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TRANSFORMING WORK FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS



ON THE BOOKS

Collective action brings victory to domestic workers in New York

Across the world, 53 million people, over 80 per cent of them women, are employed as domestic workers. Their work helps economies grow, advances the participation of women in the workplace and provides crucial care for millions of dependents. Every day they cook, clean, look after the elderly, help children with homework, performing vital roles in keeping households and communities running.

“Domestic work makes all other work possible,” says Ai-jen Poo, director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance, a national membership body made up of domestic worker groups across the United States.

“Domestic workers have always been critical to the functioning of national economies, but they are now absolutely critical to the growth of our global economy.”

Yet as a workforce, these millions of women remain largely invisible. In many countries, domestic workers remain excluded from national labour laws. This leaves domestic

Ai-jen Poo, Director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) and Co-director of the Caring Across Generations campaign

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

workers open to abuse and exploitation and unable to demand safe and protected workplaces.

“Because women are so chronically under-represented in positions of power and wealth, the work of women continues to be undervalued and exploited and nowhere is this clearer than in how we treat our domestic workers,” says Ai-jen.

“While there has been a huge shift in the role of women in the workplace, there remains an assumption that all of the work that goes into raising families is just done by women. Plus there is the historic race dynamic. The attitude that this kind of work would be done for free or for very little money by women of colour persists and remains deeply embedded and qualified by labour laws across the world.”

Around 200,000 people, the vast majority of whom are women from outside of the United States, are employed as domestic workers in New York City. Yet until 2010, none of these workers were protected or even recognized in New York State law.

In 2000, a group of domestic workers from the Philippines living and working in the city started mobilizing to try and change this. They founded Domestic Workers United (DWU) with the aim of trying to build power collectively as a workforce and establish fair labour standards for the industry.

Through a series of monthly meetings, DWU started to take shape, with hundreds and then thousands of domestic workers from across the city becoming members.

Daily outreach programmes in parks, playgrounds, churches and the street, helped to organize workers in the neighbourhoods where they lived and worked.

A network of alliances with unions, employers, church leaders and members of the New York State legislature built momentum for DWU’s aim of creating a Bill of Rights for domestic workers, which for the first time would provide them with the same basic rights that other workers had been entitled to for decades.



Ai-jen marching with members of NDWA and National People’s Action to demand accountability for the financial crisis, in Washington, DC.

Photo: NDWA

“For many in the legislature it was a huge learning curve because the concept of rights for domestic workers was so alien to them,” says Ai-jen. “For many domestic workers there was great fear of being exposed, of losing their jobs or being blacklisted for taking part in the campaign. We had resistance from employers because while many appreciated that domestic workers were entitled to rights, they were scared of losing their affordable home care.”

In 2010, DWU succeeded in helping pass the New York State Bill of Rights for Domestic Workers, the United States’ first comprehensive piece of legislation protecting domestic workers. Among other provisions, the bill set out the right to overtime pay, a day of rest every seven days, paid holidays and protection under state human rights law.

“What was crucial were the alliances we made,” says Ai-jen. “We spent years building relationships with employers, with labour unions and other workers’ groups. Many of our champions in the legislature were the sons and daughters of domestic workers.”

In the past five years, the DWU has been working on trying to ensure successful implementation of the bill, through expanding their outreach programmes and continuing to build strong networks with employers, who are the crucial link to ensuring that the provisions in the bill are upheld.

“It’s always going to be a struggle ensuring that domestic workers realize their rights because there is still a huge culture of respecting the privacy of the family home,” says Ai-jen. “What we’re now focusing on is ensuring that employers know what their legal responsibilities are and workers know how to ensure that their terms and conditions clearly reflect the rights they are entitled to under this legislation.”

Since the bill has passed, momentum has continued to build around domestic worker rights both in the US and internationally. In July 2013, Hawaii followed New York’s lead and became the second state to pass labour protections for domestic workers, followed by California in January 2014 and Massachusetts in July 2014.

In 2013, the first ILO convention on domestic workers came into force, which Ai-jen considers a “huge driver for change”. She says many domestic workers in countries



Organizers rally in the streets for better recognition of the rights of domestic workers

Photo: NDWA

“The work of women continues to be undervalued and exploited and nowhere is that clearer than in how we treat our domestic workers”

around the world are using the demand for national ratification of this convention as a rallying cry for collective action.

“Our movement is about creating not only a dignified working environment for domestic workers but a more caring society – one that recognizes that addressing the rights of domestic workers is fundamental to addressing social inequality across the world,” she says.

IN BRIEF

/1 Paid work can be a foundation for substantive equality for women, but only when it is compatible with women's and men's shared responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work; when it gives women enough time for leisure and learning; and when it provides earnings that are sufficient to maintain an adequate standard of living.

/2 Over the past two decades, women's labour force participation stagnated around the world, albeit with significant regional variation. Globally, only half of women are in the labour force, compared to more than three quarters of men, and nowhere has this gap been eliminated.

/3 In developing regions, in urban and rural areas alike, the majority of women remain concentrated in insecure, unprotected and poorly paid employment. Occupational segregation and gender pay gaps remain stubbornly persistent everywhere.

/4 Unequal outcomes for women in the labour market are the biggest contributor to their overall socio-economic disadvantage. Over a lifetime, gender differences in employment rates and pay combine to create large cumulative income differences between women and men.

/5 The remarkable progress in closing gender gaps in education has contributed to advances for women's employment, but it has not been sufficient to overcome women's disadvantage in the labour market.

/6 Unpaid care and domestic work severely limits women's economic opportunities. Recognizing the economic value of this work, reducing its drudgery and redistributing it more equally between women and men, and between households and society, is critical for the achievement of substantive equality.

/7 Public action is needed to create decent jobs, support women to take up employment opportunities and empower them to shape their working environments. Only then can paid work contribute to the realization of substantive equality for women.

/8 Across the globe, women workers have developed a range of strategies to advance their rights. Greater support is needed to empower women, both within broader labour movements and in their efforts to build autonomous organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Access to decent employment is a basic human right, providing income as well as other intrinsic rewards such as dignity and social integration. The creation of decent work is central to inclusive and pro-poor development strategies, strengthening individuals, communities and nations.¹ For women, specifically, access to good quality, paid work outside the home is perhaps the most important contributory factor to their economic empowerment.² It plays a critical role in enabling women to be financially autonomous and to

exercise greater agency in their lives. This, in turn, can improve the distribution of resources and power within the household as well as expanding opportunities outside of it.

International human rights treaties and International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions recognize the central importance of both the right to work—to have full and productive employment—and rights at work—to non-discrimination and to fair, safe and just working conditions (see Box 2.1).

BOX 2.1

The right to work and rights at work in human rights frameworks

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that ‘everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment’.³

According to The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), rights at work are fundamental to the very definition of work, which must be decent: ‘the characterization of work as decent presupposes that it respects the fundamental rights of the worker’, including ‘respect for the physical and mental integrity of the worker’ and remuneration that allows ‘workers to support themselves and their families’.⁴

For women, specifically, the right to work requires equal opportunities and treatment as well as the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of marriage or maternity, as defined in the ICESCR and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).⁵

In addition, rights at work include:

- Fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value
- Safe and healthy working conditions⁶

- Equal opportunities and non-discrimination, including in relation to hiring, promotion and training⁷
- Rest, leisure and reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay⁸
- The right to form and join trade unions for the promotion and protection of workers' economic and social interests⁹
- Social security, including but not limited to 'special protections' such as paid leave and adequate benefits for women before and after childbirth¹⁰

In addition to the provisions of the ICESCR and CEDAW, a comprehensive set of international labour standards are set out in 189 ILO conventions, which are legally binding international treaties, and 203 recommendations, which are guidelines to help countries apply the conventions.

Progress on formal equality but barriers persist

The world has advanced significantly in ensuring equality in women's and men's legal rights to work, rights at work and access to economic resources.¹¹ Rapid progress on expanding access to education, alongside greater control over their fertility, have both played a part in giving women better opportunities for paid work.

By 2014, 59 countries had passed laws stipulating equal pay for work of equal value;¹² 125 countries had laws to prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace;¹³ 128 countries had laws that guarantee married women's equality when it comes to property; and in 112 countries daughters had equal inheritance rights to sons.¹⁴ Human rights treaties have been instrumental to the progress that has been made by setting global standards and by enabling gender equality advocates to hold governments to account.¹⁵ However, there is still further to go to fill gaps in legal frameworks and repeal discriminatory laws in relation to women's access to the labour market. Some 77 countries maintain restrictions on the types of work that women can do by, for example, banning them from working at night or in occupations such as mining or construction.¹⁶

Other significant barriers remain to women's entry into the labour force. At the global level, women's labour force participation rates (LFPR) have stagnated since the 1990s. Currently, only half of women are in the labour force compared to more than three quarters of men. Despite considerable regional variations, nowhere has this gender gap been eliminated. Nor have improvements in access to education closed the gender gap in pay. Globally, women earn on average 24 per cent less than men (see Annex 4). The cumulative result of gender gaps in labour force participation, in earnings and in social transfers is substantial. A study of four countries estimates lifetime income gaps between women and men of between 31 and 75 per cent (see Box 2.4).

What explains the persistence of women's socio-economic disadvantage in the labour market despite the significant gains in formal equality?

First, women have entered the labour market in large numbers, sometimes in response to economic crisis and distress, at a time when economies have not been creating sufficient decent jobs. As a result, millions of women and men are left in poor quality, insecure employment.

Second, the range of opportunities available to women is limited by pervasive gender stereotypes and social norms, as well as discriminatory practices, within both households and labour markets. Women's skills and the types of work they perform—including paid care work, such as teaching, nursing, child- and elder-care, and social work—is undervalued relative to the jobs that men do.¹⁷

Third, unpaid care and domestic work, which is critical to reproducing the labour force, remains a huge constraint on women's capacity to engage in paid work. In all regions, women continue to take responsibility for the lion's share of unpaid care and domestic work: in most countries, when paid and unpaid work are combined, women work longer hours than men (see Annex 3).¹⁸ This is a particularly burning issue for women in lower-income households with few options for quality and affordable childcare.

The decent work challenge

In developed and developing countries alike, the dampening effect of macroeconomic policies means that labour markets are failing to create sufficient jobs of decent quality, particularly for young people (see Chapter 4).¹⁹ Even though LFPR have stagnated at the global level, due to population growth there were around 750 million more women and 1 billion more men in the labour force in 2013 compared to 1990.²⁰ The dearth of decent jobs means that millions of women and men are being forced into poor quality work, often in the informal economy. Global unemployment has continued to rise, with an estimated 202 million women and men out of work in 2013.²¹ Of particular concern are rising levels of unemployment among young people: in the Middle East and North Africa region 51 per cent of young women and 23 per cent of young men aged 15–24 were unemployed in 2013. This compares to the global unemployment rate of 7 per cent for women and 6 per cent for men.²²

Trade liberalization since the early 1980s has led to an expansion of jobs in some developing countries producing goods for export markets, providing opportunities for women, including in rural areas. However, these jobs are often concentrated in the lowest paid and most insecure segments of global value chains, where women work as temporary or seasonal workers, producing horticultural goods for export or working in factories making garments.²³

Elsewhere, financial liberalization, labour market deregulation and the outsourcing of public sector employment have strengthened the bargaining power of firms vis-à-vis workers, with the result that real wages are under downward pressure and labour rights have been undermined. Women's weaker bargaining position in labour markets has made it especially difficult for them to access decent work in this challenging environment. In most low- and middle-income countries, informal employment continues to be the norm, especially for women.

The poor quality of many jobs and, associated with this, rising income inequality are a growing cause of concern among policy makers, as well as civil society organizations and some business leaders. The majority of women and men are living in societies where income is more unequally distributed today than it was in 1990.²⁴ In both developed and developing countries, incomes among top wage earners have been rising rapidly while medium and low earners have seen little or no growth in their incomes.²⁵ Growing inequalities have high social costs and are also damaging to economic stability.²⁶

There is increasing recognition across a wide spectrum of policy actors that, far from 'distorting' labour markets, state interventions can reduce power imbalances between workers and employers and contribute to a fairer distribution of risks, as well as better health and social cohesion and increased aggregate demand.²⁷

Some countries, particularly in Latin America, have recently bucked the trend of rising inequalities.²⁸ They have shown that it is possible, with the right mix of economic and social policies, to create decent employment that supports the realization of women's rights to work and rights at work (see Box 2.2).

Policy makers are also beginning to recognize the major constraints that women's unpaid care and domestic work places on their labour market participation—constraints that are exacerbated by ageing populations and cuts in social services.²⁹

Addressing them requires more than workplace crèches and tinkering with fiscal policies. As long as labour markets continue to operate based on expectations of uninterrupted, life-long and full-time employment, those who carry out the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work will inevitably be penalized. Nothing less than a fundamental rethink of how paid employment and unpaid care and domestic work are organized is required. Responsibilities for unpaid care and domestic work need to be more evenly distributed between women and men, and between households and society.

BOX 2.2

The role of the state in generating decent work in Brazil

Between 2001 and 2009, 17 million new jobs were created in Brazil, of which more than 10 million were those where employees hold social security cards (*Carteira de Trabalho*). This represents a major turnaround from the 1990s, when unemployment doubled, informality rose sharply and real wages declined.³⁰ It shows that the right government action can yield impressive results, even against a backdrop of increasing flexibility and vulnerability of employment in the global economy.

Women's LFPR rose from 54 to 58 per cent between 2001 and 2009, and the proportion accessing jobs with social security cards increased from 30 to 35 per cent.³¹ The doubling of the minimum wage in the 2000s has also had a significant impact on gender pay gaps. Between 1995 and 2007, the gender pay gap declined from 38 to 29 per cent. Importantly, this narrowing of the gender gap has been achieved through increases in both women's and men's wages rather than because men's wages have fallen.³²

Brazil's achievements in creating decent jobs are the result of a package of economic and social policies. Macroeconomic policy aimed at inclusive growth has contributed to job creation. Investment in labour inspection, and the simplification of registration costs and tax administration for small and medium-sized firms, have promoted the formalization of jobs and enterprises.³³ The rise in the real value of minimum wages has helped to reduce poverty and accounted for 66 per cent of the decline in inequality during 2000–2008. Social protection policies have also had a major impact: a further 16 per cent of the drop in inequality was due to the increase in pension benefits and 12 per cent to the *Bolsa Família* social welfare programme.³⁴

Chapter overview

The first part of this chapter assesses progress in women's and men's LFPR, and reviews the contribution of wider economic and social policies to substantive equality in the labour market. The remainder of the chapter is concerned with how substantive equality at work can be achieved in a challenging global environment. Drawing on the framework set out in Chapter 1, it proposes a comprehensive agenda for public action by governments, labour organizations and employers to address persistent obstacles to women's rights to and at work.

The chapter shows that **redressing women's socio-economic disadvantage** requires action to recognize and support unpaid care and domestic work, tackle gender segregation in occupations and close the gender pay gap. Gender segregation is a major cause of pay differentials between women and men. Tackling this requires a focus on the **stereotyping, stigma and violence** that lead to women being clustered into lower status and lower

wage jobs. The chapter then lays out three priority arenas for public action: informal employment, rural livelihoods and public sector employment. The last section of the chapter highlights the need to **strengthen women's agency, voice and participation**. Women's capacity to influence and shape their workplaces and the conditions under which they work—whether via trade unions or in new forms of collective action—is crucial to achieving substantive equality.

In the longer term, the challenge is to **transform labour markets and households** in ways that enable a decent standard of living for all. Drawing on experiences from around the world, the chapter demonstrates that, although progress towards strengthening women's rights at work has been uneven, it is far from impossible. Even in the current challenging global context, some countries have been able to make significant headway in advancing substantive equality at work.

UNEVEN PROGRESS IN WOMEN'S LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

Globally, women's LFPR has stagnated since the early 1990s, albeit with significant regional variation (see Box 2.3 for definitions). In 2013, 50 per cent of women were in the labour force, a decline of 2 percentage points since 1990. Although the gender gap in LFPR narrowed

slightly during this period, this was primarily because participation rates for men declined faster than for women. The gender gap is striking and persistent: half of women are in the labour force compared to more than three quarters of men.

BOX 2.3

Labour force participation, employment and unemployment rates

The labour force participation rate (LFPR) captures people who are currently employed and those who are unemployed (i.e., people who are not employed but are available and actively looking for a job) as a percentage of the working-age population. The working-age population is generally defined as people aged 15 and above (with some national variation in cut-off points).³⁵

Relatively higher LFPR in many developing countries reflect the large proportion of people—mostly women—who are involved in subsistence production. Unemployment rates—defined as the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force—are generally much lower in developing than in developed countries. This is because, in the absence of unemployment insurance, most people in developing countries cannot afford to be unemployed and instead are active in informal employment. None of these indicators takes into account unpaid care and domestic work, which is fundamental for the reproduction of the labour force (see Box 2.5).

Continued debate on the merits of these indicators led to the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) agreeing in 2013 to their fundamental overhaul.³⁶ Changes agreed include a redefinition of work and a narrower definition of employment, to comprise only those who are engaged in activities that are ‘mainly’ for pay or profit. This excludes people who are producing goods and services ‘mainly’ for their own personal use or those who are doing volunteer work. These changes would mean that subsistence farming, as well as unpaid care and domestic work, would be categorized as work but not as employment. As a result better—and more meaningful—statistics on women’s and men’s work could be compiled, including LFPR and employment and unemployment rates, as well as on the time that women spend performing unpaid care and domestic work (see Monitoring women’s economic and social rights in Annexes).³⁷

WOMEN’S LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION: REGIONAL TRENDS

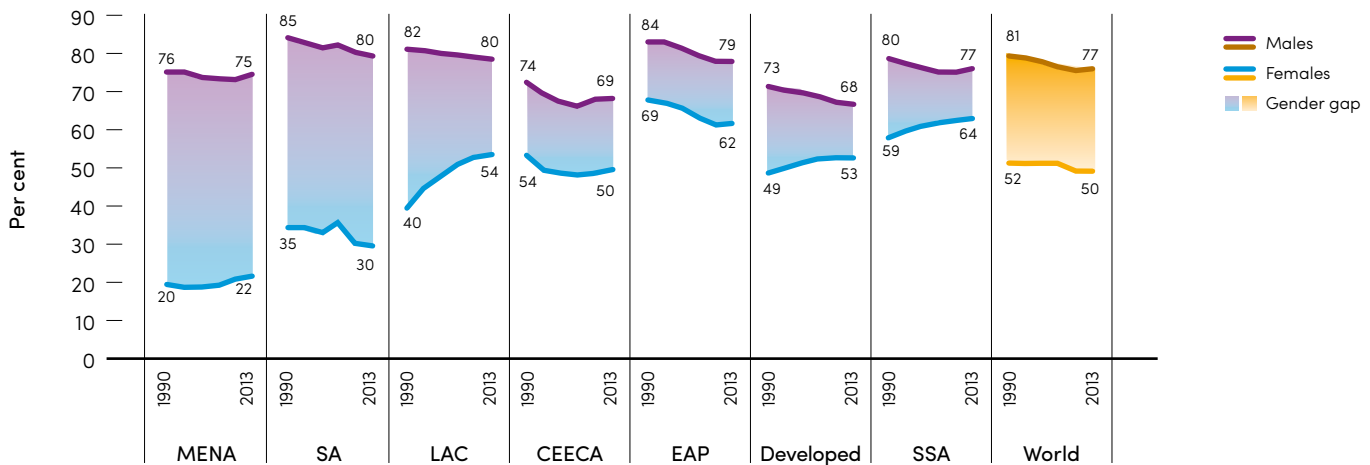
Beyond these global headlines, there is substantial regional variation. Figure 2.1 shows the trends in male and female LFPR by region between 1990 and 2013. In this period, women’s LFPR increased in Latin America and the Caribbean, in sub-Saharan Africa, in Developed

Regions and to a limited extent in the Middle East and North Africa. Latin America and the Caribbean saw the largest increase in women’s LFPR from 40 to 54 per cent, narrowing the gender gap from 42 to 26 percentage points. In sub-Saharan Africa, women’s LFPR increased from 59 to 64 per cent during the same period, resulting in a gender gap of 13 percentage points, the lowest of all regions.

Figure 2.1

Labour force participation rate by sex and region, 1990–2013

→ Globally, women’s labour force participation rates have stagnated, albeit with significant regional variation



Source: Weighted averages calculated by UN Women using data from ILO 2015c.

Note: Regions are as follows: CEECA (Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia); Developed (Developed Regions); EAP (East Asia and the Pacific); LAC (Latin America and the Caribbean); MENA (Middle East and North Africa); SA (South Asia); SSA (sub-Saharan Africa). See UN Women’s regional groupings for the list of countries and territories included in each region in Annex 7.

Meanwhile, women’s LFPR decreased in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, in East Asia and the Pacific as well as in South Asia, regions that account for about 60 per cent of the global female population of working age.³⁸ The decline in women’s LFPR in South Asia is mostly the result of lower participation rates in India due to younger women staying in education, and a general lack of employment opportunities for women.³⁹

In Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the drop in economic output following the dismantling of state socialism and the transition to a market economy have had a negative impact on employment, despite some recovery since 2000. Since the transition, these countries have also placed less emphasis on policies that enable women to combine work and family responsibilities. The result of these factors combined is that women’s LFPR has not recovered to pre-transition levels.⁴⁰

Greater opportunities or quest for survival?

Increases in women’s LFPR may indicate greater opportunities for women to access paid employment. In some countries in Latin America,

targeted labour market, macroeconomic and social policies have contributed to a growth in formal employment, which has benefited women (see Box 2.2).

Declining fertility rates have also played a part in increasing LFPR among women of prime working age (25–54). Globally, median female LFPR for this age group increased by 11 percentage points from 63 to 74 per cent, while median male participation rates in the same age group changed very little, from 95 to 94 per cent. During their reproductive years (between ages 20 and 44), women’s labour supply reduces by the equivalent of nearly two years for each child born. Reductions in median fertility rates from 5.2 to 2.4 children per woman over the last four decades⁴¹ may have increased female labour supply by 5.3 years, or 12 per cent of a woman’s uninterrupted working life.⁴²

But for some women, higher LFPR also reflect the ‘distress sale of labour’, whereby poverty and lack of social protection drive women into the labour market to meet survival needs.⁴³ In developing economies, coverage of unemployment insurance

is low or non-existent and few people can afford lengthy spells without a job. Instead they have to take up informal and poor-quality work.

Gender gaps remain everywhere

As Figure 2.1 shows, women’s LFPR still lags far behind that of men in all regions. For example, less than one quarter of women in the Middle East and North Africa and one third of women in South Asia participate in the labour force, compared to at least three quarters of men in each region, and there has been little change in the gender gaps since 1990.

In these regions, women’s ability to undertake paid work outside the home is restricted by rigid social norms and cultural expectations about women’s role within the family and in the public domain. For those women that do join the labour force, social norms also restrict the types or locations of work they can do, as well as their earnings and their capacity to retain control over them. For example, the practice of purdah or seclusion in some

communities means that women are confined to work in the home or in single-sex occupations.⁴⁴

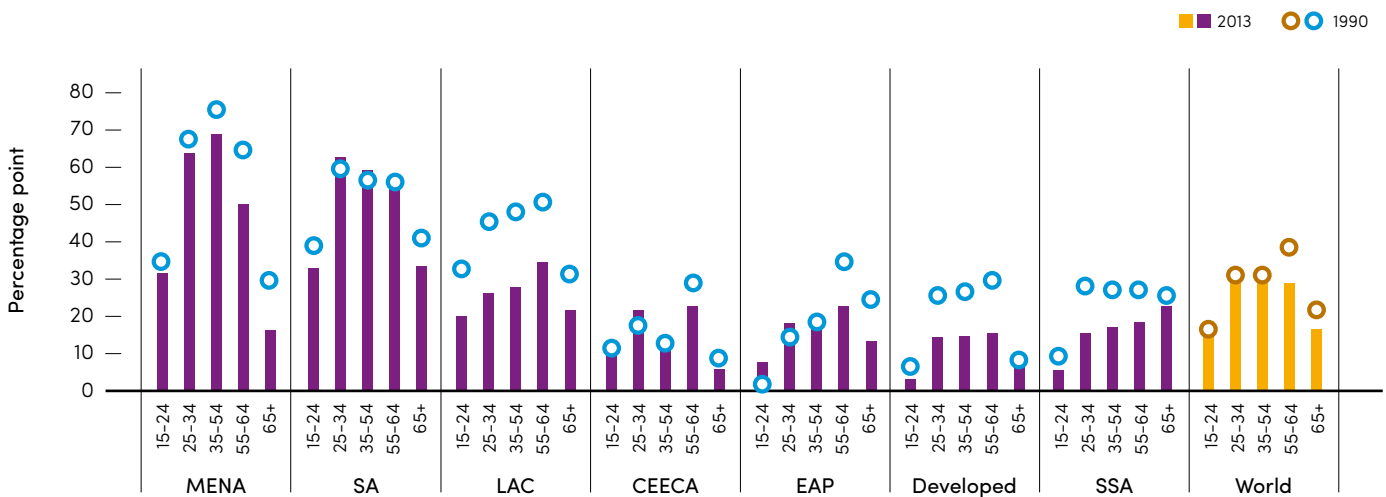
Figure 2.2 shows that gender gaps in LFPR vary by age as well as by region. Globally, gaps tend to be lower in younger age groups then increase sharply as women enter their reproductive years. Even though gender gaps have been narrowing in this age group in some regions, the large disparities in LFPR in the years when women have children indicate that combining paid and unpaid work remains a significant challenge everywhere (see Figure 2.3 and section Unpaid care and domestic work).

In most regions, gender gaps in LFPR only decline again after the age of 65, when women and men are entering retirement. The exception is sub-Saharan Africa, where 41 per cent of women and 63 per cent of men aged 65 and over are in the labour force.⁴⁵ High rates of poverty in old age and low pension coverage make retirement an impossibility for many women and men alike, in this region.

Figure 2.2

Gender gaps in labour force participation rates by age group, 1990 and 2013

→ Gender gaps increase sharply when women are most likely to have children



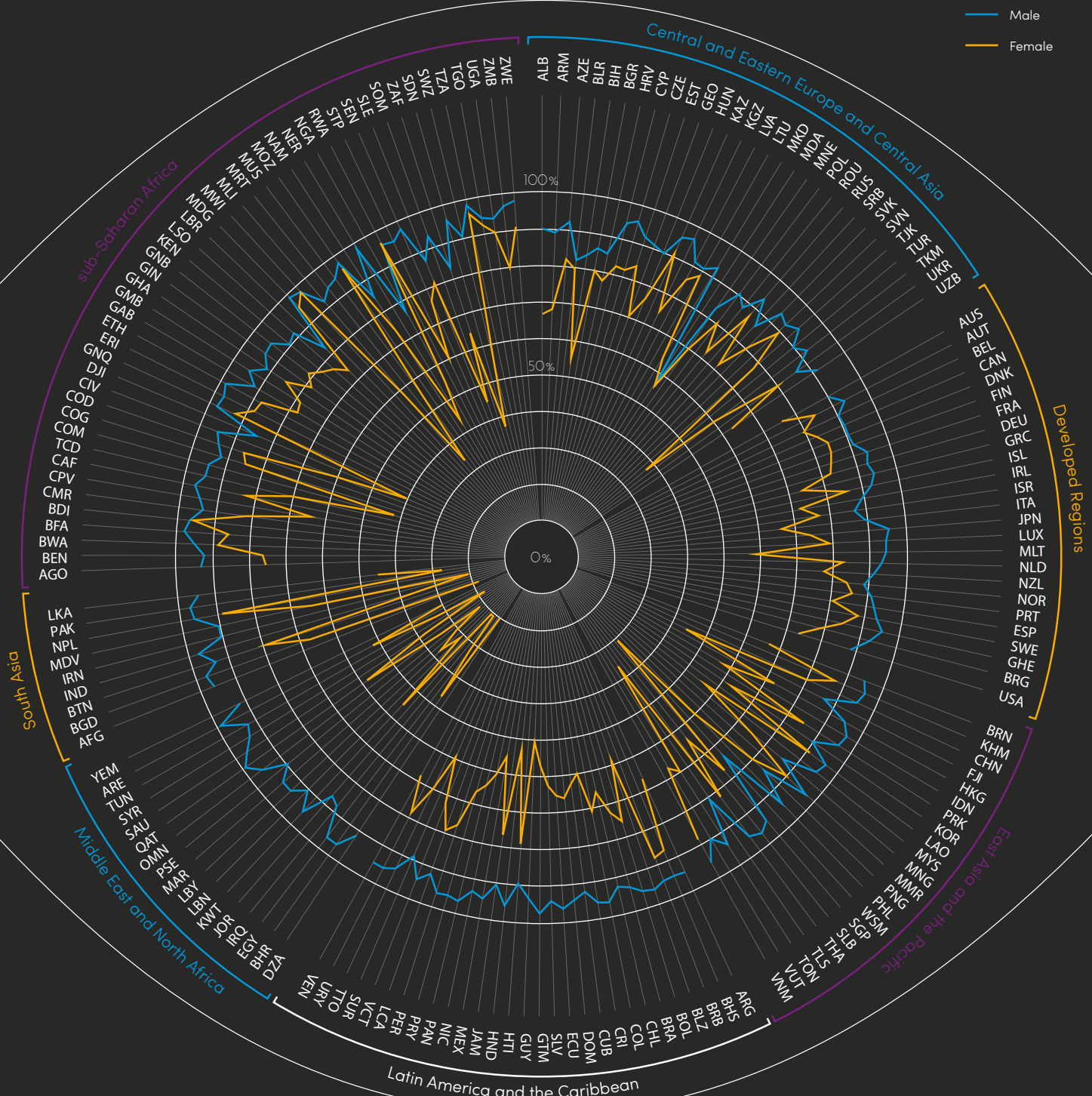
Source: Weighted averages calculated by UN Women using data from ILO 2015c.

Figure 2.3

AN EYE ON THE GAP

The global gender gap in labour force participation

Across all regions, almost all men of prime working age (25-54 years) participate in the labour force, while rates of participation vary widely for women. The gender gap is striking and persistent: in no region has it been eliminated.



Source: ILO 2015c.

Note: The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) three letter country codes are used to stand for country name. The figures uses 2013 ILO data on average labour force participation for those aged 25 to 54, disaggregated by sex.

* 27 refers to the labour force participation gap of all working-age women and men, aged 15 years and over.

A VISION FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS TO WORK AND AT WORK



THE REALITY

Another striking trend is the decline in LFPR among young women and men (aged 15–24), due to a growing demand for education. Globally, the LFPR of young women fell from 51 to 39 per cent, and from 68 to 55 per cent for young men, between 1990 and 2013. The fact that young women are increasingly staying in education is a positive development that could ultimately contribute to improved labour market outcomes.⁴⁶ However, as the next section will show, women’s increased educational attainment over the past few decades has not necessarily resulted in a commensurate improvement in their labour market outcomes relative to men.

EDUCATION: THE GREAT EQUALIZER?

One of the most important gains for gender equality and women’s rights over the last 60 years has been the rapid increase in girls’ education.⁴⁷ Education, particularly at secondary level, is associated with a range of positive outcomes for women and girls, including greater awareness of their rights, greater participation in decision-making, reduced probability of early marriage and childbearing, and reduced likelihood of dying during childbirth.⁴⁸

Mean years of education have increased faster for women than for men in most regions, leading to narrowing gender gaps. A case in point is the Middle East and North Africa region, which, in 1950, had the lowest level of female educational attainment of all regions. By 2010, while average years of education for men had increased by a factor of seven (from 1.1 to 8.0), the average years of education for women had increased 16 times (from 0.4 to 6.5).

In developing countries, advances in educational attainment are largely the result of increases in enrolment at primary and lower secondary levels. However, advances in tertiary education over the past three decades have also been remarkable. As of 2009, female gross enrolment ratios (GER) in tertiary education were higher than male GER in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America

and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa and Developed Regions. This means that in a large number of countries, an entire generation of women have enjoyed higher levels of education than men.⁴⁹

Education and labour market outcomes

In relation to employment, education is often seen as the ‘great equalizer’, based on the idea that by creating equal opportunities for women and men, more equal labour market outcomes will follow.⁵⁰ However, the relationship between improved education levels and labour force participation in developing countries is not straightforward.

In developed countries, a clear positive relationship between education and labour force participation generally exists, but in developing countries the relationship more closely resembles a U-shaped curve. Women with primary and lower secondary schooling have relatively low rates of labour force participation compared with those with no schooling and those with tertiary education. Women with little or no education tend to come from very poor households, forcing them to accept whatever low-paid, low-skilled work is available (particularly in the absence of social security), while those with some education are more likely to be able to afford to stay out of the labour force. At the highest levels of education, particularly tertiary, the opportunity cost of not working is substantial, resulting in high rates of labour force participation among this group.⁵¹

With regards to quality of employment, higher levels of educational attainment are associated with a narrowing of gender gaps in access to formal employment and increased earnings for women. High levels of education enable women to access better paid occupations, and higher-earning jobs within those occupations.⁵²

However, rising education has not been a panacea for the disadvantages that women face in the labour market. Young women’s ‘transition’ rates from education to employment are consistently lower than young men’s, contributing

to high levels of unemployment among young women in many regions.⁵³

In addition, gains in women's education have not had the expected positive impact on gender pay gaps. In a study of 64 countries, after accounting for gender differences in education, the size of the (adjusted) pay gap actually increased, indicating that rising female education has not

been fully or equally rewarded in the labour market.⁵⁴ At every level of education (including no education) women on average earn less than men. These gender gaps reflect different treatment in the labour market due to discrimination, occupational segregation and greater constraints for women in balancing employment and family responsibilities, none of which can be addressed through education alone.⁵⁵

TOWARDS SUBSTANTIVE EQUALITY IN PAID AND UNPAID WORK

Unequal outcomes for women in the labour market are the biggest contributor to their overall socio-economic disadvantage. Over a lifetime, differences in employment rates and pay combine to create large cumulative income differences between women and men. Data from France, Germany, Sweden and Turkey suggest

that women earn between 31 and 75 per cent less than men over their lifetimes (see Box 2.4). The gender gap in lifetime income is likely to be especially wide in countries such as Turkey, where women's labour force participation is low, and in developing countries where social protection coverage is very limited.

BOX 2.4

Accumulating socio-economic disadvantage: Gender gaps in lifetime income

Income inequality between women and men is usually measured in terms of gender gaps in pay per hour, week, month or year. These data provide a snapshot, but they do not tell us anything about how women's disadvantage accumulates over their lifetimes. Gender pay gaps, as well as differences in labour force participation rates, types of employment (informal vs. formal, wage vs. self-employment), levels of education and experience, and the generosity of social transfers, all contribute to gaps in women's and men's income over the longer term.

In a study on Germany, France, Sweden and Turkey, the factors that generate or mitigate gender gaps in lifetime income were assessed using actuarial methods.⁵⁶ These countries have diverse policy regimes: Sweden has a ‘universal’ and relatively gender-egalitarian welfare regime; France and Germany are two ‘conservative’, social insurance-based welfare regimes; and Turkey is a middle-income country with patchy social security coverage. The gender gaps in labour force participation in the four countries also vary widely. At one end of the scale, in Sweden, 60 per cent of women were in the labour force in 2013 (compared to 68 per cent of men); while in Turkey, in the same year, only 29 per cent of women were in the labour force (compared to 71 per cent of men).⁵⁷

Gender gaps in lifetime income are sizeable across all four countries. In France and Sweden, women’s lifetime income after all social transfers is 31 per cent lower than men’s. In Germany, women can expect to earn 49 per cent less than men, while in Turkey, a woman is likely to earn just 25 per cent of a man’s income over her lifetime.

Women’s lower levels of labour market participation, which are in part the result of their unpaid care and domestic responsibilities, are the most important factor in explaining the gender gap in lifetime income. For example, in Germany, by the age of 45, a woman who has given birth to one child can expect to earn up to US\$285,000 less than a woman who has worked full time, without interruption.⁵⁸

The results show that social transfer systems—such as pensions and family allowances, alongside comprehensive policies to support women’s employment, including childcare services and parental leave can make a critical contribution to reducing gender gaps in lifetime income (see Chapter 3).

While the results of this study are only for four countries, those for France, Germany and Sweden they may be indicative of the range of gender gaps in lifetime income in developed countries. The results for Turkey demonstrate what might be expected in countries where women’s labour force participation is low, or in contexts where the majority of women work in informal jobs and social security coverage is limited.

Women’s employment options are hugely limited by societal expectations that burden them with disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work. Without adequate support, they may ‘choose’ part-time or informal work that can be combined with these unpaid responsibilities. Labour market institutions and practices also channel women into a narrow range of gender segregated occupations at lower levels in the employment hierarchy, leading to gender-based pay differentials. And because women typically earn less than their male partners, household decisions tend

to reinforce a division of labour where men ‘specialize’ in paid work while women ‘specialize’ in homemaking.

Redressing women’s socio-economic disadvantage requires concerted action on three fronts to break this cycle. First, a reorganization of unpaid care and domestic work is required; second, efforts are needed to break down occupational segregation in the labour force; and third, gender pay gaps need to be reduced. The next three sections analyse the challenges and assess progress in these three areas.

UNPAID CARE AND DOMESTIC WORK: THE FOUNDATION FOR ALL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Unpaid care and domestic work contributes to human well-being and to overall economic development through nurturing people who are fit,

productive and capable of learning and creativity.⁵⁹ Unpaid care and domestic work produces and reproduces the labour force on a day-to-day basis and over generations for the market, but conventional analyses of employment and labour markets tend to ignore it altogether (see Box 2.5).⁶⁰

BOX 2.5

Unpaid work: A note on terminology

Unpaid work includes a diverse range of activities that are carried out predominantly by women without remuneration. There are three broad categories referred to in this report:⁶¹

- Unpaid work in a family business, involving the production of goods or services for sale on the market for no direct pay, which is referred to as contributing family work
- Unpaid work that involves the production of goods for self-consumption (e.g., collecting water or firewood)
- Unpaid work that involves the provision of services for self-consumption (e.g., cooking or cleaning as well as person-to-person care)

This Report uses the concept of unpaid care and domestic work to include the latter two types of work. In addition to person-to-person care (such as feeding a child or bathing a frail elderly person) and domestic work, this also includes other activities (such as the collection of water or firewood) that are critical for 'reproducing' people on a day-to-day basis, particularly in low-income settings.

Despite its enormous value, unpaid care and domestic work remains largely invisible in standard measures of the economy (see Chapter 4). While unpaid work in family businesses is routinely included in calculations of gross domestic product (GDP), unpaid care and domestic work, as defined in this report, is rarely included in what is known as the System of National Accounts (SNA) production boundary.

Although the collection of water and firewood has officially formed part of the SNA production boundary since 1993, this is rarely followed through in practice. All other unpaid care and domestic work at the household level continues to be referred to in the SNA as a 'self-contained activity with limited repercussions on the rest of the economy'.⁶²

This Report takes a fundamentally different view: that the unpaid provision of services in households for own consumption is a form of work that has immediate repercussions for economies, large and small, through its impact on the wider labour force. This perspective is gaining ground: in 2013, the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) agreed some important changes in how work and employment are defined and measured. It was decided that unpaid care and domestic work will now be categorized as work, which should lead to better measurement and valuation of these activities in the future (see Box 2.3).⁶³

The unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work

Across all economies and cultures, women and girls carry out the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work. Globally, women do nearly 2.5 times as much of this work as men, with large gender disparities in time spent cooking, cleaning and caring for household members (see Annex 3).⁶⁴ Women's involvement in this work varies greatly across countries depending on the extent and coverage of public services such as water and sanitation, energy, health and childcare. Within countries, there are also significant variations in the amount of unpaid care and domestic work carried out by women based on age, income, location and the presence of young children in the household.⁶⁵

For example, in Algeria, women in rural areas do 5.5 hours of unpaid care and domestic work per day, compared to 5.1 hours for urban women, rising to 7.3 hours a day for women with children younger than 4 years. Men's contribution to domestic work remains constant at less than one hour per day across all these categories.⁶⁶ In Pakistan, rural women do 4.9 hours of unpaid care and domestic work per day compared to 0.5 hours for rural men.⁶⁷

The broader economic and social context also makes a difference to women's unpaid care and domestic work. Health crises such as the HIV pandemic and the more recent outbreak of the Ebola virus disease create additional unpaid care and domestic work burdens, as well as health risks, for women (see Box 3.7). Where health systems are under-resourced or over-stretched, home-based carers, predominantly women, take up the slack with little support or remuneration (see story: *A seat at the table*).⁶⁸ Austerity measures adopted following the global financial crisis have further increased the burden of unpaid care and domestic work, particularly for poor women who are often the most reliant on public services.⁶⁹

Responsibility for care limits women's economic opportunities

Women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work limits their

participation in the labour force. In the European Union (EU), in 2013, 25 per cent of women compared to only 3 per cent of men cite care and other family responsibilities as the reason for not being in the labour force.⁷⁰ The impact of women's care responsibilities on labour market outcomes is also reflected in significant differences between employment rates of women with and without children.

Policy can also make a huge difference here: EU countries that provide comprehensive support to working parents have higher rates of female employment than countries without such policies.⁷¹ The provision of childcare services is strongly associated with higher rates of women's employment, but policies to promote paid parental leave also have a significant impact.⁷²

Figure 2.4 compares employment rates of mothers in EU countries, according to different types of family policy regimes and the number of children they have. At one end of the scale, in the Nordic countries, where comprehensive support for working parents includes generous paid leave, high quality public childcare services and flexible working options, women with children have higher than average employment rates. At the other end of the scale, in Southern Europe, where such support is minimal, women with children are least likely to be employed. The differences in employment rates between countries are particularly wide for women with two or more children.

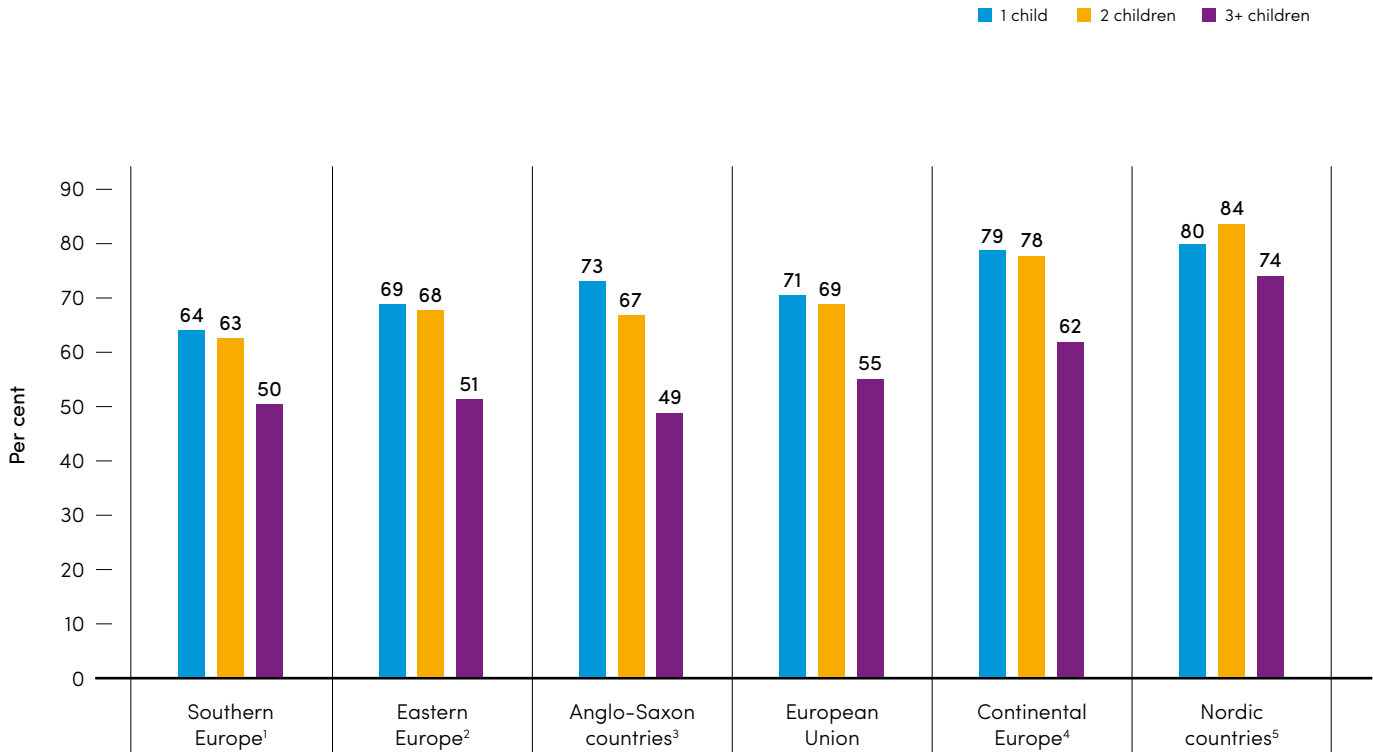
In developing countries, being married, as well as the presence of young children in the household are associated with lower employment rates for women but higher rates for men.⁷³ For example, in Mexico, 46 per cent of women aged 25–34 in households with very young children were in the labour force in 2010 compared to 55 per cent of women in households without children. The figures for men were 99 and 96 per cent, respectively.⁷⁴

Inadequate childcare support

Survey data from 31 developing countries illustrate the problems faced by working women

Figure 2.4

Average maternal employment rates by number of children in European Union countries, by family policy regime, 2013
 —> In Europe, women's employment rates are much higher in countries where family-friendly policies are in place



Source: UN Women calculations using data from Eurostat 2015.

Note: Family policy regime classification as in Thévenon 2011:

1. Limited assistance to families.
2. Long leave but low cash benefits and childcare for children under age 3.
3. Period of paid leave is short, with support targeted to low-income, single-parent families and families with preschool children.
4. High financial support but limited service provision to support dual-earner families with children under age 3.
5. Continuous, strong support for working parents of children under age 3.

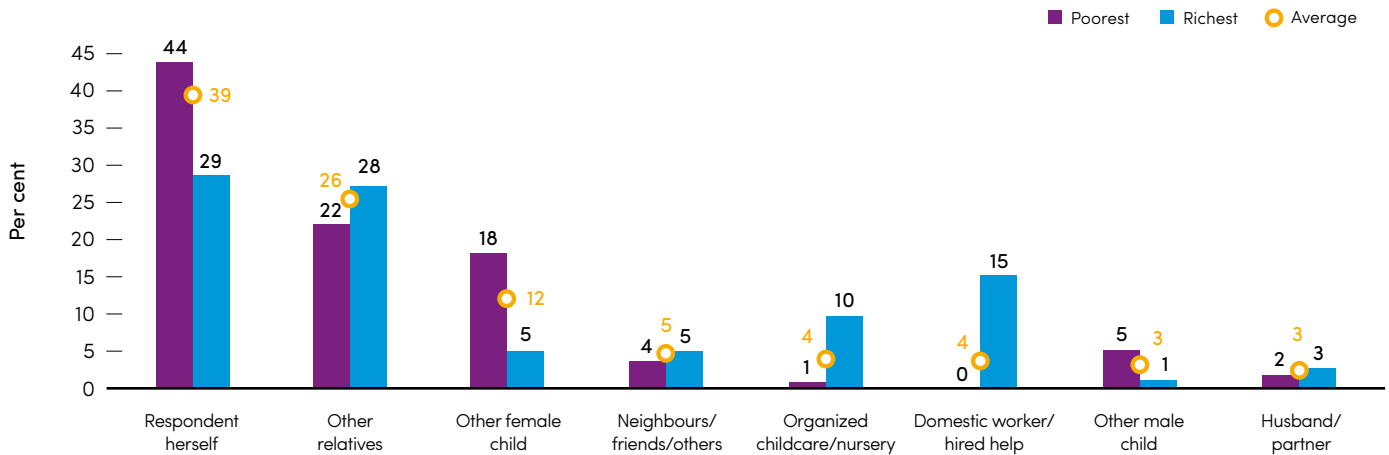
in accessing childcare. When asked who minds their children while they are at work, 39 per cent of working women with children under the age of 6 said that they themselves care for them. Only 4 per cent of those surveyed reported using organized childcare or nursery arrangements, as shown in Figure 2.5. Among the poorest women,

a negligible 1 per cent used such facilities, with many relying on other relatives or older daughters to provide care. The fact that so many women, especially the poorest, have to mind their children at their workplace influences what kind of work they can do, as well as the quality of care that their children receive.

Figure 2.5

Typical childcare arrangement for employed women with children under age 6

—> *Very few employed women in developing countries have access to organized childcare or nurseries*



Source: Unweighted averages calculated by UN Women using data from ICF International 2015.

Note: N=31 developing countries. Surveys were conducted between 1995 and 2002. This indicator corresponds to the percentage of respondents answering the question 'Who looks after your child(ren) while you are at work?'

The impact of elder care

As populations are ageing, there are also rising demands to provide care for the sick and elderly. In Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, more than 10 per cent of adults aged 50 and over, of whom two thirds are women, provide some form of informal care—typically unpaid—to the sick or elderly. This figure is set to rise by 20 to 30 per cent by 2050 in some countries.⁷⁵ As with childcare, care of the sick and elderly impacts negatively on women’s employment options. In the United States, for example, a study found that women aged 55 to 67 who provided unpaid care to their parents reduced their work hours by 41 per cent, on average.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, governments, particularly those in developing countries, have not consistently

addressed elderly care as a policy issue. Two thirds of the global population aged 60 and over live in developing countries, and by 2050 this share is projected to rise to 80 per cent.⁷⁷ The issue of elder care will therefore become increasingly important and, if left unaddressed, will continue to be a significant impediment to women’s employment opportunities (see Chapter 3).

Recognizing, reducing and redistributing women’s unpaid care and domestic work

Governments in developing countries can take a range of measures to recognize, reduce and redistribute women’s unpaid care and domestic work. These include: investments in basic social services and infrastructure, particularly health care, and water and sanitation, which are critical to reducing the drudgery of this work; and

provision of childcare services, which can enable women to participate in paid work. These policy areas are explored in more detail in Chapter 3.⁷⁸

Investments in electricity and energy infrastructure, such as clean cook-stoves are also essential. Some 1.3 billion people lack basic electricity to light their homes, while almost 3 billion people worldwide rely on solid fuels for cooking and heating. Women and girls, especially those in rural areas, spend many hours collecting wood, charcoal, animal manure and crop residues for this purpose.⁷⁹ Traditional biomass-burning cook-stoves are the primary contributor to indoor air pollution, which is responsible for more than 4 million deaths annually,⁸⁰ but in addition, these deficits impose unpaid work burdens that limit the time women and girls have available for paid work, education and leisure.⁸¹

A comprehensive system of paid parental leave is also needed to facilitate women's access to labour markets, including: maternity leave, which allows mothers to recover from childbirth and care for young infants during the first weeks of their lives; paternity leave, which enables fathers to support their partners in the weeks following the birth; and parental leave, which can be taken by mothers or fathers over a longer period of time.

Maternity leave: Some progress but inadequate coverage

The ILO Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183) provides that mothers, including those in informal work, are entitled to maternity leave of not less than 14 weeks, which should be paid for collectively (i.e., not only by employers) at a rate of at least two thirds of previous pay.⁸² Virtually every country in the world has adopted some form of maternity protection legislation, but only 63 countries comply with these ILO minimum standards.⁸³ Even where laws are in place, practical obstacles prevent women from claiming their rights: it is estimated that only 28 per cent of employed women worldwide enjoy any paid maternity leave in practice.⁸⁴

Within the developing world, Latin American countries have made considerable progress in complying with the ILO standard of 14 weeks paid maternity leave and in ensuring that more women, including those in informal work, are eligible. In Brazil, rural and domestic workers gained the right to maternity leave in 1991 and, following a court ruling in 2012, temporary workers are now also eligible. Chile and Costa Rica also grant rights to maternity leave to temporary workers. Yet, even where informal workers are legally entitled to take maternity leave, take-up is often low.⁸⁵ Ensuring that maternity leave benefits are comparatively generous, preferably with full replacement of previous earnings, alongside efforts to extend coverage and monitor implementation, is important to reduce the barriers for low-income women to access their entitlements.

While maternity leave provision can support women to remain in paid employment, substantive equality also requires policies to address gender stereotypes associated with caregiving and to promote more equal sharing of unpaid work.⁸⁶ Short leaves from the labour force can strengthen women's labour market attachment, but longer leaves can lead to detachment and a deterioration of skills. Longer leaves also increase the risk of employers discriminating against pregnant women or women of childbearing age.⁸⁷ For all of these reasons, the introduction of policies to make paternity or parental leave both available and attractive to fathers is important.

Parental and paternity leave: Challenging gender stereotypes

In 2013, provisions for paternity leave and parental leave were in place in 80 and 66 countries, respectively. However, entitlements tend to be very limited and variable—sometimes just one or two days of unpaid leave.⁸⁸ In 1974, Sweden became the first country in the world to grant parental leave as a family entitlement that both parents could share. Over the next 15 years, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway followed suit.⁸⁹

Today, parental leave is commonplace in Developed Regions and Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. It is rare in other regions and, where it does exist, is usually unpaid.⁹⁰ In Latin America, for example, where there has been good progress on extending maternity provision, attempts to extend paternity or shared parental leave have been very limited. This ‘maternalist’ approach leaves traditional gender roles firmly intact and potentially reinforces women’s role as the main caregiver for children.⁹¹

In addition, the provision of gender-neutral parental leave does not automatically lead to gender equality in take-up. Even where policies allow sharing of parental leave, mothers still take the majority of this time.⁹² Studies find that men are stigmatized for taking their leave entitlements and considered less worthy of promotion.⁹³ In

response to low take-up, Norway was the first country to pioneer so-called ‘daddy quotas’, where portions of non-transferable leave are taken on a ‘use-or-lose’ basis. Such quotas have since been replicated in several countries, and evidence on take-up of leave shows that these measures make a difference. In Iceland, for example, 84 per cent of fathers took their full three-month quota of leave in 2007.⁹⁴ Such policies may also increase men’s longer-term willingness to assume care responsibilities.⁹⁵

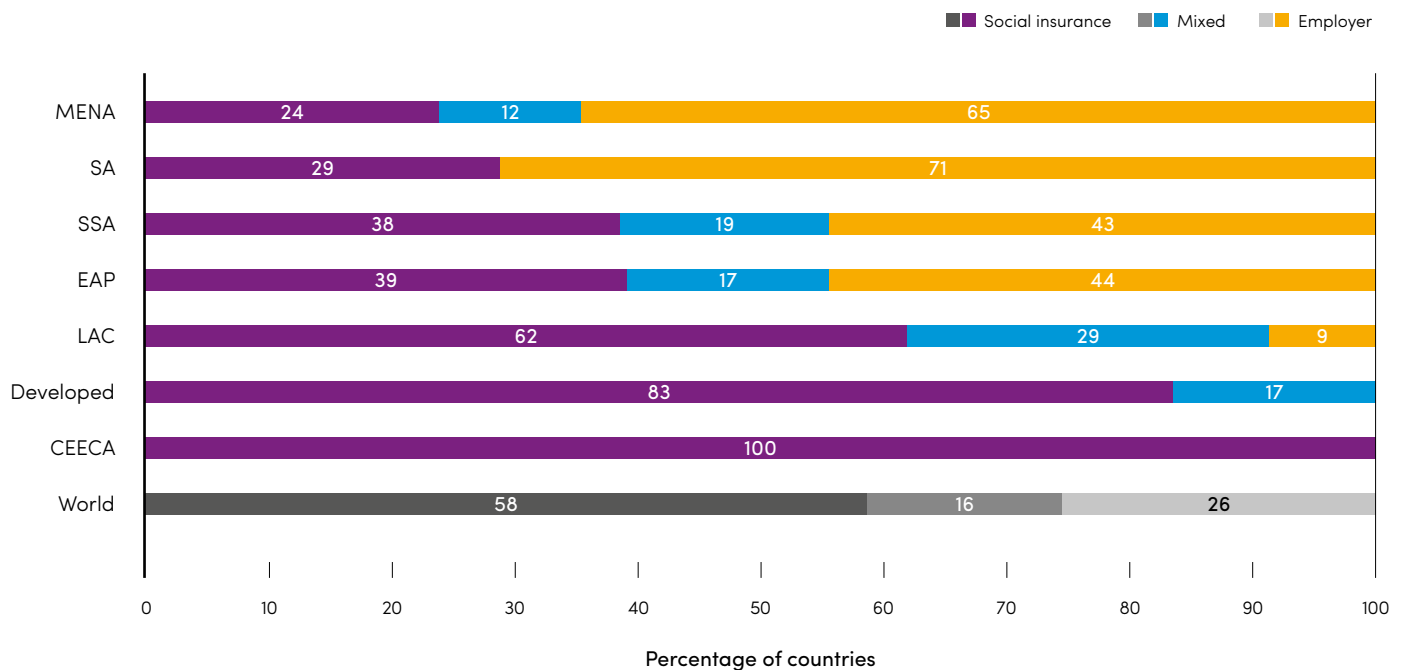
Financing maternity, paternity and parental leave

The generosity of leave benefits, as well as how they are financed, matter for gender equality. First, all leave should be paid at a relatively high percentage of normal salaries (or ‘replacement rates’) to prevent loss of earnings for mothers,

Figure 2.6

Financing of maternity leave by region, 2013

—> *In a quarter of countries, employers alone fund maternity leave*



Source: UN Women calculations using data from ILO 2014d.

especially those on low incomes who would not otherwise be able to afford to take leave.⁹⁶ In Developed Regions and Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, replacement rates of at least two thirds of previous pay are the norm, but such rates are much less common in developing countries.⁹⁷ Where applied to paternity and parental leaves, high replacement rates are also important to encourage men to take up their entitlements given that they usually earn higher wages than women.⁹⁸ High rates also send a strong message that care work is socially valued.

Second, collective financing for paid parental leave through general taxation or social insurance systems is preferable to financing by individual employers, which may make them reluctant to hire women of reproductive age.⁹⁹ Currently, maternity leave is funded through social security contributions in 58 per cent of countries, by employers in 26 per cent and through a mix of government and employer contributions in the remaining countries (see Figure 2.6).¹⁰⁰ Employers are responsible for funding leave in most countries in the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia. These are also regions where the majority of countries do not meet the ILO standard of 14 weeks paid maternity leave and where women's LFPR is particularly low.

Recommendations

Policies to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work are vital to advancing substantive equality. Public investments in basic infrastructure and family-friendly policies broaden women's paid employment options, thereby redressing their socio-economic disadvantage. Promoting more equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work between women and men would also help to address stereotypes and change social norms, with the potential to transform both labour markets and households alike. To move towards substantive equality, governments need to:

- Invest in basic infrastructure and services (water and sanitation, health, electricity and clean cook-stoves) to reduce women's unpaid care and domestic work burdens and liberate time for productive activities and leisure (see Chapter 3)

- Extend coverage of childcare services in line with the needs of working parents (see Chapter 3)
- Work towards comprehensive paid leave systems, including maternity leave of at least 14 weeks, paternity leave and parental leave that can be shared between parents
- Extend coverage of maternity, paternity and parental leave entitlements to informal workers, along with measures to ensure implementation
- Ensure that leave is paid at a minimum of two thirds of previous earnings, so that poorer women and men can afford to take it
- Finance leave through collective mechanisms such as social security contributions and/or general taxation
- Incentivize fathers to take up paternity and parental leave, including through 'use-or-lose' quotas.

ADDRESSING PERVASIVE OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

Increased participation in the labour force does not guarantee a level playing field for women in terms of their labour market outcomes. Gender-based occupational segregation—whereby women and men tend to be employed in different occupations (horizontal segregation) and at different levels, grades or positions of seniority (vertical segregation)—is a key factor in women's socio-economic disadvantage.¹⁰¹ It is prevalent in both formal and informal employment.

Patterns and consequences of occupational segregation

Occupational segregation is widespread, persistent and relatively resistant to change even as countries develop economically.¹⁰² The negative consequences of occupational segregation are multiple and far-reaching, including on the quality of work women can access and the valuation of

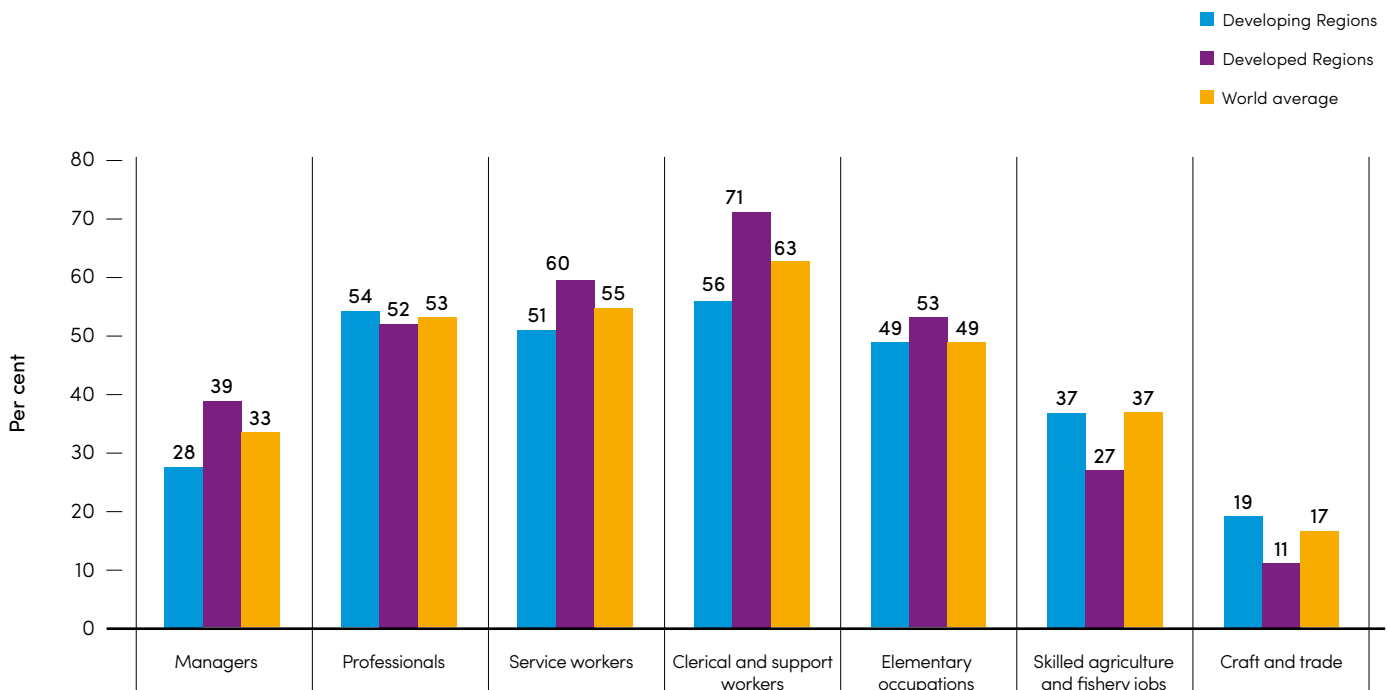
their skills. Its most pernicious impact, overall, is in maintaining pervasive gender pay gaps.¹⁰³ The exclusion of large sections of the labour force from certain jobs is also a waste of human talent with negative consequences for the economy as a whole.¹⁰⁴

Figure 2.7 presents data on occupational segregation by region, showing that it is both prevalent and has a strikingly similar pattern across developed and developing regions. Each occupational category includes both formal and informal workers.

Figure 2.7

Share of women in total employment in select occupational groups, 2013

—> *Patterns of occupational segregation are similar in all countries, with women over-represented in clerical and support roles*



Source: UN Women calculations using occupation data from ILO 2015a.

Note: Data are weighted averages calculated for 99 countries of which 74 are in Developing Regions, and 25 are in Developed Regions, using the latest available data for each country.

Globally, women are over-represented in clerical and support positions (63 per cent) and in service and sales roles (55 per cent) compared to managerial occupations (33 per cent). They are under-represented in skilled work in agriculture and fisheries (37 per cent) and in craft and trade occupations (17 per cent). At 53 per cent, women's

share of professional occupations is significant in all regions, but there is also marked gender segregation within this category.¹⁰⁵ For example, data for the United States shows that among health-care professionals, women are 36 per cent of physicians and surgeons compared to 90 per cent of registered nurses.¹⁰⁶

Like formal work, informal employment is highly segregated along gender lines. The category of 'elementary' occupations in Figure 2.7 includes many informal jobs, with women concentrated in domestic work and cleaning while men are more likely to be in low-skilled mining and manufacturing work.

Trends in occupational segregation

Over the last two decades, there has been a slight decline in the extent of occupational segregation as women have continued to move into job categories that are already quite 'mixed'. At the same time, occupations that were dominated by men to begin with have continued to offer few opportunities to

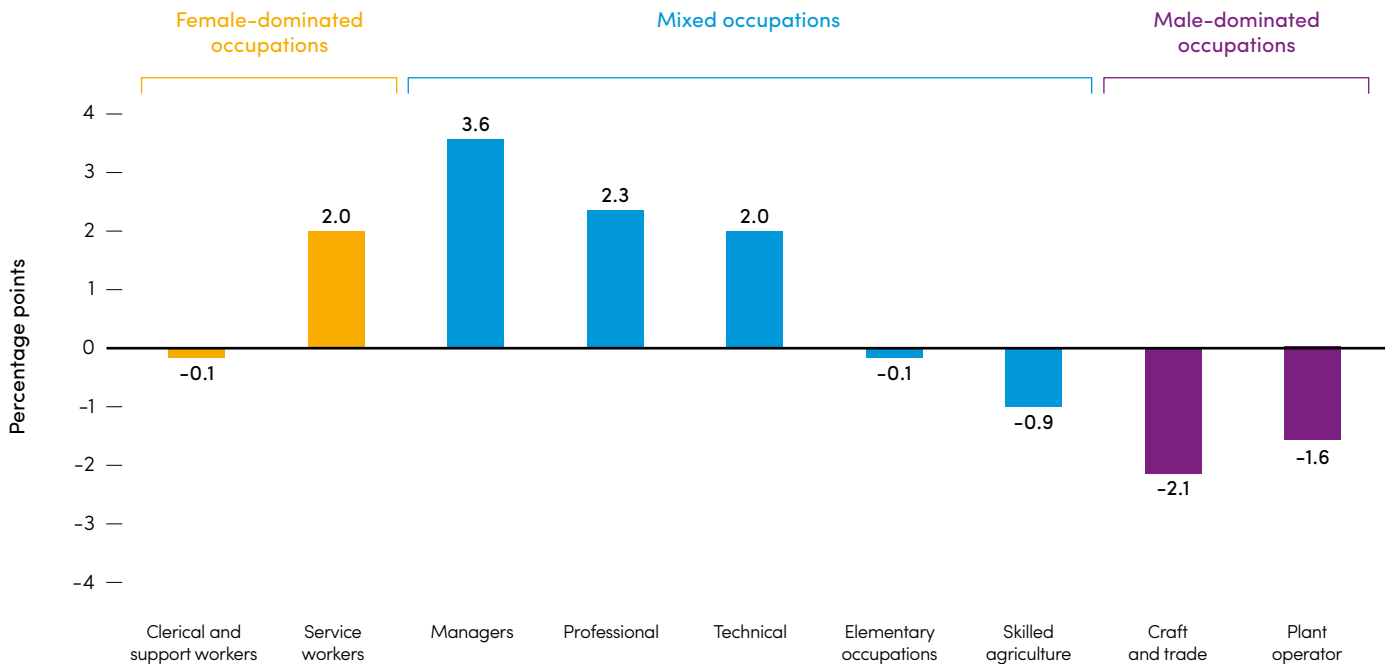
women. Predominantly female occupations, which tend to be those with lower status and pay, have remained feminized or become more so.¹⁰⁷

Figure 2.8 shows an increase in the share of women in certain mixed occupational categories between 2000 and 2010 such as leadership and management and professional and technical occupations. However, over the same period, women's share in male-dominated occupations—for example, craft and trade jobs and plant and machine operator and assembler positions—declined by 2.1 and 1.6 percentage points respectively. Female-dominated occupations such as clerks and service workers also saw little change.

Figure 2.8

Change in women's share of occupations, 2000–2010

—> *More women have become managers and professionals, but segregation in female and male-dominated occupations has become more entrenched*



Source: UN Women calculations using data from ILO 2015c.

Note: The sample size is 83 countries. The classification of occupations as mixed or female- or male-dominated follows the rule proposed by Hakim 1993, cited in Bettio and Verashchagina 2009. Female-dominated occupations are those where the female share is 15 percentage points above the share of women in total employment (i.e., 55 per cent or more); male-dominated occupations are those where the female share is 15 percentage points below their share in total employment (i.e., 25 per cent or less); and the rest are mixed. The female share calculation used to determine the sex dominated occupations are based on the latest country data. The averages used to calculate the change are unweighted.

Causes of occupational segregation

The persistence of occupational segregation can be explained by gender differences in education, training and experience; discrimination; social norms; and the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work.¹⁰⁸ Deeply ingrained stereotypes about gender roles and differences in aptitudes, and the stigmatization of certain occupations, play an important part in shaping preferences and maintaining occupational segregation.

Higher levels of education are associated with a reduction in occupational segregation in the United States: analysis of data from 1970 to 2009 found the largest decreases in segregation among college graduates, but very little change among those with incomplete secondary education.¹⁰⁹ This analysis also found that the pace of change during this period decreased significantly, all but stalling in the 2000s, suggesting that education is not enough on its own to eliminate the problem.¹¹⁰

Furthermore, the differences in girls' and boys' fields of educational specialization remain entrenched and strongly influence occupational segregation. These differences start early but grow larger as young people progress through the education system. Women are more likely to study humanities, while men specialize in highly-valued technical and scientific fields.¹¹¹ Gender differences in subject choices at school also lead to women's lower access to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) that could improve their skills and labour market outcomes.¹¹²

Gender-based violence perpetuates occupational segregation. Pervasive sexual harassment and other forms of violence in the workplace serve to reinforce or maintain existing hierarchies and gender power relations. For example, women may be reluctant to take up a job in a male-dominated occupation or apply for a promotion because of a real or perceived threat of harassment or violence, thereby perpetuating segregation.

A recent survey in EU countries found that 75 per cent of women in management and higher professional positions and 61 per cent of women in service sector

occupations have experienced some form of sexual harassment in their lifetime.¹¹³ In a study of women working in typically male trades in the United States, nearly a third reported that they frequently or always experienced sexual harassment.¹¹⁴ While there are no comparable surveys for developing countries, several studies highlight that women are frequently targeted for sexual harassment by employers, suppliers, managers or service providers asking for sexual favours in return for timely payment or for promotion.¹¹⁵

Such violence impacts women at every level: women in leadership or management positions may be targeted because they present a threat to male power.¹¹⁶ For some women, such as domestic, migrant or sex workers, abuse may be especially difficult and risky to counter because of the lack of legal protection or access to justice.¹¹⁷

The lack of support for childcare in developing countries and the fact that women often have to combine childcare with income earning (see Figure 2.5) contribute to their segregation in informal self-employment such as home-based work. Similarly, service sector jobs are more likely to offer work schedules aligned with unpaid care and domestic work demands (e.g., teaching) or flexible or part-time working hours (e.g., sales or clerical work) that enable women to combine paid and unpaid work. Women's employment in the service sector has risen from 36 per cent of total women's employment in 1990 to 51 per cent in 2013.¹¹⁸ The concentration of women in these roles means that these jobs are typically undervalued and come with a pay penalty.¹¹⁹

A significant part of the growth of service sector jobs has been in paid domestic work. For example, in Latin America and the Caribbean, paid domestic work accounts for 15 per cent of the female workforce and contributed 22 per cent of the growth in female employment in the service sector in this region between 1995 and 2010.¹²⁰ The clustering of low-income women, many of them migrants and/or from ethnic minorities, into paid domestic work has contributed to the persistence of occupational segregation at the bottom of the employment ladder. Meanwhile, better off, professional women

have benefited from the availability of cheap domestic labour to improve their own job prospects, deepening class inequality between women.¹²¹

Addressing occupational segregation

In recognition of women's rights to work in any occupation they choose, 67 governments worldwide have legislated against gender discrimination in hiring practices (Annex 3). Governments have also repealed legislation that restricted the types of work that women can do by, for example, banning them from working at night or in particular industries.¹²² These laws are an important step forward in preventing direct discrimination, but further policy action is needed to achieve substantive equality, to address the indirect drivers of occupational segregation and the limits that it places on women's access to decent work. Tackling gender stereotypes about the jobs that women are 'capable' of doing and that are considered socially 'appropriate' are a crucial part of this effort.

Education, training and mentoring

Innovative approaches to education and training that challenge stereotypes and are designed to reach women and girls throughout their lives have an important role to play in addressing occupational segregation. For women who are stuck in low-paid, informal employment, lack of basic education and training can be a major barrier to accessing better quality employment. Globally, nearly 800 million adults are illiterate and lack numeracy skills, and almost two thirds of them are women.¹²³ Some groups of women are particularly disadvantaged: in Latin America, for example, indigenous women are more than twice as likely to be illiterate than non-indigenous women.¹²⁴ Adult and non-formal education programmes that support women to qualify in more highly-valued occupations are essential to enhancing their opportunities in labour markets (see story: *Making rights real*).

For women working in global value chains as wage workers or small producers, opportunities for training can help them to access more remunerative activities. Such training needs to be carefully designed to take into account women's responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work, which makes participating in the

evenings or weekends difficult, and to ensure that women working in temporary roles or as seasonal workers in value chains can afford to take part.¹²⁵

Programmes that encourage girls to study sciences and technical subjects and offer career advice can effectively challenge deeply ingrained stereotypes that contribute to gender differences in subject choices. In Nigeria, for example, the Youth for Technology Foundation has established the Young Girls Science and Health Tele-Academy, which encourages girls to identify real-life challenges in their communities and to conduct scientific research and adapt engineering techniques to address them. More than half of the graduates from the Tele-Academy have gone on to study science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) at university or pursue careers in these areas.¹²⁶

Young women's access to TVET programmes can also be improved by providing support for their unpaid care and family responsibilities. The *Joven* programmes in Latin America have shown positive impacts for young women. In Peru, for example, the *ProJoven* programme targeted young women and men from poor families living in urban areas, providing three months of classroom training and internships, with the explicit aim of equipping women with skills for traditionally male occupations. Trainees received a stipend, with mothers receiving double the regular amount to support their participation. After 18 months, female participants were 15 per cent more likely to be employed and they generated 93 per cent more labour income compared to non-participants with similar backgrounds. Levels of occupational segregation were also lower among participants.¹²⁷

For women who make it into traditionally male-dominated occupations, support is needed to prevent the 'leaky pipeline' effect, whereby women drop out before they reach more senior positions. The African Women in Agricultural Research and Development project, for example, has provided tailored fellowships since 2008 to nearly 400 women scientists to build their skills and develop leadership capacity through mentoring and networking. With more women enrolling in agricultural science in sub-Saharan Africa, this career development

programme aims to address the greater drop-out rates of women in this field.¹²⁸

Targets and quotas

Targets and quotas are another way to break down occupational segregation and tackle stereotypes. These have been more effective in addressing vertical than horizontal segregation, since breaking down stereotypes about women's ability to take on management and leadership positions—for example, on corporate boards—is easier than encouraging men to go into occupations such as childcare, which have traditionally been seen as 'women's work' and poorly compensated.

But even where such jobs are relatively decent, encouraging men to take up feminized occupations can be difficult, as the experience of Norway illustrates. A ministerial decree passed there in the 1990s aimed to increase the representation of men among kindergarten staff to 20 per cent.¹²⁹ By 2010, after sustained effort by the Government, around 10 per cent of these workers were men. Even at this low level, the country had the highest proportion of male kindergarten workers in Europe.¹³⁰

By contrast, Norway introduced a 40 per cent quota for women in corporate boards in 2006 that was fulfilled within two years.¹³¹ This visible success has led a number of other countries to follow suit, including Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Malaysia, the Netherlands and Spain.¹³² Targets

and quotas have also been used to increase women's access to decision-making roles in the public sector (see section Boosting women's public sector employment, below).

Ending violence in the workplace

By 2014, 125 countries had passed legislation on sexual harassment in the workplace (see Annex 3).¹³³ The scarcity of data on the prevalence of violence against women makes it hard to assess the impact of such laws, although they undoubtedly send an important signal that such behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable. Ensuring these laws are effectively implemented requires employers to invest in workplace training of employees and managers, as well as awareness-raising on grievance procedures and support for women to take cases to court. Training has been found to be associated with a change in attitudes and increased awareness about sexual harassment, particularly among men.¹³⁴

Additional measures are needed to ensure that women in informal employment are equally protected from violence and harassment. Ensuring that legislation is drafted broadly to encompass a wide range of workplaces, including homes where domestic workers are located, and includes provisions to support these women's access to justice is critical. Investments in urban infrastructure for informal traders such as market women can also help to create safe environments for women workers (see Box 2.6).

BOX 2.6

Safer marketplaces in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

Women comprise 80 per cent of market vendors in Papua New Guinea's capital, Port Moresby. The markets are an important venue for women from the city as well as those from surrounding rural areas to sell their goods, generate incomes and develop social networks. However, until recently, the markets were not conducive or safe spaces for traders: waste management and water and sanitation facilities were virtually non-existent and violence against women was rife.

Some 55 per cent of female vendors interviewed in 2011 said they had experienced some form of violence in the markets and 22 per cent spoke of incidents of sexual violence. Most women did not report these crimes or seek justice. Women were also targeted for extortion, where they were forced to make payments in return for security or safekeeping and storage of produce. Police and security personnel often lacked training and in some cases were themselves implicated in the violence.

The Port Moresby Safe City Free from Violence against Women and Girls Programme is implemented by UN Women and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat) in partnership with the local authority, the police, women's organizations, vendors and customers.¹³⁵ It focuses on making the city's markets safe for all who use them.

Local market bylaws now include articles that address women's safety. Women vendors are returning to the markets following a first phase of infrastructure improvement. A targeted public awareness campaign on sexual harassment and sexual violence has been developed. One innovation of the programme has been a partnership between the National Capital District Commission (NCDC) and financial institutions to enable the collection of market fees via the use of mobile phone technology. This reduces women's exposure to extortion and improves revenue collection by the NCDC.

The International Trade Union Congress (ITUC) and other trades unions are calling for a new ILO convention on gender-based violence to spur stronger action on this issue by governments and employers. A convention is needed that would address all forms of violence and sexual harassment in the workplace as well as outline measures for employers to support women experiencing intimate partner violence. It would cover socio-economic and legal issues, access to justice, occupational health and safety, and education.¹³⁶ In 2015, with support from workers' groups and some governments, the ILO Governing Body will consider putting this issue on the agenda of a future International Labour Conference.¹³⁷

Recommendations

Occupational segregation plays a significant part in maintaining and reinforcing women's socio-economic disadvantage. This has a direct impact on pay and perpetuates the gender pay gap. Policies are needed that ensure women have equal access to a full range of economic opportunities and can make the best use of their talents. Governments, trade unions, educational institutions and employers need to:

- Ensure that laws are in place that prohibit discrimination against women in hiring, training and promotions and repeal laws that restrict women's access to certain occupations
- Enable women's lifelong access to education, training and mentoring, including basic literacy, on-the-job training to upgrade their skills and training in non-traditional skills to support them to move up the occupational ladder
- Provide career advice and encouragement to young women through, for example, mentoring to study STEM and other male-dominated subjects, as well as improved access to TVET
- Adopt and implement quotas and targets to reduce vertical segregation
- Address sexual harassment in the workplace through passing and implementing appropriate laws as well as through training, awareness-raising and support to women to access justice
- Galvanize further action by governments and employers through a new ILO convention on gender-based violence.

CLOSING GENDER PAY GAPS

Persistent gender pay gaps are a feature of almost all labour markets.¹³⁸ Globally, women on average are paid 24 per cent less than men. At the regional level, the pay gap ranges from 33 per cent in South Asia to 14 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa. In this region, relatively few women are employed, but those that are tend to be highly educated and in well-paid jobs, which accounts for the lower gender pay gap (Annex 4). Since gender pay gaps can only be calculated reliably for those in wage employment, these global and regional figures understate the real extent of earnings differentials in developing countries where self-

employment is prevalent.¹³⁹ Gender pay gaps and women's lower labour force participation, result in large cumulative gaps in lifetime income between women and men (see Box 2.4). They also contribute to women's disadvantage in pension income in later life (see Chapter 3).

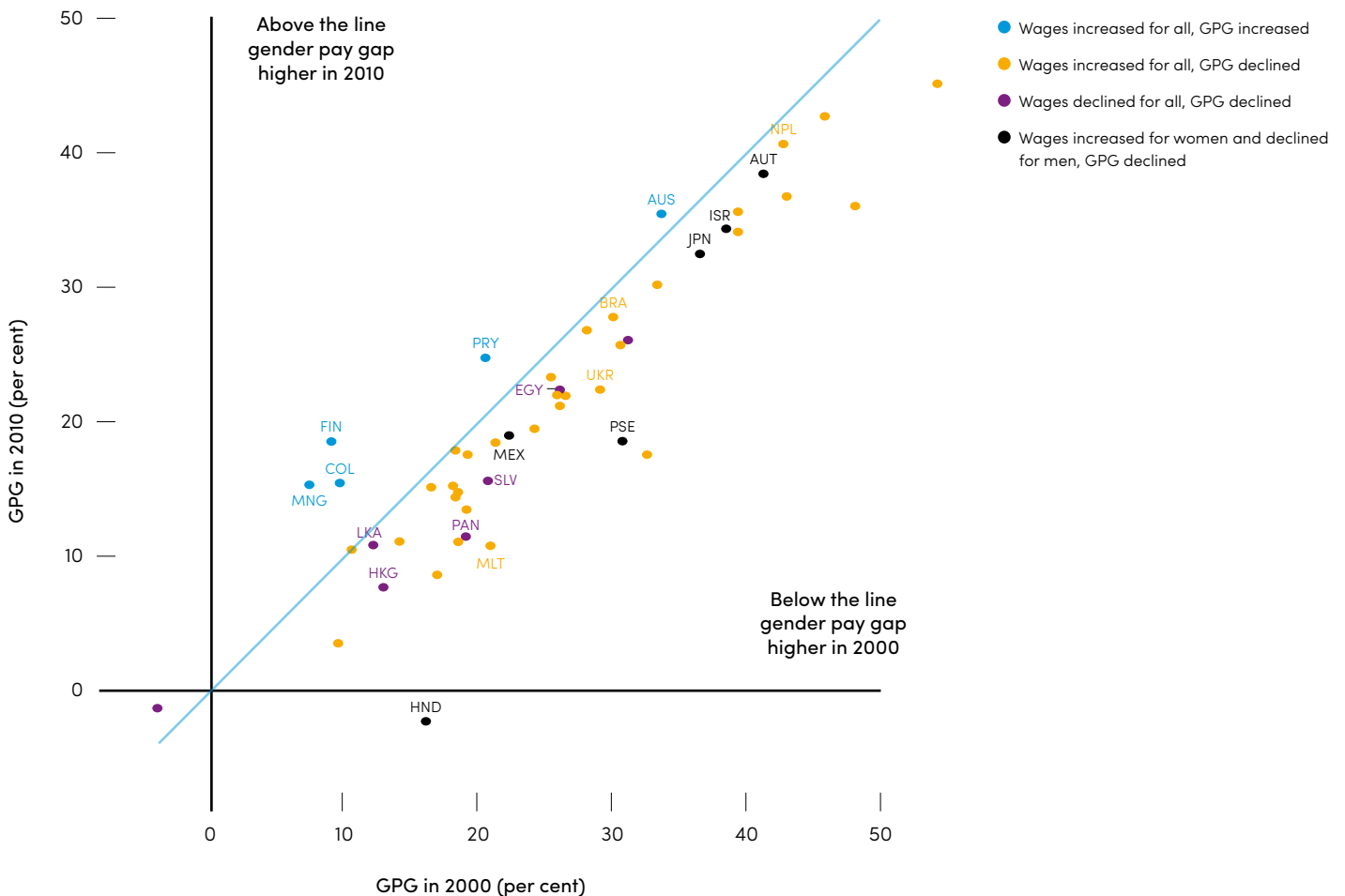
Gender pay gaps: Progress and regress

Overall, gender pay gaps have narrowed slightly in the last decade, declining between 2000 and 2010 in 45 out of 50 countries with available data (see Figure 2.9). But the pace of change has been slow and large gaps remain in most countries. In Australia, Colombia, Finland, Mongolia and Paraguay gender pay gaps have actually widened.

Figure 2.9

Unadjusted gender pay gap (GPG), 2000 and 2010

→ Gender pay gaps have narrowed in most countries, but sometimes in the context of declining wages for men



Source: UN Women calculations using nominal wage data from ILO 2015b and Consumer Price Index data from World Bank 2015d.

Note: Wage data used for this analysis refers to mean earnings of employees, and includes remuneration made in cash and in-kind for time worked, work done and paid leave.

For those countries where gender pay gaps have narrowed, it is important to look at why: is this happening in a context of overall wage growth, where women are catching up with men? Or is it happening in a context of declining wages, where living standards are falling for everyone? Figure 2.9 suggests a mixed picture.

Out of the 45 countries where gender pay gaps have declined, 32 have seen unequivocally positive change, with an overall increase in real wages and a narrowing gender pay gap, meaning that women's wages have grown faster than men's. This has been the case, for example, in Brazil, Malta, Nepal and Ukraine. Meanwhile, in five countries gender gaps have narrowed in a context of falling real wages for both women and men. In these cases, gaps have narrowed only because men's wages have fallen more dramatically than women's. This pattern—which prevails in Egypt, El Salvador, Hong Kong (SAR China), Panama and Sri Lanka—can hardly be considered progress, because instead of women catching up there is a levelling down for all.¹⁴⁰

In the six remaining countries, the gender pay gap has narrowed in the context of rising real wages for women and falling or stagnating wages for men. This is the case in Austria, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Mexico and the State of Palestine, where women have been gaining some ground in terms of their pay while men have lost out.

The deterioration of men's wages is particularly marked for those on low incomes. In developed countries, the disappearance of manufacturing jobs due to technological progress and the decline of traditional industries, coupled with the reduced influence of organized labour, has led to downward pressure on the wages of less educated male workers.¹⁴¹ In developing countries, globalization and trade liberalization have increased skill-premiums for a minority of highly educated workers. But for the majority of lower-skilled workers, greater capital mobility, declining unionization and lack of regulation have kept earnings at low levels.¹⁴²

'Glass ceilings' and 'sticky floors': variations in gender pay gaps

The largest gender pay gaps are usually found at the top of the wage distribution—the 'glass ceiling' for highly skilled women workers—and at the bottom—the 'sticky floor' for women working in the lowest paid jobs.¹⁴³ As a corollary, gender pay gaps tend to be larger in countries where the overall distribution of wages is more unequal. In the OECD, for example, gender pay gaps are smaller in the Nordic countries where overall wage inequalities (or wage dispersion) are lower.¹⁴⁴

In a study of 26 European countries, a glass ceiling was found in 11 countries and a sticky floor in 12. In three countries—Germany, the Netherlands and Norway—women at both ends of the wage distribution faced large gender pay gaps.¹⁴⁵ Similar patterns are found in many developing regions if education is taken as a proxy for socio-economic status. Gender pay gaps tend to be large for workers without education but are even larger for those with secondary and post-secondary education.¹⁴⁶ They are also often wider in informal compared to formal employment. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the gender pay gap is 28 per cent in informal employment, where the majority of women work, compared to 6 per cent for formal workers.¹⁴⁷

With regard to rural-urban differences, gender pay gaps are sometimes wider in urban areas. This may be because employment options in rural areas for both women and men are quite limited and low paid across the board, while urban areas may offer a wider range of work opportunities, albeit with greater pay differentials.¹⁴⁸ For example, in South Asia, urban women earn 42 per cent less than their male counterparts; while rural women earn 28 per cent less than rural men. Both women and men have lower than average earnings in rural areas and, in absolute terms, rural women are at the bottom of the earnings ladder.¹⁴⁹ In parts of Latin America, gender pay gaps are compounded by ethnicity, resulting in indigenous women being particularly disadvantaged.¹⁵⁰

Causes of gender pay gaps

In looking for the causes of gender pay gaps, standard economic analyses often attempt to isolate direct or 'pure' discrimination by controlling for a host of factors that influence women's and men's pay, including education and work experience. While 'pure' discrimination is associated with employers who deliberately choose to pay women less than men for the same jobs, other components of the gender pay gap are often attributed to gendered preferences (i.e., women 'preferring' jobs in less remunerative sectors) or choices (i.e., women acquiring less work experience because they 'choose' to take time off to care for dependents).¹⁵¹

However, this idea is questionable, because educational achievements, career 'choices' and employment trajectories are themselves shaped by an environment that assigns the bulk of unpaid care and domestic work to women and stereotypes that cluster women into undervalued occupations.¹⁵² An emphasis on 'pure' discrimination therefore ignores all forms of indirect discrimination that women experience over their life course.

The subjects that women study (e.g., humanities, health and social work) are undervalued compared to the ones that men choose (e.g., engineering, science and agriculture) even though societies need teachers and nurses just as much as they need scientists and engineers. As discussed in the previous section, differences in subject choices in turn lead to occupational segregation, which is a major cause of the gender pay gap: in 33 low- and middle-income countries, gender differences in occupation and sector of employment account for 10–50 per cent of the observed gender pay gap.¹⁵³ Research in the United States has found that where occupational segregation declined, so did gender pay gaps.¹⁵⁴ The two phenomena are hence intimately linked.

Parenthood and marriage also impose a pay penalty on women while they award a bonus to men. In the United Kingdom and the United States, for example, as much as 40 to 50 per cent of the gender gap in pay can be attributed to parenthood

and marriage. In both countries, while the overall gender pay gap has been narrowing overall, the parenthood pay gap is increasing.¹⁵⁵ In the United States, unmarried women earn 96 cents to an unmarried man's dollar, but married women with at least one child earn 76 cents to the married father's dollar.¹⁵⁶ In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the presence of children in the household is associated with gender pay gaps of 31 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively, compared to 4 per cent and 14 per cent for women living in households without children.¹⁵⁷

Closing gender pay gaps

Addressing gender pay gaps requires a range of interventions that address both 'pure' and indirect discrimination. Family-friendly policies are shown to reduce the gender pay gap in EU countries, with a stronger impact on the 'glass ceiling', than on the 'sticky floor'.¹⁵⁸ Where workers are organized, collective bargaining agreements help to reduce wage dispersion and inequality and can therefore narrow gender disparities in pay.¹⁵⁹

One avenue that has been widely pursued is equal pay legislation, which has in some cases been enforced through the courts (see Box 2.7). Given the extent of occupational segregation, laws should specify equal pay for work of equal value rather than only applying to situations where women and men are doing exactly the same job, which are rare. However, assessing what constitutes work of equal value is a complex task, especially when women's work is systematically undervalued.¹⁶⁰

In many European countries where equal pay legislation has been in place for several decades, but where gender pay gaps have remained stubbornly persistent, policy makers have made additional provisions to spur action by employers in the public and private sectors. For example, in Germany, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth has developed a tool called Logib-D to help companies analyse pay and staffing structures to determine the existence and extent of gender pay gaps. Tailored packages of support are available to companies to help

BOX 2.7

Unions fight for equal pay for work of equal value

Unison is the United Kingdom's largest public sector union, representing 1.3 million workers, two thirds of them women. In 2013, it reached a groundbreaking equal pay agreement with Birmingham City Council, directly benefiting approximately 11,000 women council workers.¹⁶¹ It claimed that the Council had systematically discriminated against women working as cooks, cleaners and care assistants, paying them less in bonuses and benefits than male colleagues doing equivalent jobs as road cleaners and refuse collectors. Initially the Council argued that the time limit for taking the case had expired. So, in 2012, the workers took the case to the UK Supreme Court, which ruled that the case should be heard in the civil courts rather than in an employment tribunal, giving them a time limit of six years rather than six months to bring their claim.¹⁶² As a result of this ruling, which has far-reaching implications for workers seeking redress for gender-based pay inequality in other sectors, Birmingham City Council agreed to settle the claim, costing an estimated \$1.8 billion.¹⁶³

Between 2010 and 2012, in a historic case on equal pay initiated by the Australian Services Union, the Government's employment ombudsman, Fair Work Australia (FWA), ruled in favour of 150,000 workers in the social and community services sector. FWA decided that gender had been an important factor in undervaluing the sector's largely feminized workforce, which provides services to vulnerable children, sick and older people, disabled people, refugees and survivors of violence.¹⁶⁴ As a result of the case, it was agreed that workers would receive pay increases of between 23 and 45 per cent over eight years, for which the Federal Government committed around \$1.8 billion.¹⁶⁵ Unions hope the case will help establish an equal pay standard in other industries.¹⁶⁶

them to reduce any gaps found. Logib-D is now available in the Czech Republic, Israel, Luxembourg and Switzerland.¹⁶⁷ Recognizing that equal pay legislation, even where it is well implemented, is not enough on its own, the German Government has also introduced new family-friendly policies to support employed women.

Minimum wages

Minimum wages play an essential part in addressing low pay, reducing inequality and narrowing gender pay gaps. Women tend to be over-represented in low-paid work: in 22 out of 34 countries with data, women are more likely than men to be in low-paid jobs.¹⁶⁸ As a result, they stand to gain the most from minimum wages, which are crucial for redressing their socio-economic disadvantage and realizing their right to an adequate standard of living.

In OECD countries, the presence of a minimum wage, set at a relatively high level, reduces the risk of women being in low-paid work, and narrows the gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is 6 per cent in countries with a statutory minimum wage set at 40 per cent of median wages or above, 10 percentage points lower than the average gender pay gap for OECD countries.¹⁶⁹ In Brazil, the doubling of the minimum wage in the 2000s has been associated with a narrowing of the gender pay gap (see Box 2.2). A study on India estimated that if the minimum wage was extended to all wage earners, the gender pay gap would decline from 16 to 10 per cent for salaried workers and from 26 to 8 per cent for casual workers.¹⁷⁰

Of 151 countries with data, only around half have a comprehensive minimum wage system that is applied uniformly on a national or regional basis,

while the rest have multiple minimum wages that are set by industry or occupation.¹⁷¹ Fears that minimum wages might dampen employment creation have largely proven to be unfounded.¹⁷² Instead, by increasing the incomes of the poorest workers, minimum wages can help to support aggregate demand, thereby stimulating investment and creating stronger economies.¹⁷³

Whether the benefits of minimum wages are realized depends on the extent of compliance, which varies widely across countries. Uniform minimum wages are generally easier to enforce, but in all cases clear information for employers and workers, rigorous labour inspection and sanctions are needed.¹⁷⁴ The level of minimum wages should also be regularly reviewed to ensure that wages increase at least in line with inflation so that they retain their real value.

In some cases, minimum wage legislation covers informal employment, where the majority of women workers are concentrated. Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico and Peru have minimum wage legislation for all workers, irrespective of the sector or the status of the enterprises that employ them.¹⁷⁵ Chile, Portugal and Trinidad and Tobago, are among the countries that have recently extended national minimum wages to domestic workers who are often informally employed.¹⁷⁶

In South Africa, where 15 per cent of working women are paid domestic workers,¹⁷⁷ a 2002 law established a minimum wage for domestic workers and mandated an 8 per cent wage increase for that year. The combined effect of these measures, evaluated 16 months after their introduction, was a 20 per cent increase in the wages of domestic workers.¹⁷⁸ Even in countries where informal workers are not covered by minimum wage legislation, they are able to use it as a way to negotiate better pay (the so-called 'lighthouse effect'). In one study, average earnings of informal workers increased in 8 out of 11 countries analysed following the introduction of minimum wages—for example, by 15 per cent in Mali and by 7 per cent in Peru.¹⁷⁹

In developing countries with high seasonal unemployment peaks, employment guarantee

programmes can help raise wage levels by guaranteeing a certain amount of work at a set rate of pay, so that poor women and men are not forced to take work under exploitative conditions (see Chapter 3).

Valuing paid care work

Paid care work, including domestic work, childcare, early childhood education, teaching, nursing and social work, are highly feminized occupations. Despite widespread acceptance of the essential role of care work, the skills required for it are often devalued, contributing to women's over-representation among low-paid workers and the persistence of gender pay gaps.¹⁸⁰

A recent study of 12 developed and developing countries finds that paid care work often entails a 'wage penalty', meaning that care workers are not adequately compensated for their skills and experience in comparison to other workers.¹⁸¹ In common with other 'public goods', caregiving tends to be undervalued and underpaid by the market.¹⁸² Those requiring care such as children, the elderly, sick people or those with disabilities are often least able to afford to pay for the true costs of quality care services. Women, as the majority of care providers, end up subsidizing these costs through their underpaid labour.

Legal action can be taken to tackle the issue of how to properly value paid care work (see Box 2.7).¹⁸³ However, it should not be left to the courts to take action in this area. The same 12 country study found that the undervaluation of paid care work is not inevitable and depends on the policy context. In countries with low levels of income inequality, high levels of union density and generous public spending on care, paid care workers do not suffer a pay penalty.¹⁸⁴ Public policies are therefore needed to ensure that care providers are properly remunerated for their work.

Equally important is adequate regulation of care work and training for workers, to maintain and upgrade their skills on a regular basis. These measures also support the recruitment and

retention of staff and are essential for maintaining the quality of care services, with benefits for workers as well as those in their care.¹⁸⁵

Recommendations

Rising levels of education for women have not consistently led to narrowing of gender pay gaps, which have also been resistant to equal pay legislation. Additional measures are needed. To address gender inequality in pay, governments, employers and trade unions need to:

- Implement well-designed national minimum wage policies, set at an adequate level, which apply to all workers and are rigorously implemented through labour inspection and sanctions
- Reverse the systematic undervaluation of paid care work through the provision of well paid, protected public sector care jobs, by working with employers to improve regulation and standards in the care industry and by investing in professional skills and training for care workers
- Protect the space for, and enable, collective bargaining over pay and conditions, which is proven to reduce wage dispersion and inequality
- Ensure that equal pay laws are implemented through initiatives to encourage public and private companies to be more transparent and accountable for their pay structures.

PRIORITY ARENAS TO PROMOTE SUBSTANTIVE EQUALITY AT WORK

The vast majority of women workers in developing countries are employed, or self-employed, in informal work. Measures to make informal employment more economically viable and protected are therefore a priority for tackling women's socio-economic disadvantage and advancing substantive equality. This requires a multi-faceted approach that considers the specific problems of women in different parts of the informal economy, in addition to the broader measures outlined in the previous section.

Labour market interventions such as minimum wages can be extended and enforced for some women informal workers, such as those working in domestic service or small export-oriented

production units. These policies may not, however, reach self-employed workers such as street vendors, who will benefit more from the provision of safe and sanitary spaces for marketing their goods. A different set of measures, again, are needed to improve women's rural livelihoods, with a particular focus on enabling secure access to land, extension services and markets for their products.

Policy action should also prioritize creating decent work in the public sector as a means to advance substantive equality for women. Well-remunerated, secure public sector work has the potential to generate a double dividend by boosting women's employment and extending

access to services that reduce women's unpaid care and domestic work. The following sections look at each of these arenas for action in greater detail.

WOMEN IN INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT

Realizing women's rights at work—a key component of substantive equality—requires that women can access employment with decent pay, safe working conditions and social protection. However, in large parts of the world, employment does not meet these criteria. Informal work is the norm in developing countries, in both rural and urban areas.¹⁸⁶ In South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and East and South-East Asia (excluding China), more than 75 per cent of all jobs are informal (see Figure 2.10). The poor pay and conditions that characterize informal employment mean that these workers are more likely to live in poverty than formal workers.¹⁸⁷

Informal workers include those who are self-employed—such as street vendors and petty traders in goods (food, small consumer items) or services (hairdressing, tailoring)—as well as subsistence farmers, who grow enough food for their families and perhaps a little extra to sell or exchange. But informal work also includes waged workers in domestic or seasonal agricultural work, as well as subcontracted industrial outworkers who work from their homes or small workshops.

One of the most vulnerable forms of informal employment is contributing family work. Globally, women are 63 per cent of these workers, who are employed without direct pay in family businesses or farms (see Box 2.3).¹⁸⁸ This limits their autonomy and decision-making role within the household, as well as their empowerment more broadly.¹⁸⁹

How widespread is informal employment?

Three quarters of the world's poor people live and work in rural areas.¹⁹⁰ Most derive their

livelihoods through agricultural work, which is almost always informal.¹⁹¹ Figure 2.10 shows that in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where agriculture remains a major employer, 71 per cent and 59 per cent of employed women, respectively, are in informal agricultural employment, usually as small-scale farmers, compared to 47 per cent and 56 per cent of men.

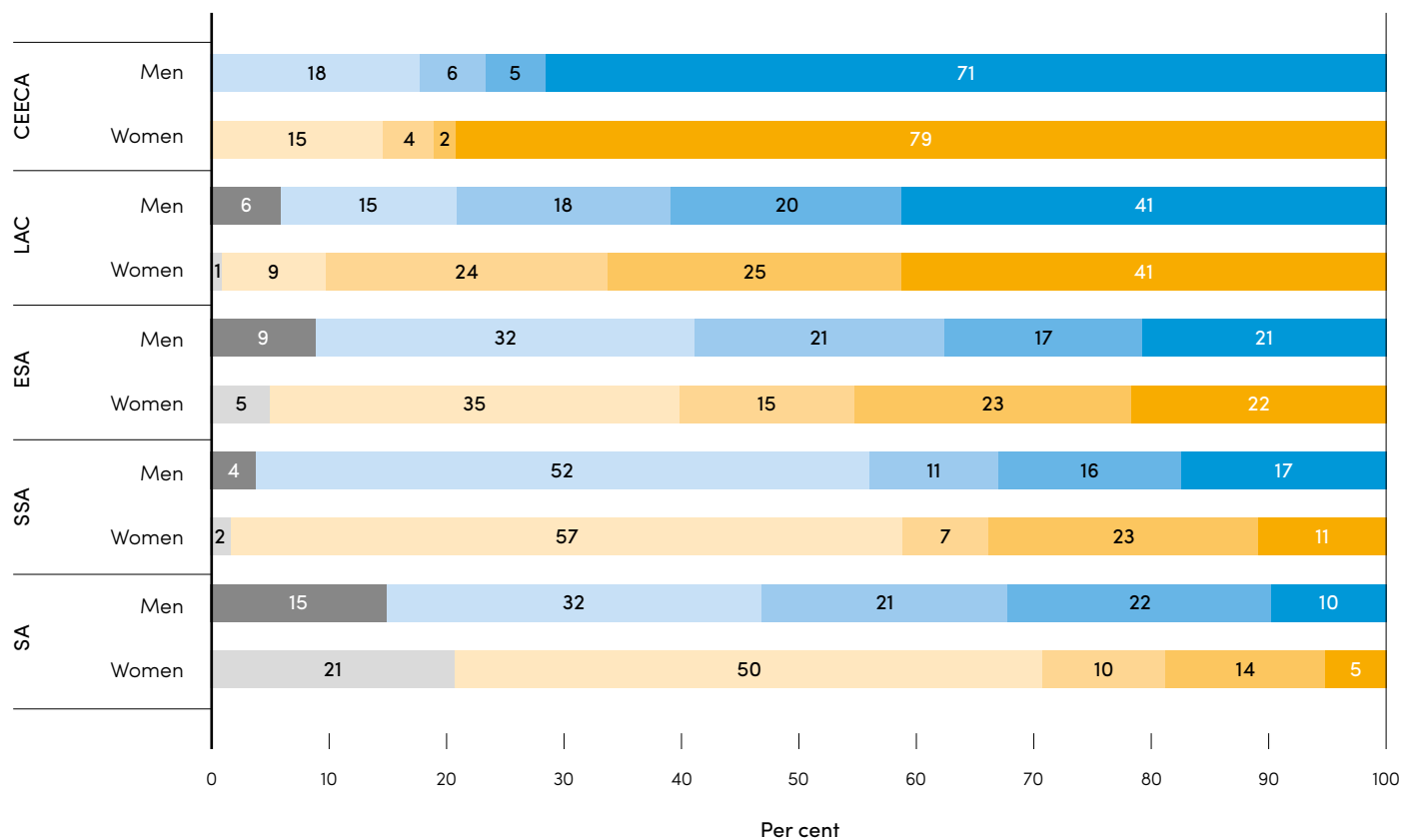
In East and South-East Asia (excluding China), one third of employed women and men are in informal agricultural self-employment.¹⁹² Informal wage employment in agriculture is particularly important for women in South Asia, where out-migration means that tasks previously performed by men—such as land preparation, crop cultivation, spraying pesticides, harvesting, post-harvesting and marketing of produce—are now performed by women, but for lower wages.¹⁹³

Gendered hierarchies within informal employment mean that men dominate in the more protected and remunerative jobs at the top (i.e., informal employers and informal wage workers), while women are over-represented among the least secure and lowest-paying occupations at the bottom (i.e., industrial outworkers/homeworkers and contributing family workers), as illustrated in Figure 2.11.¹⁹⁴ In South Asia, for example, 64 per cent of women compared to 54 per cent of men are self-employed, while 36 per cent of men are in informal wage employment compared to 31 per cent of women. Even among informal self-employed workers, women tend to be clustered in less remunerative activities. In waste-picking, for example, men usually collect the higher value scrap metal, while women collect less valuable plastics and cardboard.¹⁹⁵ This segmentation contributes to the wide gender pay gaps discussed above.¹⁹⁶

Figure 2.10

Informal employment, as a share of total employment, by type and sex, 2004–2010

→ Up to 95 per cent of women's employment is informal in Developing Regions



- Men Women
- ■ Agricultural informal wage employment
- ■ Agricultural informal self-employment
- ■ Non-agricultural informal wage employment
- ■ Non-agricultural informal self-employment
- ■ Formal employment

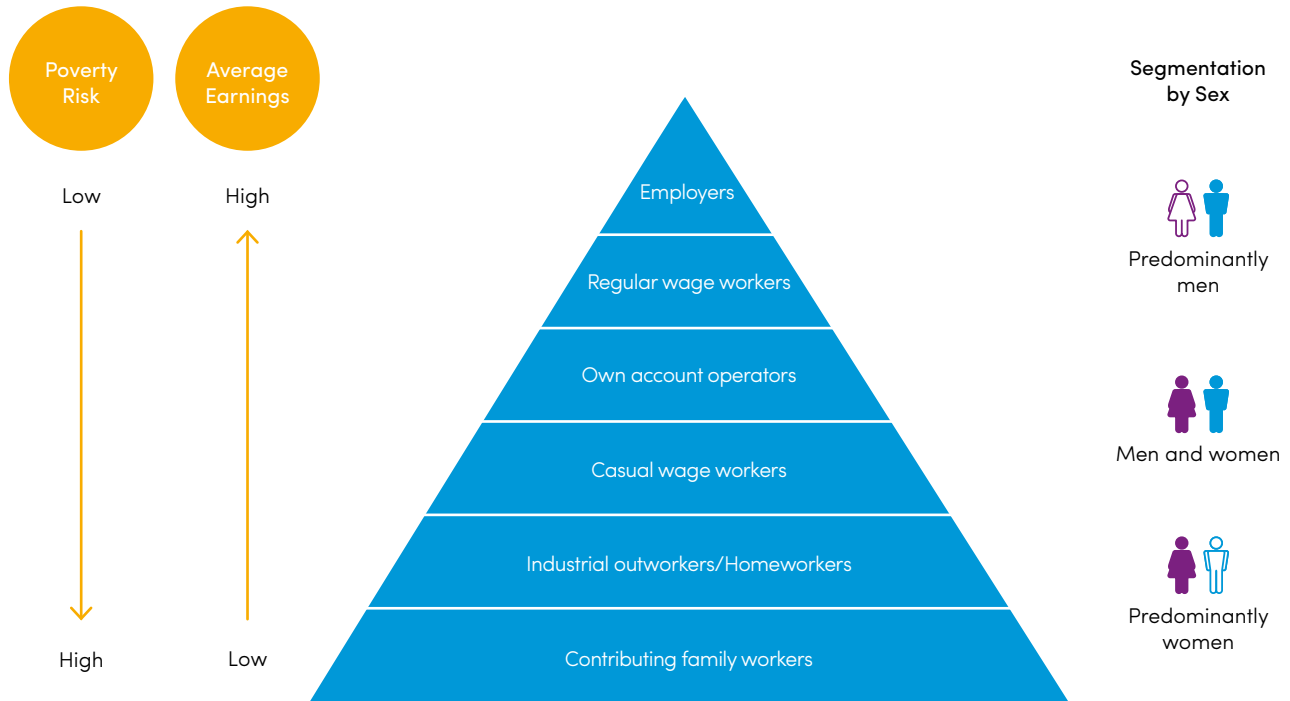
Source: UN Women calculations using data in Tables 2 and 4 in Vanek et al. 2014.

Note: Estimates for East and South-East Asia (ESA) exclude China. The Middle East and North Africa is excluded due to lack of data for these different categories. Given that agricultural employment almost always lacks social protection, these calculations assume that all agricultural employment in developing countries is informal.

Figure 2.11

Segmentation of informal employment by average earnings and sex

—> *Within informal employment, women are concentrated in the least secure and lowest paid jobs*



Source: WIEGO 2015a.

In Developed Regions, informal employment is often referred to as non-standard or atypical employment. These insecure forms of work, in which women are over-represented, tend to be own-account, temporary or on-call arrangements that can deprive workers of the protection offered by full-time regular employment.¹⁹⁷ In OECD countries, women constitute 44 per cent of those employed overall but two thirds of workers on involuntary temporary contracts.¹⁹⁸ There is evidence that since the economic crisis, levels of informal employment have been on the rise in some of these countries. In the United Kingdom, for example, most of the rise in total employment since 2008 is in low paid self-employment, with women accounting for 54 per cent of the

increase.¹⁹⁹ Women in this kind of employment earn on average just 35 per cent of median annual earnings in the United Kingdom, and 42 per cent less than men in the same kind of employment.²⁰⁰

Trends in informal employment

Establishing trends for informal employment is challenging: the concept itself has evolved and data are not systematically collected for all countries over time.²⁰¹ However, recent research on ‘unprotected’ employment—which shares many of the same characteristics as informal employment—points to a decline for both women and men between 2000 and 2010 (see Figure 2.12). In two countries (Ecuador and Ethiopia),

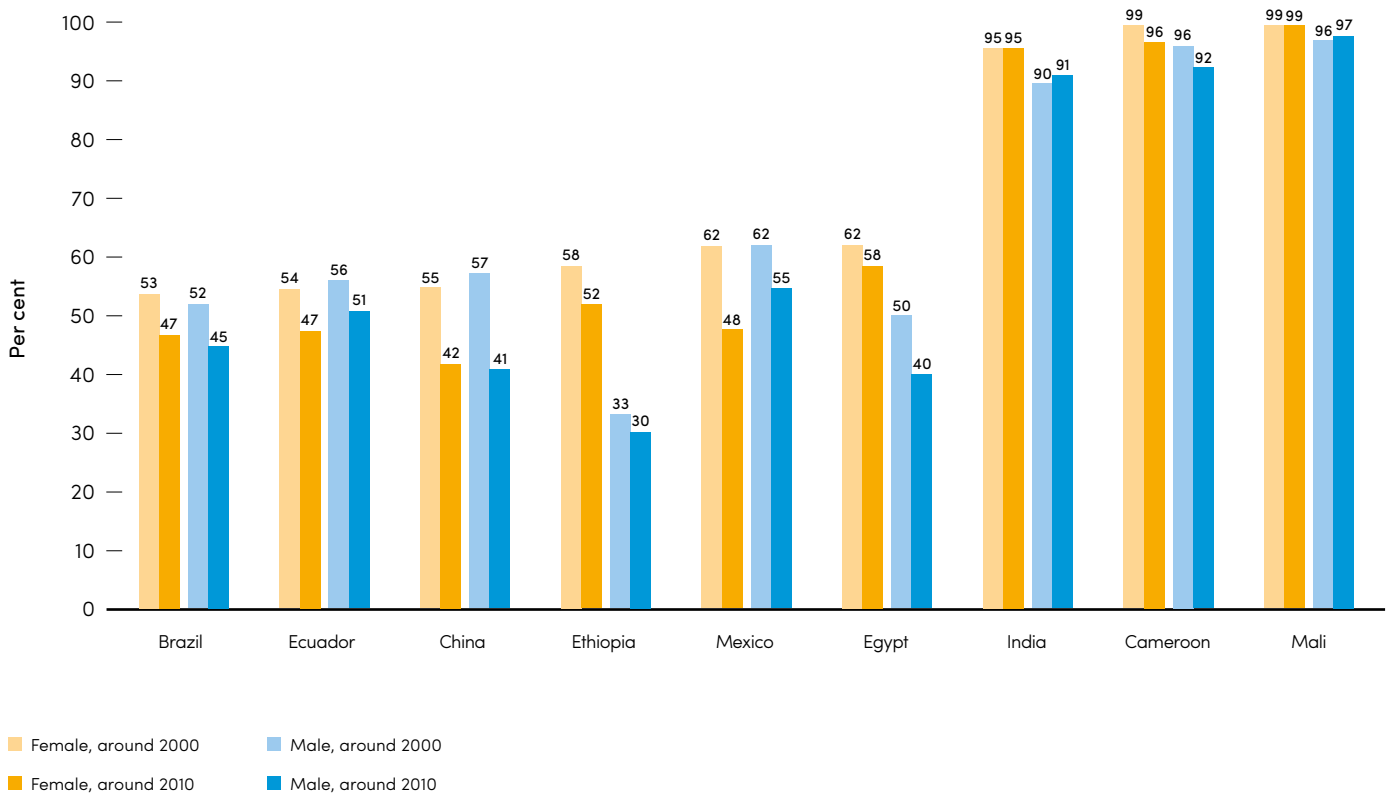
women's rates of 'unprotected' employment have declined faster than those of men. By contrast, in China, Egypt and Mexico, the proportion of men in unprotected employment has declined faster than that of women. In Brazil, similar declines were observed for women and men. In Cameroon, India and Mali, where over 90 per cent of workers are in 'unprotected' employment, this share has changed very little for either women or men.²⁰²

Declining rates of 'unprotected' employment are a sign of progress. However, they have not kept pace with increases in the labour force, with the result that the absolute number of people in 'unprotected' employment continues to rise.²⁰³ In Egypt, for example, despite a reduction in 'unprotected' employment by 4 percentage points for women and 10 percentage points for men between 1998 and 2012, the actual number of women and men in this kind of work increased by 750,000 and 1 million, respectively.²⁰⁴

Figure 2.12

Proportion of women and men in 'unprotected' employment over the past decade (as a percentage of total non-agricultural employment), around 2000 and 2010

—> *In spite of declines in some countries, 'unprotected' jobs make up a large proportion of employment*



Source: Raveendran 2014; Comblon et al. 2014; Dong et al. 2014; Gammage et al. 2014 a, b; Gammage and Kraft 2014; Said, Petrovich and Khalil 2014; Kedir 2014.

Note: Values reflect variables available in individual surveys. They are not comparable across countries and may not in some cases be comparable to official country estimates that follow the ICLS definition of informality.²⁰⁵ See endnote for definitions.

Extending rights at work for paid domestic workers

Alongside macroeconomic policies to generate more and better jobs (explored in Chapter 4), concrete measures are needed to extend social protection to informal workers and to regulate informal work to enhance the enjoyment of basic labour rights for these workers.

Paid domestic work is a very important and expanding source of wage employment for women, but the majority of it is informal and poor quality. As of 2010, there were 53 million domestic workers worldwide, an increase of almost 20 million since 1995. The overwhelming majority, 83 per cent, are women.²⁰⁶ According to the ILO, there are also nearly 12 million girls aged 5–17 in paid domestic work.²⁰⁷ Domestic workers carry out their duties in the private homes of their employer, with whom they are in a subordinate and dependent relationship, and may experience psychological and physical abuse by the employer or family members.²⁰⁸

About 30 per cent of domestic workers are currently excluded from national labour legislation, 43 per cent are not covered by minimum wage legislation and 36 per cent are not entitled to maternity protection.²⁰⁹ Migrant domestic workers are especially marginalized, frequently lacking support and protection under the law in both sending and receiving countries. For example, labour law does not cover migrant domestic workers in the majority of countries in the Middle East and North Africa. These workers, mostly women, make up between one quarter and one third of an estimated 22 million migrant workers in these countries.²¹⁰

Migrant domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to abuse because of their dependence on recruitment agencies and lack of reliable information on migration procedures. Once in the receiving country, they have limited freedom to change employers, because they often withhold travel and identity documents. In cases

of abuse, these workers lack access to effective redress mechanisms.²¹¹

ILO Convention 189: A victory for domestic workers worldwide

Thanks largely to the efforts of domestic worker organizations, global and national policy makers have begun to focus on how to improve the quality of this employment. These efforts culminated in 2011, in the adoption of the ILO Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189). The convention requires States to extend basic labour rights to domestic workers, such as normal hours of work with regular periods of rest, overtime compensation, annual paid leave, minimum wages, a safe and healthy working environment and social security benefits.²¹² To date, 17 countries have ratified the convention.²¹³

In several countries, policy change was already underway. In the state of New York in the United States, the National Domestic Workers Alliance was successful in campaigning for one of the most progressive bills of rights for these workers in the world (see story: *On the books*).

Implementation of these improved labour standards for domestic workers remains a major challenge. Model contracts, effective labour inspection and improved access to justice are priority measures to support compliance. For example, in South Africa since 2003, employers are required to register domestic workers and make social security contributions for them. By 2008, over 633,000 domestic workers had been registered with the Unemployed Insurance Fund.²¹⁴ Compliance is enforced through regular inspections as well as sanctions. In the event of a dispute, domestic workers can access the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration.²¹⁵ In a similar vein, under its Migrant Workers Act of 1995, the Philippines established a fund to enable migrant workers to access legal services in cases of violations or disputes, including with employers.²¹⁶

Increasing the viability of women's urban self-employment

Self-employment makes up the majority of informal employment for women in urban and rural areas. But policy frameworks either overlook these workers or in some cases make it harder for them to make a decent living. Constraints on the productivity of the informally self-employed are rarely visible to urban planners and policy makers.

For example, homeworkers absorb many non-wage costs to provide the workplace, equipment, power and transport needed to make their products. Street vendors need reliable services such as electricity and transportation to marketplaces for timely sale of their goods. Without access to finance, it is difficult for self-employed workers to keep their businesses afloat. Even basic infrastructure is lacking and women's needs are often overlooked. For example, in 2013, the three municipal bodies of New Delhi, India,

admitted to the High Court that they had 3,712 public toilets for men and only 269 for women.²¹⁷ The lack of facilities affects the health of female street vendors, and many suffer from kidney ailments as a result.²¹⁸

To improve working conditions for urban self-employed women and help make these precarious forms of employment more viable, action is required at municipal, regional and national levels to provide services and infrastructure, legally recognize informal workers, introduce occupational health and safety measures and provide access to finance. Urban planners need to consider the needs of informally self-employed workers and understand the home and the street as sites of production and trade (see Box 2.8).²¹⁹ These measures are not typically understood as labour market policies but have the potential to make a huge difference to informal women workers and their families.

BOX 2.8

Involving informal workers in local and municipal planning in India

Women are a high proportion of India's 10 million urban street vendors. In March 2014, the Indian Parliament signed into law the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, after decades of struggle by members of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and the National Association of Street Vendors of India (NASVI), including a four-day hunger strike.²²⁰

This law recognizes that street vendors have a positive role to play in generating employment. It seeks to balance vendors' right to work with the need to prevent urban overcrowding and unsanitary conditions, and to establish legal status for vendors to protect them from the harassment that they often face from police and the authorities.

The law mandates the involvement of street vendors in local government planning processes through their participation in Town Vending Committees alongside local government representatives, non-governmental organizations and community organizations. The Committees oversee surveys of vendors, issue certificates of vending and recommend regulations. The Act also includes a dispute resolution mechanism to resolve grievances and disputes brought by street vendors.²²¹

For example, the legal and regulatory framework is important for waste pickers, who rely on access to waste, at dumpsites, collection points, or by going door-to-door. As waste management and recycling have become big business, however, waste pickers and their associations often cannot meet the stringent requirements of tendering processes for large municipal contracts.

Change has often come about in response to mobilizations by informal workers' movements, which have had some important successes in recent years in negotiating collectively for better terms of engagement with state and market actors.²²² After years of advocacy by Colombian waste pickers, the country's Constitutional Court ruled in 2011 that those in Bogota must be included in municipal sanitation planning. Bogota's waste pickers were subsequently recognized as public service providers and, as of March 2013, are paid by the city for the materials that they collect at fixed rates specified in formal contracts.²²³

Improving health and safety for informal workers

Poor and dangerous working conditions are a daily fact of life for millions of workers worldwide. The impact of such conditions was tragically demonstrated in the 2013 Rana Plaza disaster, in which more than 3,600 workers were killed or injured when an eight-storey factory collapsed in Dhaka, Bangladesh (see story: *Out of the ashes*).

Self-employed informal workers also face serious hazards in the course of their daily work. A street vendor works on a busy street, exposed to noise, traffic fumes, the sun and the rain.²²⁴ She may face eviction from the street or market, and this may be accompanied by violence from the authorities. The biggest risk for vendors in closed markets is fire that can destroy livelihoods. A self-employed homemaker operating out of her own home may work with poor ventilation, inadequate lighting and unsuitable working equipment.

None of these occupational sectors and places of work is covered by rules and regulations on occupational health and safety (OHS, sometimes called environmental health and safety).²²⁵ Local

government also has a major role in the health and safety of workers in both private homes and public places through its responsibilities for and spending on basic infrastructure such as water, sanitation, fire services and lighting.

A Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) action-research project in five countries integrates informal workers and their workplaces in the discipline and practice of OHS.²²⁶ Among other strategies, the project supports collaborations between ergonomic designers and organizations of women informal workers to produce improved equipment such as carts, gloves and sorting sticks for waste pickers. The initiative has shown the short-term effectiveness of workers' engagement in city dialogues on specific issues such as unblocking gutters and reducing fire risk. In the longer term, the challenge is to institutionalize permanent platforms for fair negotiations between city authorities and informal workers, in the interest of both better city management and more secure and safer working spaces.

Access to finance for self-employed women

Access to financial services, including credit, loans and savings, is vital for low-income women but is rarely available to them. These services can help households to cope with economic shocks arising from unexpected expenses—for example, for health care, school fees or funeral costs. For self-employed people, and especially women, access to credit can also be an essential pre-condition for their work. A survey of street vendors found that only 37 per cent of women were able to use their own capital to start up their businesses, compared to 68 per cent of men.²²⁷ As well as start-up costs, vendors rely on being able to access working capital on a daily basis, since the small profits that they generate each day are often insufficient to cover the cost of buying more stock the following day.²²⁸ As discussed in the next section, small-scale farmers also need access to financial services to be able to buy seeds and fertilizers, invest in equipment and so on.

Mainstream commercial banks are generally unwilling to engage with poor workers due to the

costs and risks involved in administering small loans. As a result, workers rely on exploitative moneylenders or suppliers who sell on credit at highly unfavourable rates. In response to the problem of financial exclusion, microfinance institutions have sprung up over the past few decades and have expanded rapidly in developing countries. Women tend to make up the majority of borrowers due to their perceived greater reliability in repaying the loans.²²⁹ However, experience has shown that the lending practices of many microfinance institutions, particularly those that are 'for-profit' and poorly regulated, can in fact increase women's economic vulnerability and push households further into debt.²³⁰

Access to microfinance can support women's economic security when it is provided by civil society organizations as part of a holistic approach to extending opportunities and rights. A number of organizations of informal self-employed workers provide small loans and savings schemes as part of a wider package of support to their members. Examples include *Didi Bahini Sewa Samaj* in Nepal, which organizes home-based workers, providing training, access to markets and interest-free loans that do not require collateral.²³¹ However, even well-designed microfinance should not be a replacement for extending the reach of institutional finance. A set of inclusive financial institutions is needed such as credit cooperatives and local development and community banks. These need to be regulated and incentivized through subsidies to ensure that they are accessible to poor women and the micro-enterprises on which they depend.²³²

Recommendations

Policies to redress women's socio-economic disadvantage must aim to increase the returns to informal work, improve working conditions and eliminate the violence and abuse these workers face. Domestic workers must be protected by the full range of labour laws. Including women informal workers in urban planning and decision-making can help boost their agency, voice and participation and ensure that city environments support rather than undermine their work. Priorities for public action include:

- Extend social protection measures such as health care and pension schemes to women in informal employment (see Chapter 3)
- Ratify ILO Convention 189 to recognize the rights of domestic workers to decent working conditions, adequate pay, freedom from violence and abuse, and access to social protection
- Broaden the scope of occupational health and safety regulations to include informal workers, recognizing the particular hazards that women face as homeworkers, street vendors and waste-pickers
- Invest in urban and rural infrastructure such as electricity, water and sanitation, and transport, as well as safe marketplaces with secure storage facilities
- Facilitate access to financial services for women informal workers, including credit and savings.

INCREASING RETURNS TO WOMEN'S SMALL-SCALE FARMING

The viability of rural livelihoods in developing countries has been under pressure since the early 1980s.²³³ Structural adjustment policies led to the scaling back of state support for agriculture in many countries, including in the provision of marketing, credit, inputs and extension services, as well as investment in infrastructure, irrigation and research. Development aid for agriculture also declined during this period. Private traders and credit providers have not filled the gap left by state withdrawal, with poor farmers and those in remote areas particularly affected.²³⁴

In recent years, rising and volatile global food prices, in part driven by financial speculation, as well as the large-scale dispossession of agricultural land have combined to produce adverse outcomes for poor and marginalized farmers, especially women (see Box 2.9).²³⁵ Climate change has also impacted negatively on agricultural production and prices, compounding

the problems faced by poor people living in rural areas.²³⁶ As a result of these factors, some governments, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, are beginning to recognize the need to take a more active role in the governance of markets in rural areas and in the provision of support to the agricultural sector. In some cases, these efforts have specifically focused on supporting small-scale farmers, including women.²³⁷

Given the importance of women's agricultural employment in rural areas, policies to make small-scale farming more productive and viable are

essential for redressing women's socio-economic disadvantage in agrarian settings. Investments in rural infrastructure, including water and sanitation, and social services, such as health care, are also needed (see Chapter 3). In addition, secure land rights, bolstered by changes to marital property regimes are needed. Greatly improved access to agricultural inputs, services and markets to increase the returns to women's farming activities, should also be priorities. Support to women's collective action and public procurement programmes can be instrumental to increasing women's access to markets.

BOX 2.9

Impacts of land dispossession on women in Indonesia

The expansion of oil palm plantations has been a major cause of land dispossession and deforestation in South-East Asia since the 1980s, but the recent boom in biofuels has accelerated the trend.²³⁸ Millions of hectares of forest have been cleared in Indonesia, land that is typically held under customary tenure by rural populations who depend on it for their livelihoods but whose claims are not recognized by the state.²³⁹

In the Hibun Dayak community in West Kalimantan, the provincial government granted long-term land use concessions to private companies for oil palm plantations. Compensation schemes for dispossessed villagers involved incorporating them as contract farmers, or 'out-growers', on small plots surrounding the main plantation and on highly unfavourable terms.

Before the concessions were granted, customary norms specified no gender differentiation in inheritance rights for individually owned land: whichever child cared for the parents inherited the most land. The State's compensation system undermined the property rights that women had previously enjoyed. Only 'household heads' were registered as out-growers and, as a result, just 6 out of 98 of the contract farmers were women (who were either divorced or widowed).

The effects on gender relations have been profound. Before the plantations there was a relatively balanced division of labour between women and men in subsistence and cash-crop production. Afterwards, women became responsible for the most labour-intensive work, such as maintaining the trees, on land they had no control over. This led to escalating domestic conflict over the control of oil palm income and an increase in violence against women. Women's reproductive work was also placed under strain by the enclosure of common property resources: various kinds of local fruit and vegetables that were part of the local diet became scarce, and raw materials for craft production were lost when the forests were destroyed.

Grievances mounted in the villages as it took years for families to have their rights to compensation plots of land recognized. Villagers blockaded and harvested part of the plantation and filed a court case. While women were excluded from formal political arenas, such as the local union, they were informally active in asserting their rights. These efforts have resulted in a number of villages receiving compensation plots, but apparently little more.

Increasing women's access to and control over land

Women face systematic disadvantage in land rights because of laws, customs and norms that either exclude them from tenure or ownership or make their rights contingent on the relationship with a male relative or spouse. This has particular implications in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where large numbers of women rely on land for their livelihoods. Strengthening women's rights over land and other productive resources is critical not only to their productivity in the short term but also to expand their broader economic agency and provide protection against shocks.²⁴⁰

Reforming marital property regimes

Appropriate legal frameworks and gender-sensitive policies are needed to strengthen women's land rights. First, recognizing claims to property acquired within marriage can increase women's ownership of assets because women, especially when married, are less likely than men to be able to acquire individual assets. Such claims recognize women's paid and unpaid contributions to the household by considering assets acquired during marriage as the joint property of the couple.

Recent research on individual-level asset ownership found that women fare much better in marital systems with joint or common property (such as in Ecuador) than under those with 'separation of property' (as in Ghana and the state of Karnataka, in India). Under marital regimes that stipulate a 'separation of property', in the event of dissolution of the marriage all property is treated as individually owned. In Ghana and Karnataka, women are 36 per cent and 20 per cent of landowners, respectively.

By contrast in Ecuador, where children of both sexes inherit land and a 'partial community' of property prevails (whereby all property, except for inheritances, acquired by either spouse during the marriage belongs to both of them jointly), women constitute the majority of landowners at 52 per cent.²⁴¹

Gender-sensitive land titling and reform programmes

Land reform and titling programmes can also help women gain access to land if they are systematically designed with gender equality considerations in mind. Two factors make a difference.

The first is joint titling. Individual titles can potentially increase women's autonomy and help to rebalance unequal gender power relations in the household and may be appropriate in some cases. However, the majority of poor women rely on their membership of the household for their livelihoods and survival. Efforts to ensure women's access to resources within the household, through joint titling, inheritance rights for daughters and copies of title deeds, should therefore be given priority.²⁴² The second area requiring policy attention is efforts to bolster women's agency, voice and participation, both through representation in decision-making bodies that administer land rights and via autonomous women's organizations that monitor the process and demand accountability.²⁴³

The land registration process in Rwanda initiated in the mid-2000s gave legally married women equal ownership rights over household parcels of land. A 2011 study found that women in a formal union were 17 percentage points more likely to be regarded as joint landowners after the reform than before.²⁴⁴

Women's organizations, such as the Rwandan Women's Network and *Haguruka*, collaborated with local authorities to monitor land registrations and sensitize officials and communities about the changes.²⁴⁵ However, the same study found an 8 percentage point decrease in the likelihood of informally married women having documented land ownership, highlighting the importance of being sensitive to existing customary arrangements in reform processes.²⁴⁶

Top-down land titling programmes that either undermine women's existing land rights, ignore the constraints posed to women by existing customary tenure arrangements and land governance institutions, or fail to create widespread public awareness are unlikely to secure rights for women. In some cases, poorly designed land titling programmes have triggered waves of speculative land acquisition that have primarily benefited local elites at the expense of those with less secure claims on land, including women and migrants.²⁴⁷

In some sub-Saharan African countries, efforts to make use of 'traditional' or customary institutions to reform land tenure have been problematic for women, who sometimes lack rights or decision-making power within customary systems. Formal recognition of such institutions by governments or international development agencies can confer greater legitimacy on them than they previously enjoyed, which may further entrench women's disadvantage and lack of agency.²⁴⁸

Securing rural women's livelihoods

Legal and policy efforts to strengthen women's land rights over agricultural land are important, but secure land tenure alone cannot end rural women's poverty.²⁴⁹ In Ethiopia, for example, even where women hold a land certificate or are informally acknowledged to control land, social norms dictate that they cannot plough the land themselves.²⁵⁰ Female-headed households are therefore forced to sharecrop their land, which means they earn much less than households that have access to male labour. Therefore, alongside land tenure reform, other policy measures are needed to improve the returns to women's agricultural employment and enterprises.

Increasing women's access to agricultural services, markets and finance

Agricultural extension services provide vital support for women farmers to increase their productivity and incomes. The reach of these services is often inadequate overall, but women are especially likely to miss out. In Ghana, for example, on average only 12 per cent of male-headed households and less than 2 per cent of female-headed households reported receiving extension advice.²⁵¹ In some cases, a lack of female extension workers means that it is not socially acceptable for women to receive these services.²⁵² Exclusion from extension activities is a particular problem in the context of climate change, with less predictable rainfall and more crop failures making it especially important that small-scale farmers get the support they need to adapt.

Women also face numerous barriers in accessing markets, including lack of capacity to produce sufficient volume or quality of produce; lack of secure markets or established relationships with buyers; problems with transport; restrictions on mobility; and lack of time due to unpaid work burdens.²⁵³ Where women do engage directly with markets, they are often confined to specific products, market segments or locations. In global value chains, contract-farming arrangements are rarely made directly with women farmers.²⁵⁴

Participation in cooperatives or other collective action groups can deliver clear economic benefits to rural women and give them greater control over income and even land.²⁵⁵ In Mali, for example, women have created their own cooperatives in the shea butter sector over the past two decades, resulting in improved quality of the product and increased annual earnings for members.²⁵⁶ Women's participation in the cooperatives has contributed to shifts in perceptions on gender roles, including greater recognition and opportunities for them to negotiate with community leaders to sustain their activities.²⁵⁷

Well-designed rural savings groups targeting women have a role to play in increasing their access to finance, alongside institutional finance

provided by the state such as community and development banks.²⁵⁸ These groups have strong potential to contribute to increases in women's earnings and productivity, particularly when linked to market opportunities.²⁵⁹ Participation can strengthen women's social capital, reduce their vulnerability to shocks and improve their financial management and leadership skills.²⁶⁰ It can also enable the accumulation of individual and joint assets that women control directly. Membership links women with few resources to the services provided by more formal cooperatives, where their representation—particularly in leadership positions—is typically low.²⁶¹

In order for women to benefit from membership of collective action groups, national policies are required that stipulate women's and men's equal right to be members. Local bylaws and membership criteria may also need to be reviewed to enable women to join in their own right.

Strategic use of subsidies and public procurement

Input subsidies on fertilizers and seeds were largely dismantled during the structural adjustment reforms of the 1980s. Critics argue that subsidies distort prices and mainly benefit well-off producers and agribusinesses. In the late 1990s, a reverse trend developed for 'smart', more targeted subsidies, which have the potential to deliver broader economic and social benefits.²⁶²

Countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and United Republic of Tanzania have recently introduced new input subsidy programmes. The Government of Malawi has been implementing a Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) since 2005, targeting poor small-scale farmers who have land but cannot afford to buy inputs at market prices. While some studies have found that women are still disadvantaged when it comes to receipt of these subsidies, others have found that access to subsidized fertilizer improves the outcomes for female-controlled plots and increases the probability of female-headed households cultivating higher-yielding crop varieties.²⁶³

Public procurement from small-scale farmers is gaining ground as a policy approach. Ensuring that women agricultural producers can benefit from such procurement opportunities can help to redress the disadvantage they face in agricultural markets. The World Food Programme's Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme procures staple food commodities for food aid from small-scale farmers. It was piloted between 2008 and 2013 in 20 countries, with the aim that 500,000 small-scale farmers would take part and that half of them would be women.²⁶⁴ Although the 50 per cent target has not been met, it is reported that since a gender strategy was put in place to overcome the constraints to women's participation, P4P has facilitated women's involvement in farmers' organizations, improved women's access to credit, increased incomes, strengthened skills and provided time-saving technology.²⁶⁵

Brazil has made extensive use of public procurement from small-scale farmers as part of the country's comprehensive food security policy (*Fome Zero*). Implemented since 2003, it has contributed to the sustained decline in hunger in rural areas, especially among female-headed households.²⁶⁶ Since 2009, it is a requirement that a minimum of 30 per cent of the financial resources transferred by the Government to states and municipalities to implement the National School Feeding Programme, which covers 49 million children, must be used to buy food sourced from family-based farms, including indigenous communities.²⁶⁷

Recommendations

After years of neglect, there is greater recognition among policy makers that the state needs to take a more pro-active role in the governance of markets in agrarian economies to support rural livelihoods. In order to redress women's socio-economic disadvantage, it is critical that public action recognizes the particular needs of women working in these contexts, who are almost all informal workers, many of them in small-scale agriculture.

Governments should:

- Ensure that women have secure access to land through introducing gender-sensitive land reform programmes such as joint titling initiatives
- Involve women’s organizations in policy design and implementation to ensure that gender concerns are adequately addressed
- Reform other parts of the legal framework, including marital property regimes and inheritance laws, to help ensure that women and girls have equal access to assets and land
- Increase women’s access to agricultural extension services, including through the recruitment of female agents who, in some contexts, can be more effective at reaching women farmers
- Facilitate women’s access to markets by, for example, targeting them to be providers for public procurement programmes and school feeding programmes
- Support women’s collective action in rural areas so that women can access productive resources such as finance, training, processing technologies and irrigation systems.

BOOSTING WOMEN’S PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT

Policies to generate employment generally target the private sector as the main engine for employment growth. But the public sector is also an important source of jobs, as well as providing services that benefit both the economy and society more broadly. Women working in the public sector are concentrated in health, education and care services, which both support and reduce women’s unpaid care and domestic work.²⁶⁸

Public sector workers are essential to efforts to boost economic growth and to regulate markets. For

example, as noted in the previous section, agricultural extension workers help to increase the agricultural productivity of small-scale farmers.²⁶⁹ In addition, tax officials can ensure efficient revenue collection, essential for funding infrastructure and public services, while labour inspectors monitor the implementation of labour market regulations such as minimum wages.

The public sector has historically been an important source of formal wage employment for women, providing decent pay, good employment conditions, job security and pension contributions linked to high levels of unionization and opportunities for collective bargaining.²⁷⁰ As such, it can play an important role in setting and advancing standards for gender equality policies for the private sector.

Women’s share of public sector employment

Women are on average 57 per cent of government employees in OECD countries.²⁷¹ The latest ILO data for 49 developing and transition countries show wide variation in women’s share of employment in public administration, ranging from 19 per cent in Guinea to 70 per cent in Slovenia. Overall, the share of women in public sector employment exceeded their share in total employment in 46 out of 64 countries.²⁷²

However, women employed in the public sector tend to be clustered in junior and lower-paying positions as well as in typically feminized sectors such as education and health.²⁷³ In some developing countries, female health- and care-workers are paid below the minimum wage—for example, Pakistan’s Lady Health Workers (see Chapter 3)—or are even employed on a voluntary basis, as in the case of Anganwadi childcare workers in India.²⁷⁴

Meanwhile, in all regions, women remain under-represented in the most senior decision-making positions in the public sector. In the 15 OECD countries with data, women hold 29 per cent of top management positions.²⁷⁵ Similarly, a recent study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) showed that women are 30 per cent or more of those in decision-making positions in only 5 out of 35 developing countries and territories (Botswana, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia and South Africa).²⁷⁶

A number of countries, including Colombia, Mongolia, the Philippines and South Sudan, have applied quotas or targets for women's employment in the public sector. In Colombia, for example, a quota set at 30 per cent has been exceeded, with women holding 40 per cent of decision-making positions in public administration in 2011.²⁷⁷

Women have faced particular barriers to entering public sector employment in post-conflict situations. Gender equality and social sectors, areas where women are more likely to be employed, are often deprioritized in the process of rebuilding state infrastructure and restoring basic government functions.²⁷⁸ In response to this, the United Nations Secretary-General's 2010 report on *Women's Participation in Peacebuilding* emphasizes the importance of women's employment in public institutions in its 7-Point Action Plan.²⁷⁹

The impacts of austerity and outsourcing on public sector employment

Austerity policies implemented in the aftermath of the economic crisis have led to a sharp

downward trend in public sector employment. Between 2008 and 2011, governments in 27 out of 45 countries with data put in place cuts or freezes to public sector wages, including the majority of EU countries.²⁸⁰ Cutting jobs as part of these cost-saving measures has particularly negative implications for women's employment opportunities as they are more likely to be in temporary and part-time positions, which are more vulnerable to redundancy (see Chapter 4).

Another widespread trend in the public sector in both developing and developed countries is the increase in outsourcing of public services to private companies, which may not adhere to established public sector terms and conditions of employment. The blurring of the distinction between formal and informal employment as a result of outsourcing is leading to growing insecurity of public sector employment and increasing the complexity of employment relationships.²⁸¹ Outsourcing frequently occurs in industries where women are concentrated such as catering, cleaning or care work (see Box 2.10).

BOX 2.10

Outsourcing of public sector jobs at the University of Cape Town

The University of Cape Town (UCT), like many other universities, is mainly financed by government and student fees but struggles to raise sufficient funds to provide quality teaching, research and other services. It therefore looked at cost-cutting options in order to balance the books and outsourced a number of services. In 1999, despite resistance from workers, who are mainly low-paid black women, general cleaning operations at UCT were outsourced to a private company called Supercare, which is one of the largest contract cleaning companies in South Africa.

As employees of Supercare, the cleaners were no longer directly employed by UCT and instead found themselves in a triangular employment relationship. This arrangement, whereby a sub-contracted company provides workers and pays their wages while the work that they do is determined by the organization contracting the services, is increasingly commonplace.

The Supercare cleaners lost significant benefits as a result of the outsourcing, including access to relatively generous medical aid and retirement funds, which previously had been cross-subsidized by higher-paid workers at the University. The workers were also put on fixed-term rather than permanent contracts.

Despite being dispersed across several campuses and different buildings, the Supercare workers organized to demand their rights. Partly as a result of the pressure they applied, the University drew up a progressive code of conduct for contracted companies that led to significant increases in pay. However, the employers used the introduction of the code of conduct to increase the cleaners' ordinary working hours from 40 to 45 hours per week, which they were expected to work without any overtime being paid. After a two-year struggle, the cleaners' hours reverted back to 40 hours per week and compensation was finally agreed for various forms of underpayment over several years.

In spite of this victory, the Supercare workers' troubles are far from over. The process of outsourcing led to the cleaners' formal jobs effectively being informalized, and even with the University's code of conduct in place, the result has been a considerable loss of benefits and job security for these workers.²⁸²

Outsourcing is not inevitable and can be reversed. As a result of a similar campaign to that described in Box 2.10, mounted by cleaners, staff and students at the Queen Mary University of London, outsourced cleaners were brought back in-house. The cleaners, who had previously been paid the minimum wage with few entitlements, achieved significant pay rises and gained the right to sick pay, holidays, an annually negotiated pay increase and access to an employer-contribution pension scheme.²⁸³ There have also been wider benefits: the University's decision has stimulated improvements in productivity and service delivery with very little increase in costs.²⁸⁴

Expanding women's public sector employment

Scaling up public services to achieve women's rights will require the creation of new jobs. Globally, 10.3 million additional health workers (physicians, nurses and midwifery personnel) are required to ensure the effective delivery of universal health care, the majority in Asia (7.1 million) and Africa (2.8 million).²⁸⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that 27 million more teachers will be needed worldwide to achieve universal primary education by 2030.²⁸⁶ This presents a major opportunity to create decent employment for women in these sectors, as well as in elder- and childcare services.

Capitalizing on this opportunity would generate a double dividend, by providing support both for

human well-being as well as employment and wider economic benefits.²⁸⁷ Locating care jobs within the public sector is likely to ensure better pay and conditions for care workers.²⁸⁸ Having more women in public sector jobs can also facilitate efforts to increase women's and girls' access to public services. Cross-country studies show a positive correlation between gender parity in school enrolment and the proportion of female teachers, for example.²⁸⁹

There are a number of examples of governments creating employment through public investments in social services. In the Republic of Korea, the Government has significantly expanded social care provision since 2000 through universal long-term insurance schemes for the elderly and publicly subsidized childcare services. In Ecuador, the Government has increased investments in public services hand-in-hand with an expansion of public employment and the elimination of outsourcing practices, which has improved pay and conditions for workers.²⁹⁰

Recommendations

Expanding public sector employment in paid care jobs, as well as in public administration more broadly, can make a significant contribution to substantive equality. Well-resourced public services support and reduce women's unpaid work and can provide good quality jobs for women, thereby redressing their socio-economic disadvantage.

Increasing the capacity of governments to implement labour market regulations and collect taxes also supports the realization of rights by ensuring that work is decent and that social services can be adequately financed. Policy priorities for governments include:

- Recognize the potential for decent employment creation in the public sector and ensure that women can access these jobs
- Protect existing public sector jobs from unnecessary austerity cuts and, where cuts

have to be made, ensure that they do not disproportionately fall on women's jobs

- Avoid outsourcing public sector jobs to private companies and instead work with trade unions to increase the effectiveness of service delivery whilst also protecting workers' rights
- Ensure that women are fairly represented at senior and management levels of public sector employment. Quotas can play a part in making this happen.

WOMEN'S ORGANIZING FOR SUBSTANTIVE EQUALITY AT WORK

This chapter has outlined an ambitious agenda to bring about transformation in labour markets so that women can access decent, paid employment that is compatible with unpaid care and domestic work and that provides safe and healthy working conditions, adequate pay and access to social protection. To achieve these changes, action needs to be taken on many fronts by a range of actors including policy makers, employers and civil society organizations, in particular trade unions.

Collective action make a difference to improving women's access to decent work. For example, as Chapter 1 shows, women's organizing has played an essential part in legal reform to prohibit discrimination in the workplace and to introduce childcare services;²⁹¹ countries with strong union coverage and collective bargaining tend to have lower gender pay gaps;²⁹² women's organizations have been instrumental in winning improvements

to working conditions and pay (see Box 2.11); collective action through cooperatives, as in rural areas in sub-Saharan Africa, has helped women to pool resources, realize economies of scale and access markets;²⁹³ and savings and self-help groups have been shown to support women's livelihoods and strengthen their agency, voice and participation in households and communities more broadly.²⁹⁴

Women have been active in both mainstream trade unions and in other organizations of informal workers that have sprung up in recent decades, particularly in developing countries. In the mainstream, women have joined the longstanding fight for workers' rights on issues such as adequate pay and working hours, but they have also brought new concerns to the table such as gender pay gaps, sexual harassment in the workplace, safe and affordable transport and childcare services.

In recent years, globalization and economic liberalization have undermined the power of organized labour, and some governments have marginalized trade unions from economic policy making. Unions also face intensified hostility from some corporations and employers, who have recently called into question the legal basis of the right to strike, the most fundamental right of all workers.²⁹⁵ In this hostile environment, women trade unionists have played an important role in renewing the movement to make it more representative, democratic and relevant in today's world.²⁹⁶ They have argued that one way to reassert the power and influence of organized labour is to represent workers in all their diversity.

WOMEN WORKERS AND THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The international trade union movement has played a pivotal role in expanding the reach and scope of workers' rights worldwide. However, historically and in common with many social movements, trade unions have often failed to be inclusive of women, seeing women's rights issues as less of a priority. Women have thus faced a struggle for voice and recognition on two fronts: to be heard by employers and also by trade unions themselves.

Although global data on trade union membership by sex are not systematically collected, there is evidence of increases in women's membership. A 2012 review of 39 developing and developed countries found that women were at least 40 per cent of members in two thirds of countries reviewed and that women's membership increased between the early and late 2000s in the majority.²⁹⁷

There are a number of factors that may be influencing this shift. Changes in employment patterns have led to a decline in private sector unionism, which has tended to be male-dominated. In its place, unions of the public sector, where large numbers of women work, have become much more important. For example, Public Services International (PSI) brings together 669 unions in 154 countries, representing 20 million public sector workers of whom two thirds are women. PSI campaigns on many familiar labour issues such

as precarious work and the impact of privatization of public services, but it also takes up issues such as literacy and affordable access to water that are of particular relevance to women.

In spite of increasing representation as members and greater take-up of gender issues, with some notable exceptions women remain under-represented in union leadership.²⁹⁸ An ILO study in 2002 found that women were a negligible 1 per cent of representatives on union decision-making bodies.²⁹⁹ A 2014 survey of EU trade unions showed a more positive picture, but it still found that women comprised only 10 per cent of presidents and 25 per cent of vice-presidents and general secretaries.³⁰⁰ The lack of women in senior positions in trade unions mirrors the problems in other sectors: the culture of trade unions remains male-dominated, with 'old boys' networks' exerting strong influence on who can get to the top. Women's responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work makes it difficult for them to devote time to the networking activities needed to build support for their leadership. Women are often expected to fulfil administrative roles and are less likely to be identified as leadership material or given training and opportunities to develop these skills.³⁰¹

Quotas and reserved seats for decision-making positions can help to overcome barriers to women's leadership. However, where women do reach the top, whether they are able to change the culture of trade unions and effectively represent women's rights issues depends on the extent to which they have built support from the bottom up. As well as promoting their leadership, it is also necessary to create space for women's caucuses, divisions and committees within union structures to foster, support and hold to account those in decision-making positions. This approach to amplifying women's voices in civil society organizations has been used very successfully in the international peasants' movement *Via Campesina* (see Box 1.6).³⁰²

WOMEN AND INFORMAL WORKER ORGANIZING

While women's membership has been increasing and trade unions have become better at incorporating gender concerns into campaigns and collective

bargaining, women in informal employment have, in parallel, opted to form their own organizations to represent their interests.³⁰³

Informal workers confront many challenges in their efforts to organize. For self-employed informal workers, the traditional employer–employee relationship, which is the basis for collective bargaining, does not exist. For women working on the lowest rungs of global value chains—for example, in garment factories—negotiating on conditions with local factory owners may have limited impact when the downward pressure on pay and conditions of work originates many miles away with parent companies in the North (see story: *Out of the ashes*). Furthermore, informal workers frequently do their jobs in dispersed workplaces, making it difficult to come together to build a collective identity and coordinate campaigns.³⁰⁴

Some informal work—such as sex work and waste picking—is stigmatized, which may make these workers reluctant even to identify what they do as work. Some informal workers face multiple forms of discrimination and exclusion—for example, migrants often contend with hostility from the authorities as well as from other workers, who perceive that they are undercutting their jobs.³⁰⁵

Addressing these challenges calls for diverse, context-specific strategies. Alongside gender differences, class, caste, race, ethnic and nationality divisions have to be skillfully negotiated and incorporated into strategies built around shared identities and goals.³⁰⁶ What organizations of informal workers have in common are the overarching priorities to seek redress for the socio-economic disadvantage they face, by making work more viable and remunerative and to combat stigma and redefine social norms (see Box 2.11).

BOX 2.11

Women informal workers organizing for change

Organizations of women informal workers often start with initiatives to meet their immediate, practical needs and to empower members to see themselves as workers with rights, as a basis for building a collective identity. In the longer term, the aim is to support women to negotiate for change with employers, subcontracting firms and buyers, national and local governments or even the general public.

The largest and best known organization of informal workers is the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA), which was established in India in 1972. Today, SEWA counts almost 2 million members spanning diverse forms of informal work. The organization provides a range of services to members—including savings and credit, health and childcare, insurance, legal aid and capacity building—to enable women to become self-reliant.³⁰⁷ SEWA also supports members in negotiations with employers to improve working conditions. For example, SEWA Delhi, in partnership with the UK-based Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), negotiated with lead firms to buy directly from home-based workers rather than through intermediaries in the supply chain. This enabled sub-contracted workers to become self-employed, with their own producer group, and to negotiate better rates for their goods.³⁰⁸

In Brazil, the Domestic Workers’ Federation (FENATRAD) has been at the forefront of efforts to improve working conditions for the country’s 7 million domestic workers, resulting in successive legal reforms to advance their rights.³⁰⁹ Alongside these campaigns, FENATRAD has used radio, evening courses and networking in communities, families and churches to link with hard-to-reach and isolated domestic workers.³¹⁰

The *Veshya Anyay Mukti Parishad* (VAMP) sex workers' collective in India has promoted dialogue between sex workers and the public in order to transform perceptions and remove stigma surrounding their work. VAMP has forged a common identity among diverse women engaged in sex work and has sought to redefine their struggles in broad rights-based terms rather than just focusing on sexual health. Collective action among sex workers has been vital for their capacity to change their own and others' perceptions of their work, claim their rights and demand equal treatment as human beings, workers and citizens. As a result, these women are gaining recognition not only as sex workers, but as educators on HIV, breadwinners and upwardly mobile women.³¹¹

Recommendations

To achieve the transformation of labour markets required for substantive equality, women must be centrally involved in influencing and shaping their workplaces. In order to strengthen women's agency, voice and participation, priorities for governments, donors, international organizations and trade unions include:

- Ensure a conducive legal framework for women's collective action around economic and social rights, including the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike
- Scale up funding for women's labour organizations, particularly those that represent marginalized or stigmatized informal workers, to improve working conditions and realize rights. Overseas development aid from governments or private donors can play a particularly important role in supporting organizations that need to remain independent from their own governments
- Create spaces for women's organizing, such as caucuses and committees within mainstream trade unions and other workers' organizations, to build women's capacity and mainstream gender equality issues
- Increase the representation of women—including those in informal and part-time employment—in trade unions, especially in decision-making positions, and ensure that women's rights issues are consistently taken up in collective bargaining agreements.

CONCLUSIONS

Paid work can be a foundation for substantive equality for women, but only when it is compatible with women's and men's shared responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work; when it gives women enough time for leisure and learning; and when it provides earnings that are sufficient to maintain an adequate standard of living. This kind of work is the fundamental basis for

women's economic empowerment, with the potential to provide resources, respect and agency.

However, governments in all regions have struggled to generate enough decent employment in recent years, a period when the capacity of organized labour to negotiate better wages and employment

conditions has also diminished. In this difficult global context, women continue to face gender-specific barriers to accessing labour markets. Efforts to create a 'level playing field' by removing legal impediments to women's employment and ensuring equal access to education have not been enough, on their own, to close gender gaps in participation and pay.

The conventional view that regulation 'distorts' labour markets and dampens job creation has been widely refuted. This opens up space for a much more proactive set of policies to increase the quantity and improve the quality of employment available. As Chapter 4 highlights, getting the macroeconomic policy environment right is critically important for this endeavour. The policy framework must be designed in a way that supports substantive equality for women. Strengthening women's agency, voice and participation as a central part of defining an agenda for change, through trade unions and other workers' organizations that represent women's diverse experiences at work, is one way to meet that challenge.

Measures to redress women's socio-economic disadvantage should be a priority. Where they are set at the right level and properly implemented, minimum wages have a particularly important impact in raising the incomes of the poorest women workers and are also shown to narrow gender pay gaps. Extending the coverage of minimum wages as well as social protection, including pensions and health care, to all workers is also vital for providing a basic level of income security. For millions of informally self-employed women, measures to move them from survival-oriented activities to owning viable and profitable businesses are needed, from extending legal recognition to investing in urban infrastructure; from guaranteeing access to land and markets to making financial services accessible for all.

But these measures will only be effective if stereotypes, stigma and violence against women are also addressed. Much of women's disadvantage in labour markets stems from persistent stereotypes about the kind of work that is suitable for them. Gender stereotypes, which define caregiving as

quintessentially female, have been much harder to dislodge than those that prescribe breadwinning as a male domain. In the absence of adequate care services, the result has often been greater uptake of paid work among women, but little change in their unpaid work responsibilities, with negative impacts on the quality of work they can accept and their quality of life more broadly.

Gender stereotypes also feed occupational segregation, channelling women into a limited set of jobs that mirror their unpaid caring roles and are undervalued as a result. Hierarchies in the workplace are often maintained by violent means, including sexual harassment, which reinforces male power and deters women from moving into 'non-traditional' jobs or up the occupational ladder.

Addressing these issues requires a fundamental rethink of how paid employment and unpaid care and domestic work are organized, starting with a more even distribution of unpaid care and domestic work between women and men and between households and society. Radically altering the way that women's work is valued in society would also mean recognizing the enormous contribution that paid care jobs in teaching, nursing and domestic work make to the everyday functioning of economies and societies and properly compensating women for this work.

Employment and social policies are intrinsically linked, and both are critical for the realization of economic and social rights and substantive equality for women. Even if the agenda for change outlined in this chapter was fully implemented, social protection and public services are needed to guarantee the full range of rights, whether women participate in paid work or not. Social transfers, such as pensions and child benefits, are imperative for supporting families with children and providing income security over the life course. And social services, such as health-, elder- and childcare, and water and sanitation are not only crucial for women, but also contribute to the daily and intergenerational reproduction of a healthy workforce. It is to this set of policy issues that the Report now turns in Chapter 3.