

The Sustainable Development Goals Extended Report 2025

Inputs and information provided as of 30 April 2025

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Note: This unedited ‘Extended Report’ includes all indicator storyline contents as provided by the SDG indicator custodian agencies as of 30 April 2025. For instances where the custodian agency has not submitted a storyline for an indicator, please see the custodian agency focal point information for further information. The ‘Extended Report’ aims to provide the public with additional information regarding the SDG indicators and is compiled by the Statistics Division (UNSD) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Storylines presented in this document may slightly differ from figures cited in the SDG Report 2025 text due to the timing of the submission and the subsequent updates received upon finalizing the Report.

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Target 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

Indicator 5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex

Continuing legal reforms show progress, but gaps continue in all areas

Data collected in 2024 from 131 countries show that, despite progress, discriminatory laws and legal gaps continue to deny women their human rights worldwide and prevent them from achieving their full potential. Between 2019 and 2024, 99 positive reforms focused on removing discriminatory laws and establishing legal frameworks to advance gender equality were recorded, most of them in the area of employment and economic benefits. The reforms included lifting restrictions on women’s work, guaranteeing equal remuneration for work of equal value, providing maternity leave, as well as protecting women from domestic violence. Despite progress, no country gets a perfect score across all 4 areas measured by SDG indicator 5.1.1 and over half the countries (51%) have a gap in each of the areas covered. Data show that in 61 countries (46.6%) there is at least one restriction preventing women from doing the same jobs as men. Only 38 countries (29%) make 18 the minimum age for marriage with no exceptions and only 63 countries (48.1%) have laws on rape that are based on lack of consent.

Chart 1: Positive reforms captured for SDG indicator 5.1.1 between 2019 and 2024, by area

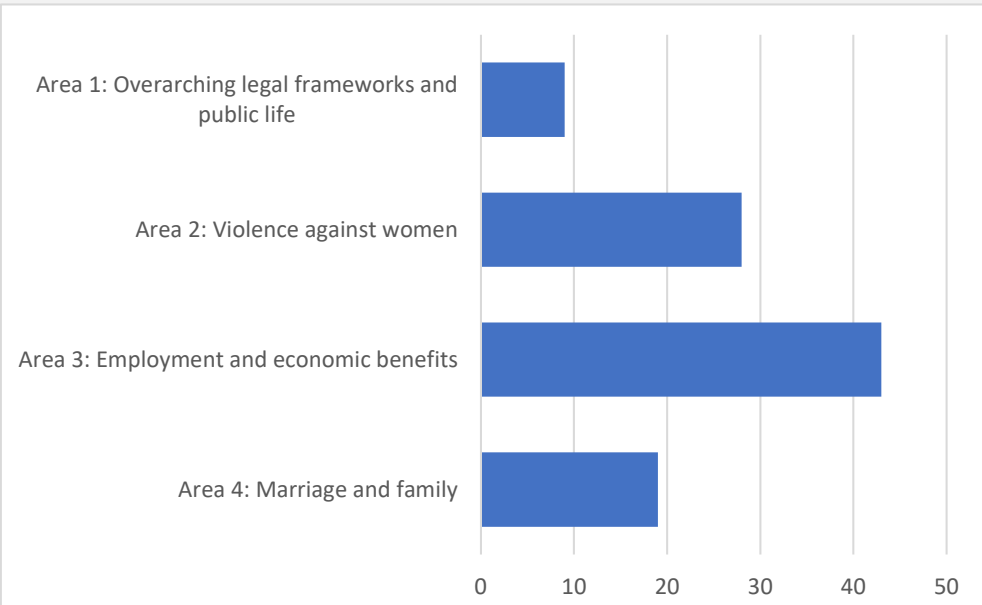


Chart 2: Percentage of countries that have gaps in all 4 areas measured by SDG indicator 5.1.1

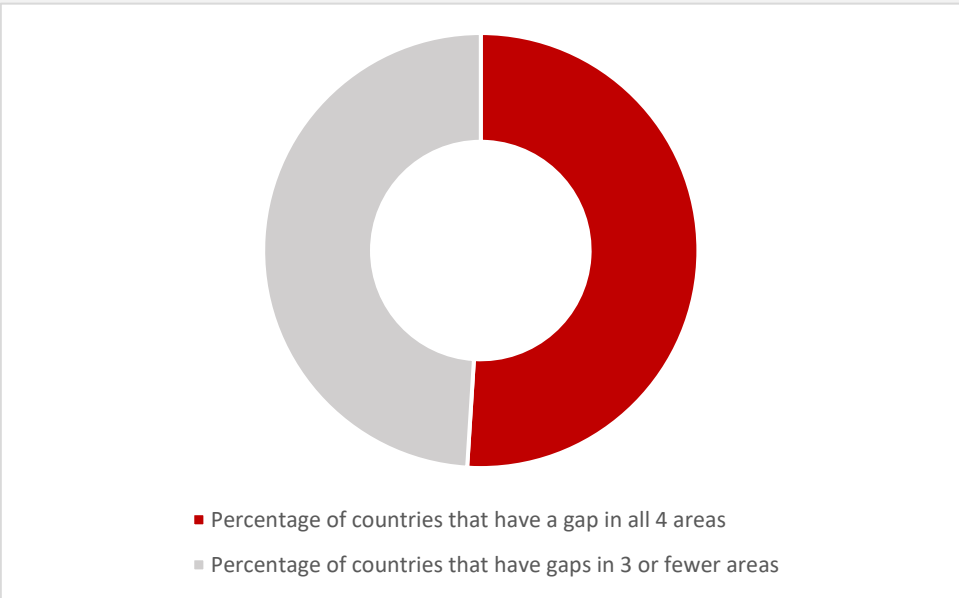
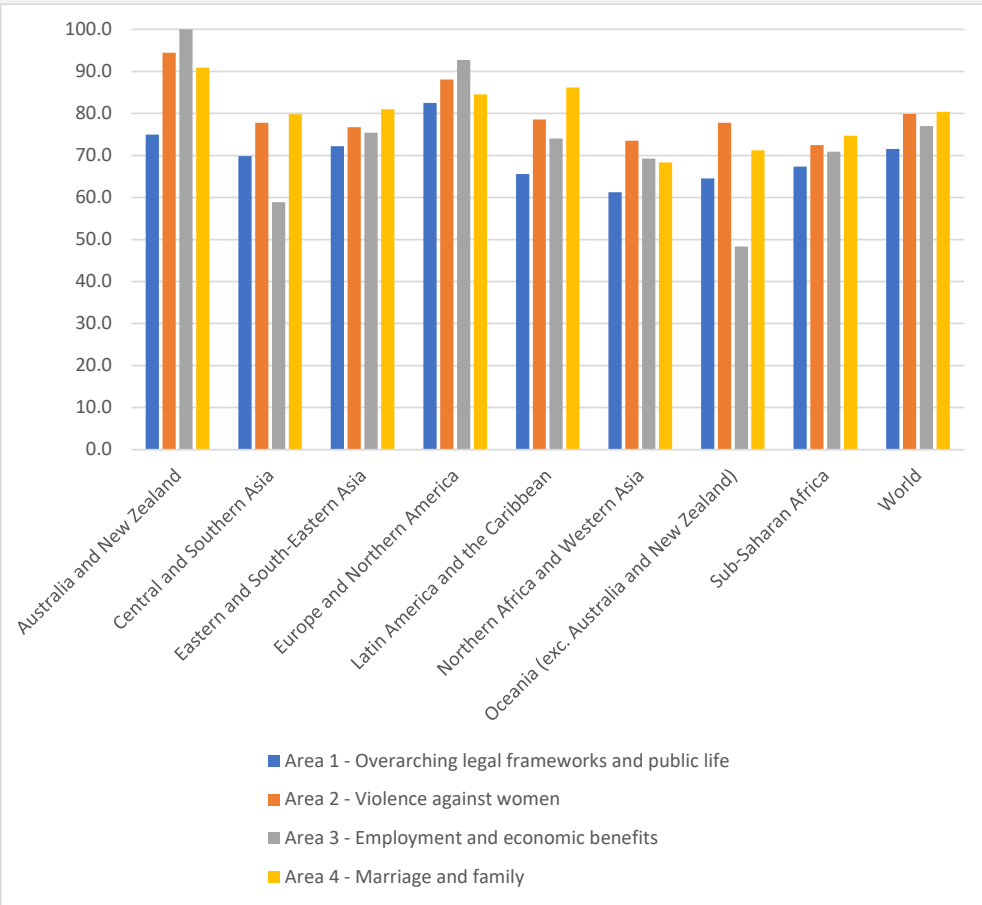


Chart 3: SDG indicator 5.1.1, average regional scores, 2024



Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): UN Women
Custodian agency(ies): UN Women, World Bank, OECD Development Centre

Target 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

Indicator 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age

Custodian agency(ies): UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC

Indicator 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence

Custodian agency(ies): UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC

Target 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

Indicator 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18

Custodian agency(ies): UNICEF

Indicator 5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation, by age

Over 230 million girls and women worldwide have undergone female genital mutilation

Around the world, over 230 million girls and women have undergone female genital mutilation. Africa accounts for the largest share of this total, with over 144 million. Asia follows with over 80 million, and a further 6 million are in the Middle East. Another 1-2 million are affected in small practising communities and destination countries for migration in the rest of the world.

The prevalence of female genital mutilation varies greatly across countries, with the highest levels found in Somalia (99%), Guinea (96%) and Djibouti (90%). Of the four million girls who undergo the practice each year, over two million are cut before their fifth birthday, and over half a million experience the most severe form of the practice, in which the genital area is sewn closed.

Progress in reducing the prevalence of the practice is mixed, with some countries seeing declines and others with stagnant levels. Progress is evident in a wide range of contexts, including those like Sierra Leone and Burkina Faso where the practice was previously widespread, and those like Kenya and Benin where the national prevalence was lower and has continued to drop. Still, overall, progress would need to be 27 times faster than the rate observed in the past decade to eliminate female genital mutilation by 2030.

Challenges in meeting the target to eliminate this harmful practice lie ahead, as the practice grows increasingly concentrated in pockets of resistance, where no progress is yet evident.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- <https://data.unicef.org/resources/female-genital-mutilation-a-global-concern-2024/>

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Claudia Cappa, UNICEF; Colleen Murray, UNICEF

Custodian agency(ies): UNICEF

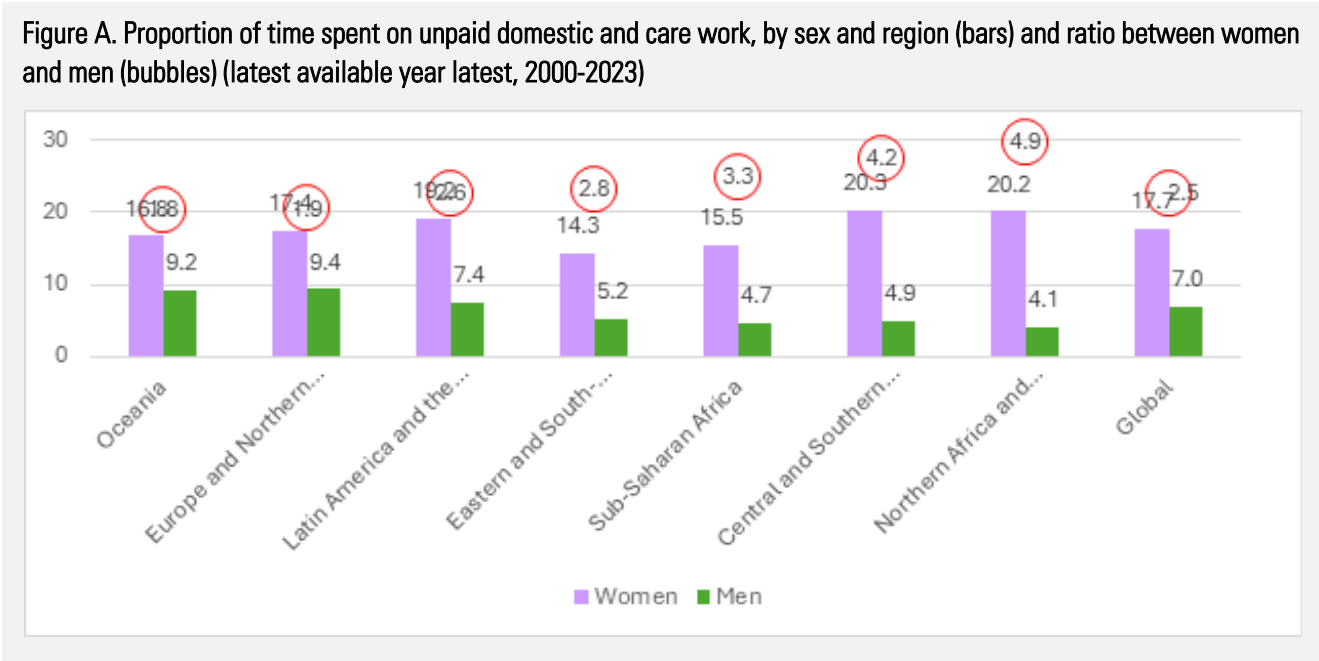
Target 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

Indicator 5.4.1 Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location

Unpaid Domestic and Care Work: A Barrier to Gender Equality and Sustainable Development

Understanding how time is allocated between women and men across different societies is critical for designing policies that promote gender equality and economic empowerment. Global time-use data underscores a persistent reality: women and girls shoulder a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic and care work. Gender norms have long dictated that responsibilities such as childcare, elder care, household management, cooking, and cleaning primarily fall on women. On average, women devote two and a half times more hours per day to these tasks than men. Regional disparities are marked, with women in Northern Africa and Western Asia devoting more than four times more hours than men, while women in Oceania, Europe, and Northern America spend about twice as many hours as men (see figure A). This unequal distribution not only reflects entrenched gender roles but also reinforces them, limiting women’s economic opportunities and perpetuating their marginalization in political, economic, and social spheres.

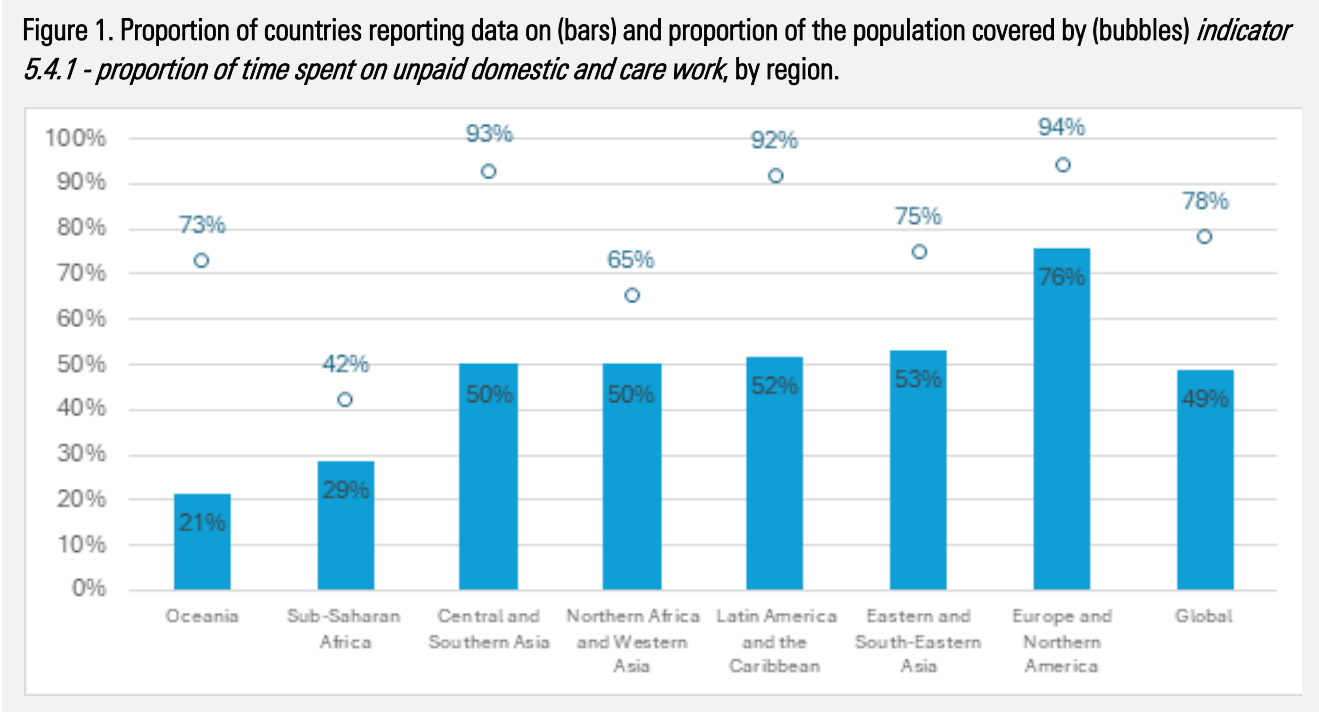
The burden of unpaid domestic and care work is particularly pronounced among the poorest households,¹where limited resources make it difficult to outsource tasks or invest in time-saving domestic technology. As a result, many women face restrictions in entering or remaining in the labor market,²further entrenching cycles of poverty and inequality. Recognizing and valuing unpaid care work is essential to breaking the cycle of gender inequality. Public policies—such as improved social protection, investment in care infrastructure, and family-friendly labour regulations—are crucial steps toward recognizing and redistributing care responsibilities and ensuring that women’s economic participation is not hindered by an invisible workload.



Harnessing Time-Use Data for Sustainable Development Policies

Time-use data is fundamental for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a broad range of public policies, including those called for the achievement of sustainable development and the Goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda. Time-use data are necessary and the direct input for monitoring progress made towards the achievement of SDG indicator 5.4.1 on the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age, and location and they contribute to the evidence needed for monitoring other SDG goals and targets.

Due to the growing recognition of the importance of time-use data in informing diverse policies, 96 countries currently report data on SDG indicator 5.4.1. However, there are still significant regional disparities. Globally 78% of the population is covered by available data (see bubbles in Figure 1), with more than 90% of the population covered in Central and Southern Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe and North America, while important gaps are still present in Sub-Saharan Africa with only 42% of the population covered.

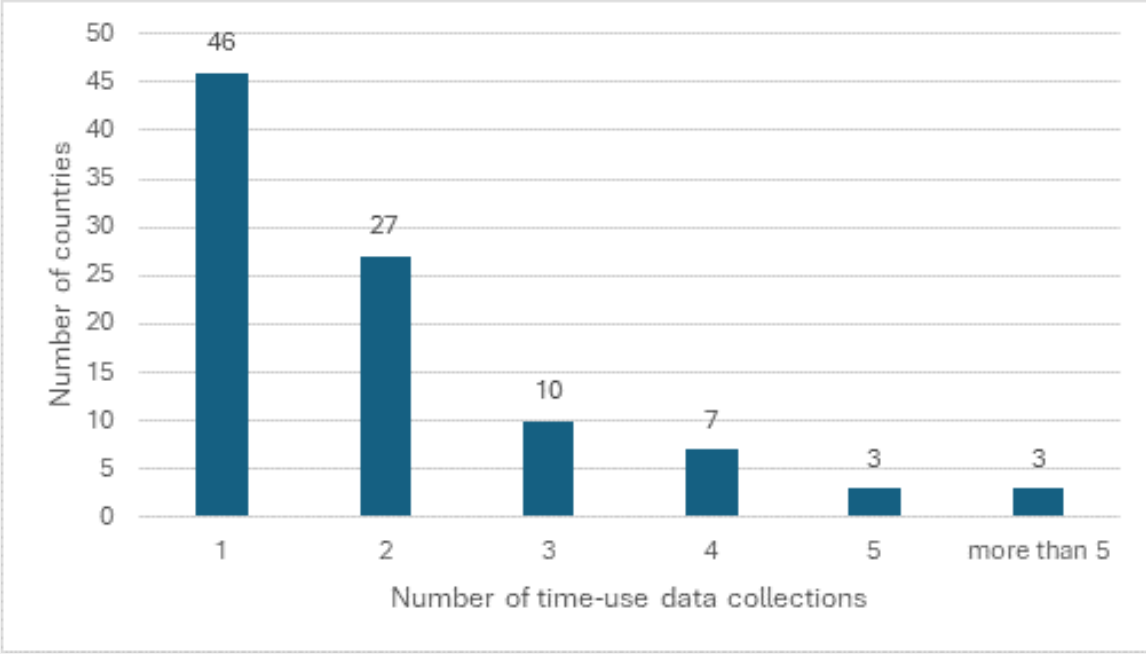


Numerous countries have collected time-use data as a one-time exercise, lacking a sustainable model to ensure frequent data collection, which is crucial for designing and monitoring public policies. Since 2000, forty-six countries worldwide have reported only once on indicator 5.4.1 of the SDGs Global Database, as depicted in Figure 2, while merely six countries have reported data at least five times, allowing for trend analysis.

¹ ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) (2021), Social Panorama of Latin America, 2020 (LC/PUB.2021/2-P/Rev.1), Santiago. UNECE/UN-Women (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe/United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) (2021), “Empowering women through reducing unpaid work: A regional analysis of Europe and Central Asia”, UNECE - UN-Women series: Rethinking Care Economy and Empowering Women for Building Back Better. ESCAP/ASEAN (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific/Association of Southeast Asian Nations) (2021), Addressing Unpaid Care Work in ASEAN (ST/ESCAP/2968), Bangladesh.

² [wcms_674831.pdf \(ilo.org\)](#)

Figure 2. Distribution of countries by number of time-use data collections, 2000-2023



In response to the shortage of this vital data, the Statistical Commission has recently endorsed the [Guide to Producing Time-Use Statistics](#). This technical document presents a range of options and methodologies, facilitating the production of high-quality time-use statistics and indicators in support of SDG monitoring. The Guide will help countries address challenges related to the complexity and cost of time-use surveys, including declining participation rates, coding and processing of time-use data, which can be resource-intensive processes.

Driving Policy Change with Time-Use Data

Several countries have leveraged time-use data to reshape care policies and promote shared responsibilities within households. Uruguay, for example, used these data to design, implement, and monitor its Integrated National Care System (SNIC). Similar initiatives in Argentina, Cambodia, Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, Kenya, Mexico, and Paraguay have informed care policies and programs aimed at fostering co-responsibility. Other countries, including Finland, the Republic of Moldova, and Albania, have reformed family leave systems by introducing or extending paternity leave to encourage men’s involvement in caregiving. In Korea, time-use data has been instrumental in analyzing care services, female labor force participation, and economic growth, influencing policy debates through academic and institutional research.

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Custodian agency(ies): UNSD, UN Women

Target 5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

Indicator 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments

What did a super-election year change in the composition of parliament?

Despite the turnover of more than 12,000 parliamentary seats in 2024 – affecting nearly half the world’s population -- the so-called “super election” year failed to spark meaningful change in parliamentary representation. Progress toward gender parity and more proportionate representation of youth in parliaments remains incremental, moving at a slow, steady pace – and, in the case of women parliamentarians, shows signs of deceleration.

Among leadership positions in parliament, women’s representation among Speakers declined by 0.1 percentage points compared to a year ago, running counter to the average annual rise of .64 points over the past 5 years (Table 1). Of the 81 Speakers elected or appointed in 2024, only 22 were women, all in the Americas (4), Europe (13) and Sub-Saharan Africa (5). No new women Speakers were elected or appointed in Asia, MENA, or the Pacific regions, where efforts to enable equal representation have been relatively limited. Currently, MENA is the only region in the world without any woman Speaker of parliament. Meanwhile, growth in women’s share of parliamentary seats continues to slow down, with a gain of only 0.3 points in 2024 (up 2.3 points over five years).

Growth in women’s share of committee leadership positions remains slow and uneven, with a net gain of 1.6 percentage points over five years and an average annual increase of 0.32 points (Table 1). Women chair 27.9% of parliamentary committees, but they overwhelmingly lead those with a gender equality portfolio (68.8%). At the same time, their leadership is disproportionately absent in the areas that shape security, economic policy, and global diplomacy. In 2024, women chaired between 14.5 - 20.7% of committees on foreign affairs, defence, and finance with negligible improvement from year to year.

Parliamentarians aged 45 and under now make up 32.6% of MPs – growing by 0.72 percentage points per year – yet these gains have done little to reshape the distribution of leadership roles (Table 2). They account for 9.6% of Speakers and chair 15.8% of parliamentary committees, a figure that is declining annually by 1.2 percentage points. Following an amendment to the IPU Statutes, the IPU definition of a “young parliament” is now aged 40 or younger at the time of election, and future reporting will also track this metric.

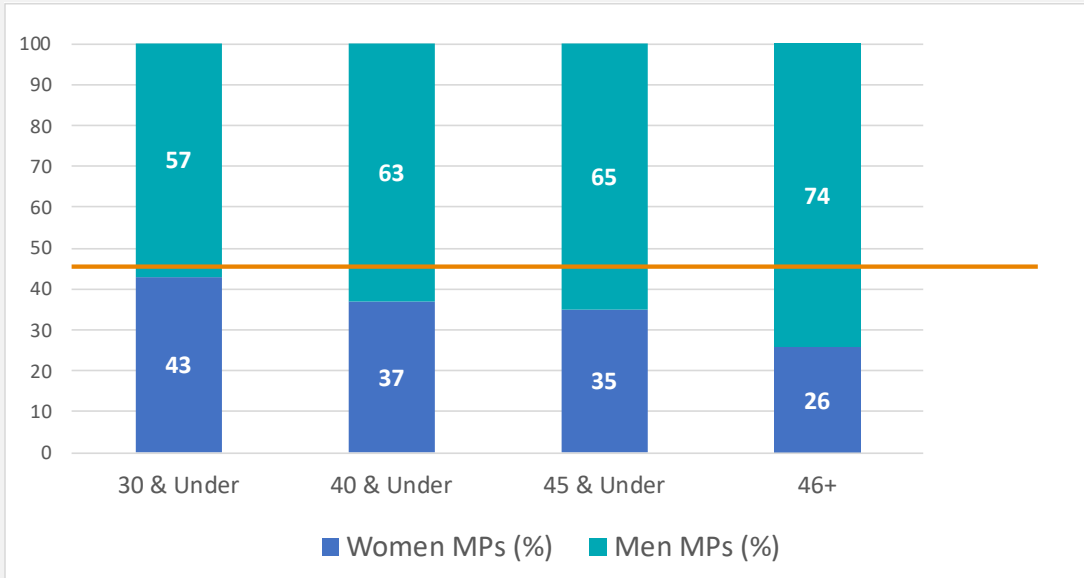
Nonetheless, the ratio of men to women among younger cohorts skews closer to parity 57:43 (for MPs age 30 and under), suggesting potential for a more gender-balanced future if younger members advance into leadership (Chart 1).

Overall, these results underscore that incumbents - typically older and male - maintain a tight grip on leadership positions, and large numbers of elections do not automatically translate into greater representation of underrepresented groups in parliament.

Achieving quicker and enduring progress requires fundamental reforms to the institutional and cultural norms that govern who runs for parliament and who ultimately wields influence and power.

Political parties often play a salient role as gatekeepers to candidacy and leadership, giving them the power to determine who rises to top positions. Thus, proactive measures to enhance leadership opportunities for women and youth can be a game-changer. This can include amending internal parliamentary and party rules to put in place quotas for women and youth in leadership positions, rotating positions between men and women, introducing dual leadership structures, and promoting proportional and equitable distribution of parliamentarians across all committee subject areas. Well-designed quotas have repeatedly proven effective, sometimes nearly doubling women’s representation over an election cycle where duly implemented. Greater diversity can also be achieved by shifting decisions about leadership roles from parties to the full parliament membership (creating open competition) and by holding secret ballots for leadership roles (reducing pressure to toe the party line). In conclusion, accelerating diversity in parliamentary leadership hinges on bold, deliberate action.

The Future of Politics? Greater Gender Balance among Younger MPs



Women’s representation in parliament 2020-2025

Year	Women Speakers	Annual change - Speakers	Women committee chairs	Annual change - Chairs	Women members	Annual change - Members
2020	20.5%	-	26.3%	-	24.9%	-
2021	20.9%	▲ 0.4	26.8%	▲ 0.5	25.5%	▲ 0.6
2022	22.0%	▲ 1.1	26.2%	▼ -0.6	26.1%	▲ 0.6
2023	22.7%	▲ 0.7	25.7%	▼ -0.5	26.5%	▲ 0.4
2024	23.8%	▲ 1.1	27.2%	▲ 1.5	26.9%	▲ 0.4
2025	23.7%	▼ -0.1	27.9%	▲ 0.7	27.2%	▲ 0.3
Average rate of change	▲ 0.64		▲ 0.32		▲ 0.46	
Total change in 5 years	▲ 3.2%		▲ 1.6%		▲ 2.3%	

Representation of parliamentarians aged 45 and under - 2020-2025

Year	Young Speakers (≤ 45)	Annual change - Speakers	Young committee chairs (≤ 45)	Annual change - Chairs	Young members (≤ 45)	Annual change - Members
2020	6.2%	-	21.8%	-	29.0%	-
2021	10.0%	▲ 3.8	19.3%	▼ -2.5	29.9%	▲ 0.9
2022	8.5%	▼ -1.5	19.8%	▲ 0.5	30.3%	▲ 0.4
2023	8.8%	▲ 0.3	18.5%	▼ -1.3	29.9%	▼ -0.4
2024	9.3%	▲ 0.5	17.3%	▼ -1.2	32.0%	▲ 2.1
2025	9.6%	▲ 0.3	15.8%	▼ -1.5	32.6%	▲ 0.6
Average rate of change	▲ 0.68		▼ -1.20		▲ 0.72	
Total change in 5 years	▲ 3.4%		▼ -6.0%		▲ 3.6%	

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- IPU (2025), Parline database on national parliaments, <https://data.ipu.org>
- IPU (2025), Women in Parliament 1995-2025: 30 years in review, <https://ipu.org/knowledge>
- United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2024), *General Recommendation No. 40 (CEDAW/C/GC/40)* “on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems,” <https://docs.un.org/en/CEDAW/C/GC/40>
- IPU (2024), « Super election year sees few gains for women MPs so far,” <https://www.ipu.org/news/press-releases/2024-09/super-election-year-sees-few-gains-women-mps-so-far>
- IPU (2022), *Kigali Declaration: Gender equality and gender-sensitive parliaments as drivers of change for a more resilient and peaceful world*, <https://www.ipu.org/file/15355/download>
- IPU (2022), *IPU Member parliaments commit to accelerating gender equality*, <https://www.ipu.org/news/press-releases/2022-10/ipu-member-parliaments-commit-accelerating-gender-equality>
- IPU (2017), Plan of Action for Gender Sensitive Parliaments, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reference/2016-07/plan-action-gender-sensitive-parliaments>
- IPU (2017), Global Parliamentary Report - Parliamentary Oversight: Parliament’s Power to Hold Government to Account, <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reports/2017-10/global-parliamentary-report-2017-parliamentary-oversight-parliaments-power-hold-government-account>
- IPU (2010), Youth Participation in the Democratic Process, <http://archive.ipu.org/conf-e/122/res-3.htm>

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Custodian agency(ies): IPU, UN Women

Progress toward gender parity slows, while risk of backsliding grows

Progress towards parity in political decision-making is stalling, creating concern for backsliding.

At 1 January 2025, women occupied 27.2% of seats in lower or single chambers of national parliaments globally. This is a gain of 4.9 percentage points since 2015 (22.3%) and 0.3 points since 1 January 2024. Despite numerous parliamentary chamber renewals (73), 2024 marked a slowdown compared to an average annual increase of nearly 0.5 points over the past decade. On a more positive note, increased diversity among elected women MPs creates hope for more inclusive decision-making.* In local government, women’s representation stagnated at 35.5%, after an average annual increase of 0.4 percentage points since 2020.

Parliaments and local governments with parity remain rare. As at 1 January 2025, only six countries have 50% or more women in the lower or single chamber of parliament (Andorra, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Rwanda and the United Arab Emirates), up from three in 2015, but the same number as in 2024. Three chambers had zero women members (Oman, Vanuatu and Yemen), down from five in 2015, but an increase from two in 2024. Another 17 chambers had less than 10% women MPs. In local governments, only two out of 145 countries with data reached 50% or more women in elected positions (Bolivia and Iceland). Compared to 2020, the number of countries with 40% or more women in local government increased from 23 to 28 while the number of countries with less than 10% women decreased from 15 to 12 countries .

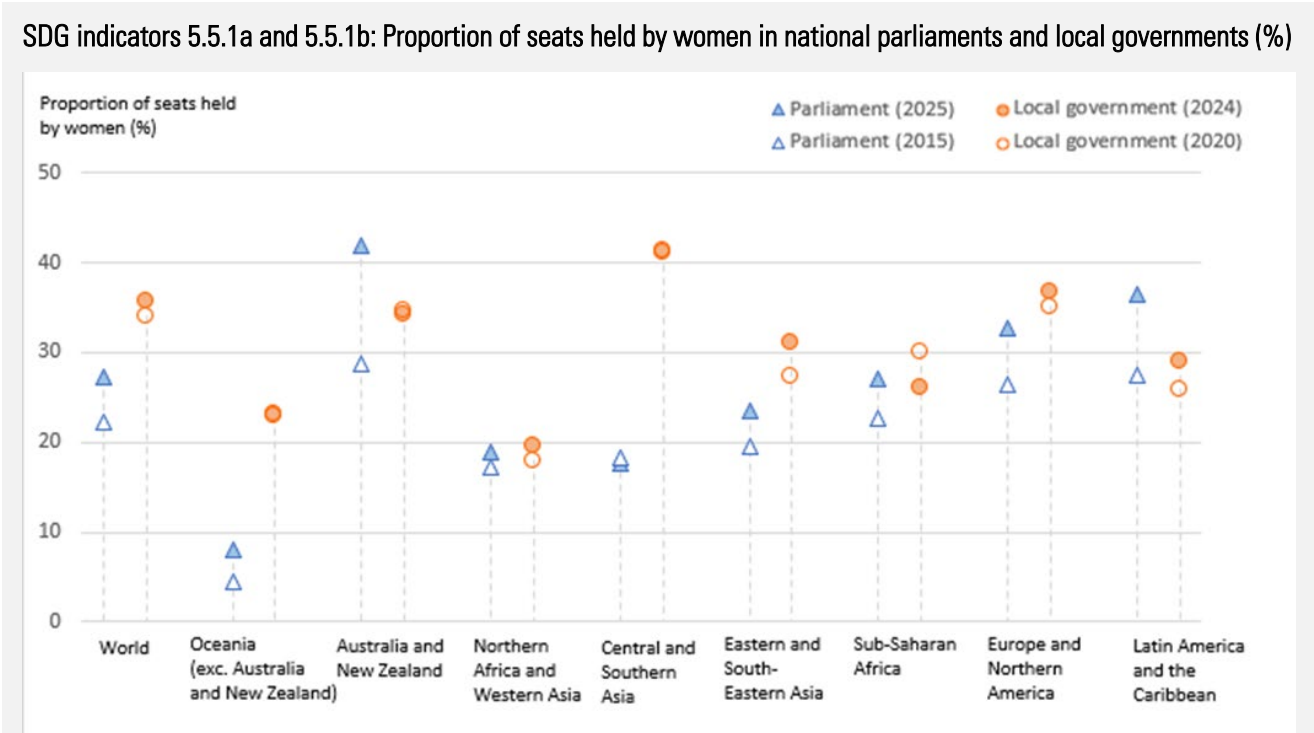
Electoral quotas remain a determining factor for progress. Over half of countries implement legislated electoral gender quotas, including 94 at parliamentary level and 84 at local level, as of 1 January 2024. Countries that applied quotas in national parliamentary renewals in 2024 elected far more women (31.2%) than those without quotas (16.8%). For quotas to work they must be ambitious, duly enforced and combined with measures to create a conducive environment.

In this regard, violence against women in politics continue to hinder women’s political participation, as witnessed during 2024 elections. Moreover, a UN Women survey in five countries found that between one third and two thirds of women elected to local governments experienced violence and harassment because of their gender and position. Such violence is deeply rooted in harmful gender norms. Gender issues more broadly dominated several elections in 2024, sometimes spurring anti-feminist backlash or creating a gender divide among voters. While violence against women in politics has been widely acknowledged, sustained action is needed to develop long-term and integrated legislative and policy solutions.

General Recommendation 40 adopted by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in October 2024 provides new guidance towards achieving equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making, focusing on seven transformative pillars:

- 1. Instituting 50/50 gender parity as a permanent norm for governance.
- 2. Promoting young women leaders.
- 3. Ensuring leadership of women in all their diversity.
- 4. Applying parity to all spaces, levels and fields.
- 5. Promoting equal power and influence through parity in top leadership roles.
- 6. Eliminating gender stereotypes and care work inequalities.
- 7. Ensuring women’s organizations and activists can organize and participate in decision-making.

*See also SDG 16.7.1a data on women’s stronger representation among youngest cohorts of members of parliament.



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- CEDAW, General recommendation No 40. on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, 2024, available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-recommendation-no-40-equal-and-inclusive>
- IPU, Women in Parliament 1995-2025: 30 years in review, 2025, available at <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/reports/2025-03/women-in-parliament-1995-2025>
- IPU, Parline database: <https://data.ipu.org>
- IPU-UN Women, Women in Politics: 2025, available at <https://www.ipu.org/resources/publications/infographics/2025-03/women-in-politics-2025>
- UN Women, Women in Local Government website, accessible at: <https://localgov.unwomen.org/>
- United Nations, 2025. United Nations Gender Quota Portal, available at <https://genderquota.org/>
- United Nations, 2025. Review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Report of the Secretary-General. E/CN.6/2025/3. Available at: <https://docs.un.org/E/CN.6/2025/3>

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Custodian agency(ies): IPU, UN Women

Indicator 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions

Less than one-third of managerial positions were held by women in 2023

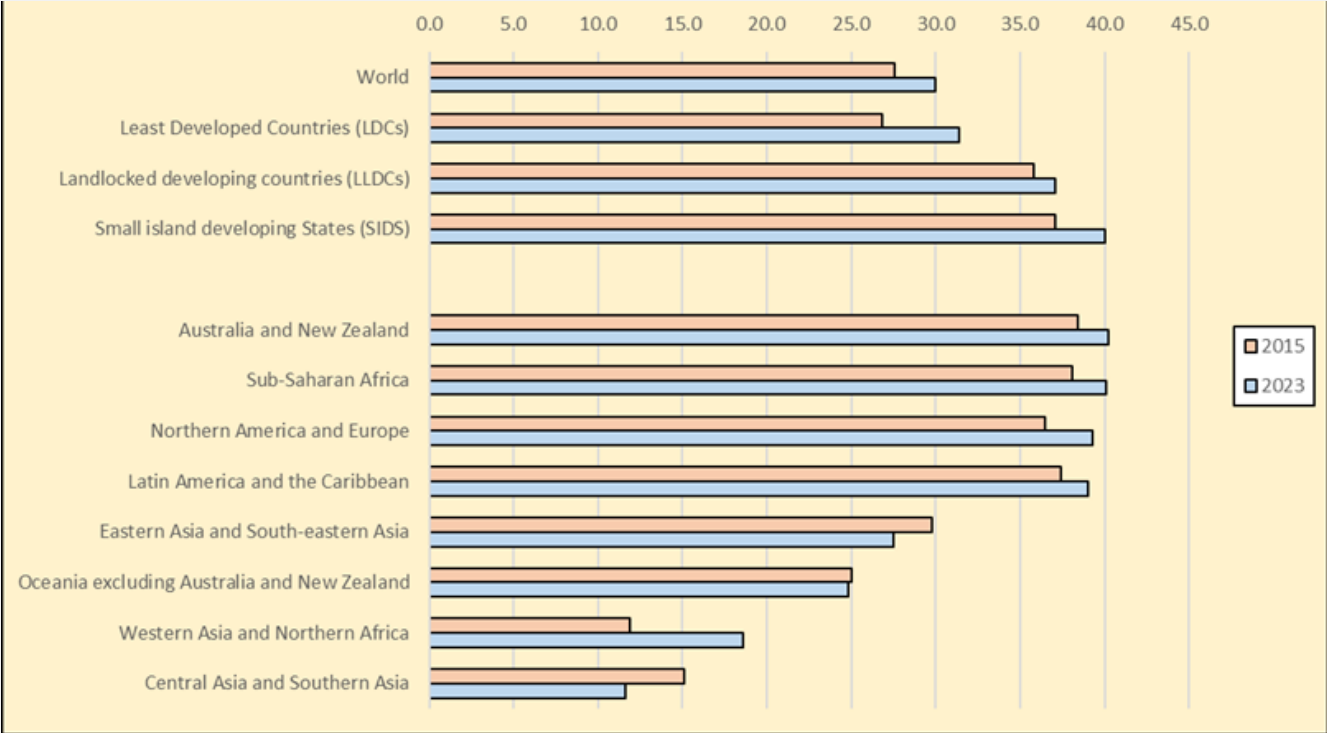
Globally, less than one out of three managerial positions are held by women, despite women accounting for approximately 40 per cent of global employment. Since 2015, women’s representation in management has increased by only 2.4 percentage points, reaching 30.0 per cent in 2023. Given this sluggish progress, it will take almost 100 years before we reach gender parity in managerial roles.

All regions and subregions lag in ensuring women are adequately represented in managerial positions. However, women in Australia and New Zealand and Sub-Saharan Africa fared better than those in other regions, holding over 40 per cent of these management positions. Northern America and Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean followed closely, with women representing around 39 per cent of managerial roles.

Meanwhile, the trajectory in Central and Southern Asia is alarming: the share of women in management declined from 15.1 per cent in 2015 to 11.6 per cent in 2023. The reversal of progress has also been observed in Eastern and South-eastern Asia (-2.3 percentage points), a region that has otherwise shown promising trends for women in the labour market. In Western Asia and Northern Africa, less than one in five management positions were held by women in 2023, despite a notable increase of 6.7 percentage points since 2015. Women in these regions face significant systemic hurdles in accessing employment opportunities and, if employed, career growth opportunities.

It should be noted that these aggregates include all types of management (top, senior, middle or junior management) regardless of the number of staff supervised, the type of economic unit, or scope and size of the economic unit, all of which are important to assess the actual decision-making power of workers holding managerial positions.

Proportion of women in managerial positions, 2015 & 2023



Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): ILO

Custodian agency(ies): ILO

Target 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences

Indicator 5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care

Reversing Gains: Women’s Sexual and Reproductive Autonomy Declines in West and Central Africa Amid Stagnant Global Progress

Despite global commitments to gender equality, only 56.3% of women aged 15 to 49 who are married or in a union have full decision-making power over their sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), based on data from 78 countries. Women in Europe have the highest autonomy in making their own decisions on SRHR, at 87.2%, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean at 79%, and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia at 77.4%. In contrast, women in Sub-Saharan Africa have the lowest level of sexual and reproductive autonomy, at just 36.8%.

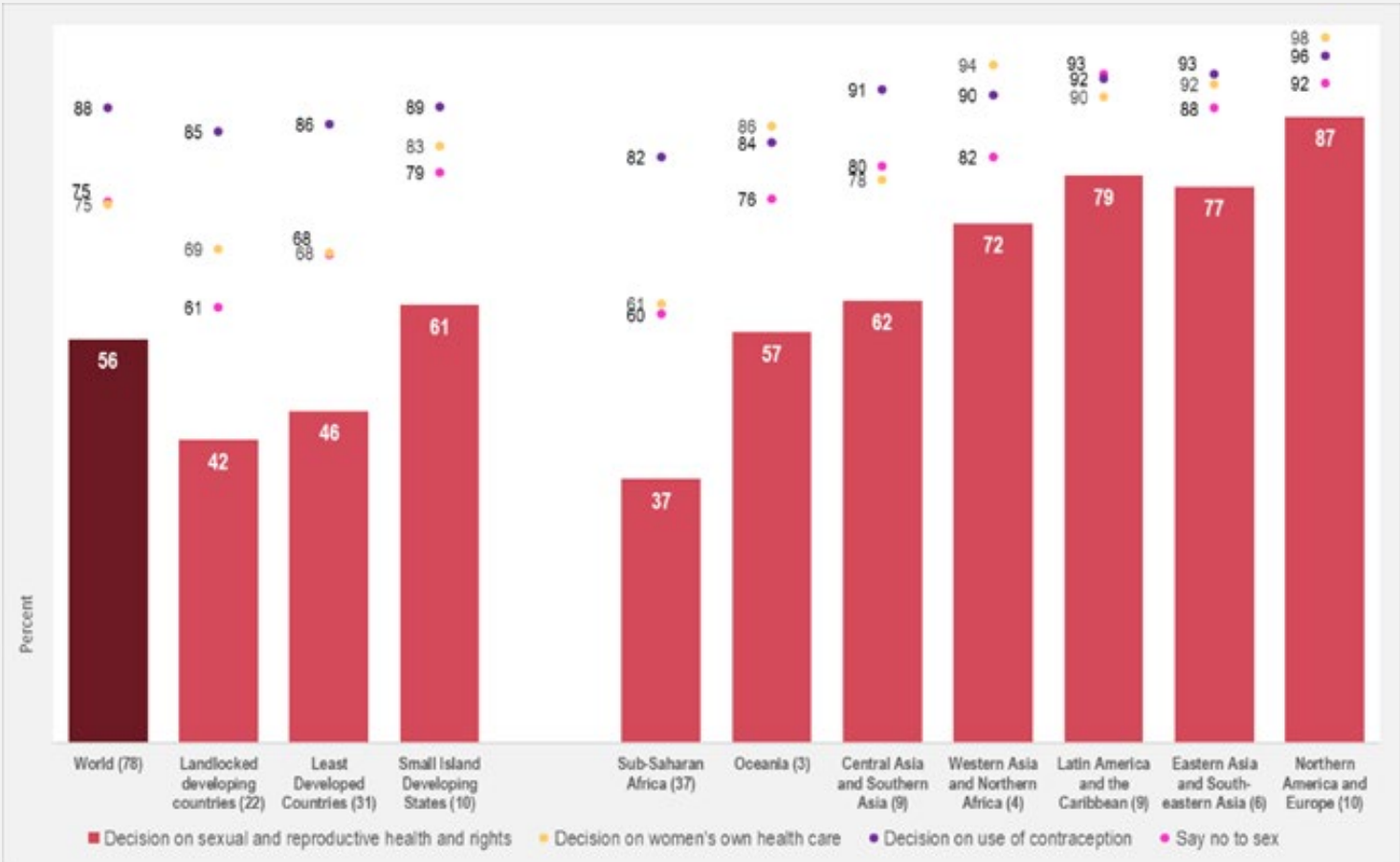
A disaggregated analysis of three sub-indicators, including autonomy in contraceptive use, the ability to refuse sex, and decision-making on healthcare, further exposes the uneven progress. While 88.5% of women globally can decide on contraceptive use, one in ten women (11.5%) still lacks this right. Even more concerning, only 75.4% of women can refuse sexual intercourse with their partners, and 75% can make their own healthcare decisions, with figures dropping to 51.2% and 43.6% in Western Africa, where gender norms and legal restrictions continue to limit women's bodily autonomy.

A trend analysis conducted for 36 countries highlights both progress and setbacks. Encouragingly, many countries in East and Southern Africa have made significant progress in women’s sexual and reproductive autonomy. For example, in Eswatini, the percentage of women who can make their own SRHR decisions increased from 48.9% to 73% between 2007 and 2022. However, many countries in West and Central Africa have experienced the most significant regressions, underscoring persistent challenges in advancing women’s sexual and reproductive rights in the region.

A closer examination of socioeconomic disparities reveals important trends. Urban-rural disparities have widened in some countries, such as the United Republic of Tanzania, while others have shown progress in closing these gaps. Similarly, educational disparities remain a major barrier, with countries like Benin showing growing inequalities in decision-making power between women with different education levels.

The stagnation in progress calls for urgent action. Strengthening legal frameworks, ensuring comprehensive sexuality education, and expanding access to SRHR services are crucial to accelerating change. The data also underscore the need for localized, data-driven policy responses that address deeply entrenched gender norms and socioeconomic barriers, particularly in regions where progress has been slow or reversed. Without sustained action, millions of women will continue to lack autonomy over their own bodies, limiting their rights, health, and overall well-being.

Figure. Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own decisions regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights (including deciding on their own health care, deciding on the use of contraception; and can say no to sex); most recent data 2007-2024.



Custodian agency(ies): UNFPA

Indicator 5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education

Custodian agency(ies): UNFPA

Target 5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws

Indicator 5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure

Limited Ownership and Secure Land Rights in Agricultural land with Notable Gender Gaps

Women play a key role throughout the agricultural value chain, from cultivating family plots to preparing and distributing food within households. In this context, access to agricultural land is essential for women's economic empowerment. Land ownership and secure tenure rights not only benefit women individually but also contribute to broader societal gains. Although global data remains limited, information from 49 countries between 2009-2023 highlights a general lack of ownership and secure tenure rights over agricultural land for both men and women living in agricultural households. Moreover, significant gender disparities persist within the agricultural population, with women being less likely than men to own agricultural land in most countries.

In nearly 80 percent of countries with available data, less than half of women have ownership or secure rights to agricultural land (Figure 1). Likewise, in half of these countries, less than half of men hold such rights. A significant gender gap exists, with men owning land at least twice as often as women in almost half of the countries.

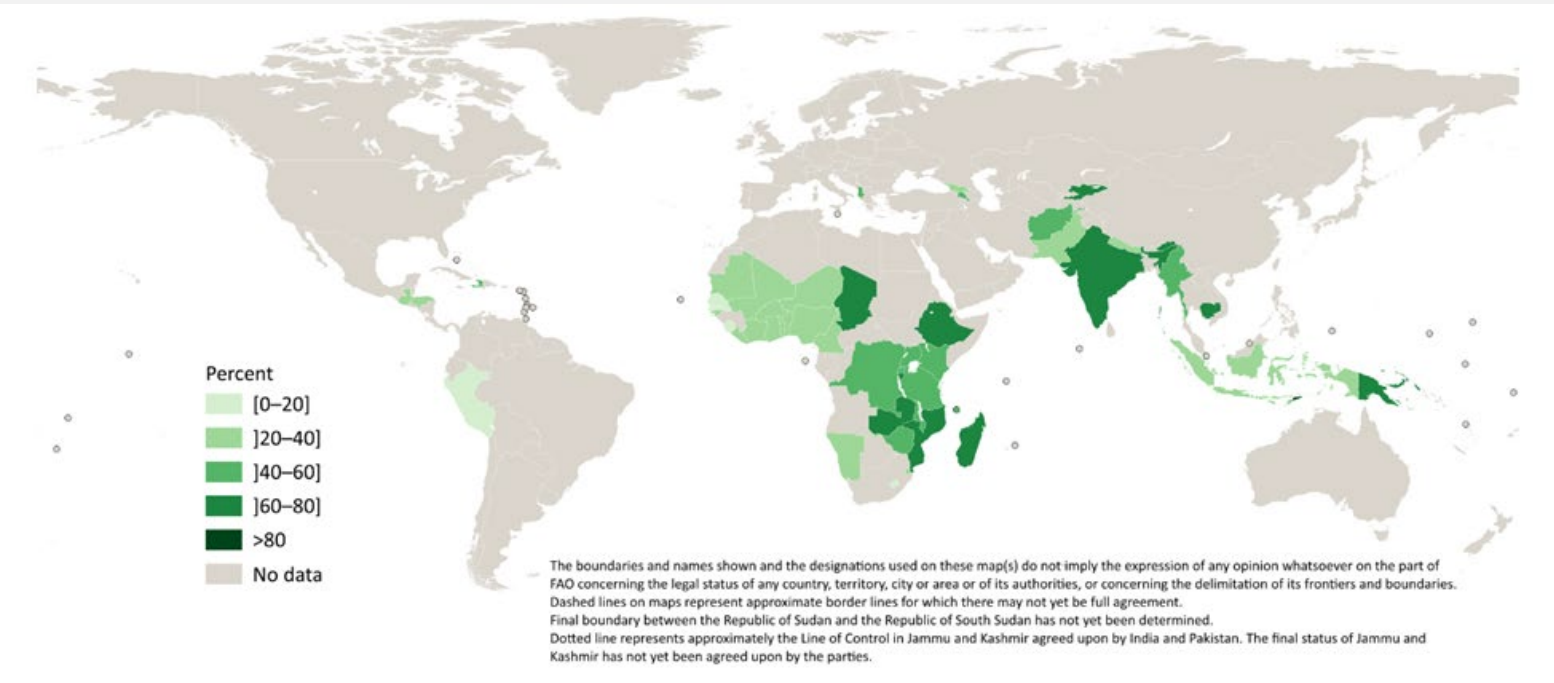
Gender equality in agricultural land ownership remains a persistent challenge. Only ten countries report women making up slightly more than 50 percent of total landowners. By contrast, in almost half of the countries, male landowners account for more than 70 percent of the total landowners (Figure 2).

In one third of the countries with available data, less than 50 percent of women and men have ownership or secure rights over agricultural land (Figure 1). Additionally, there is a notable disparity between women and men’s agricultural land ownership, with men owning land at least twice as often as women in almost half of the countries.

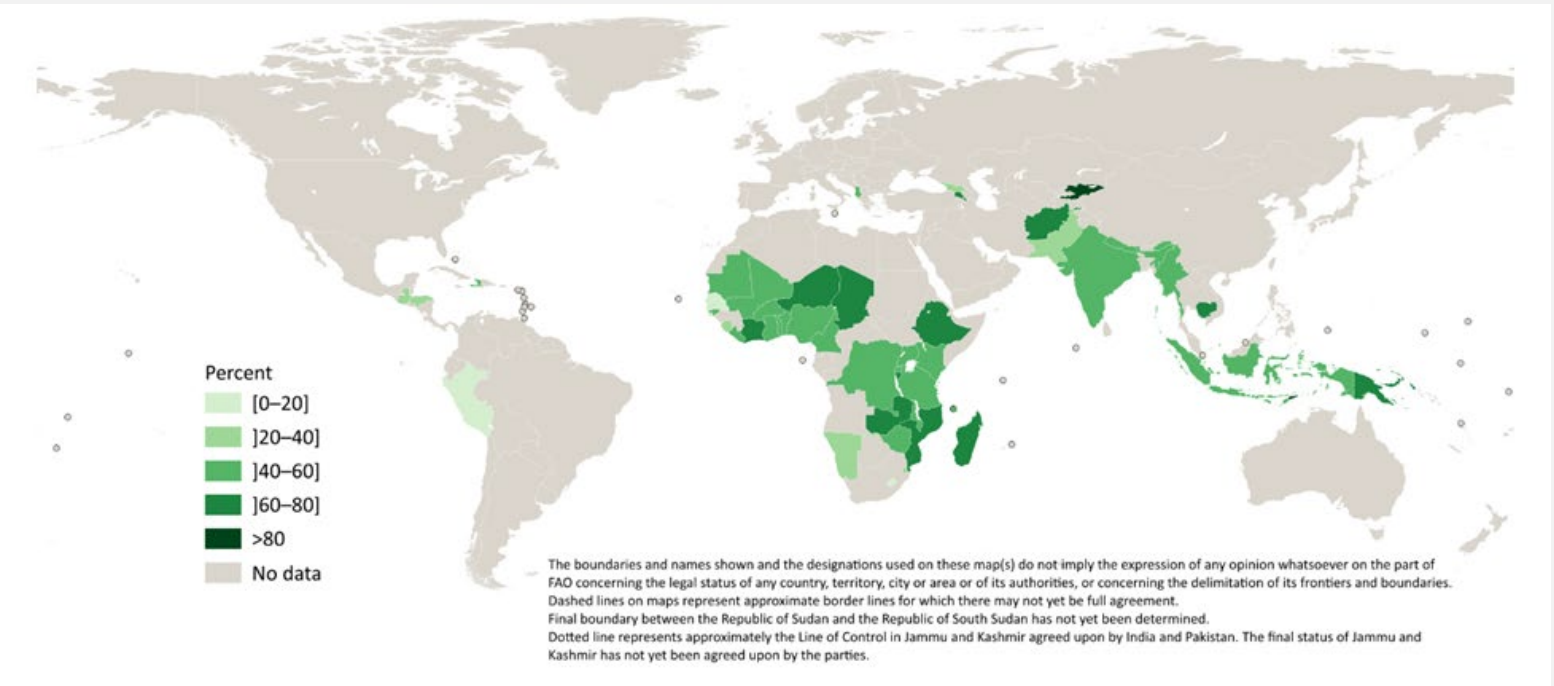
Achieving gender equality in ownership and secure rights over agricultural land remains a challenge in most countries. Only nine countries have a slightly higher proportion of female among the total landowners, exceeding 50 percent. Additionally, male landowners constitute over 70 percent of the total owners in one third of the countries (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Share of people in the total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights

Total



Male



Female

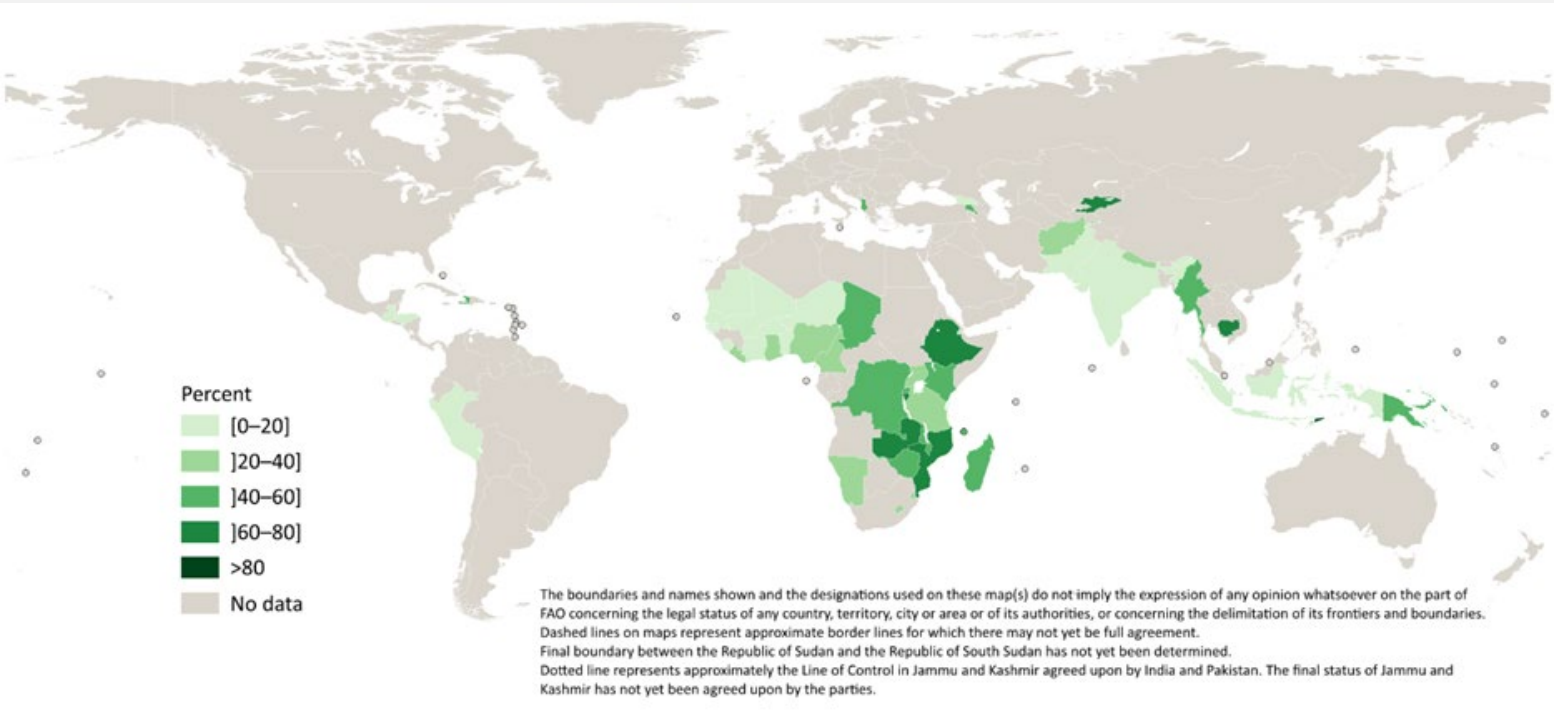
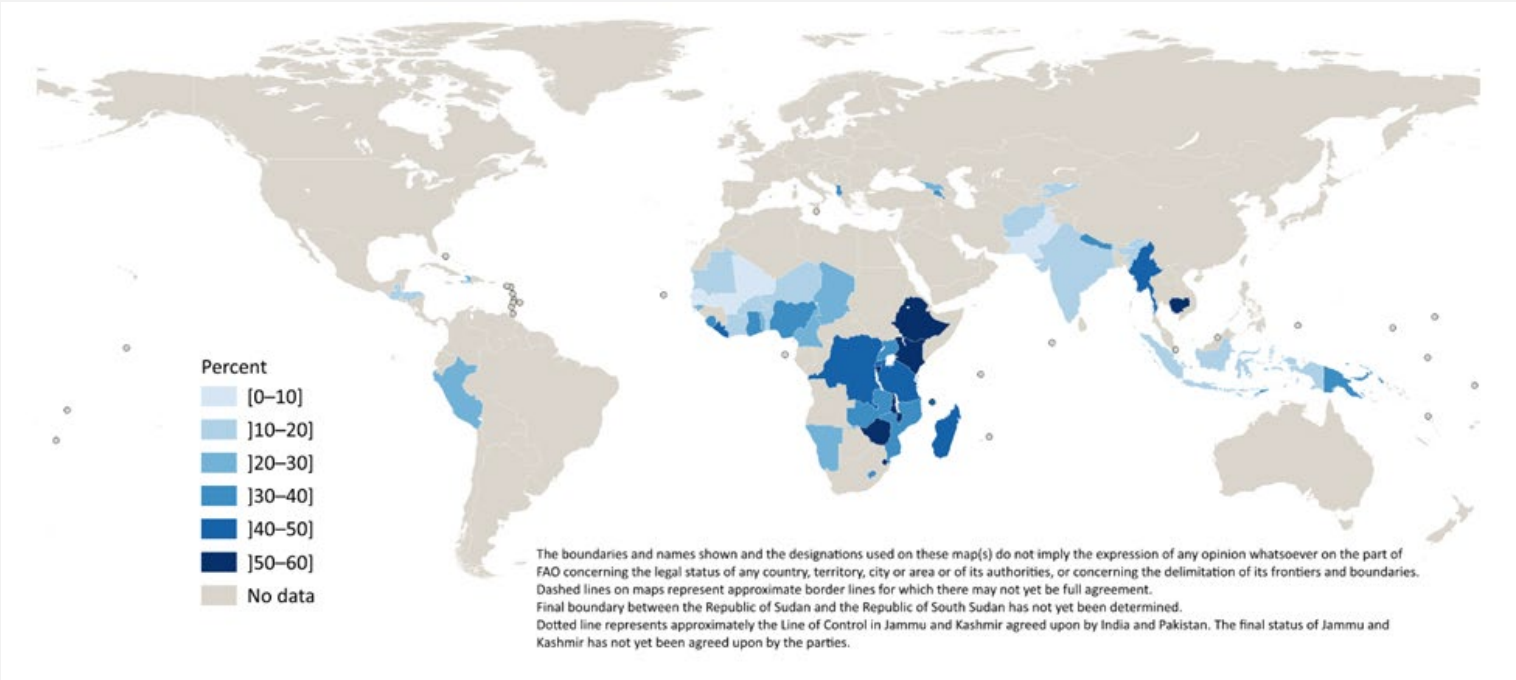


Figure 2. Share of women among owners/ holders secure tenure rights over agricultural land



Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Leman Yonca Gurbuzer

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Indicator 5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women’s equal rights to land ownership and/or control

Strengthening women's land rights: Legal and policy reforms for inclusive, sustainable development

The SDG 5.a.2 legal assessment provides critical insights into land tenure systems, identifying both protections and gaps in legislation affecting women’s land rights. It helps understand how legal and policy frameworks can be strengthened to benefit both women and men, while supporting broader societal goals. Secure land tenure is essential for promoting inclusive, sustainable development and food system transformation, as it encourages both men and women to invest in land improvements and adopt sustainable practices. It also contributes to better and inclusive governance. Strengthening land tenure security and promoting women’s participation in land governance helps create more resilient, equitable food systems that can better withstand challenges like climate change, migration, economic downturns, and food insecurity.

The global review, covering 84 countries, reveals a significant gap in the effectiveness of legal protections, despite broad constitutional guarantees of gender equality and property rights in most countries. Although legislative reforms have been introduced to improve women's land rights, the disparity between policy intent and actual practice remains especially wide for groups such as indigenous women, women from ethnic and religious minorities, widows, and unmarried or divorced women. The analysis of SDG 5.a.2 in combination with 5.a.1 data further underscores this issue. Beyond implementation challenges, the SDG 5.a.2 legal assessments also highlight the existence of outdated and fragmented legal frameworks which often contain discriminatory or internally inconsistent provisions, substantively hampering the achievement of broader policy objectives set by national governments.

Legal protections for women’s land rights vary significantly by region. While Europe, Latin America, and Asia have generally strong inheritance laws and spousal consent requirements, regions such as Western Asia and sub-Saharan Africa lag behind. For example, legal safeguards as promoted by SDG 5.a.2 are scarce in Western Asia, while sub-Saharan Africa has seen some success with quotas for women's participation in land administration, despite slow implementation. Joint registration of matrimonial property is more common in Asia and Latin America, while financial allocations aimed at increasing women’s land ownership or tenure security are still rare globally. Thirteen countries have reported having statistical data showing that at least 40% of those with ownership or secure rights to land are women, with half of these countries located in Europe.

The COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing conflicts, climate change, political instability, threats to the rule of law, among others have intensified challenges for women’s secure land rights, deepening vulnerabilities, hindering progress on gender equality and women’s economic empowerment, and weakening governance.

Level of protection for women’s land rights in national legal frameworks

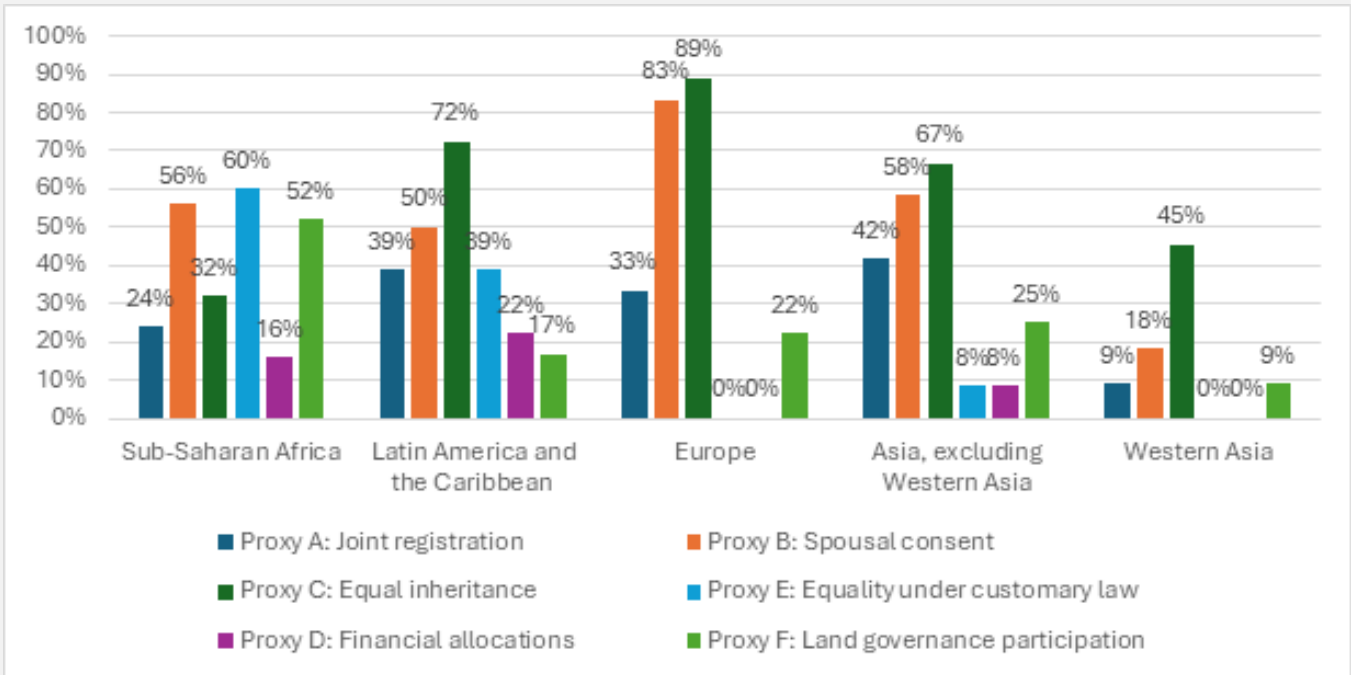
Number of proxies present	Score*	Level of protection in the law	No. of countries (n=84)	Share of countries globally
0	1	None	16	19%
1	2	Very low	9	11%
2	3	Low	24	29%
3	4	Medium	20	24%
4	5	High	13	15%
5 or 6	6	Very high	2	2%

Source: Percentages based on officially submitted SDG Indicator 5.a.2 assessments, February 2025.

Notes: This table gives an overview of legal score based solely on de jure measures, excluding statistical data reported in 13 countries.

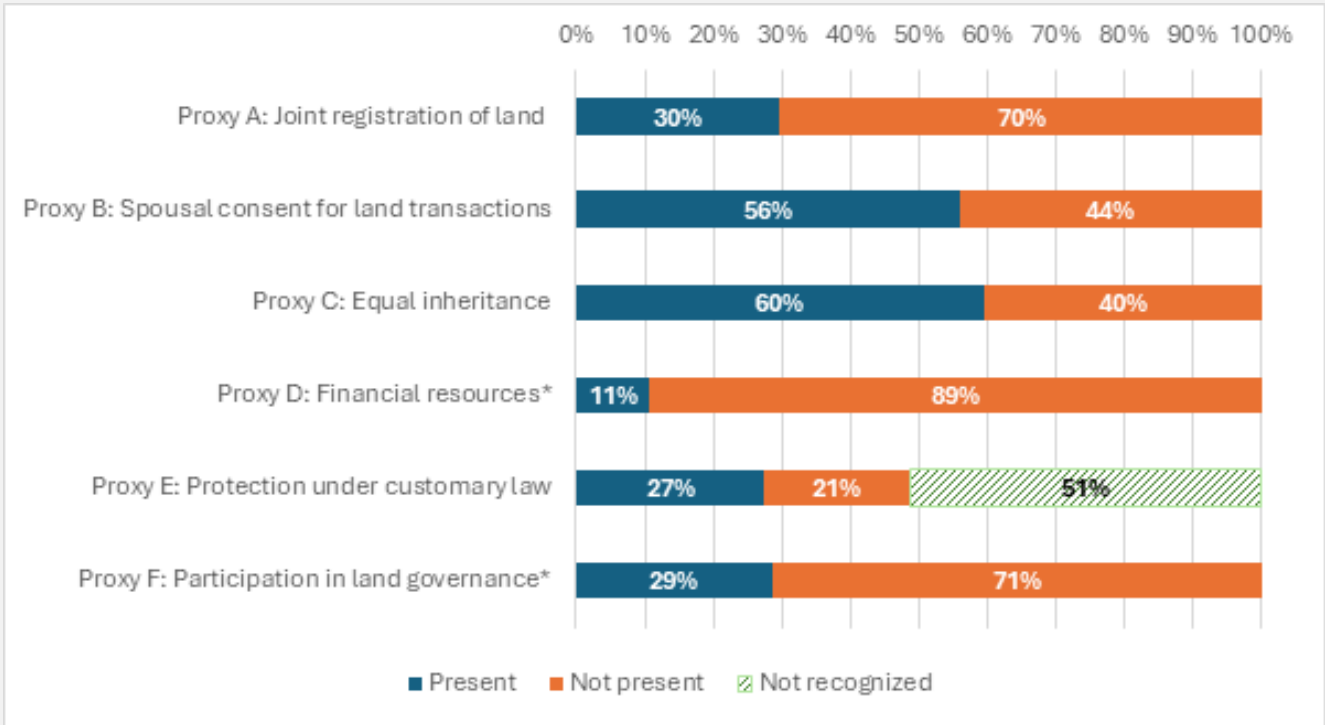
* The score equals the number of proxies present plus one. The maximum band is 6, even for the countries where 6 proxies are applicable.

Figure 1: The share of countries (out of SGD 5.a.2 reporting countries in each region) per region, where legal proxies A, B, C, E, D and F are present



Source: Percentages based on officially submitted SDG Indicator 5.a.2 assessments, February 2025.
Note: Figures for proxy D and F are based solely on legal measures, without considering statistical data in 13 countries that show no or a limited gender gap in land ownership or secure tenure rights, with a disparity of 40% or less.

Figure 2: The share of countries out of 84 reporting countries globally in which each proxy is present



Source: Percentages based on officially submitted SDG Indicator 5.a.2 assessments, February 2025.
Note: Figures for proxy D and F are based solely on legal measures, without considering statistical data in 13 countries that show no or a limited gender gap in land ownership or secure tenure rights, with a disparity of 40% or less.

Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- From law to practice: a cross-country assessment of gender inequalities in rights to land, Authors: Vanya Slavchevska, Muriel Veldman, Clara Park, Veronica Boero, Yonca Gurbuzer, Annarita Macchioni Giaquinto, GFS journal (forthcoming in 2025)
- UN Women's series: "Towards Reversing Discrimination in Law: Mapping and Analysis of Laws of Guyana; Malawi; Mozambique; South Sudan; Uganda; Liberia; Mali; and Rwanda. This publication focuses on SDG 5.1.1, 5.6.2, and 5.a.2, identifying discriminatory laws and legal gaps affecting women and girls in target countries. It provides a framework and roadmap for law reform, serving as a valuable resource for governments, civil society, academia, and international organizations. (forthcoming)

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Muriel Veldman, FAO

Custodian agency(ies): FAO

Target 5.b Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women

Indicator 5.b.1 Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex

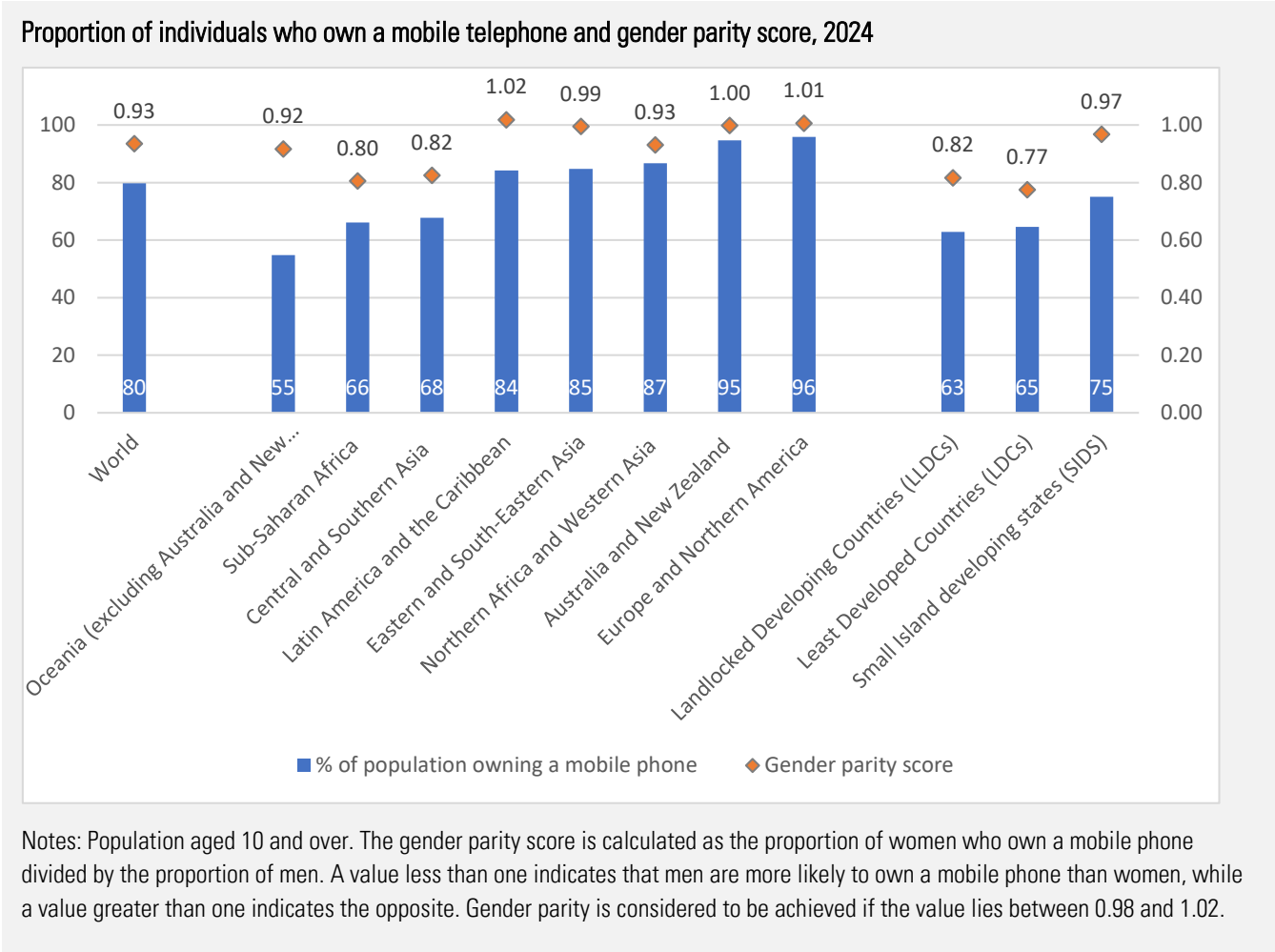
Worldwide, four out of five people own a mobile phone, but women are about 7 per cent less likely to own one than men

Globally, four out of five individuals 10 years or older owned a mobile phone in 2024. Universal ownership, meaning a penetration rate of over 95 per cent, has been reached in the SDG regions Australia and New Zealand, and Europe and Northern America. On the other end of the spectrum, in Oceania (excluding Australia and New Zealand) only 55% of the population owned a mobile phone. In Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia this figure stood at around two-thirds of the population, while in the other regions it was between 84% and 87%.

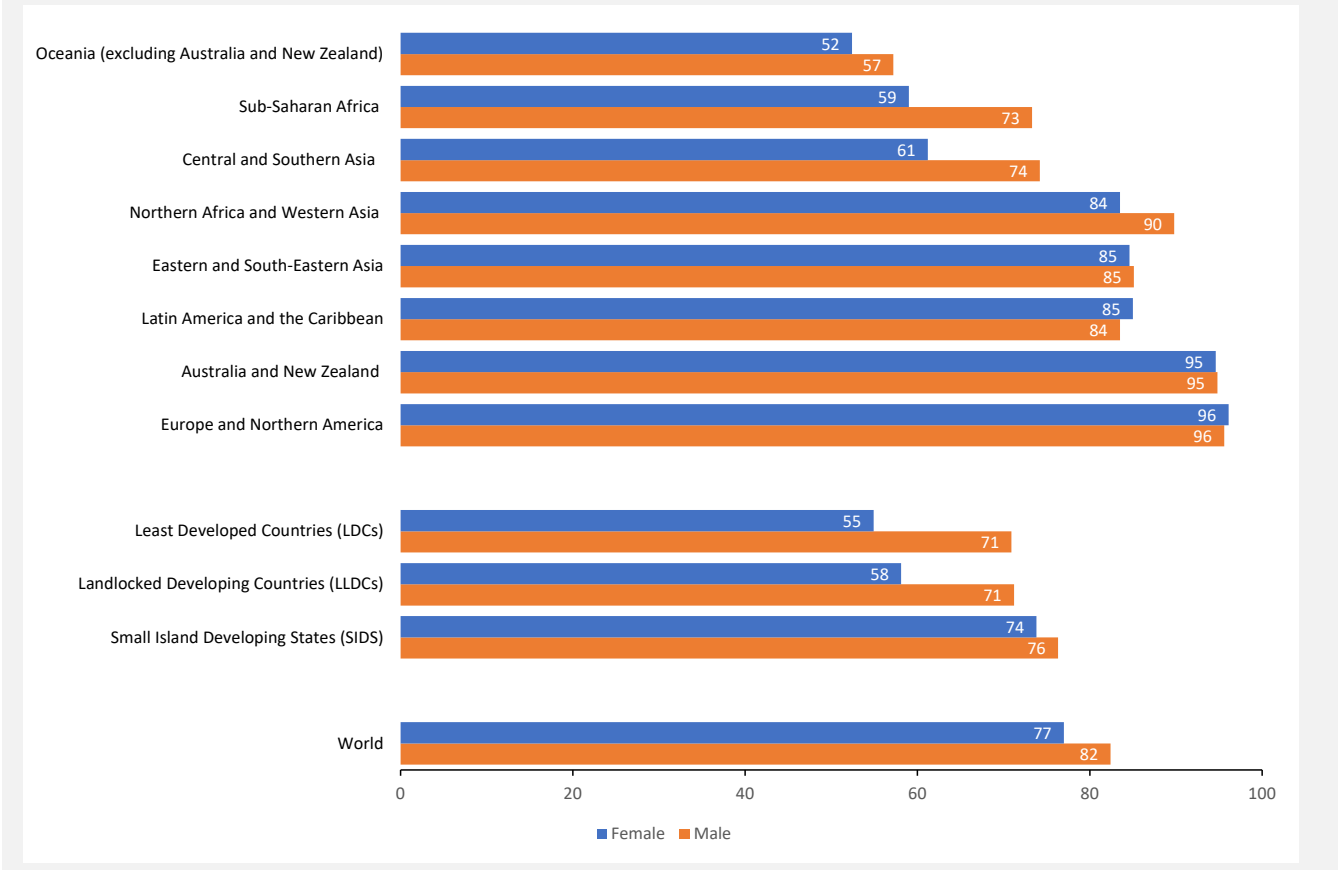
Looking at the breakdown by sex, 77 per cent of females and 82 per cent of males owned a mobile phone, giving a gender parity score (GPS) (defined as the percentage of women owning a mobile phone divided by the number of men owning one) of 0.93, i.e. skewed against women. Gender parity (defined as a GPS between 0.98 and 1.02) has been reached in Australia and New Zealand; Europe and Northern America; Latin America and the Caribbean; and Eastern and South-Eastern Asia. The lowest GPS were recorded in Sub-Saharan Africa (0.80) and Central and Southern Asia (0.82). The situation was also dire in Least Developed Countries (0.77) and Landlocked Developing Countries (0.82).

GPS and Internet penetration rates tend to be correlated. Small island developing States, where two thirds of the population used the Internet in 2024, are an exception. Although SIDS are 25 percentage points below the most connected country groups, they have achieved gender parity in Internet use (GPS of 1.00) and have almost reached gender parity in mobile phone ownership (GPS of 0.97).

Progress on gender parity in mobile phone ownership has been uneven in the past three years. Globally, women are about 7% less likely to own a mobile phone than men – down from 9.4% in 2021. Among those not owning mobile phones, women outnumber men by 31%.



Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex, 2024



Additional resources, press releases, etc. with links:

- ITU (2024), Measuring digital development: Facts and Figures 2024, <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/facts-figures-2024/>

Storyline authors(s)/contributor(s): Martin Schaaper, ITU

Custodian agency(ies): ITU

Target 5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

Indicator 5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment

Custodian agency(ies): UN Women, OECD, UNDP
