Shifting wealth, shifting gender relations? Gender inequality and social cohesion in a converging world

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Rationale for this research

Despite growth and structural changes of the past two decades, women continue to lose out in terms of wealth and well-being as compared to men across much of the world

WHY?

Discriminatory social institutions drive gender inequalities in hidden and unexplored ways, even in countries that have experienced fast growth or growing income levels

SO WHAT?

Structures and practices that discriminate against women have a negative impact on social cohesion and are an obstacle to sustainable and inclusive development
Discrimination against women leads to poor development outcomes

In the 21 countries that have the highest level of discrimination against women as measured by SIGI, primary school completion is on average 15% lower, nearly twice as many children suffer from malnutrition and maternal mortality rates are twice as high.

Three key factors are over-looked and under-researched:
• Women’s limited access to and control over resources
• Women’s lack of decision-making power
• Widespread violence against women
Measuring discrimination against women

Social Institutions Variables

Family Code
- Early marriage
- Polygamy
- Parental authority
- Inheritance

Physical Integrity
- Female genital mutilation
- Violence against women

Son Preference
- Missing women

Civil Liberties
- Freedom of movement
- Freedom of dress

Ownership Rights
- Access to land
- Access to bank loans
- Access to property
SIGI: The Social Institutions and Gender Index

- **Highest inequality**: sub-Saharan Africa; Middle East and North Africa; South Asia
- **Lowest inequality**: Latin America; Europe and Central Asia
- **Region with both** high and low performers: East Asia and Pacific

Source: OECD (2009)
Shifting wealth, shifting gender relations?

- Changing dynamics of inequality
- Structural changes in labour markets
- New trade patterns
- Technological advances
- Increased migration flows

Faster growth and rising incomes (for some)…but what does this mean for development, gender equality and social cohesion?
Average SIGI score according to country classification in the four-speed world

Source: Author’s calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009), OECD Gender and Institutions Database (2009)
### Converging countries and discrimination against women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low-income</th>
<th>Lower-middle income</th>
<th>Upper-middle income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh (90)</td>
<td>China (83)</td>
<td>22 countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad (97)</td>
<td>Egypt (82)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia (89)</td>
<td>India (96)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali (99)</td>
<td>Iran (95)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone (100)</td>
<td>Nigeria (86)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia (85)</td>
<td>Pakistan (94)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 other countries</td>
<td>Sudan (102)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24 other countries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Growth doesn’t tell the whole story…

…and averages hide more than what they tell us about society
Maternal mortality ratios

Source: Author’s calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009)
Births attended by skilled staff

Source: Author's calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009)
Health expenditure per capita

Source: Author’s calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009)
In the ten countries where women’s physical integrity is least protected (Mali, Somalia, Sudan, Egypt, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Eritrea, Guinea), maternal mortality ratios are on average twice as high as elsewhere.

Source: Author’s calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009), OECD Gender and Institutions Database (2009)
Significant increase in enrolment and completion rates in primary education…

…But, for every 100 boys out of school:

270 girls are out of school in Yemen, 316 in Iraq and 416 in India and 257 in Benin (UNESCO, 2007)...

…And progress is not as significant at the secondary level.
Ratio of female/male enrolment in primary education

Source: Author’s calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009)
Ratio of female/male enrolment in secondary education

Source: Author’s calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009).
Female literacy in high-SIGI countries is strikingly below average female literacy in other converging countries.

Source: Author’s calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009)
Early marriage and primary school completion rates

In the countries where more than half of girls aged 15-19 years are married (DRC, Niger, Afghanistan, Congo and Mali), on average fewer than half of primary school aged children are in school.

Source: Author's calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009), OECD Gender and Institutions Database (2009)
Female labour force participation

SIGI and labour market outcomes

Average female labour force participation (%)

Degree of gender discrimination based on SIGI quintile
Changing employment patterns

• Feminisation of “bad jobs”: while there has been an increase in the quantity of job opportunities, women lose out on the quality of jobs available
• Women are most often segregated in sectors with low pay, long working hours and informal working arrangements, without access to benefits or social protection
• Women carry out a disproportionate amount of unpaid care and domestic work
• Women are over-represented in agriculture and services
• A significant proportion of contributing family workers are women for some converging countries
Ratio of female share/male share in employment status

Source: ILO Labour Force Survey, Population Census
Contributing family workers by gender for selected converging countries
Employment by sector, 2008

Source: ILO 2009
Female agricultural employment

Source: Author’s calculations based on World Bank World Development Indicators (2009), OECD Gender and Institutions Database (2009)
Change in % of women in parliament in low income converging countries

- **Other converging countries**
- **High SIGI converging countries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>% Women in Parliament</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>5.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000s</td>
<td>15.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In many countries, particularly China and India, there is strong evidence of ‘missing women’ as a result of son preference due to female infanticide, sex-selective abortions and neglect of the well-being of girl children.

This phenomenon has direct consequences on social cohesion as it:

- Perpetuates discriminatory practices against women and girls if men are not able to find wives, early marriage, forced marriage, bride-knapping etc.
- The perception that investing in boys will yield a greater return than similar investments in girls who will eventually marry and leave the family is reflected in the allocation of household resources
- Could increase likelihood of conflict as the number of single, young men increases
- In China, recent research has found that the shifting demographic reality is already changing household saving behaviour, and may be a factor driving global imbalances
## Linking women’s access to resources and social cohesion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Impact on women and girls</th>
<th>Policy options</th>
<th>Implications for social cohesion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited land and property rights</td>
<td>Limits women’s agricultural productivity and food security</td>
<td>Land-titling projects and resettlement schemes</td>
<td>More access to and control over resources:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of collateral prevents women from accessing bank loans or financial services</td>
<td></td>
<td>Women more active in the formal economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to financial resources</td>
<td>Restricts women’s entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Training and networks to support women’s entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Improves women’s socioeconomic status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited inheritance rights</td>
<td>Widowed girls and women may be left homeless</td>
<td>Legislative reform to protect women and girls’ right to inherit</td>
<td>Increases their sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased vulnerability of young girls</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increases social mobility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Linking women’s decision-making power and social cohesion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Impact on women and girls</th>
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<th>Implications for social cohesion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Limited decision-making power in the household | Increased likelihood of losing out in intra-household allocation of resources  
Increased likelihood of high fertility rates and unsafe sex | Cash transfers directly to women and girls  
Awareness-raising campaigns targeting men | **Increasing women’s decision-making power:**  
Promotes their sense of inclusion and participation in civic life  
Increases their bargaining power in the home  
Improves health and welfare of children |
| Low representation in local government       | Limits women’s community engagement                                    | Quotas and affirmative action  
Proportional representation  
Constitutional reform |                                                                                 |
| Low representation in national government    | Limits women’s voice and participation  
May decrease likelihood of gender-sensitive service delivery and resource allocations |                                                                                 |                                                                                 |
## Linking security for women and social cohesion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Impact on women and girls</th>
<th>Policy options</th>
<th>Implications for social cohesion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical and sexual violence</td>
<td>Physical and psychological health problems</td>
<td>Publicity and media campaigns</td>
<td>More security for women:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compromises the education of girls when violence occurs in schools</td>
<td>Strengthen data collection on VAW</td>
<td>Avoids the erosion of social capital due to stigma and isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lowers earnings and productivity when women are unable to work</td>
<td>Adopt and enforce national laws against VAW</td>
<td>Enables women to participate in social, political and economic life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restricts women’s freedom of movement</td>
<td>Prohibit and criminalise marital rape</td>
<td>Increases their sense of trust in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGM</td>
<td>Short and long term risks to physical, sexual and psychological health</td>
<td>Public awareness campaigns</td>
<td>Prevents the perpetuation of a culture of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased risk of mortality during pregnancy and childbirth and of HIV/Aids</td>
<td>Community led initiatives to abandon FGM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FGM: Female Genital Mutilation
Key findings

• Hidden gender inequalities are being driven by these discriminatory institutions: negative consequences for human development and the economic and political participation of women

• Gender can be a useful lens to see the social costs and inequalities that are being exacerbated by shifting wealth

• Quality of jobs and access to decent work for women needs to be at forefront of policy responses to adapt to changing labour markets

Next step:

Country case studies to determine which factors (early marriage, violence, land rights, etc) are most relevant and what policies have been effective in transforming discrimination against women