in the total population, their labour force participation and their contribution to the GDP.

Sources: Woetzel et al. (2015), “The power of parity: How advancing women’s equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth”, McKinsey Global Institute Report; World Bank (2015a), *World Development Indicators*, <http://data.worldbank.org> (accessed April 2016).

Gender-based discrimination in laws partially explains the lower economic contribution of women compared to their potential. Legal restrictions and lack of gender-sensitive labour policies hinder women’s ability to get a job and help to explain the disparities in gender gaps in labour market outcomes across countries. For example, legally guaranteed equality between women and men in property and inheritance rights, women’s freedom to pursue a profession, get a job, open a bank account, and to initiate legal proceedings without her husband’s permission, all lead to a statistically significant decrease in the gender gap in labour market outcomes. Similarly, labour policies addressing women-specific issues, such as the provision of maternity leave and child benefits, have also been shown to exhibit significant positive effects on women’s economic participation (IMF, 2015). Yet, according to the Women, Business and the Law database (World Bank, 2015b) women face on average eight gender-based job restrictions in the EAP region, up to 13 in Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam; and labour policies do not account for women-specific needs. For example, in eight countries women are legally restricted from doing the same jobs as men; in 13 countries, labour codes do not guarantee mothers an equivalent position after maternity leave.

Discriminatory social norms and attitudes also restrict women’s economic contribution to the GDP. Social expectations on women’s reproductive and caring responsibilities create barriers to women’s employment (Ferrant, Pesando and Nowacka, 2014): 25% of European women cite care and other family responsibilities as the reason for not working, compared to only 3% of men (UN Women, 2015). As women in the EAP region undertake as much as three-quarters of the childcare work, they struggle to adapt their labour supply accordingly. Negative attitudes towards working mothers reinforce this pervasive situation: for example, 42% of Chinese people declare that children will suffer when a mother is in paid employment, with this figure rising up to 55% in South Korea (Figure 3.1.2).

Figure 3.1.2. **Negative attitudes towards working mothers**

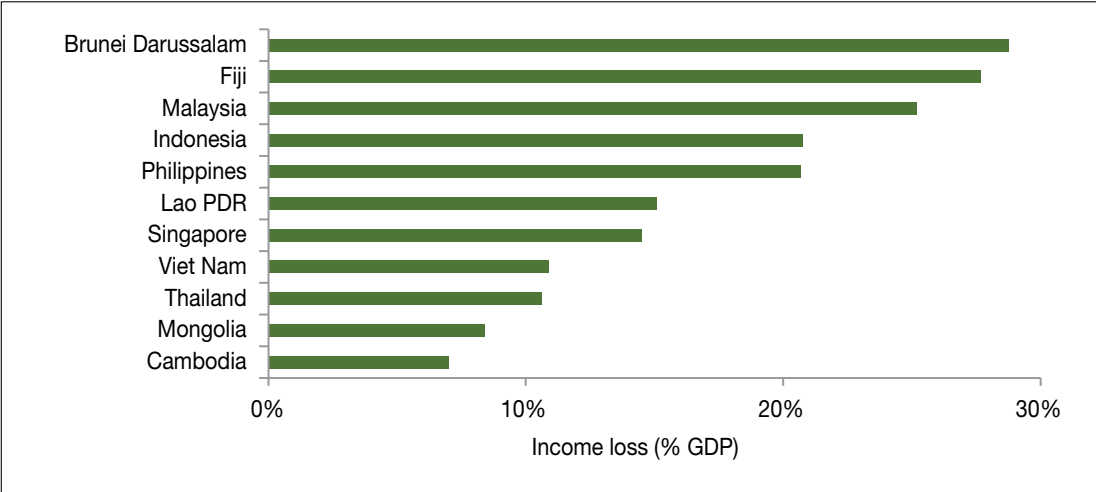


Note: This figure presents the percentage of respondents agreeing that children will suffer when mothers are working for pay outside home.

Source: World Values Survey (2010-2014), *World Value Survey Wave 6*, www.worldvaluessurvey.org (accessed April 2016).

Restrictions on women’s economic roles have serious macroeconomic consequences. The income losses attributable to gender gaps in the labour market are substantial: 38% in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), 25% in South Asia (SA), 17% in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and 12% in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). In East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) the total income loss is 16%, with regional disparities (Figure 3.1.3): from 7% in Cambodia, to 15% in Singapore and 29% in Brunei Darussalam (Cuberes and Teigner, 2013).

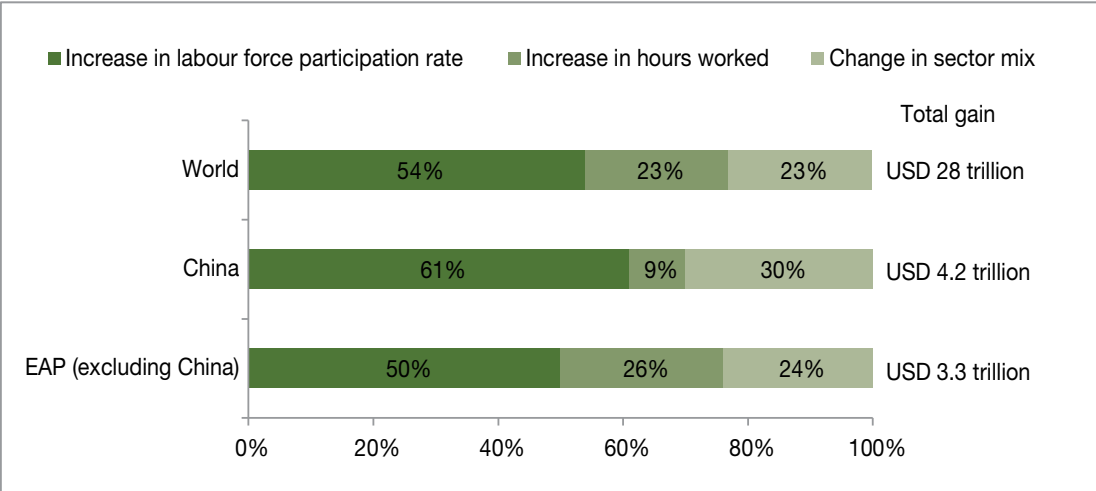
Figure 3.1.3. Income losses associated with gender gaps in labour force participation



Note: This figure presents income losses as a percentage of GDP associated with current gender gaps in labour force participation. Source: Cuberes, D. and M. Teigner (2013), "Aggregate Costs of Gender Gaps in the Labor Market: A Quantitative Estimate", Clark University.

The EAP economy would benefit from greater parity in labour force participation between women and men. Huge macroeconomic gains would be made if women were able to fully develop their labour market potential. For example, closing the gender gap, in order to allow women to play the same role in labour markets as men, would add as much as USD 28 trillion to annual global GDP in 2025, USD 3.3 trillion in EAP (excluding China) and USD 4.2 trillion in China (Woetzel et al., 2015), representing respectively 26%, 30% and 20% of the current GDP (Figure 3.1.4).

Figure 3.1.4. Income gains from gender parity in the labour force and their drivers by sub-region

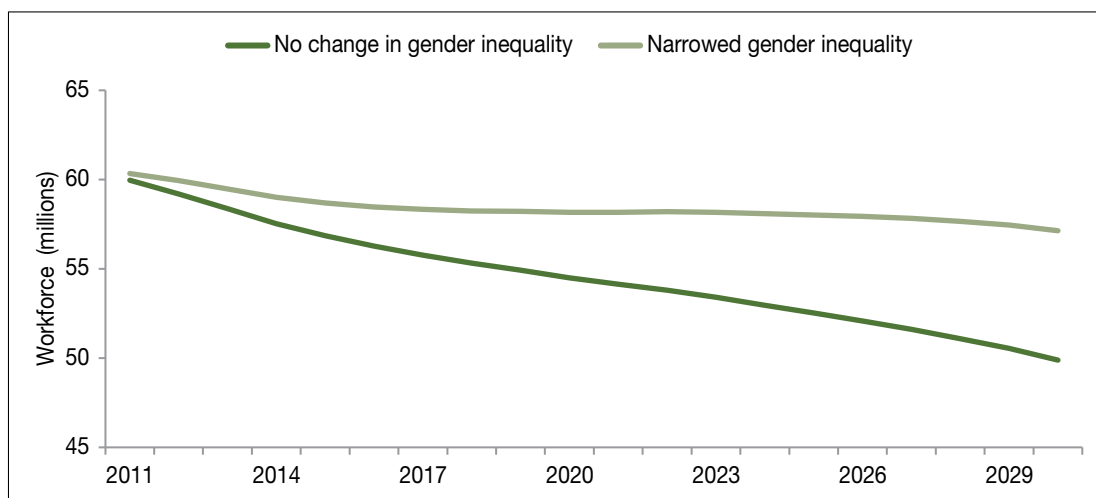


Note: This figure presents the total gain associated with closing gender gaps in labour force participation, as well as the contribution of three types of improvements to the total gain. Source: Woetzel et al. (2015), "The power of parity: How advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth", McKinsey Global Institute Report; World Bank (2015a), *World Development Indicators*, <http://data.worldbank.org> (accessed April 2016).

The drivers of additional income vary within the EAP region. In China, 61% of the potential increase in income would come from raising participation rates of women to match those of men, 9% from closing the gap between men and women in part-time work and 30% from shifting women into higher-productivity sectors, thereby reducing gender occupational segregation (Figure 3.1.4). In the rest of the region, about 50% of this potential increase in income could come from raising participation rates, 24% from shifting women into higher-productivity sectors and 26% from closing the gap between women and men in part-time work (Woetzel et al., 2015).

EAP countries with ageing populations have a particular interest in narrowing the gap in labour force participation. In rapidly ageing economies, higher female labour force participation can directly yield growth and stability gains by mitigating the impact of a decline in the labour force on growth potential (Steinberg and Nakane, 2012). Some EAP countries face economic challenges regarding their pool of labour and their GDP growth: in Japan, for example the labour force is estimated to shrink by about 10 million people to around 50 million workers in 2030 and the ratio of working-age people to the elderly will fall from 2.8 currently to 1.3 in 2050, a trend primarily driven by ageing (OECD, 2012). Increasing women's economic contributions might address the looming labour shortages: by closing the gender gaps in labour force participation (63% of working-age females compared to 84% of working-age males) and income (27%), the fall in labour supply would be limited and the economy would expand by almost 20% over two decades (Figure 3.1.5).³

Figure 3.1.5. **Gender equality and the forecasted size of the Japanese workforce**



Note: This figure presents the forecasted size of the Japanese labour force. The labour force projections are based on population projections for persons aged 15-64 years as reported by the OECD Demography and Population Database. No-change scenario: the projected size of the total labour force aged 15-64 years if the labour force participation rates for men and women remain constant from 2011 to 2030 at the rates observed in 2010. Convergence in participation rates: the projected size of the total labour force aged 15-64 years if the labour force participation rate for men remains constant from 2011 to 2030 at the rates observed in 2010, and the rate for women shows a gradual increase from 2011 to 2030, reaching the 2010 rate for men by 2030.

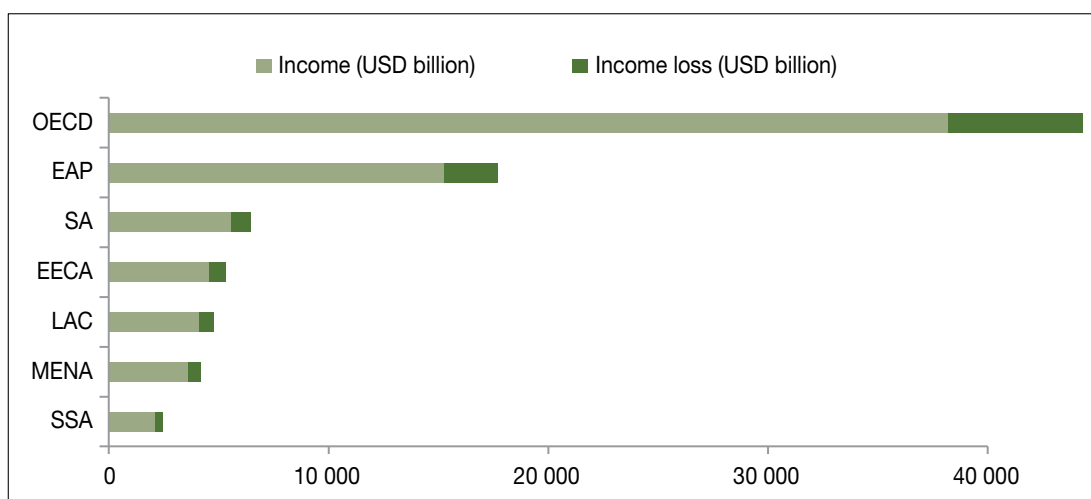
Source: OECD (2012), *Closing the Gender Gap: Act Now*, OECD Publishing.

The cost of gender discrimination in social institutions

Discriminatory social institutions are also costly for economies. While their role has been neglected in the gender and growth literature, discriminatory social institutions hinder economic growth. Higher levels of discrimination in social institutions, as measured by the SIGI, are associated with lower levels of income per capita. This negative correlation is explained by the negative influence of discriminatory social institutions on the way in which human assets are generated, as well as technological progress and the efficiency with which these assets are used in production. More precisely, discriminatory social institutions hinder national income growth by restricting technological progress, as well as through lowering both the level of female education and labour force participation, without affecting male outcomes (Ferrant and Kolev, 2016).

Gender-based discrimination in social institutions is associated with huge income losses for all regions around the world, reducing potential income per inhabitant. The current level of discrimination induces a loss of USD 12 trillion or 16% of global income. Regional income losses attributable to current levels of gender-based discriminatory social institutions are huge (Figure 3.1.6): about USD 6 116 billion in OECD countries, USD 2 440 billion in East Asia and the Pacific (EAP), USD 888 billion in South Asia (SA), USD 733 billion in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ECA), USD 658 billion in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), USD 575 billion in Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and USD 340 billion in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

Figure 3.1.6. Income losses associated with discriminatory social institutions by region

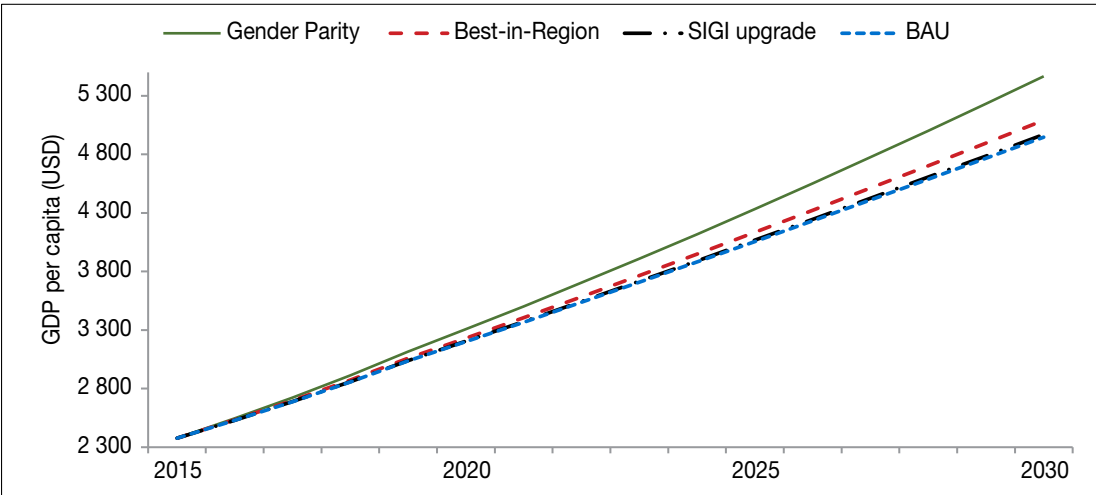


Note: This figure presents the regional income and income loss associated with current levels of gender-based discrimination in social institutions. Income losses are measured in terms of 2011 real income at current PPP. The regions are: East Asia and the Pacific (EAP), South Asia (SA), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) and Middle East and North Africa (MENA). This regional classification excludes Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, which are represented as a stand-alone group.

Source: Ferrant, G. and A. Kolev (2016), "Does gender discrimination in social institutions matter for long-term growth?: Cross-country evidence", *OECD Development Centre Working Paper No. 330*.

Each step to reduce and eliminate discrimination can produce long-term positive results for the East Asia and the Pacific region. Eliminating all forms of gender-based discrimination in social institutions requires long-term commitments. However, by introducing gender-responsive policies and programmes and removing discrimination in legal frameworks, countries could gradually reduce their level of discrimination. At the global level, a gradual reduction of gender-based discriminatory social institutions by 2030 could increase the annual GDP growth rate by 0.03 to 0.6 percentage points over the next 15 years, depending on the scenario (Ferrant and Kolev, 2016). For example, compared to the business-as-usual scenario, Myanmar would see its annual GDP per capita growth rate increase by 0.03 percentage points by reducing its level of discrimination in social institutions from very high to high (as measured in the SIGI 2014). This effect rises up to 0.2 percentage points by reaching the Mongolian level of discrimination, and 0.7 percentage points by eradicating discriminatory social institutions over the next 15 years (Figure 3.1.7).

Figure 3.1.7. Income gains from reducing gender discrimination in social institutions in Myanmar

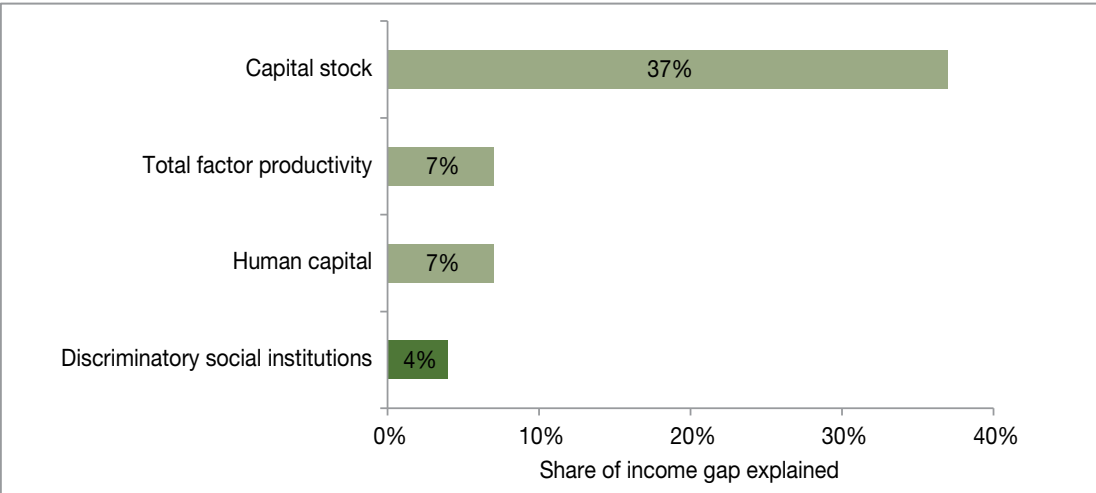


Note: This figure presents GDP forecasts for 2030 in four scenarios: (i) business-as-usual (BAU), using available growth forecast, and assuming no change in level of gender-based discrimination in social institutions between 2015 and 2030; (ii) upgrade in the SIGI classification, considering that Myanmar would decrease its level of gender-based discrimination in social institutions in order to attain a lower group along the SIGI classification in 2030; (iii) best-in-region, Myanmar would decrease its level of gender-based discrimination in social institutions in order to catch up the best performer of the region (Mongolia); (iv) gender parity, assuming that Myanmar would have eradicated gender-based discrimination in social institutions by 2030. GDP forecasts are measured in terms of 2011 real GDP per capita at current PPPs.

Source: Ferrant, G. and A. Kolev (2016), “Does gender discrimination in social institutions matter for long-term growth?: Cross-country evidence”, *OECD Development Centre Working Paper No. 330*.

Differences in levels of gender-based discrimination in social institutions could account for disparities in living standards between OECD and EAP countries. This regional report shows that women living in EAP face higher levels of deprivation related to discriminatory social institutions compared to women living in OECD economies, which in turn may explain development gaps. Indeed, 4% of the income gap between OECD and EAP countries may be explained by differences in the level of discrimination in social institutions. This is significant compared to 37% of the income gap accounted for by differences in capital stock accumulation, 7% by differences in human capital and technology (Figure 3.1.8). Therefore, EAP countries could reduce the income gap with OECD countries by 4% by decreasing their levels of discrimination in social institutions to OECD levels.

Figure 3.1.8. Drivers of income gap between OECD and East Asia and the Pacific countries



Note: This graph presents the share of the income gap between OECD and East Asia and the Pacific explained by the main determinants of long-term growth and the SIGI.

Source: Ferrant, G. and A. Kolev (2016), “Does gender discrimination in social institutions matter for long-term growth?: Cross-country evidence”, *OECD Development Centre Working Paper No. 330*.

Discriminatory social institutions: The drivers of gender inequality in economic empowerment in East Asia and the Pacific

Gender discrimination cuts across most aspects of socioeconomic development and society at large, restricting both women's empowerment opportunities and outcomes. Equal opportunity refers to non-discrimination in the provision and availability of and access to resources, rights and institutions; equality in outcomes refers to the ability for women and men to benefit equally from education, employment and access to political power. In the East Asian context, the SIGI measures discrimination in rights and opportunities by capturing discriminatory social institutions, while the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index (GGG) captures gender inequality in outcomes (see Box 3.1).

Different forms of gender discrimination exacerbate each other, increasing the relevance of tackling discriminatory social institutions in the East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) region. Discriminatory social institutions have gained prominence as a useful analytical framework to illuminate what drives gender inequality in outcomes. By guiding female and male behaviour and shaping interaction between the sexes, discriminatory social institutions influence women's economic, social and political outcomes. This is the missing link to understand the persistence of unequal outcomes in education, health and access to economic and political rights between women and men. Therefore, while economic development allows for various opportunities to improve gender equality in outcomes, economic growth alone is not enough.

Box 3.1 The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index (GGG) quantifies relative gaps between women and men across four key outcomes: health, education, economy and politics.

- The economic participation and opportunity sub-index measures the labour force participation gap, the remuneration gap (female-to-male ratio of estimated earned income and a qualitative indicator) and the advancement gap (female-to-male ratio of legislators, senior officials and managers, and female-to-male ratio of technical and professional workers).
- The educational attainment sub-index includes access to education (female-to-male ratios of school enrolment rates in primary, secondary and tertiary education and the female-to-male ratio of literacy rate).
- The health and survival sub-index includes the sex ratio at birth, gender gaps in life expectancy.
- The political empowerment sub-index includes female-to-male ratio of minister-level positions and parliamentary positions.

The GGG ranges from 0 (inequality) to 1 (equality). The East Asia and the Pacific region has closed more than 67% of its overall gender gap. However, the region ranks second from the bottom on the 2015 GGG, the global average being 70%. Moreover, the regional disparity is high: the best performer of the region, Philippines, is ranked 7th with 79% of its overall gender gap closed, compared to Fiji, the poorest performer of the region, which is ranked 121st and has closed 64.5% of its gender gap.

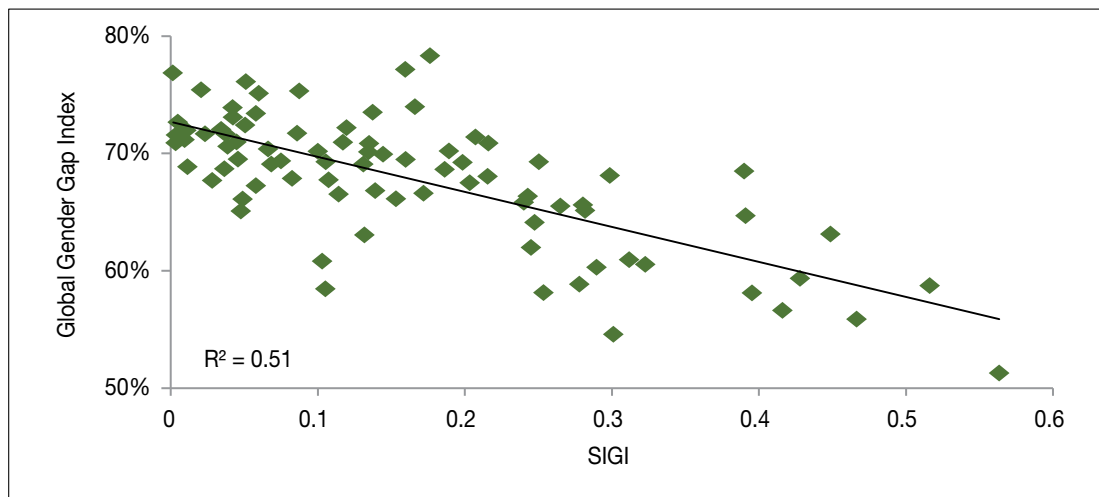
Source: WEF(2015), *The Global Gender Gap report 2015*, World Economic Forum, Geneva, <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015>.

Restricted rights and opportunities: A barrier to gender parity in outcomes

Gender inequality in opportunities and outcomes remains pervasive in EAP, despite the significant economic and social progress of the last decades. Nowhere do women possess the same legal, economic and social rights as men. As described in the Overview, in terms of discriminatory social institutions, the region has low performance compared to economies of the OECD (0.0224), Latin America and the Caribbean (0.0695) and Europe and Central Asia (0.0878) with a SIGI average score of 0.1528, ranging from 0.0345 in Mongolia to 0.2935 in Myanmar. Similarly, women's outcomes are still lower than men's as reflected by the GGG score of 0.7, meaning that East Asia and the Pacific has closed over 70% of the gap, with the Philippines, New Zealand and Australia in the lead.

Discriminatory social institutions explain what stops women from achieving equal outcomes. They set the parameters of what decisions, choices or behaviours are deemed acceptable or unacceptable for women in a society and therefore define their role and influence their outcomes. Discriminatory laws and norms, as measured by the SIGI, restrict women's access to education and health but also to economic and political power, and in turn exacerbate gender gaps in outcomes (Figure 3.2.1). Higher levels of gender-based discrimination in social institutions are associated with lower equality in outcomes, as measured by the GGG index, even when controlling for factors such as the level of economic development, urbanisation and regional characteristics.

Figure 3.2.1. Higher gender inequality in opportunities and rights, lower equality in outcomes

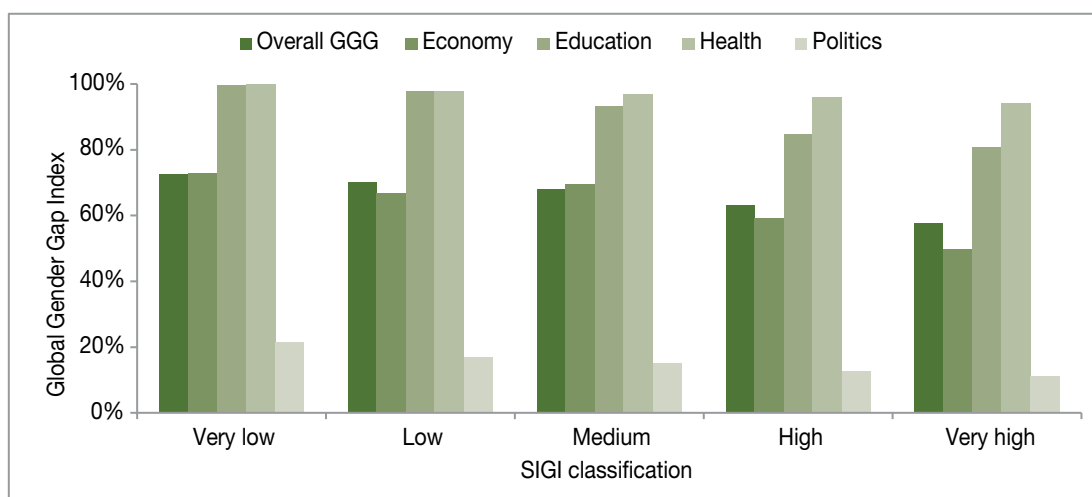


Notes: This figure presents the predicted value of the Global Gender Gap index by levels of gender-based discrimination in social institutions as measured by the SIGI, controlling for level of development (GDP per capita), urbanisation rates and regional dummies. Higher SIGI values indicate higher inequality: the SIGI ranges from 0 for very low discrimination to 1 for very high discrimination. Higher GGG values indicate higher equality: the GGG ranges from 0 to 100 for perfect equality.

Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>; WEF (2015), *Global Gender Gap Report*, World Economic Forum, Geneva.

Gender inequalities in opportunities and outcomes intersect and overlap to reinforce women's marginalisation. Countries with higher levels of discrimination in social institutions are further from achieving gender parity in outcomes, as measured by the GGG. Countries ranked as having low levels of discrimination in social institutions in the SIGI classification have achieved on average 73% of the way towards perfect equality, compared to 58% for countries classified as having very high levels of discrimination in the SIGI (Figure 3.2.2). Similarly, compared to countries with very high levels of discrimination in social institutions, countries with very low levels of discrimination have narrowed gender gaps in access to economic (50% versus 73%) and political power (11% versus 22%) and are closer to gender parity in access to education (81% versus 100%) and health (94% versus 100%).

Figure 3.2.2. Levels of gender equality in outcomes by SIGI classification



Note: This figure presents the level of achievement of gender equality in the GGG and its components by SIGI classification. Higher GGG values indicate higher equality: the GGG ranges from 0 to 100 for perfect equality.

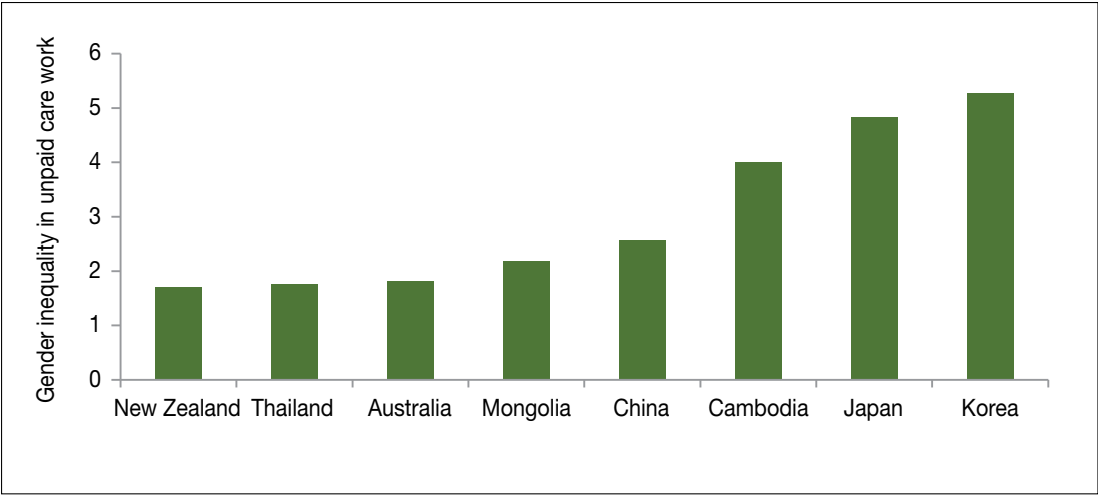
Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>; WEF (2015), *The Global Gender Gap Report 2015*, World Economic Forum, Geneva.

Unpaid care work: The missing link explaining gender gaps in labour market outcomes

The division of unpaid care work matters for gender equality in the labour market. The inequalities in economic outcomes reflect how discriminatory social institutions restrict women's ability to fully access and benefit from their economic, political and social rights. Unequal distribution of domestic and caring responsibilities is an additional example of how discriminatory social institutions can shape women's labour force outcomes. A standard assumption is that increases in levels of female education and employability and decreasing fertility rates would automatically lead to increased levels of female labour force participation and narrowed gender gaps in labour market outcomes. However, time spent on unpaid care work is also part of the labour supply equation. The amount of caring responsibilities affects individual labour outcomes by reducing the time potentially available for market activities. Time is a limited resource that is allocated between labour and leisure, productive and reproductive activities, and paid and unpaid work. Therefore, each minute spent on unpaid care work is one minute less potentially spent on market activities. Since women typically bear the bulk of caring responsibilities (Figure 3.2.3), unpaid care work significantly reduces their labour participation and wages, as well as the quality of their jobs compared to men (Ferrant, Pesando and Nowacka, 2014).

The unequal distribution of unpaid care work also explains gender gaps in labour market participation (Figure 3.2.4). In countries where women spend an average of five hours per day on unpaid care activities, 50% of the women are active, compared to 60% in countries where they devote less than three hours per day to such activities. Therefore, more unequal distribution of care work between women and men is associated with higher gender gaps in labour force participation. In countries where women spend almost eight times the amount of time on unpaid care activities as men, they represent only 35% of the active working population. However, when the difference drops to less than twice the amount, women's labour force participation increases to 50% of the active population (for a given level of GDP per capita, fertility rate, urbanisation rate, maternity leave, and gender inequality in unemployment and education).

Figure 3.2.3. The gender gap in unpaid care work

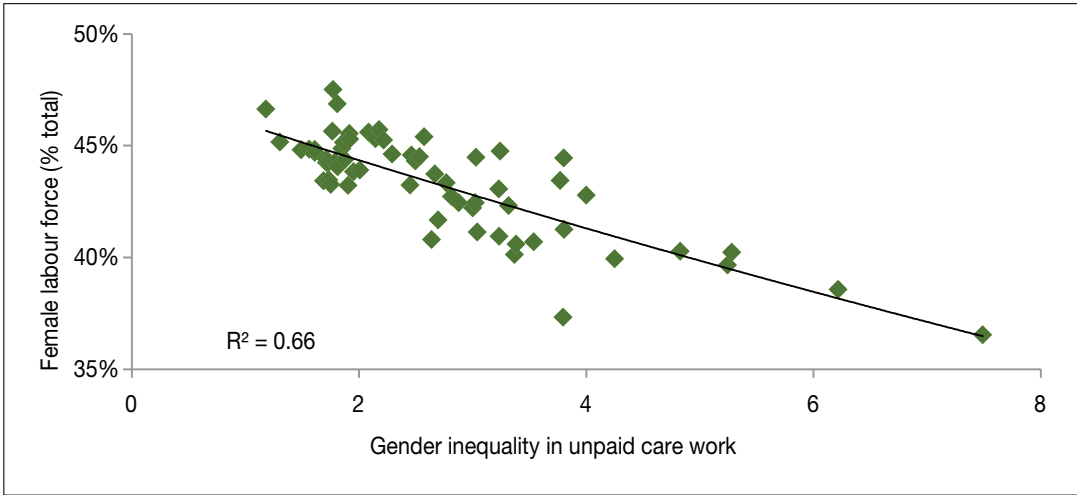


Note: This figure presents the gender gap in unpaid care work, as measured by the female-to-male ratio of time devoted to unpaid care work, for selected countries.

Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org> (accessed April 2016).

Women’s unequal share of unpaid care work has negative outcomes for a wide range of other areas affecting women’s well-being and life satisfaction. Studies from the US point to decreases in working mothers’ own subjective assessment of happiness due to the difficulties in balancing paid and unpaid care work responsibilities, with less time for leisure activities (Stevenson and Wolfers, 2009). This phenomena, which is described in the second shift theory (Hochschild and Machung, 1989), or double work burden is believed to be one reason behind the apparent paradox of declining female happiness in developed countries.

Figure 3.2.4. Gender gaps in unpaid care work and labour force participation

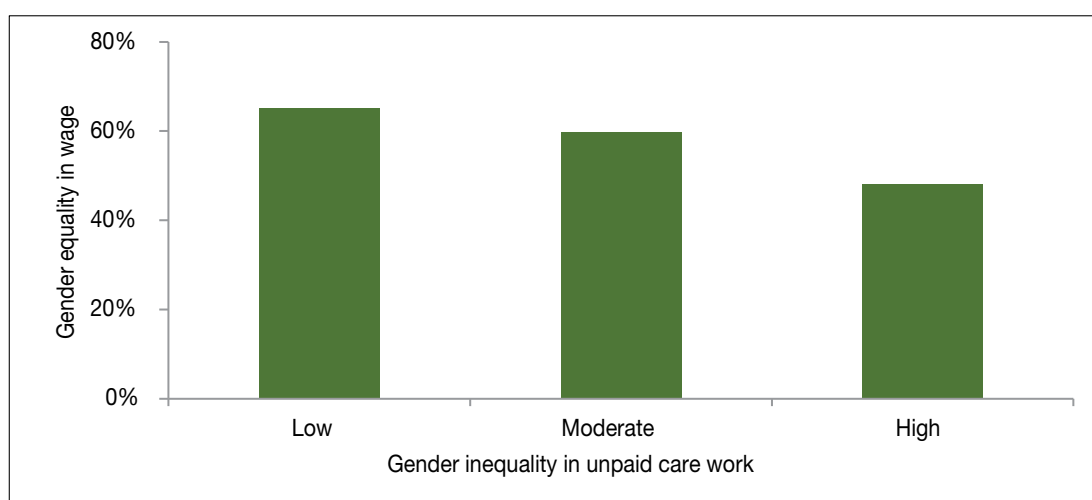


Note: This figure presents the relationship between gender gaps in unpaid care work (as measured by the female-to-male ratio of time devoted to unpaid care work) and labour force participation (as measured by the female share in the labour force participation), controlling for the country’s GDP per capita, fertility rate, urbanisation rate, maternity leave policies, and gender inequality in unemployment and education.

Sources: World Bank (2015a), *World Development Indicators*, <http://data.worldbank.org>; OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org> (accessed April 2016).

Gender inequalities in unpaid care work are also linked to gender wage gaps. In countries where women spend a large amount of time on unpaid care compared to men, the gender pay gap is high (for a given level of GDP per capita, fertility rate, female unemployment rate, female education, urbanisation rate, and maternity leave) (Figure 3.2.5). In countries where women spend twice as much time as men on caring activities, they earn only 65% of what their male counterparts earn for the same jobs. This drops to 40% where women spend five times the amount of time on unpaid care work (for full-time employees).

Figure 3.2.5. **Higher gender inequality in unpaid care work, lower equality in wages**



Note: This figure presents the negative relationship between gender equality in hourly wage (as measured by the female share in male wage) and gender inequality in unpaid care work (as measured by the female-to-male ratio of time devoted to unpaid care work), controlling for GDP per capita, fertility rate, urbanisation rate, maternity leave and gender inequality in labour force participation, unemployment and education. Low inequality in unpaid care work refers to a female-to-male ratio lower than 2; moderate inequality refers to a ratio comprised between 2 and 5; and high inequality refers to a ratio higher than 5.

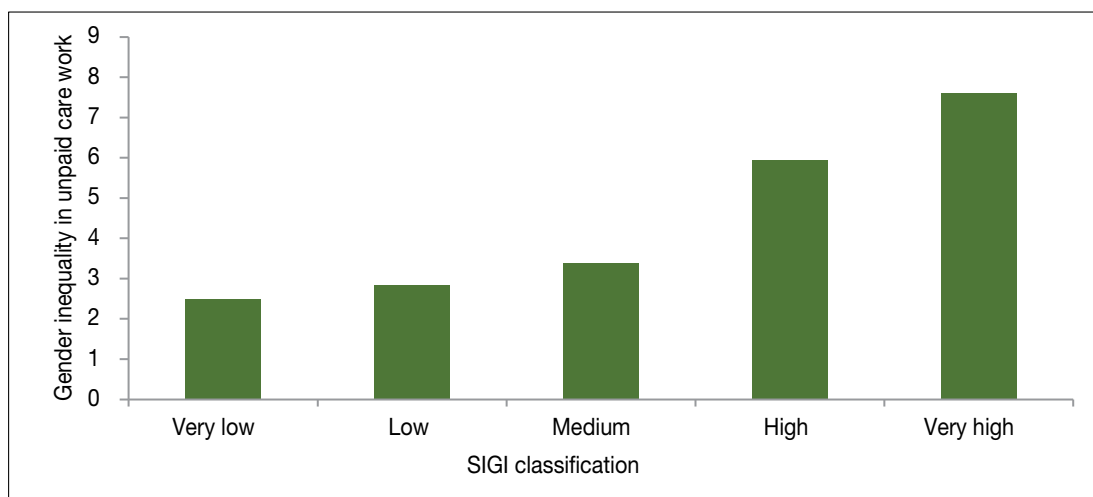
Sources: World Bank (2015a), *World Development Indicators*, <http://data.worldbank.org>; WEF (2014), *The Global Gender Gap Report 2014*, World Economic Forum, Geneva; OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

Discriminatory social institutions are at the root of unequal distribution in unpaid care work, indirectly creating gender gaps in labour outcomes. Discriminatory social institutions, such as social expectations of gender roles, place a greater burden of domestic and care work on women while work arrangements deny them a balanced family-work life. Cambodian women devote four times more time than men to unpaid domestic and care work. Yet, women working outside the home implies an opportunity cost for poor households that increases with higher levels of gender-based discrimination in social institutions. Therefore, countries do not fully benefit from women's economic potential as they are mainly working part-time and in the lowest paid sectors. The level of gender discrimination in social institutions as measured by the SIGI relates to the way responsibilities for housework and care are shared between women and men. In countries where social institutions discriminate highly against women, women's role in society is restricted to reproductive and domestic functions, with women performing more unpaid care work than men. In other words, higher SIGI scores are associated with higher gender gaps in time devoted to unpaid care work (Figure 3.2.6).

Tackling entrenched gender norms and stereotypes is a first step in reducing and redistributing responsibilities for care between women and men. Accompanied by a policy framework which reduces as well as redistributes time spent on care activities through the provision of essential services, gender gaps in economic, labour and political outcomes could thereby be significantly reduced. Indeed, in countries where there are lower levels of discrimination against women in social institutions, the distribution of caring responsibilities between women and men is more equal. Reducing the level of discrimination in social institutions encourages gender roles to evolve allowing for more opportunities for the share of unpaid care work to be redistributed between women and

men. In countries having lower levels of discrimination in the SIGI classification, women have greater opportunities to engage in productive as well as reproductive roles and social norms are also more open for men to assume domestic and other care responsibilities. For example, MenCare in Latin America is challenging harmful masculine norms and promoting positive changes in men’s care giving through a global fatherhood and care-giving campaign.

Figure 3.2.6. **The gender gap in unpaid care work by SIGI classification**



Note: This figure presents gender inequality in unpaid care work as measured by the female-to-male ratio of time devoted to unpaid care activities by SIGI classification.

Source: OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

The cost of discriminatory social institutions for human development

East Asian and Pacific countries have medium levels of human development compared to the rest of the world: with an average score of 0.65, the UNDP’s Human Development Index (HDI) ranges from 0.52 in Myanmar to 0.72 in Thailand, compared to 0.944 in Norway and 0.86 in OECD economies (see Box 3.2). In parallel, EAP displays regional disparities in levels of gender inequality in the HDI: in Mongolia, the Philippines and Thailand, men and women face similar levels of human development, while in Timor-Leste for example, the female level of human development (0.57) is 91% of the male level (0.63).

Box 3.2 The UNDP Human Development Index

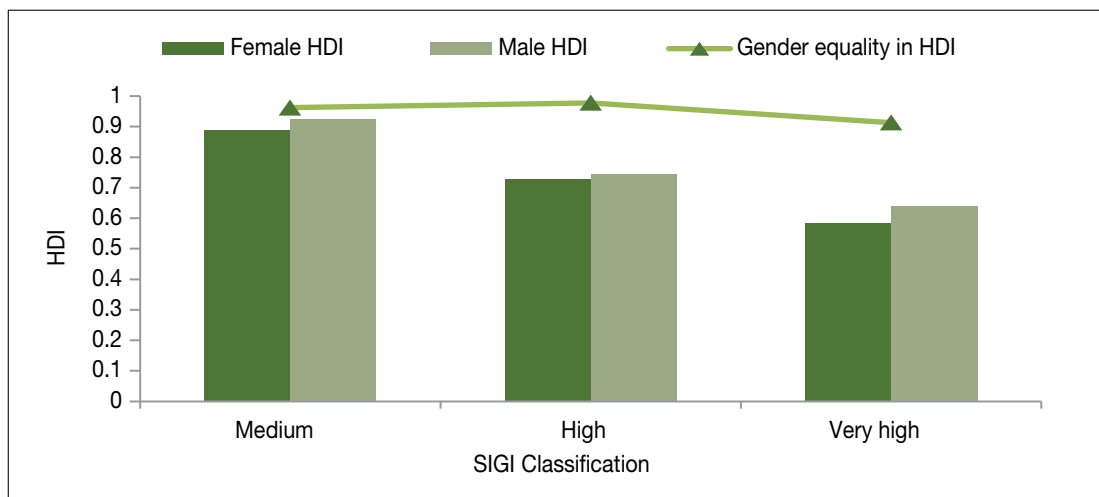
The UNDP Human Development Index measures countries’ achievements in key dimensions of human development: health, education and standard of living. The health dimension includes life expectancy at birth, the education dimension years of schooling for adults aged 25 years and more and expected years of schooling for children of school entering age. Finally the standard of living is measured by gross national income (GNI) per capita.

The HDI ranges from 0 to 1, indicating very high levels of human development. With an HDI average of 0.71 in 2014, EAP is classified as having high levels of development. However, regional diversities appear. Six countries have very high levels of development (Australia; New Zealand; Singapore; Hong Kong, China; Korea and Japan), while two countries have low levels of development (Myanmar and Papua New Guinea).

Source: UNDP (2015b), *Human Development Report*, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>.

Discriminatory social institutions are powerful drivers of gender inequality in human development outcomes. Apart from geography, political systems, religion and the level of economic development, discriminatory social institutions are the missing factor explaining differences in development levels across a country. Values and codes of conduct that shape gender roles and restrict women’s rights are associated with higher fertility rates and higher child mortality (Branisa et al., 2013). Discriminatory social institutions also influence fertility rates and child mortality. For example, if women have only limited power within the household and are not free to take decisions on either their sexual and reproductive health, or their children’s health, even if they might want to have fewer children, they cannot achieve their objectives in the presence of social institutions that restrict their power to limit the number of children born. Similarly, they cannot take care of their children as they would without those restrictions (Thomas 1990, 1997).

Figure 3.2.7. **The human development cost of discriminatory social institutions**



Note: This figure presents the female and male HDI scores by SIGI classification as well as gender equality in HDI. The HDI ranges from 0 to 1, indicating very high levels of human development. The gender equality in HDI is captured by the female-to-male ratio of HDI.

Sources: UNDP (2015b), *Human Development Report*, United Nations Development Programme, <http://hdr.undp.org>; OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

Gender-based discrimination is associated with human development deprivation. Discriminatory laws, norms and practices not only affect Asian women’s well-being, but also that of Asian men, as measured by the UNDP’s Human Development Index (HDI). Figure 3.2.7 presents the female and male HDI scores, as well as gender equality in human development, captured by the female-to-male ratio of HDI, by SIGI classification. This negative correlation shows that both female and male levels of human development as well as gender equality in the HDI are associated with higher levels of discrimination in social institutions. Asian countries classified as having very low levels of discrimination in social institutions therefore have higher levels of both female and male human development as well as a higher level of gender equality in human.

Discriminatory social norms and gender imbalances in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

Gender diversity in the talent pool can help support sustainable and inclusive growth. Discrimination in the labour market distorts the economy: it artificially reduces the pool of talent from which employers can draw, thereby reducing the average productivity of the workforce (Klasen and Lamanna, 2009). As shown in the previous sections, to fully benefit from women's economic potential and related macroeconomic gains, countries need to tackle discriminatory social institutions that reduce women's access to education and decent work. They also need to support women and men to develop the right skills and find opportunities to use them productively. This requires challenging deeply entrenched stereotypes that clearly delineate "feminine jobs" from "masculine jobs".

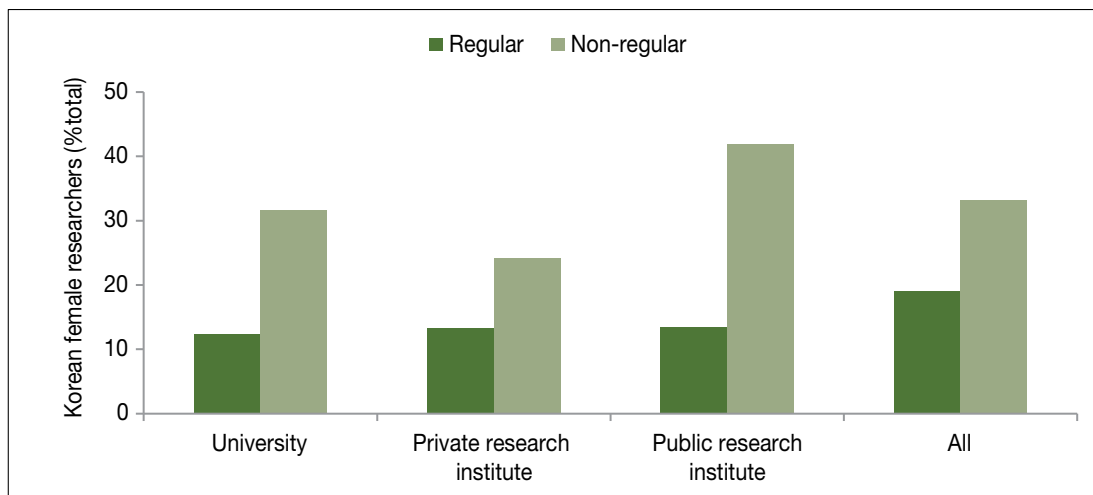
While most East Asian countries have been successful in closing the gender gaps in access to education, gender imbalances in the labour market still persist. At the global level, there is a "leaky pipe" for women in STEM: they are underrepresented in graduate studies and become rarer at every step up the level of responsibility (Blickenstaff, 2005). It leads to gender imbalance in the workforce, with women overrepresented in jobs deemed "feminine", such as health and education, and underrepresented in "masculine" jobs, such as engineering. This trend can be observed in EAP where women are concentrated in the services sector (58%), while only a minority work in the industrial sector (12%) (ADB/ILO, 2011). Similarly, women globally and regionally still account for a minority of researchers: only 23% in the EAP region, compared to 28% in the world, 30% in sub-Saharan Africa, 44% in Latin America and the Caribbean and 47% in Central Asia (UNESCO, 2015).

The persistence of gender imbalance in the labour market and education field results from discriminatory social norms and attitudes. Attitudes towards girls' education in mathematics and science as well as towards women working in STEM fields help explain these imbalances. Deeply entrenched stereotypes about gender roles and gender differences in abilities, as well as the "feminisation"/"masculinisation" of certain occupations and their internalisation by individuals, shape preferences in education and perpetuate occupational gender segregation. In East Asia and the Pacific countries, relatively few girls pursue studies in STEM fields; girls continue to be over-represented in programmes that will lead to relatively lower-paying jobs, namely teaching and nursing (OECD, 2014b): in Mongolia for example, while 72% of girls are enrolled in tertiary education compared to 50% of boys, only 40% of science students are girls (UIS, 2014a).

Encouraging more women to study and work in STEM

The East Asia and the Pacific region is faced with a serious labour shortage in STEM fields. This is a major concern as STEM sectors play a catalytic role for national economic development (OECD, 2014b). Graduates with degrees in STEM areas are in demand in the labour market, and increasing the pool of women graduating in these areas can be critical to the development of the economy. In EAP, gender imbalance within STEM fields persists: in Malaysia, for example, women are strongly represented in health-related professions such as pharmacy (73%) and nursing (60%), and to some extent in medicine (47%), yet they only make up 11% of professional engineers. Lower job stability for women is an additional barrier to women's career prospects across STEM sectors: in Korea, among professionals in science and technology, only 19% of permanent employees and 33% of temporary employees are women. Hence, female researchers are more likely to work in academia or public service while men dominate the private research sector, which offers better salaries and opportunities for advancement. In Korea, for example, only 13% of researchers in the private sector are women (Figure 3.3.1). These persistent gender gaps imply untapped potential and talent, while STEM fields are crucial for regional economies' development (UNESCO, 2015). In addition, the lack of family-friendly work conditions in STEM sectors constrains women's progression to higher positions: 53% of Korean female professionals who decided to discontinue their profession in STEM fields declare having children as one of the main reasons (WISSET, 2013).

Figure 3.3.1. The share of female Korean professionals in science and technology by institute and employment type



Note: This figure presents the proportion of female professionals in science and technology (S&T) by institute and employment type in Korea as of 2012. Regular employment refers to employees appointed for an unlimited period of time, while non-regular employment refers to employees contracted for temporary or fixed periods of time.

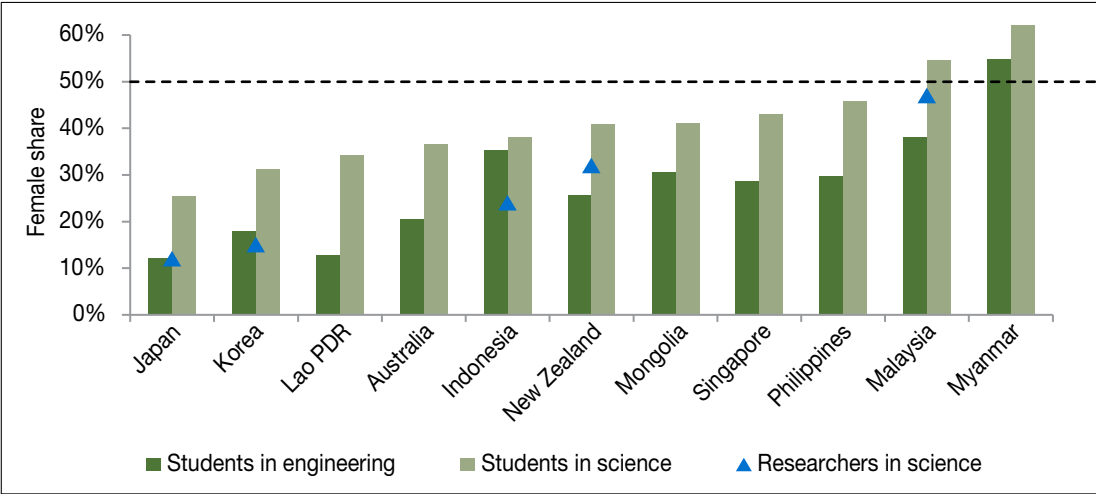
Source: UIS (2014a), *Education: Participation*, UIS Database, <http://data.uis.unesco.org>.

Improving women’s and girls’ access to education was widely perceived as a catalyst for their empowerment and gender equality in the labour market. However, improvements in women’s education have not translated into equitable entry into the labour market (ADB, 2015). At the global level, women have reached 91% of the education men have in terms of school enrolment rates and average years of education, but only 70% of their employment rates (Seguino, 2016). Similarly, EAP countries with different levels of gender equality in education display similar levels of the female share in the workforce and occupational gender segregation.

Girls’ greater access to higher education has not led to more studying STEM subjects. Women are more likely to study non-STEM subjects at tertiary level than men: in OECD countries 70% of degrees in humanities and health are awarded to women, while 75% of degrees in mathematics and engineering degrees are awarded to men (OECD, 2011). Notwithstanding huge regional disparities within East Asia and the Pacific, common trends can be identified regarding girls’ underrepresentation in STEM fields across the region (UNESCO, 2015). In some countries, access to higher education for young women remains a challenge in itself: in Cambodia and Nepal for example, only 12% of girls are enrolled in tertiary education, compared to 83% in Korea (UIS, 2014a). However, in all East Asian countries with available data male students outnumber female students in STEM disciplines (OECD, 2015). The gender gap in engineering, manufacturing and construction degrees is particularly large in Japan where only 11% of graduates are female (OECD, 2011).

Segregated study choices are reflected in occupational segregation in the labour markets. The self-perpetuating aspect of gender segregation is key: in countries where fields of study are more segregated, women tend to be more underrepresented in STEM research fields. For example, girls represent less than one in eight students enrolled in engineering programmes in Japan compared to more than one in three in Malaysia. This imbalance in the field of education is also reflected in research: one in eight Japanese researchers in science is a woman compared to almost one in two Malaysian researchers (Figure 3.3.2). This imbalance leads to limited opportunities for a “role model effect”, undermines girls’ confidence and discourages them from pursuing a career in STEM fields. For example, schools employing mainly female teachers at the primary level and male teachers at the secondary level in mathematics and science send the wrong signal to girls and boys about their respective capacities and occupational opportunities; similarly, textbooks showing women as nurses and men as engineers convey beliefs about girls’ and boys’ aptitudes (OECD, 2012).

Figure 3.3.2. Gender imbalance in education and research in STEM fields

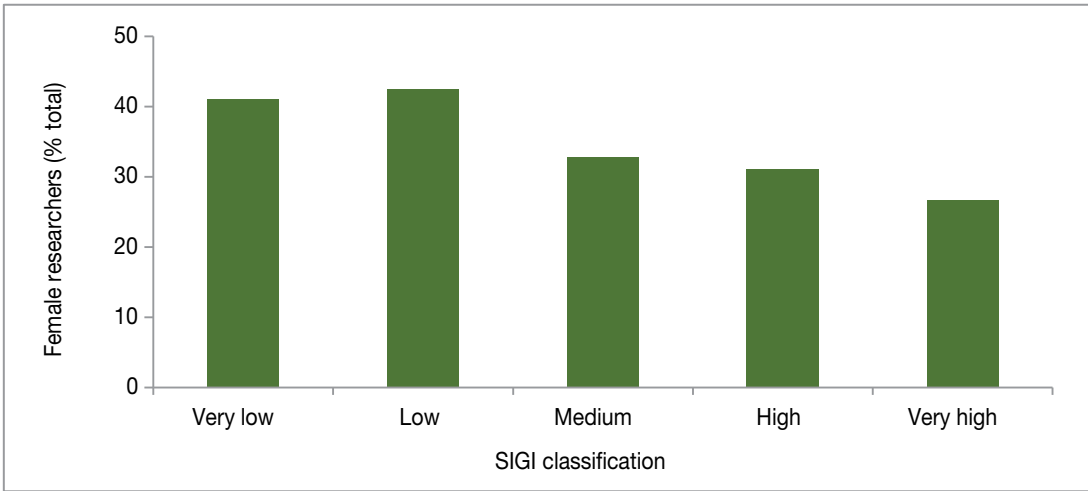


Note: This figure presents the female share of students enrolled in Engineering, Manufacturing and Construction programmes or Science programmes, and the female share of researchers in science, where available.
 Source: UIS (2014a), *Education: Participation*, UIS Database, <http://data.uis.unesco.org>.

The key role of discriminatory institutions

Gender differences in STEM fields do not start in the labour market, nor in higher education, but are deeply entrenched in discriminatory social institutions. Women’s occupational choices are based on a complex set of factors including social expectations and role models that perpetuate stereotypes. Discriminatory social institutions help define gender appropriate careers from stereotypes encountered by girls in choosing their subject, to caring and reproductive responsibilities, to labour market preconceptions and bias women face when choosing a career. In countries where the level of discrimination in social institutions is high, the share of women as scientific researchers is low (Figure 3.3.3). Preferences for a specific field of study are often shaped by personal experiences that start at a young age (OECD, 2014b). Social norms on appropriate career paths are embedded and shared by both girls and boys (Figure 3.3.4). Indeed, few girls consider STEM as their first career choice: for example, few UK girls aged 7 to 10 declare engineer (3%) or scientist (6%) as potential careers (Girlguiding, 2015). Even when girls perform as well in science as boys, there are gender disparities in their aspirations for their future which result in gender segregation in fields of study and choice of career (OECD, 2015). For instance, 81% of girl students enrolled in STEM studies in the US expressed interest in pursuing a career in a STEM field; however, only 13% as a first choice (GSRI).

Figure 3.3.3. Female researchers by SIGI classification



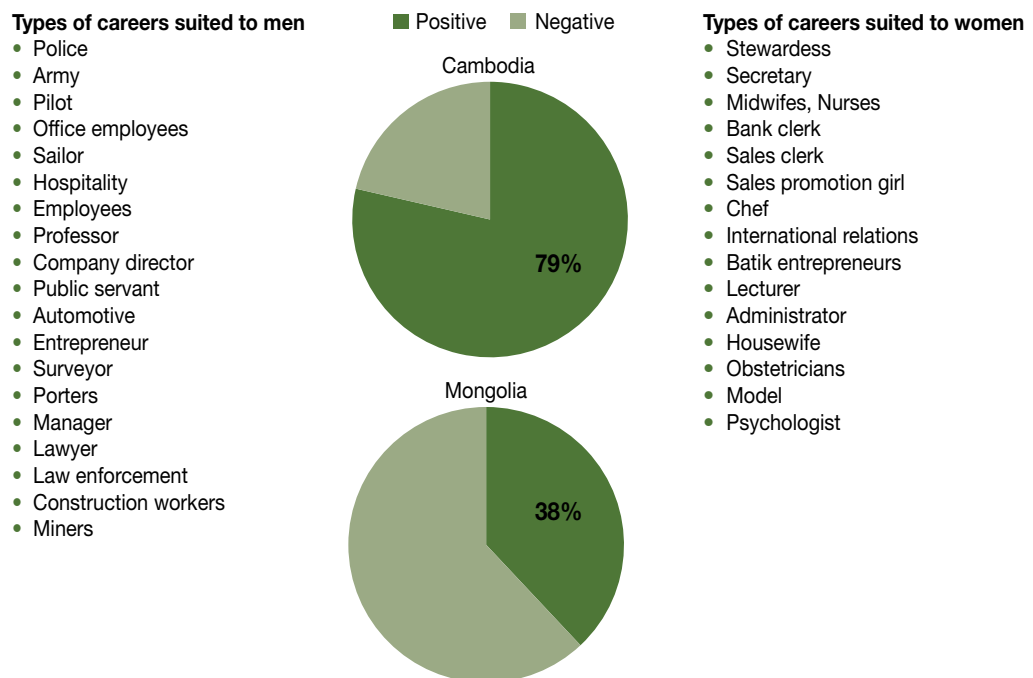
Note: This figure presents the percentage of female researchers among the total number of researchers by SIGI classification.
 Sources: UIS (2014a), *UIS database*, <http://data.uis.unesco.org>; OECD (2014a), *Gender, Institutions and Development Database*, <http://stats.oecd.org>.

One factor that may hold girls back is low confidence in their own abilities. Gender disparities in drive, motivation and self-belief are more pervasive and more firmly entrenched than gender differences in performance in mathematics. Even when performance in mathematics and science are similar across genders, girls report lower levels of perseverance and motivation, a lack of self-belief as well as higher levels of anxiety (OECD, 2015). In EAP economies which are high performers in mathematics in the PISA, such as Macao, China; Singapore and Chinese Taipei, there is no gender gap in mathematics performance: girls perform just as well as boys, but still report a lack of self-confidence. Gender differences in self-confidence are particularly large when considering the ability to solve applied mathematical tasks that have gender-stereotypical content. For example, across OECD countries, 67% of boys but only 44% of girls reported feeling confident about calculating the petrol-consumption rate of a car, and 75% of girls (compared to 84% of boys) reported feeling confident or very confident about calculating how much cheaper a TV would be after a 30% discount.

Promoting gender balance at work beyond STEM fields

Recognition and valuing of “feminine” jobs also constitute an important social transformative change: typical female-dominated subjects such as nursing, teaching and social work offer value to societies and economies, despite their lower remuneration. While STEM fields are key growth-enhancing fields for the economic, increasing care-demand and the care deficit is critical in promoting sustainable and inclusive growth. However, the gender imbalance debate mainly focuses on promoting women in STEM instead of challenging pervasive gender stereotypes about appropriate professions for a given sex and other labour market preconceptions on what is “valuable”. This could be achieved by encouraging men to enter feminised professions, such as nursing and teaching. In 2013 in Japan and Korea for example, while 55% of undergraduate students were men, only 38% and 31% of students in teaching and education were men (OECD 2015).

Figure 3.3.4. Attitudes towards gender occupational segregation



Note: This figure presents the percentage of students agreeing to the statement “those occupations are better suited to women or men” in Cambodia and Mongolia, as well as students’ perceptions on the types of careers suited to women and men.

Source: UNESCO Bangkok and Korean Women’s Development Institute (2013), *Gender, Jobs and Education: Prospects and Realities in the Asia-Pacific*.

Challenging discriminatory social institutions is critical to promote gender equality in the labour market. Education and labour policies can help women and men move out of stereotypical jobs and sectors (see Box 3.3). Breaking down gender stereotypes would encourage girls first to enrol in STEM studies and second to pursue non-traditional “feminine” jobs, while at the same time, support men to pursue “feminine” studies and professions. Strategies that have proven effective are: raising awareness and challenging gender stereotypes in families and schools (ADB, 2015); gender-responsive pedagogical approaches for all subjects (STEM as well as humanities) with qualified teachers addressing gender-specific attitudes within the classroom (OECD, 2010).

Box 3.3 **OECD recommendation on promoting a gender-balanced workforce**

The OECD Council Recommendation on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship, adopted in May 2013, includes:

- Making the study of science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), financial and entrepreneurship issues, as well as education, arts and the humanities, equally inclusive and attractive for both boys and girls.
- Campaigning and raising awareness among young men and women, parents, teachers and employers about gender-stereotypical attitudes towards academic performance and the likely consequences of overall educational choices for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, career progression and earnings.
- Encouraging more women who have completed STEM studies to pursue professional careers in these areas, for example by means of career counselling, adult education, internships, apprenticeships and targeted financial support.

Source: OECD (2014c), “Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship”, Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level, 29-30 May 2013, Paris.



Annex

SI
GI

Methodology

Selection of variables

Variables included in the SIGI 2014 were selected on the following criteria, based on the 2012 conceptual framework:

- **Conceptual relevance**
The variable should be closely related to the conceptual framework of discriminatory social institutions and measure what it is intended to capture.
- **Underlying factor of gender inequality**
The variable should capture an underlying factor that leads to unequal outcomes for women and men.
- **Data quality, reliability and coverage**
The variable should be based on high quality, reliable data. Ideally the data should be standardised across countries and have extensive coverage across countries.
- **Distinction**
Each variable should measure a distinct discriminatory institution and should add new information not measured by other variables.
- **Statistical association**
Variables included in the same sub-index should be statistically associated, and thereby capture similar dimensions of social institutions without being redundant.

Country profiles

The SIGI country profiles contain fully referenced qualitative information relative to social institutions, organised by sub-indices. They were drafted following a standardised structure to ensure comparability across countries in line with the following guidelines:

- **Conceptual relevance**
Qualitative information should be relevant to the conceptual framework of discriminatory social institutions.
- **Sources**
All information should be referenced and sourced from constitutions, legal frameworks, and primary publications, reports or studies, using the most recent data.
Data should be sourced from and cross-checked with reliable studies, reports and publications, including country reports to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, reports by international organisations and country sources.
- **Validation**
Country profiles were developed through a two-stage internal draft and review process. Qualitative information was validated by external gender experts with knowledge of the policy and legal landscape for gender equality and women's rights at a national level (see list of experts in OECD Development Centre (2014a)).

The SIGI and its sub-indices are constructed according to the steps below.

Step 1: Building the Gender, Institutions and Development Database

Truncating quantitative data at the equality benchmark and inverting the scale.

The SIGI and its sub-indices range from 0 for low discrimination to 1 for very high discrimination.

For some variables, equality is reached at 0.5 instead of 1. Equality in political representation for example is achieved when 50% of parliament members are women. Hence, countries having more than 50% of women have a score of 50%.

According to the variable, the scale from low to very high discrimination is inverted to fit with the 0-1 scale. For female political representation for example, a higher share of women in parliamentary seats means lower discrimination against women. Hence, countries having 50% of women have a score of 0.

Assigning a score to qualitative variables

The qualitative information detailed in the SIGI country profiles are quantified using the following coding manual described in Table A.1:⁴

- **0:** Women and men enjoy the same rights in law and in practice.
- **0.25:** The legislation is not well implemented.
- **0.5:** The customary laws and practices discriminate against women.
- **0.75:** The legislation is contradictory, non-specific or limited in scope and definition.
- **1:** Women and men do not enjoy the same rights in the legal framework.

In cases where no or insufficient information exists, variables are not assigned a value. The legal indicators are assessed based on all applicable legal frameworks, including civil law, religious law, customary law and traditional law.

Constructing indicators

Some indicators are based on one variable while others on several. In the latter case, the indicator is the average⁵ of its available⁶ variables. For example:

$$\text{Parental authority} = \frac{1}{2} (\text{Parental authority during marriage} + \text{Parental authority after divorce})$$

Standardising the indicators

Standardisation of the original variables is done by subtracting the mean and then dividing by the standard deviation for continuous variables, using results of an ordered probit model for ordinal categorical variables.

Step 2: Aggregating indicators to build the sub-indices

Measuring association between indicators

Each sub-index combines indicators that are assumed to belong to one dimension of discrimination in social institutions. The statistical association between the indicators is tested using a Kendall Tau rank correlation analysis and a multiple joint correspondence analysis (MCA).

Why square each SIGI sub-index?

The quadratic form is inspired by the Foster-Greer-Thorbecke poverty measures (Foster et al., 1984):

- The partial compensation means that very high inequality in one dimension can be only partially offset by low inequality in another dimension.
- The SIGI measures gender inequalities corresponding to deprivation that increases more than proportionally when inequalities increase.
- The SIGI has an aversion to high values of sub-indices.

Constructing the sub-indices

The sub-indices aim to provide a summary measure of each dimension of discrimination. Constructing a sub-index consists of aggregating the indicators with a reasonable weighting scheme through a polychoric principal component analysis (PCA). The first principal component is used as a proxy for the common information contained in the indicators: it is the weighted sum (see table in Annex) of the standardised indicators that captures as much of the variance in the data as possible.

Step 3: Computing the SIGI

The SIGI is a composite indicator built as an unweighted average of a non-linear function of the sub-indices:

$$\text{SIGI} = \frac{1}{5} \text{Discriminatory family code}^2 + \frac{1}{5} \text{Restricted physical integrity}^2 + \frac{1}{5} \text{Son bias}^2 + \frac{1}{5} \text{Restricted resources and assets}^2 + \frac{1}{5} \text{Restricted civil liberties}^2$$

Why are the sub-indices equally weighted?

Equal weights for each sub-index offer two benefits:

- Each dimension of discriminatory social institutions has equal value.
- No dimension is more important than another in terms of deprivation experienced by women.

How are the SIGI categories defined?

The SIGI classification clusters 108 countries into five levels of discrimination in social institutions: very low, low, medium, high and very high. It is based on the Jenks Natural Breaks Classification. This method of classifying data optimally arranges values into the five levels, or classes. It aims to minimise the average deviation from the class mean, while maximising the deviation from the means of the other classes. Hence, this method reduces the variance within classes and maximises the variance between classes.

SIGI 2014 framework: Variables and coding

DISCRIMINATORY FAMILY CODE			
Indicator	Variable	Coding	Sources
Legal age of marriage	Legal age of marriage: Whether women and men have the same legal minimum age of marriage	<p>0: The law guarantees the same minimum age of marriage to both women and men, and the minimum age is 18*.</p> <p>0.25: The law guarantees the same minimum age of marriage to both women and men, and the minimum age is lower than 18.</p> <p>0.5: The law guarantees the same minimum age of marriage to both women and men, but there are customary, traditional or religious laws that discriminate against some women by allowing them to be married at a younger age than men.</p> <p>0.75: The law does not guarantee the same minimum age of marriage to women and men, and the gap between women's and men's minimum age of marriage is less than or equal to two years.</p> <p>1: The law does not guarantee the same minimum age of marriage to women and men, and the gap between women's and men's minimum age of marriage is greater than two years. However, there is no law on the minimum age of marriage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SIGI Country Profiles
Early marriage	Prevalence of early marriage: Percentage of girls aged 15-19 who are married, divorced, widowed or in informal unions	0-100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •UN World Marriage Data (2012) •Demographic Health Survey •Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
Parental authority (average of two variables)	Parental authority in marriage: Whether women and men have the same right to be the legal guardian of a child during marriage	<p>0: The law guarantees the same parental authority to women and men during marriage.</p> <p>0.5: The law guarantees the same parental authority to women and men during marriage, but there are some customary, traditional or religious practices that discriminate against women.</p> <p>1: The law does not guarantee the same parental authority to women and men during marriage, or women have no rights to parental authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SIGI Country Profiles
	Parental authority in divorce: Whether women and men have the same right to be the legal guardian of and have custody rights over a child after divorce	<p>0: The law guarantees the same parental authority to women and men after divorce.</p> <p>0.5: The law guarantees the same parental authority to women and men after divorce, but there are some customary, traditional or religious practices that discriminate against women.</p> <p>1: The law does not guarantee the same parental authority to women and men after divorce, or women have no rights to parental authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SIGI Country Profiles
Inheritance (average of two variables)	Inheritance rights of widows: Whether widows and widowers have equal inheritance rights	<p>0: The law guarantees the same inheritance rights to both widows and widowers.</p> <p>0.5: The law guarantees the same inheritance rights to both widows and widowers, but there are some customary, traditional or religious practices that discriminate against widows.</p> <p>1: The law does not guarantee the same inheritance rights to widows and widowers, or widows have no inheritance rights at all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SIGI Country Profiles
	Inheritance rights of daughters: Whether daughters and sons have equal inheritance rights	<p>0: The law guarantees the same inheritance rights to both daughters and sons.</p> <p>0.5: The law guarantees the same inheritance rights to both daughters and sons, but there are some customary, traditional or religious practices that discriminate against daughters.</p> <p>1: The law does not guarantee the same inheritance rights to daughters and sons, or daughters have no inheritance rights at all.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SIGI Country Profiles

SIGI 2014 framework: Variables and coding (cont.)

RESTRICTED PHYSICAL INTEGRITY				
Indicator	Variable	Coding	Sources	
Violence against women (average of five variables)	Laws on domestic violence: Whether the legal framework offers women legal protection from domestic violence	0: There is specific legislation in place to address domestic violence; the law is adequate overall, and there are no reported problems of implementation. 0.25: There is specific legislation in place to address domestic violence; the law is adequate overall, but there are reported problems of implementation. 0.5: There is specific legislation in place to address domestic violence, but the law is inadequate. 0.75: There is no specific legislation in place to address domestic violence, but there is evidence of legislation being planned or drafted. 1: There is no legislation in place to address domestic violence.	•SIGI Country Profiles	
	Laws on rape: Whether the legal framework offers women legal protection from rape	0: There is specific legislation in place to address rape, marital rape is included, perpetrators cannot escape prosecution if they marry the victim and implementation is effectively enforced. 0.25: There is specific legislation in place to address rape, marital rape is included and perpetrators cannot escape prosecution if they marry the victim, although implementation is not effectively enforced. 0.5: There is specific legislation in place to address rape, marital rape is not included and perpetrators cannot escape prosecution if they marry the victim. 0.75: There is specific legislation in place to address rape, marital rape is not included and perpetrators can escape prosecution if they marry the victim. However, legislation is being planned or drafted. 1: There is no legislation in place to address rape.	•SIGI Country Profiles	
	Laws on sexual harassment: Whether the legal framework offers women legal protection from sexual harassment	0: There is specific legislation in place to address sexual harassment, the law is adequate overall and there are no reported problems of implementation. 0.25: There is specific legislation in place to address sexual harassment, the law is adequate overall but there are reported problems of implementation. 0.5: There is specific legislation in place to address sexual harassment, but the law is inadequate. 0.75: There is no specific legislation to address sexual harassment, but there is evidence of legislation being planned or drafted. 1: There is no legislation in place to address sexual harassment.	•SIGI Country Profiles	
	Attitudes toward violence: Percentage of women who agree that a husband/partner is justified in beating his wife/partner under certain circumstances	0-100%		•Demographic Health Surveys •Multiple Cluster Indicator Surveys •World Value Survey
	Prevalence of violence in the lifetime: Percentage of women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner at some time in their lives	0-100%		•Demographic Health Surveys •World Health Organization •International Violence Against Women Survey •European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
Female genital mutilation	FGM prevalence: Percentage of women who have undergone any type of female genital mutilation	0-100%	•World Health Organization Population Reference Bureau •Multiple Cluster Indicator Surveys •Demographic Health Surveys	
Reproductive autonomy	Unmet need for family planning: Percentage of married women aged 15-49 with an unmet need for family planning, i.e. who do not want any more children for the next two years and who are not using contraception	0-100%	•Demographic Health Surveys •Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys •World Health Organization	

SIGI 2014 framework: Variables and coding (cont.)

SON BIAS			
Indicator	Variable	Coding	Sources
Missing women	Missing women**: Shortfall in the number of women in sex ratios for ages 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-64, 65+ relative to the expected number if there were no sex-selective abortions, no female infanticide or similar levels of health care and nutrition	0: There is no evidence of missing women.	•United Nations Population Division
		0.25: The incidence of missing women is low.	
		0.5: The incidence of missing women is moderate.	
		0.75: The incidence of missing women is high.	
		1: The incidence of missing women is severe.	
Fertility preferences	Fertility preferences: Share of males as the last child from women currently not desiring additional children or sterilised	0-100%	•Demographic Health Surveys •Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys •EUROSTAT •National household surveys

RESTRICTED RESOURCES AND ASSETS			
Indicator	Variable	Coding	Sources
Secure access to land	Secure access to land: Whether women and men have equal and secure access to land (use, control and ownership)	0: The law guarantees the same rights to own, use and control land to both women and men.	•SIGI Country Profiles
		0.5: The law guarantees the same rights to own, use and control land to women and men, but there are some customary, traditional or religious practices that discriminate against women.	
		1: The law does not guarantee the same rights to own, use and control land to women and men, or women have no legal rights to own, use and control land.	
Secure access to non-land assets	Secure access to non-land assets: Whether women and men have equal and secure access to non-land assets (use, control and ownership)	0: The law guarantees the same rights to own and administer property other than land to both women and men.	•SIGI Country Profiles
		0.5: The law guarantees the same rights to own and administer property other than land to both women and men, but there are some customary, traditional or religious practices that discriminate against women.	
		1: The law does not guarantee the same rights to own and administer property other than land to women and men, or women have no legal rights to own and administer property other than land.	
Access to financial services	Access to financial services: Whether women and men have equal access to financial services	0: The law guarantees the same rights to access formal financial services (e.g. credit, bank account and bank loans) to both women and men.	•SIGI Country Profiles
		0.5: The law guarantees the same rights to access formal financial services to both women and men, but there are some customary, traditional or religious practices that discriminate against women.	
		1: The law does not guarantee the same rights to access formal financial services to women and men, or women have no legal rights to access financial services.	

RESTRICTED CIVIL LIBERTIES			
Indicator	Variable	Coding	Sources
Access to public space	Access to public space: Whether women face restrictions on their freedom of movement and access to public space, such as restricted ability to choose their places of residence, visit their families and friends or to apply for a passport	0: The law guarantees the same rights to freely move to both women and men.	•SIGI Country Profiles
		0.5: The law guarantees the same rights to freely move to women and men, but there are some customary, traditional or religious practices that discriminate against women.	
		1: The law does not guarantee the same rights to freely move to women and men, or women have no freedom of movement.	
Political voice	Quotas: Whether there are legal quotas to promote women's political participation at national and sub-national levels	0: There are legal quotas to promote women's political participation both at the national and sub-national levels.	•SIGI Country Profiles
		0.5: There are legal quotas to promote women's political participation either at the national or at the sub-national level.	
		Political representation: Share of women in national parliaments	0-100%

* The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child considers that adulthood begins at age 18 (www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/UNCRC_PRESS200910web.pdf).
 ** Computed by Pr. S. Klasen using the method discussed in S. Klasen and C. Wink (2002), "A Turning Point in Gender Bias in Mortality? An Update on the Number of Missing Women", Population and Development Review, 28, pp. 285-312.

East Asia and the Pacific country SIGI scores per sub-index

Country	SIGI	Discriminatory family code	Restricted physical integrity	Son bias	Restricted resources and assets	Restricted civil liberties
VERY LOW LEVELS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS						
Mongolia	0.0345	0.0226 very low	0.2584 medium	0.1582 medium	0.2048 low	0.1951 low
LOW LEVELS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS						
Cambodia	0.0477	0.0684 low	0.2601 medium	0.0000 very low	0.2028 low	0.3539 medium
Thailand	0.1056	0.3770 medium	0.2935 medium	0.1533 medium	0.3885 medium	0.3539 medium
MEDIUM LEVELS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS						
People's Republic of China	0.1310	0.2885 medium	0.1246 very low	0.5578 very high	0.4076 medium	0.2812 low
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0.1445	0.2606 medium	0.5321 high	0.0506 very low	0.4076 medium	0.4505 medium
Indonesia	0.1532	0.5612 very high	0.2511 medium	0.3891 high	0.1837 low	0.4505 medium
Philippines	0.1765	0.4929 high	0.2597 medium	0.1392 medium	0.5913 high	0.4505 medium
Viet Nam	0.1865	0.3374 medium	0.1857 low	0.4967 very high	0.4076 medium	0.6093 high
HIGH LEVELS OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS						
Timor-Leste	0.2550	0.3882 medium	0.5421 high	0.2271 medium	0.5913 high	0.6552 high
Myanmar	0.2935	0.4963 high	0.4891 high	0.0000 very low	0.5913 high	0.7953 very high
NOT RANKED IN THE SIGI 2014						
Australia	n.a.	0.1021 low	n.a.	n.a.	0.0000 very low	0.1951 low
Fiji	n.a.	0.1998 low	n.a.	n.a.	0.5913 high	0.5399 high
Hong Kong, China	n.a.	0.0805 low	n.a.	n.a.	0.4076 medium	0.1951 low
Japan	n.a.	0.2053 low	n.a.	n.a.	0.0000 very low	0.5399 high
Korea	n.a.	0.0025 very low	n.a.	n.a.	0.4076 medium	0.1951 low
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	n.a.	0.2417 medium	n.a.	n.a.	0.0000 very low	0.6093 high
Malaysia	n.a.	0.5267 high	0.2682 medium	n.a.	0.4076 medium	0.7953 very high
New Zealand	n.a.	0.0527 very low	n.a.	n.a.	0.0000 very low	0.1951 low
Papua New Guinea	n.a.	0.4773 high	n.a.	n.a.	0.8044 very high	0.5399 high
Singapore	n.a.	0.1396 low	n.a.	n.a.	0.2048 very low	0.3539 medium

Note: No countries in the EAP region are classified as having very high levels of gender discrimination in social institutions.

Country ISO codes

AUS	Australia
KHM	Cambodia
PRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
FJI	Fiji
HKG	Hong Kong, China
IDN	Indonesia
JPN	Japan
KOR	Korea
LAO	Lao People's Democratic Republic
MYS	Malaysia
MNG	Mongolia
MMR	Myanmar
NZL	New Zealand
PNG	Papua New Guinea
CHN	People's Republic of China
PHL	Philippines
SGP	Singapore
THA	Thailand
TLS	Timor-Leste
VNM	Viet Nam

Notes

1. The National Survey on Women's Health and Life Experiences (National Institute of Statistics of the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Women's Affairs, 2015).
2. Partners included: Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture & Natural Resource Management (WOCAN), the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) and PAKISAMA, a national confederation of 28 peasant organisations of small-scale farmers, fishers and indigenous peoples.
3. See more at: www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/4336/Closing_the_gender_gap_can_boost_the_economy.html#sthash.avpHslKq.dpuf.
4. See www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E.
5. For more information on the construction of the index and its sub-indices, please refer to the SIGI methodological paper available at www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/gender-publications.htm.
6. When the indicator aggregates categorical and continuous variables, the latter are the object of discretisation.
7. Where data are available for only one variable of an indicator, the score is based solely on that available variable.

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