Chapter **4**
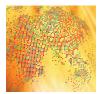
Gender inequalities beyond averages: Between social norms and power imbalances

4.

Gender inequalities beyond averages: Between social norms and power imbalances

Gender disparities remain among the most persistent forms of inequality across all countries.[1] Given that these disadvantages affect half the world's people, gender inequality is arguably one of the greatest barriers to human development. All too often, women and girls are discriminated against in health, in education, at home and in the labour market—with negative repercussions for their freedoms.

Progress in reducing gender inequality over the 20th century was remarkable in basic achievements in health and education and participation in markets and politics (figure 4.1).[2] Much of this progress was celebrated with the Beijing Platform for Action during the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women.[3] But as the event's 25th anniversary approaches in 2020, many challenges to equality remain, particularly for enhanced capabilities that alter power relations and enhance agency.

The world is not on track to achieve gender equality by 2030. Based on current trends, it would take 202 years to close t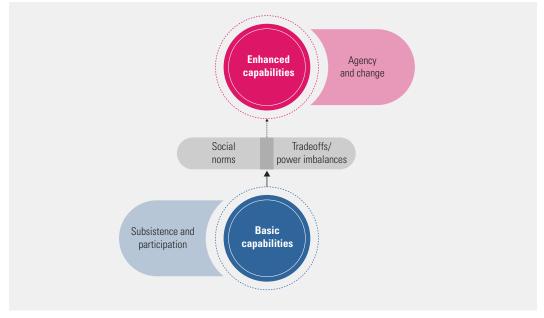he gender gap in economic opportunity.[4] The Human Development Report's Gender Inequality Index—a measure of women's empowerment in health, education and economic status— shows that overall progress in gender inequality has been slowing in recent years.[5]

Consider two developments. First, gender gaps are deeper than originally thought. *Time* magazine's 2017 Person of the Year was "the silence breakers," women who denounced abuse. Accomplished women were unprotected against persistent sexual abuse. The silence breakers were also given voice by the #MeToo movement, which uncovered abuse and vulnerability for women, well beyond what is covered in official statistics. In Latin America,

The world is not on track to achieve gender equality by 2030

FIGURE 4.1

Remarkable progress in basic capabilities, much less in enhanced capabilities

Source: Human Development Report Office.

too, the #NiUnaMenos movement has shed light on femicides and violence against women from Argentina to Mexico.[6]

Second, there are troubling signs of difficulties and reversals on the path towards gender equality—for female heads of state and government and for women's participation in the labour market, even where there is a buoyant economy and gender parity in access to education.[7] And there are signs of a backlash. In several countries the gender equality agenda is being portrayed as part of "gender ideology."[8]

In other words, precisely when awareness is increasing more needs to be done to achieve gender equality, the path becomes steeper. This chapter explores why progress is slowing, identifying today's active barriers that pose challenges for future prospects for equality, which include personal and public beliefs as well as practices that generate biases against gender equality. It stresses that gender inequality reflects intrinsic imbalances in power—something well known to women's movements and feminist experts—and documents two trends:

- Gender inequalities are intense, widespread and behind the unequal distribution of human development progress across levels of socioeconomic development.
- Gender inequality tends to be more intense in areas of greater individual empowerment and social power. This implies that progress is easier for more basic capabilities and harder for more enhanced capabilities (chapter 1).

The first trend indicates the urgency in addressing gender inequality to promote basic human rights and development. The second raises a red flag about future progress. Progress at the basics is necessary for gender equality, but it is not enough.

Social norms and gender-specific tradeoffs are key barriers to gender equality. Social and cultural norms often foster behaviours that perpetuate inequalities, while power concentrations create imbalances and lead to capture by powerful groups such as dominant, patriarchal elites. Both affect all forms of gender inequality, from violence against women to the glass ceiling in business and politics. In addition, gender-specific tradeoffs burden the complex choices women encounter in work, family and social life—resulting in cumulative

structural barriers to equality. The tradeoffs are influenced strongly by social norms and by a structure of mutually reinforcing gender gaps. These norms and gaps are not directly observable, so they are often overlooked and not systematically studied.

Gender inequality in the 21st century

Gender inequality is intrinsically linked to human development, and it exhibits the same dynamics of convergence in basic capabilities and divergence in enhanced capabilities. Overall, it is still the case—as Martha Nussbaum has pointed out—that "women in much of the world lack support for fundamental functions of a human life."[9] This is evident in the Gender Inequality Index and its components—reflecting gaps in reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. No place in the world has gender equality. In Sub-Saharan Africa 1 in every 180 women giving birth dies (more than 20 times the rate in developed countries), and adult women are less educated, have less access to labour markets than men in most regions and lack access to political power (table 4.1).

Gender inequality as a human development shortfall

Gender inequality is correlated with a loss in human development due to inequality (figure 4.2). No country has reached low inequality in human development without restricting the loss coming from gender inequality. Investing in women's equality and lifting both their living standards and their empowerment are central to the human development agenda. "Human development, if not engendered, is endangered," concluded the pioneer 1995 Human Development Report, based on similar evidence.[10]

Today looks different from 1995. The 1995 Human Development Report noted sizeable gender disparities, larger than today's, but documented substantial progress over the preceding two decades, particularly in education and health, where the prospect of equality was visible. The conclusion: "These impressions are cause for hope, not pessimism, for the future."[11]

Gender inequality is correlated with a loss in human development due to inequality
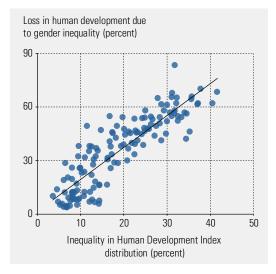
TABLE 4.1

Gender Inequality Index: Regional dashboard

Region	Gender Inequality Index	Maternal mortality ratio (deaths per 100,000 live births)	Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15–19)	Share of seats in parliament (% held by women)	Population with at least some secondary education (% ages 25 and older)		Labour force participation rate (% ages 15 and older)	
					Female	Male	Female	Male
	2018	2015	2015–2020	2018	2010–2018	2010–2018	2018	2018
Arab States	0.531	148.2	46.6	18.3	45.9	54.9	20.4	73.8
East Asia and the Pacific	0.310	61.7	22.0	20.3	68.8	76.2	59.7	77.0
Europe and Central Asia	0.276	24.8	27.8	21.2	78.1	85.8	45.2	70.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.383	67.6	63.2	31.0	59.7	59.3	51.8	77.2
South Asia	0.510	175.7	26.1	17.1	39.9	60.8	25.9	78.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.573	550.2	104.7	23.5	28.8	39.8	63.5	72.9

Source: Human Development Report Office (see *Statistical table 5*)

FIGURE 4.2

Gender inequality is correlated with a loss in human development due to inequality

Note: Countries mapped by their Gender Inequality Index performance relative to their performance on the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index. The higher the loss due to gender inequality, the greater the inequality in human development.
Source: Human Development Report Office.

Today, the prospects are different. The past two decades have seen remarkable progress in education, almost reaching parity in average primary enrolment, and in health, reducing the global maternal mortality ratio by 45 percent since 2000.[12] But gains in other dimensions of women's empowerment have not been as intense, and progress towards gender equality is slowing (figure 4.3). The space for gains based on current strategies may be eroding, and unless the active barriers posed by biased beliefs and practices that sustain persistent gender inequalities are addressed, progress towards equality will be far harder in the foreseeable future.

Gender inequality and empowerment: Catching up in the basics, widening gaps in enhanced capabilities

Accumulating capabilities requires achievements of different natures. As chapter 1 discussed, progress in human development is linked to expanding substantive freedoms, capabilities and functionings from basic to more enhanced. Progress towards equality tends to be faster for basic capabilities and harder for enhanced capabilities. Gender equality–related capabilities follow a similar pattern.

On the positive side women are catching up in basic areas of development. Legal barriers to gender equality have been removed in most countries: Women can vote and be elected, they have access to education, and they can participate in the economy without formal restrictions. But progress has been uneven as women pull away from basic areas into enhanced ones, where gaps tend to be wider.

On the positive side women are catching up in basic areas of development. But progress has been uneven as women pull away from basic areas into enhanced ones, where gaps tend to be wider

FIGURE 4.3

Progress towards gender equality is slowing

Gender Inequality Index (mean value)

Source: Human Development Report Office (see *Statistical table 5*).

> Women make greater and faster progress where their individual empowerment or social power is lower (basic capabilities). But they face a glass ceiling where they have greater responsibility, political leadership and social payoffs in markets, social life and politics (enhanced capabilities)

These patterns can be interpreted as reflecting the distribution of individual empowerment and social power: Women make greater and faster progress where their individual empowerment or social power is lower (basic capabilities). But they face a glass ceiling where they have greater responsibility, political leadership and social payoffs in markets, social life and politics (enhanced capabilities) (figure 4.4). This view of gradients in empowerment is closely linked to the seminal literature on basic and strategic needs coming from gender planning (box 4.1).

Take access to political participation (see figure 4.4, left panel). Women and men vote in elections at similar rates. So there is parity in entry-level political participation, where power is very diffused. But when more concentrated political power is at stake, women appear severely under-represented. The higher the power and responsibility, the wider the gender gap—and for heads of state and government it is almost 90 percent.

Similar gradients occur even for women who reach higher power. Only 24 percent of national parliamentarians were women in 2019,[13] and their portfolios were unevenly distributed. Women most commonly held portfolios in environment, natural resources and energy, followed by social sectors, suc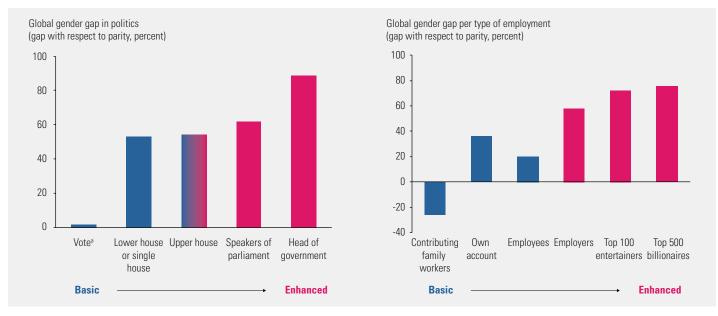h as social affairs, education and family. Fewer women had portfolios in affairs such as transport, economics or finance. Certain disciplines are typically associated with feminine or masculine characteristics, as also happens in education and the labour market.

Economic participation also shows a gradient (see figure 4.4, right panel). When empowerment is basic and precarious, women are over-represented, as for contributing family workers (typically not receiving monetary payment). Then, as economic power increases from employee to employer, and from employer to top entertainer and billionaire, the gender gap widens.

Empowerment gradients appear even for a uniform set of companies, as with the gender leadership gap in S&P 500 companies. Although women's overall employment by these companies might be close to parity, women are under-represented in more senior positions.

In developing countries most women who receive pay for work are in the informal sector. Countries with high female informal work rates include Uganda, Paraguay, Mexico and Colombia (figure 4.5), where more than 50 percent of women are protected by minimal regulations; have few or no benefits; lack voice, social security and decent work conditions; and are vulnerable to low salaries and possible job loss.

FIGURE 4.4

The greater the empowerment, the wider the gender gap

Global gender gap in politics
(gap with respect to parity, percent)

100

80

60

40

20

0

Vote[a] Lower house or single house Upper house Speakers of parliament Head of government

Basic ⟶ **Enhanced**

Global gender gap per type of employment
(gap with respect to parity, percent)

100

80

60

40

20

0

-20

-40

Contributing family workers Own account Employees Employers Top 100 entertainers Top 500 billionaires

Basic ⟶ **Enhanced**

a. Assumes an equal proportion of men and women in the voting population.
Source: Human Development Report Office calculations based on data from the World Values Survey, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, ILO (2019b) and *Forbes* (2019).

BOX 4.1

Practical and strategic gender interests and needs

The notion of practical and strategic gender interests and needs (pioneered by Caroline Moser),[1] which informs much of the gender policy analysis framework, is connected to the conception of basic and enhanced capabilities and achievements in this Report. As articulated in gender social policy analyses,[2] practical gender needs refer to the needs of women and men to make everyday life easier, such as access to water, better transportation, child care facilities and so on. Addressing these will not directly challenge gender power relations but may remove important obstacles to women's economic empowerment. Strategic gender needs refer to needs for society to shift in gender roles and relations, such as a law condemning gender-based violence, equal access to credit, equal inheritance and others. Addressing these should alter gender power relations. Sometimes practical and strategic needs coincide—for example, the practical need for child care coincides with the strategic need to get a job outside the home.[3] The difference is comparable to that between basic and enhanced capabilities discussed in this Report. Transformative changes that can bring about normative and structural shifts are the strongest predictors of practical and strategic interventions expanding women's agency and empowerment for gender equality.
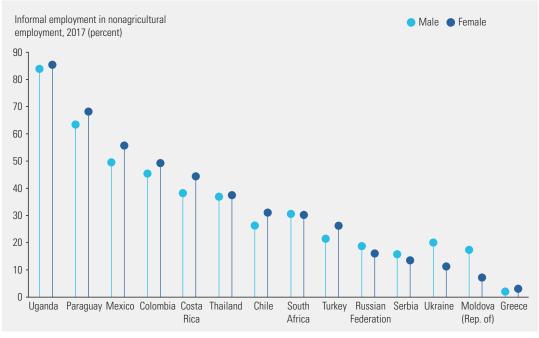
Notes
1. Molyneux 1985; Moser 1989. 2. Moser 1989. 3. SIDA 2015.

Today, women are the most qualified in history, and newer generations of women have reached parity in enrolment in primary education.[14] But it now seems that this is not enough for achieving parity in adulthood. The transition from the education system to the world of paid work is marked by a gender equality discontinuity, associated with women's reproductive roles (see *Dashboard 2* in the statistical annex), revealing one of the moving targets discussed in chapter 1. Some represent a natural part of the process of development—the constant need to push new boundaries to achieve more. Others represent the response of deeply rooted social norms to preserve the underlying structure of power.

FIGURE 4.5

The percentage of informal employment in nonagricultural employment in developing countries is generally higher for women than for men

Source: ILO 2019b.

Are social norms and power imbalances shifting?

Gender inequality has long been associated with persistent discriminatory social norms prescribing social roles and power relations between men and women in society.[15] Social norms held by individuals and their reference groups are values, beliefs, attitudes and practices that assert preferred power dynamics for interactions between individuals and institutions.[16] As broader constructs, norms are operationalized through beliefs, attitudes and practices.[17]

People's expectations of individuals' roles in households, communities, workplaces and societies can determine a group's functioning. Women often face strong conventional societal expectations to be caregivers and homemakers; men similarly are expected to be breadwinners.[18] Embedded in these social norms are longstanding patterns of exclusion from household and community decisionmaking that limit women's opportunities and choices. So, despite convergence on some outcome indicators—such as access to education at all levels and access to health care—women and girls

in many countries still cannot reach their full potential.[19]

Beliefs about what others do and what others think a person in some reference group should do, maintained by social approval and disapproval, often guide actions in social settings.[20] So it is useful to measure the beliefs and attitudes that create biases and prejudices towards women's empowerment in society.

Social norms cover several aspects of an individual's identity—gender, age, ethnicity, religion, ability and so on—that are heterogeneous and multidimensional. Discriminatory social norms and stereotypes reinforce gendered identities and determine power relations that constrain women's and men's behaviour in ways that lead to inequality. Norms influence expectations for masculine and feminine behaviour considered socially acceptable or looked down on. So, they directly affect individuals' choices, freedoms and capabilities.

Social norms also reflect regularities among groups of individuals. Rules of behaviour are set according to standards of behaviour or ideals attached to a group's sense of identity.[21] Individuals have multiple social identities and

> Gender inequality has long been associated with persistent discriminatory social norms prescribing social roles and power relations between men and women in society

behave according to identity-related ideals, and they also expect others sharing a common identity to behave according to these ideals. Norms of behaviour related to these ideals affect people's perception of themselves and others, thus engendering a sense of belonging to particular identity groups. The beliefs people hold about appropriate behaviour often determine the range of choices and preferences that they exercise—in that context norms can determine autonomy and freedom, and beliefs about social censure and reproach create barriers for individuals who transgress. For gender roles these beliefs can be particularly important in determining the freedoms and power relations with other identities—compounded when overlapping and intersecting with those of age, race and class hierarchies (box 4.2).

How prevalent are biases from social norms? How are they evolving? How do they affect gender equality? These are difficult questions,

Overlapping and intersecting identities

When gender identities overlap with other identities, they combine and intersect to generate distinct prejudices and discriminatory practices that violate individuals' equal rights in society. Intersectionality is the complex, cumulative way the effects of different forms of discrimination combine, overlap or intersect—and are amplified when put together.[1] A sociological term, intersectionality refers to the interconnected nature of social categories such as race, class, gender, age, ethnicity, ability and residence status, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. It emerges from the literature on civil legal rights. It recognizes that policies can exclude people who face overlapping discrimination unique to them.

Overlapping identities must be considered in research and policy analysis because different social norms and stereotypes of exclusion can be associated with different identities. For instance, regarding median years of education completed in Angola and United Republic of Tanzania, an important gap distinguishes women in the highest wealth quintile from those in the second or lowest quintile (see figure). If the differences are not explicitly considered, public programmes may leave women in the lowest quintiles behind.

Moreover, individuals' different social identities can profoundly influence their beliefs and experiences about gender. People who identify with multiple minority groups, such as racial minority women, can easily be excluded and overlooked by policies. But the invisibility produced by interacting identities can also protect vulnerable individuals by making them less prototypical targets of common forms of bias and exclusion.[2]

> Overlapping identities must be considered in research and policy analysis because different social norms and stereotypes of exclusion can be associated with different identities

How gaps in median years of education distinguish rich from poor in Angola and United Republic of Tanzania, 2015

	Total 15–49	Lowest quintile	Second	Middle	Fourth	Highest quintile
Angola	4.9	0	1.4	4.4	6.5	9.2
United Republic of Tanzania	6.5	6.0	6.2	6.4	6.6	7.0

Note: Lowest quintile refers to the poorest 20 percent; highest quintile refers to the wealthiest 20 percent.
Source: Demographic and Health Surveys.

Notes
1. IWDA 2018. 2. Biernat and Sesko 2013; Miller 2016; Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach 2008.

mainly because social norms and attitudes are hard to observe, interpret and measure. But using data from the World Values Survey wave 5 (2005–2009) and wave 6 (2010–2014), a social norms index can be constructed to capture how social beliefs can obstruct gender equality along multiple dimensions (figure 4.6 and box 4.3).

Widespread biases and backlash

The multidimensional gender social norms count index and high-intensity index (see box 4.3) show widespread biases in gender social norms. According to the count index, only 14 percent of women and 10 percent of men worldwide have no gender social norm bias (figure 4.7). Women are skewed towards less bias against gender equality and women's empowerment. Men are concentrated in the middle of the distribution, with 52 percent having two to four gender social norms biases. The high-intensity index shows that more than half the world's people have a high-intensity bias against gender equality and women's empowerment.

Both indices provide evidence of a stagnation or a backlash from 2005–2009 to 2010–2014. The share of both women and men worldwide with no gender social norms bias fell (figure 4.8).

Progress in the share of men with no gender social norms bias was largest in Chile, Australia, the United States and the Netherlands

(figure 4.9). At the other extreme, indicating a backlash, the share of men with no bias fell in Sweden, Germany, India and Mexico.

The share of women with no gender social norms bias increased the most in the Netherlands, Chile and Australia. But most countries in the sample showed a backlash, led by Sweden, India, South Africa and Romania (see figure 4.9).

Gender inequality and social norms

The multidimensional gender social norms indices appear linked to gender inequality, as might be expected. In countries with higher biases (measured through the multidimensional gender social norms indices), overall inequality (measured by the Gender Inequality Index) is higher (figure 4.10). Similarly, the indices are positively related to the Gender Inequality Index in time spent on unpaid domestic chores and care work.
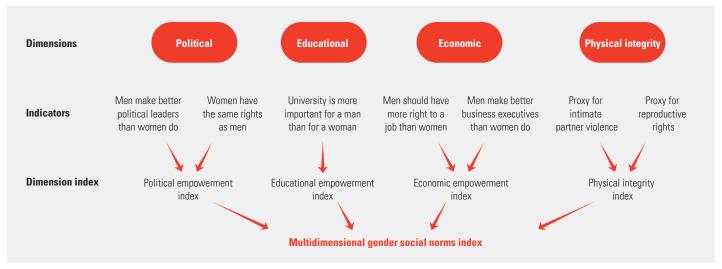
Biases in social norms also show a gradient. The political and economic dimensions of the multidimensional gender social norms index indicate biases for basic women's achievement and against more enhanced women's achievement (figure 4.11). Overall, the biases appear more intense for more enhanced forms of women's participation. The proportion of people favouring men over women for high-level political and economic leadership positions is

> The multidimensional gender social norms indices appear linked to gender inequality. In countries with higher biases, overall inequality is higher

FIGURE 4.6

How social beliefs can obstruct gender and women's empowerment

Dimensions	**Political**		**Educational**	**Economic**		**Physical integrity**
Indicators	Men make better political leaders than women do	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 do	Proxy for intimate partner violence / Proxy for reproductive rights
Dimension index	Political empowerment index		Educational empowerment index	Economic empowerment index		Physical integrity index

Multidimensional gender social norms index

Source: Mukhopadhyay, Rivera and Tapia 2019.

BOX 4.3

The multidimensional gender social norms index—measuring biases, prejudices and beliefs

Research prepared for this Report proposed the multidimensional gender social norms index to capture how social beliefs can obstruct gender equality along multiple dimensions. The index comprises four dimensions—political, educational, economic and physical integrity—and is constructed based on responses to seven questions from the World Values Survey, which are used to create seven indicators (see figure 4.5 in the main text). The answer choices vary by indicator. For indicators for which the answer choices are strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree, the index defines individuals with a bias as those who answer strongly agree and agree. For the political indicator on women's rights, for which the answer is given on a numerical scale from 1 to 10, the index defines individuals with a bias as those who choose a rating of 7 or lower. For the physical integrity indicators, for which the answer also ranges from 1 to 10, the index defines individuals with a bias using a proxy variable for intimate partner violence and one for reproductive rights.

Aggregation

For each indicator a variable takes the value of 1 when an individual has a bias and 0 when the individual does not. Two methods of aggregation are then used in reporting results on the index.

The first consists of a simple count (equivalent to the union approach), where the indicators are simply summed and therefore have the same weight. This result has a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 7:

The calculation is a simple addition of dichotomic variables, but it complicates the disaggregation and analysis by dimension and indicator.

To address this, the second method follows the Alkire–Foster methodology,[1] which counts the different gender social norm biases that an individual faces at the same time (following the intersection approach). These dimensions are analysed to determine who has a bias on each indicator. This result counts only people with high-intensity bias.

The methods are applied to two sets of countries. The first set consists of countries with data for either wave 5 (2005–2009) or wave 6 (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey and uses the latest data available. This set includes 77 countries and territories accounting for 81 percent of the world population. The second set consists of only countries with data for both wave 5 and wave 6. This set includes 32 countries and territories accounting for 59 percent of the world population.

Definition of bias for the indicators of the multidimensional gender social norms index

Dimension	Indicator	Choices	Bias definition
Political	Men make better political leaders than women do	Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree	Strongly agree and agree
	Women have the same rights as men	1, not essential, to 10, essential	Intermediate form: 1–7
Educational	University is more important for a man than for a woman	Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree	Strongly agree and agree
Economic	Men should have more right to a job than women	Agree, neither, disagree	Strongly agree and agree
	Men make better business executives than women do	Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree	Agree
Physical integrity	Proxy for intimate partner violence	1, never, to 10, always	Strongest form: 2–10
	Proxy for reproductive rights	1, never, to 10, always	Weakest form: 1

Source: Mukhopadhyay, Rivera and Tapia 2019.

Note
1. Alkire and Foster 2011.
Source: Mukhopadhyay, Rivera and Tapia 2019.

higher than the proportion of people favouring men over women in access to basic political rights or paid employment.

Several theories linked to social norms could account for these differences. One suggests an inability to discern between confidence and competence. If people misinterpret confidence as a sign of competence, they can mistakenly believe that men are better leaders than women when men are simply more confident. In other words, for leadership the only advantage that men have over women is that manifestations of overconfidence, often masked as charisma or charm, are commonly mistaken for leadership potential and are much more frequent among men than women.[22]
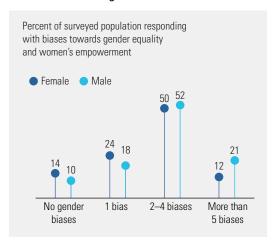
Gradients in biases are likely to affect elections and economic and family decisions, making gender equality more difficult to reach when higher levels of empowerment are at stake.

What causes change—and what determines the nature of change?

How can practices and behaviours either change or sustain traditional gender roles? Norms can change as economies develop, by changes in communications technology, by

FIGURE 4.7

Only 14 percent of women and 10 percent of men worldwide have no gender social norms biases

Percent of surveyed population responding with biases towards gender equality and women's empowerment

● Female ● Male

	No gender biases	1 bias	2–4 biases	More than 5 biases
Female	14	24	50	12
Male	10	18	52	21

Note: Balanced panel of 77 countries and territories with data from wave 6 (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey, accounting for 81 percent of the world population.
Source: Mukhopadhyay, Rivera and Tapia (2019), based on data from the World Values Survey.

> Norms can change as economies develop, by changes in communications technology, by new laws, policies or programmes, by social and political activism and by exposure to new ideas and practices through formal and informal channels (education, role models and media)

would miss a deeper understanding of social change.[24]

Consider the subtle differences between descriptive and injunctive norms.[25] Descriptive norms are beliefs about what is considered a normal practice in a social group or an area. Injunctive norms state what people in a community should do. This distinction is important for practice, as it can lead to an understanding of why some aspects of gender norms and relations shift faster than others.[26]
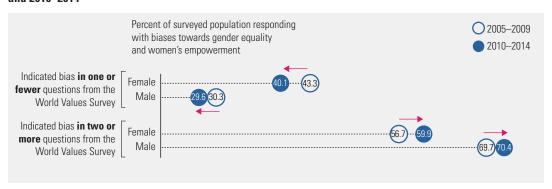
The family sets norms, and experiences from childhood create an unconscious gender bias.[27] Parents' attitudes towards gender influence children through mid-adolescence, and children at school perceive gender roles.[28] Parenting practices and behaviours are thus among the predictors of an individual's gendered behaviours and expectations. For instance, children tend to mimic (in attitudes and actions) how their parents share paid and unpaid work.[29]

Parenting experiences may, however, influence and change adults' social norms and established gender roles. In the "mighty girl effect," fathers raise their awareness of gender disadvantages when they are rearing daughters.[30] Parenting a school-age girl makes it easier for men to put themselves in their daughter's shoes, empathize with girls facing traditional gender norms and embrace nontraditional ones that would not place their daughters at a disadvantage to men in the labour market.[31]

Adolescence is another key stage for gender socialization, particularly for boys.[32] Young

new laws, policies or programmes, by social and political activism and by exposure to new ideas and practices through formal and informal channels (education, role models and media).[23]

Policymakers often focus on the tangible—on laws, policies, spending commitments, public statements and so forth. This is driven partly by the desire to measure impact (and thus prove effectiveness), by frustration with the vagueness of "talking shops" arguing about rights and norms and by sheer impatience with the slow pace of change. Yet neglecting the invisible power of norms

FIGURE 4.8

The share of both women and men worldwide with no gender social norms bias fell between 2005–2009 and 2010–2014

Percent of surveyed population responding with biases towards gender equality and women's empowerment

○ 2005–2009 ● 2010–2014

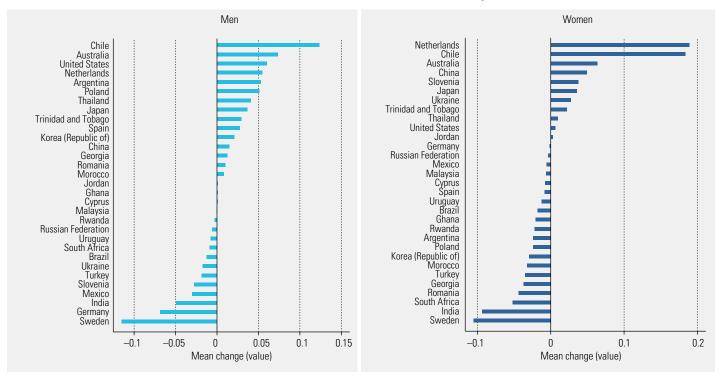| Indicated bias **in one or fewer** questions from the World Values Survey	Female	40.1 ← 43.3
	Male	29.6 ← 30.3
Indicated bias **in two or more** questions from the World Values Survey	Female	56.7 → 59.9
	Male	69.7 → 70.4

Note: Balanced panel of 32 countries and territories with data from both wave 5 (2005–2009) and wave 6 (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey, accounting for 59 percent of the world population.
Source: Mukhopadhyay, Rivera and Tapia (2019), based on data from the World Values Survey.
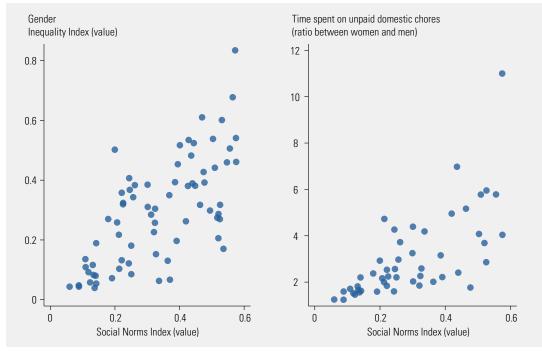
FIGURE 4.9

Progress in the share of men with no gender social norm bias from 2005–2009 to 2010–2014 was largest in Chile, Australia, the United States and the Netherlands, while most countries showed a backlash in the share of women with no gender social norms bias

Note: Balanced panel of 32 countries and territories with data from both wave 5 (2005–2009) and wave 6 (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey, accounting for 59 percent of the world population.
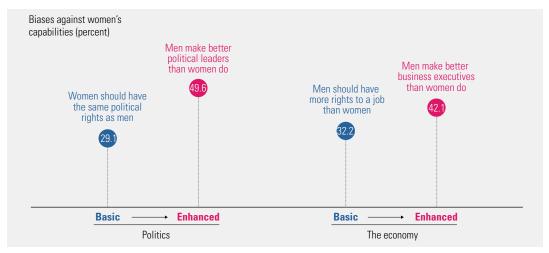Source: Mukhopadhyay, Rivera and Tapia (2019), based on data from the World Values Survey.

FIGURE 4.10

Countries with higher social norms biases tend to have higher gender inequality

Source: Mukhopadhyay, Rivera and Tapia (2019), based on data from the World Values Survey and *Dashboard 2* in the statistical annex.

FIGURE 4.11

Biases in social norms show a gradient

Biases against women's
capabilities (percent)

Men make better
political leaders
than women do

49.6

Women should have
the same political
rights as men

29.1

Men make better
business executives
than women do

42.1

Men should have
more rights to a job
than women

32.2

Basic ⟶ Enhanced

Politics

Basic ⟶ Enhanced

The economy

Note: Balanced panel of 77 countries and territories with data from wave 6 (2011–2014) of the World Values Survey, accounting for 81 percent of the world population.
Source: Mukhopadhyay, Rivera and Tapia (2019), based on data from the World Values Survey.

adolescents in different cultural settings commonly endorse norms that perpetuate gender inequalities, and parents and peers are central in shaping such attitudes. Some of the endorsed masculinity norms relate to physical toughness (showing higher tolerance for pain, engaging in fights, competing in sports), autonomy (being financially independent, protecting and providing for families), emotional stoicism (not "acting like girls" or showing vulnerabilities, dealing with problems on their own) and heterosexual prowess (having sex with many girls, exercising control over girls in relationships) (box 4.4).[33]

Social convention refers to how compliance with gender social norms is internalized in individual values reinforced by rewards or sanctions. Rewards use social or psychological approvals, while sanctions can range from exclusion from the community to violence or legal action. Stigma can limit what is considered normal or acceptable and be used to enforce stereotypes and social norms about appropriate behaviours. A social norm will be stickiest when individuals have the most to gain from complying with it and the most to lose from challenging it.[34] Social norms have enough power to keep women from claiming their legal rights due to pressure to conform to societal expectations.[35]

Social norms can also prevail when individuals lack the information or knowledge to act

or think differently.[36] Because of intertwined social dynamics,[37] challenging discriminatory norms that impede gender equality and women's empowerment requires acting on more than one factor at a time.

Restricted choices and power imbalances over the lifecycle

Gender inequality within households and communities is characterized by inequality across multiple dimensions, with a vicious cycle of powerlessness, stigmatization, discrimination, exclusion and material deprivation all reinforcing each other. Powerlessness manifests itself in many ways, but at its core is an inability to participate in or influence decisions that profoundly affect one's own life, while more powerful actors make decisions despite neither understanding the situation of the vulnerable nor having their interests at heart. Human development is about expanding substantive freedoms and choices. This section presents evidence of restricted or even tragic choices women face.[38]

Examples of restricted choices can be identified in a lifecycle approach. Some represent blatant limits to basic freedoms and human rights; others represent subtle manifestations of gender biases. The disparities of childhood and adolescence are amplified when women reach

> Powerlessness manifests itself as an inability to participate in or influence decisions that profoundly affect one's own life, while more powerful actors make decisions despite neither understanding the situation of the vulnerable nor having their interests at heart

BOX 4.4

The man box

Engaging men and boys is a critical piece of advancing the gender equality agenda. Gender equality implies changing and transforming the way individuals express and experience power in their lives, relationships and communities. Reaching equality, women and men will have the same agency to make choices and participate in society. While women and girls bear the brunt of gender inequalities, men and boys are also affected by traditional conceptions of gender.

Gender is a social construct of attributes or roles associated with being male or female. What it means to be a man or a woman is learned and internalized based on experiences and messages over the course of a lifetime, normalized through social structures, culture and interactions. Though men usually have more agency than the women in their lives, men's decisions and behaviours are also profoundly shaped by rigid social and cultural expectations related to masculinity.

Masculinity is the pattern of social behaviours or practices associated with ideals about how men should behave.[1] Some characteristics of masculinity relate to dominance, toughness and risk-taking, recently referred to as toxic masculinity or the man box, in that traditional behaviours of the gender roles restrict men to act in a certain way that preserves existing power structures. In 2019 Promundo along with Unilever estimated the economic impacts of the man box in Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States, considering bullying, violence, depression, suicide, binge drinking and traffic accidents as costs of restricting men to masculine behaviours.[2] Two of the most damaging consequences for men are related to their mental health: Men are less likely to seek mental health services than women are, and men are more likely to die by suicide than women are. Besides the ethical and social gains of gender equality, men as individuals can benefit from expressing freely, from having more options in their own experiences and behaviours and from having better and healthier relationships with women and girls.

So challenging rigid gender norms and power dynamics in households and communities and involving men and boys in making these changes are important. Engaging men in preventing gender-based violence, supporting women´s economic empowerment, pursuing change for reproductive health and acting as fathers or caregivers are examples of how men can challenge their notions of masculinity and of their own selves.

Notes
1. Ricardo and MenEngage 2014. 2. Heilman and others 2019.

> Challenging rigid gender norms and power dynamics in households and communities and involving men and boys in making these changes are important

adulthood, as exemplified in the differences in labour force participation and the representation of women in decisionmaking positions in business and in politics (see figure 4.4). For unpaid care work, women bear a bigger burden, providing more than three times as much as men.[39] And older women's challenges accumulate through the life course: They are less likely than men to have access to pensions, even though they are expected to live three years longer. Along the way, social norms and path dependence—how outcomes today affect outcomes tomorrow—interact to form a highly complex system of structural gender gaps.

Birth, early childhood and school age

In some cultures traditional social norms can affect girls even before they are born, since some countries deeply prefer bearing sons over daughters. While in the 1990s only some countries had the technology available to determine a baby's gender and only 6 countries had an imbalanced sex ratio at birth, today 21 countries have a skewed ratio. The preference for a son can lead to sex-selective abortions and to a large number of "missing" women, particularly in some South Asian countries.[40] Discrimination continues through how households share resources. Girls and women sometimes eat last and least in the household.[41] The gender politics of food—nurtured by assumptions, norms and practices about women needing fewer calories—can push women into perpetual malnutrition and protein deficiency.

Education opportunities, including access and quality, are affected by both household and community social norms. Gender differences manifest first in girls' families over education as a human right and later over respect for women's agency to decide to study and to choose her preferred field. Social norms can define the level of education a girl can attain or her choice of study. The restriction, control and monitoring of a girl's or woman's behaviour and decisionmaking about her education

or job, or her access to financial resources or their distribution, constitute economic violence against her (see spotlight 4.1 at the end of the chapter). And even when girls are educated as well as boys, other effects of inequality—driven especially by gendered social norms—reduce the likelihood that women will later attain positions of power and participate in decisionmaking.

Worldwide, one in eight age-eligible girls does not attend primary or secondary school. Only 62 of 145 countries have gender parity in primary and secondary education.[42] Despite the progress in enrolment ratios for some countries, large differences persist in learning outcomes and education quality.

Even among children attending school, determinants of occupational choices appear very early. Girls are less likely to study subjects such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics, while boys are a minority of those studying health and education.[43]

Adolescence and early adulthood

Adolescence is when girls' and boys' futures start to diverge; while boys' worlds expand, girls' worlds contract.[44] Every year 12 million girls are victims of forced marriage.[45] Girls forced to get married as a child are victims of a human rights violation and are condemned to live a life with heavily restricted choices and low human development.

Child marriage not only alienates girls from their families and social networks but also increases their risk of becoming victims of domestic violence.[46] It exacerbates overall gender inequality in education and employment by greatly reducing a girl's chances of completing formal schooling and developing skills for employment outside the home.[47] It also leads to early and multiple pregnancies, increasing health risks for both the married girls and their children, since the risks of newborn death and infant mortality and morbidity are higher in children born to women under age 20.[48]

The health effects of early marriage are among the many health risks that are higher for women and girls than for men and boys. One of the most globally widespread cross-cutting forms of horizontal inequality, early marriage

presents disproportionate risks to women's and girls' health, reflecting both biological differences and social norms (see box 4.3). And early marriage limits girls' choices.
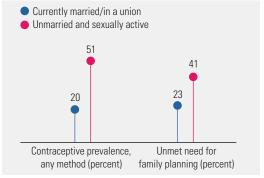
The adolescent birth rate among women ages 15–19 is 104.7 per 1,000 in Sub-Saharan Africa and 63.2 in Latin America and the Caribbean. When a teenage girl becomes pregnant, her health is endangered, her education and job prospects can abruptly end and her vulnerability to poverty and exclusion multiplies.[49] Adolescent pregnancy, often a result of a girl's lack of opportunities and freedom, can reflect a failure among those around her to protect her rights.

Contraception is important in maintaining good sexual and reproductive health.[50] Contraceptive use is higher among unmarried and sexually active adolescents, but so is the unmet need for family planning, especially in Asia and the Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa (figure 4.12). There is still a stigma in many countries around unmarried women needing family planning services. And in some countries regulations prevent access to these services. Moreover, many women cannot afford to pay for health care.

Social norms and traditional behaviour generally pose a threat to women's reproductive health. Women are more vulnerable to a loss of agency to have a satisfying and safe sex life, the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so.[51] When men use their power to decide on women's behalf, that limits women's access to resources

FIGURE 4.12

Contraceptive use is higher among unmarried and sexually active adolescent girls, but so is the unmet need for family planning, 2002–2014

- ● Currently married/in a union
- ● Unmarried and sexually active

51

41

20   23

Contraceptive prevalence, any method (percent)

Unmet need for family planning (percent)

Source: UNFPA 2016.

and dictates women's behaviour. More broadly, if women are seen as objects rather than agents in households and communities, this form of horizontal inequality can lead to violence and harassment (see spotlight 4.1 at the end of the chapter), affecting women's mental health.[52]

Adulthood and older age

Globally, women do more unpaid work than men do.[53] However, the global gender income gap is 44 percent (see *Statistical table 4*). Gender differences in paid and unpaid work and the gradients in empowerment combine multiple elements that restrict women's choices. The gaps illustrate the multidimensional effects of gender inequality on occupation choices, income and women's financial independence and resilience to external shocks.

A key constraint on women's decisionmaking is their disadvantages in the amount of unpaid work they do, bearing disproportionate responsibility for housework, caring for family members and performing voluntary community work.[54] On average, women spend about 2.5 times as much time on unpaid care and domestic work as men do.[55] This affects women's labour force participation, lowers economywide productivity and limits their opportunities to spend time in other ways.[56] This sort of gender inequality is linked to levels of income: Higher

income regions have a narrower gap in unpaid care work. The regions with the widest gaps are the Arab States, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean—the same regions that have the widest gaps for women´s labour force participation (figure 4.13). The struggle to reconcile care work responsibilities with paid work can lead women to occupational downgrading, where they choose employment below their skill level and accept poorer working conditions.[57]

Some constraints faced by women are invisible when gaps are seen in isolation. Statistics typically record achievements (the functionings) but not the full set of choices (the capabilities). This partial view tends to hide the multidimensional biases in choices women face. Take, for instance, a qualified woman who has children and must decide between taking a job and staying home. Workplace inequalities (including pay gaps[58] and the risk of harassment), social norms (pressure to fulfil the role of mother) and imbalances at home (a greater load of domestic unpaid work), among other factors, may deter her from participating in paid work. The woman's choice may bring feelings of guilt or regret. A large proportion of female homemakers feel that by staying home they are giving up a career or economic independence. A large proportion of mothers employed in paid occupations face the stress of

> Gender differences in paid and unpaid work and the gradients in empowerment combine multiple elements that restrict women's choices

FIGURE 4.13

The gap in unpaid care work persists in developing economies

Note: Aggregation rule has been relaxed; estimates not published in dashboard.
Source: Human Development Report Office.

feeling that their choice implies suffering for their children (figure 4.14).

Moreover, home-based inequalities exacerbate market-based gender inequality through the motherhood pay gap—a term that can refer to the difference in pay between mothers and childless women, or to that between mothers and fathers, rather than between all working men and women. The motherhood pay gap is usually bigger in developing countries, and in all countries it increases with the number of children a woman has. The combination of low earnings and dependants makes women over-represented among poor people during their reproductive age: Women are 22 percent more likely than men to live in a poor household between the ages of 25 and 34.[59]

According to the World Bank's 2017 Global Findex, of the 1.7 billion unbanked adults in the world, 56 percent are women, while in developing countries women are 9 percentage points more likely to be unbanked than men.[60] The Arab States and Sub-Saharan Africa have the lowest percentage of women with an account at a financial institution or with a mobile money-service provider, but the percentage is below 80 percent in all developing country regions (figure 4.15). Women's financial independence can be dependent on socioeconomic factors such as profession, earnings and income

stability[61] or to legal discrimination and gender norms.[62] Women face restricted resources in areas besides finance, with climate change, in particular, exacerbating existing inequalities in women's livelihoods and reducing their resilience (box 4.5).
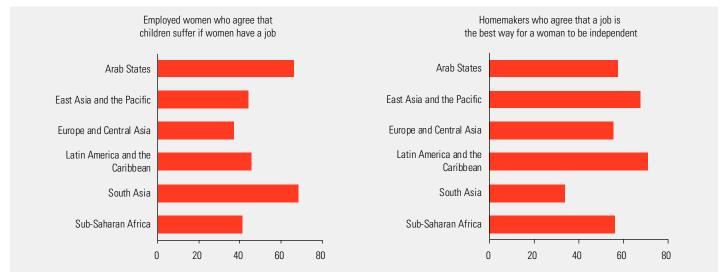
As noted, girls and women of reproductive age (15–49 years old) are more likely than boys and men of the same age to live in poor households (figure 4.16). This challenges the "headship definitions" approach to household composition for examining poverty profiles, in which households with a male earner, a non-income earner spouse and children are more likely to have poor women. Children and other dependants can be an important vulnerability factor for women in their reproductive health. For both genders, pooling resources and having more adults working for pay in a household can protect them from falling into poverty, as can education, especially for women.[63]

For most people lifetime working conditions have a great impact on economic conditions and autonomy in older age. For women— over-represented among older people—earlier gender gaps in health, wages, productivity, labour participation, formal versus informal work, remunerated versus nonremunerated work, continuity in the labour market and the ability to own property and save are likely to
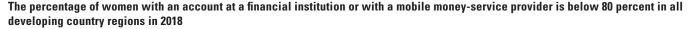
> Women's financial independence can be dependent on socioeconomic factors such as profession, earnings and income stability or to legal discrimination and gender norms

FIGURE 4.14

A large proportion of employed women believe that choosing work implies suffering for their children, while a large proportion of female homemakers feel that by staying home they are giving up a career or economic independence, 2010–2014

FIGURE 4.15

The percentage of women with an account at a financial institution or with a mobile money-service provider is below 80 percent in all developing country regions in 2018

Women with access to an account with financial institution or a money service provider, ages 15 and older, simple average (percent)

Source: Human Development Report Office based on data from the Global Findex database.

BOX 4.5

Climate change and gender inequality

Women tend to be responsible for procuring and providing food in households and are the primary workers engaged in subsistence agriculture. They make up an average of 43 percent of the agricultural workforce in developing countries.[1]

Even so, they experience inequitable access to land and agricultural inputs,[2] which can affect their productivity in the sector, generating a gap in comparison with men's productivity. In Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda the gender gap in agricultural productivity ranges from 11 percent to 28 percent.[3] The difference is due to access to credit, ownership of land, use of fertilizers and seeds, and availability of labour. As in many other dimensions, gendered norms and traditions at the household level are behind the inequitable allocations of production factors, thus limiting women's agency, decisionmaking power and participation in the labour market. Furthermore, the gender agricultural gap hinders poverty reduction, inequality reduction and the mitigation of climate change effects and environmental degradation.

Greater female participation in natural resource management, productive agricultural activities and natural disaster responses can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of policies and projects. Closing the gender gap in agricultural productivity would increase crop production by 7–19 percent in Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.[4]
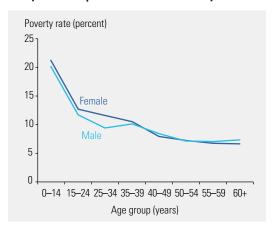
Climate change can affect women's income, education, access to resources, access to technologies and access to information.[5] It is entangled with economic and social consequences for women. Women in developing countries are highly vulnerable when they depend heavily on local natural resources for their livelihood. Yet women are powerful agents of change. As key players in core productive sectors, they are well placed to identify and adopt appropriate strategies to address climate change at the household and community levels.

> Greater female participation in natural resource management, productive agricultural activities and natural disaster responses can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of policies and projects

Notes
1. FAO 2011. 2. UN Women, UNDP and UNEP 2018. 3. UN Women, UNDP and UNEP 2018. 4. UN Women, UNDP and UNEP 2018. 5. Brody, Demetriades and Esplen 2008.

FIGURE 4.16

Girls and women of reproductive age are more likely to live in poor households than boys and men

Poverty rate (percent)

Age group (years)

Source: Munoz Boudet and others 2018.

become later gender gaps in well-being.[64] The gap widens when pension systems are based on contributory schemes, and even more when they take the form of individual accounts.[65] In most developed countries women have equal access to pensions. But in most developing countries with data, there is a women's pension gap (see *Dashboard 2* in the statistical annex).

Empowering girls and women towards gender equality: A template to reduce horizontal inequalities

Expanding opportunities for women and girls; promoting their economic, social and political participation; and improving their access to social protection, employment and natural resources make economies more productive. Such investments reduce poverty and inequality and make societies more peaceful and resilient.[66] All that is well known. Social norms are shifting towards changed gendered roles in society. But while some conventional gender norms evolve in the private and public domains, their effects are also facing a backlash from the conventional power relations between men and women in today's social hierarchies.

The backlash against changing gender roles in households, workplaces and politics affects entire societies influenced by shifting power relations. The resistance to changes in gender

expectations may lead to a perceived clash—a conflict, for example, of women's rights with traditional values—or reveal subconscious biases. Still, even norms can be shifted towards gender equality.

The shift can be supported with a proactive stance, generating new regulations and policy interventions that mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment. This has been happening but has not been enough to create long-term changes in stereotypes and traditional gender roles. Entrenched inequalities persist due to discriminatory social norms and harmful behaviours and practices that undermine implementation. Well intentioned interventions might fail or might have unintended consequences if policymakers do not consider deeply rooted norms and practices. For instance, affirmative action or positive discrimination has sometimes overlooked or underplayed the effects of social norms on overall outcomes.[67]

Efforts to promote women's representation in positions of leadership have yet to succeed, and major prejudices persist about women's ability to participate politically and function in high office. Representation quotas for women sometimes do not deliver the envisaged transformation and risk promoting tokenism by introducing women's presence while power remains entrenched in traditional hierarchies and privileges based on other identities such as class, race and ethnicity.

Varied alternatives should be priorities in light of multiple and complementary identities rather than competing, conflicting ones—the multiple identities of an individual as a woman, a mother, a worker and a citizen should be mutually supportive, not counterposed. So, choices that enhance multiple freedoms are to be prioritized over choices based on a singular identity that diminish other freedoms. Any approach addressing gender inequality should consider the multidimensional character of gender and be sensitive to local social norms. Norm-aware interventions for women focus on supporting them by providing solutions that work around existing social norm constraints.

Options to reduce gender inequalities—and many other horizontal ones—need to consider how to directly target changes in unequal power relationships among individuals within a community or to challenge deeply rooted roles.

The backlash against changing gender roles in households, workplaces and politics affects entire societies influenced by shifting power relations

This may include a combination of efforts in education, raising awareness by providing new information and changing incentives.

An additional and important consideration to influence change in social norms and traditional gender roles is for options to be inclusive of both women and men, which may hold also for other horizontal inequalities. When choosing among alternatives—whether norm-aware or those pursuing social norm change—targeting both women and men is crucial. The importance of adequately engaging men and boys in overcoming gender inequality or addressing their own gender-related vulnerabilities is acknowledged, but actions have a long way to go.

Finally, analysis that goes beyond averages requires more and better data to keep pushing for gender equality and to make other horizontal inequalities visible (box 4.6).

Analysis that goes beyond averages requires more and better data to keep pushing for gender equality and to make other horizontal inequalities visible

BOX 4.6

Better data are needed on gender inequalities

Gender data face challenges of quantity and quality. The first refers to not having enough data to depict women's current situation. For instance, among the Sustainable Development Goals over 70 percent of data for 58 indicators linked to gender equality and women's empowerment is missing.[1] The second refers to current data that might not accurately reflect reality and that might underestimate women's roles and contributions.

Some organizations perceive collecting and producing gender data as expensive in time and cost. Some data collection methods are outdated and biased against women because they follow gender social norms, such as interviewing only the male head of household, not disaggregating by sex and age, using outdated measurements of time use and collecting data only on households instead of individuals. Changes in these measurements can affect indicators such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index, calculated for households rather than individuals, so that complementary research may be needed to clarify the relationship between gender and poverty.[2]

More information is needed to get a better picture of gender biases specific to a region, country or community, as with information on the impact of media and social networks in reinforcing traditional norms and stereotypes.[3]

Notes
1. Human Development Report Office calculations based on data from UN Women (2017). 2. UNDP 2016. 3. Broockman and Kalla 2016; Paluck and others 2010.

SPOTLIGHT 4.1

Women's unequal access to physical security—and thus to social and political empowerment

Violence against women is one of the cruellest forms of women's disempowerment can be perpetuated through social norms
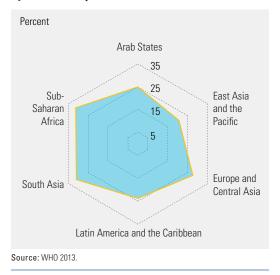
Violence against women is one of the cruellest forms of women's disempowerment. Magnifying inequality, it happens throughout the lifecycle, in different spaces—households, institutions, public spaces, politics and online—in all societies, among all socioeconomic groups and at all levels of education. And it reflects the same social norms that legitimize harassment and discrimination.

More than a third of women—and more than two-thirds in some countries—have experienced physical or sexual violence inflicted by an intimate partner or sexual violence inflicted by a nonpartner (figure S4.1.1).[1] Some 20 percent of women have experienced sexual violence as children. Nearly a quarter of girls ages 15–19 worldwide report having been victims of violence after turning 15.[2] And violence is typically underestimated because of stigma, denial, mistrust of authority and other barriers to women reporting an incident.

Intimate partner violence has been recurrently associated with such factors as age, wealth, marital status, number of children, education attainment and economic empowerment.

Decomposing these factors reveals inequality in the experience of violence, an insight that can help in designing more focused interventions. For instance, although violence can occur at all education levels, greater education attainment can protect women from partner violence. Educated women have better access to information and resources that help them identify an abusive relationship and end it.[3] Women's economic empowerment through participation in the workforce had mixed associations with the risk of intimate partner violence,[4] challenging the notion that economic empowerment protects women from gender-based violence. This finding highlights the heavy influence of social norms in women's perceptions of their status in society in some cultures. In developing countries women make up a large proportion of the informal sector workforce with low-paying jobs, a structure that might perpetuate the myth of male superiority.[5]

Violence against women can be perpetuated through social norms. For example, female genital mutilation and cutting remain widespread. An estimated 200 million women and girls living today have undergone female genital mutilation, even though most men and women oppose the practice in many countries where it is performed.[6] Violence against women and girls is sustained by individual behaviours and beliefs as well as by social norms from the communities and networks that can slow change. Violent actions, attitudes and behaviours are triggered by unequal power relations dictating gender roles at the household level. Some examples are beliefs that a man has a right to physically discipline a woman for an incorrect behaviour, divorce is shameful or sex is a man's right in marriage.
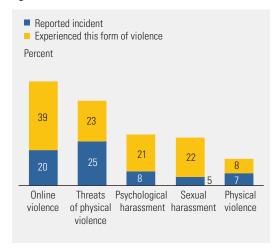
When women assert autonomy or aspire to exert power at any level—from the household to the national government—they often face a backlash that can include violence (psychological, emotional, physical, sexual or economic), whether as discrimination, harassment, assault or femicide. More than 85 percent of female members of European parliaments

FIGURE S4.1.1

About a third of women ages 15 and older have experienced physical or sexual violence inflicted by an intimate partner, 2010

Source: WHO 2013.

have experienced psychological violence, and 47 percent have received threats of death, rape, beating or kidnapping (figure S4.1.2).[7] Moreover, the only country in the world that has legally made political violence a separately defined crime is Bolivia.[8] Elsewhere, lacking laws, regulations and sanctions, women are left unprotected from this type of violence. In 2016 the #NotTheCost campaign was launched to raise awareness and stop violence against women in politics. The name alludes to how women are told that harassment, threats, psychological abuse and other forms of violence are "the cost" of participating in politics.[9] Traditional gender norms play a role in such political violence.

Globally, there are some efforts to fight the backlash. Political violence and sexual harassment and assault received attention in 2017 when American actress Alyssa Milano called for women to come forward with their experiences. Some 1.7 million tweets using the hashtag #MeToo responded, and 85 countries had at least 1,000 #MeToo tweets. The movement gave visibility to the issue and propelled initiatives to conduct more research on sexual harassment and assault, especially in the United States. Some 81 percent of women and 43 percent of men in the United States reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment or assault in their lifetime. The most common forms of sexual harassment are whistling, honking, saying disrespectful or unwanted comments or purposely touching or brushing up against someone. Women are harassed mostly in public spaces, their workplaces, their residences or their schools.[10]

Through social media and other online platforms and applications, women are vulnerable to harassment and bullying in a new space—the digital public space. Ensuring that this space is safe and empowering for women and girls is a new challenge. Some 73 percent of women online have been exposed to some type of cyberviolence, and women are 27 times more likely than men to be the victims of cyberviolence.[11] Besides the impact of violence against women and girls in other spaces, cyberviolence impedes their digital inclusion and keeps them from enjoying digital dividends. Even though technology can connect and empower, it can also reinforce traditional gender roles and normalize stereotypes reflecting a culture of misogyny and marginalization. Security and harassment are among the top five barriers to women's mobile phone ownership and use.[12] Online harassment, sexist attitudes and misogynistic remarks can undermine women's sense of legitimacy, competence and safety, making them mistrust technology and even opt out of its use. Besides hindering technological inclusion, violence against women and girls in this space has a cumulative emotional and physical cost on them.
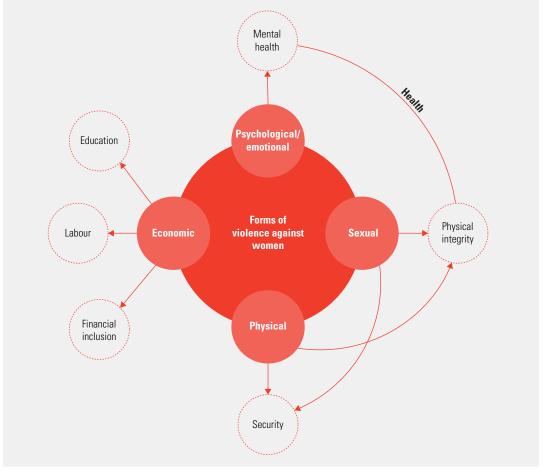
For each demographically "missing" woman, many more fail to get an education, job or political responsibility they would have obtained if they were men.[13] Gender is a global factor in unequal human autonomy, physical security and social, economic and political empowerment. Women's human development depends on socioeconomic enabling factors such as the ability to pursue a profession, to attain income stability and to achieve earnings comparable to men's. Women's empowerment in health, education, earning opportunities, and political rights and participation can change social decisionmaking and development (figure S4.1.3). Women's human development also requires positive gender norms and an absence of gender discrimination, with laws preventing unequal treatment, harassment and violence against women. Education, reproductive rights and political participation are key assets in all these areas, while the right to human security is fundamental.

FIGURE S4.1.2

Female members of European parliaments experience high rates of acts of political violence against women, 2018

- Reported incident
- Experienced this form of violence

Percent

Source: IPU 2019.

Traditional social norms encourage different forms of violence against women

Women's empowerment in health, education, earning opportunities, and political rights and participation can change social decisionmaking and development

Source: Human Development Report Office based on UN General Assembly (2006).

Notes

1   WHO 2013.
2   UNICEF 2014a.
3   Flake 2005; Waites 1993.
4   Sardinha and Catalán 2018.
5   Uthman, Lawoko and Moradi 2011.
6   UNICEF 2018a.
7   IPU 2019.
8   Government of Bolivia 2012.
9   NDI 2019.
10 Kearl 2018.
11 Broadband Commission for Digital Development Working Group on Broadband and Gender 2015; Messenger 2017.
12 GSMA Connected Women 2015.
13 Duflo 2012.
14 Caprioli 2005.
15 Ouedraogo and Ouedraogo 2019.
16 Stone (2015) as cited in O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin and Paffenholz (2015).