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GIST OF GENDER SOCIAL NORMS INDEX 2020



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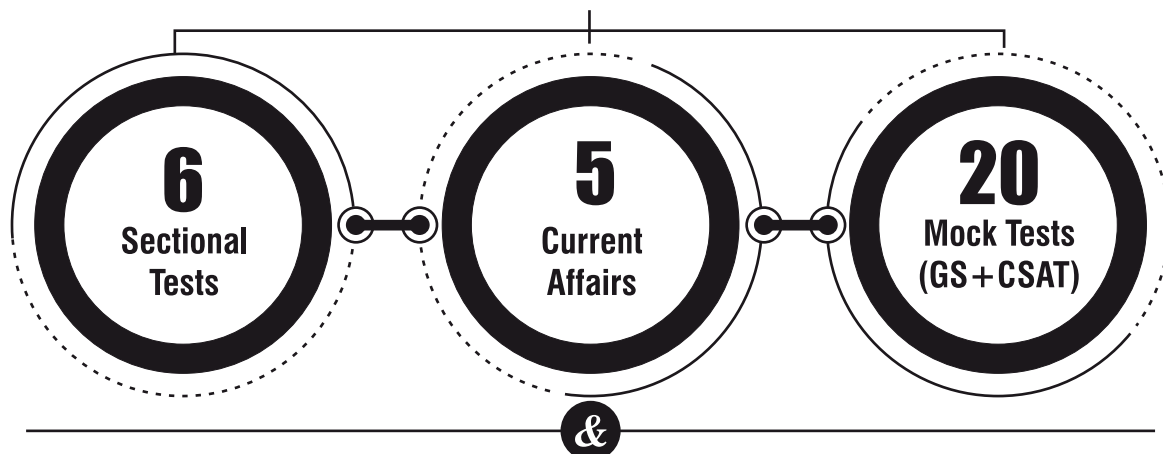
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UNDP GENDER SOCIAL NORMS INDEX (GSNI) 2020

CONTEXT

Recently, the 1st edition of 'Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI) 2020' was released by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

BACKGROUND

- **GSNI 2020:** The 1st edition of '**Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI 2020)**' was released by **UNDP**, in an attempt to tackle gender norms which eventually are a broad contributor to gender inequalities.
 - ▶ The report commemorates the 25th anniversary of adoption of **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+25)**.
- **No country has yet achieved gender equality:** Gender disparities are a persistent form of inequality in every country. Despite remarkable progress in some areas, **no country in the world**— rich or poor— has achieved gender equality.
 - ▶ Women and girls are still **discriminated against in health, in education, at home** and in the labour market— with negative repercussions for their freedoms.
 - ▶ There are **unaccounted and unmeasurable burdens that women face: Double shift** at home, **harassment** in public transportation, **discrimination** in workplaces, and multiple other such **hidden constraints**.
- **It is a long road ahead:** According to the report, the world is not on track to achieve gender equality by 2030. **Overall progress in gender inequality has been slowing in recent years.** Based on current trends, it would take **257 years to close the gender gap** in economic opportunity.
- **Gender inequality is a matter of concern:** Gender inequality is correlated with a loss in human development due to inequality.

- Gender inequality translates into other areas of human development, **threatening progress across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AROUND THE WORLD

- Different forms of demonstration— including **online campaigns, women marches and street performances**— are emerging around the world.
- **#MeToo** movement **around the world** is uncovering abuse and vulnerability.
- In **India** the **#IWillGoOut** movement demands equal rights for women in public spaces.
- In Latin America the **#NiUnaMenos** movement sheds light on femicides and violence against women from **Argentina to Mexico.**
- A movement born in **Chile** created a hymn named **“a rapist in your way,”** has been shouted in unison by thousands of women across the world, demanding that society stop blaming the victims of rape.

PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY OVER THE PAST CENTURY

- **Barriers removed:** Women in most countries were granted basic **political, economic and social rights**, and progress was made in areas where it was more achievable; like health and education.
- **Constitutional guarantees:** Restrictions to **vote, go to school and work** in different economic areas were lifted, typically granted through **constitutions.**
- **Education:** Remarkable strides in education, almost reaching **parity in average primary enrolment.**
- **Health:** Reducing the **global maternal mortality ratio** by 45 percent after 1990.

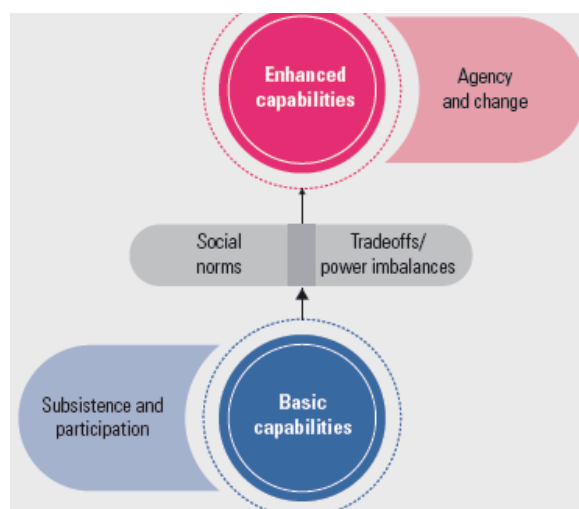
SITUATION OF WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

- **Few women leaders:** The number of female heads of government is lower today than five years ago, with **only 10 women in such positions among 193 countries** (down from 15 in 2014).
- **Lack adequate access:** Women in much of the world lack support for fundamental functions of a human life. This is evident in **Gender Inequality Index (GII)** and its components—**reflecting gaps** in reproductive health, empowerment and labour market.
 - In Sub-Saharan Africa, **1 woman in every 180 giving birth dies** (more than 20 times the rate in developed countries).
 - In most regions adult women are **less educated**, have **less access to labour markets** than men and **lack access to political power.**

WIDENING GAPS IN ENHANCED CAPABILITIES

- **Uneven progress:** Women make greater and faster progress where their individual empowerment or social power is lower (**basic capabilities**). But they face a glass ceiling where they have greater responsibility, political leadership and social payoffs in markets, social life and politics (**enhanced capabilities**).
 - Thus, progress has been uneven as women move away from basic areas into **enhanced** ones, where **gaps tend to be wider.**
- **Disadvantaged groups fall behind in advanced capabilities:** Disadvantaged groups catch up in the basic and fall behind in the enhanced, a dynamic that tends to perpetuate the unequal distribution of power.

- **Examples of lack access to political participation:** Women and men vote in elections at similar rates. So, there is parity in entry-level **political participation, where power is very diffused**. But when more concentrated political power is at stake, women appear severely underrepresented.
 - The **higher the power and responsibility, the wider the gender gap**— and for heads of state and government it is almost **90 percent**.
 - **Only 24 percent of parliamentary seats** are held by women.
 - **Uneven portfolios:** Women most commonly hold portfolios in environment, natural resources and energy, followed by social sectors, such as social affairs, education and family.
 - **Gender characterisation of portfolios:** Fewer women had portfolios in **transport, economics or finance**.
 - Certain disciplines are typically **associated with feminine or masculine characteristics**, as is also true in education and the labour market.
- **Examples of gaps in economic participation:** When empowerment is basic and precarious, women are overrepresented, as for contributing **family workers (typically not receiving monetary payment)**.
 - **Empowerment gradients:** Then, as economic power increases from employee to employer, and from employer to top entertainer and billionaire, the gender gap widens.
 - **Poor representation at the top:** Women represent only **21 percent of world's employers** and **12 percent of the top billionaires**.
 - In S&P 500 companies, **only 5.8 percent of CEOs are female**. Although women's overall employment by these companies might be close to parity, women are underrepresented in more senior positions
- **Example of unevenness in education:** Women have reached parity in enrolment in primary education. But large differences persist in **occupational choices**, with the share of **female graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) programmes lower than 15 percent** for most countries.
- **Example of irregularities in agriculture:** Women on average comprise **43 percent of agricultural labour force** in developing countries, while the share of female **holders of agricultural land is only 18 percent**.



WHY IS PROGRESS TOWARDS SOME ASPECTS OF GENDER EQUALITY GETTING SLOWER AND MORE DIFFICULT?

- **Empowerment loopholes:** Despite overall progress towards gender equality, there is still lack in more empowering achievements.
 - For example, **in the 50 countries where adult women are more educated than men**, they still receive on average **39 percent less income than men**— despite devoting more time to work.
- **Social norms:** Social norms are central to **understanding gender inequality dynamics**. For example, societies often tell their girls that they can become anything they want and are capable of, while investing in their education. But the same **societies tend to block their access to power** positions without giving them a fair chance

- **Social judgement:** Just for being a woman, acts an **invisible barrier** and an affront to fairness and real meritocracy.
 - Globally almost **50 percent** of people say they **think men make better political leaders**, while more than **40 percent feel that men make better business executives**.

WORKINGS OF SOCIAL NORMS AND POWER IMBALANCES

- Social norms held by individuals and their reference groups are **values, beliefs, attitudes and practices** that assert **preferred power dynamics** for interactions between individuals and institutions.
 - **People's expectations** of individuals' roles in households, communities, workplaces and societies can determine a group's functioning.
 - Beliefs about what others do and what others think a person should do, maintained by **social approval and disapproval**, often guide actions in social settings.
 - Social norms cover several aspects of an individual's identity—**age, gender, ability, ethnicity, religion and so on**—that are heterogeneous and multidimensional.
 - Individuals have **multiple social identities** and behave according to **identity-related ideals**; they also expect others sharing a common identity to behave according to these ideals.
 - Norms of behaviour related to these ideals affect people's perception of themselves and others, thus **engendering a sense of belonging to particular identity groups**, for individuals who transgress.
 - **Social norms against women:** Women often face strong conventional societal expectations to be **caregivers and homemakers; men are expected to be breadwinners**. Embedded in these social norms are longstanding **patterns of exclusion from household and community decisionmaking** that limit women's opportunities and choices.
 - Discriminatory social norms and stereotypes **reinforce gendered identities** and determine power relations.
 - Norms influence **expectations for masculine and feminine behaviour** considered socially acceptable or looked down on.
 - So they directly affect individuals' **choices, freedoms and capabilities**, leading to **behaviours that lead to inequality**.

GENDER SOCIAL NORMS INDEX—MEASURING BELIEFS, BIASES AND PREJUDICES

- GSNI was **introduced in the 2019** Human Development Report for the first time, and comprises of **four dimensions—political, educational, economic and physical integrity**.
- It is constructed based on responses to **seven questions from the World Values Survey**, which are used to create **seven indicators**.
- For indicators for which the answer choices are strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree, the index defines individuals with a **bias if they strong agree or disagree**.
- **Political indicators** represent a bias for choice of ratings of **7 or lower**.
- For each indicator a variable takes the **value of 1 when an individual has a bias** and 0 when the individual does not.
- GSNI captures how social beliefs can obstruct gender equality along multiple dimensions.
- **Two methods of aggregation** are used in reporting results in the form of an Index.

- ▶ **Core GSNI:** It is based on “**union approach.**” It measures the percentage of people with bias(es), independent of the number of biases.
- ▶ **GSNI2:** This second GSNI is based on “**intersection approach.**” It measures the percentage of people with at least two biases.
- **Methods are applied to two sets of countries:** The first set consists of countries with data for either wave 5 (2005–2009) or wave 6 (2010–2014) of the World Values Survey and uses the latest data available. This set includes **75 countries and territories** accounting for **81 percent of the global population**
- ▶ **The second set** consists of only countries with data for both wave 5 and wave 6. This set includes **31 countries and territories** accounting for **59 percent of the global population.**

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

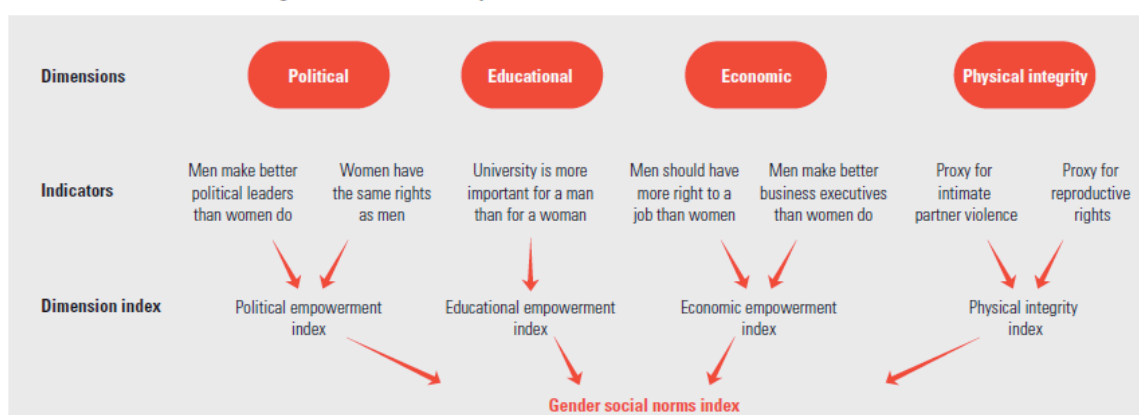
Dimension	Indicator	Choices	Bias definition
Political	Men make better political leaders than women do	Strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree	Strongly agree and agree
	Women have the same rights	1, not essential, to 10, essential	Intermediate form: 1-7
Educational	University is more important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

RESULTS FROM GSNI 2020 STUDY

- **Very few have absolute zero gender biases:** Only **14 percent of women and 10 percent of men** worldwide have no gender social norms biases. Overall, bias against gender equality is on the rise.
- **Majority have at least one clear bias:** In areas such as politics, economic, education, intimate partner violence and women’s reproductive rights, **91 percent of men and 86 percent of women** show at least one clear bias against gender equality.
- **Bias that men make better political leaders:** About **50 percent of men and women** interviewed across 75 countries say they think men make better political leaders than women.
- **Bias that men make better business leaders:** More than **40 percent** felt that men made better business executives.
- **Compromised physical integrity:** Almost **30 percent** of people agree it is justifiable for a man to beat his partner.
- **Men are relatively more biased:** Women are skewed towards less bias against gender equality and women’s empowerment. **52 percent men have two to four gender social norm biases.**
 - ▶ More than 50 percent of women are biased in the political arena.
 - ▶ Men present biases higher than **63 percent in both the political and economic dimensions**, especially for the indicators, “Men make better political leaders than women do” and “**Men should have more right to a job than women**” (50 percent).
 - ▶ This coincides with the fact that **professional women currently face a challenge** in finding a partner that will support their career.
- **Bias against gender equality is increasing in some countries:** There is evidence of backlash in attitudes among both men and women. According to GSNI2, the proportion of people with moderate and intense biases against gender equality **grew over the last few years in 15 countries** (out of 31).

- The share of both women and men worldwide with moderate to intense gender biases grew from 57 percent to **60 percent for women** and from 70 percent to **71 percent for men**.
- Survey show that **younger men may be even less committed** to equality than their elders.
- **Countries which made progress:** Progress in the share of men with no gender social norms bias was largest in **Chile, Australia, United States** and **Netherlands**.
 - Share of women with no gender social norms bias increased the most in the **Netherlands, Chile and Australia**.
- **Countries which degressed:** Share of men with no bias fell in **Sweden, Germany, India and Mexico**.
 - Other countries which showed a backlash include **India, South Africa and Romania**.
- **Positive correlation between biased social norms and gender inequality:** Countries with higher social norms biases tend to have higher gender inequality.

How social beliefs can obstruct gender and women's empowerment



DETERMINING THE NATURE OF SOCIAL NORMS

- **Descriptive norms** are beliefs about what is considered a normal practice in a social group or an area.
- **Injunctive norms** state what people in a community should do.
- This distinction between descriptive and injunctive norms is important, as it can lead to an understanding of **why some aspects of gender norms and relations shift faster than others**.
- **Family sets norms**, and experiences from childhood create an **unconscious gender bias**.
 - **Parents' attitudes towards gender** influence children through mid-adolescence, and children at school perceive gender roles.
 - Parenting practices and behaviours are thus among the **predictors of an individual's gendered behaviours and expectations**.
 - For instance, children tend to mimic (in attitudes and actions) how their parents share paid and unpaid work.
- **Adolescence** is another key stage for gender socialization, particularly for boys. **Gender is a social construct** of attributes or **roles associated with being male or female**.
 - What it means to be a man or a woman is **learned and internalized based on experiences and messages** over the course of a lifetime, normalized through social structures, culture and interactions.
- **Endorsed masculinity:** Though men usually have **more agency than the women** in their lives, men's decisions and behaviours are also profoundly shaped by **rigid social and cultural expectations related to masculinity**. Following are few endorsed masculinity norms:

- ▶ **Physical toughness:** Showing higher tolerance for pain, engaging in fights, competing in sports).
- ▶ **Autonomy:** Being financially independent, protecting and providing for families.
- ▶ **Emotional stoicism:** Not “acting like girls” or showing vulnerabilities, dealing with problems on their own.
- ▶ **Heterosexual prowess:** Having sex with many girls, exercising control over girls in relationships.
- **Social convention** refers to how compliance with gender social norms is internalized in individual values **reinforced by rewards or sanctions.**
 - ▶ **Rewards** use social or psychological approvals, while **sanctions** can range from exclusion from the community to violence or legal action.
 - ▶ **Stigma** can limit what is considered normal or acceptable and be used to enforce stereotypes and social norms about appropriate behaviours.
- **A social norm will be stickiest when** individuals have the most to gain from complying with it and the most to lose from challenging it.
 - ▶ Social norms have enough power to keep women from claiming their legal rights due to **pressure to conform to societal expectations.**
 - ▶ Social norms can also **prevail when individuals lack the information or knowledge to act or think differently.**

RESTRICTED CHOICES AS IDENTIFIED IN A LIFECYCLE APPROACH

- Human development is about expanding substantive freedoms and choices, and too often women face **heavily restricted or even “tragic” choices.**
- Social norms can affect girls even before they are born since some countries deeply **prefer bearing sons over daughters.**
- Discrimination continues through **the way households share resources.** Girls and women **sometimes eat last and least** in the household.
- **The gender politics of food**—nurtured by assumptions, norms and practices about women needing fewer calories—can push women into **perpetual malnutrition and protein deficiency.**
- Among children attending school, **determinants of occupational choices appear very early.** Girls are less likely to study STEM, while boys are a minority of those studying health and education.
 - ▶ For example, in **OECD countries**, on average among **STEM graduates, only 32.6 percent are women.**
- **Early marriage** condemns girls to live a life with heavily restricted choices—**every year 12 million** girls are victims of **forced marriage.**
 - ▶ Highest rates are registered in **Sub-Saharan Africa, with 36 percent** of women marrying before their 18th birthday, and **South Asia, with 29 percent.**
- The **disparities of childhood and adolescence are amplified** when women reach adulthood. For **unpaid care work**, women bear a bigger burden, on average spending about **2.5 times more than men do.**
 - ▶ This **affects women’s labor force participation**, which is consistently lower than for men, both globally and by human development grouping.
 - In 2018, global labour force participation rate was around **75 percent for men and 48 percent for women.**

- **Professional women** mostly have **two options** for their personal partners—a **super-supportive partner** or **no partner at all**.
 - Husbands are considered a **key factor in two-thirds of women's decisions to quit the workforce**, often because women had **to fill the parenting vacuum**.
 - Additionally, **skilled women**, who are more likely to participate in the labor market, **face social norms that make them less attractive potential partners** in the marriage market.
- **Older women's challenges accumulate** through the life course. They are less **likely than men to have access to pensions**, even though they can expect to live three years longer.

NEED FOR ATTAINING GENDER EQUALITY

- **Correlation between human development and gender inequality:** No country has reached low inequality in human development without reducing the loss coming from gender inequality.
- **Attaining SDGs: Investing in women's equality** and lifting both their living standards and their empowerment are central to the human development agenda and to achieving SDGs.
 - Not only are **45 targets and 54 specific indicators of SDG framework directly linked to gender**, the effects of these inequalities are linked to all dimensions of development.

POLICIES TO TACKLE SOCIAL NORMS AND WAY FORWARD

- **Policymakers often focus on the tangible**—on laws, policies, spending commitments, public statements and so on. This is driven partly by the desire to measure impact and by sheer impatience with the slow pace of change of social norms.
- **Universal policies can provide basic floors but may not be enough** to eliminate horizontal inequalities rooted in social exclusion and longstanding social norms.
 - **Social exclusion** means a lack of voice, lack of recognition or lack of capacity for active participation. It also means exclusion from decent work, assets, land, opportunities, access to social services or political representation.
- **When horizontal inequalities are large, targeted or affirmative action policies** that directly support disadvantaged groups—as with access to credit, scholarships or certain group quotas in employment and education—**can complement universal policies**.
 - But there is also a risk that **targeted policies further reinforce group differences** since members receive benefits precisely because of their group identity.
 - Targeted policies are particularly relevant **when a group has clearly been disadvantaged historically**.
- **Gender targetted policies:** Since gender remains one of the most prevalent bases of discrimination, **policies addressing deep-seated discriminatory norms** and harmful gender stereotypes, prejudices and practices are key for full realization of women's human rights.
 - Policies can **target social norms directly**. This can be done through **education, by raising awareness or by changing incentives**.
 - Education and raising awareness are both based on providing individuals with new **information and knowledge that can foster different values and behaviours**. Such
- **Examples of gender positive policies:** Policies are important in areas ranging from protection from violence and discrimination to access to public services initiatives.

- **Formal education**, workplace training or media campaigns against gender stereotyping.
- Conditional and unconditional **transfers to girls in school**.
- **Protective mechanisms** to confront school bullying or workplace harassment.
- **Changing incentives** to delay early marriage and reduce teenage pregnancies.
- **Nontransferable parental leave for fathers** so that fathers became more involved in home caregiving.
- **Offering access to affordable childcare** can provide mothers opportunities to make their own work-life decisions, allowing them to engage in paid work.
- **Affirmative action quotas** that bring **gender parity in politics**.
- **Specialized training centres** to build women's capacity in **STEM and entrepreneurship**.
- **Comprehensive sexuality education in all schools** to empower girls and women through awareness of and access to sexual and reproductive health assistance.

CONCLUSION

Gender inequality within households and communities is multidimensional, characterized by a vicious cycle of powerlessness, stigmatization, discrimination, exclusion and material deprivation all reinforcing each other. Social norms can change as economies develop; with changes in communications technology, with new laws, policies or programmes, with social and political activism and with exposure to new ideas and practices through formal and informal channels (education, role models and media).
