

Gender Equality in the Indo-Pacific: A Quantitative Overview

July 2023

Preferred citation: Gender Equality in the Indo-Pacific: A Quantitative Overview

For further information please contact:

Support Unit for Gender Equality (SURGE) Program

admin@surge4genderequality.com.au

This document is produced by SURGE solely for the benefit and use by the client in accordance with the terms of the engagement. SURGE and DT Global do not and shall not assume any responsibility or liability whatsoever to any third party arising out of any use or reliance by any third party on the content of this document.

This publication has been funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The views expressed in this publication are the author's alone and are not necessarily the views of the Australian Government.

SURGE is supported by the Australian Government and implemented by DT Global.

We acknowledge that this report does not meet accessibility guidelines due to the high number of graphs/charts included. We encourage those with accessibility requirements who would like to access the document to reach out to SURGE at the above email address.

Contents

Key Findings vii

1	Introduction	1
2	Gender Equality in the Global Indexes	2
2.1	Women’s Empowerment Index and Global Gender Parity Index	2
2.2	The World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index	3
2.3	The Social Institutions and Gender Index	3
2.4	Other indexes	4
3	Promoting and Protecting Human Rights: Laws and Treaties	5
3.1	International Instruments.....	5
3.2	Domestic Laws.....	5
3.3	The Law in Practice.....	13
4	Promoting and Protecting Human Rights: Women Influencing the State	13
4.1	Women in Government.....	14
4.2	Women influencing the public and private sectors	15
4.3	Women in Civil Society	16
5	Key Issues: Economic empowerment	17
5.1	Economic Prosperity.....	17
5.2	Employment	19
6	Key Issues: Health	22
6.1	Life Expectancy and Mortality	22
6.2	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	25
7	Key Issues: Education	28
8	Key Issues: Gender-based Violence	30
8.1	Intimate Partner Violence.....	31
8.2	Child Marriage	33
8.3	On-line Violence	34
8.4	Trafficking in Persons.....	35
9	Key Issues: Climate Change and Humanitarian Response	36
9.1	Climate change	36
9.2	Humanitarian Response.....	37
10	Key Issues: Population	38
10.1	Women and men as a proportion of the population	38
10.2	A youth bulge or an aging population.....	40
10.3	Urban and rural populations.....	41
11	Key Issues: Norms and Perceptions	41
Annex 1	Title of Annex.....	44

Tables

Table 1	Countries that outlaw same-sex relations and forms of gender expression	6
Table 2	Legal age for marriage.....	6
Table 3	Reproductive autonomy: Law.....	7
Table 4	Social Protection legal coverage.....	11
Table 5	Women who have experienced intimate partner violence, 2000–2020	32
Table 6	Social media users by number and platform	46
Table 7	Access to financial assets: Law	48
Table 8	Access to justice: Law	49
Table 9	Access to land assets: Law.....	49
Table 10	Access to non-land assets: Law	50
Table 11	Citizenship rights: Law.....	51
Table 12	Discrimination in household responsibilities: Law.....	51
Table 13	Divorce: Law	52
Table 14	Freedom of movement: Law	53
Table 15	Gender-based discrimination in the legal framework on workplace rights.....	54
Table 16	Inheritance: Law	55
Table 17	Political voice: Law	56
Table 18	Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).....	57
Table 19	Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)	57
Table 20	Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans.....	58
Table 21	Countries with legislation on domestic violence	58
Table 22	Countries with Laws on marital rape	59
Table 23	The law prohibits discrimination in employment based on gender (yes/no)	59
Table 24	There is legislation on sexual harassment in employment (yes/no).....	60
Table 25	Reproductive autonomy: Law.....	60
Table 26	Types and Coverage of Social protection	63

Figures

Figure 1	The Women’s Empowerment Index (WEI) and Global Gender Parity Index (GGPI)	2
Figure 2	World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index and Domains.....	3
Figure 3	Social Institutions and Gender Index and its Dimensions.....	4
Figure 4	Women, Business and the Law Index	9
Figure 5	People with lack of confidence in the judicial system	13
Figure 6	Number of Female Heads of Government Since 1946	14
Figure 7	Women in Government (% of seats held)	15

Figure 8	Share of business owners (% of total business owners)	15
Figure 9	Share of women among managers.....	16
Figure 10	Feminist Mobilization Index	16
Figure 11	Estimated gross national income per capita (2017) PPP \$ (countries with under \$12,000 for men)	17
Figure 12	Estimated gross national income per capita (2017) PPP \$ (countries with over \$12,000 for men)	17
Figure 13	Female poverty rates by region, using national poverty line estimates, 2022 projections (%)	18
Figure 14	Bank account ownership	18
Figure 15	Labour force participation rate, (% of population ages 15–64) (modelled ILO estimate)	19
Figure 16	Unemployment (% of labour force) (modelled ILO estimate)	19
Figure 17	Unemployment, youth (% of labour force ages 15–24) (modelled ILO estimate)	20
Figure 18	Wage and salaried workers (% of employment) (modelled ILO estimate)	21
Figure 19	Hours per day spent on unpaid domestic and care work	21
Figure 20	Prevalence of discriminatory attitudes towards working women	22
Figure 21	Mortality rate, under–5 (per 1,000 live births).....	23
Figure 22	Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene, (per 100,000 population)	23
Figure 23	Suicide mortality rate, (per 100,000 population)	24
Figure 24	Cervical cancer prevalence and mortality rates	25
Figure 25	Fertility rate, total (births per woman).....	25
Figure 26	Births attended by skilled health staff (% of total)	26
Figure 27	Maternal mortality ratio (modelled estimate, per 100,000 live births).....	26
Figure 28	Women of reproductive age whose need for family planning is satisfied with modern methods	27
Figure 29	Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15–19).....	27
Figure 30	Mean years of schooling.....	28
Figure 31	Literacy rate, adult (% of adults ages 15 and above).....	29
Figure 32	Completion rate, primary education (%).....	30
Figure 33	Out-of-school rate for children of primary school age (%)	30
Figure 34	Feel unsafe walking alone at night	31
Figure 35	Percentage of women aged 15–49 years who consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one of the specified reasons	33
Figure 36	Prevalence of child marriage (15–19 years old)	34
Figure 37	Social media users, proportion of population	34
Figure 38	Global prevalence of online violence	35
Figure 39	Prevalence rate by threat tactic (%)	35
Figure 40	Trends in the profile of trafficking victims detected, 2002–2020	36

Figure 41	The relationship between the impacts of climate change and gender-related development indicators.....	37
Figure 42	Number of Gender-Sensitive COVID–19 Response Measures: Asia	38
Figure 43	Number of Gender-Sensitive COVID–19 Response Measures: Oceania.....	38
Figure 44	Sex-disaggregation of population ages 0–14.....	39
Figure 45	Sex-disaggregation of population ages 15–64.....	39
Figure 46	Sex-disaggregation of population ages 65 and above	40
Figure 47	Population by age (%).....	40
Figure 48	Youth not in education, employment or training	41
Figure 49	Gender Social Norms Index	42
Figure 50	Percentage of people with at least one bias against gender equality	42
Figure 51	Women and men with at least one bias against gender equality 2010–2014 and 2017–2022....	43
Figure 52	Attitudes to gender diversity: Responses to the statement ‘Homosexual couples are as good parents as other couples’	43
Figure 53	Human Development Index.....	44
Figure 54	Gender Development Index	44
Figure 55	Gender Inequality Index	45
Figure 56	Completeness of birth registration %.....	61
Figure 57	Number of years of free primary and secondary education guaranteed in legal frameworks	62
Figure 58	Coming up with emergency funds in 30 days not possible (% age 15+).....	65
Figure 59	Completion rates, lower secondary (%)	65
Figure 60	Completion rate, upper secondary (%).....	66
Figure 61	Population, female (% of total).....	66
Figure 62	Life expectancy at birth (years)	67
Figure 63	Rural population, (% of total)	67
Figure 64	Urban population (% of total).....	68

Key Findings

This report presents data and analysis on gender equality in the Indo-Pacific region for the purpose of informing policy makers. The data provide an evidence base to guide decision making, enabling priority areas to be identified and assumptions to be tested.

The data reinforce the significance of Australia's efforts to advance gender equality in the Indo-Pacific. In nearly all aspects of human development, women in the region are disadvantaged in comparison to men. This is important for policy making because the impact and effectiveness of Australia's diplomatic, economic, trade and development relationships are compromised when the benefits do not reach women and men equally. Furthermore, evidence shows that gender equality makes economic sense – both to Australia and our Indo-Pacific partners.¹

Critically, the evidence shows that increasing human development alone will not result in the changes required to bring about gender equality.² That is, targeted interventions are essential for positive change.

The focus for efforts by Australia and other actors seeking to address gender equality and women's empowerment have primarily been in the domains of women's economic empowerment, gender-based violence, and voice and leadership. The data validate the focus of past efforts and, furthermore, demonstrate that more work needs to be done in these domains:

Women's economic empowerment

- Women in the Indo-Pacific consistently have lower levels of incomes per capita than men (Figure 11 and Figure 12).
- Women's participation in the workforce is lower than that of men, and women are more likely than men (Figure 15) to be in vulnerable employment.
- Women spend more time in unpaid domestic and care work than men (Figure 19).
- Discriminatory attitudes toward working women persist in most countries (Figure 20).

Gender-based violence

- The Indo-Pacific region experiences some of the highest rates of intimate partner violence in the world (Table 5).
- Almost 40 per cent of women have personal experience with online violence. Women in countries with higher levels of gender inequality are more likely to experience online violence.³
- In all countries in the study where data are available, a proportion of women believe that a husband is justified in hitting his wife in some circumstances (Figure 35).
- The proportion of men and boys that became victims of trafficking increased over the decade to 2020.

Voice and leadership

- Women's movements are central to efforts to advance gender equality. In countries with weaker women's movements, there is greater bias in favour of men.⁴
- Gender diversity on boards and in senior management improves company performance, productivity, and profitability.⁵ However, in the Indo-Pacific, women are under-represented in government, business and senior decision-making positions.
- Only one country in this study – New Zealand – has achieved parity in the national parliament (Figure 7).
- Only five countries in this study have current National Action Plans for Women, Peace, and Security (Table 20).

The data reveal other areas where gender inequalities persist, and where inequalities are being heightened. These point to issues on which policy makers can focus their efforts.

1 See for example, COVID-19 impact on women and gender equality | McKinsey; board-gender-diversity-in-asean.pdf (ifc.org)

2 The paths to equal: Twin indices on women's empowerment and gender equality | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters

3 Measuring the prevalence of online violence against women (eiu.com)

4 Forester and others, cited in United Nations *Human Development Report*, p205.

5 COVID-19 impact on women and gender equality | McKinsey; board-gender-diversity-in-asean.pdf (ifc.org)

LGBTI+

- At least 11 countries in the region have laws that prohibit same sex-relations and restrict forms of gender expression (Table 1). In some countries these laws are rarely enforced, but they are widely considered to be a breach of human rights as well as a basis for discrimination.

Health

- Globally, under-five mortality rates have fallen over the last three decades.⁶ But at least six countries in the region still have under-five mortality rates above the global average (Figure 21).
- Women in all countries in the study have unmet needs for family planning. In at least 12 countries in the region this figure is as high as 40 per cent and reaches almost 70 per cent (Figure 28).
- The number of births attended by skilled health personnel can be used as a proxy for access to health services and maternal care. In at least seven countries in the region, fewer than 80 per cent of births are attended by skilled health personnel (Figure 26).
- Cervical cancer is one of the most preventable and treatable forms of cancer and Australia is leading the work to eliminate the disease domestically.⁷ Data from the region show that programs of support to reduce cervical cancer have the potential to make a large impact (Figure 24).

Education

- The data on education is variable, however we know that the education outcomes for girls and boys differ. In some countries girls are outperforming boys at school but, overall, adult men have higher levels of literacy than adult women (Figure 31).
- The most recent data from the Pacific show that high numbers of school children are under-performing: around 28 per cent of girls and 46 per cent of boys perform at the lowest proficiency level for literacy.⁸

Climate change

- Evidence shows that environmental impacts of climate change are associated with gender-related outcomes. For example, changes in relative aridity are associated with the prevalence of child marriage, rates of adolescent births, and access by women to water and clean fuel.⁹

Humanitarian response

- In spite of the evidence, knowledge and commitments around diversity in decision-making and gender-responsive policy, the majority of government measures to COVID-19 were not gender-responsive and women were under-represented in taskforces.¹⁰ More can be done to embed gender equality in humanitarian responses.

Population

- The data on age demographics highlights the two dominant trends taking place across the region: countries are facing either a youth bulge, or an aging population (Figure 47). Both situations will have gendered implications and require gender-responsive policy responses.
- Many countries in the region have high numbers of youth who are not in education, employment or training (Figure 48).

6 Child Mortality - UNICEF DATA

7 How the HPV vaccine is eliminating cervical cancer in Australia | healthdirect

8 PILNA Regional Report 2018.pdf (spc.int)

9 impact-climate-change-gender-asiapacific.pdf (unwomen.org)

10 undp-unwomen-upitt-covid19-task-force-participation-en-v3.pdf

Perceptions

- Globally, there was a decrease in bias against gender equality over the past decade. However, at the country level, there were backlashes with some women and men becoming more biased against gender equality.¹¹
- Men are more likely to be biased against gender equality than women (Figure 50 and Figure 51), highlighting the need to engage men in efforts to advance the status of women.

11 Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org) p208

1 Introduction

The report examines the ways in which the rights of women and girls, and people of diverse gender identities and sexual orientation are promoted and protected in the region. It does this through an examination of the data on legal frameworks and the influence of women on policy making and on areas of relevance to policy on gender equality including economic empowerment, health, education, gender-based violence, climate change and humanitarian response, and changing age demographics. It explores social norms and attitudes and how these have changed over time.

In providing an evidence base, the data reinforce that, in nearly all aspects of human development, women are disadvantaged in comparison to men: more than 90 percent of the world's female population — 3.1 billion women and girls — live in countries characterized by a large women's empowerment deficit and a large gender gap.¹²

The data pinpoint areas that should be the focus of interventions: political influence, economic opportunity, health services, responses to climate change, and gender-based violence, including online abuse, child marriage and intimate partner violence. The data also point to areas of particular concern for men and boys, such as suicide rates, educational attainment, and harmful biases.

The data highlight the complexity of gender equality within the Indo-Pacific region. Even within cultural groupings, stark differences can emerge. At the same time, similar trends can play out in countries with very different social, economic and political influences. Above all, the data reinforce the need for policy makers to draw on the available evidence to develop solutions that are tailored to context.

Methodology

Data are presented for a set list of 30 countries in the Indo-Pacific region. The countries were selected for their relevance to Australia in terms of the political and economic relationship, the size of their populations and economies, and their influence in the region. All countries in the region where Australia provides at least \$15 million in Official Development Assistance annually are included.

Countries that are sometimes considered to be part of the Indo-Pacific but which are excluded from the research, are those in the Americas and Africa, along with Brunei, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Pacific Island countries that receive less than \$15 million ODA from Australia annually.

The paper presents open-sourced data compiled primarily from: UN Women and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *The Paths to Equal*¹³, the OECD's Gender Institutions and Development Database¹⁴, the International Labor Organisation, the World Bank's Gender Statistics¹⁵, the UNDP's *Human Development Report 2021–22*¹⁶, UNESCO and the World Economic Forum, and supplemented with data from other sources.

In most instances, figures and tables include all thirty countries, listed alphabetically even where data for all countries are not available. In some cases, countries without data are excluded for readability and formatting reasons. In cases where data are available for only a small number of countries or for specific regions, only those countries and regions are included.

The quality of data is variable, and methodologies used for collecting the original data vary. Detailed information regarding the data is available on the databases listed. In some instances, upheavals within countries, including the COVID–19 pandemic or changes of government, will mean that data may be less reliable.

All data are from the most recent year available.

12 Press release: Less than 1 percent of women and girls live in a country with high women's empowerment and high gender parity | UN Women – Headquarters

13 The paths to equal: Twin indices on women's empowerment and gender equality | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters

14 OECD Statistics

15 Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

16 Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org)

2 Gender Equality in the Global Indexes

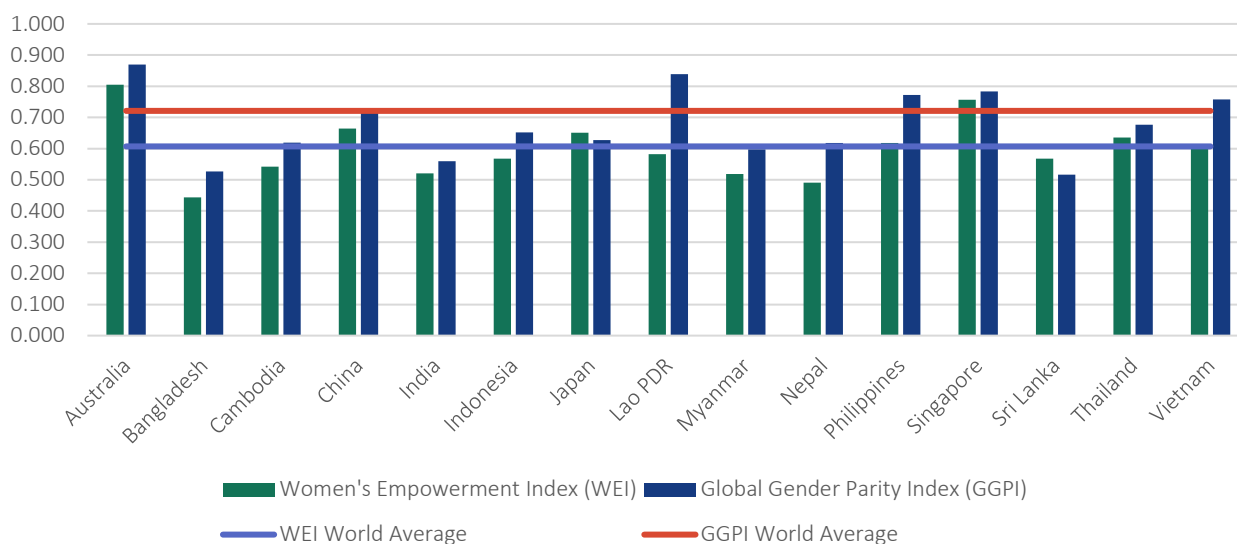
Various multilateral institutions have developed indicators to measure gender equality, and gender inequality. They each take a different approach, examining different dimensions of participation, empowerment, and human development to reach a score that can be compared across countries.

Data are presented for: the UN Women and UNDP Women’s Empowerment Index and Global Gender Parity Index; the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Index; the UNDP Human Development Index, Gender Development Index and the Gender Inequality Index; and the Social Institutions and Gender Index.

2.1 Women’s Empowerment Index and Global Gender Parity Index

The Women’s Empowerment Index (WEI) and Global Gender Parity Index (GGPI) were introduced in 2023 by UN Women and UNDP.¹⁷ The WEI monitors *process indicators* to measure the reach of institutions, laws and policies to assess women’s power and freedom to make choices and seize life opportunities across five dimensions: health, education, inclusion, decision-making, and violence against women. The GGPI is a complementary measure that monitors *outcome indicators* to evaluate the status of women relative to men in core dimensions of human development, including health, education, inclusion, and decision-making.¹⁸

Figure 1 The Women’s Empowerment Index (WEI) and Global Gender Parity Index (GGPI)



Source: The paths to equal: Twin indices on women’s empowerment and gender equality | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters Annex: Tables

17 Press release: Less than 1 percent of women and girls live in a country with high women’s empowerment and high gender parity | UN Women – Headquarters

18 The paths to equal: Twin indices on women’s empowerment and gender equality | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters

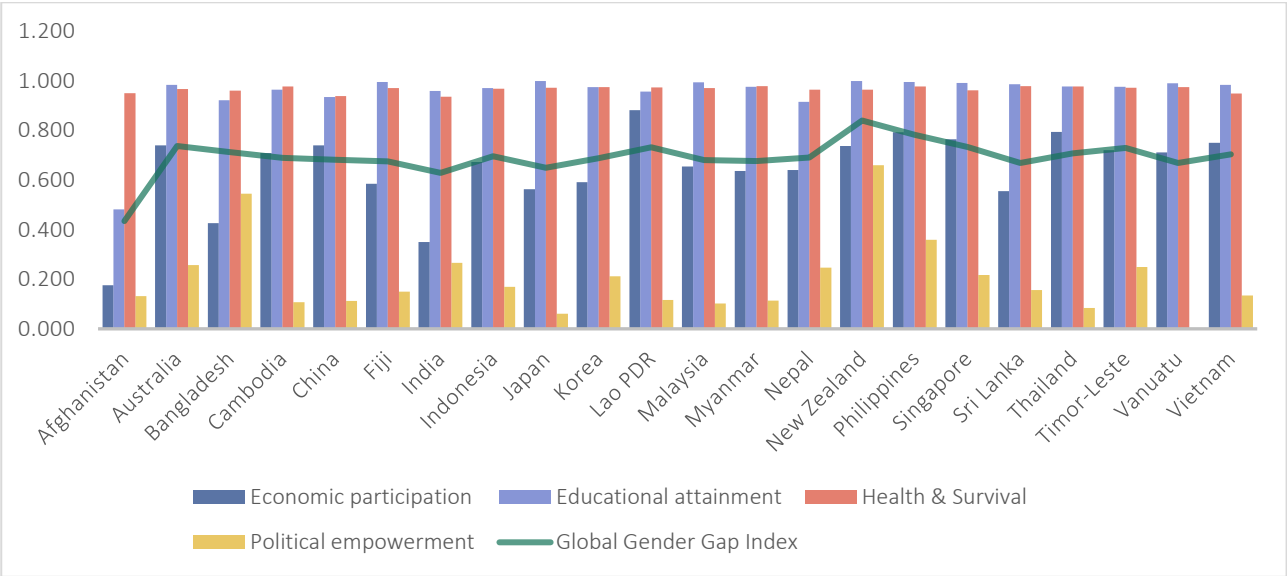
<p>Globally, women are empowered to achieve, on average, only 60 per cent of their full potential (WEI)</p>	<p>Globally, women are empowered to achieve, on average, 28 per cent less than men across key human development dimensions (GGPI)</p>
<p>Higher human development alone is insufficient to empower women and girls and bring about gender equality (WEI & GGPI)</p>	

2.2 The World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index

The Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks the current state and evolution of gender parity across four key domains: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. The Index measures scores on a 0 to 1 scale and scores can be interpreted as the distance covered towards parity, that is, the percentage of the gender gap that has closed.

With the exception of Afghanistan, the overall score hovers between around 6 and 8 for the 22 countries with data. However, there are large variations when we look at the four domains. Particularly stark are the low scores for political empowerment, with only two countries – Bangladesh and New Zealand – scoring over 0.5, and 13 countries scoring less than 0.2.

Figure 2 World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index and Domains



Source: Global Gender Gap Report 2022 | World Economic Forum (weforum.org) (only countries in the study with data available are shown)

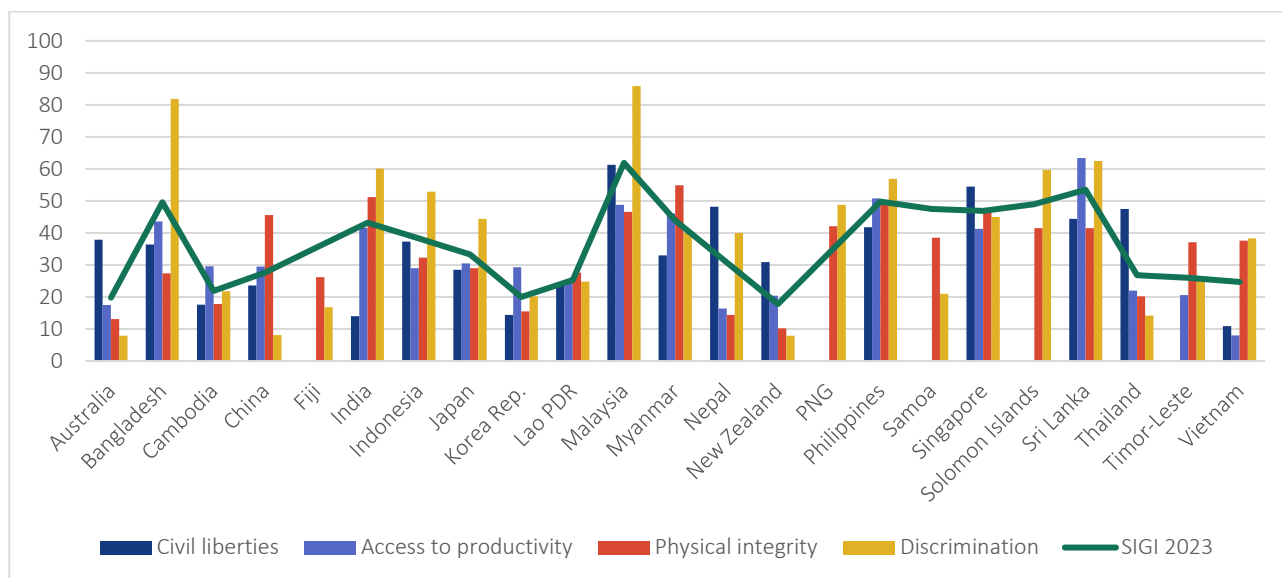
2.3 The Social Institutions and Gender Index

The Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) measures discriminatory social institutions in four domains: discrimination in the family, restricted physical integrity, restricted access to productive and financial resources, and restricted civil liberties. Each domain is assessed by sets of indicators for sub-categories which are each rated for discrimination and given a score between 0 and 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination.

Of the 30 countries of focus in this study, only 18 have data on all four areas and so receive an overall SIGI score.

Using this approach, there is considerable variation both between and within countries. Once again this highlights the complexity of assessing gender quality and the importance of nuanced policy that is tailored to the context.

Figure 3 Social Institutions and Gender Index and its Dimensions



Note: Only countries with data available are displayed. The overall SIGI score applies only where there are data for all four domains. That is, the SIGI score does not apply for Fiji, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands or Timor-Leste.
Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics

For this study, data were collated for the SIGI sub-categories of:

- Access to financial assets: Law
- Access to justice: Law
- Access to land assets: Law
- Access to non-land assets: Law
- Citizenship rights: Law
- Discrimination in household responsibilities: Law
- Divorce: Law
- Freedom of movement: Law
- Gender-based discrimination in the legal framework on workplace rights
- Inheritance: Law
- Political voice: Law
- Reproductive autonomy: Law

Scoring for the sub-categories listed above are in Annex 1, Table 7 to Table 17.

2.4 Other indexes

The UNDP’s Human Development Index (HDI) (Annex 1, Figure 53) measures three domains: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable, and having a decent standard of living. The health dimension is assessed by life expectancy at birth. The education dimension is measured by mean of years of schooling for adults aged 25 years and more and expected years of schooling for children of school entering age. The standard of living dimension is measured by gross national income per capita. The Index provides a sex-disaggregated score for most countries.

The Gender Development Index (Annex 1, Figure 54) measures disparities between women and men - the closer the ratio is to 1, the smaller the disparity.

The Gender Inequality Index (Annex 1, Figure 55) is a composite measure of gender inequality across three domains: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. The reproductive health indicators are the maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rate. The empowerment indicators are the percentage of parliamentary seats held by women and the percentage of population with at least some secondary education by gender. The labour market indicator is participation in the labour force by gender. A low GII value indicates low inequality between women and men.

3 Promoting and Protecting Human Rights: Laws and Treaties

Countries in the region have in place a range of international agreements and domestic laws to protect the rights of women, people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities, and people with disabilities. Some of the key frameworks that promote and protect gender equality are discussed below.

3.1 International Instruments

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the central global instrument for gender equality, described as an international bill of rights for women.¹⁹ CEDAW entered into force in 1981 and has now been ratified by 197 countries. All countries in this study, apart from Tonga, have ratified CEDAW. (Annex 1, Table 18)

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) entered into force in 2008 and has been ratified by 176 countries. The CRPD emphasises that persons with disabilities have rights and are active members of society.²⁰ Of the countries in this study, 29 have ratified the CRPD and the remaining one - Tonga - has signed the Convention. (Annex 1, Table 19)

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was adopted in 2000. The resolution consists of four pillars: 1) The role of women in conflict prevention, 2) women's participation in peacebuilding, 3) the protection of the rights of women and girls during and after conflict, and 4) women's specific needs during repatriation, resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction. Twelve countries in this study have National Action Plans for Women, Peace and Security, but seven of these plans are out of date. (Annex 1, Table 20)

3.2 Domestic Laws

States can promote and protect the rights of women and people of diverse gender identity and sexual orientation through laws that reach across the public and private spheres, into homes, workplaces, cultural and religious institutions, and cyber space. This section presents data on some of the key legal frameworks relevant to gender equality.

3.2.1 Gender expression

Of the 30 countries of focus in this study, 11 have laws that prohibit same sex-relations and restrict forms of gender expression. In some countries these laws are rarely enforced, but their existence is widely considered to be a breach of human rights as well as a basis for discrimination.

19 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women New York, 18 December 1979 | OHCHR, accessed 4 July 2023.

20 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) | Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD) (un.org), accessed 4 July 2023.

Table 1 Countries that outlaw same-sex relations and forms of gender expression

■ Same-sex relations outlawed ■ Forms of gender expression outlawed

Country	Rating	Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan^	■	Korea, Rep.	-	Samoa	■
Australia	-	Lao PDR	-	Singapore	-
Bangladesh	■	Malaysia	■ ■	Solomon Islands	■
Cambodia	-	Marshall Islands	-	Sri Lanka	■
China	-	Myanmar	■	Thailand	-
Fiji	-	Nauru	-	Timor-Leste	-
India	-	Nepal	-	Tonga	■ ■
Indonesia	-	New Zealand	-	Tuvalu	■
Japan	-	PNG	■	Vanuatu	-
Kiribati	■	Philippines	-	Vietnam	-

Source: Maps of anti-LGBT Laws Country by Country | Human Rights Watch (hrw.org)

3.2.2 Gender-based violence

Domestic violence: Laws that specifically prohibit domestic violence are in place in 28 countries in the study. (Annex 1, Table 21.) For prevalence rates on intimate partner violence, see Table 5, p32.

Marital rape: Women are protected by the laws of the state against rape in marriage in 21 countries in the study. In some, but not all countries, this extends to rape against male spouses. (Annex 1, Table 22.) In practice, local customary authorities in some countries apply customary laws that do not comply with the laws of the state regarding marital rape.

Child marriage: The UNFPA estimates that, globally, around 33,000 child marriages are performed every day. An estimated 650 million women and girls alive today were married as children.²¹ In the Indo-Pacific region, the legal age for marriage ranges from a low of 15 for women and men in Solomon Islands and Tonga, to 22 for men in China. Some countries specify different ages for women and men and in all such cases women can marry younger than men. Exemptions to the legal age are commonly available. Furthermore, laws on child marriage are frequently ignored in some countries, particularly in times of financial stress or where a young couple have children – child marriage and prevalence rates (Figure 36, p34) are discussed further below.

Table 2 Legal age for marriage

Country	Minimum age		Country	Minimum age		Country	Minimum age	
	F	M		F	M		F	M
Afghanistan	16	18	Korea, Rep.	18	18	Samoa	19	21
Australia	18	18	Lao PDR	18	18	Singapore	21	21
Bangladesh	18	21	Malaysia	16	18	Solomon Islands	15	15
Cambodia	18	18	Marshall Islands	16	18	Sri Lanka	18	18
China	20	22	Myanmar	18	18	Thailand	17	17
Fiji	18	18	Nauru	16	18	Timor-Leste	16	16
India	18	21	Nepal	18	n/a	Tonga	15	15
Indonesia	16	19	New Zealand	20	20	Tuvalu	16	16

21 UNFPA, 2020, *State of the World Population 2020: Against my will*, english-v6.29-web_8.pdf (unfpa.org), p96

Country	Minimum age		Country	Minimum age		Country	Minimum age	
	F	M		F	M		F	M
Japan	16	18	PNG	16	18	Vanuatu	21	21
Kiribati	21	21	Philippines	18	18	Vietnam	18	20

Exemptions can be approved by a state justice representative, with parental consent

Exemptions can be approved by a parent

Women and men under 20 must have parental consent

Boys and girls can marry at 14 with the consent of their parents and village.

Marriages cannot be registered until the youngest spouse is at least 16, but cultural, religious and civil ceremonies are recognised in civil code. Underage couples commonly marry de facto if they have children together.

Source: FT_Marriage_Age_Appendix_2016_09_08.pdf (pewresearch.org)

3.2.3 Reproductive rights

Globally, an estimated 73 million induced abortions take place each year. Over 60 per cent of unintended pregnancies and 30 per cent of all pregnancies end in induced abortion. Around 45 per cent are considered to be unsafe, with the vast majority (97 per cent) of these, take place in developing countries.²²

Abortion care services, including information, management of abortion, and post-abortion care are widely considered to be a human right: UN Women states that reproductive rights are integral to women's rights, and are upheld by international agreements²³ and the World Health Organisation states that abortion care is fundamental to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.²⁴

Legislation on reproductive rights was assessed by the OECD's Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) which found that the majority of countries in this study have measures in place to restrict legal access to abortion. GID-DB assessed that in eight countries the law protects women's right to a legal and safe abortion, but fourteen countries rate high (75+) for discrimination in abortion rights. (Table 3)

Even in countries where abortion is decriminalised, access can be limited. Factors that can restrict access include the cost of treatment, geographic access to services, and practitioner attitudes, education and training.²⁵

Table 3 Reproductive autonomy: Law

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan [^]	.75	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	0
Bangladesh	75	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	0	PNG	75
China	0	Philippines	100
Fiji	50	Samoa	75
India	75	Singapore	0
Indonesia	75	Solomon Islands	75
Japan	75	Sri Lanka	75
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0

22 Abortion (who.int)

23 Statement: Reproductive rights are women's rights and human rights | UN Women – Headquarters

24 Abortion (who.int)

25 Barriers to abortion access in Australia before and during the COVID-19 pandemic - PMC (nih.gov)

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	75
Lao PDR	75	Tonga	-
Malaysia	75	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	75	Vietnam	0

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination).²⁶

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available) (^Data for Afghanistan for 2019, using a variation on scoring²⁷)

3.2.4 Employment and economic empowerment

The Women, Business and the Law Index measures how laws and regulations affect women's economic opportunity. Overall scores are calculated by taking the average score of each index (mobility, workplace, pay, marriage, parenthood, entrepreneurship, assets and pension), with 100 representing the highest possible score. As can be seen, there is considerable variation across countries, ranging from a high of 97.5 in New Zealand to a low of 31.9 in Afghanistan.

26 Scoring reproductive autonomy (2023)

0: The law protects women's right to a legal and safe abortion and does not require the approval of the father of the foetus to seek a legal abortion.

25: The law protects women's right to a legal and safe abortion. However, the law requires the approval of the father of the foetus to seek a legal abortion.

50: The law protects women's right to a legal and safe abortion when it is essential to save the woman's life and when the pregnancy is the result of rape, statutory rape and incest. However, the law does not protect women's right to a legal and safe abortion in one or more of the following circumstances: to preserve the mother's mental or physical health, for social and economic reasons, or in case of foetal impairment.

75: The law does not protect women's right to a legal and safe abortion in one or more of the following circumstances: when it is essential to save the woman's life or when pregnancy is the result of rape, statutory rape or incest.

100: The law does not provide women the right to a legal and safe abortion under any circumstance.

27 Scoring for reproductive autonomy in Afghanistan (2019)

0: The legal framework protects women's reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy, without any justifications.

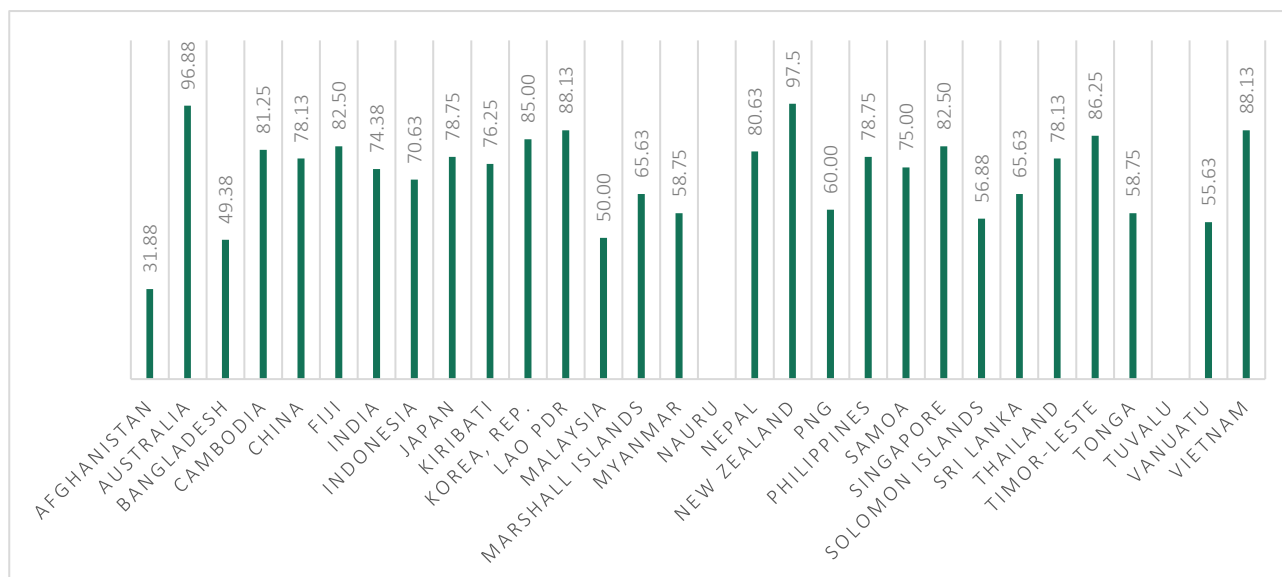
0.25: The legal framework protects women's reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy, but requires justifications.

0.5: The legal framework only protects women's reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy with some justifications.

0.75: The legal framework only protects women's reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy with strict justifications.

1: The legal framework does not protect women's reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy.

Figure 4 Women, Business and the Law Index



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Discrimination in employment: Only 19 countries in the study have laws in place to prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender. (Annex 1, Table 23) While laws do not always prevent gender gaps in employment, promotion, pay or workplace rights, lack of legislation limits opportunities for women and people of diverse gender identity. Gaps in legislation can result in unequal pay for equal work, unfair dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy, absence of provisions for parental leave, fewer opportunities for promotion, and other limitations.

Twenty-one countries in the study have legislation to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace. (Annex 1, Table 24).

3.2.5 Birth Registration

Birth registration is a human right, recognised in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Birth registration is linked to the realisation of other rights, such as the right to health, education, and justice. It is estimated that, globally, one in four children under the age of 5 is not registered. And many of those that are, may not have proof of registration.²⁸ Data on rates of registration in the Indo-Pacific show considerable variation, with Australia, Japan and Thailand all attaining 100 per cent while PNG lags well behind at only 13 per cent. (Annex 1, Figure 56)

3.2.6 Free Education

Most countries in the study have legal frameworks in place that guarantee free education. The number of years guaranteed ranges from a high of 13 in Australia, New Zealand and Sri Lanka, down to 5 in Bangladesh and Myanmar. (Annex 1 Figure 57.) In practice, families inevitably have out-of-pocket expenses related to education, and these, along with other factors, can keep children out of school. Out-of-school rates (Figure 33) are discussed further below.

3.2.7 Social Protection

Social protection is widely considered to be central to efforts to reduce poverty and prevent people from living below the poverty line. Social protection is included in the Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 1.3) and almost all countries now invest in social protection programs.

28 From birth to rights: why birth registration matters (unicef.org.au)

Social protection programs cover different areas of support and countries have historically built their systems gradually, commonly starting with employment injury then introducing other types of benefits. Those for children and families and the unemployed are typically the last to be introduced.²⁹

In the Asia and Pacific region, it is estimated that 24.7 per cent of women, compared with 32.9 per cent of men are legally covered by comprehensive social security systems.³⁰

Table 4 provides data on the legal coverage of protection systems in 25 countries in the region and demonstrates the gender gaps are experienced in most countries. Table 26 (Annex 1) provides a summary of the different types of social protection in place across the 30 countries of focus in this study.

29 ILO, World Social Protection Report 2020–22, p45

30 International Labour Organization, *World Social Protection Report 2020–22*, p56

Table 4 Social Protection legal coverage

	Children/Family		Maternity	Sickness		Unemployment		Work Injury		Disability		Old age	
	Female	Male		Female	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Afghanistan													
Australia	100	100	57.1	50.3	53.5	100	100	57.1	67.1	163.9	180.8	163.9	180.8
Bangladesh	0	0	11	11	34.4	0	0	11	34.4	34.2	35.8	34.2	35.8
Cambodia	0	0	0	73	85.2	0	0	33	47.2	0	0	0	100
China	0	0	28.9	48.8	61.6	29.3	39.8	29.3	39.8	29.3	39.8	200	200
Fiji	47.9	48.3	20.8	18.7	42.6	0	0	18.7	42.6	36.4	73.8	84.3	122.1
India	0	0	49.1	1.8	7.1	4.5	17.1	4.5	17.1	38.7	64.2	38.7	64.2
Indonesia	0	0	25.3	20.9	41.5	0	0	20.9	41.5	50.7	78	50.7	78
Japan	100	100	51	51.7	69.6	51.7	69.6	51.7	69.6	82.3	90.4	82.3	90.4
Kiribati	0	0	12.5	0	0	0	0	12.5	26.1	24.2	43.7	124.2	143.7
Korea, Rep.	100	100	39.5	0	0	50.9	70	39.5	51.3	50.8	69.9	67.4	86.6
Lao PDR	0	0	76.3	76.3	79.7	9.5	20.7	9.5	20.7	76.3	79.7	76.3	79.6
Malaysia	0	0	34.5	34.5	52.8	27.5	46.2	36.2	56.1	48.8	74.7	56.1	82
Marshall Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	51.1	27.7	51.1	27.7
Myanmar	46.3	76.7	49.7	46.6	76.7	46.6	76.4	46.6	76.4	46.6	76.4	46.6	76.4
Nauru													
Nepal	100	100	32	23.2	50.6	0	0	8.8	27.6	108.8	127.6	108.8	127.6
New Zealand	100	100	61.9	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
PNG	0	0	0	32.1	31.3	0	0	5.5	13.3	45.7	46.4	45.7	46.4
Philippines	30.8	31.4	54.4	59.6	92.4	0	0	27	47.3	130.8	131.4	130.8	131.4
Samoa	0	0	20.8	20.8	32.4	0	0	1.3	29.8	31.1	55.4	131.1	155.4
Singapore	100	100	113.2	53.9	62	0	0	53.9	62	59.3	75.2	59.3	75.2
Solomon Islands	0	0	27.9	20.2	35.3	0	0	20.2	35.3	40.9	71	40.9	71
Sri Lanka	5.3	5.5	18.5	28	60.5	0	0	18.5	42.8	33.1	72.5	33.1	72.5
Thailand	58.8	75.5	34.6	58.8	75.5	28.7	36.9	28.7	36.9	157.4	173.8	157.4	173.8

	Children/Family		Maternity	Sickness		Unemployment		Work Injury		Disability		Old age	
	Female	Male	Female	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Timor-Leste													
Tonga													
Tuvalu													
Vanuatu	0	0	14.1	14.1	23.5	0	0	20.8	32.4	43.9	52.2	43.9	52.2
Vietnam	8.6	8.9	27.3	25.9	36	71.3	80.6	27.3	39.5	108.6	108.9	108.6	108.9

Source: Compiled from ILO | Social Protection Platform (social-protection.org) 31

31 Includes Contributory voluntary, contributory non-voluntary and non-contributory. Contributory are entitlements to a benefit based on contributions from insured persons and/or their employer. Non-contributory are entitlements to a benefit not based on the previous payment of contributions but on other criteria. Non-contributory benefits are usually financed out of general taxation.

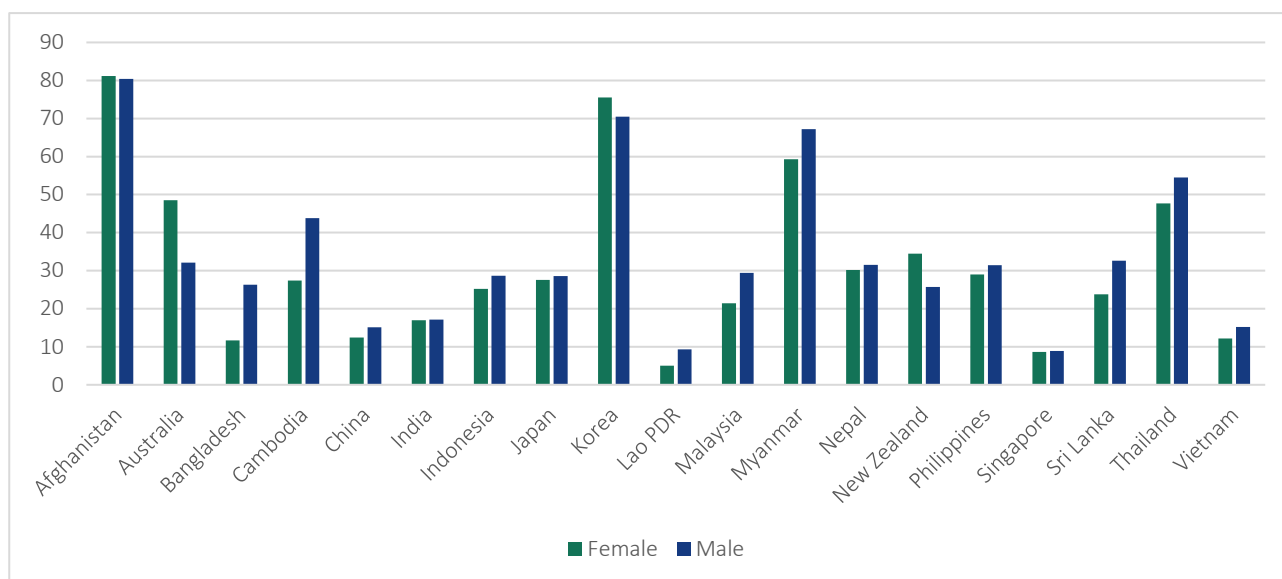
3.3 The Law in Practice

In practice, a range of factors impact the implementation of laws, policies and regulations. Implementation is impacted by factors such as levels of resourcing, skills and training of justice officials, geographic distance, and so on. In some countries and in some instances, customary and faith-based laws may over-ride laws of the state, even in cases when they do not align. Furthermore, application of the law is influenced by social norms, discussed further below.

Limitations in application of the law are commonly felt in areas relevant to gender equality. In real terms this is manifest in things such as restricted access to abortion care services, prevalence of child marriage, gender pay gaps, and responses from state officials in cases of gender-based violence.

The Gender, Institutions and Development Database provides data on confidence in the legal system in 19 countries in this study (Figure 5 below). The data reveal that women and men in Afghanistan, Korea, Myanmar and Thailand have the least confidence in their systems. Australia stands out for the difference in attitudes of women and men, with 48.5 per cent of women lacking confidence in the system compared with 32.1 per cent of men. Conversely, in Bangladesh more than twice the number of men than women lack confidence in the system – 26.3 per cent of men compared with 11.7 per cent of women.

Figure 5 People with lack of confidence in the judicial system



Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (A score of 0 signifies no data available)³²

4 Promoting and Protecting Human Rights: Women Influencing the State

There is an established and growing body of evidence that demonstrates the value of women's leadership to decision-making in the public and private sectors, and in civil society. Critically, women are central to efforts to progress the rights of women. But they are also central to advancing the rights of men.

For example, research demonstrates that the risk of civil war and state-perpetrated human rights abuse is decreased through women's representation in parliament. A critical mass of women in some parliaments has been associated with increased expenditure in education and healthcare and legislation that advances

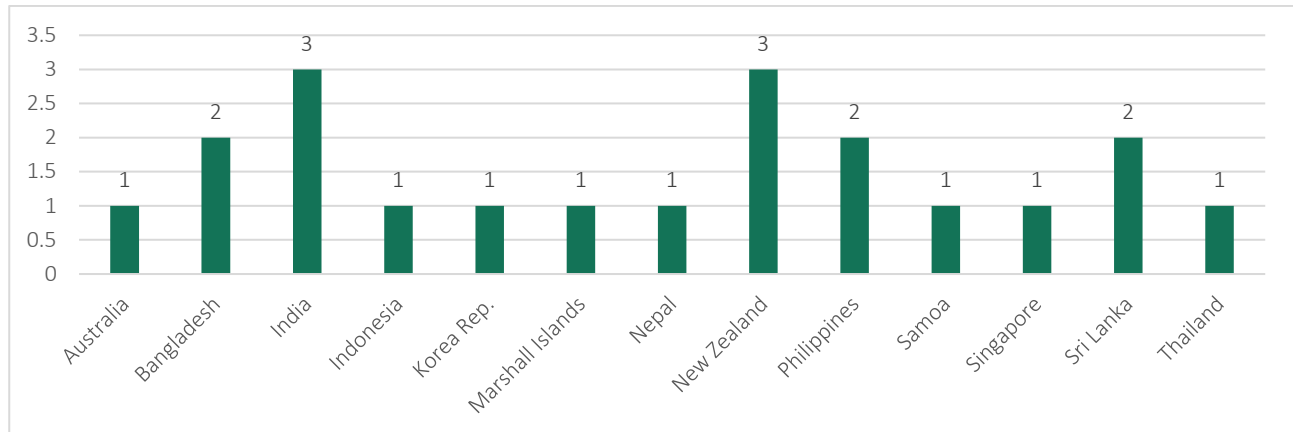
³² Percentage of women and men who declare not having confidence in the judicial system and courts of their country.

gender equality.³³ In the United States, women have been found to be more likely to reach political compromises, resulting in the passage of more legislation.³⁴

4.1 Women in Government

Only a small number of women are represented in the highest positions of government. Of the 30 countries of focus in this report, only 13 have had at least one female head of government in almost seven decades.

Figure 6 Number of Female Heads of Government Since 1946



Source: Women’s Power Index | Council on Foreign Relations (cfr.org)

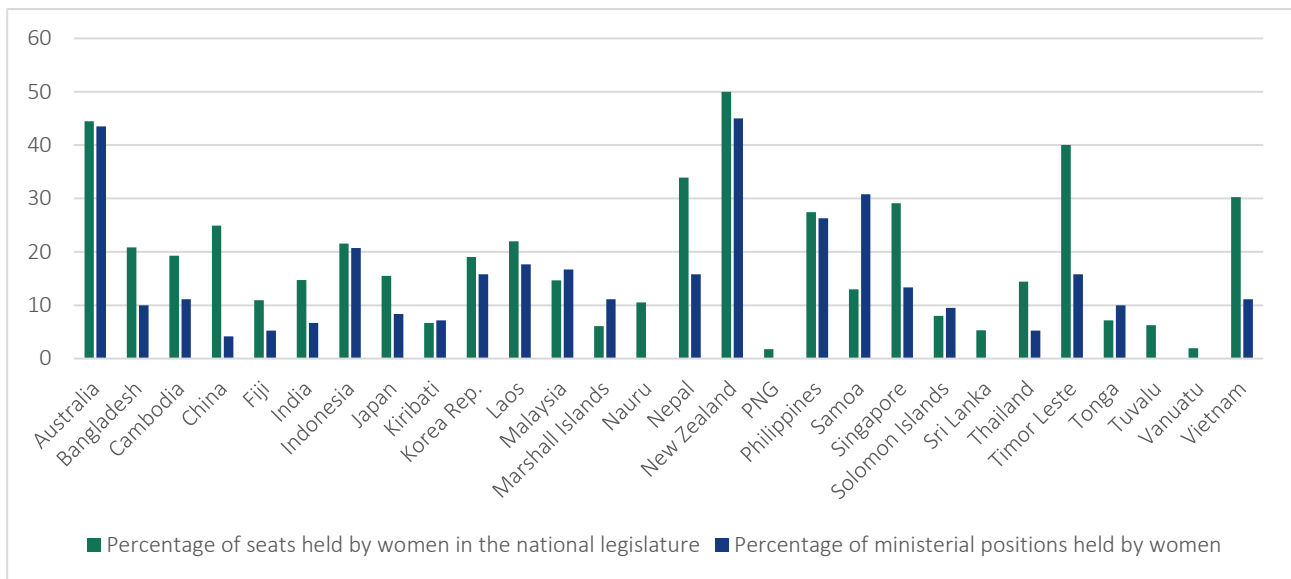
New Zealand is the only country in the study to have achieved parity in the national parliament, followed by Australia at 45 per cent and Timor-Leste at 40 per cent. Timor-Leste has a legislated quota system which requires that one out of every group of three candidates be a woman. Other countries in the region have quota systems but they often have little impact. This can be the case, for example, when a quota system applies to political parties, but where the majority of candidates run as independents.

No countries in the study achieve gender parity for ministerial positions and, in five countries there are currently no women ministers.

33 The key to change: Women’s voice and influence | UN Women – Asia-Pacific, Women’s Power Index | Council on Foreign Relations (cfr.org)

34 Women’s Power Index | Council on Foreign Relations (cfr.org)

Figure 7 Women in Government (% of seats held)



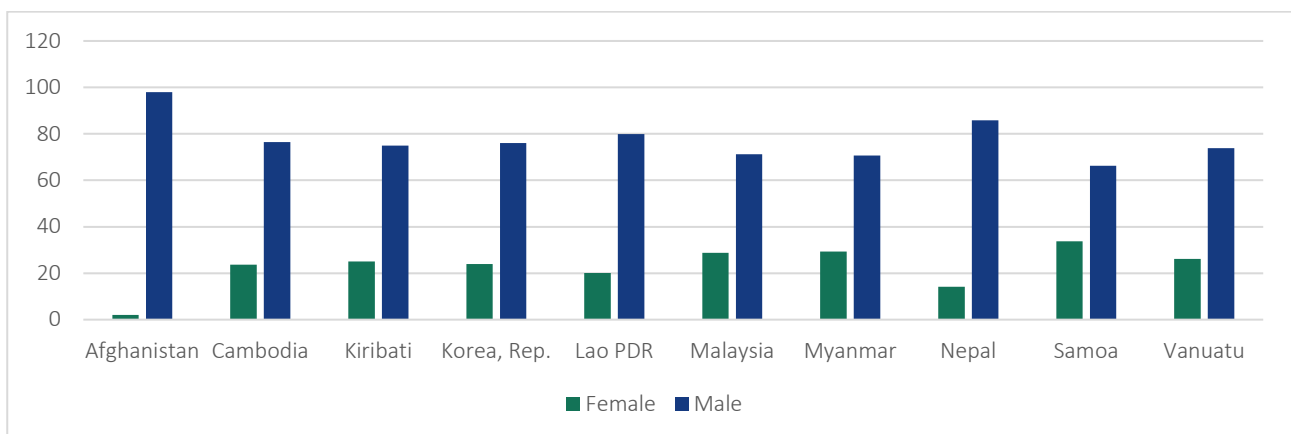
Source: Women’s Power Index | Council on Foreign Relations (cfr.org) Data current for June 2023, Afghanistan and Myanmar not included.

4.2 Women influencing the public and private sectors

Women are increasingly being recognised for their contributions to the public and private sectors. Evidence demonstrates that gender diversity on boards and in senior management improves company performance, productivity and profitability.³⁵ A 2020 study by the McKinsey Global Institute found that taking action to advance gender equality could add \$13 trillion to global GDP in 2030.³⁶

The data demonstrate that women are under-represented in government, business and decision-making positions (Figure 7 to Figure 9). In the Pacific only 22 per cent of board members are women³⁷ and in Asia the proportion is less, at around 12 per cent.³⁸

Figure 8 Share of business owners (% of total business owners)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

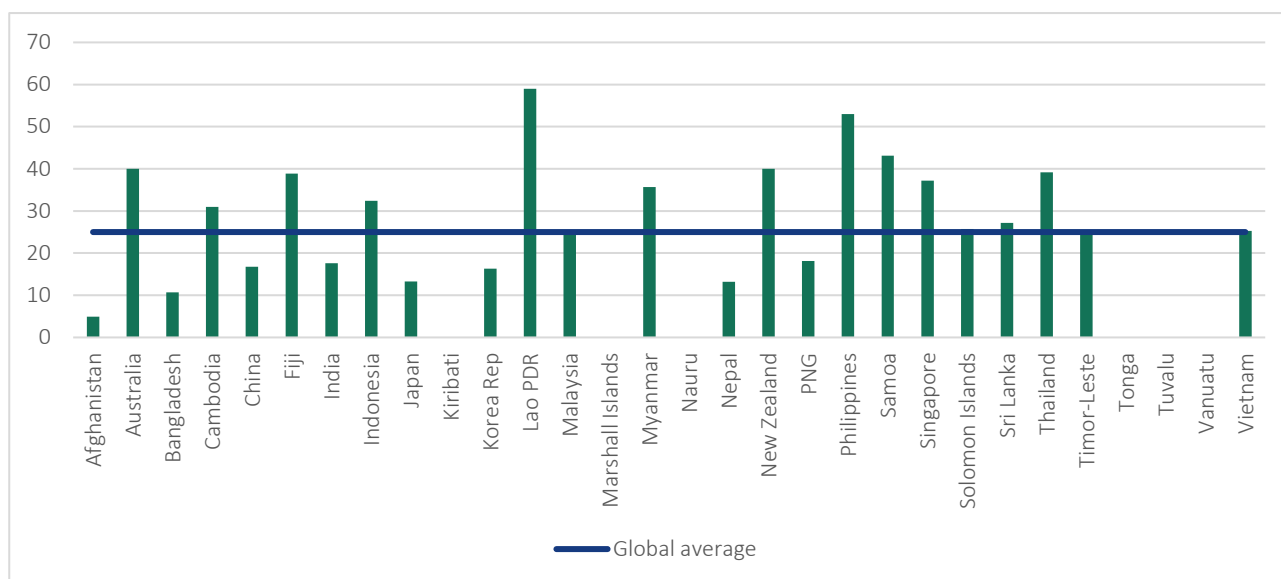
35 See COVID–19 impact on women and gender equality | McKinsey; board-gender-diversity-in-asean.pdf (ifc.org)

36 COVID–19 impact on women and gender equality | McKinsey

37 Private sector progress in women’s leadership in the Pacific | Lowy Institute

38 gx-women-in-the-boardroom-seventh-edition.pdf

Figure 9 Share of women among managers



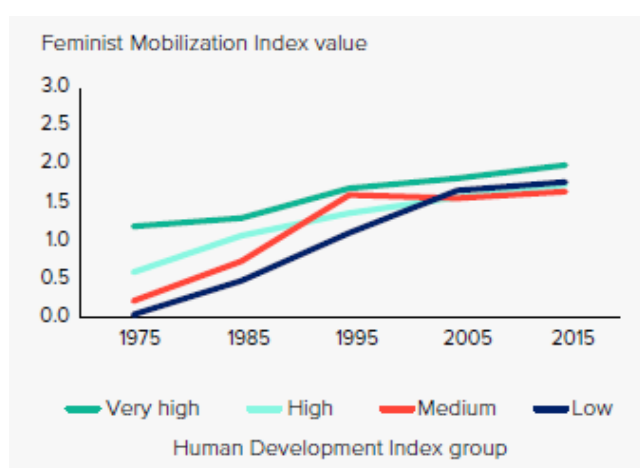
Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

4.3 Women in Civil Society

Women’s movements are central to efforts to advance gender equality. Data show that in countries with weaker women’s movements, there is greater bias in favour of men. For example, in such countries, almost 50 per cent of people think men make better political leaders and more than 40 per cent think they make better business executives than women.³⁹ Women’s movements instigate changes in laws and social norms, enabling women to participate more fully in political, economic, social and faith-based arenas.

Women’s movements have grown in strength, particularly since the mid-1970s. The greatest growth has occurred in countries with low development.

Figure 10 Feminist Mobilization Index



Source: Reproduced from the United Nations Human Development Report

Policy makers can facilitate the growth and impact of women’s movements through, among other things, support to women-led and women-focussed organisations. Similar support can extend to organisations with a focus on the rights of people with disabilities and the rights of people of diverse sexual orientation and

39 Forester and others, cited in United Nations *Human Development Report*, p205.

gender identities. All these types of organisations promote diversity in decision-making, thereby contributing to social and economic growth.

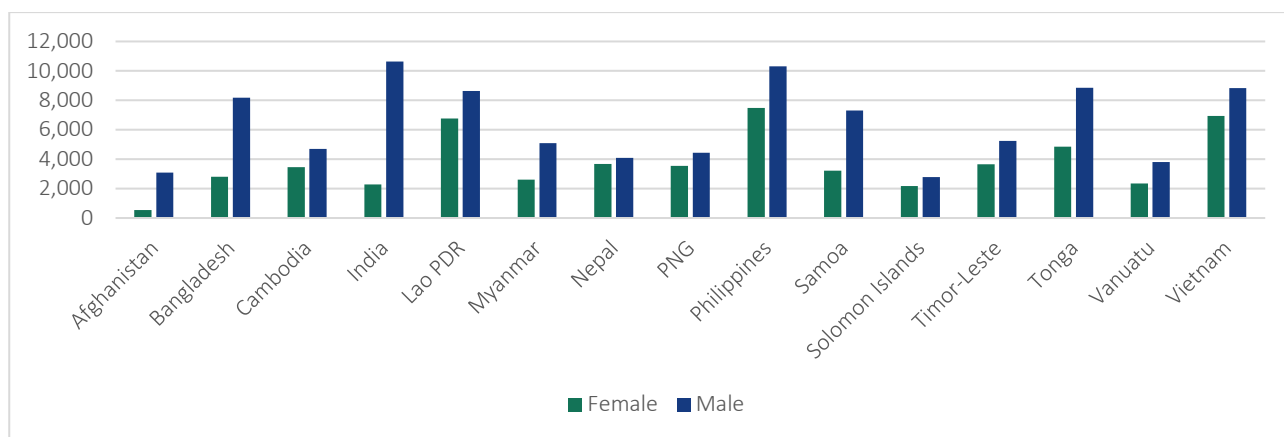
5 Key Issues: Economic empowerment

5.1 Economic Prosperity

Women in the Indo-Pacific consistently have lower levels of incomes per capita than men. This is a result of, among other things, lower levels of participation in the workforce along with a gender pay gap.

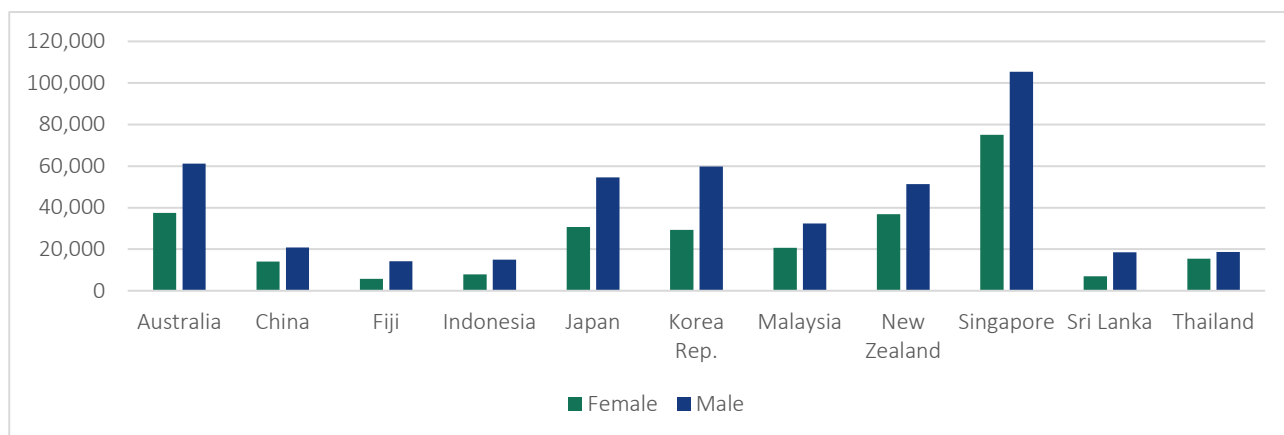
Data on income per capita are available for 26 of the 30 countries of focus in this study. In all these countries, women’s gross national income is lower than that of men. (Figure 11 and Figure 12) This is contributing to poverty: over 30 per cent of women in the Pacific and more than 20 per cent of women in Central and Southern Asia live under than national poverty line. (Figure 13)

Figure 11 Estimated gross national income per capita (2017) PPP \$ (countries with under \$12,000 for men)



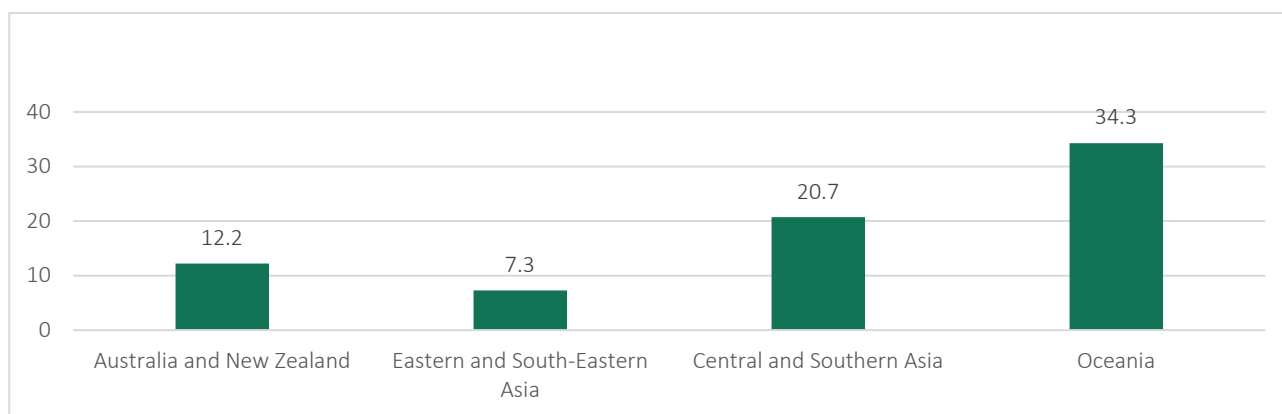
Source: Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org)

Figure 12 Estimated gross national income per capita (2017) PPP \$ (countries with over \$12,000 for men)



Source: Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org)

Figure 13 Female poverty rates by region, using national poverty line estimates, 2022 projections (%)



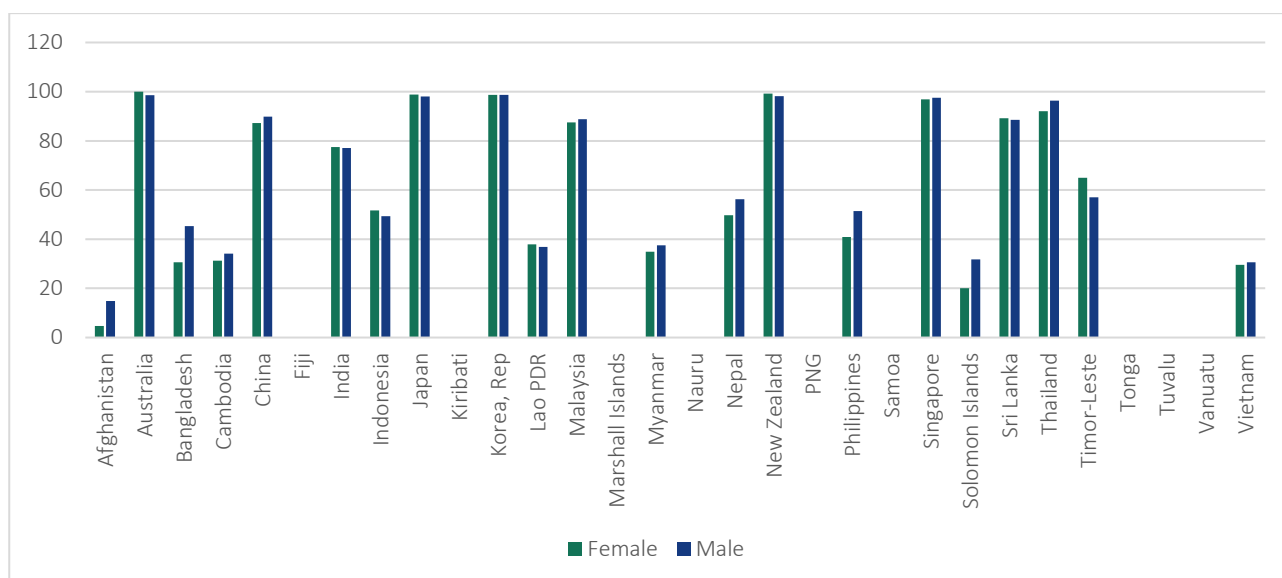
Source: Poverty deepens for women and girls, according to latest projections | UN Women Data Hub

In Afghanistan, India, Lao, Sri Lanka and Thailand, twenty per cent of women are unable to come up with emergency funds in 30 days. (Annex 1, Figure 58)

Bank account ownership is regarded as a measure of financial inclusion. A bank account allows the owner to store, send and receive money, enabling investment in health, education and other things that bring benefit. Worldwide, account ownership increased by 50 per cent over the ten years to 2021. Globally, 76 per cent of adults now own bank accounts.⁴⁰

As can be seen in Figure 14, in most countries of focus in this study, there is little difference between women and men in terms of bank account ownership. However, there is substantial variation of ownership across countries, with Afghanistan and Solomon Islands standing out for low levels of ownership, and in those two countries women share a smaller proportion than men.

Figure 14 Bank account ownership



Source: OECD Statistics (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

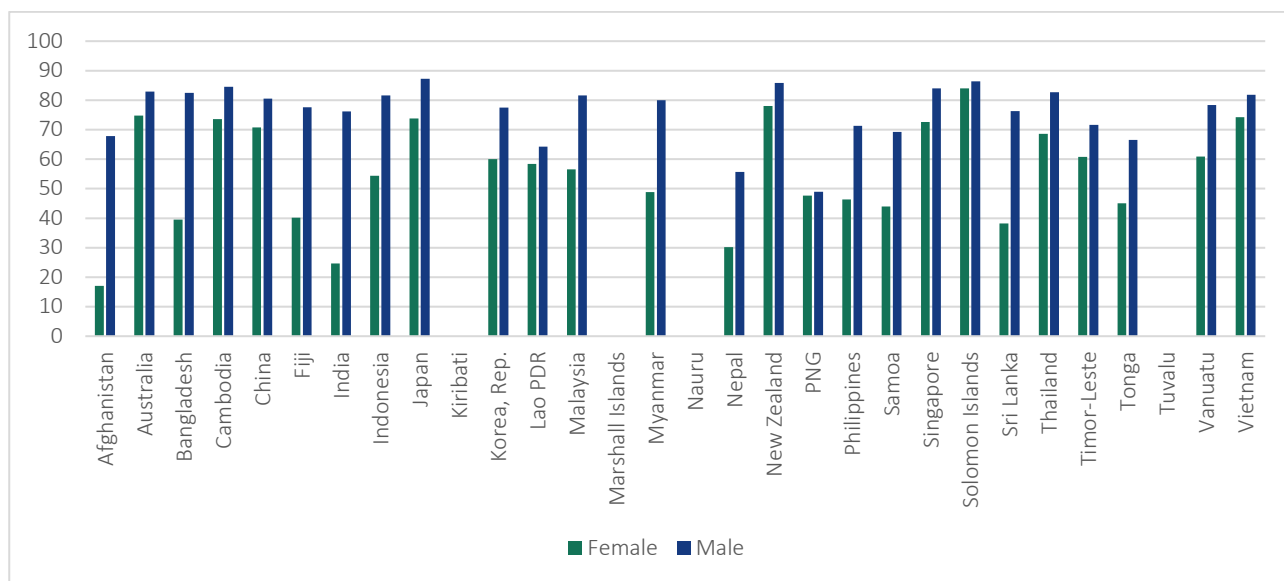
40 Global Findex Database 2021 survey headline findings on account ownership (worldbank.org)

5.2 Employment

As can be seen from Figure 15 below, in all countries in the study women’s participation in the workforce is lower than that of men. And in some countries – such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka and Tonga – there are stark gendered differences in participation.

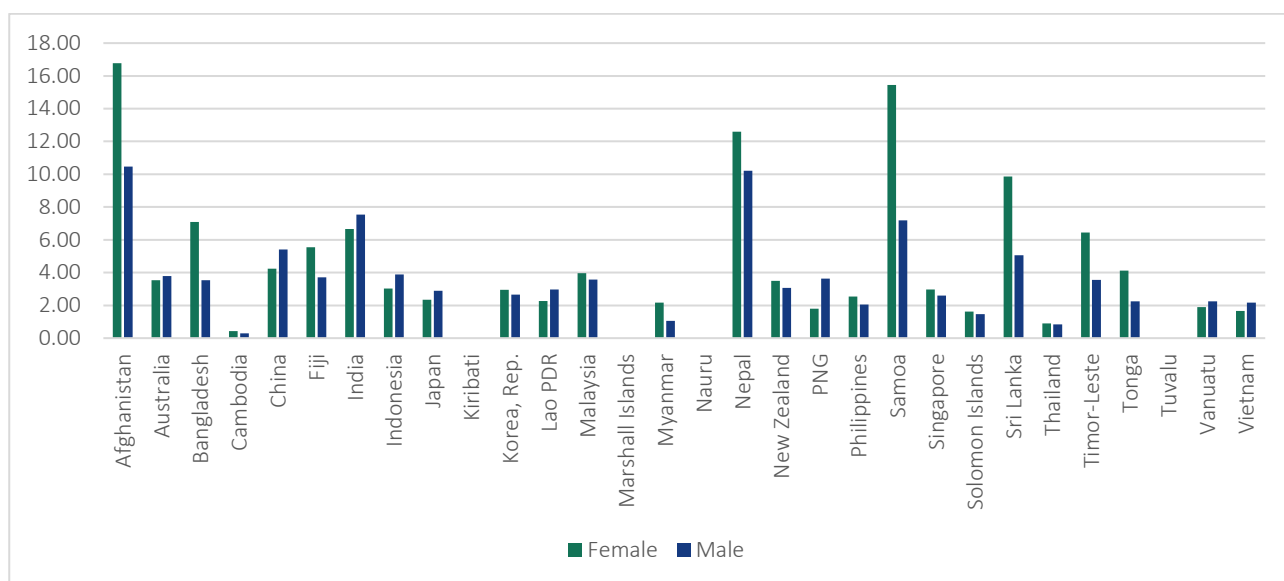
Participation rates include people who are employed or actively seeking employment. In most countries in the study, rates of unemployed women are higher than those of unemployed men (Figure 16 below). In some countries, rates of youth unemployment are especially high, for both women and men. In Afghanistan, Fiji, India and Nepal over 20 per cent of young women are unemployed and in Samoa and Sri Lanka this increases to over 30 per cent. (Figure 17 below) (See also discussion on youth bulge Figure 47 and data on youth not in education employment or training Figure 48.)

Figure 15 Labour force participation rate, (% of population ages 15–64) (modelled ILO estimate)



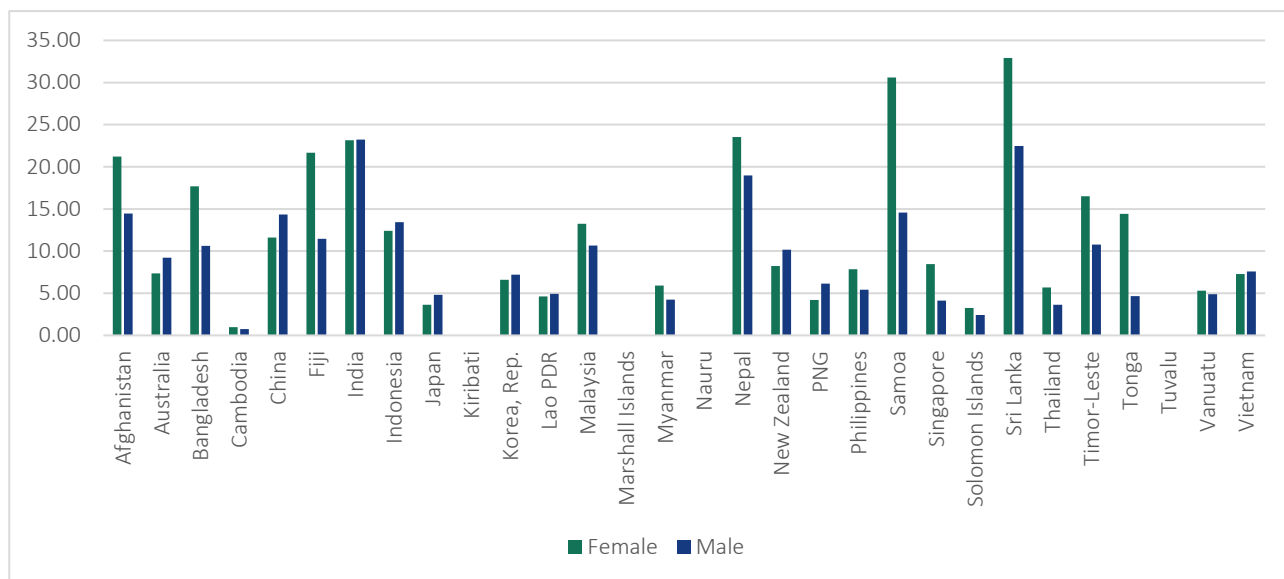
Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Figure 16 Unemployment (% of labour force) (modelled ILO estimate)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Figure 17 Unemployment, youth (% of labour force ages 15–24) (modelled ILO estimate)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

The trend changes when we look at wage and salaried workers (Figure 18). In at least thirteen countries in the study, women’s share is about equal to or higher than that of men.

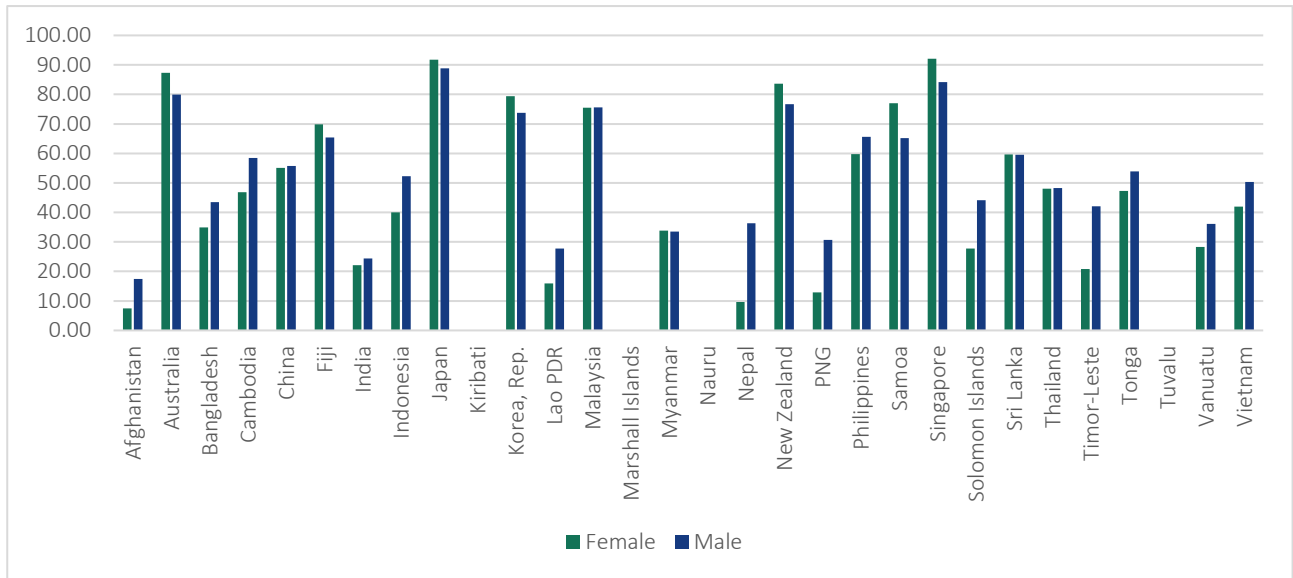
However, behind this data is the knowledge that women are more likely than men to be in vulnerable employment. That means that they work fewer hours, often not by choice. In addition, women are more likely than men to be contributing to a business that is owned or operated by a relative and are thereby less likely to have an employment contract or access to social protection.⁴¹ Women are also less likely than men to be in positions of seniority (Figure 9) and therefore have fewer opportunities to secure higher salaries.

The gender pay gap has long-term consequences for women and their families as it means that women have fewer opportunities to progress their careers, to contribute to the well-being of their families, or to save and build assets for retirement and old age.

Amongst OECD members, the average gender pay gap is 11.9 per cent, ranging from a high of 31.2 per cent for Korea down to a low of 1.2 per cent for Belgium. Australia has a gender pay gap of 9.9 per cent and New Zealand is slightly lower at 9.2 per cent.¹

41 The gender gap in employment: What's holding women back? - InfoStories (ilo.org)

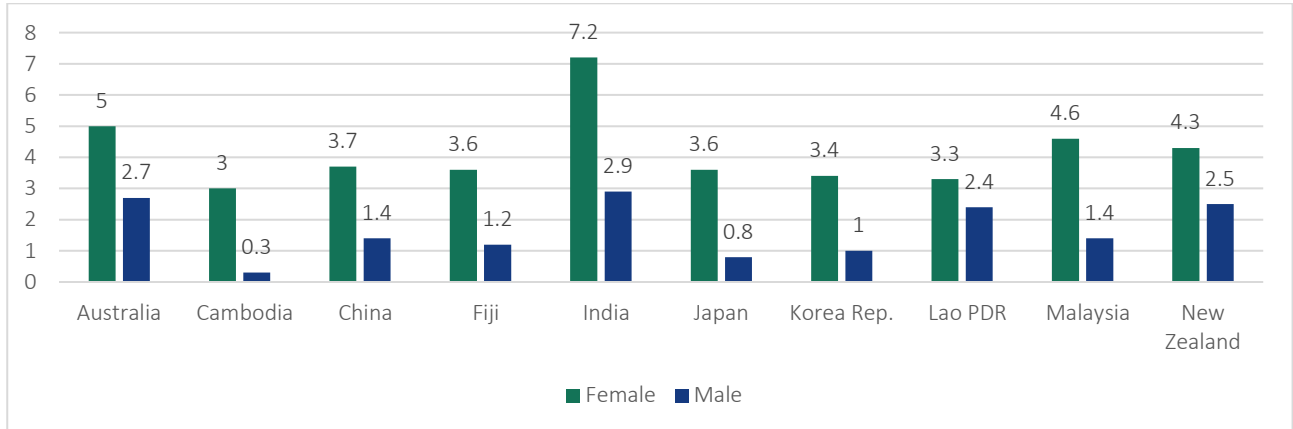
Figure 18 Wage and salaried workers (% of employment) (modelled ILO estimate)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Social norms and attitudes influence employment for women. In addition to conscious and unconscious biases that limit opportunities for women to progress to the most senior roles, women are impacted by home and family responsibilities. We can see that in all countries where data are available, women spend more time in unpaid domestic and care work than men (Figure 19).

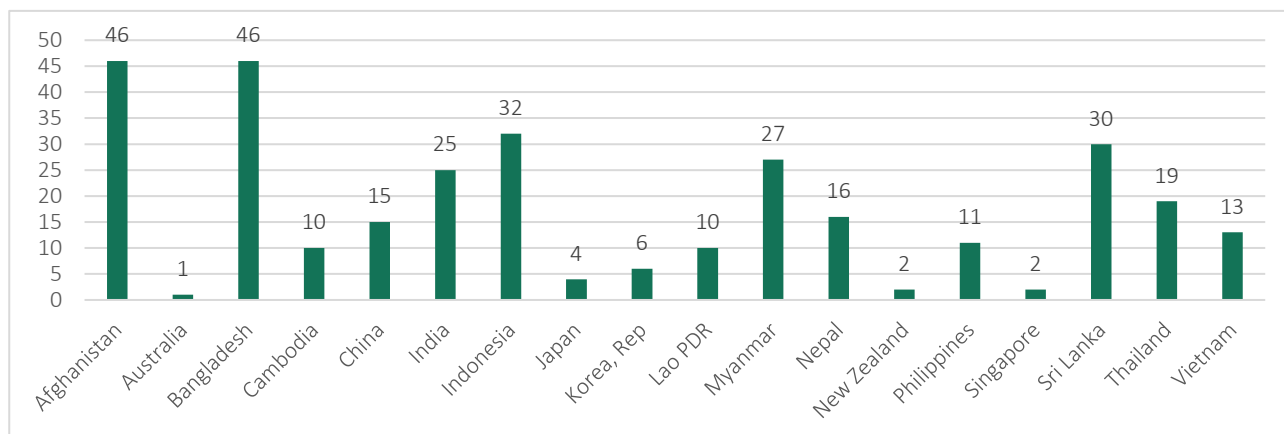
Figure 19 Hours per day spent on unpaid domestic and care work



Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics

The data show that discriminatory attitudes toward working women persist in some countries. When asked to respond to the statement “It is perfectly acceptable for any woman in your family to have a paid job outside the home if she wants one” 46 per cent of respondents in Afghanistan and Bangladesh disagreed. Of the countries with data available, Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore rated most favourably (Figure 20). Interestingly, while Japan rates well here, it rates poorly in terms of percentage of women managers (Figure 9 p16), demonstrating that discrimination persists in complex ways.

Figure 20 Prevalence of discriminatory attitudes towards working women



Source: OECD Statistics (A score of 0 signifies no data available) ⁴²

6 Key Issues: Health

6.1 Life Expectancy and Mortality

In all countries in the study, women live longer than men, with life expectancy ranging from a low of 64 (F) and 59 (M) in Afghanistan to a high of 87 (F) and 81 (M) in Japan. (Annex 1, Figure 62)

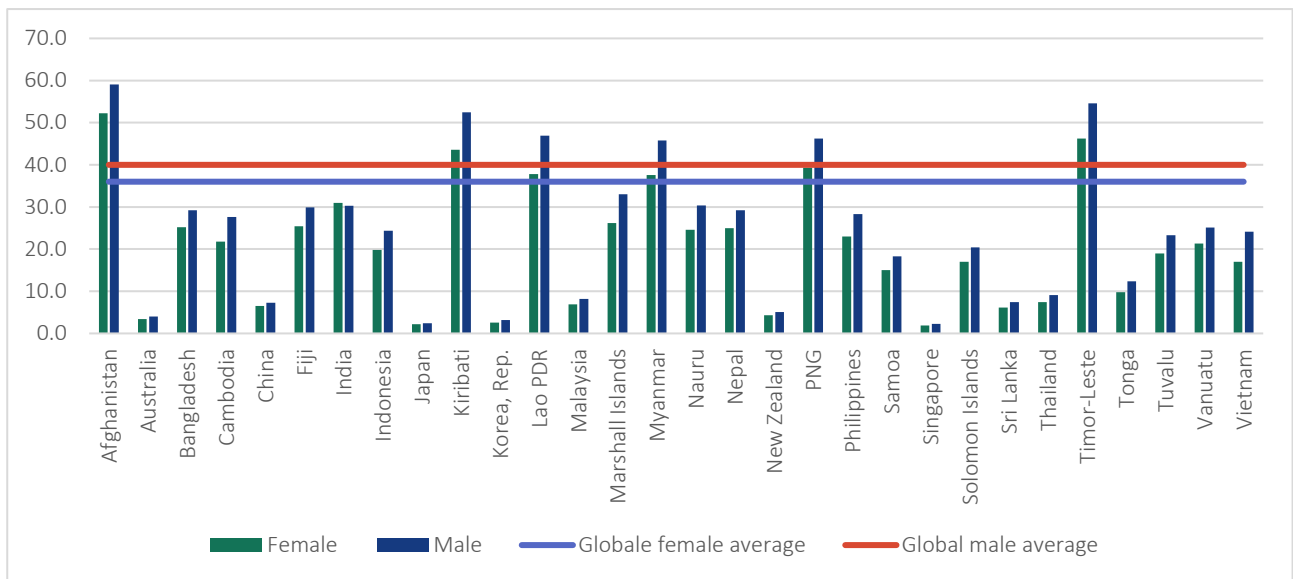
Globally, under-five mortality rates have fallen quite dramatically over the last three decades. In 1990, 1 in 11 children died before reaching the age of five, compared to 1 in 26 in 2021. The leading causes for child deaths are infectious diseases including pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, along with pre-term birth and complications during childbirth.⁴³

In all countries in this study, the under-5 mortality rate for boys is higher than that for girls (Figure 21 below). Most countries in the study have an under-5 mortality rate that is lower than the global average, with Afghanistan, Kiribati, Lao, Myanmar, PNG and Timor-Leste exceeding the global average.

⁴² Percentage of the population who disagrees with “It is perfectly acceptable for any woman in your family to have a paid job outside the home if she wants one”.

⁴³ Child Mortality - UNICEF DATA

Figure 21 Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000 live births)

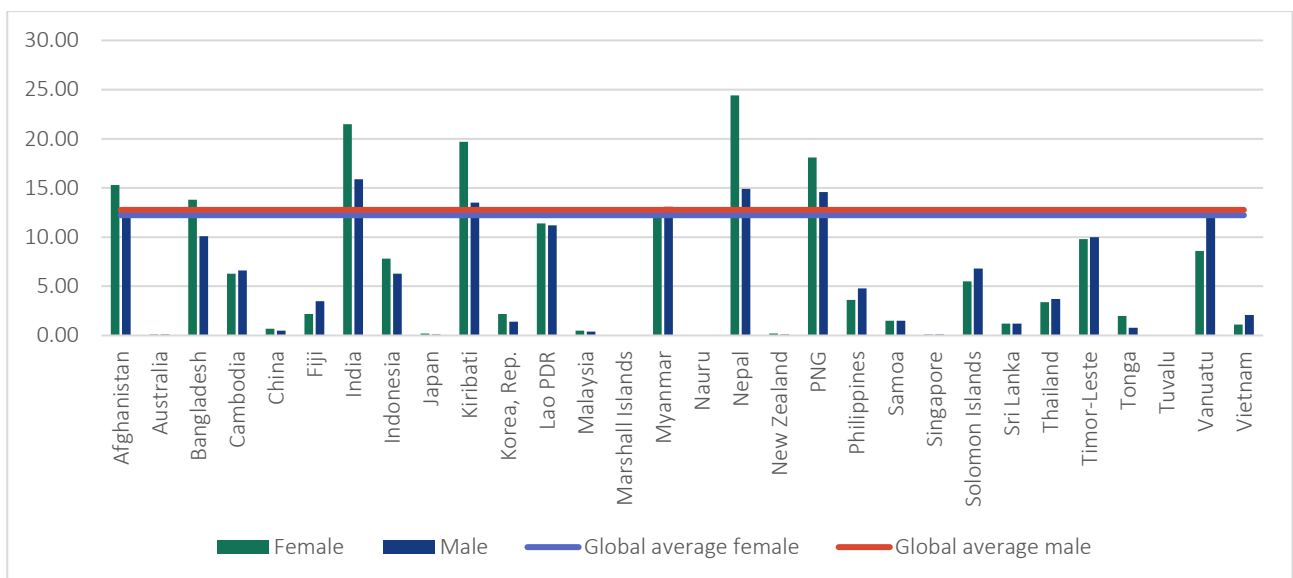


Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

Data are available for other indicators of physical and mental health and well-being. Three indicators of interest are presented here.

There are considerable variations across countries for mortality rates attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene. The differences for women and men also vary across countries.

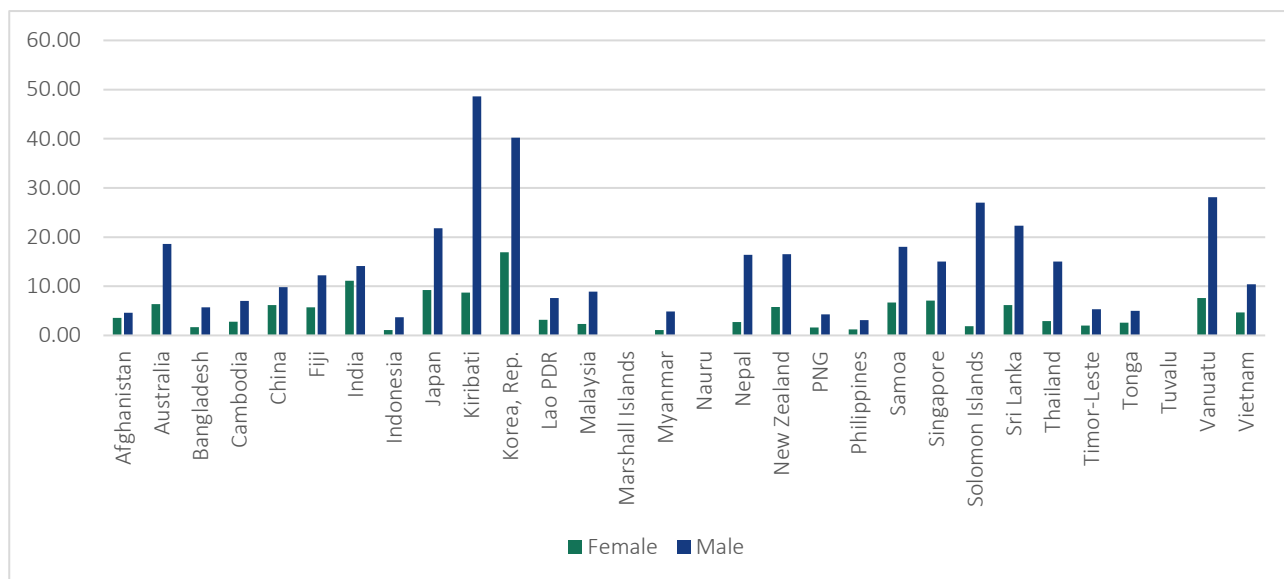
Figure 22 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene, (per 100,000 population)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore are 0.2 or less. Data not available for Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Tuvalu.)

Data on suicide reveal that men are often at much higher risk than women, with Kiribati and Korea standing out as having very high rates of suicide.

Figure 23 Suicide mortality rate, (per 100,000 population)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer among women and, in some countries, is the leading cause of cancer death in women. Globally, one life is lost every two minutes to this disease, most commonly in low and middle-income countries with poor access to screening and early detection and treatment. Importantly, cervical cancer is one of the most preventable and treatable forms of cancer. Australia is leading the work in this area and is set to be the first country to eliminate cervical cancer - rates among women aged 18–24 dropped from 22.7 per cent to 1.5 per cent in the period between 2007 and 2015.⁴⁴

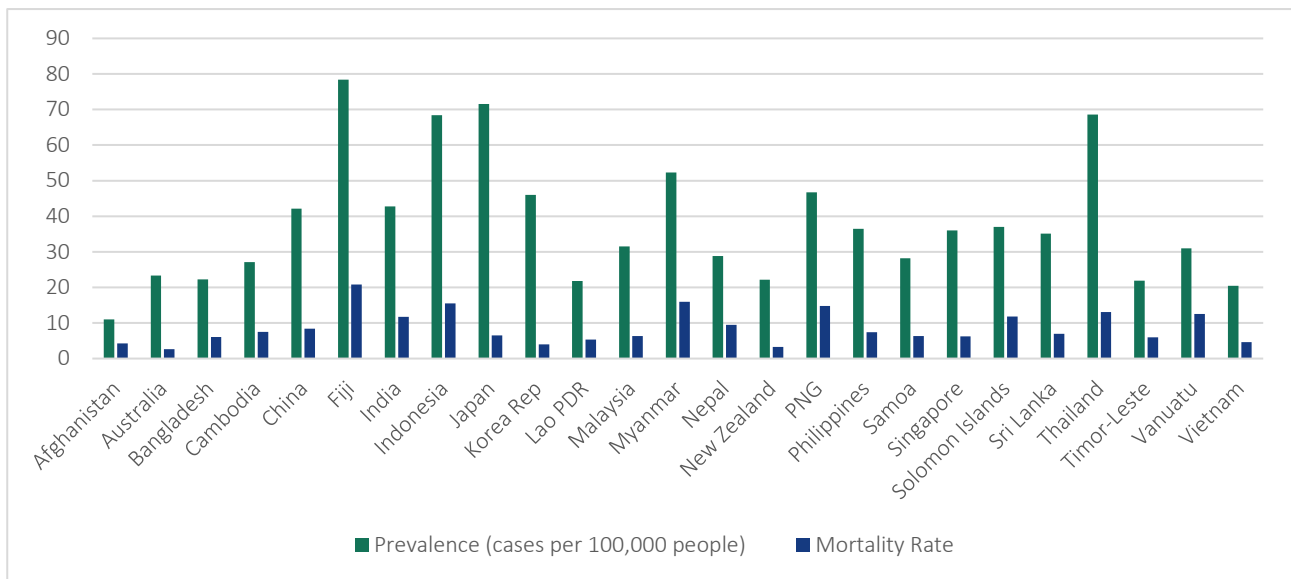
In 2020, the World Health Organisation set a strategy to accelerate elimination of cervical cancer, with the targets of: vaccinating 90 per cent of girls; screening 70 per cent of women by 35 and 45 years of age; and, treating 90 per cent of women diagnosed with cervical cancer.⁴⁵

Data from the region show that programs of support to reduce cervical cancer have the potential to make a large impact.

44 How the HPV vaccine is eliminating cervical cancer in Australia | healthdirect

45 Cervical cancer elimination | UICC

Figure 24 Cervical cancer prevalence and mortality rates

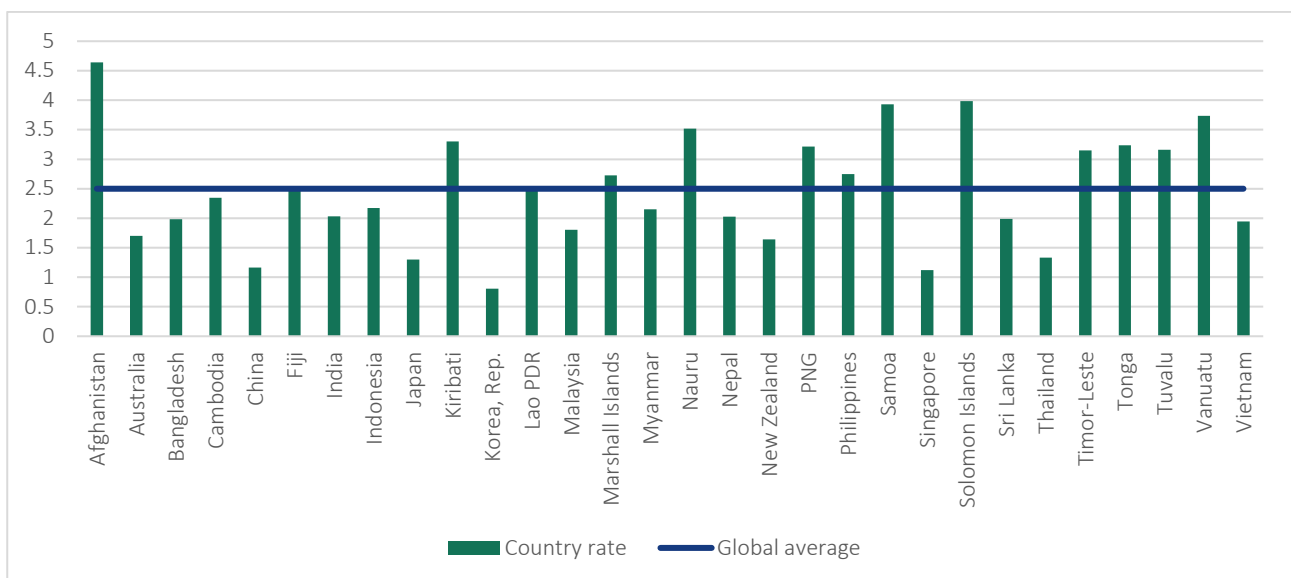


Source: WHO International Agency for Research on Cancer Cancer Today (iarc.fr)

6.2 Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Fertility rates in the countries of focus range from under one per woman in Korea to up to more than 4.6 per woman in Afghanistan. In 13 countries, fertility rates are on or above the global average. (Figure 25) In addition to the ramifications for maternal health, fertility rates impact upon the demographics of a population, resulting in aging populations or a youth bulge (discussed further below).

Figure 25 Fertility rate, total (births per woman)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

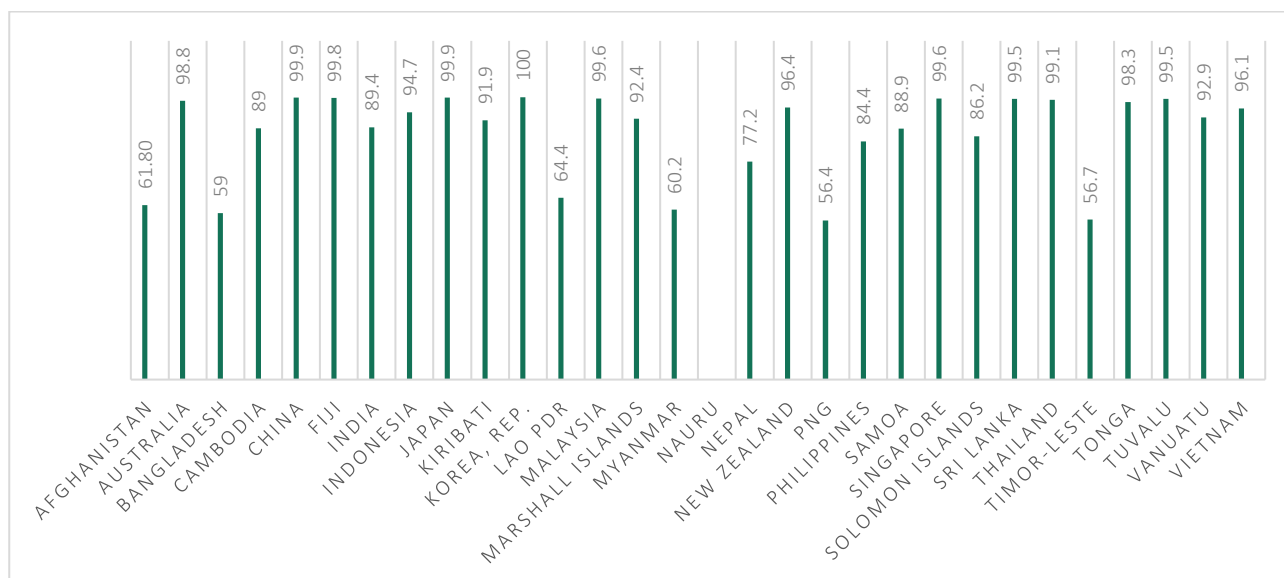
The WHO estimates that one woman dies every minute of pregnancy-related causes, and another 8 million or more women experience lifelong health consequences from complications of pregnancy.⁴⁶

The number of births attended by skilled health personnel is regarded as a measure of the health system's ability to provide sufficient care during birth – a period of high risk of morbidity and mortality. It can also be

46 Births attended by skilled health personnel (who.int)

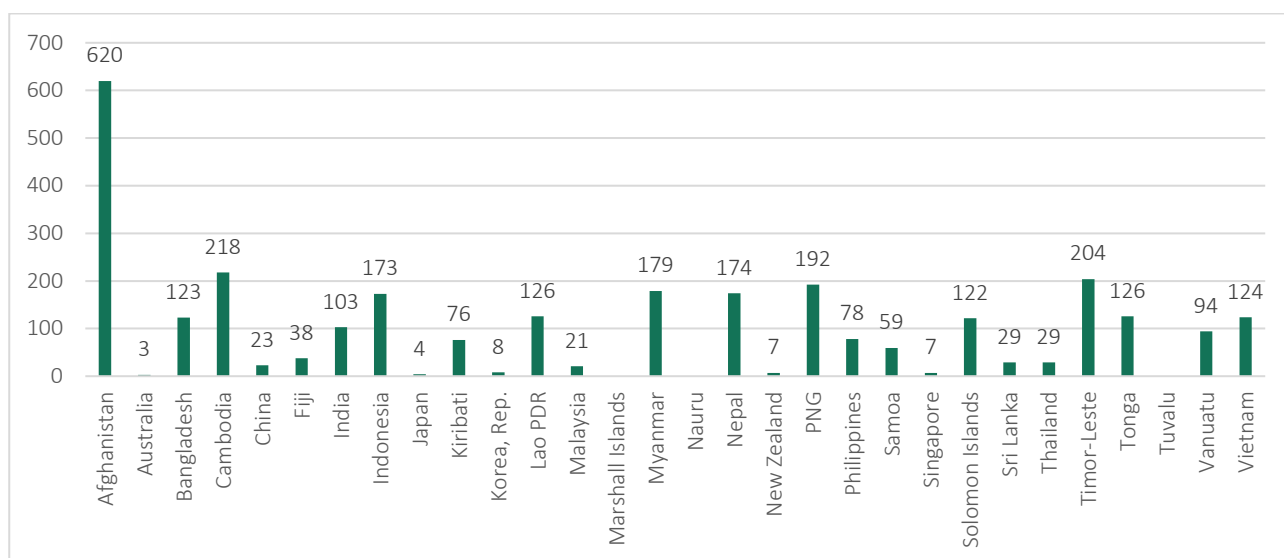
used as a proxy for access to health services and maternal care.⁴⁷ In six of the countries of focus in this study, around 60 per cent or fewer births are attended by skilled health personnel (Figure 26). Perhaps not surprisingly, four of these six also experience the highest rates of maternal mortality (Figure 27).

Figure 26 Births attended by skilled health staff (% of total)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Figure 27 Maternal mortality ratio (modelled estimate, per 100,000 live births)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

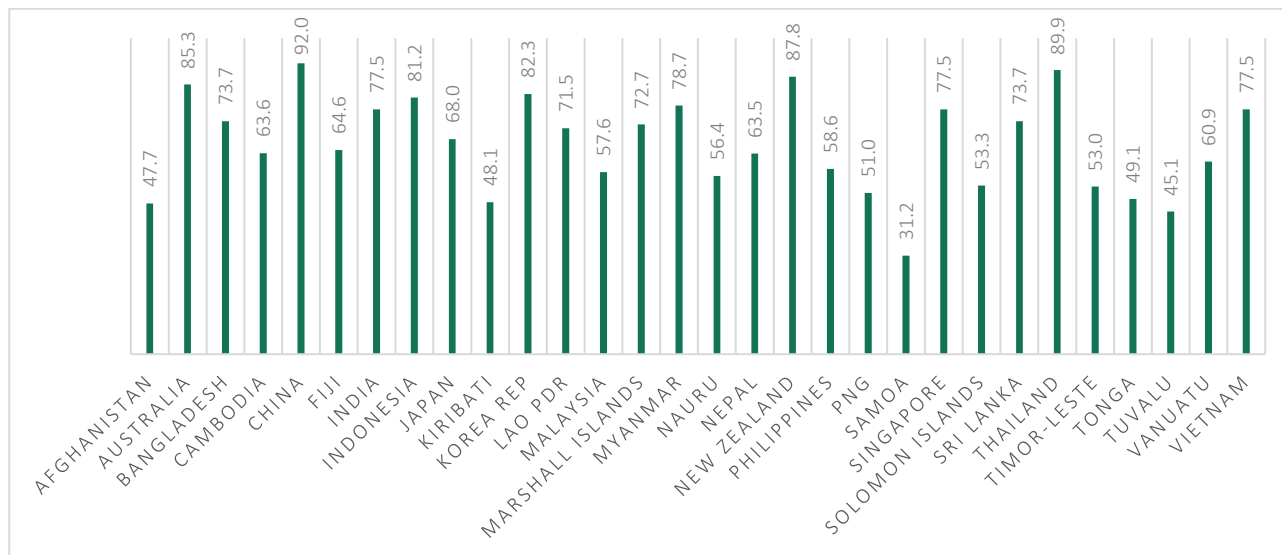
Contraceptive information and services are regarded as fundamental to health and human rights by helping women and men determine the number of children that they have, and the spacing of pregnancies. Delaying pregnancy in young women (Figure 29) is especially important as they are at greater risk of health problems from early childbearing. Older women can also be at increased risk.

47 Births attended by skilled health personnel (who.int)

In 2017, the WHO estimated that 214 million women of reproductive age in developing countries had unmet needs for contraception.⁴⁸ Data from the region show that unmet needs for family planning are high – at over 20 per cent in at least eight countries (Figure 28).

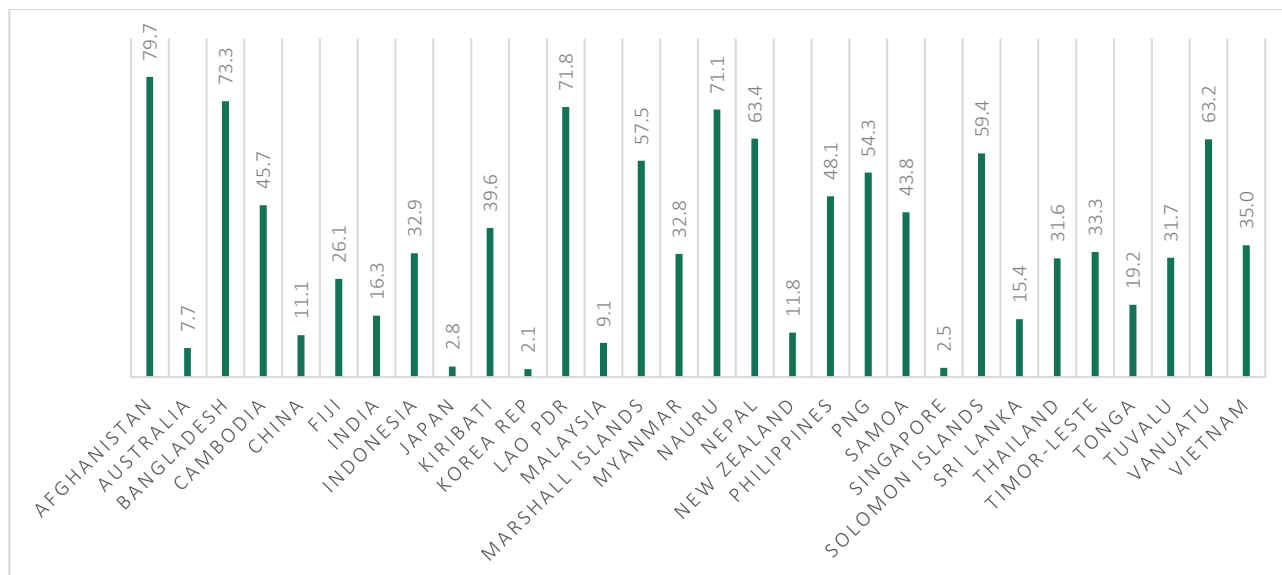
The COVID–19 pandemic disrupted sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, reducing access to abortion, contraceptives, HIV/STI testing and triggering changes in sexual behaviours, menstruation, and pregnancy intentions.⁴⁹ This experience demonstrated the need for emergency responses to enact policies that are equitable and inclusive of SRH considerations.

Figure 28 Women of reproductive age whose need for family planning is satisfied with modern methods



Source: The paths to equal: Twin indices on women’s empowerment and gender equality | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters Annex: Tables

Figure 29 Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15–19)



Source: The paths to equal: Twin indices on women’s empowerment and gender equality | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters Annex: Tables

48 Contraception (who.int)

49 See for example, Reproductive justice in the time of COVID–19: a systematic review of the indirect impacts of COVID–19 on sexual and reproductive health | Reproductive Health | Full Text (biomedcentral.com)

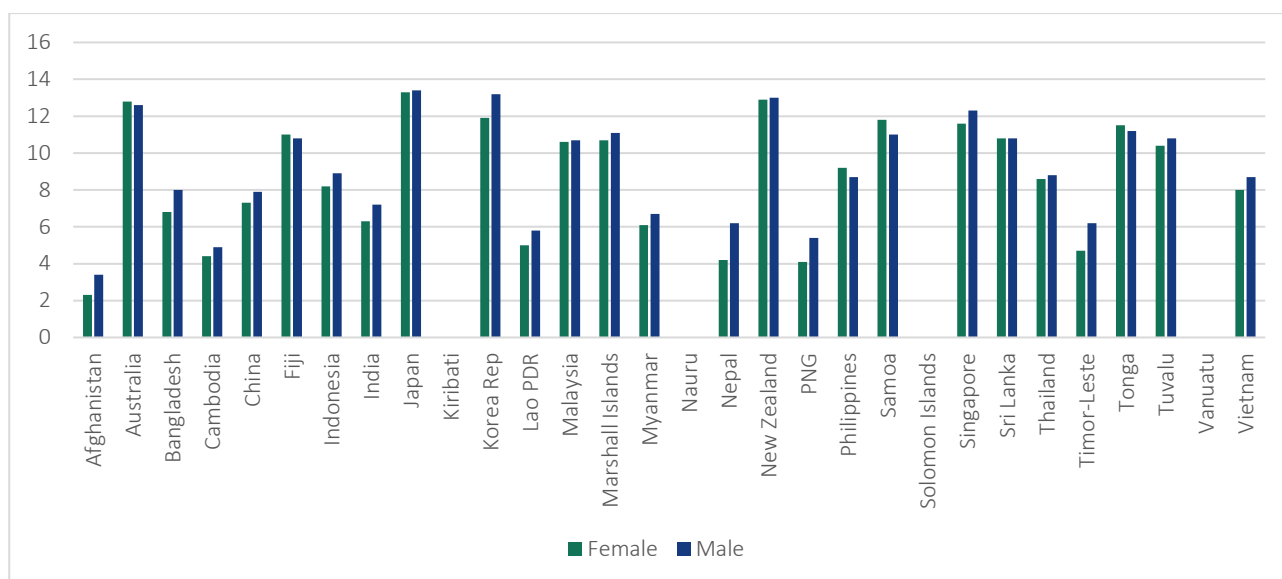
Reproductive rights are discussed above. See also Table 3.

7 Key Issues: Education

As noted above, most countries in the study guarantee free education, ranging from 13 years of free education in Australia, New Zealand and Sri Lanka, down to 5 years in Bangladesh and Myanmar. (Annex 1 Figure 57) In practice, there are a range of factors that influence the number of years that children stay in school as well as the quality of education that they receive.

The data show that in most countries in the study, boys receive more schooling than girls.

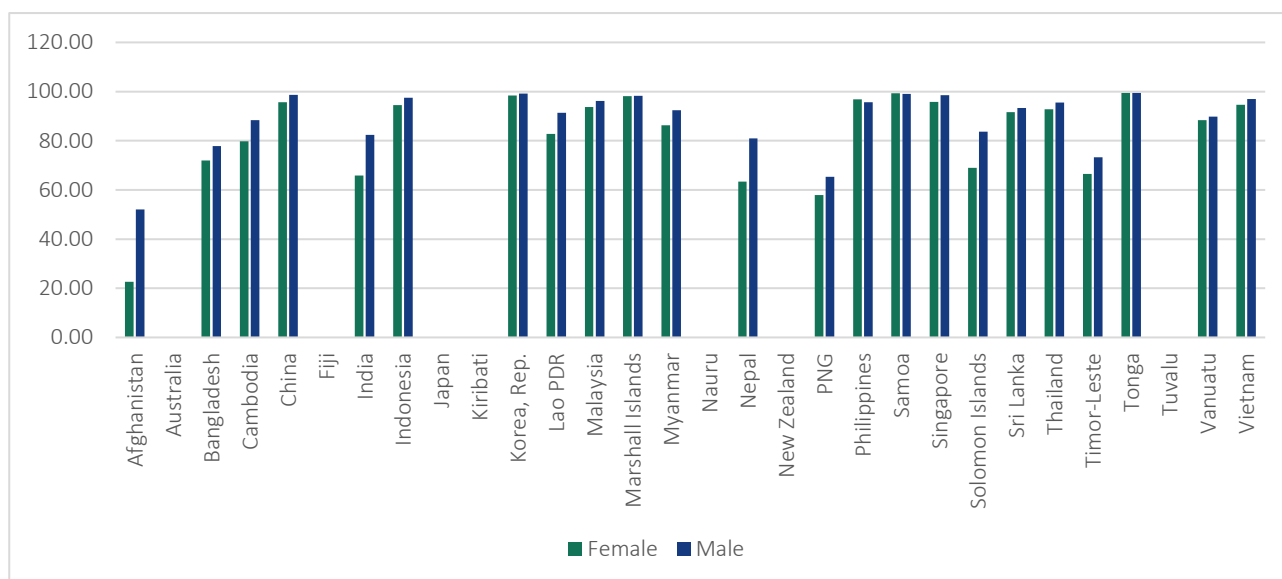
Figure 30 Mean years of schooling



Source: Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Literacy is used to evaluate educational attainment and it can predict the quality of the future labour force. Literacy - which generally includes numeracy - can also be used as a proxy instrument to assess the effectiveness of the education system. In practice, literacy is difficult to measure, and different countries use different definitions and methods of data collection. The World Bank, among others, provides data on literacy rates in the region (Figure 31), however it emphasises that data should be used cautiously.⁵⁰

Figure 31 Literacy rate, adult (% of adults ages 15 and above)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (Data extends back to 2009 for Solomon Islands, 2010 for PNG and 2011 for Marshall Islands) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)⁵¹

The Educational and Quality Assessment Programme (EQAP) administers an assessment of literacy and numeracy across 12 Pacific Island countries. This longitudinal study will track progress in the literacy and numeracy skills of Year 4 and Year 6 students and has, so far, reported in 2012, 2015 and 2018.⁵²

Results from 2018 show that, on average, girls in the Pacific region have higher levels of literacy and numeracy than boys. However, as many as 28 per cent of girls and 46 per cent of boys performed at the lowest proficiency level for literacy.⁵³

In the Pacific, around 28 per cent of girls and 46 per cent of boys perform at the lowest proficiency level for literacy.

The results show that around 86 per cent of Year 4 girls, compared to around 80 per cent of Year 4 boys performed at or above the expected minimum proficiency for numeracy.⁵⁴ Similar rates for numeracy were attained for Year 6: 87 per cent for girls and 80 per cent for boys.⁵⁵ Only 60 per cent of Year 4 girls and 46 per cent of Year 4 boys met or exceeded proficiency expectations for literacy. This increased for Year 6 to 71 per cent of girls and 55 per cent of boys meeting or exceeding proficiency in literacy.⁵⁶

Completion rates are, overall, higher in primary education and decrease as children progress through lower secondary and upper secondary school. Of the countries of focus in this study, Afghanistan and PNG stand out as having poor completion rates. With the exception of Afghanistan, completion rates for girls are higher or on par with those for boys.

See Figure 32 below for completion rates for primary education. Completion rates for secondary education are in Annex 1, Figure 59 and Figure 60.

51 Generally, literacy also encompasses numeracy, the ability to make simple arithmetic calculations. In practice, literacy is difficult to measure. Estimating literacy rates requires census or survey measurements under controlled conditions. Many countries report the number of literate people from self-reported data. Some use educational attainment data as a proxy but apply different lengths of school attendance or levels of completion. And there is a trend among recent national and international surveys toward using a direct reading test of literacy skills. Because definitions and methods of data collection differ across countries, data should be used cautiously.

52 Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment | Educational Quality & Assessment Programme | Pacific Community (SPC)

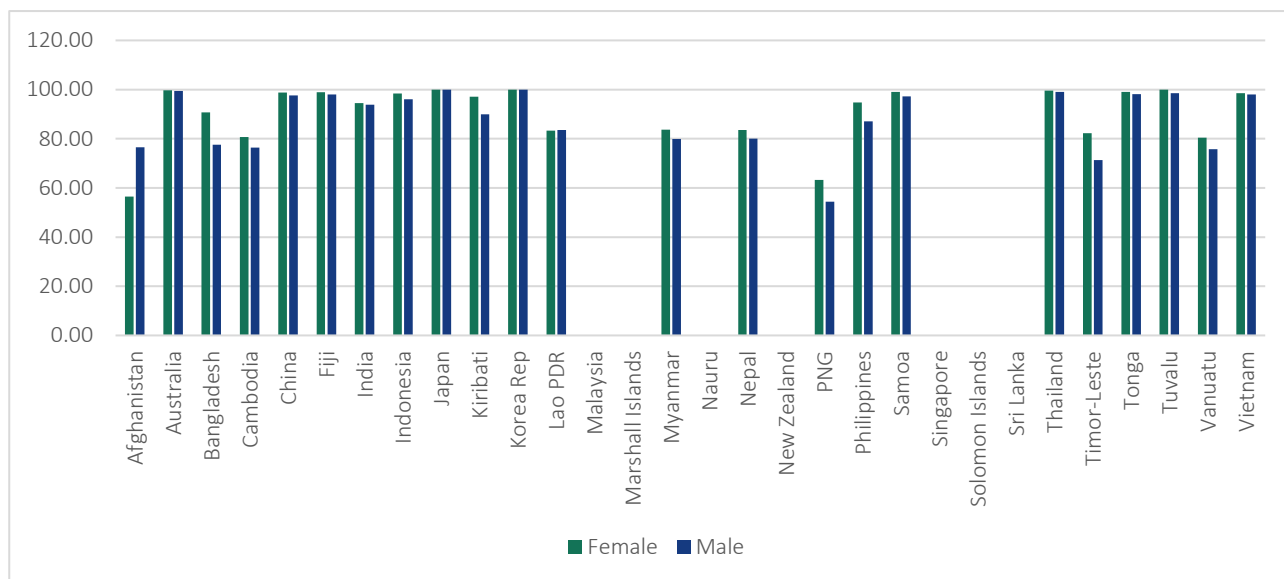
53 PILNA Regional Report 2018.pdf (spc.int) p39

54 PILNA Regional Report 2018.pdf (spc.int) p22

55 PILNA Regional Report 2018.pdf (spc.int) p31

56 PILNA Regional Report 2018.pdf (spc.int) p47

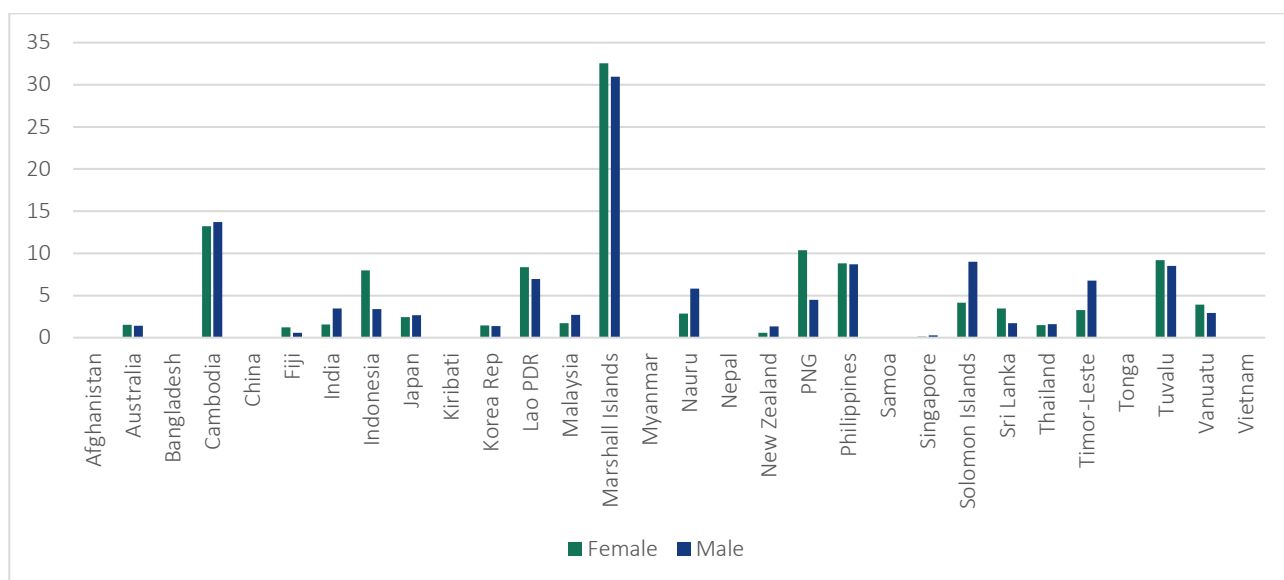
Figure 32 Completion rate, primary education (%)



Source: sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Data on out-of-school rates vary considerably, with Marshall Islands standing out as having a very high out-of-school rate. In contrast to completion rates, there is inconsistency in the rates of girls compared to boys staying out of school: in Indonesia and PNG, girls far outnumber boys, but in Solomon Islands and India boys are more likely to be out of school.

Figure 33 Out-of-school rate for children of primary school age (%)



Source: sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

8 Key Issues: Gender-based Violence

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the extent to which women, men and people of diverse gender and sexual orientation can feel unsafe in private and public spaces. The prevalence of gender-based violence

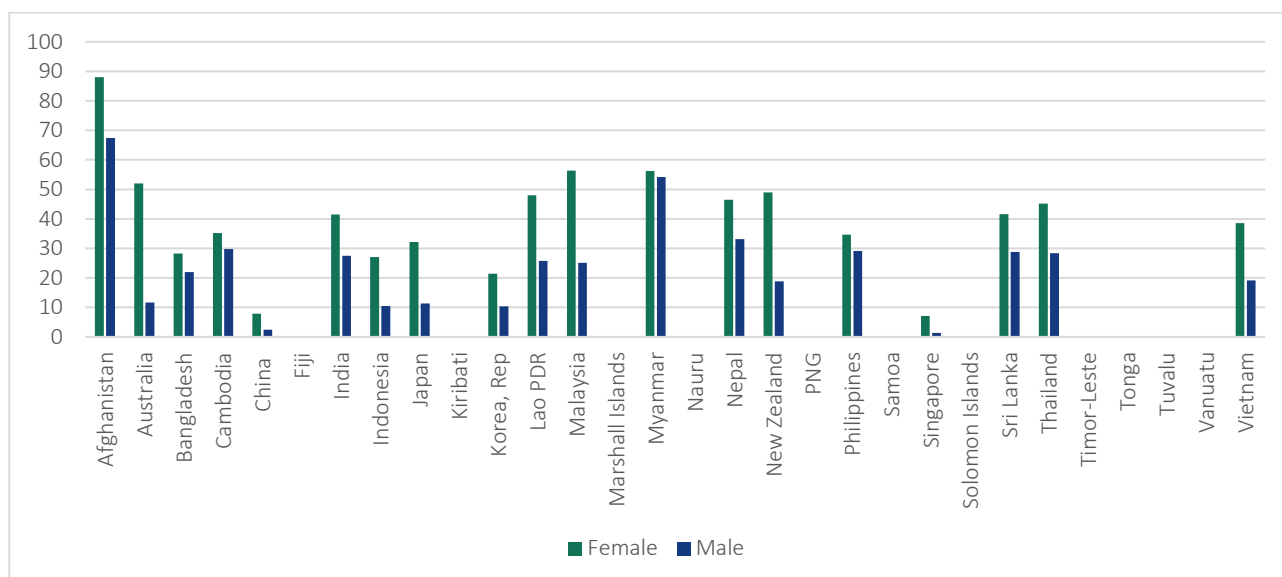
became so severe in the early stages of the pandemic that UN Secretary General Guterres and UN Women former Executive Director coined the term ‘shadow pandemic.’⁵⁷

Gender-based violence is rooted in gender inequality, but it can be exacerbated or triggered by external stresses. These can include factors such as alcohol consumption or financial stress. The COVID–19 pandemic provided an example of this. In 2021, following a rapid survey across 13 countries, UN Women reported that 40 per cent of women felt less safe in public spaces and 25 per cent of women reported that household conflicts had increased.⁵⁸

Gender-based violence is a violation of human rights and the impacts are profound and long-term. Gender-based violence impacts health and productivity, and it prevents people from participating in social, political and economic life. It comes at considerable cost to the economy: in Australia, violence against women and their children costs the economy an estimated 13.6 billion annually.⁵⁹

The Gender, Institutions and Development Database provides data on feelings of security as part of its assessment of civil liberties. The available data show that both women and men can feel unsafe walking alone at night, although in some countries the proportion of women to men is considerably higher.

Figure 34 Feel unsafe walking alone at night



Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (A score of 0 signifies no data available)⁶⁰

8.1 Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV) includes physical, sexual, emotional and economic abuse and controlling behaviours by a spouse or partner. Women overwhelmingly bear the burden of IPV, although women can sometimes be perpetrators and violence can occur within same-sex male relationships. Men are more likely to experience violence by strangers or acquaintances than from an intimate partner.

Globally, around 30 per cent of women have been subjected to intimate partner violence at least once in their lifetime.⁶¹

57 UN Women, 2021, Measuring the Shadow Pandemic: Violence Against Women during COVID–19, Measuring-shadow-pandemic.pdf (unwomen.org) p3

58 UN Women, 2021, Measuring the Shadow Pandemic: Violence Against Women during COVID–19, Measuring-shadow-pandemic.pdf (unwomen.org) p5

59 Economic cost of violence against women and their children | Department of Social Services, Australian Government (dss.gov.au)

60 Percentage of women and men declaring not feeling safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live.

61 Facts and figures: Ending violence against women | What we do | UN Women – Headquarters

The Indo-Pacific region experiences some of the highest rates of IVP in the world (Table 5).

In Afghanistan, Kiribati, PNG, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu, **more than 40 per cent of women** experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in the last 12 months.

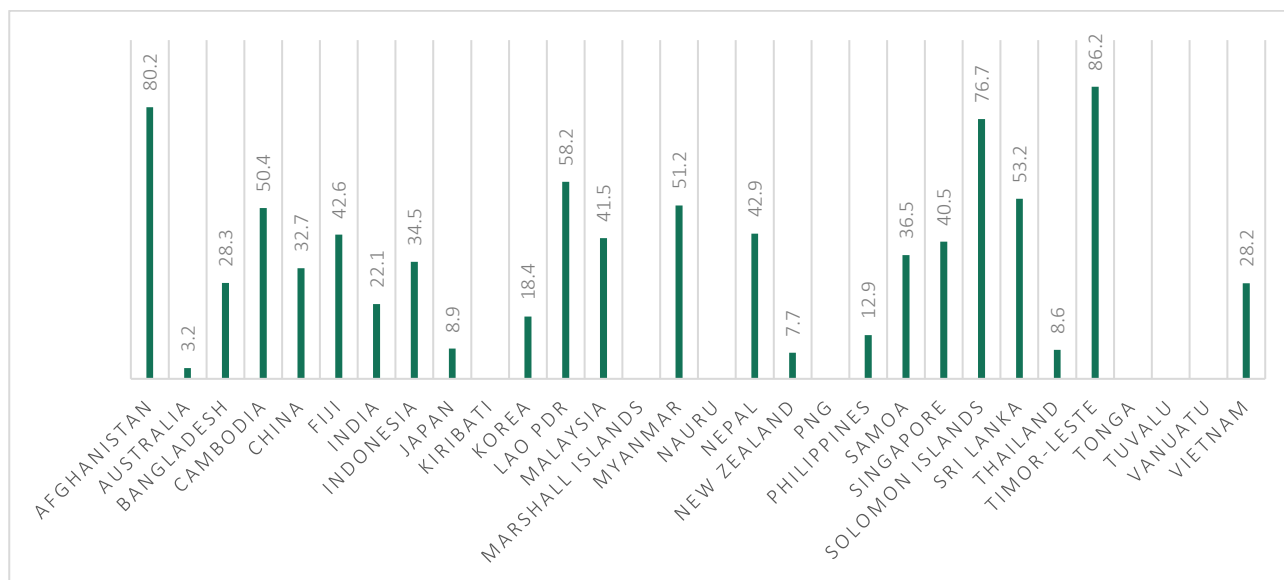
Table 5 Women who have experienced intimate partner violence, 2000–2020

Country	Age group	Psychological violence		Physical violence		Sexual violence		Physical and/or sexual violence	
		Lifetime	Last 12 months	Lifetime	Last 12 months	Lifetime	Last 12 months	Lifetime	Last 12 months
Afghanistan	15–49	37.3	34.4	50.5	45.8	7.5	6.1	50.8	46.1
Australia [^]	15+	-	-	-	-	-	-	17.1	-
Bangladesh	15+	28.7	24.2	49.6	20.8	27.2	13.3	54.2	26.9
Cambodia	15–64	32.0	14.7	15.0	4.7	10.2	4.1	20.9	7.7
China	15–49	38.3	10.0	35.2	6.8	14.0	1.9	38.7	8.7
Fiji	18–64	58.3	28.8	61.1	19.4	33.9	14.2	64.1	23.7
India	15–49	12.7	10.5	27.6	20.6	6.5	5.0	28.8	21.8
Indonesia	15–64	20.5	7.5	12.3	1.8	10.6	3.8	18.3	4.9
Japan	18–49	34.7	15.4	12.9	3.1	6.2	1.3	15.4	3.8
Kiribati	15–49	51.4	38.6	58.5	39.4	29.9	21.4	61.0	43.4
Korea, Rep.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lao PDR	15–64	26.2	10.5	11.6	4.0	7.2	3.1	15.3	6.0
Malaysia [^]	15+	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.7	-
Marshall Islands	15–64	47.6	22.1	48.1	16.2	20.6	5.9	50.9	18.2
Myanmar	15–49	13.5	10.2	16.3	10.2	3.5	2.2	17.3	11.0
Nauru	15–64	-	-	46.6	20.6	20.6	9.9	48.1	22.1
Nepal	15–49	12.3	7.7	23.6	10.0	7.7	4.0	25.0	11.2
New Zealand [^]	15+	-	-	-	-	-	-	19.4	-
PNG	15–49	51.1	43.7	55.7	44.4	30.6	24.2	58.3	47.6
Philippines	15–49	21.6	12.9	13.5	4.4	5.2	2.2	14.8	5.5
Samoa	15–49	19.6	12.3	40.5	17.9	19.5	11.5	46.1	22.4
Singapore [^]	15+	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.4	-
Solomon Islands	15–49	56.1	42.6	45.5	-	54.7	-	63.5	41.8
Sri Lanka	18–49	30.0	9.6	20.8	5.1	17.9	15.0	27.8	18.4
Thailand	15–49	38.0	20.0	28.4	10.7	29.4	16.4	44.0	22.0
Timor-Leste	15–49	55.4	44.0	48.7	35.8	40.5	31.4	58.8	46.4
Tonga	15–49	24.0	13.0	33.4	12.5	16.5	11.0	39.6	18.9
Tuvalu	15–49	28.1	23.1	33.3	23.8	10.0	5.1	36.8	25.0
Vanuatu	15–49	68.0	54.0	51.0	33.0	44.0	33.0	60.0	44.0
Vietnam	15–64	47.0	19.3	26.1	4.6	13.3	5.7	32.0	8.9

Source: knowvawdata_regional_vaw_map_july_29_2020_final.pdf Data for Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand and Singapore are modelled estimates, sourced from Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

As noted above, gender-based violence is underpinned by gender inequality, which is in turn perpetuated by institutions as well as social norms and attitudes. Social norms and attitudes can be deeply embedded within societies and individuals to the point that attitudes that are detrimental to women can sometimes be held by women themselves. In all countries in the study where data are available, a proportion of women believe that a husband is justified in hitting his wife in some circumstances. In Timor-Leste over 80 per cent of women hold this belief and in at least seven countries at least 50 per cent of women hold this belief (Figure 35).

Figure 35 Percentage of women aged 15–49 years who consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one of the specified reasons



Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (A score of 0 signifies no data available)⁶²

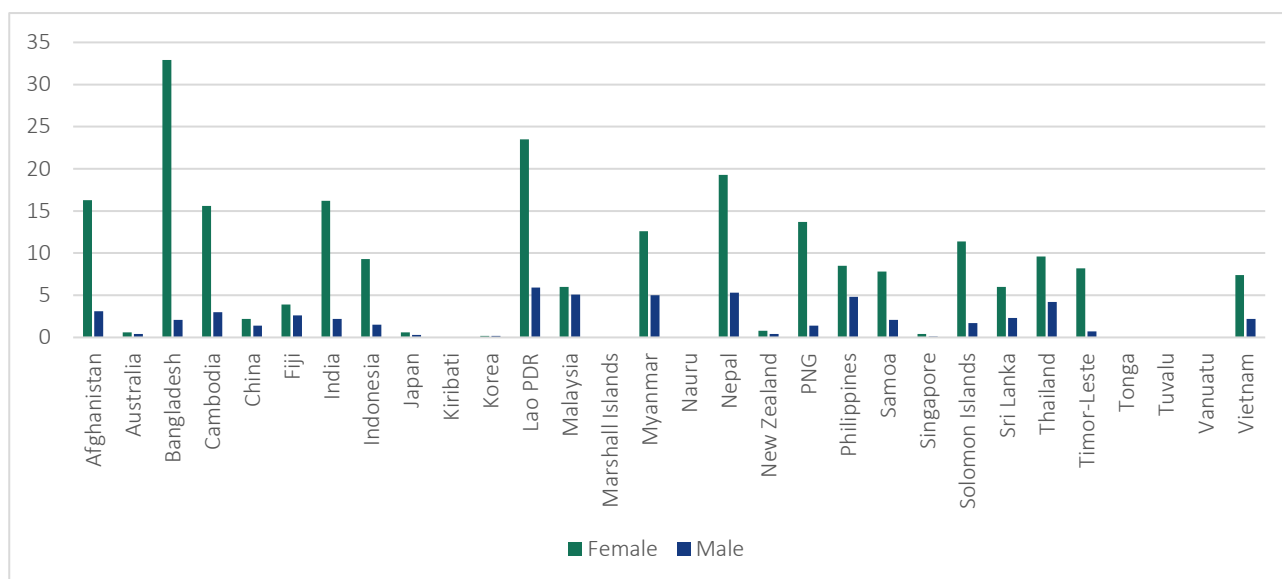
8.2 Child Marriage

Child marriage is a breach of human rights and is considered to be a form of gender-based violence. Child marriage is more common for girls than for boys. As discussed above, all countries have legislated a minimum age for marriage, ranging from a low of 15 for women and men in Solomon Islands and Tonga, to 22 for men in China (Table 2 p6). Most countries provide legal exemptions, which allow girls and boys to marry earlier under specified circumstances. But in some countries, social norms and economic pressures outweigh concerns of the law. Child marriages can be widespread during times of conflict or in humanitarian settings⁶³ and, as discussed further below, climate change is also having an impact on the prevalence of child marriage.

⁶² Percentage of women aged 15–49 years who consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one of the specified reasons, i.e., if his wife burns the food, argues with him, goes out without telling him, neglects the children or refuses sexual relations.

⁶³ Child and forced marriage, including in humanitarian settings | OHCHR

Figure 36 Prevalence of child marriage (15–19 years old)

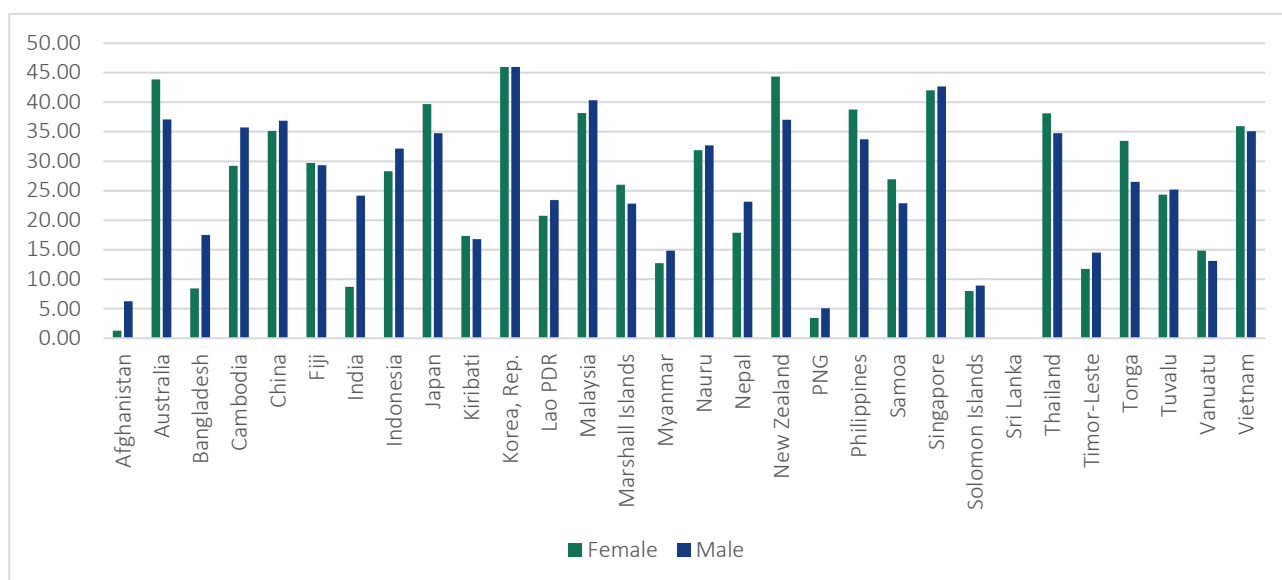


Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (A score of 0 signifies no data available)⁶⁴

8.3 On-line Violence

On-line violence is a growing threat and is particularly felt by young women. In the countries of focus in this study, there are over 2 billion users of social media, of which just over 50 per cent are women. Figure 37 provides data on the proportion of the population that uses social media. Table 6 (Annex 1) provides a breakdown of total user numbers for widely used social media platforms.

Figure 37 Social media users, proportion of population



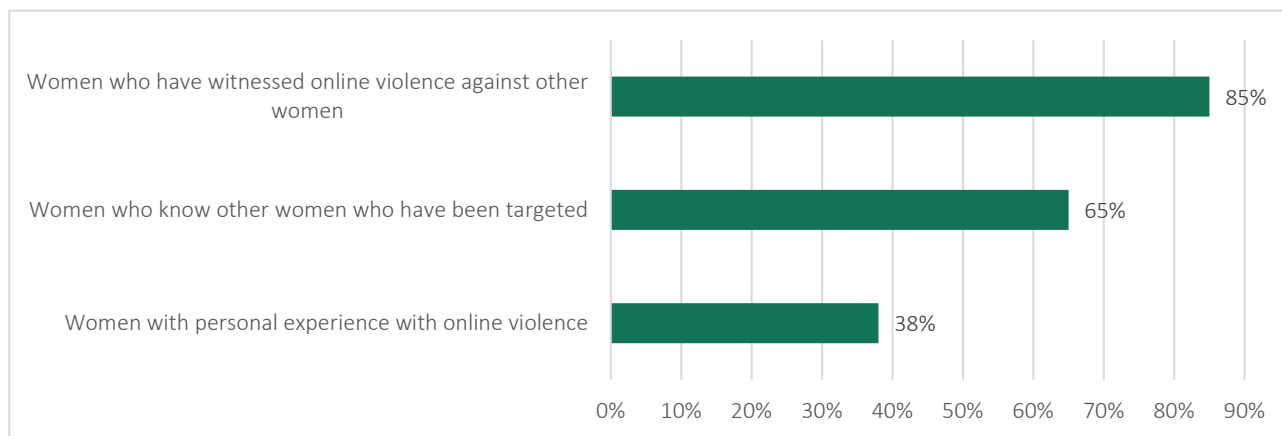
Source: DataReportal – Global Digital Insights (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Globally, almost 40 per cent of women have personal experience with online violence, and women in countries with higher levels of gender inequality are more likely to experience online violence. Those most at risk are young women, women in public life such as politicians, journalists and women’s rights activists, and

64 Percentage of girls and boys aged 15–19 years who have been or are still married, divorced, widowed or in an informal union

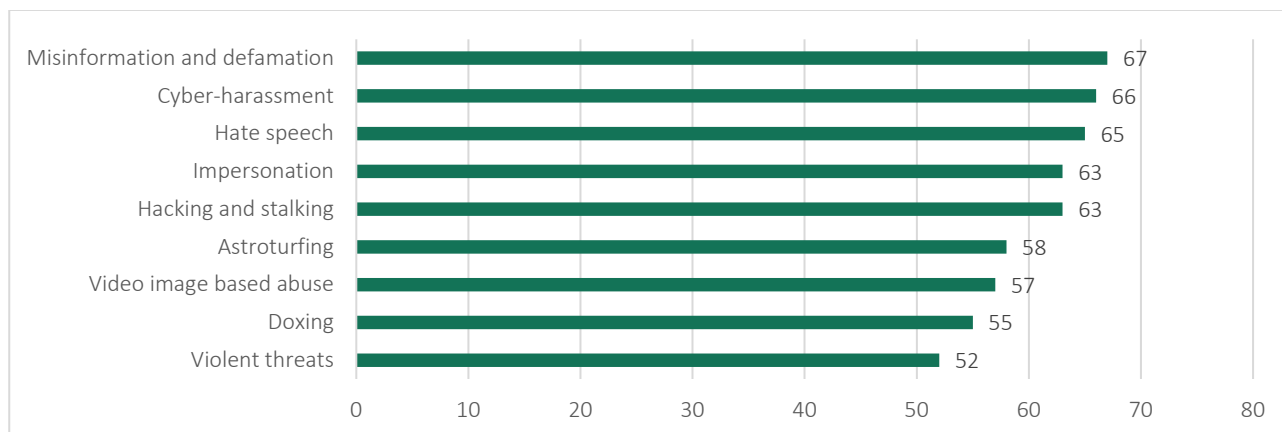
women belonging to ethnic minorities, indigenous women, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, and women with disabilities.

Figure 38 Global prevalence of online violence



Source: Measuring the prevalence of online violence against women (eiu.com)

Figure 39 Prevalence rate by threat tactic (%)



Source: Measuring the prevalence of online violence against women (eiu.com)

The impacts of online violence are far-reaching. Research by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)⁶⁵ found that more than 90 per cent of women report that online violence harms their sense of wellbeing. Critically, online violence is exacerbating the digital gender divide as 90 per cent of women restrict their online activity and the diversity of online spaces becomes limited. The EIU determined that online violence impacts the economy with 7 per cent of women changing their job due to online abuse, 35 per cent of women reporting mental health issues and 10 per cent of women experiencing physical harm as a result on online threats. Some countries and companies are developing regulations or strategies to address online violence, but the EIU found that these tend to focus on response rather than prevention.

8.4 Trafficking in Persons

Globally around 188,000 people were victims of trafficking during the period 2017–2020⁶⁶ and the majority of these were women and girls. The COVID–19 pandemic resulted in a drop in detected victims for the first

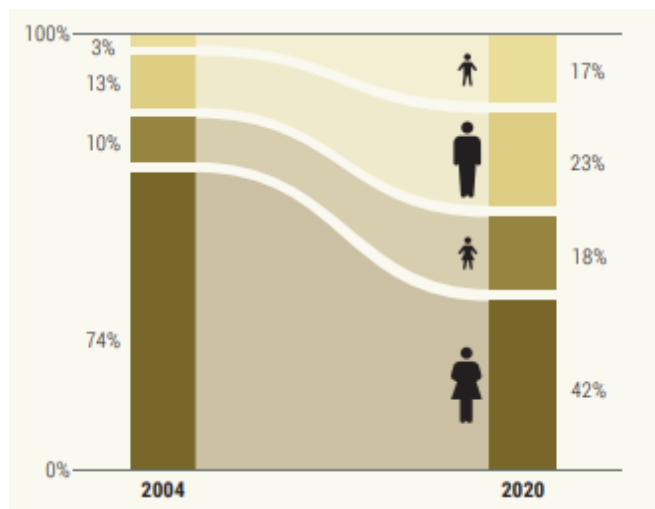
65 Measuring the prevalence of online violence against women (eiu.com)

66 GLOTIP_2022_web.pdf (unodc.org) p11

time in 20 years. It limited opportunities, but also pushed trafficking further underground and constrained the ability of law enforcement to target the crime.

Data collected by the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) revealed that the proportion of men and boys that became victims of trafficking increased over the decade to 2020.

Figure 40 Trends in the profile of trafficking victims detected, 2002–2020



Source: Reproduced from GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf (unodc.org) pXI
 Source: GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf (unodc.org)

Female victims are three time more likely than male victims to be subjected to physical or extreme violence at the hands of traffickers.	Children are subjected to physical or extreme violence at a rate almost two times higher than adults.
Climate change is escalating the risk of trafficking.	

9 Key Issues: Climate Change and Humanitarian Response

9.1 Climate change

The impacts of climate change are felt differently across regions, socio-economic groups, ages, and genders. Women can be especially vulnerable because pre-existing disadvantages become exacerbated.

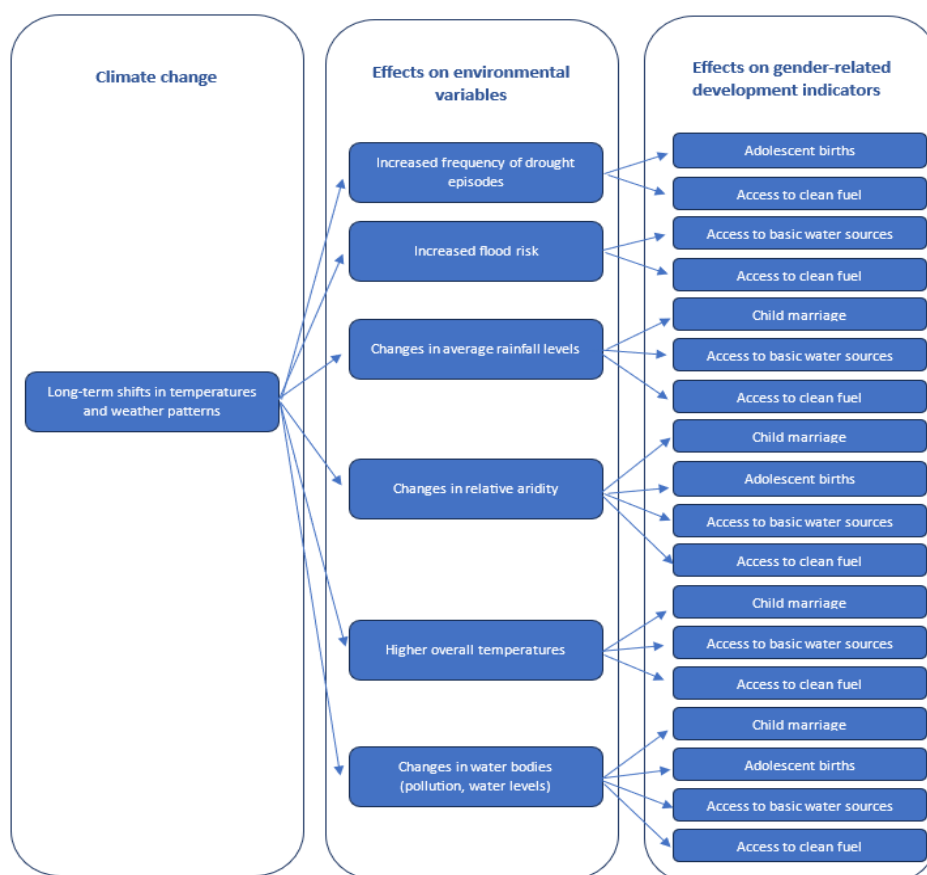
In 2021, 23.7 million people were internally displaced by weather induced natural disasters while many others crossed borders to escape climate-induced poverty.

Source: GLOTiP_2022_web.pdf (unodc.org)

Research published by UN Women, presented evidence of the gendered impacts of climate change in five countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Philippines and Timor-Leste. It found that climate-related factors are statistically associated with gender-related outcomes (Figure 41), emphasising the need for policy makers to address gender equality and climate change as associated issues.

As noted above, climate change is also increasing the risk of trafficking in persons.

Figure 41 The relationship between the impacts of climate change and gender-related development indicators



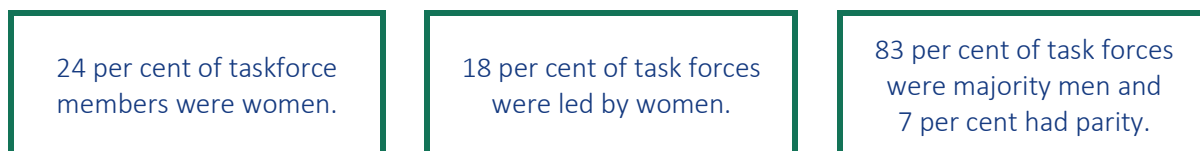
Source: Reproduced from UN Women, impact-climate-change-gender-asiapacific.pdf (unwomen.org)

9.2 Humanitarian Response

As with climate change, women can be more vulnerable than men in times of crisis because of pre-existing disadvantages. As such it is critical that humanitarian actions are gender responsive.

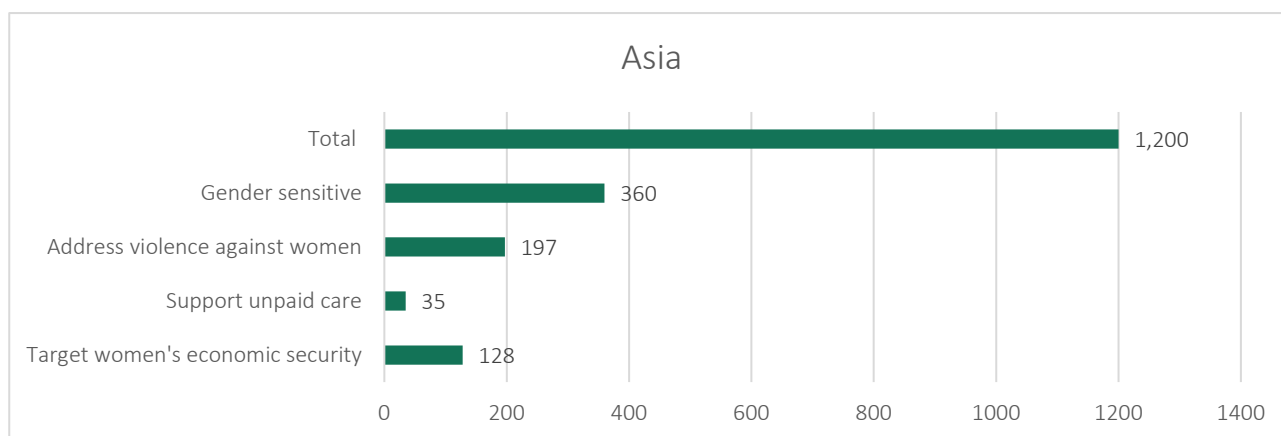
The COVID–19 Global Gender Response Tracker was set up by UNDP and UN Women to monitor measures taken by governments to tackle the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic. It captures two types of government responses: women’s participation in COVID–19 task forces, and national policy measures taken by governments.

Data from the tracker highlighted that, in spite of the evidence, knowledge and commitments around diversity in decision-making and gender-responsive policy, the majority of measures were not gender-responsive (Figure 42 and Figure 43) and women were under-represented in taskforces.



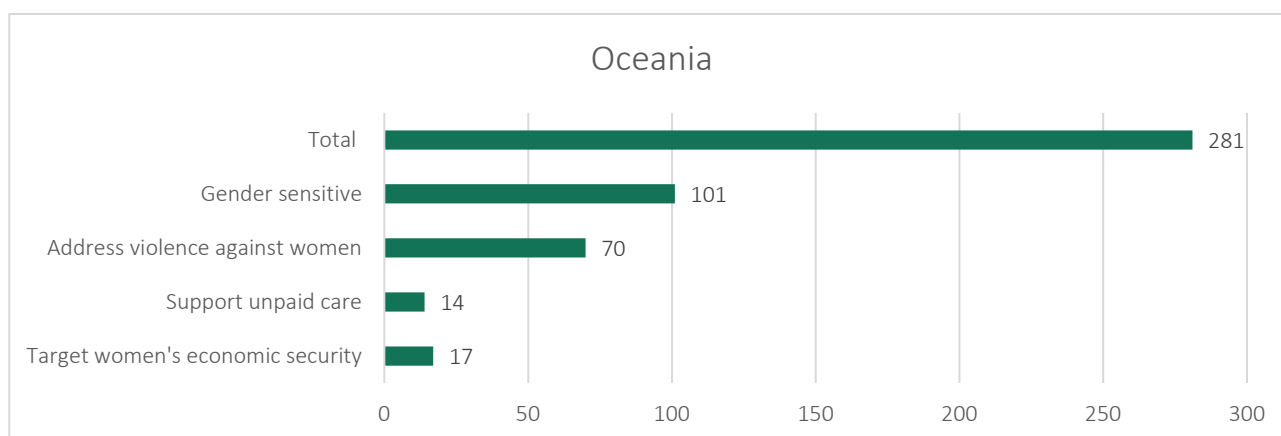
Source: undp-unwomen-upitt-covid19-task-force-participation-en-v3.pdf

Figure 42 Number of Gender-Sensitive COVID–19 Response Measures: Asia



Source: COVID–19 Global Gender Response Tracker - UNDP Data Futures Platform

Figure 43 Number of Gender-Sensitive COVID–19 Response Measures: Oceania



Source: COVID–19 Global Gender Response Tracker - UNDP Data Futures Platform

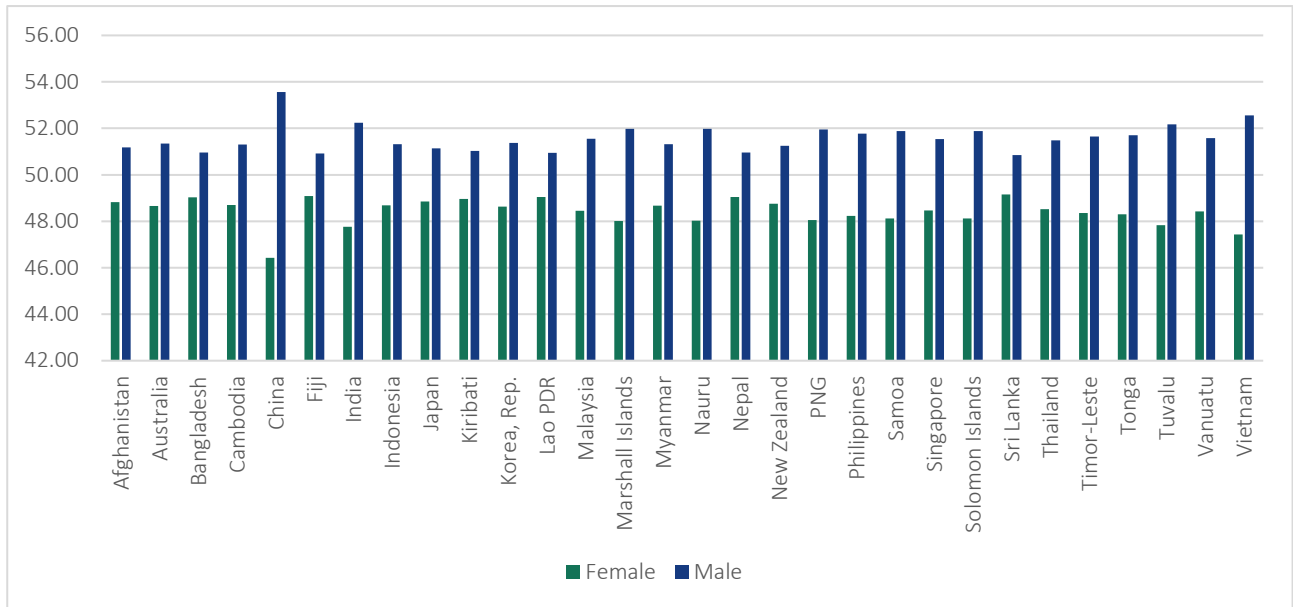
10 Key Issues: Population

10.1 Women and men as a proportion of the population

The global average for women as a proportion of the population is 50 per cent, but some countries in the region have slightly higher or lower percentages of women. Of the 30 countries of focus in this study, Nepal has the most women at 52 per cent and Singapore has the least at less than 48 per cent (Annex 1, Figure 61).

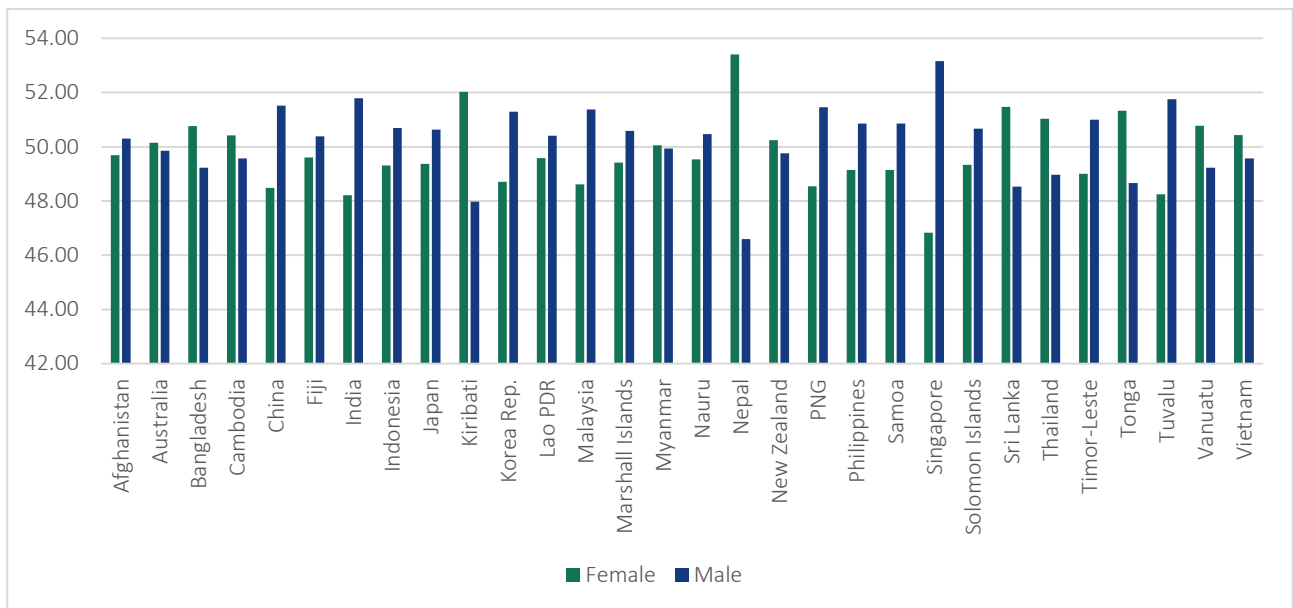
The proportion of women and men change as populations age. All countries in the study have more boys than girls in the 0–14 age range. This starts to change in the 15–64 demographic and then, in most countries, women outnumber men in the 65+ demographic. (Figure 44 to Figure 46). In all countries in the study, women live longer than men, with life expectancy ranging from a low of 64 (F) and 59 (M) in Afghanistan to a high of 87 (F) and 81 (M) in Japan. (Annex 1, Figure 62)

Figure 44 Sex-disaggregation of population ages 0–14



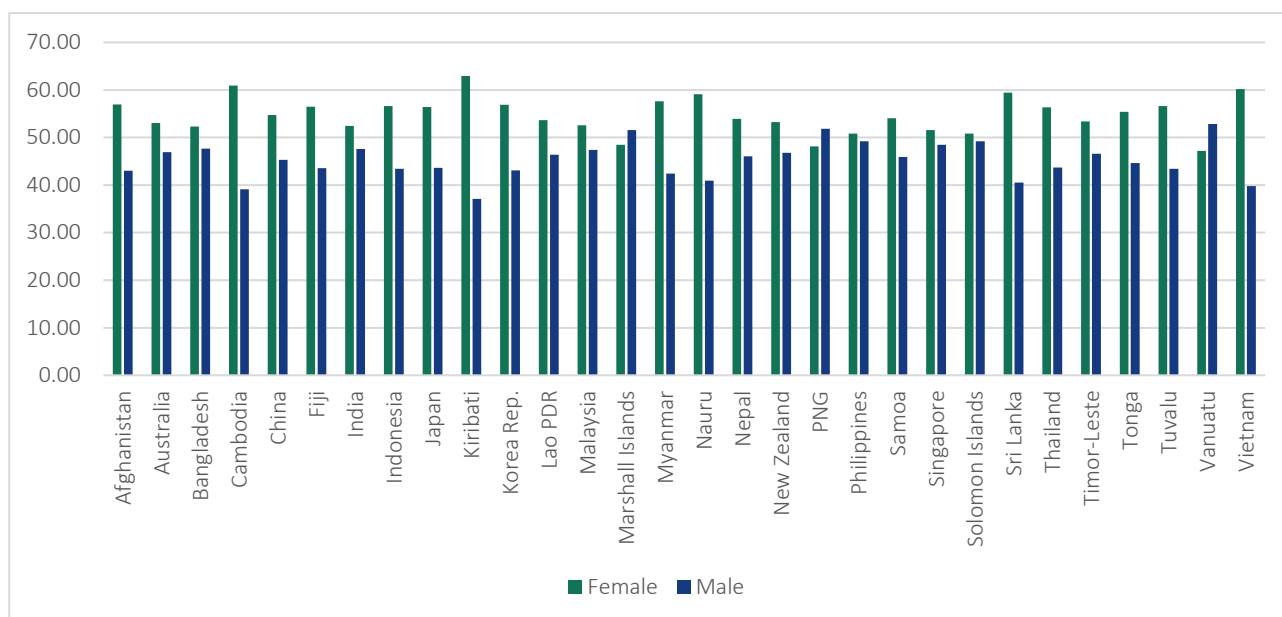
Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

Figure 45 Sex-disaggregation of population ages 15–64



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

Figure 46 Sex-disaggregation of population ages 65 and above



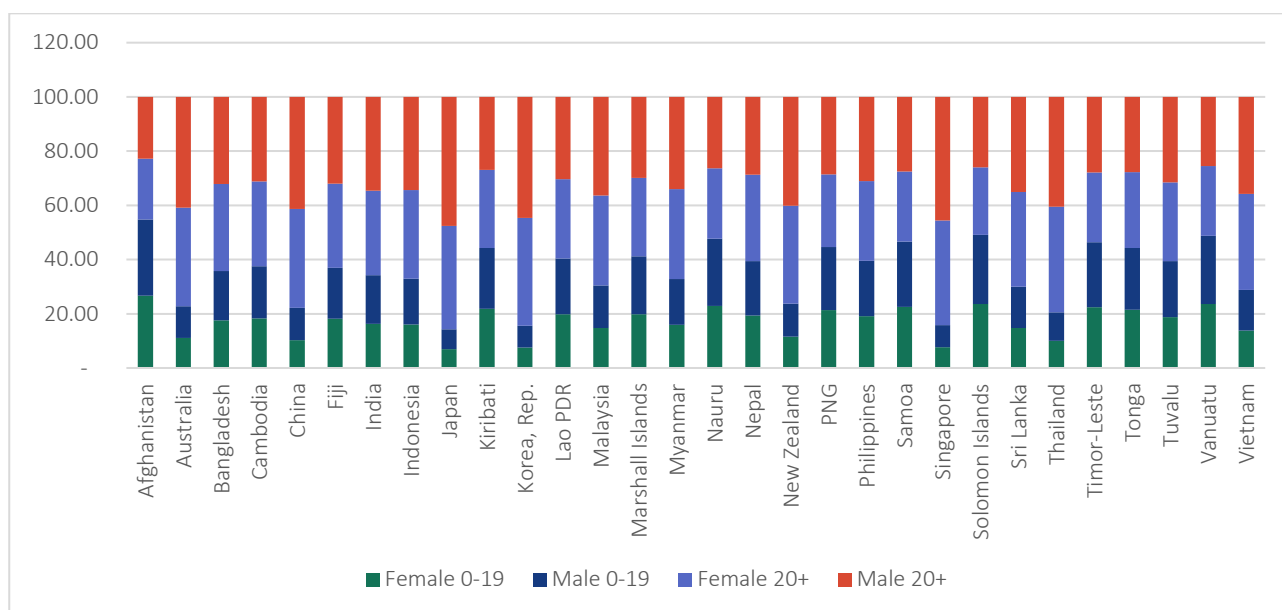
Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

10.2 A youth bulge or an aging population

The data on age demographics highlights the two dominant trends taking place across the region: countries are facing either a youth bulge, or an aging population. Both situations require policy responses and will have gendered implications.

The data show that the proportion of the population aged 19 and under varies from a high of 55 per cent in Afghanistan to a low of around 16 per cent in Japan, Korea and Singapore. Conversely the proportion of the population aged 20 and over ranges from a high of 45 per cent in Afghanistan to a low of around 86 per cent in Japan, Korea and Singapore.

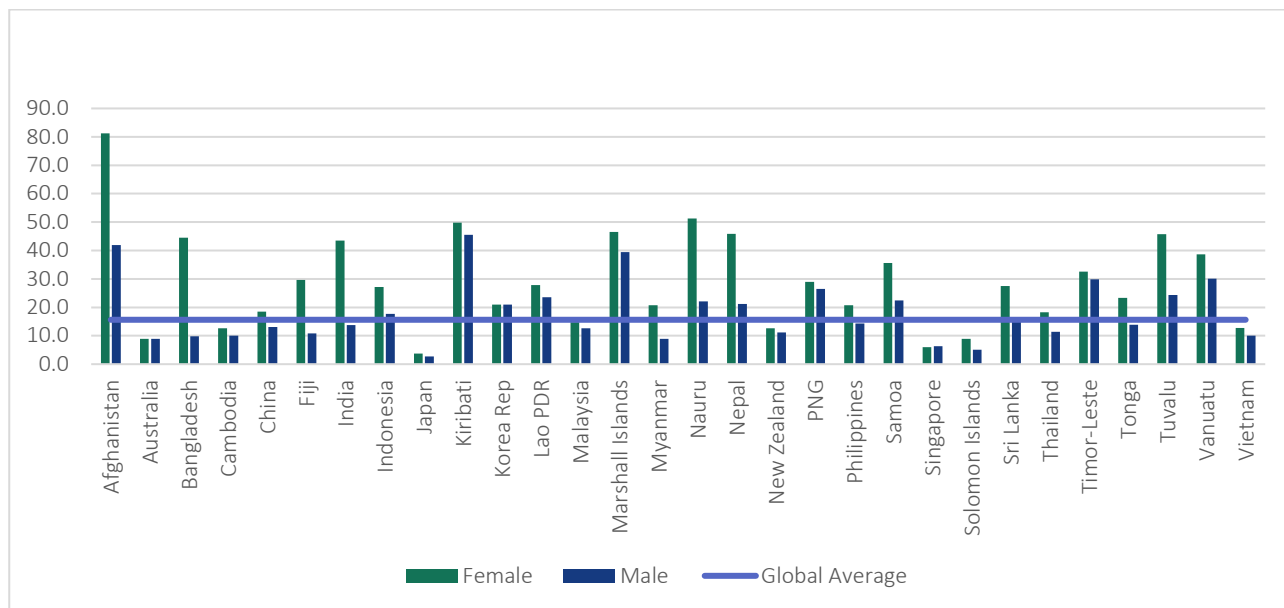
Figure 47 Population by age (%)



Youth bulges create challenges, especially for low-income countries which are already struggling to provide quality education systems and address high rates of youth unemployment. There is a common perception that large numbers of young men lead to a rise in violence - although this perception is challenged by some.

As shown in Figure 48, many countries in the region have high numbers of youth who are not in education, employment or training. Conversely, ageing populations create pressures on health systems and financing of social protection.

Figure 48 Youth not in education, employment or training



Source: The paths to equal: Twin indices on women’s empowerment and gender equality | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters Annex: Tables

There are undoubtedly gendered implications for youth bulges and aging populations. The data reveal gendered differences in areas such as employment and unemployment, education attainment, health outcomes, suicide rates, and online violence and these differences will play out across age demographics. However there appears to be limited open-source data that looks specifically at youth bulges and aging populations. This is potentially a gap that warrants additional research.

10.3 Urban and rural populations

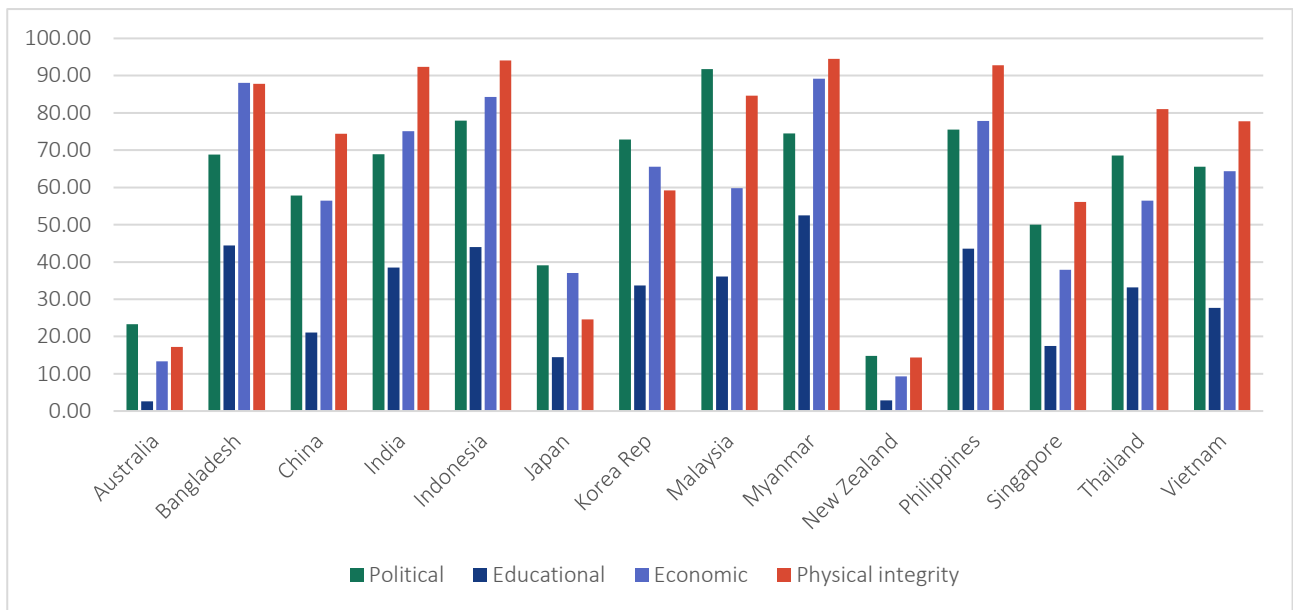
The rural/urban breakdown varies considerably, with Singapore having no rural population while most countries in the study have over 50 per cent of the population living in rural areas. There is little variation in the proportion of women and men who live in rural or urban areas, with the balance being around 50/50 in all countries. (Annex 1, Figure 63 and Figure 64)

11 Key Issues: Norms and Perceptions

Social norms and perceptions are integral to the creation and perpetuation of gender inequalities. As can be seen from institutions such as child marriage and attitudes to intimate-partner violence, social norms can sometimes carry more weight and credibility than legal frameworks or other formalised systems of the state.

The Gender Social Norms Index (Figure 49) quantifies biases against women. The Index comprises four dimensions— political, educational, economic and physical integrity. The Index is constructed based on responses to seven statements which are used to create seven indicators to inform the four dimensions. The seven statements are: men make better political leaders than women; women have the same rights as men; university is more important for a man than for a woman; men should have more right to a job than women; men make better business executives than women; a proxy statement for intimate partner violence; and a proxy statement for reproductive rights.

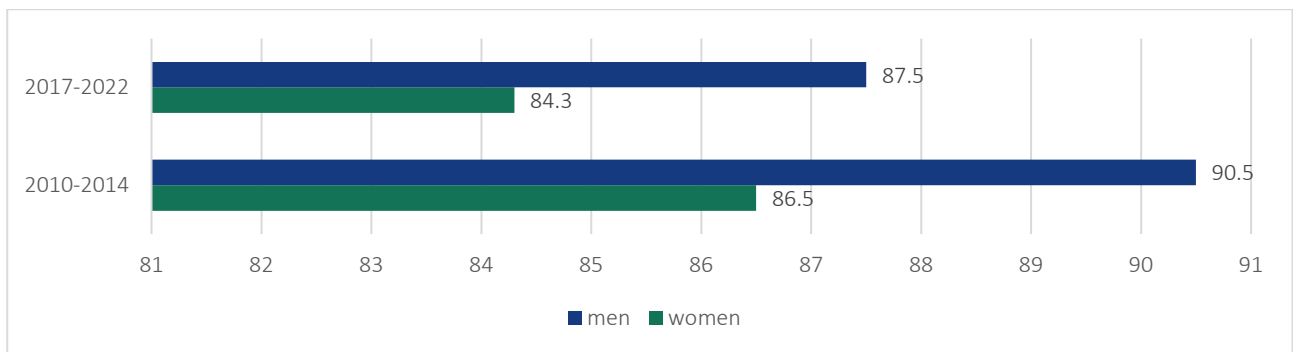
Figure 49 Gender Social Norms Index



Source: The paths to equal: Twin indices on women’s empowerment and gender equality | Publications | UN Women – Headquarters, Annex: Tables (All data for 2017–22 except for India: 2010–2014)

Using this methodology, the Gender Social Norms Index tracks attitudes over time. Two waves are covered by the Index: 2010–2014 and 2017–2022. The data reveal that, globally, there was a decrease in bias against gender equality over the period covered (Figure 50). However, at the country level, there were backlashes with some women and men becoming more biased against gender equality (Figure 51).⁶⁷ The data show that men are more likely to be biased against gender equality than women, highlighting the need to engage men in efforts to advance the status of women.

Figure 50 Percentage of people with at least one bias against gender equality

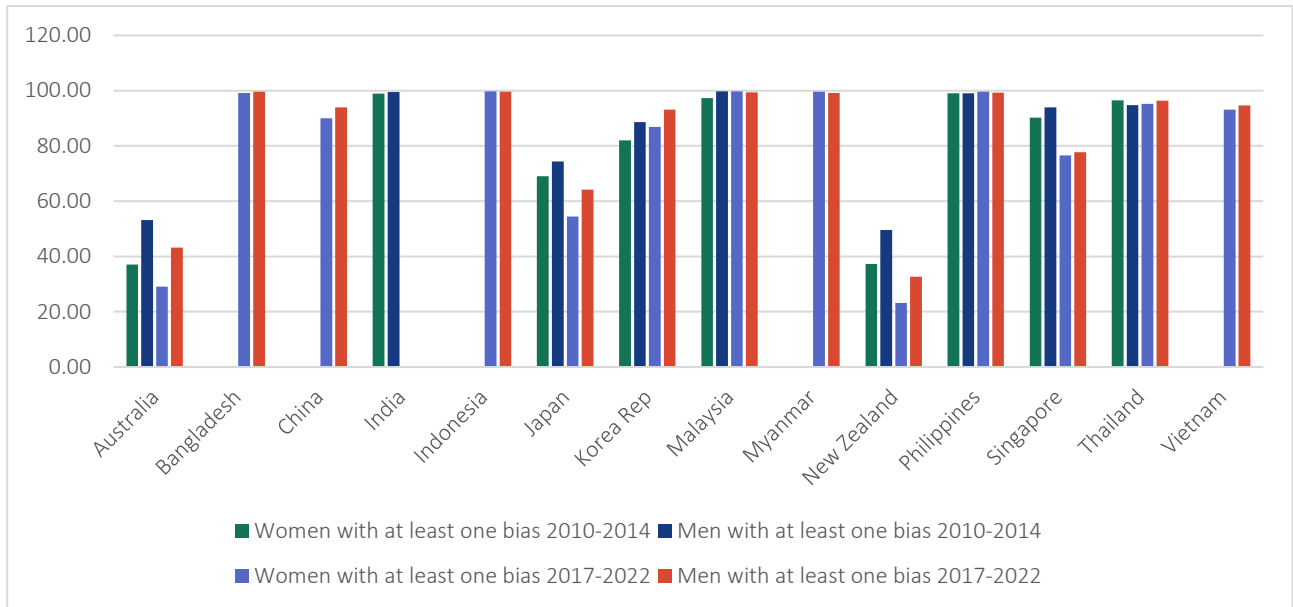


Source: Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org)⁶⁸

⁶⁷ See also Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org) p208

⁶⁸ Based on 37 countries and territories with data from wave 6 (2010–2014) and wave 7 (2017–2022) of the World Values Survey, accounting for 48 percent of the global population. Averages are weighted based on the population age 15 and older from United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs population data.

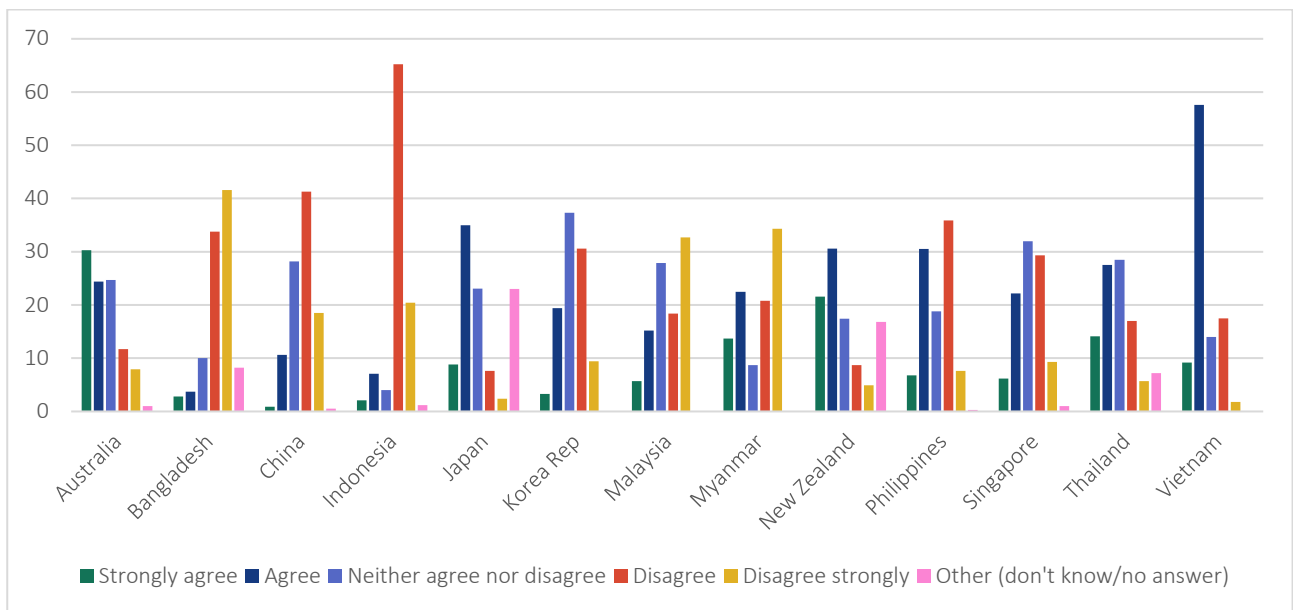
Figure 51 Women and men with at least one bias against gender equality 2010–2014 and 2017–2022



Source: 2023 Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) | Human Development Reports (undp.org)

The Gender Social Norms Index draws on data from the World Values Survey, which also collects data relevant to LGBTQI+. Figure 52 shows the variations across countries of attitudes to same-sex couples.

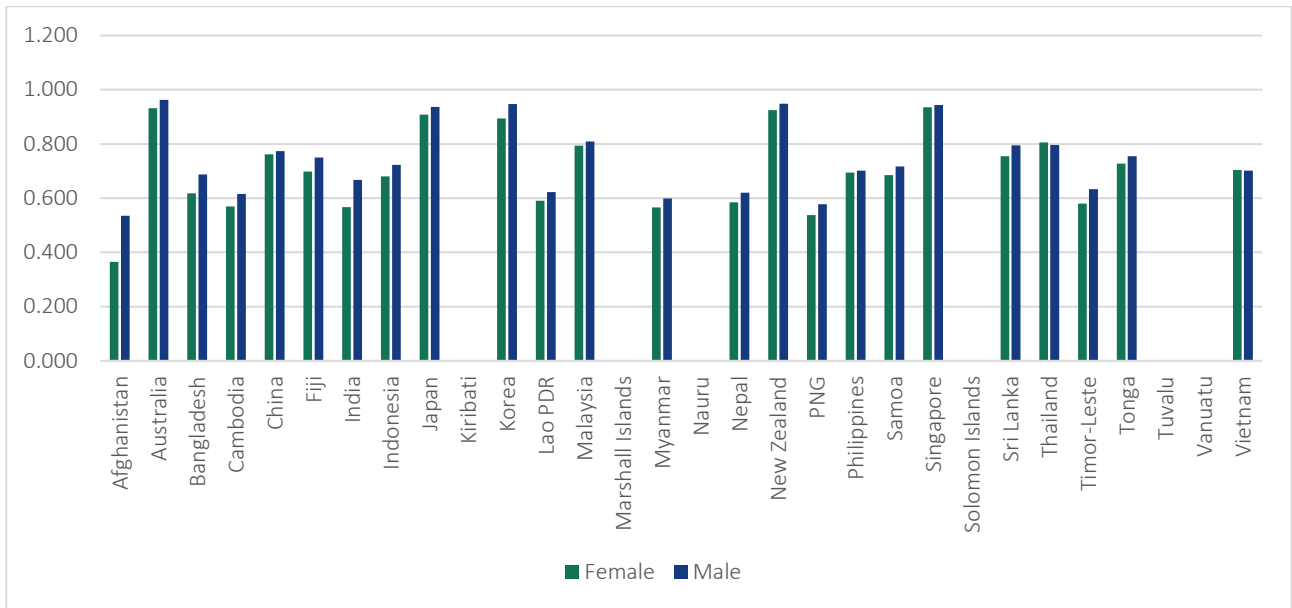
Figure 52 Attitudes to gender diversity: Responses to the statement ‘Homosexual couples are as good parents as other couples’



Source: World Values Survey WVS Database (worldvaluessurvey.org)

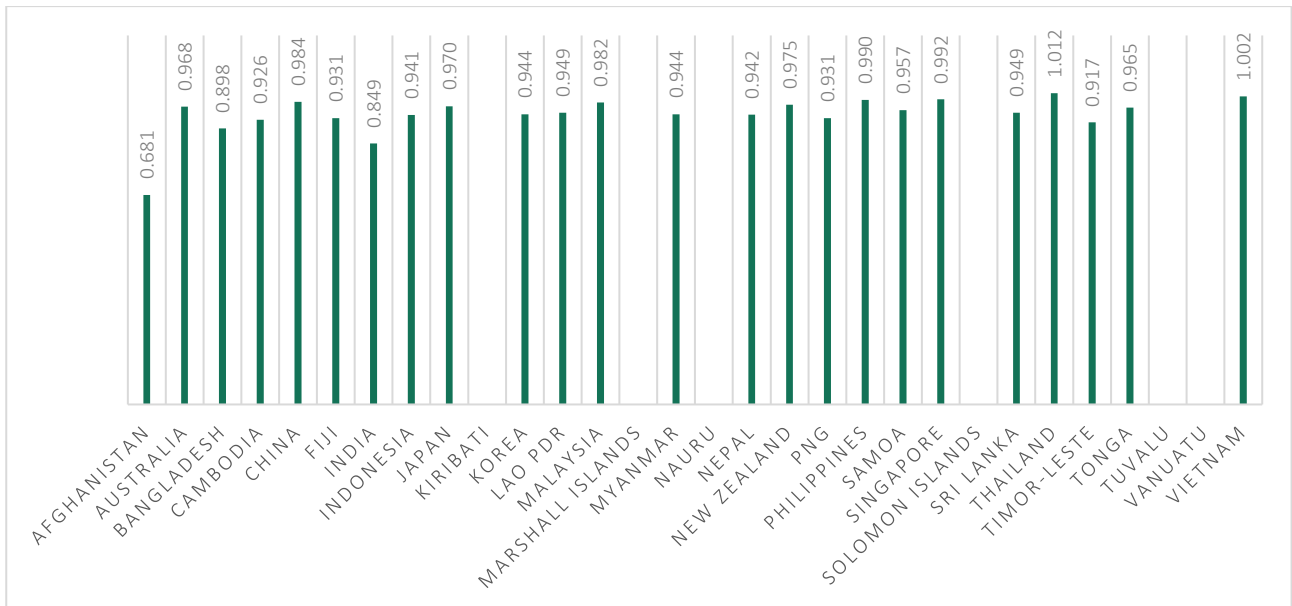
Annex 1 Title of Annex

Figure 53 Human Development Index



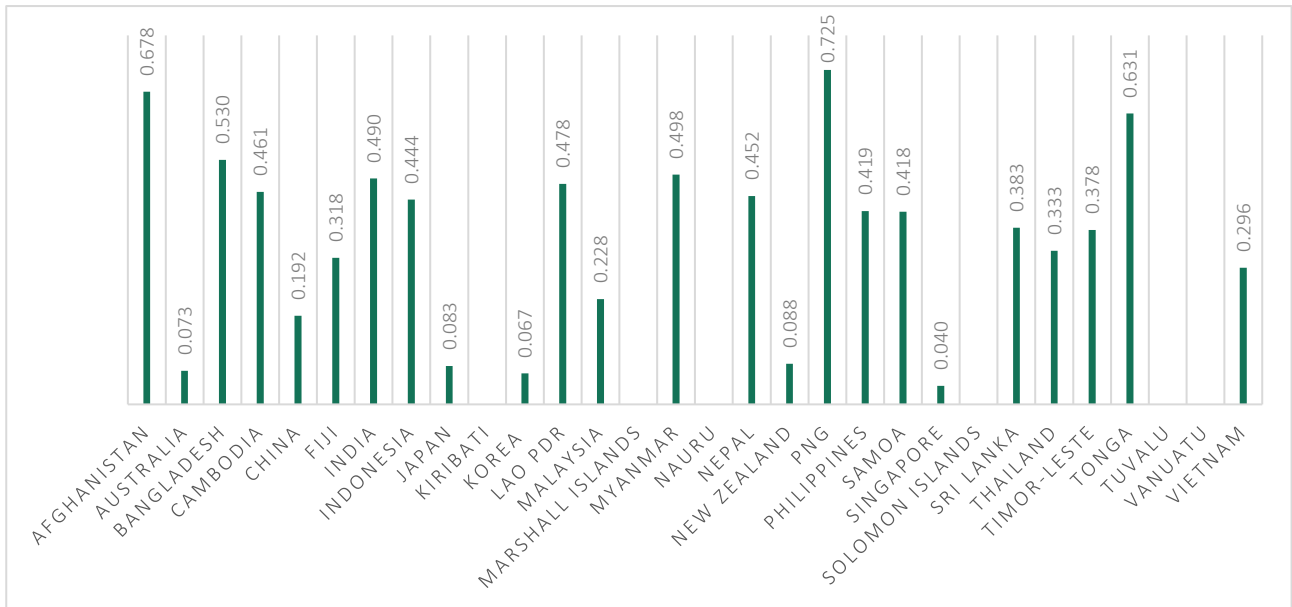
Source: Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Figure 54 Gender Development Index



Source: Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Figure 55 Gender Inequality Index



Source: Human Development Report 2021–22 | Human Development Reports (undp.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Table 6 Social media users by number and platform

	Social media female	Social media male	Facebook Female	Facebook male	Messenger female	Messenger male	Instagram female	Instagram male	Twitter female	Twitter male
Afghanistan	544,950	2,605,050	463,150	2,486,850	284,700	1,665,300	121,041	431,659		
Australia	11,544,600	9,755,400	7,926,800	12,560,700			6,547,300	5,102,700	1,664,250	3,585,750
Bangladesh	14,572,200	30,127,800	14,013,000	36,459,750	6,166,050	14,183,950	1,401,750	3,048,250	168,000	882,000
Cambodia	4,927,500	6,022,500	4,702,500	8,809,350	3,196,800	4,003,200	957,250	792,750	130,542	262,658
China	502,640,000	527,360,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fiji	277,153	273,847	248,552	420,741	210,288	208,612	87,534	74,266	13,386	22,214
India	123,755,000	343,245,000	74,560,200	265,207,800	27,400,800	90,199,200	61,303,200	168,296,800	4,005,750	23,244,250
Indonesia	78,156,000	88,844,000	52,516,200	101,075,700	12,230,400	15,069,600	46,001,400	43,148,600	10,872,000	13,128,000
Japan	49,036,000	42,964,000	6,923,000	12,687,150	2,422,500	3,277,500	24,449,500	21,250,500	31,971,300	35,478,700
Kiribati	22,962	22,238	22,352	37,092	19,917	18,983	717	383	133	267
Korea, Rep.	23,820,000	23,820,000	3,782,400	8,092,800	1,548,300	2,351,700	10,568,250	8,681,750	6,722,800	3,077,200
Lao PDR	1,574,500	1,775,500	1,500,800	2,697,600	1,099,400	1,200,600	287,473	201,427	73,697	164,804
Malaysia	13,024,800	13,775,200	9,396,000	17,070,750	5,252,800	5,947,200	7,561,600	6,338,400	2,271,500	3,228,500
Marshall Islands	10,873	9,527	9,861	15,596	9,038	7,762	1,650	1,200	625	625
Myanmar	6,930,000	8,070,000	6,597,500	12,223,500	5,243,200	6,056,800	764,400	635,600	-	-
Nauru	4,051	4,149	3,925	6,618	3,298	3,352	922	678	88	263
Nepal	5,493,600	7,106,400	5,095,500	9,989,550	4,067,250	5,282,750	943,850	1,206,150	99,648	453,952
New Zealand	2,310,800	1,929,200	1,604,800	2,486,850	1,454,850	1,195,150	1,229,800	920,200	265,220	526,481
PNG	350,906	521,994	336,270	712,251	36,854	67,846	26,963	32,037	3,356	10,744
Philippines	45,180,750	39,269,250	42,880,200	67,692,900	27,612,000	24,388,000	11,126,700	6,423,300	6,431,000	5,369,000
Samoa	60,376	51,224	57,021	88,852	44,634	36,666	11,401	6,899	1,350	2,000
Singapore	2,519,680	2,560,320	1,597,200	2,781,900	984,750	965,250	1,476,900	1,223,100	-	-
Solomon Islands	58,528	65,472	57,733	102,677	19,411	21,889	3,276	2,724	586	1,514
Sri Lanka	0	0	2,436,600	5,521,650	-	-	513,800	886,200	83,179	289,821

	Social media female	Social media male	Facebook Female	Facebook male	Messenger female	Messenger male	Instagram female	Instagram male	Twitter female	Twitter male
Thailand	27,326,750	24,923,250	24,531,000	40,548,300	183,311,500	167,188,500	10,566,150	6,783,850	6,146,600	8,453,400
Timor-Leste	158,861	195,739	155,385	291,088	33,721	38,179	34,108	31,992	2,119	5,341
Tonga	35,879	28,421	34,114	52,097	28,200	21,800	6,298	3,302	-	-
Tuvalu	2,774	2,876	2,499	4,299	2,401	2,499	431	270	50	50
Vanuatu	49,064	43,336	47,047	74,690	17,172	14,628	3,280	2,070	-	-
Vietnam	35,420,000	34,580,000	33,232,400	55,806,600	26,851,500	25,798,500	6,468,750	3,881,250	1,180,800	2,919,200

Table 7 Access to financial assets: Law

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan		Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	25
Bangladesh	0	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	0	PNG	100
China	0	Philippines	0
Fiji	25	Samoa	25
India	25	Singapore	0
Indonesia	0	Solomon Islands	50
Japan	0	Sri Lanka	25
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	0
Lao PDR	0	Tonga	-
Malaysia	0	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	0	Vietnam	0

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination)⁶⁹

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available)

⁶⁹ Scoring for access to financial assets

0: All women have the same rights as men to open a bank account at a formal financial institution and to obtain credit, and the law does not require married women to obtain the signature and authority of their husband to do so. There are no informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women to open a bank account or obtain credit.

25: All women have the same rights as men to open a bank account at a formal financial institution and to obtain credit, and the law does not require married women to obtain the signature and authority of their husband to do so. However, informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) create different rights or abilities between men and women to open a bank account or obtain credit.

50: Women have the same rights as men to open a bank account at a formal financial institution and to obtain credit, and the law does not require married women to obtain the signature and authority of their husband to do so. However, legal exceptions regarding access to formal financial services exist for some groups of women.

75: Women have the same rights as men to open a bank account at a formal financial institution and the law does not require married women to obtain the signature and authority of their husband to do so. However, the law does not provide women with the same rights as men to obtain credit.

100: Women do not have the same rights as men to open a bank account at a formal financial institution or the law requires married women to obtain the signature and authority of their husband to do so.

Table 8 Access to justice: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination) ⁷⁰ Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan	-	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	25
Bangladesh	25	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	25	PNG	25
China	0	Philippines	0
Fiji	0	Samoa	0
India	0	Singapore	0
Indonesia	0	Solomon Islands	0
Japan	0	Sri Lanka	25
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	0
Lao PDR	25	Tonga	-
Malaysia	0	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	25	Vietnam	0

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available)

Table 9 Access to land assets: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination). ⁷¹ Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan	-	Nauru	-
Australia	50	Nepal	0

70 Scoring access to justice

0: Women and men have the same rights to sue. Women's and men's testimony carries the same evidentiary weight in all types of courts, and in all justice systems when parallel plural legal systems exist. Women have the same rights as men to hold public or political office in the judiciary branch. There are no informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women to sue someone, to provide testimony in court, or to be a judge, advocate or other court officer.

25: Women and men have the same rights to sue. Women's and men's testimony carries the same evidentiary weight in all types of courts, and in all justice systems when parallel plural legal systems exist. Women have the same rights as men to hold public or political office in the judiciary branch. However, some informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) create different rights or abilities between men and women to sue someone, to provide testimony in court, or to be a judge, advocate or other court officer.

50: Women and men have the same rights to sue. Women's and men's testimony carries the same evidentiary weight in all types of courts, and in all justice systems when parallel plural legal systems exist. However, women do not have the same rights as men to hold public or political office in the judiciary branch.

75: Women and men have the same rights to sue. However, women's testimony does not carry the same evidentiary weight as men's testimony in all types of courts, or in all justice systems when parallel plural legal systems exist.

100: Women do not have the same rights as men to sue.

71 Scoring for access to land assets

0: All women and men have the same legal rights to own and use land assets. There are no informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities regarding the ownership or use of land.

25: All women and men have the same legal rights to own and use land assets. However, some informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) create different rights or abilities regarding the ownership or use of land.

50: Women and men have the same legal rights to own and use land assets. However, legal exceptions exist for some groups

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination). ⁷¹ Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Bangladesh	25	New Zealand	50
Cambodia	25	PNG	50
China	0	Philippines	75
Fiji	50	Samoa	0
India	25	Singapore	50
Indonesia	25	Solomon Islands	50
Japan	0	Sri Lanka	75
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	25
Lao PDR	25	Tonga	-
Malaysia	50	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	50	Vietnam	0

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available)

Table 10 Access to non-land assets: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination).⁷²

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan	-	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	0
Bangladesh	25	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	25	PNG	0
China	0	Philippines	75
Fiji	50	Samoa	0
India	25	Singapore	50
Indonesia	25	Solomon Islands	0
Japan	0	Sri Lanka	75
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	25

of women.

75: Women and men have the same legal rights to own land assets. However, women do not have the same legal rights to use and/or make decisions over land.

100: Women do not have the same legal rights and access as men to own and use land assets.

72 Scoring for access to non-land assets

0: All women and men have the same legal rights to own and use non-land assets. There are no informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities regarding the ownership or use of non-land assets.

25: All women and men have the same legal rights to own and use non-land assets. However, some informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) create different rights or abilities regarding the ownership or use of non-land assets.

50: Women have the same legal rights as men to own and use non-land assets. However, legal exceptions exist for some groups of women.

75: All women and men have the same legal rights to own non-land assets. However, women do not have the same legal rights as men to use and/or make decisions over non-land assets.

100: Women do not have the same legal rights as men to own non-land assets.

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Lao PDR	25	Tonga	-
Malaysia	50	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	50	Vietnam	0

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available)

Table 11 Citizenship rights: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination).⁷³

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan	-	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	100
Bangladesh	75	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	0	PNG	0
China	0	Philippines	100
Fiji	25	Samoa	0
India	0	Singapore	100
Indonesia	75	Solomon Islands	50
Japan	0	Sri Lanka	75
Kiribati	-	Thailand	100
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	0
Lao PDR	0	Tonga	-
Malaysia	100	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	25	Vietnam	0

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available)

Table 12 Discrimination in household responsibilities: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination).⁷⁴

⁷³ Scoring citizenship

0: Women and men have the same rights to acquire, change and retain their nationality as well as to confer their nationality to their spouse and children. There are no informal laws (customary, traditional, or religious laws) that create different rights or abilities between men and women to acquire, change, or retain their nationality, or to confer nationality to their spouse and/or children.

25: Women and men have the same rights to acquire, change and retain their nationality as well as to confer their nationality to their spouse and children. However, some informal laws (customary, traditional, or religious laws) create different rights or abilities between men and women to acquire, change, or retain their nationality, or to confer nationality to their spouse and/or children.

50: Women and men have the same rights to acquire, change and retain their nationality as well as to confer their nationality to their spouse and children. However, legal exceptions exist for some groups of women.

75: Women and men have the same rights to acquire, change and retain their nationality. However, women do not have the same rights as men to confer their nationality to their spouses and/or children.

100: Women do not have the same rights as men to acquire, change or retain their nationality.

⁷⁴ Scoring discrimination in household responsibilities (2023)

0: Women have the same legal rights as men to be "head of household" or "head of family" (or the law does not make any reference to these concepts) and to be legal guardians of their children during marriage or in informal unions. There are no informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities regarding being

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan [^]	.75	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	0
Bangladesh	75	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	25	PNG	25
China	0	Philippines	75
Fiji	25	Samoa	25
India	75	Singapore	50
Indonesia	75	Solomon Islands	75
Japan	75	Sri Lanka	25
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	25	Timor-Leste	25
Lao PDR	25	Tonga	-
Malaysia	75	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	25	Vietnam	25

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available) ([^]Data for Afghanistan from 2019, using a variation on scoring⁷⁵)

Table 13 Divorce: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination).⁷⁶

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan [^]	100	Nauru	-

recognised as the head of household, being the legal guardians of children nor choosing where to live.

25: Women have the same legal rights as men to be "head of household" or "head of family" (or the law does not make any reference to these concepts) and to be legal guardians of their children during marriage or in informal unions. However, some informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) create different rights or abilities regarding being recognised as the head of household, being the legal guardians of children or choosing where to live.

50: Women have the same legal rights as men to be "head of household" or "head of family" (or the law does not make any reference to these concepts) and to be legal guardians of their children during marriage or in informal unions. However, legal exceptions exist for some groups of women.

75: Women do not have the same legal rights as men to be either "head of household" or "head of family" or to be legal guardians of their children during marriage or in informal unions.

100: Women neither have the same legal rights as men to be "head of household" or "head of family" nor to be legal guardians of their children during marriage or in informal unions.

75 Scoring used for household responsibilities in Afghanistan (2019)

0: Women enjoy the same legal rights and decision-making abilities and responsibilities within the household as men, without legal exceptions regarding some groups of women. Customary, religious and traditional laws or practices do not discriminate against women's legal rights.

0.25: Women enjoy the same legal rights and decision-making abilities and responsibilities within the household as men, without legal exceptions regarding some groups of women. However, customary, religious and traditional laws or practices discriminate against women's legal rights.

0.5: Either not all groups of women enjoy the same legal rights and decision-making abilities and responsibilities within the household as men, or there is no law regulating household headship.

0.75: Women do not enjoy the same legal rights as men to be recognised as the head of household or to have parental authority.

1: Women do not enjoy the same legal rights as men to be recognised as the head of household and to have parental authority.

76 Scoring for divorce (2023)

0: All women and men have the same rights as men to initiate or file for a divorce, to finalise a divorce or an annulment, and to retain child custody following a divorce. There are no informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Australia	0	Nepal	100
Bangladesh	100	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	25	PNG	50
China	0	Philippines	75
Fiji	0	Samoa	0
India	75	Singapore	50
Indonesia	50	Solomon Islands	75
Japan	75	Sri Lanka	75
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	0
Lao PDR	25	Tonga	-
Malaysia	100	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	50	Vietnam	75

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available) (^Data for Afghanistan from 2019, using a variation on scoring ⁷⁷)

Table 14 Freedom of movement: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination). ⁷⁸

different rights or abilities regarding initiating a divorce or being the legal guardians of children after a divorce.

25: All women and men have the same rights as men to initiate or file for a divorce, to finalise a divorce or an annulment, and to retain child custody following a divorce. However, some informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) create different rights or abilities regarding initiating a divorce or being the legal guardians of children after a divorce.

50: Women have the same rights as men to initiate or file for a divorce, to finalise a divorce or an annulment, and to retain child custody following a divorce. However, legal exceptions exist for some groups of women.

75: Women do not have the same rights as men to initiate or file for a divorce, or to finalise a divorce or an annulment, or to retain child custody following a divorce.

100: Women do not have the same rights as men to initiate or file for a divorce, or to finalise a divorce or an annulment.

Women do not have the same rights as men to retain child custody following a divorce.

⁷⁷ Scoring for divorce law in Afghanistan (2019)

0: Women have both the same rights to initiate divorce and the same requirements to finalise divorce or annulment as men, without negative repercussions on their parental authority. This applies to all groups of women. Customary, religious and traditional laws or practices do not discriminate against women's rights regarding divorce or parental authority after divorce.

0.25: Women have both the same rights to initiate divorce and the same requirements to finalise divorce or annulment as men, without negative repercussions on their parental authority. This applies to all groups of women. However, there are some customary, religious or traditional laws or practices that discriminate against women's rights regarding divorce and/or parental authority after divorce.

0.5: Women have both the same rights to initiate divorce and the same requirements to finalise divorce or annulment as men, without negative repercussions on their parental authority. However, this does not apply to all groups of women.

0.75: Women do not have the same rights over divorce as men: either their rights to initiate divorce and/or the requirements to finalise divorce or annulment are unequal, or their parental authority after divorce is restricted.

1: Women do not have the same rights over divorce as men: their rights to initiate divorce and/or the requirements to finalise divorce or annulment are unequal, and their parental authority after divorce is restricted.

⁷⁸ Scoring freedom of movement

0: Women have the same rights as men to apply for national identity cards (if applicable) or passports, and to travel outside the country. There are no informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women to apply for identity cards or passports.

25: Women have the same rights as men to apply for national identity cards (if applicable) or passports, and to travel outside the country. However, some informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) create different rights or abilities between men and women to apply for identity cards or passports.

50: Women have the same rights as men to apply for national identity cards (if applicable) or passports, and to travel outside the country. However, legal exceptions exist for some groups of women.

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan	-	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	25
Bangladesh	0	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	0	PNG	75
China	0	Philippines	0
Fiji	0	Samoa	0
India	0	Singapore	0
Indonesia	0	Solomon Islands	75
Japan	0	Sri Lanka	0
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	0
Lao PDR	0	Tonga	-
Malaysia	75	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	50	Vietnam	0

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available)

Table 15 Gender-based discrimination in the legal framework on workplace rights⁷⁹

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination)

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan	-	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	0
Bangladesh	100	New Zealand	25

75: Women do not have the same rights as men to apply for national identity cards (if applicable) or passports, or to travel outside the country.

100: Women do not have the same rights as men to apply for national identity cards (if applicable) or passports, nor to travel outside the country.

79 Scoring the legal framework on workplace rights

0: Women and men are guaranteed equality in the workplace, including the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value, to work the same night hours, to work in all professions, and to register a business. The rights of all women are protected during pregnancy and maternity/parental leave. There are no informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women to enter certain professions, take a paid job or register a business.

25: Women and men are guaranteed equality in the workplace, including the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value, to work the same night hours, to work in all professions, and to register a business. The rights of all women are protected during pregnancy and maternity/parental leave. However, some informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) create different rights or abilities between men and women to enter certain professions, take a paid job or register a business.

50: Women and men are guaranteed equality in the workplace, including the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value, to work the same night hours, to work in all professions, and to register a business. Women's rights are protected during pregnancy and maternity/parental leave. However, legal exceptions to the rights to take a paid job and/or to register a business exist for some groups of women.

75: Women and men are guaranteed equal rights to enter all professions, to work the same night hours as men, and to work or register a business without the permission of someone else. However, women are not guaranteed non-discrimination in employment on the basis of sex, equal remuneration for work of equal value, or protection of their rights during pregnancy and maternity/parental leave.

100: Women do not have the same rights as men to enter all professions, to work the same night hours as men, or to work or register a business without the permission of their husband or legal guardian.

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Cambodia	75	PNG	100
China	100	Philippines	50
Fiji	100	Samoa	0
India	100	Singapore	75
Indonesia	75	Solomon Islands	100
Japan	100	Sri Lanka	100
Kiribati	-	Thailand	100
Korea, Rep.	100	Timor-Leste	0
Lao PDR	75	Tonga	-
Malaysia	100	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	100	Vietnam	0

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available)

Table 16 Inheritance: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination).⁸⁰

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan [^]	75	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	0
Bangladesh	100	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	0	PNG	50
China	0	Philippines	50
Fiji	25	Samoa	25
India	50	Singapore	50
Indonesia	50	Solomon Islands	50
Japan	0	Sri Lanka	100
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	25	Timor-Leste	25
Lao PDR	25	Tonga	-
Malaysia	100	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	50	Vietnam	25

⁸⁰ Scoring for inheritance law (2023)

0: All widows and daughters have the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit. There are no informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities regarding inheritance between sons and daughters and between male and female surviving spouses.

25: All widows and daughters have the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit. However, some informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) create different rights or abilities regarding inheritance between sons and daughters or between male and female surviving spouses.

50: Widows and daughters have the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit. However, legal exceptions exist for some groups of widows and/or daughters.

75: Widows do not have the same rights as widowers to inherit, or daughters do not have the same rights as sons to inherit.

100: Widows and daughters do not have the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit.

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (^Data for Afghanistan from 2019, using a variation on scoring⁸¹) (No score signifies no data available)

Table 17 Political voice: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination).⁸²

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan	-	Nauru	-
Australia	50	Nepal	25
Bangladesh	0	New Zealand	50
Cambodia	25	PNG	25
China	50	Philippines	0
Fiji	50	Samoa	25
India	0	Singapore	50
Indonesia	0	Solomon Islands	0
Japan	50	Sri Lanka	25
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	0
Lao PDR	50	Tonga	-
Malaysia	50	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	50	Vietnam	0

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, [OECD Statistics](#) (No score signifies no data available)

81 Scoring for inheritance law in Afghanistan (2019)

0: Widows and daughters enjoy the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit land and non-land assets. This applies to all groups of women. Customary, religious and traditional laws or practices do not discriminate against women's inheritance rights.

0.25: Widows and daughters enjoy the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit land and non-land assets. This applies to all groups of women. However, there are some customary, religious or traditional laws that discriminate against women's inheritance rights.

0.5: Widows and daughters enjoy the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit land and non-land assets. However, this does not apply to all groups of women.

0.75: Widows or daughters do not enjoy the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit land and/or non-land assets.

1: Widows and daughters do not enjoy the same rights as widowers and sons to inherit land and/or non-land assets.

82 Scoring political voice

0: Women and men have the same rights to vote and to hold public and political office in the legislature and executive branches. There are constitutional/legislated quotas or special measures other than quotas (e.g. disclosure requirements, parity laws, alternating the sexes on party lists, financial incentives for political parties) in place to promote women's political participation at the national or local levels. There are no informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women to vote or hold public office.

25: Women and men have the same rights to vote and to hold public and political office in the legislature and executive branches. There are constitutional/legislated quotas or special measures other than quotas (e.g. disclosure requirements, parity laws, alternating the sexes on party lists, financial incentives for political parties) in place to promote women's political participation at the national or local levels. However, some informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) create different rights or abilities between men and women to vote or hold public office.

50: Women and men have the same rights to vote and to hold public and political office in the legislature and executive branches. However, there are no constitutional/legislated quotas or special measures other than quotas (e.g. disclosure requirements, parity laws, alternating the sexes on party lists, financial incentives for political parties) in place to promote women's political participation at the national or local levels.

75: Women and men have the same rights to vote. However, women do not have the same rights as men to hold public and political office in the legislative or executive branch.

100: Women do not have the same rights as men to vote.

Table 18 Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Country	Year Signed	Year Ratified	Country	Year Signed	Year Ratified
Afghanistan	1980	2003	Nauru	-	2011(a)
Australia	1980	1983	Nepal	1991	1991
Bangladesh	-	1984(a)	New Zealand	1980	1985
Cambodia	1980	1992	PNG	-	1995(a)
China	1980	1980	Philippines	1980	1981
Fiji	-	1995(a)	Samoa	-	1992(a)
India	1980	1993	Singapore	-	1995(a)
Indonesia	1980	1993	Solomon Islands	-	2002(a)
Japan	1980	1985	Sri Lanka	1980	1981
Kiribati	-	2004(a)	Thailand	-	1985(a)
Korea, Rep.	1983	1984	Timor-Leste	-	2003(a)
Lao PDR	1980	1981	Tonga	-	-
Malaysia	-	1995(a)	Tuvalu	-	1999(a)
Marshall Islands	-	2006(a)	Vanuatu	-	1995(a)
Myanmar	-	1997(a)	Vietnam	1980	1982

Accession (a) is a one-step procedure, not preceded by an act of signature.

Source: United Nations Treaty Body Database

tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?Treaty=CEDAW&Lang=en

Table 19 Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

Country	Year Signed	Year Ratified	Country	Year Signed	Year Ratified
Afghanistan	-	2012(a)	Nauru	-	2012(a)
Australia	2007	2008	Nepal	2008	2010
Bangladesh	2007	2007	New Zealand	2007	2008
Cambodia	2007	2012	PNG	2011	2013
China	2007	2008	Philippines	2007	2008
Fiji	2010	2017	Samoa	2014	2016
India	2007	2007	Singapore	2012	2013
Indonesia	2007	2011	Solomon Islands	2008	2023
Japan	2007	2014	Sri Lanka	2007	2016
Kiribati	-	2013(a)	Thailand	2007	2008
Korea, Rep.	2007	2008	Timor-Leste	-	2023(a)
Lao PDR	2008	2009	Tonga	2007	-
Malaysia	2008	2010	Tuvalu	-	2013(a)
Marshall Islands	-	2015(a)	Vanuatu	2007	2008
Myanmar	-	2011(a)	Vietnam	2007	2015

Accession (a) is a one-step procedure, not preceded by an act of signature.

Table 20 Women, Peace and Security National Action Plans

Country	Most recent	Country	Most recent
Afghanistan	2019–2022	Nauru	-
Australia	2021–2031	Nepal	2011–2016
Bangladesh	2019–2022	New Zealand	2015–2019
Cambodia	-	PNG	-
China	-	Philippines	2017–2023
Fiji	-	Samoa	-
India	-	Singapore	-
Indonesia	2020–2025	Solomon Islands	2017–2021
Japan	2019–2022	Sri Lanka	2023–2027
Kiribati	-	Thailand	-
Korea, Rep.	2021–2023	Timor-Leste	2016–2021
Lao PDR	-	Tonga	-
Malaysia	-	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	-	Vietnam	-

Source: [National Action Plans](#) | UN Women – Asia-Pacific

Table 21 Countries with legislation on domestic violence

Country	Yes/No	Country	Yes/No
Afghanistan	No	Nauru	Yes
Australia	Yes	Nepal	Yes
Bangladesh	Yes	New Zealand	Yes
Cambodia	Yes	PNG	Yes
China	Yes	Philippines	Yes
Fiji	Yes	Samoa	Yes
India	Yes	Singapore	Yes
Indonesia	Yes	Solomon Islands	Yes
Japan	Yes	Sri Lanka	Yes
Kiribati	Yes	Thailand	Yes
Korea, Rep.	Yes	Timor-Leste	Yes
Lao PDR	Yes	Tonga	Yes
Malaysia	Yes	Tuvalu	Yes
Marshall Islands	Yes	Vanuatu	Yes
Myanmar	No	Vietnam	Yes

Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org); Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute (paclii.org)

Table 22 Countries with Laws on marital rape

Country	Yes/No	Country	Yes/No
Afghanistan	No	Nauru	Yes
Australia	Yes	Nepal	Yes
Bangladesh	No	New Zealand	Yes
Cambodia	Yes	PNG	Yes
China	No	Philippines	Yes
Fiji ^	Case Law	Samoa	Yes
India	No	Singapore	Yes
Indonesia	Yes	Solomon Islands	Yes
Japan	Yes	Sri Lanka	No
Kiribati	No	Thailand	Yes
Korea, Rep.	No	Timor-Leste	Yes
Lao PDR	Yes	Tonga	Yes
Malaysia	Yes	Tuvalu	No
Marshall Islands	Yes	Vanuatu *	Yes
Myanmar	No	Vietnam	Yes

^ Fiji’s legislation does not expressly state that marital rape is a crime, but in 2016 the Fiji Court of Appeal held that marital rape and sexual assault are crimes in Fiji.⁸³ *In Vanuatu, marital rape is not explicitly addressed, however, Section 4 of the Family Protection Act 2008 defines domestic violence as encompassing sexual abuse of a family member. It has been determined marital rape is, therefore, recognised as a form of domestic violence in Vanuatu.⁸⁴

Sources: Various⁸⁵

Table 23 The law prohibits discrimination in employment based on gender (yes/no)

Country	Yes/No	Country	Yes/No
Afghanistan	No	Nauru	No
Australia	Yes	Nepal	Yes
Bangladesh	No	New Zealand	Yes
Cambodia	Yes	PNG	Yes
China	Yes	Philippines	Yes
Fiji	Yes	Samoa	Yes
India	Yes	Singapore	No
Indonesia	Yes	Solomon Islands	No
Japan	Yes	Sri Lanka	No
Kiribati	Yes	Thailand	Yes
Korea, Rep.	Yes	Timor-Leste	Yes

83 (The Human Dignity Trust - Changing Laws, Changing Lives interactive tool)

84 (182-vanuatu.pdf (ohchr.org))

85 UN Women, ProgressOfTheWorldsWomen–2011-en.pdf (unwomen.org); *Concluding observations of the Committee against Torture : Cambodia*, Refworld | *Concluding observations of the Committee against Torture : Cambodia*; Opportunities_for_women_and_LGBTI_rights_Pacific.pdf (pgaction.org); The Human Dignity Trust - Changing Laws, Changing Lives interactive tool; nhri-indonesia.pdf (ohchr.org); 3. Similarities and differences in terminology | Japan | Fighting Domestic Violence | Baker McKenzie Resource Hub; 3. Similarities and differences in terminology | Singapore | Fighting Domestic Violence | Baker McKenzie Resource Hub; kiribati_policy_and_legislative_review_031122.pdf (unfpa.org); Laos | LII / Legal Information Institute (cornell.edu); MARSHALL ISLANDS 2019 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT (state.gov)

Country	Yes/No	Country	Yes/No
Lao PDR	Yes	Tonga	No
Malaysia	No	Tuvalu	No
Marshall Islands	Yes	Vanuatu	No
Myanmar	No	Vietnam	Yes

Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org); TUVALU 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT (state.gov); NAURU 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT (state.gov)

Table 24 There is legislation on sexual harassment in employment (yes/no)

Country	Yes/No	Country	Yes/No
Afghanistan	Yes	Nauru	No
Australia	Yes	Nepal	Yes
Bangladesh	Yes	New Zealand	Yes
Cambodia	Yes	PNG	No
China	Yes	Philippines	Yes
Fiji	Yes	Samoa	Yes
India	Yes	Singapore	Yes
Indonesia	Yes	Solomon Islands	No
Japan	No	Sri Lanka	Yes
Kiribati	Yes	Thailand	Yes
Korea, Rep.	Yes	Timor-Leste	Yes
Lao PDR	Yes	Tonga	No
Malaysia	Yes	Tuvalu	No
Marshall Islands	No	Vanuatu	No
Myanmar	No	Vietnam	Yes

Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org); TUVALU 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT (state.gov); NAURU 2022 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT (state.gov)

Table 25 Reproductive autonomy: Law

Scores range from 0 (no discrimination) to 100 (absolute discrimination).⁸⁶

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Afghanistan [^]	.75	Nauru	-
Australia	0	Nepal	0

86 Scoring reproductive autonomy (2023)

0: The law protects women's right to a legal and safe abortion and does not require the approval of the father of the foetus to seek a legal abortion.

25: The law protects women's right to a legal and safe abortion. However, the law requires the approval of the father of the foetus to seek a legal abortion.

50: The law protects women's right to a legal and safe abortion when it is essential to save the woman's life and when the pregnancy is the result of rape, statutory rape and incest. However, the law does not protect women's right to a legal and safe abortion in one or more of the following circumstances: to preserve the mother's mental or physical health, for social and economic reasons, or in case of foetal impairment.

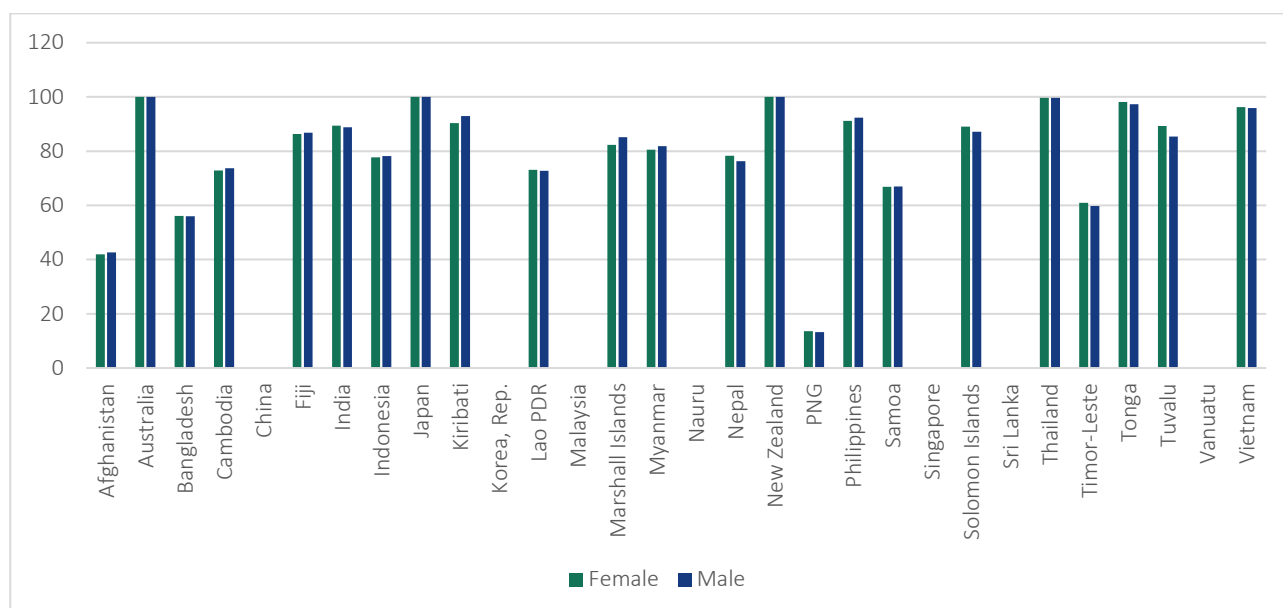
75: The law does not protect women's right to a legal and safe abortion in one or more of the following circumstances: when it is essential to save the woman's life or when pregnancy is the result of rape, statutory rape or incest.

100: The law does not provide women the right to a legal and safe abortion under any circumstance.

Country	Rating	Country	Rating
Bangladesh	75	New Zealand	0
Cambodia	0	PNG	75
China	0	Philippines	100
Fiji	50	Samoa	75
India	75	Singapore	0
Indonesia	75	Solomon Islands	75
Japan	75	Sri Lanka	75
Kiribati	-	Thailand	0
Korea, Rep.	0	Timor-Leste	75
Lao PDR	75	Tonga	-
Malaysia	75	Tuvalu	-
Marshall Islands	-	Vanuatu	-
Myanmar	75	Vietnam	0

Source: Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GID-DB) 2023, OECD Statistics (No score signifies no data available) (^Data for Afghanistan for 2019, using a variation on scoring⁸⁷)

Figure 56 Completeness of birth registration %

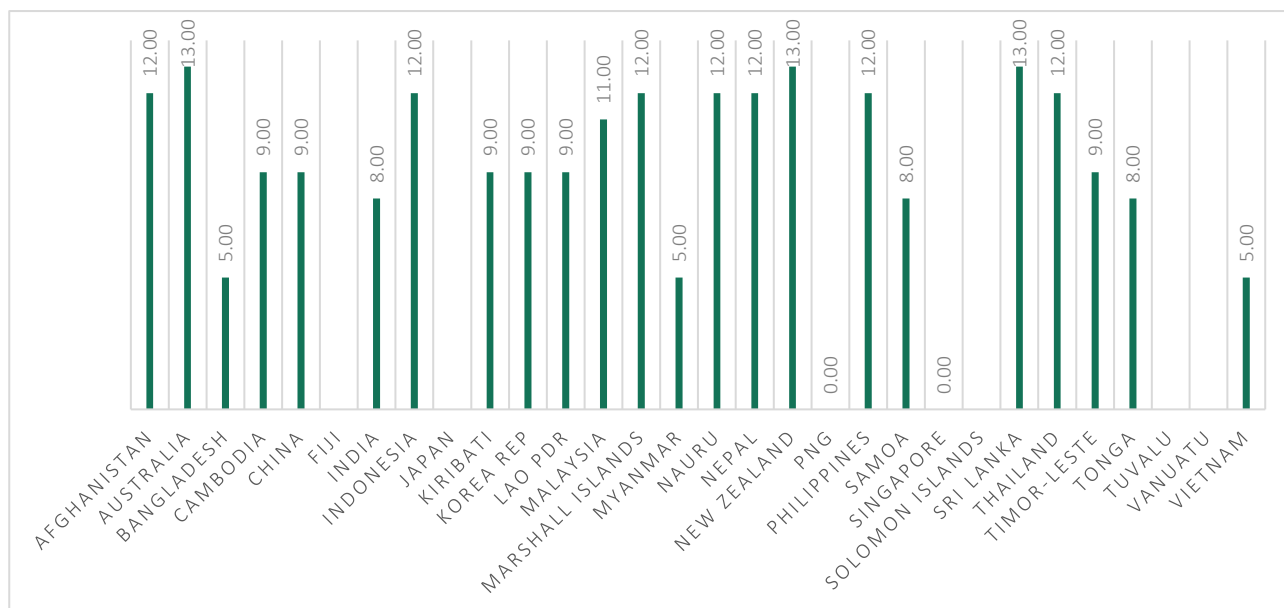


Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (No score signifies no data available)

87 Scoring for reproductive autonomy in Afghanistan (2019)

- 0: The legal framework protects women’s reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy, without any justifications.
- 0.25: The legal framework protects women’s reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy, but requires justifications.
- 0.5: The legal framework only protects women’s reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy with some justifications.
- 0.75: The legal framework only protects women’s reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy with strict justifications.
- 1: The legal framework does not protect women’s reproductive health and rights in case of unwanted pregnancy.

Figure 57 Number of years of free primary and secondary education guaranteed in legal frameworks



Source: sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

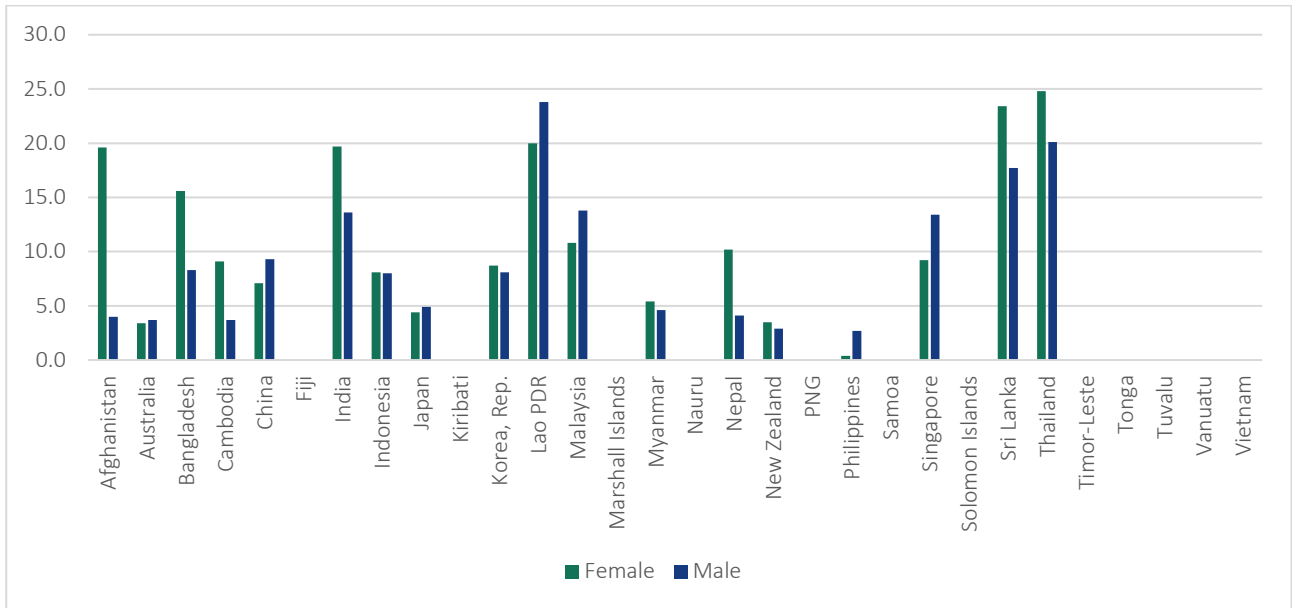
Table 26 Types and Coverage of Social protection

Country	Children/ Family	Maternity	Sickness	Unemployment	Work Injury	Disability	Survivors	Old age	Expenditure (% GDP)	Effective coverage
Afghanistan	No info	Limited provision	No info	None	No info	No info	No info	No info	2.4%	7.5%
Australia	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	15.7%	100%
Bangladesh	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	1.1%	28.4%
Cambodia	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Not implemented	Not implemented	Not implemented	2.3%	6.2%
China	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	10.1%	70.8%
Fiji	Anchored in legislation	Limited provision	Limited provision	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	4.8%	58.9%
India	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	2.4%	24.4%
Indonesia	Anchored in legislation	Limited provision	Limited provision	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	2.7%	27.8%
Japan	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	25.3%	98%
Kiribati	None	Limited provision	Benefit in kind	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	19%	21%
Korea, Rep.	None	Anchored in legislation	Benefit in kind	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	10.7%	77.3%
Laos PDR	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	1.6%	12.1%
Malaysia	None	Limited provision	Limited provision	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	6.2%	27.3%
Marshall Islands	None	Benefit in kind	Benefit in kind	None	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	9.6%	25.2%
Myanmar	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Not implemented	Anchored in legislation	Not implemented	Not implemented	Not implemented	1.5%	6.3%
Nauru	No info	No info	No info	None	No info	No info	No info	No info	12.4%	45.4%
Nepal	None	Limited provision	Limited provision	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	3.3%	17%
New Zealand	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	18.4%	100%
PNG	None	None	Benefit in kind	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	2%	9.6%

Country	Children/ Family	Maternity	Sickness	Unemployment	Work Injury	Disability	Survivors	Old age	Expenditure (% GDP)	Effective coverage
Philippines	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	4%	36.7%
Samoa	None	Limited provision	Limited provision	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	5.3%	21.1%
Singapore	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	3.1%	100%
Solomon Islands	None	Limited provision	Benefit in kind	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	4%	-
Sri Lanka	Anchored in legislation	Limited provision	Benefit in kind	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	4.8%	36.4%
Thailand	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	5.9%	68%
Timor-Leste	None	Anchored in legislation	None	None	Limited provision	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	16.4%	30.6%
Tonga	No info	No info	No info	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	4.2%	22.2%
Tuvalu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vanuatu	None	Limited provision	Limited provision	Limited provision	None	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	3.7%	57.4%
Vietnam	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	Anchored in legislation	7%	38.8%

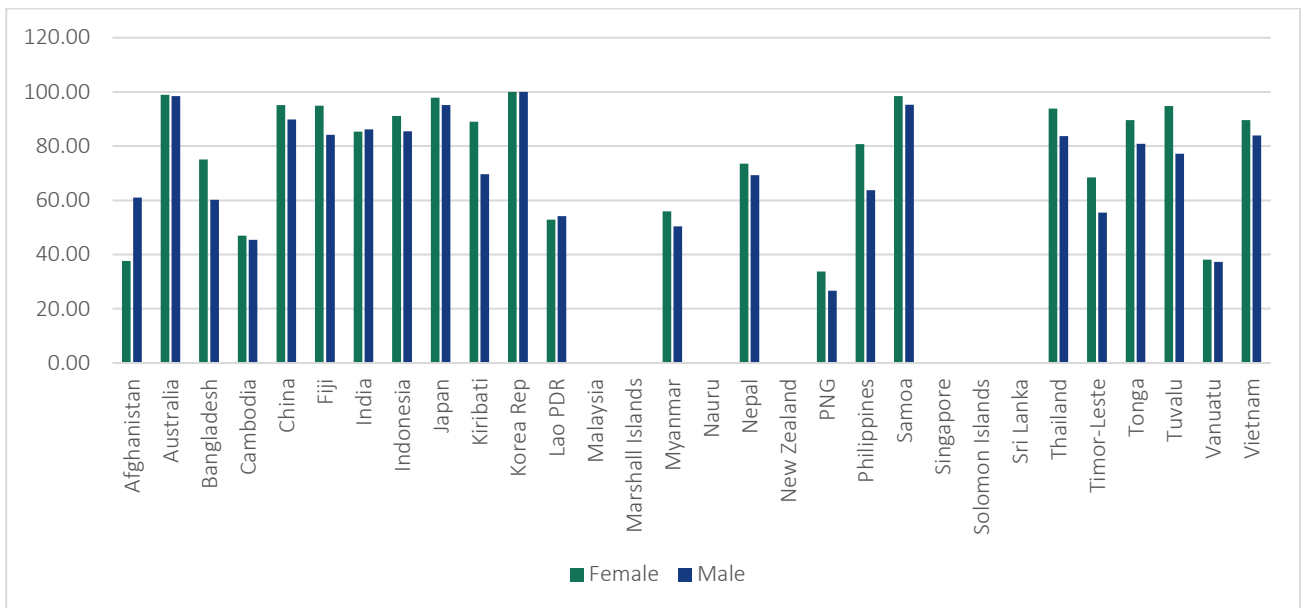
Source: Compiled from ILO | Social Protection Platform (social-protection.org)

Figure 58 Coming up with emergency funds in 30 days not possible (% age 15+)



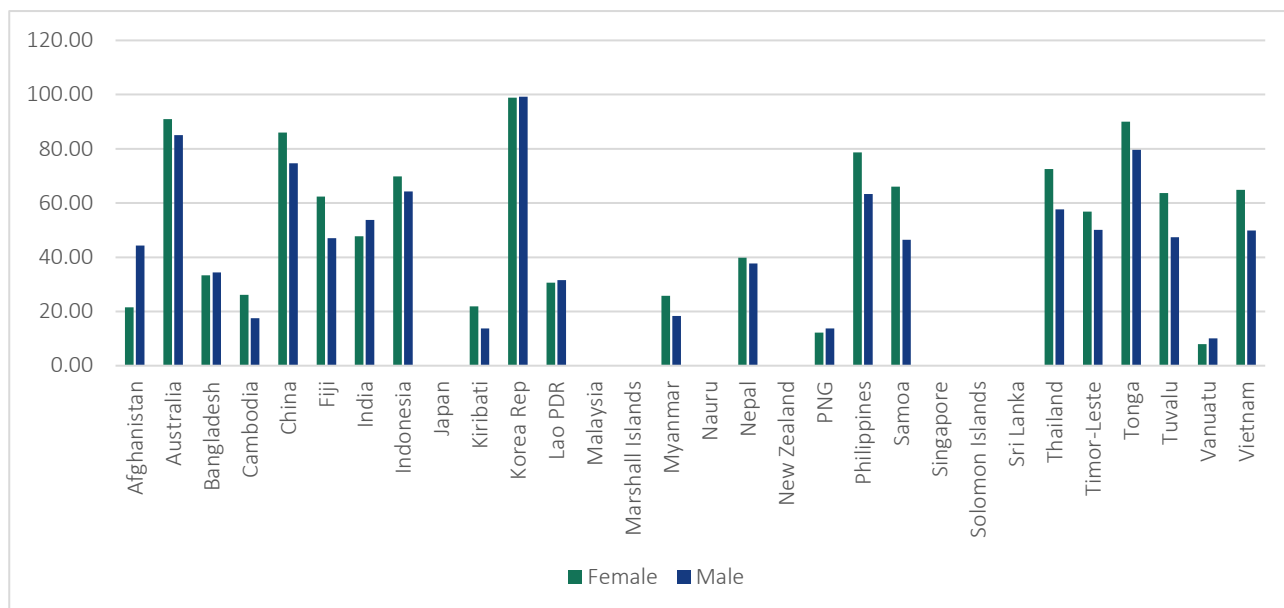
Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Figure 59 Completion rates, lower secondary (%)



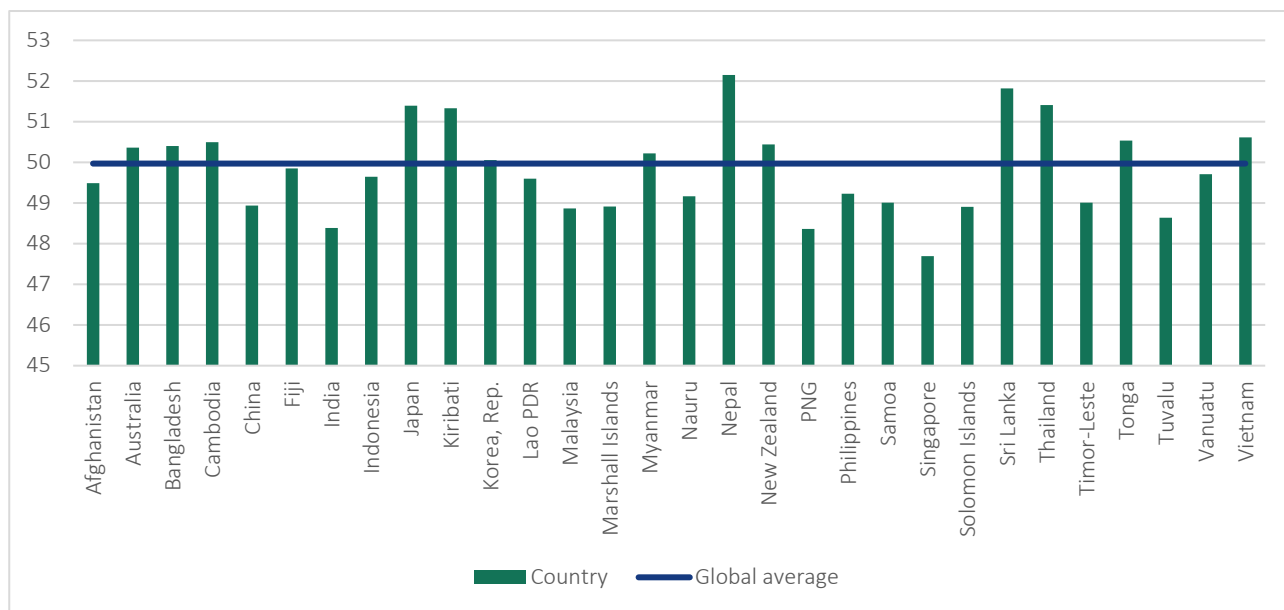
Source: sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Figure 60 Completion rate, upper secondary (%)



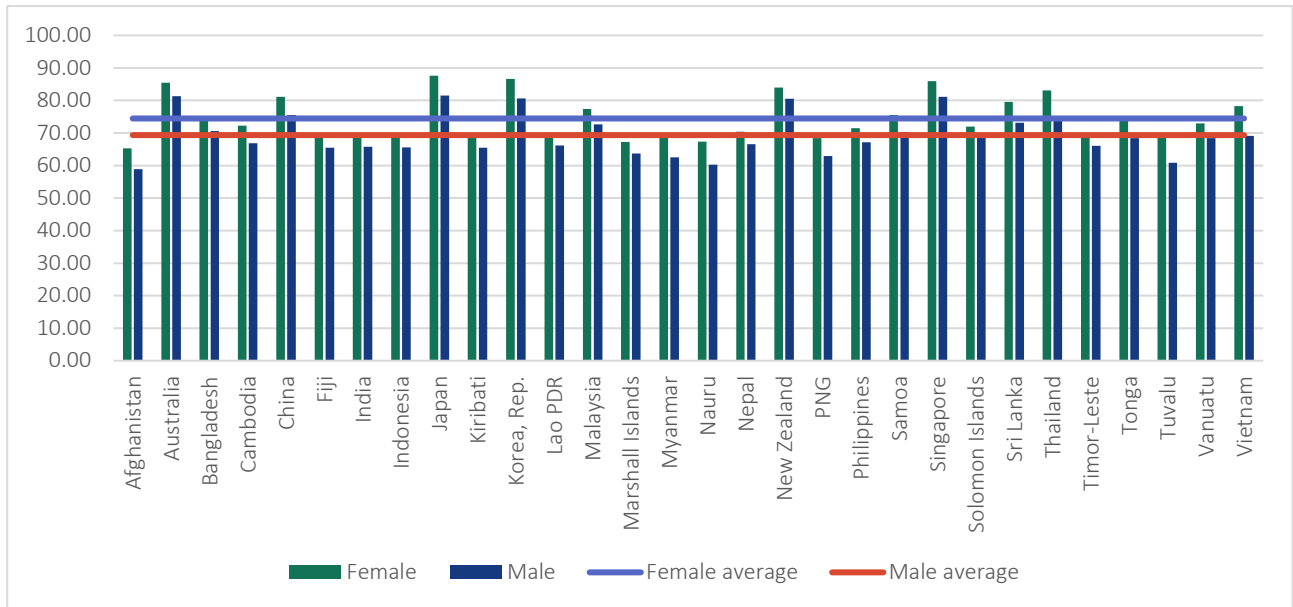
Source: sdg4-data.uis.unesco.org (A score of 0 signifies no data available)

Figure 61 Population, female (% of total)



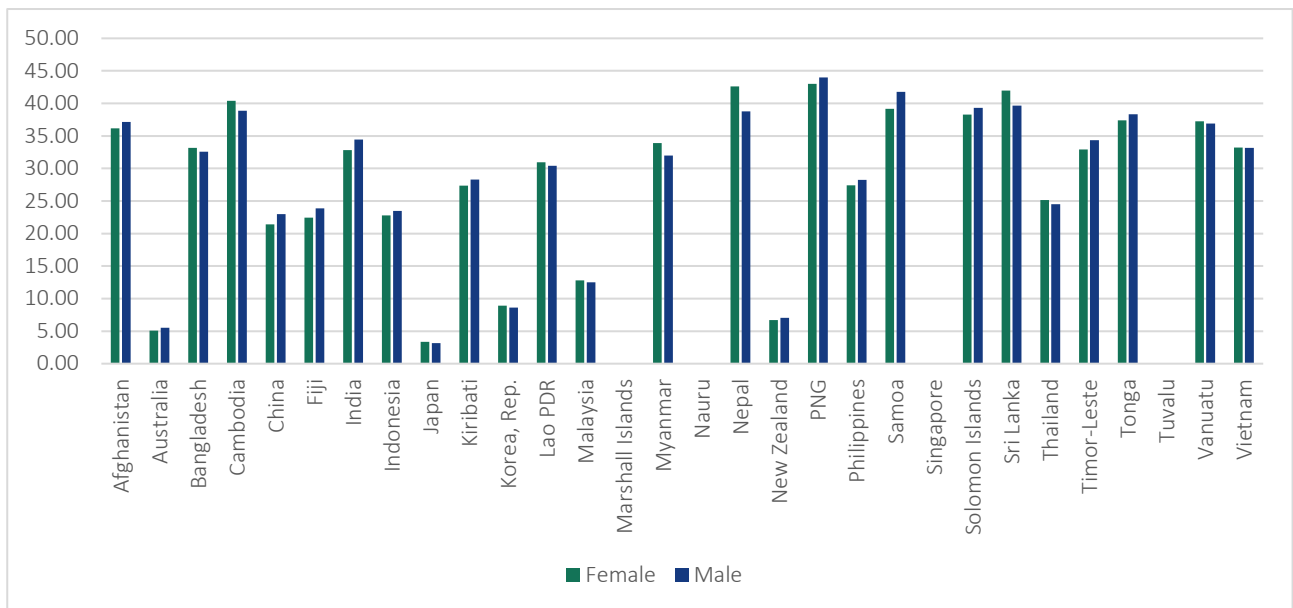
Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

Figure 62 Life expectancy at birth (years)



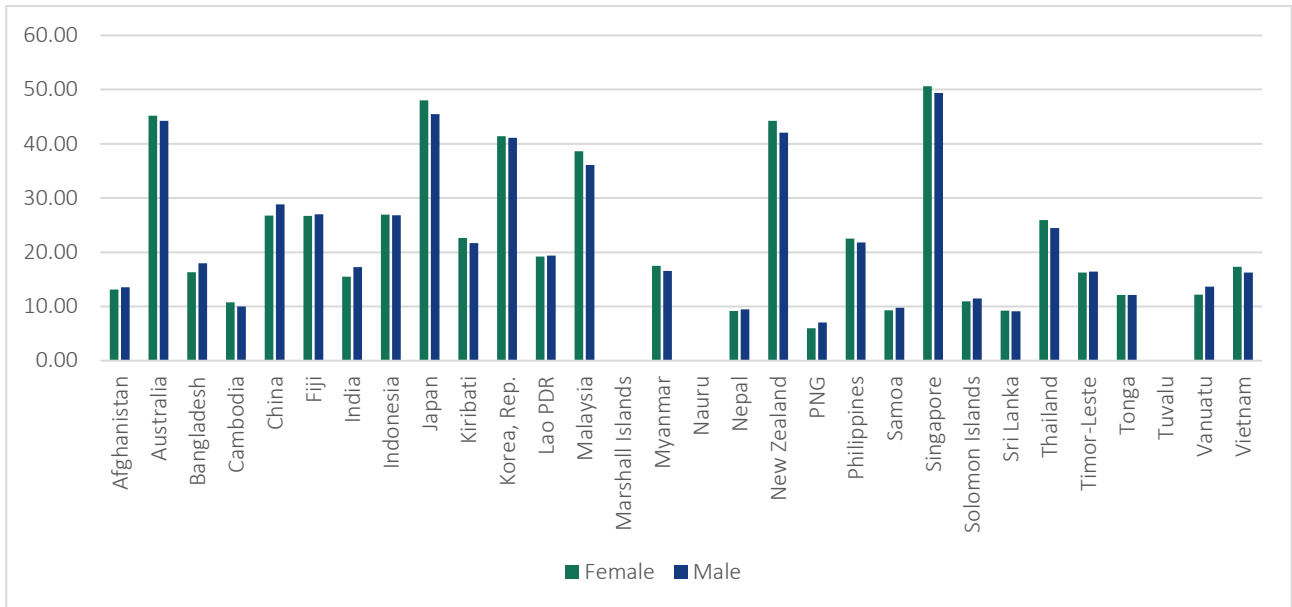
Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)

Figure 63 Rural population, (% of total)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org) (A score of 0 signifies no data available, except for Singapore which has no rural population)

Figure 64 Urban population (% of total)



Source: Gender Statistics | DataBank (worldbank.org)