

LUISS



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Anno Accademico

*Alla mia roccia e alla mia luce, che mi
hanno insegnato a lottare e non arrendermi mai.*

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INTRODUCTION

Achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls today constitute an opportunity to advance a sustainable tomorrow. Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a foundation for peaceful, prosperous and sustainable societies. Unfortunately, there is still a long way to go to achieve equality between men and women. Beyond the critical need to foster peace, the broad scope of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDG) means that a gender equality lens needs to be applied across the Sustainable Development Goals, including good health and well-being, decent work and economic growth, clean water, sanitation, and Agriculture.

1. Why is agriculture important for Development?

To become a high-income nation is one of every developing nation's primary objective. Along with attaining other crucial development goals like guaranteeing food security and enhancing nutrition, agriculture is crucial in helping to change economies and reach the target. Therefore, agricultural transformation must become a reality in order to eradicate hunger and undernourishment while boosting economic growth. Only a small number of nations—almost all of which began in poverty—have grown to be high-income nations. The ones who succeeded, however, began with agriculture and underwent an economic transition that sped up growth and decreased hunger and malnutrition. For instance, this type of transition led to China's GDP per capita in current US dollars rapidly increasing from \$155 to \$8,123 between 1978 and 2016. As a member of Compact2025's Leadership Council, I'm excited to share the Chinese experience with South-South collaboration to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN, which call for eradicating hunger and undernutrition by 2030. Economic transformation, also known as structural transformation, refers to a country's change in the relative contribution of its sectors and technologies to its overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP): from agriculture to industry and manufacturing, then to a high-income service economy. This shift occurs from traditional technology to modern technology. Agriculture needs to be upgraded for this process to succeed. By raising labor productivity, expanding the agricultural surplus to build capital, and growing exports, agricultural modernization creates the prerequisites for industrialization. By increasing the incomes and productivity of

underprivileged farmers, bringing down food prices, and enhancing nutrition, modernization aids in the achievement of humanitarian aims. Modernizing agriculture can boost human capital by better feeding the populace and preventing long-lasting, crippling effects of hunger, such as child stunting. In general, a child who grew up well-nourished develops better, becomes more productive, and earns greater pay later in life: These youngsters received a nutrition intervention in Guatemala, which resulted in a 46 percent wage gain over those who did not. A positive feedback loop started by better nutrition encourages greater economic transformation: Consumers are better able to acquire manufactured goods and make investments in the modernization of agriculture as a result of higher agricultural productivity and revenue. A surplus of labor migrates from rural farm jobs to urban manufacturing jobs as agriculture becomes more productive. Agriculture's contribution to the GDP and labor force declines as a result of this stage, but agricultural modernization is still essential for ensuring food security and better nutrition as well as for economic change. To make agricultural transformation a reality, two main areas must be addressed. The availability of contemporary technologies must come first. National governments must play a significant role in funding agricultural research and development even though current agricultural innovations can come from both the public and private sectors (R&D). This is because it is challenging for a private firm to completely benefit from the development of such technology. To identify novel agricultural technologies appropriate for regional conditions, national agricultural research systems must collaborate with provincial institutions, and the state needs extension systems to distribute these innovations. Adoption of contemporary technologies is the following crucial issue for agricultural transformation because farmers might not use such technologies even if they are available. Numerous technologies, like high-yielding seeds, demand exacting requirements for water, inputs, and knowledge. Governments must therefore create the necessary conditions, such as enhanced market infrastructure and irrigation, so that farmers can acquire these inputs and sell their agricultural products. In order to have a trained labor force that can learn new technology, manage logistics, and advance each node of the value chain, governments will also need to invest in human capital. Agriculture is the key engine to kickstart the process of structural transformation that characterizes economic development. Another crucial objective of agricultural modernisation and of economic development is the eradication of hunger and malnutrition. While only a few nations have so far been able to achieve high income levels, all of them have the ability to do so, and it all begins with

modernizing agriculture. When you give farmers access to contemporary technologies, they will transform sand into gold, as Nobel Laureate Theodore W. Schultz wrote in his book *Transforming Traditional Agriculture*.

2. Women Land rights

Across developing countries, the agriculture sector is an essential source of economic growth, employment, poverty reduction and food security. Because women play a vital role in agriculture, neglecting gender issues in this sector can be costly, socially, and economically. Strengthening the role of women in agriculture could boost agricultural productivity, income and closing the gender gap; ensuring gender equality in access to productive resource would raise agricultural output in developing countries and help reduce hunger. Indeed, agriculture and women's empowerment are central to the new Sustainable Development Goals. Globally, less than 15 percent of all landholders are women. More specifically, the distribution of women landholder's ranges from 5 percent in middle east and North Africa to 18 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean. In many parts of the world, full participation in society – including the ability to earn an income – is still dependent on owning land. Yet in many of these places, discrimination against women's rights to property and tenure remains the norm – and the existing policies and legal frameworks in these regions often provide little recourse for women to realize these rights.

Securing women's land rights does more than just make them more prosperous. It's also linked to the greater well-being of their families, especially their children. Recent studies show, for example, that women tend to invest more of their earnings than men into the well-being of their families, especially in areas such as child health, nutrition, and education. Investing in women's equal access to land and assets, then, is a direct investment in the future of agriculture production and food security – as well as a crucial step towards both achieving gender equality (SDG 5) and ending hunger (SDG 2). When women's propriety rights are guaranteed, sustainable positive change is assured.

However, this thesis will bring forward the argument that women land rights are not enough to guarantee full absolute access of women in agriculture without barriers or obstacles.

This research presents the role of women in agriculture and explores the impact of women land rights on a sustainable and equitable agriculture and what are the results in agriculture when guarantying more propriety rights to women and why this needs to be integrated with other fundamental elements such as education, social norms, and women's health. The study will use a two-part methodology. The first part provides theoretical background based on existing literature on Gender Equality and Agriculture and related information on women land rights in the global south, which has been facilitated by accessing resources from the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) Library. The second part of this study evaluates the empirical evidence; more in detail it will use two case studies where matrilineal society has been shaping society for centuries.

3. Why Matrilineal Societies?

I chose to analyze matrilineal societies to conduct my research as women land right have not been implemented thanks to the advocacy of international organizations but because of their traditions and culture.

Although biological perpetuation is universally identical, cultural perpetuation varies and is unique to each group. It follows that a family is made up of the older and younger generations, with the members of the two generations determined by the family structure that is adhered to, all of which is prescribed by culture. When fathers give the descent, succession, and inheritance to sons, it is clear that the family system is patrilineal. On the other hand, the family system is matrilineal when mothers pass on descent, succession, and inheritance to daughters.

4. Methodology

For the purpose of this research, I will use the most similar case design, which consists in analyzing cases that are similar but the outcome (or dependent variable) is different.

I conducted in-depth research into the different matrilineal societies around the world; I decided to narrow down my research to rural matrilineal societies in countries where the economy of the country is mainly based on agriculture and the GDP is constantly growing. In addition to this I chose two matrilineal societies where there has been no intervention of

International Organizations. As a result, I chose **West Sumatra**, Indonesia and **Zomba**, Malawi. Evidence from the study of these two countries show that in in Zomba gender equality in agriculture in guaranteed, at least at a higher level, whilst in West Sumatra women still face many barriers to access agriculture. Being both matrilineal societies land rights are guaranteed in both cases.

What will emerge from the second chapter's analysis of these two countries is that the element which is divergent in these two cases is Religion; as a result, the third chapter will make an analysis of the intersection of Religion, Social norms and gender roles and the effect it has on women access to Agriculture.

Chapter 1

Women Land Rights – The key element for a sustainable future

1. A sustainable future

According to historical evidence, the word "sustainable development" (hereinafter as "SD") originally appeared in the World Charter for Nature in the context of environmental issues¹. These concerns were addressed in "Our Common Future"² and further elaborated in the Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit in 1992³. That might be viewed as an effective attempt to combine the two paradigms of sustained economic expansion and effective environmental and natural resource protection, which were powerfully challenged in *The Limits to Growth*⁴. Following this, the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995⁵ stressed SD's key role in securing global social development and effectively added the "third pillar" to the current definition of SD endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002⁶ and many subsequent statements and documents. It was recently fully embraced by the Rio + 20 outcome document "The Future We Want"⁷. As evidenced by the title of the summit's main topic: Green economy in the framework of sustainable development and poverty eradication, the social pillar received significant attention in this paper. Information, namely quantitative indicators, have been obvious from the beginning of the SD notion that will play a significant role.

Already Agenda 21 (Chapter 40) called for "indicators that show us if we are creating a more sustainable world"; since then, many indicators, indicator sets and dashboards, compound (composite and aggregated) indicators and indices have been introduced. However,

¹ Burhenne, Wolfgang E., and Will A. Irwin. *World Charter for Nature*. E. Schmidt, 1983.

² WCED, S. W. S. (1987). World commission on environment and development. *Our common future*, 17(1), 1-91.

³ UN. (1993). Agenda 21: Earth Summit—The United Nations Programme of Action from Rio.

⁴ Meadows, D. H., Meadows, D. L., & Randers, J. (1972). Club of Rome, *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*. Universe, New York.

⁵ UN. (1995). Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development. *World Summit for Social Development, held in March 1995 in Copenhagen*.

⁶ Laubner, T. (2002). World summit on sustainable development, johannesburg, south africa, 26 august-4 september 2002: People, planet and prosperity. *German YB Int'l L.*, 45, 417.

⁷ UN. (2012). Realizing the Future We Want for All. Report to the Secretary-General. *United Nations*.

notwithstanding all the government and organization efforts at the local, state, and federal levels – encompassing long-term initiatives like the European Commission's ‘Beyond GDP’⁸ and the OECD's ‘Measuring the Progress of Societies’⁹– There is no theoretically agreed-upon method for measuring sustainability or current well-being¹⁰. The major worldwide assessment of countries' progress was supported by an indicator-based methodology towards Millennium Development Goals, and now towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹¹.

The governments of Colombia and Guatemala are credited with coming up with the concept of global goals backed by specific indicators, which was formally unveiled during the Rio + 20 Conference. The SDGs, as they currently stand, are a global collection of objectives, benchmarks, and metrics that UN member states will use to guide their agendas and policies over the course of the next 15 years. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which governments committed to in 2000, are expanded upon by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹². The mandate to develop the proposal on the SDGs was included in Conference Outcome Document, ‘The Future We Want’¹³, which incorporated the request to create an Open Working Group (OWG) with the task of developing the set of SDGs. The OWG, which was created by the UN General Assembly, produced the SDGs in the “Zero Draft” of July 2014¹⁴, and approved at the UNGA's 68th session in the fall of 2014. The goals are made tangible by targets – there are 169 targets (including 62 targets on the means of implementation) ranging from 5 to 12 targets per goal. The early draft list of indicators was based, among other things, on the recommendations of the OWG and the findings of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development of the UN Secretary-General. The SD Solutions Network, the Conference of European Statisticians, and the MDGs indicators were the three indicator sets around which it was created.

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/beyond_gdp/index_en.html

⁹ <http://www.oecd.org/statistics/measuringwell-beingandprogress.htm>

¹⁰ Stiglitz, J. E., Sen, A., & Fitoussi, J. P. (2009). Report by the commission on the measurement of economic performance and social progress.

¹¹ Sachs, J. D. (2012). From millennium development goals to sustainable development goals. *The lancet*, 379(9832), 2206-2211.

¹² Evans, A., & Steven, D. (2012). *Sustainable Development Goals: A Useful Outcome from Rio+ 20?*. Center on International Cooperation.

¹³ UN. (2012). Realizing the Future We Want for All. Report to the Secretary-General. *United Nations*.

¹⁴ <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

2. The Goals

The goals set for sustainable development have a global validity; they concern and involve all countries and components of society, from private companies to the public sector, from civil society to communication and culture operators. They take into account the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic, social and ecological - in a balanced way and with the aim to end poverty, fight against inequality, tackle climate change, build peaceful societies that respect human rights.

Goal 1: no poverty

Extreme poverty rates have fallen by more than half since 1990. While this is a remarkable achievement, one in five people in developing areas still live on less than \$ 1.25¹⁵ a day and there are many millions of people who earn just over that amount every day. In addition, many people are at risk of falling back into poverty. Poverty goes far beyond just lack of income and resources to ensure a sustainable living. Among its manifestations are hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, discrimination and social exclusion, as well as a lack of participation in decision-making processes. Economic growth must be inclusive¹⁶ to create sustainable jobs and promote equality.

Goal 2: zero hunger

If managed well, agriculture, forestry and fishing can provide nutritious food for all and generate adequate incomes, supporting people-centered rural development and protecting the environment at the same time. However, nowadays, our soils, rivers, oceans, forests and our biodiversity are rapidly degrading¹⁷. Climate change is putting increasing pressure on the resources we depend on, increasing the risks associated with environmental disasters such as droughts and floods¹⁸. Many rural women are no longer able to support themselves with the

¹⁵ Ki-Moon, B. (2013). The millennium development goals report 2013. *United Nations Pubns*, 365, 366.

¹⁶ Ianchovichina, E., & Gable, S. (2012). What is inclusive growth. *Commodity Price Volatility and Inclusive Growth in Low-Income Countries*. Washington, DC: IMF, 147-60.

¹⁷ Shlisky, A., Waugh, J., Gonzalez, P., Gonzalez, M., Manta, M., Santoso, H., ... & Fulks, W. (2007). Fire, ecosystems and people: threats and strategies for global biodiversity conservation. *Arlington: The Nature Conservancy*.

¹⁸ Arnell, N. W. (1999). Climate change and global water resources. *Global environmental change*, 9, S31-S49.

proceeds from their land and are therefore forced to move to cities¹⁹ in search of opportunities. A profound change in the global agricultural and food system is needed if we want to feed the 795 million people who suffer from hunger²⁰ today and the other 2 billion people who will inhabit our planet in 2050²¹. The food and agricultural sectors offer key solutions for development and are vital for the elimination of hunger and poverty.

Goal 3: good health and well-being

To achieve sustainable development, it is essential to ensure a healthy life and promote the well-being of all at all ages. Great progress has been made in increasing life expectancy and reducing some of the most common causes of death. Significant progress has been made in access to clean water and hygiene, in the reduction of malaria, tuberculosis, polio and the spread of HIV / AIDS²². Despite this, many other efforts are needed to completely eradicate a wide variety of diseases and address numerous and diverse health issues, whether recent or persistent over time.

Goal 4: quality education

Quality education is the basis for improving people's lives and achieving sustainable development. Important results have been achieved in terms of increasing access to education at all levels and increasing enrollment levels in schools, especially for women and girls²³. The basic level of literacy has improved significantly²⁴, but efforts need to be doubled to achieve even better results towards achieving the goals for universal education. For example, equality between girls and boys in primary education has been achieved worldwide²⁵, but few countries have achieved this at all educational levels.

¹⁹ Smith, P. C., Khoo, S. E., & Go, S. P. (2019). The migration of women to cities: A comparative perspective. In *Women in the Cities of Asia* (pp. 15-35). Routledge.

²⁰ Von Grebmer, K., Bernstein, J., Nabarro, D., Prasai, N., Amin, S., Yohannes, Y., ... & Thompson, J. (2016). *2016 Global hunger index: Getting to zero hunger*. Intl Food Policy Res Inst.

²¹ Roser, M., & Rodés-Guirao, L. (2013). Future population growth. *Our world in data*.

²² Khalifa, M., & Bidaisee, S. (2018). The importance of clean water. *Sch J Appl Sci Res*, 1(7), 17-20.

²³ Unterhalter, E. (2005). Fragmented frameworks? Researching women, gender, education and development. *Beyond access: Transforming policy and practice for gender equality in education*, 15-35.

²⁴ Roser, M., & Ortiz-Ospina, E. (2016). Literacy. *Our World in Data*.

²⁵ Subrahmanian, R. (2005). Gender equality in education: Definitions and measurements. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 25(4), 395-407.

Goal 5: gender equality

Women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence all over the world.

Gender equality is not just a fundamental human right, but a necessary condition for a prosperous, sustainable and peaceful world. Ensuring women and girls equal access to education, medical care, decent work, as well as representation in decision-making, political and economic processes, will promote sustainable economies²⁶, which will benefit societies and humanity as a whole.

Goal 6: clean water and sanitation

Accessible and clean water is an essential aspect of the world we want to live in. Our planet has sufficient drinking water to achieve this. But due to poor infrastructure or poor economic management, every year millions of people, most of them children, die from diseases due to inadequate water supplies, health services and hygiene levels. Water shortages and poor quality, together with inadequate sanitation systems, have a negative impact on food security²⁷, livelihood choices and educational opportunities for poor families around the world. Drought affects some of the poorest countries in the world, exacerbating hunger and malnutrition. By 2050, at least one in four people are likely to be affected by a lasting or recurring shortage of drinking water²⁸.

Goal 7: affordable and clean energy

Energy is a central element for almost all the most important challenges and opportunities that the world is facing today. Whether it is for work, security, climate change, food production or increased income, access to energy is essential²⁹. Sustainable energy is an opportunity - it transforms life, the economy and the planet.

Goal 8: decent work and economic growth

²⁶ Chen, D. H. (2004). Gender equality and economic development. *The Role for Information and Communication Technologies. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper*, 3285, 28.

²⁷ Misra, A. K. (2014). Climate change and challenges of water and food security. *International Journal of Sustainable Built Environment*, 3(1), 153-165.

²⁸ Connor, R. (2015). *The United Nations world water development report 2015: water for a sustainable world* (Vol. 1). UNESCO publishing.

²⁹ Pachauri, S., & Spreng, D. (2004). Energy use and energy access in relation to poverty. *Economic and Political weekly*, 271-278.

In many places, having a job does not guarantee the possibility of escaping poverty³⁰. This slow and uneven progress requires us to reconsider and reorganize our economic and social policies aimed at eliminating poverty. A prolonged lack of decent job opportunities³¹, insufficient investment and under-consumption lead to an erosion of the basic social contract at the foundation of democratic societies, according to which we all must contribute to progress.

Goal 9: industry innovation and infrastructure

Investments in infrastructure are crucial for achieving sustainable development and for strengthening the capacities of communities in many countries. It has long been recognized that productivity and income growth, as well as better outcomes in health and education, require investment in infrastructure³². Inclusive and sustainable industrial development is the first source of income generation; it allows a rapid and sustained increase in people's living standards and provides technological solutions for an industrialization that respects the environment³³.

Goal 10: reduced inequalities

The international community has made significant progress in lifting people out of poverty. However, inequality persists and large inequalities remain in access to health, education and other services. Furthermore, while the inequality of income between different countries seems to have narrowed, the inequality within the same country has increased³⁴. There is a growing consensus that economic growth is not enough to reduce poverty if it is not an inclusive growth. To reduce inequality, policies should be universal and pay attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations.

Goal 11: sustainable cities and communities

³⁰ Ramadhani, F., & Putra, F. S. (2019). Having a Job Is Not Enough to Escape Poverty: Case of Indonesian Working Pooors. *IPTEK Journal of Proceedings Series*, (6), 58-64.

³¹ MacNaughton, G., & Frey, D. F. (2015). Decent work, human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals. *Geo. J. Int'l L.*, 47, 607.

³² Ali, I., & Pernia, E. M. (2003). Infrastructure and poverty reduction-What is the connection?.

³³ Thomé, A. M. T., Ceryno, P. S., Scavarda, A., & Remmen, A. (2016). Sustainable infrastructure: A review and a research agenda. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 184, 143-156.

³⁴ Kuznets, S. (2019). Economic growth and income inequality. In *The gap between rich and poor* (pp. 25-37). Routledge.

Cities are centers for new ideas, for commerce, culture, science, productivity, social development and much more. At best, cities have enabled people to improve their social and economic status. However, many challenges persist in maintaining urban centers as places of work and prosperity, while not damaging land and resources³⁵. The challenges posed by the urban environment include traffic, the lack of funds to provide basic services, the scarcity of adequate housing, the degradation of infrastructure³⁶.

The challenges that cities face can be overcome in order to allow them to continue to thrive and grow, improving the use of resources and reducing pollution and poverty. The future we want includes cities that offer opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transport and much more.

Goal 12: responsible consumption and production

Sustainable consumption and production means promoting resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, as well as ensuring access to basic services, decent and environmentally friendly jobs and a better quality of life for all. Its implementation contributes to the implementation of overall development plans, to the reduction of future economic, environmental and social costs, to the improvement of economic competitiveness and to the reduction of poverty³⁷.

Goal 13: climate action

Climate change affects countries on all continents. It is disrupting national economies, with high costs for people, communities and countries today, and which will be even more serious tomorrow.

People are experiencing the significant impacts of climate change, such as changing weather conditions, rising sea levels and other even more extreme weather phenomena³⁸. Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are the driving force behind climate change and continue

³⁵ Caprotti, F., Cowley, R., Datta, A., Broto, V. C., Gao, E., Georgeson, L., ... & Joss, S. (2017). The New Urban Agenda: key opportunities and challenges for policy and practice. *Urban research & practice*, 10(3), 367-378.

³⁶ Yamasaki, K., & Yamada, T. (2022). A framework to assess the local implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 11. *Sustainable Cities and Society*, 84, 104002.

³⁷ Leal Filho, W., Azul, A. M., Brandli, L., Özuyar, P. G., & Wall, T. (Eds.). (2020). *Responsible Consumption and Production*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

³⁸ Hitz, S., & Smith, J. (2004). Estimating global impacts from climate change. *Global Environmental Change*, 14(3), 201-218.

to increase³⁹. They are currently at their highest level in history. If no action is taken, the average temperature of the earth's surface is projected to rise over the 21st century and likely to rise by 3 ° C this century⁴⁰ - some areas of the planet are set for even greater global warming. The poorest and most vulnerable people are the most exposed.

Goal 14: life below water

The oceans of the world influence the global systems that make the Earth a livable place for mankind. Rainwater, the water we drink, the weather, the climate, our coasts, much of our food and even the oxygen present in the air we breathe are elements ultimately supplied and regulated by the sea⁴¹. Throughout history, oceans and seas have been and continue to be vital channels for trade and transportation⁴². Careful management of this fundamental global resource is the basis of a sustainable future.

Goal 15: life on land

Forests cover 30% of the earth's surface⁴³ and, in addition to providing safe food and shelter, they are essential for combating climate change, and for the protection of biodiversity and the homes of indigenous peoples. Thirteen million hectares of forest are lost every year, while persistent land deterioration has led to the desertification of 3.6 billion hectares⁴⁴. Deforestation and desertification - caused by human activities and climate change - pose considerable challenges in terms of sustainable development and have affected the lives and livelihoods of millions of people struggling against poverty. Much effort is being made to manage forests and combat desertification.

Goal 16: peace and justice strong institutions

³⁹ Collins, W., Colman, R., Haywood, J., Manning, M. R., & Mote, P. (2007). The physical science behind climate change. *Scientific American*, 297(2), 64-73.

⁴⁰ Rummukainen, M. (2012). Changes in climate and weather extremes in the 21st century. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, 3(2), 115-129.

⁴¹ Nordquist, M. H., Moore, J. N., & Long, R. (Eds.). (2018). *The Marine Environment and United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14*. Brill.

⁴² Peters, H. J., & Mundial, B. (1989). *Seatrade, logistics, and transport* (No. 6). Washington DC: World Bank.

⁴³ Palo, M., & Uusivuori, J. (Eds.). (2012). *World forests, society and environment* (Vol. 1). Springer Science & Business Media.

⁴⁴ Interesting facts and figures on desertification. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000193851.locale=en>

Goal number 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals is dedicated to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, and also aims to provide universal access to justice, and to build responsible and effective institutions at all levels⁴⁵.

Goal 17: partnerships for the goals

To be successful, the sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society⁴⁶. These inclusive partnerships, built on principles and values, on a common vision and shared goals, which put people and the planet at the center, are needed at the global, regional, national and local levels.

3. Agriculture relevance to the sustainability goals

The interdependence between agriculture, development, and the environment for the purposes of global sustainability is widely reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals system: primarily in Goal 2 but also in the Goals 5, 6, 8, 12, 13 and 15.

The role of agriculture for the compliance with the 2030 UN Agenda is uniquely powerful; the environmental impacts⁴⁷, the link with peace and stability⁴⁸ and the interconnection with the sustenance of the poorest people in the world⁴⁹. Mentioning how cross relational agriculture is, turns out to be necessary to understand how fundamental agriculture is for the global development agenda with a major impact on the poorest and most vulnerable people. The environmental aspect of agriculture illustrates the urgency of switching to a more sustainable system. It has been confirmed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) that “20–25 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions are directly caused by

⁴⁵ Goetz, A. M., & Jenkins, R. (2016). Gender, security, and governance: the case of Sustainable Development Goal 16. *Gender & Development*, 24(1), 127-137.

⁴⁶ Stafford-Smith, M., Griggs, D., Gaffney, O., Ullah, F., Reyers, B., Kanie, N., ... & O'Connell, D. (2017). Integration: the key to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. *Sustainability science*, 12(6), 911-919.

⁴⁷ Canter, L. W. (2018). *Environmental impact of agricultural production activities*. CRC Press.

⁴⁸ Läderach, P., Pacillo, G., Thornton, P., Osorio, D., & Smith, D. (2021). Food systems for peace and security in a climate crisis. *The Lancet Planetary Health*, 5(5), e249-e250.

⁴⁹ Fan, S. G., & Cho, E. E. (2021). Paths out of poverty: International experience. *Journal of Integrative Agriculture*, 20(4), 857-867.

agriculture, including deforestation”⁵⁰ and they could rise by another 30% by 2050⁵¹. Agriculture is equally responsible for the loss of natural resources in addition to its involvement in climate change. It is clear that the survival of our terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems rests on the success of agriculture given that it consumes over half of the planet's vegetated land and most of the fresh water that is available, using around 85% of it for irrigation⁵². Already, agriculture contributes to the loss of between 20,000 and 50,000 kilometers of potentially productive lands year, and agricultural expansion is by far the main driver of tropical deforestation. As a result, 33 percent of the world's land is already extensively degraded⁵³. Approximately two-thirds of the world's population, however, reside in regions that experience severe water shortages for at least one month of the year. If water resources are not managed effectively, it is predicted that by 2050, 52 percent of humanity will be living in severe water shortages⁵⁴. If the current trajectory of unsustainable agricultural practices continues, a number of global trends, including extreme population growth, the rising frequency of natural disasters, the widespread occurrence of conflict, and shifting consumption patterns tied to economic growth, make the already bleak picture for the environment in the future even more bleak.

Failure to effectively invest in sustainable agriculture would also jeopardize any efforts to ensure the health and stability of society in every way, beyond the implications for the health and security of the planet. Climate change causes an increase in the frequency of natural catastrophes and unpredictable weather, which leads to the destruction of livelihoods and the eviction of populations. These causes of unrest increase hunger and poverty, which are fundamental causes of unrest and war. They also heighten conflicts over increasingly depleted natural resources. All of this, in turn, undermines the institutions' capacity and the implementation of good governance, both of which are essential for long-term growth. Conflict also depletes the physical and human resources necessary for a sound food system

⁵⁰ UNDP and UNRISD (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development). 2017. *Global Trends: Challenges and Opportunities in the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

⁵¹ Michalopoulos, S. 2016, April 18. “Agriculture Holds Key to UN Sustainable Development Goals.”

⁵² Searchinger, T., Waite, R., Hanson, C., Ranganathan, J., Dumas, P., & Matthews, E. (2018). *Creating a sustainable food future*.

⁵³ Mollier, L., Seyler, F., Chotte, J. L., & Ringler, C. (2017). *End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture: SDG 2. A Guide to SDG Interactions: From Science to Implementation; ICSU: Paris, France*.

⁵⁴ IFPRI (International Food Policy Research Institute). 2014. *2014 Global Nutrition Report: Actions and Accountability to Accelerate the World's Progress on Nutrition*. Washington, DC.

and resilient communities through the displacement it creates⁵⁵. The connection between agriculture and peace and stability seems all the more noteworthy given the rise in the number and severity of conflicts, crises, and natural disasters, as demonstrated by the 20 million people in four countries who are currently facing severe food insecurity and impending famine in what has grown to be the largest humanitarian crisis since World War II⁵⁶. It is important to understand that, despite the fact that food insecurity has received a lot of attention in global discourses on the humanitarian-development-peace and security nexus—to the point where some claim it may end up being the main source of conflict in this century—it is only one of many factors related to agriculture⁵⁷. In addition to connections through food emergencies, links between agriculture and food systems and, more generally, poverty alleviation, governance, and resource scarcity or abundance highlight their potential to have an impact on a variety of variables that start, continue, or end conflict, including post-conflict reconstruction efforts⁵⁸.

The scale of agriculture's current and potential influence is similarly illustrated through its connection to livelihoods, just as agriculture plays a crucial role in achieving the environmental goals of the SDGs, without which it will be impossible to achieve the sustained peace and prosperity of societies. The ability of the sector to operationalize the pledge to leave no one behind, one of the most difficult yet essential components for the implementation of the SDGs, is notably highlighted by this pathway. It is especially illuminating of agriculture's capacity to enact change for those who are most difficult to reach to examine the relationship between poverty and agriculture through the prism of livelihoods. Similar arguments might be made based on different means by which agriculture contributes to human progress, the most obvious of which is that it provides food and nutrition. The typical profile of those who work in agriculture or rely on it for their livelihood is the most illuminating evidence for this claim. Today, the majority of the poor reside in rural areas and work in agriculture, accounting

⁵⁵ Ibid 54.

⁵⁶ FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). 2006. *Rapid Growth of Selected Asian Economies: Lessons and Implications for Agriculture and Food Security*. Policy Assistance Series 1/1. Bangkok: FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

⁵⁷ ICSU (International Council for Science). 2017. *A Guide to SDG Interactions: From Science to Implementation*, edited by D. J. Griggs, M. Nilsson, A. Stevance, and D. McCollum. Paris.

⁵⁸ Taeb, M. 2004. *Agriculture for Peace: Promoting Agricultural Development in Support of Peace*. Tokyo: United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability.

for about 80% of the extremely poor⁵⁹. The majority of this group are smallholder farmers who are unable to access the same resources and markets as larger producers and are hence unable to maintain the bare minimum level of sustenance. Around 2.5 billion people depend on small farms for their livelihoods, and 80 percent of the food produced in Asia and Africa south of the Sahara comes from these farms⁶⁰. It is obvious that focusing on agriculture, especially its role in contributing to inclusive rural transformation, is essential for the success of poverty eradication policies and strategies just by looking at the demographics of the populations mainly employed by the industry. Given these connections to employment, agriculture's power goes beyond addressing variables connected to income that contribute to inequality and exclusion, even while it serves as a key engine for boosting the economic inclusion of people who have been left the most behind by progress. It is possible to see this once more in the demographics of those who rely on agriculture the most. This reveals a web of interconnected vulnerabilities rooted in political, economic, identity, and geographic dimensions of inequality, creating pockets of marginalization and exclusion among the poorest of the poor. Age and gender, for instance, are identity traits that have a significant impact on farmers' productivity and income potential, while geographic factors like drought or climate shocks exacerbate these identity-based or political and economic inequalities, having the greatest adverse effects on those with the fewest resources and adaptive abilities. As a result of the significant effects that coordinated investments and policies to address the unique challenges faced by smallholder farmers as a target group will have on the accomplishment of national social and economic development priorities, there are additional opportunities to reduce inequalities by taking into account the variety of disadvantaged groups within this larger category. With sociocultural norms and policy environments dictating access to resources and preventing women farmers from achieving the same productive capacity and income-earning potential as men, despite making up 43% of the world's producers, gender inequalities undoubtedly represent the most pervasive form of inequality⁶¹. Aging is a significant factor in social isolation and economic disadvantage, and it has an

⁵⁹ IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development). 2016. *Rural Development Report 2016: Fostering Inclusive Rural Transformation*. Rome.

⁶⁰ Ibid 59.

⁶¹ Ibid 54.

impact on rural residents' productivity. Therefore, it is crucial to improve older populations' well-being through agriculture⁶². Children are frequently pulled out of school to work on subsistence farms or to make money for the family; this highlights the potential to improve educational outcomes and break cycles of poverty through interventions in agriculture. It is also striking that 60% of all child laborers worldwide in the age range of 5 to 17 work in agriculture. Children are frequently pulled out of school to work on subsistence farms or to make money for the family; this highlights the potential to improve educational outcomes and break cycles of poverty through interventions in agriculture. It is also striking that 60% of all child laborers worldwide in the age range of 5 to 17 work in agriculture⁶³. Strengthening agriculture livelihoods with an eye toward equity can therefore go a long way in eradicating many of the cultural forces that continue to prevent some groups from reaching their full social capacity.

4. Agriculture and economic growth in developing countries

Agriculture, which accounts for one-fourth of the GDP in emerging nations, is a significant force behind accelerated economic growth, especially when used to improve rural regions, create jobs in both rural and urban areas, and diversify employment⁶⁴. Although agriculture plays a significant role in the expansion of national economies, this does not ensure that the advantages would be distributed equitably among the population. This highlights the importance of agriculture to Agenda 2030 and the necessity of its contribution to the achievement of SDG 1, which calls for the eradication of poverty in all of its forms everywhere by 2030. Agriculture has a multifaceted potential to contribute to pro-poor growth and poverty reduction while also boosting GDP growth. There is strong evidence to support the notion that agricultural growth is, on average, five times more effective than other sectors in resource-poor low-income countries and eleven times more effective than other sectors in

⁶² FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). 2017. *The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges*. Rome.

⁶³ ICSU (International Council for Science). 2017. *A Guide to SDG Interactions: From Science to Implementation*, edited by D. J. Griggs, M. Nilsson, A. Stevance, and D. McCollum. Paris.

⁶⁴ FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). 2016b. *Food and Agriculture: Key to Achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Rome.

Africa south of the Sahara in alleviating poverty⁶⁵. The combination of direct and indirect economic development pathways provided by the sector results in this effect. On one side, the direct relationship between agriculture and rural livelihoods helps to directly reduce poverty by increasing farm incomes. On the other side, the indirect effects of job creation outside of agriculture help to lower food prices for low-income consumers, especially through the increased productivity of food⁶⁶. By guaranteeing that individuals who would not typically be able to participate in or profit from market integration and investment in agriculture are able to do so, a focus on pro-poor growth policies amplifies these direct and indirect advantages. These measures will increase the economic chances for the poorest groups and address the underlying causes of migration. They will also stimulate the economic sectors where the poor are employed⁶⁷.

5. Gender Equality and Agriculture for a sustainable future

Due to its essential role in human growth, gender equality serves as a facilitator and an accelerator for the SDGs, much like proper nutrition does. As long as half of humankind continues to be denied access to basic human rights and opportunities, sustainable growth is unachievable⁶⁸. However, gender disparities continue to be the most prevalent type of inequality restricting growth across all nations as complex hurdles ingrained in the social, cultural, political, and economic landscapes of civilizations. A focus on agrifood systems, and rural development more generally, can produce significant results for women's empowerment and, in turn, for the reduction of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and environmental risks. These outcomes are possible because they have the potential to directly address several dimensions of gender inequality for large segments of the population. Closing the gender gap in agricultural productivity by addressing the resource and policy barriers that female smallholders encounter is one of the most effective ways to make this impact.

⁶⁵ FAO and IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development). 2013. *Sustainable Agriculture*. Technical Support Team Issues Brief. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and United Nations Development Programme.

⁶⁶ World Bank. 2008. "Agriculture and Poverty Reduction." In *World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development*. Washington, DC.

⁶⁷ FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). 2017. *The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges*. Rome.

⁶⁸ Agarwal, B. (2018). Gender equality, food security and the sustainable development goals. *Current opinion in environmental sustainability*, 34, 26-32.

Regardless of gender, the limitations faced by smallholder farmers provide serious development obstacles. Smallholders account for more than 90% of the 570 million farms in the world and produce the majority of the food, but they also account for the majority of the world's impoverished and hungry people, with 84 percent of them farming on less than 2 hectares of land⁶⁹. Despite smallholders producing 40% of the world's food, monetary support and finances generally favor large amounts of land⁷⁰. Due to gender disparities that affect how power and resources are distributed and, consequently, how to escape poverty, women within this underprivileged group disproportionately suffer the social and economic effects of these barriers. Between 60 and 80 percent of food is produced by women, but they have less access than males to vital agricultural resources including land, credit, and cutting-edge technology. They also have less access to services that affect productivity and prospects for earning money, less decision-making authority, and fewer opportunities for market integration⁷¹. As a result, women generally perform worse than males on average in every gender and development parameter, including a greater risk of undernourishment and hunger. It is hardly shocking that over 60% of persons who experience hunger are female⁷². Targeting this support towards women would have the biggest multiplier benefits for sustainable development, even if it is obvious how important empowering smallholder farmers is for rural development, food production, and their repercussions on all other areas of development. Changing the policy environment and legal frameworks to remove obstacles to women owning land and other resources, as well as increasing investments in rural infrastructure and labor-saving technologies that can help address the additional time burdens that women face due to unpaid care and household work, are all ways to start empowering rural women in agriculture⁷³. Particularly, statutory and customary rules in underdeveloped nations severely restrict the enabling environment for women farmers, prohibiting them from owning property, as evidenced by the fact that barely 10–20 percent of landholders in developing countries are female⁷⁴. The social norms and legislative frameworks that surround it have an impact on how

⁶⁹ Ibid 64.

⁷⁰ Opoku, A. (2019). Biodiversity and the built environment: Implications for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). *Resources, conservation and recycling*, 141, 1-7.

⁷¹ Irish Aid. 2017. "Why Gender Equality Matters." <https://www.irishaid.ie/what-we-do/our-priority-areas/gender-equality/gender-overview/>.

⁷² FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). 2017. *The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges*. Rome.

⁷³ UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). 2016a. *Human Development Report 2016: Human Development for Everyone*. Washington, DC: Communications Development Incorporated.

⁷⁴ Ibid 73.

power is distributed and how likely it is for women to become economically independent. Up to 30% of women are prohibited from making financial decisions for their own households⁷⁵. Therefore, more inclusive policies would go a long way in enabling rural women to participate in making decisions that have an impact on their lives and allowing them access to the basic resources required to reach the same level of output and economic opportunity in agriculture as men⁷⁶. Interventions that promote women's access to food value chains and marketplaces would expand their commercial potential as a complementary strategy to removing governmental barriers. This entails giving women the instruments, information, and practical know-how to manage their finances and risks, connecting them with high-value markets, boosting their resilience to shocks, encouraging their leadership in farmers' organizations, and expanding their access to investment opportunities, extension services, and capacity development. In addition to directly affecting social and economic conditions at the individual and household levels, the results of these policy measures and other interventions to support women smallholders would also have a trickle-down effect on significant portions of both rural and urban populations through increased agricultural productivity and inclusive economic growth. According to estimates based on country statistics, closing the gender gap in agriculture might raise economic growth by 2.5 to 4 percent⁷⁷. When efforts are taken to incorporate women in resource management, such growth can also result in more environmentally friendly outcomes. The ramifications for achieving SDG 2 would also be considerable, as it is predicted that if women and men had access to the same resources, the number of hungry people in the world might be decreased by up to 150 million⁷⁸. More specifically, given the childcare responsibilities frequently taken on by women, there is a greater likelihood that household income increases, along with increased decision-making power for women, would result in better nutritional outcomes for kids; generally speaking, it could also cause rates of undernourishment to decline by 12–17 percent⁷⁹.

⁷⁵ Ibid 73.

⁷⁶ Ibid 59.

⁷⁷ HLPF (High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development). 2017a. *2017 HLPF Thematic Review of SDG2: End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and Improved Nutrition, and Promote Sustainable Agriculture*.

⁷⁸ Sekhran, N. 2017. *Biodiversity as a Catalyst for Sustainable Development: Staying within Our Planetary Food Comfort Zone*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

⁷⁹ Ibid 77.

6. Women's land rights

Land is frequently the most significant household asset for rural women and men, boosting agricultural productivity and ensuring food security and nutrition. Evidence demonstrates a substantial correlation between stable land tenure and higher levels of agricultural investment and production, and therefore with higher incomes and improved economic wellbeing. Secure land rights for women are frequently linked to better results for them and their families, such as increased bargaining power in the home and community, improved child nutrition, and decreased gender-based violence. Men and women, however, often lack proper access to secure land rights in many parts of the world. In this aspect, women are disadvantaged more than males. For emphasizing differences in land rights between men and women, trustworthy data on land that is sex-disaggregated is essential. This aids in the establishment of better policies and the tracking of the development of gender equality in land tenure and agriculture. There is still a dearth of knowledge on the data that are available, what data are needed, and what they can tell us about women's land rights, despite the fact that significant efforts are being made to collect better and more pertinent data on land rights. For conceiving and measuring gender disparities in terms of access to land, there are two key factors. The rights of persons to sell, bequeath, manage, or control the economic production from their property are among the bundles of land rights that are the subject of the first dimension. Despite their differences, these various land rights concepts are frequently used in the same sentence. The indicators used to accurately depict the disparities in land rights between men and women are the focus of the second dimension. Whatever the indicator type, the data consistently demonstrate that women have significantly fewer land rights than men. All aspects of land rights related to agricultural land, including ownership, management, transfer, and economic rights, are consistent with this. Less than 15% of all landowners worldwide are women. From 5% in the Middle East and North Africa to 18% in Latin America and the Caribbean, women own land in various proportions. All landowners are much more male than female. Less than 20% of landowners worldwide are women, while slightly more than 50% of landowners worldwide are women in Malawi. When it comes to having a formal document showing their ownership of their plots or having their names on the paperwork, women reported owners are less likely than males to do so.

7. Women land Rights Data

Indicators used to analyze the gender disparity in land rights across nations and regions are explained in this section along with some of the most important figures. A wide range of measures are suggested because no one indicator can capture the complete picture of women's land rights.

A breakdown of agricultural landowners by gender

This indicator calculates the proportion of male and female agricultural landowners in relation to all agricultural landowners. With the knowledge that they might not actually be the holdings' legal owners, the indicator concentrates on the primary managers of agricultural holdings. The Graph below depicts the geographic distribution of women who own agricultural land. Large disparities between areas and across nations within the same region are highlighted by the map. Compared to men, women are significantly less likely to own land. Around the world, only 15% of those who own agricultural land are women, compared to 85% of men⁸⁰. Only about 5% of all landowners are women in North Africa and the Near East, where there are the greatest gender disparities in access to land⁸¹.

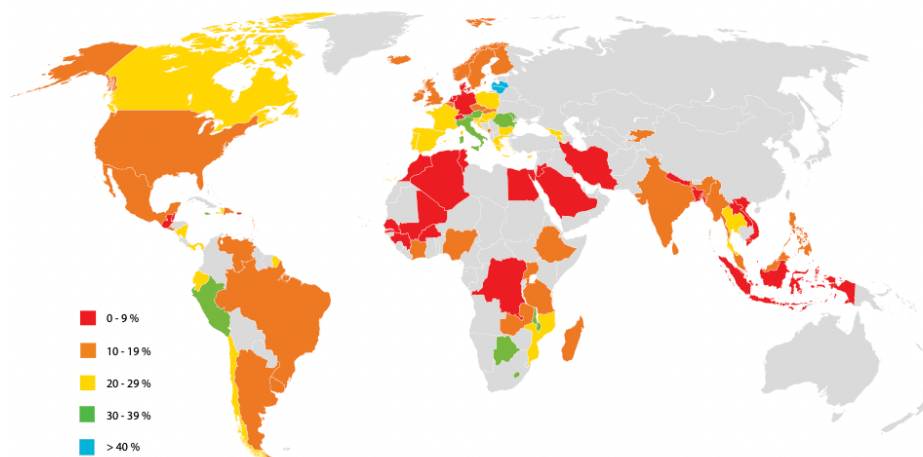


Figure 1 Shows averages for both the worldwide and regional distribution of agricultural landowners by gender.

Source: FAO Land Rights and Gender Database. The numbers are based on 104 nations for which census data were available, including 20 in sub-Saharan Africa, 2 in North America, 20 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 8 in the Near East and North Africa, 14 in Central, East, and South Asia, 34 in Europe, and 6 in Oceania. The weighting of the regional averages is based on the total number of landowners in each nation.

⁸⁰ Doss, C., Kieran, C., & Kilic, T. (2022). Measuring Ownership, Control, and Use of Assets: Policy Research Working Paper No. 8146. *World Bank, Washington DC*. Received from: <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/27953>. *Quarterly Journal of The Macro and Strategic Policies*, 10(1).

⁸¹ Doss, C., Kovarik, C., Peterman, A., Quisumbing, A., & Van Den Bold, M. (2015). Gender inequalities in ownership and control of land in Africa: myth and reality. *Agricultural Economics*, 46(3), 403-434.

Ownership of agricultural land by gender distribution

This indicator calculates the proportion of male and female landowners among all landowners, which is how agricultural landowners are distributed by sex. Statistics are recorded for documented owners in certain nations but simply self-reported owners in others. With rare exceptions and despite their active participation in agriculture, women own a much smaller percentage of all land (Fig 2). The share of women landowners spans from less than 20% in some nations, such Nigeria, Tajikistan, and Peru, to just over 50% in Ecuador and Malawi⁸² among the almost 20 countries for which we have data on the distribution of landowners by sex.

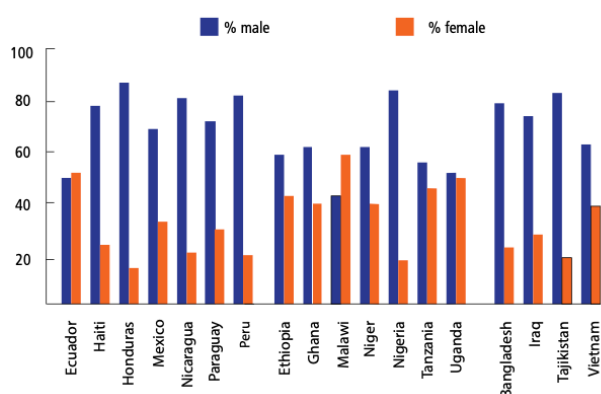


Figure 2 Shows the sex breakdown among agricultural landowners.

The ratio of male to female landowners

This indicator adds further nuance to the sex-disaggregated statistics on land by showing the percentage of the population that owns agricultural land. The indicator captures the share of women out of all women in a country and the share of men out of all men in a country who own agricultural land. If information is available, the indicator can only show whether men and women own any land at all, whether solely or jointly (Fig. 3), or whether they own land solely. In the case of sole ownership, gender disparities in land ownership are more pronounced. Simply put, men own more land than women. Additionally, even when men and women jointly own land, it does not imply that rights and benefits are distributed equally because joint ownership has different meanings in different contexts.

⁸² Deere, C. D., Oduro, A. D., Swaminathan, H., & Doss, C. (2013). Property rights and the gender distribution of wealth in Ecuador, Ghana and India. *The Journal of Economic Inequality*, 11(2), 249-265.

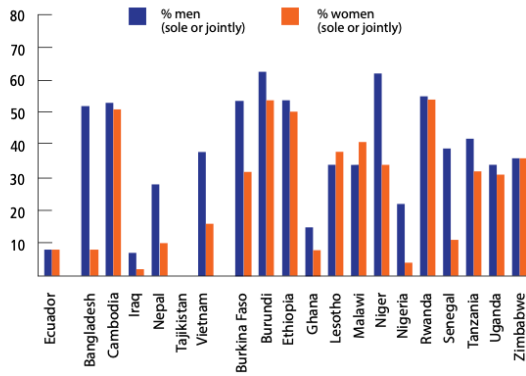


Figure 3 Percentage of men and women who jointly or individually own land

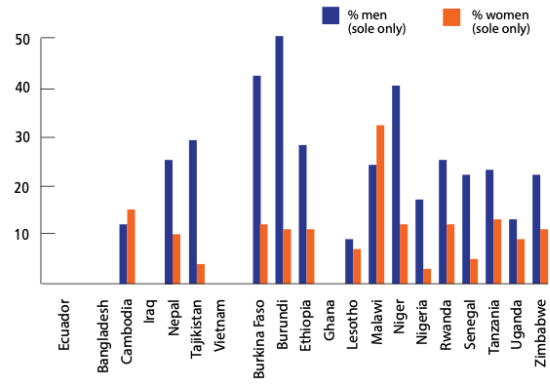


Figure 4 Percent of men and women who own all of their land

How ownership of agricultural land by sex is distributed

By recording the proportion of total agricultural land that women and men actually possess, this indicator captures the distribution of agricultural land by sex. The indicator gives a good indication of how the land area is divided up between men and women, even if it does not tell us how many men or women own land. Even when they do, women often own less land than males. Women possess much less agricultural land in the nine sub-Saharan African and Asian nations for which data are available. This is true even in nations like Malawi, where a greater proportion of landowners are women (Fig 5).

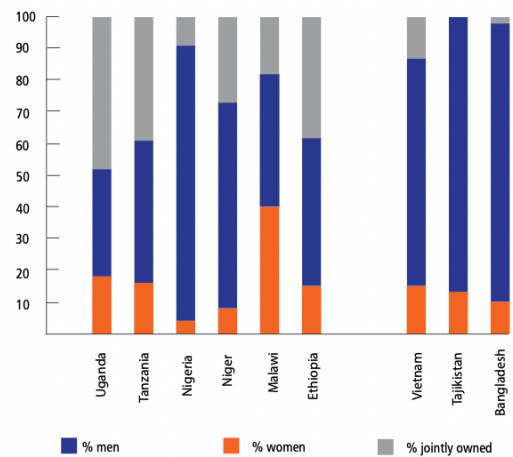


Figure 5 The ownership and sex breakdown of agricultural land

8. Why are women’s land rights so important, socioeconomic impacts.

Women may only have access to communal land that was acquired from their husbands or male relatives in some cultures, and this property is frequently connected to their marital status. As a result, a woman's tenure is precarious, making it possible for her and her children to fall into poverty in the case of her husband's death or their divorce⁸³.

⁸³ https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/zimbabwe0117_web.pdf

Despite being a minority of agricultural landowners, women make up a sizeable component of the agricultural labor force⁸⁴. Even when they do possess land rights, the parcels they own are frequently smaller and of lower quality than those owned by males. Studies have shown⁸⁵ that women and their communities get significant economic, social, and environmental benefits when women's land tenure rights are legally recognized and safeguarded in society.

The economic advantages extend to women's households and communities when they have access to and legal rights to land. According to research⁸⁶, women make up a larger share of the household's agricultural and land-based income than men do, which enhances food security and the health and education of children.

A matriarchal village in Indonesia's Riau Province serves as an example of this. Matrilineal residency and a matrilineal form of inheritance are practices in the Gajah Bertalut community⁸⁷. When a man marries his wife, he moves to her village because women are the major owners of the community's ancestral lands. This cultural framework places women at the center of home financial management, where they in turn provide their families with long-term economic benefits. For instance, local ladies claimed that they spend a sizable percentage of the land's profits on food and their kids' schooling.

Women's land tenure has both immediate and long-term economic advantages that affect entire communities. Because women's individual rights to the communal forest are required, a community prospered in the Banpale Community Forest User Group in Gandhaki Pradesh, Nepal⁸⁸. Because they had access to the forest, women were able to start a small company that collects, prepares, and sells hog plums. Today, women and men work together to administer the community-wide business, which serves as the main source of income for the entire neighborhood. Additionally, a portion of proceeds go toward community initiatives

⁸⁴ Ibid 81

⁸⁵ Salcedo-La Viña, C., & Giovarelli, R. (2021). On equal ground: promising practices for realizing women's rights in collectively held lands.

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Salcedo-La Viña, C. 3 Benefits of Women's Collective Land Rights.

⁸⁸ Ojha, H., Khanal, D. R., Sharma, N., Sharma, H., & Pathak, B. (2007, September). Federation of community forest user groups in Nepal: An innovation in democratic forest governance. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Poverty Reduction and Forests, Bangkok, Thailand*.

including constructing roads, repairing schools, and installing water pipes in houses. Women's land tenure has both immediate and long-term economic advantages that affect entire communities.

Secure land tenure rights give women more negotiating leverage and give them access to decision-making at the local level⁸⁹. The inclusion of their knowledge and ideas in decision-making is made possible by giving them a voice within community governance, improving the decisions' quality and empowering women.

Women in the Boomabong and Pouth-Ndjock Community Forest in Cameroon⁹⁰ were able to use the forest and take part in decision-making because of the formal recognition of women's rights in community forests and the requirement that they belong to the association. The reclassification of the forest as a community forest allowed women to be rights-holders in the pooled landholding and participate in forest management. Previously, women only had access rights to forests owned by their husbands and were not involved in communal forest management. Greater intercommunity cooperation was also encouraged by the inclusive community forest association. On communal forestlands, men and women collaborate to grow crops, and an executive body made up of eight people, five of whom are women, manages harvest sales. Women make up 40% of the association of community forest members, who vote on how harvest cash will be dispersed among member homes and to community projects. As a result, women have a say in what community initiatives are prioritized, such as installing solar panels on homes and installing clean water systems.

Women's individual land tenure rights offer a crucial social safety net to female-headed households, including widows and single moms. In rural areas, female-headed households are particularly vulnerable to poverty, especially if men often maintain the traditional land rights. In La Trinidad Ixtlán⁹¹, in the Sierra Norte area of Mexico, community membership gives

⁸⁹ <https://www.landesa.org/wp-content/uploads/Landesa-Women-and-Land-Issue-Brief.pdf>

⁹⁰ Minang, P. A., Duguma, L. A., Bernard, F., Foundjem-Tita, D., & Tchoundjeu, Z. (2019). Evolution of community forestry in Cameroon: an innovation ecosystems perspective. *Ecology and Society*, 24(1). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26796898>

⁹¹ Salcedo-La Viña, C. 5 Lessons for Securing Women's Collective Land Rights.

women long-term rights to communal agricultural lands, enabling them to grow crops for their family even if their marital status changes.

Women and their communities are more motivated to preserve the land and make investments in its sustainability when they have safe access to it⁹². For instance, women in Jordan and Nepal are able to preserve and reestablish their local biodiversity thanks to land rights.

By reinstating the hima, a conventional form of land management that allows the land to regenerate by leaving specific parts undisturbed for a period of time, a donor-funded project in Jordan is assisting a pastoral community in restoring highly degraded rangelands. Contrary to custom, women in the Bani-Hashem village now have access to rangeland and 40% of the administrative positions on the rangeland management committee, thanks to donor requirements.

With the help of these new rights, women—who are generally in charge of caring for animals that are grazed—applied their intimate knowledge of the pasture to the management of the hima, aiding in the restoration of land vegetation to levels seen in 1990. The community experienced an increase in biomass after a year of restoration and protection, which included the reintroduction of 36 native species in the pasture. This new organic growth increased the pasture's ability to support grazing livestock and gave women the opportunity to launch a herbal tea business, creating a new source of revenue for the community and homes.

Residents of Banpale Community Forest in Nepal⁹³ were motivated to increase tree planting on their private property as well as in the community forest by the success of the women-led enterprise there. The community forest recovered as a result of more tree planting and enhanced communal forest management by both men and women.

The project also encouraged women and other community members to take an active part in trainings on sustainable forestry and climate adaptation, such as those on preventing forest

⁹² <https://climate-xchange.org/2020/07/21/to-solve-the-climate-crisis-women-must-own-more-of-the-worlds-land/>

⁹³ Fleming, B., & Fleming, J. P. (2009). A watershed conservation success story in Nepal: Land use changes over 30 years. *Waterlines*, 29-46.

fires, conserving water, preventing landslides and soil erosion, mapping biodiversity, and avoiding human-wildlife conflict. The company wants to reintroduce native species like cardamom and broom grass to the forest in order to further diversify it.

The foundation for significant socioeconomic and environmental changes that benefit not only women themselves but also their families and communities is laid by securing women's land rights in collectively held lands. Women have demonstrated their ability to effect change by advancing a vision of equality, shared prosperity, and world peace.

9. Obstacles to securing the land rights of women

In developing nations, women make up an average of 43% of the agricultural work force, and 50% in some regions of Africa and Asia⁹⁴. But in the poor world as a whole, women's significant contribution to agriculture is frequently disregarded. Their employment includes a variety of tasks like growing crops, caring for animals, and gathering fuel and water. Importantly, women often shoulder the majority of the burden for providing for their family, including providing for their nutritional needs. Women are still much less frequently than men to own property, despite the fact that they play important roles in agriculture, family administration, and food production. Women also gain much more when they have solid rights to land. In addition, the land they do own is frequently smaller and of lower quality, and they normally have more limited access to it. A complex interplay of judicial, structural, social, and cultural issues contributes to the obstacles to women's secure land rights. Women may be subject to overt discrimination under formal land and property laws, policies, and regulations. Implementation and enforcement are frequently challenging, even when they are not⁹⁵. The rights of women may not be expressly stated in formal laws. Regulations that direct execution may not adequately reflect the rights granted by law, even when the laws are unambiguous. For instance, paperwork for registering land may fail to include a second line to record both spouses even in cases when the law specifies joint ownership by spouses⁹⁶. Additionally, other rules, such as those that control inheritance or marriage, may conflict with

⁹⁴ FAO. (2001). *The State of Food and Agriculture 2001* (No. 33). Food & Agriculture Org..

⁹⁵ World Bank, *Gender Issues in Land Policy and Administration* in GENDER IN AGRICULTURE SOURCEBOOK, 127 (2009).

⁹⁶ Benschop, M. (2004). Women's rights to land and property. *UN-Habitat Commission on Sustainable Development*.

land laws. Additionally, governments frequently lack the funds or refuse to devote them in order to fully administer the laws, and enforcement agencies could be inadequate. Officials continue to be biased towards men and apply "traditional" legal interpretations that view men as having the rightful control over land⁹⁷. For instance, people administering land titling initiatives might assume that it is adequate to title land rights to the household's male head of household⁹⁸. There is open opposition to women's land rights, not just from officials but also from members of the local community. Therefore, even formal land rules that are gender-neutral could still disadvantage women. Furthermore, depending on how formal law is related to customary law, formal law that seems to be non-discriminatory may really be so. Despite their diversity, customary regimes frequently prioritize men's rights above women's rights or regard women's rights as subordinate to men's rights. Formal law may make use of customary law or codify certain discriminatory customary law principles. Or formal legislation may be quiet on certain issues, allowing customary law—which disadvantages women—to fill the void. Women's rights to land can be significantly and frequently negatively impacted by customary laws and norms. Land rights are often decided by social and familial ties within a cultural group where customary norms are predominant (e.g., a clan or a tribe). A woman's relationship with a male, typically her spouse or father, determines her entitlement to land. Her rights to the land would alter if that connection changed. Women born into the group are given less rights to land than their brothers and, in practice, do not inherit land from their fathers in societies where patrilocal marriage (where the woman moves to her husband's village) is the norm. Since they are outsiders, women who marry into the clan also have lessened land rights. By virtue of marriage, a woman often acquires the right to utilize her husband's land to support their children. She may have relied on the land for years to provide for her family's needs, but if the marriage fails, so too does her right to use the land. Only male family heads have typically benefited from land distributions made by the state. Officials of the program frequently target men in their messages and actions, especially when there is no formal policy or initiative to ensure that women acquire land. Finally, women are typically less able to buy land on the open market because they have less access to finance and information than males. Additionally, structural and sociocultural barriers impede women

⁹⁷ Haddad, L., Hoddinott, J., & Alderman, H. (1997). Intra-household resource allocation in developing countries: models, methods and policies.

⁹⁸ World Bank, *Gender Issues in Land Policy*.

from exercising their legal entitlements to property under formal or customary rules. It's possible that women are not entirely aware of their land rights. It's possible that the breadth of women's rights is not known by those who administer or enforce such rights, who are usually men. Additionally, if a woman asserts her claim to land, it may cause domestic strife, a loss of support from the extended family, and other social and economic expenses that some women may be unwilling or unable to face. Women may therefore give up their rights in situations where they must rely on a patriarchal family structure for fundamental family welfare in order to preserve social and domestic harmony. Even when women are ready to stand up for their rights, it can be challenging to do so. They frequently lack the financial means or educational background to pursue their legal rights, such as in a court of law. Additionally, they encounter obstacles while visiting those institutions or experience intimidation as a result of their underrepresentation in the legal system or traditional dispute-resolution agencies⁹⁹.

10. The benefits to society and economy of advancing women's land rights

A foundational element for agricultural output and the social and economic development of rural households is the possession of secure land rights. Smallholder farmers who have strong land rights are more motivated to invest in productivity-boosting projects because they are more assured that their efforts will pay off in the medium and long terms¹⁰⁰. Thus, having secure land rights can have positive economic effects. Through agricultural production and sales, land generates money and can be used as security for loans. Land, though, stands for much more. The nature of a rural household's land rights also significantly affects access to opportunities, housing, food security, and political power, as well as their capacity to achieve empowerment. However, the ownership of those rights inside the household determines who will benefit¹⁰¹. Women and their children might not be able to fully benefit when men alone enjoy those rights. According to research, men spend a large amount of their salary on personal items whereas women often spend their income on domestic necessities. A World

⁹⁹ A. Nzioki, *Land and Property Rights 2*, paper presented at CLEAR Gender Expert Meeting Berlin (2007).

¹⁰⁰ Deininger, K. W. (2003). *Land policies for growth and poverty reduction*. World Bank Publications.

¹⁰¹ Haddad, L., Hoddinott, J., & Alderman, H. (1997). Intrahousehold resource allocation in developing countries: models, methods and policies.

Bank research also claims that "only independence or joint property can ensure that women have access to influence over land-based revenues."¹⁰²

Women benefit from greater intra-household bargaining and decision-making power when their rights are safeguarded. This enables parents to have more control over home income and spending, which usually lowers household poverty and is advantageous to their children. Studies have demonstrated a strong connection between women's protected land rights and household welfare:

- Women who possess land rights make up a larger percentage of the household income, have more influence over agricultural income, and are more likely to be approved for loans¹⁰³.
- Women who own land are much more likely to make the ultimate decisions in the home¹⁰⁴.
- If a mother owns land, the likelihood that a kid will be extremely underweight is cut in half¹⁰⁵.
- Families spend more of their household budget on food when women possess a higher amount of the farmland in the household¹⁰⁶.
- Children achieve higher levels of education when women in the home have access to land¹⁰⁷.

Improved status brought about by property rights can also enable women to participate more actively in community-level institutions, increasing the likelihood that those institutions will attend to the needs of women¹⁰⁸. Women may become less susceptible to domestic violence as their status rises. According to an Indian study, women who own property or a home are

¹⁰²World Bank, *Gender Issues and Best Practices in Land Administration Projects: A Synthesis Report 3* (2005).

¹⁰³ Katz, E., & Chamorro, J. S. (2003, October). Gender, land rights, and the household economy in rural Nicaragua and Honduras. In *annual conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Economics Association, Puebla, Mexico, October* (pp. 9-11).

¹⁰⁴ Katz, E., & Chamorro, J. S. (2003, October). Gender, land rights, and the household economy in rural Nicaragua and Honduras. In *annual conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Economics Association, Puebla, Mexico, October* (pp. 9-11).

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

¹⁰⁶ Doss, C. (2006). The effects of intrahousehold property ownership on expenditure patterns in Ghana. *Journal of African economies*, 15(1), 149-180.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid 104

¹⁰⁸ Ibid 102

much less likely to experience domestic abuse¹⁰⁹. Land and property rights can increase a woman's leverage and bargaining position inside marriage, presumably serving to deter violence. Additionally, because these rights can boost a woman's sense of self-worth, they may also lessen her tolerance for violent behavior. In addition, land rights can assist women in addressing HIV/AIDS, another area of risk and vulnerability. Negotiating safe sex may be easier for women if they have more economic power as a result of having solid land rights. Furthermore, women are less likely to resort to transactional sex as a means of survival because solid property rights can boost household food production and food security¹¹⁰. The ability of women to deal with the financial and social effects of the disease can be improved by using land and other property as a source of income to pay for costs related to HIV/AIDS¹¹¹. Finally, women who become family heads owing to man emigration, marriage, or death may need protected land rights very badly. Land rights can imply the difference between a woman's ability to build a 15 sustainable, self-reliant female-headed household and her dependence on her family or her husband's family¹¹².

11. How to change women's land rights?

Promote legislation and rules that are gender-sensitive.

Legislators and advisors should work toward gender-sensitive legislation as opposed to gender-neutral legislation that ignores the practical impact of the laws on women. In terms of land ownership, access, and use, both Tanzania's Village Land Act of 1999 and Kenya's 2010-adopted new constitution support equal rights for women¹¹³.

For additional reform, look to the implementation regulations.

¹⁰⁹ Panda, P., & Agarwal, B. (2005). Marital violence, human development and women's property status in India. *World development*, 33(5), 823-850.

¹¹⁰ A. Knox, et al. *USAID Issue Brief: Land Tenure, Property Rights, and HIV/AIDS* 3-4 (2010).

¹¹¹ Strickland, R. S. (2004). To have and to hold: women's property and inheritance rights in the context of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa.

¹¹² Giovarelli, R. (2009). Gender and land tenure reform. *One billion rising: Law, land and the alleviation of global poverty*, 195-233.

¹¹³ Kenya, L. O. (2013). *The constitution of Kenya: 2010*. Chief Registrar of the Judiciary.

Land rights must be registered in the names of both spouses or just the woman in Guatemala for state-sponsored land programs to be valid¹¹⁴. Incentives are given to landowners in Rajasthan, India, for property that is registered jointly or solely in the name of the woman who is the head of the household¹¹⁵.

Make sure that other laws, such as family and inheritance laws, do not undermine land laws supporting women's rights.

For instance, Rwandan law automatically grants spouses co-ownership rights to all marital property. However, the rule offers no protection to women in polygamous marriages because the practice is prohibited (but popular).¹¹⁶

Think about how a nation's culture may alter the application of laws that might otherwise seem to be gender-sensitive.

Most rural land in Liberia is managed by customary laws, hence it is not regarded as "owned" legally or socially. Therefore, the great majority of land in the nation is not covered by a seemingly beneficial rule that grants women a one-third interest in property that her husband "owns." Similar to this, 2002 research in West Bengal, India, discovered that joint titling under a government initiative was uncommon because at the time, there was no concept of co-ownership of marital property there¹¹⁷.

Increase the capacity of government employees through tools and gender training.

Ensure that officials are aware of the laws protecting women's land rights and are equipped with the necessary resources to ensure its appropriate application. For instance, Ethiopia utilized 31 pictures of spouses on joint property title papers as a strategy to assist protect women's land rights¹¹⁸.

¹¹⁴ Deere, C. D., & De Leal, M. L. (2001). *Empowering women: Land and property rights in Latin America*. University of Pittsburgh Pre.

¹¹⁵ Ahmad, N. (2015). *Status of Gender Responsive Budgeting in Rajasthan: A Study*. Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre and Dan Church Aid.

¹¹⁶ Santos, F., Fletschner, D., & Daconto, G. (2014). Enhancing inclusiveness of Rwanda's Land Tenure Regularization Program: Insights from early stages of its implementation. *World Development*, 62, 30-41.

¹¹⁷ Brown, J., & Chowdhury, S. D. (2002). *Women's land rights in West Bengal: A field study*. Washington, DC: Rural Development Institute.

¹¹⁸ USAID, *Strengthening Ethiopia Land Tenure and Administration Program Project (ELTAP) Trip Report* (2008).

When constructing initiatives, take into account the opinions and worries of the local women to ensure that they are suited to their needs.

Local women can aid with training design, identifying household property rights holders, and assisting researchers in understanding the structure of families and customary systems from the viewpoints of women.

Analyze gender and collect data differently based on gender for social assessment.

Projects should list all owners of property rights and/or resource users within households and communities, taking into account women's lower status, disparities in access to services like education and healthcare, as well as the communities' customs regarding marriage and lineage.

Educate project participants and staff on gender issues and women's land rights.

More female participation may result from separate trainings for men and women, and trainings must address the cultural norms that hinder women's access to land.

Before project interventions, do baseline investigations to capture the gender concerns.

To alter techniques and aims as necessary and to gauge the project's impact, projects should gather and evaluate sex-disaggregated data both during and after the project.

Chapter 2

Are Women Land rights enough?

Similar to the Millennium Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goals ignore culture as a factor in development. This chapter examines what it really means to declare that "all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development"¹¹⁹. We investigate how Matrilineal societies of Zomba (Malawi) and West Sumatra (Indonesia) indigenous peoples can contribute to sustainable development through their inheritance laws. At the same time, we analyze the differences of these two matrilineal societies, trying to understand if Women land rights are enough to reach Goal N. 5.

This chapter will provide a thorough explanation of the idea of matrilineal systems with a focus on Zomba (Malawi) and West Sumatra (Indonesia) matrilineal societies and offers an overview of Malawi and Indonesia country context, in order to understand what the main obstacles to the female gender are when accessing agriculture labor.

1. The Importance of Indigenous Culture for sustainable development

To the detriment of the ecosystem and the food systems on which we all depend, indigenous peoples have for too long been ignored or even denied their significance in the battle against deforestation, land degradation, and climate change. This trend is changing worldwide thanks to indigenous peoples and their organizations' advocacy, though not quickly enough.

Some 370 million individuals identify themselves as members of indigenous cultures. Despite making up fewer than 5% of the world's population, indigenous peoples have a significant impact on the health of the natural resources that we all rely on. They oversee 28% of the

¹¹⁹ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

planet's land area and operate as de facto stewards for 80% of the world's biodiversity, which includes the majority of the planet's plant and animal species.

Indigenous peoples use traditional ways of land management and food production as family farmers, fishers, pastoralists, and forest dwellers. These systems have developed over generations and have frequently shown their sustainability and resilience in the face of environmental changes.

Indigenous knowledge systems and languages directly contribute to biological and cultural variety, the eradication of poverty, the resolution of conflicts, food security, and the health of ecosystems. They also provide the basis of indigenous communities' resilience to the effects of climate change. Their understanding of traditional food sources and the underlying link between food systems and wholesome environments can aid in the promotion of varied and sustainable diets.

The 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples emphasized the critical role of indigenous peoples (UNDRIP). And yet, while defending their ancestral territories, indigenous peoples continue to experience disproportionately high levels of land insecurity, social unrest, and violence. Furthermore, they account for 15% of the world's poorest individuals.

Traditional knowledge and indigenous food systems are vanishing at an alarming rate due to these and other factors, such as youth migration. They are also causing native languages to disappear quickly. In fact, in keeping with the year-long celebration of the International Year of Indigenous Languages, this year's International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (9 August) places a special emphasis on the 7,000 indigenous languages spoken around the world.

Indigenous peoples were specifically mentioned when the international community adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, a set of objectives for enhancing human well-being and safeguarding natural resources by the year 2030. They also

acknowledged that there cannot be truly sustainable development without safeguarding the traditional knowledge and territories of indigenous peoples.

For an illustration of why this is the case, consider the woods of the planet. For indigenous peoples' food security, way of life, culture, and spiritual identity, forests continue to be essential. Their resources include wholesome foods and medications, furniture and other items for the home, as well as money made from the sale of forest goods.

To safeguard biodiversity, promote integrated sustainable management of different food systems, and preserve traditional medicines, indigenous knowledge can be merged with new knowledge and innovation in agriculture and land management. However, this strategy necessitates quick, constant action.

Governments and organizations of indigenous peoples are working to develop appropriate forestry policies in nations like Indonesia and Peru that take into account the rights to land, resources, and perspectives of indigenous peoples, offer communities options for land tenure, and provide farmers, fishers, and people who live in forests with training in modern methods to combat climate change and manage forests.

New technologies, such as drone-supported mapping of forest cover and territories, are being employed in Côte d'Ivoire, Panama, and other places to assist sustainable land management (SLM) practices and the acknowledgement of traditional land ownership rights.

Developing climate-resistant forest and land management plans, promoting the protection of indigenous intellectual property and cultural identities, and creating systems for indigenous peoples to negotiate and settle disputes with the owners of private forest concessions are additional initiatives to support indigenous peoples.

Recent months saw the first-ever high-level expert forum on indigenous food systems organized by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). A soon-to-be-released FAO report based on two years of research is anticipated to throw further light on indigenous

peoples' experiences, needs, and ability to contribute to the development of a sustainable, hunger-free world.

The lives of indigenous peoples and the natural resources that are so important to all of us will need to be significantly and permanently improved. While these are encouraging signs of commitment, this will require urgent, more extensive policy changes and community-based action, particularly around the recognition of land rights.

2. Matrilineal Societies

Institutions are pieces of the social construct that have been reshaped to fit the needs of the society. In all human evolutions, the family has been the fundamental institution, even though its characteristics can vary. The family is the cornerstone of human civilization, and it can be found in various forms across all communities and cultures. Families are fundamentally a part of society, and society is made up of families. Families inside society take on the essential characteristics of those families, and the conditions of those families take on the general characteristics of society. Through the family, biological reproduction, and cultural tradition, a society maintains itself¹²⁰.

Although biological perpetuation is universally identical, cultural perpetuation varies and is unique to each group. It follows that a family is made up of the older and younger generations, with the members of the two generations determined by the family structure that is adhered to, all of which is prescribed by culture. When fathers give the descent, succession, and inheritance to sons, it is clear that the family system is patrilineal. On the other hand, the family system is matrilineal when mothers pass on descent, succession, and inheritance to daughters¹²¹.

¹²⁰ Kharkrang, R. (2012). Matriliney on the March.

¹²¹ Nongbri, T. (2000). Khasi women and matriliney: Transformations in gender relations. *Gender, Technology and Development*, 4(3), 359-395.

3. The district of Zomba, Malawi.

In Malawi's southernmost region, Zomba is situated. The district is home to a diverse population made up of various ethnic groups, customs, and tongues. The Mang'anja, Yao, and Lomwe ethnic groups are the most prevalent. The Chewa, Ngoni, Tumbuka, and numerous more minor ethnic groups are also present.

The Zomba district's economy is focused on agriculture, like most districts in Malawi. While tobacco is farmed primarily as a revenue crop, maize is primarily grown as a food crop. Rice, cassava, sweet potatoes, ground-nuts, beans, and pigeon peas are some of the other major primary crops produced. A wide variety of crops are grown by estates and smallholder farmers alike. The majority of homes have less than one hectare of land. The most common livestock raised in Zomba are cattle, poultry, goats, sheep, pigs, and rabbits. The majority of these are regional breeds grown primarily for their meat. Goats are the second most prevalent livestock in the district after poultry¹²².

The region was picked because it is a matrilineal society that follows the matrilineal system of marriage, in which land is both left to daughters and husbands move to their spouses' village after marriage, both of which take place under the matrilineal system. Given that women appear to be the 'owners' of land by tradition, this research location was chosen in order to assess the degree to which this type of system advances women's rights and identify areas within which women might use to preserve their rights.

¹²² Hirschmann, D., & Vaughan, M. (1983). Food production and income generation in a matrilineal society: Rural women in Zomba, Malawi. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 10(1), 86-99.

a. Country Context: Malawi

i. Political Environment

In 1994, when the nation had its first multi-party elections, Malawi ended thirty years of one-party control. Bakili Muluzi was elected as Malawi's first democratically elected president after the United Democratic Front (UDF) won those elections, forcing the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) into opposition. As a third force in legislative politics, the other major political party, AFORD, arose.

While Malawi established democratic institutions at the level of its formal constitutional structures, liberal politics are only now beginning to take hold and have faced numerous setbacks since 1994. When the second round of the multi-party elections took place on time in 1999, a significant step toward the establishment of democracy was made. President Muluzi was re-elected, but not without opposition parties and other observers accusing him of vote-rigging and other electoral violations. The list of suspect actions covered the entire gamut of electoral procedures, including the designation of voting districts, voter registration, the makeup and function of the electoral commission, media coverage, the use of donor cash, and the declaration of election results¹²³. Since 1999, this has made opposition rhetoric possibly more divisive than it otherwise might have been, and it has made developing cooperative relationships with the administration on matters of policy and governance very difficult.

Regional divides have exacerbated partisan conflict. Each of Malawi's three geographic regions—the north, middle, and south—has a support base for one of the three major parties. This type of regionalism has been labeled as "atypical since it [does] not dovetail strongly with ethnicity," despite the fact that the regional division is likely the primary cleavage influencing the formation of the party system¹²⁴. However, opposition leaders have repeatedly criticized the government for giving the southern region, where the UDF is in power, a disproportionate amount of the advantages of development policy.

¹²³ Patel, N. (2000). 1999 elections in Malawi: Challenges and reforms. *Malawi's Second Democratic Elections: Process, Problems and Prospects*. Blantyre: CLAIM.

¹²⁴ Reynolds, A. (1999). *Electoral systems and democratization in Southern Africa*. OUP Oxford.

There is little doubt that there are fewer constraints on the press and the freedom to free expression today than there were when there was a single-party system in place. However, government officials continue to make direct and indirect threats against journalists and editors who criticize the actions and policies of the government¹²⁵. The government-favored bias of the state-run Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) is well-known. In phone-in programs, several private radio stations have tackled more contentious subjects. These programs provide as a forum for criticism, if not for fully educated and moderated debate.

In general, Malawi is moving toward a more transparent, representative political system. The tendency of the administration to overreact to democratic protests has nevertheless persisted as a legacy of the former political system¹²⁶.

ii. The economic situation

In the 1990s, 33% of Malawi's GDP came from agriculture. Smallholder farmers produce three-quarters of this, primarily for subsistence. Only 17% on average of the GDP was contributed by the manufacturing and mining industries, while 27% went to services. The manufacturing industry generates less than a fifth of Malawi's exports, the majority of which are agricultural goods¹²⁷. The value of all exports between 1997 and 2000 was 85% made up of agricultural products, with tobacco accounting for 63% of that value¹²⁸.

The economy's limited capacity for revenue creation results from its small, undiversified foundation¹²⁹. Grants help to close the budgetary gap between expenses and revenues. Foreign loans and local borrowing, however, are what completely close the deficit.

¹²⁵ Campbell, T. (2002). Chronicle for 2001–2002.

¹²⁶ Ihonvbere, J. O. (1997). From despotism to democracy: The rise of multiparty politics in Malawi. *Third World Quarterly*, 18(2), 225-248.

¹²⁷ Chirwa, E. W., Kumwenda, I., Jumbe, C., & Chilonda, P. (2008). Agricultural growth and poverty reduction in Malawi.

¹²⁸ Aragic, E., Pauw, K., & Pernechele, V. (2018). Achieving food security and industrial development in Malawi: Are export restrictions the solution?. *World development*, 108, 1-15.

¹²⁹ Lea, N., & Hanmer, L. (2009). Constraints to growth in Malawi. *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper*, (5097).

With up to 73% of the multilateral debt, the World Bank is by far Malawi's largest creditor. With nearly 85% of the country's debt to the Paris Club of bilateral creditors and 11% of total debt, Japan is by far the largest bilateral creditor. Only 2% of the overall debt stock is commercial debt, most of which was incurred with UK-based creditors. Due to the form of its debt, Malawi stands to benefit from the HIPC2 Initiative since it also covers loans obtained from multilateral donors¹³⁰.

iii. Religion

Less than 1% of women and 3% of men in Malawi report having no religious affiliation¹³¹. While over 86% of Malawians identify as Christians, Islam also has a sizable presence, with 13% of women and 11% of men, respectively, identifying as Muslims. Catholicism is one of the well-represented Christian denominations in Malawi, with 18% of women and 19% of men, and the distinctions among other Christian organizations call for more clarification¹³².

Mission The Anglican, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches were established by European missionaries in the 19th century, and the Church of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Seventh-Day Adventist churches were established several decades later. Africans have started Pentecostal congregations since the 1930s¹³³. Conflicts over traditional culture led to the development of African independent churches (AICs), which are descended from Mission Protestants¹³⁴.

Malawian society is strongly separated by gender. One of the easiest ways for women to find social support outside of their families is through religion. Men predominate in bars and paid work, while women are mostly restricted to their subsistence farming livelihoods. Compared

¹³⁰ Vajja, A., & White, H. (2008). Can the World Bank build social capital? The experience of social funds in Malawi and Zambia. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 44(8), 1145-1168.

¹³¹ National Statistical Office (Malawi). (2001). *Malawi demographic and health survey 2000*. National Statistical Office.

¹³² Yeatman, S. E., & Trinitapoli, J. (2008). Beyond denomination: The relationship between religion and family planning in rural Malawi. *Demographic research*, 19(55), 1851.

¹³³ Trinitapoli, J., & Regnerus, M. D. (2006). Religion and HIV risk behaviors among married men: Initial results from a study in rural Sub-Saharan Africa. *Journal for the scientific study of religion*, 45(4), 505-528.

¹³⁴ Trinitapoli, J., & Weinreb, A. (2012). *Religion and AIDS in Africa*. Oxford University Press.

to a home environment, religion typically offers a background for social interaction that is much broader and more diverse¹³⁵.

iv. Gender Data

There has been some advancement for women's rights on a global scale. According to the SDG indicator, with an emphasis on violence against women, 83.3% of legal frameworks that promote, enforce, and monitor gender equality are in place in Malawi. In 2016, 73.9% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 who needed family planning got it taken care of using contemporary methods¹³⁶.

To attain gender equality in Malawi, more still has to be done. Women who were married or in a union before the age of 18 made up 42.1% of those aged 20 to 24. As of 2015, there were 137.6 adolescent births for every 1,000 women aged 15 to 19, up from 135.9 in 2014¹³⁷. Only 22.9% of the seats in parliament were occupied by women as of February 2021¹³⁸. In the past 12 months, 16.6% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 reported experiencing physical or sexual abuse at the hands of a current or former intimate partner¹³⁹. In addition, 8.7% of the time spent by women and girls aged 15 and older is spent on unpaid care and household chores, as opposed to 1.3% by men¹⁴⁰.

Only 41.9% of the metrics required to track the SDGs from a gender perspective were accessible as of December 2020, and there were gaps in important sectors, including information and communications technology capabilities. Additionally, several sectors lack equivalent approaches for routine monitoring, including gender and the environment, women's access to assets (including land), physical and sexual harassment, and poverty. For

¹³⁵ Ibid

¹³⁶ Adolfsson, J. S., & Madsen, O. J. (2020). "Nowadays there is gender": "Doing" global gender equality in rural Malawi. *Theory & Psychology*, 30(1), 56-76.

¹³⁷ Sennott, C., & Yeatman, S. (2012). Stability and change in fertility preferences among young women in Malawi. *International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 38(1), 34.

¹³⁸ Amundsen, I., & Kayuni, H. (2016). *Women in politics in Malawi*. Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI), Department of Political and Administrative Studies (PAS).

¹³⁹ Bazargan-Hejazi, S., Medeiros, S., Mohammadi, R., Lin, J., & Dalal, K. (2013). Patterns of intimate partner violence: a study of female victims in Malawi. *Journal of Injury and Violence Research*, 5(1), 38.

¹⁴⁰ Glynn, J. R., Kayuni, N., Floyd, S., Banda, E., Francis-Chizororo, M., Tanton, C., ... & French, N. (2010). Age at menarche, schooling, and sexual debut in northern Malawi. *Plos one*, 5(12), e15334.

Malawi to fulfill its commitments to the gender-related SDGs, it is crucial to close these gender data gaps¹⁴¹.

v. Agriculture Production

A third of Malawi's GDP is directly attributable to agriculture, which is the economic backbone of the country. Agriculture makes a substantial contribution to nutrition, employment, economic growth, export revenue, and poverty reduction. One of Malawi's main development objectives is to make the agriculture sector the engine of the nation's growth. Malawi competes most well in the agricultural industry on the global market.

Tobacco, tea, cotton, groundnuts, sugar, and coffee are Malawi's top exports. These have been among the most important cash crops for the past century, but tobacco has taken over in the last 25 years, with a yield of 175,000 tonnes in 2011¹⁴². Groundnuts and tea have gained relative importance during the past century, whereas cotton has lost it¹⁴³. Maize, cassava, sweet potatoes, sorghum, bananas, rice, and Irish potatoes are the principal food crops, and cattle, sheep, and goats are also raised. The primary industries are those that process agricultural products including timber, tea, sugar, and tobacco. Estimated industrial production growth is 10%.

b. Malawi Rural Matrilineal society

Individual women in Malawi tend to maintain the same garden through subsequent marriages and through intervals without a partner under this matrilineal inheritance structure. It appears that this method has endured unaltered up to the present. The majority of the married women, as well as almost all of the widowed and divorced women interviewed, lived in either their birth village or a village where many of their maternal relatives also resided¹⁴⁴. Eighty percent of women said they would keep their land in the event of a divorce or separation, and the

¹⁴¹ <https://data.unwomen.org/country/malawi>

¹⁴² <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#home>

¹⁴³ Pike, J. G. (1968). Malawi, a political and economic history.

¹⁴⁴ Hirschmann, D., & Vaughan, M. (1983). Food production and income generation in a matrilineal society: Rural women in Zomba, Malawi. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 10(1), 86-99.

majority of women said they got their plots of land directly from their mothers or grandmothers or through the village headman. Although the Village Headman has the legal authority to allocate and reallocate land, it seems that as the area's uncultivated land has shrunk, his influence has become less significant. In reality, women typically inherit plots that their mothers, grandmothers, and other maternal ancestors have worked, even though they are technically entitled to do so through the Village Headman¹⁴⁵.

Whether or whether a husband was present, women dominate farm work in every home. Men and women shared most tasks in the production of maize in households where husbands were more or less permanently residing on the family farm with their wives (approximately 55% of households), although women frequently assumed primary responsibility for harvesting, storage, and seed selection. While women in married families frequently assumed primary responsibility for specific agricultural duties, males were consistently assisted in their labor by spouses and/or laborers and children, it was observed¹⁴⁶.

In the 1940s, it was observed that the "work determines ownership" theory applied to agricultural products in this area¹⁴⁷. The same seems to be true now, with the majority of labor being performed by women giving them significant power over how the produce is used. live. Nearly all women had at least some maternal relatives—typically their mothers, sisters, and aunts—whom they were close to. There was a lot of informal mutual aid and food sharing between women, even though each woman typically managed a separate home¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁵ Phiri, K. M. (1983). Some changes in the matrilineal family system among the Chewa of Malawi since the nineteenth century. *The Journal of African History*, 24(2), 257-274.

¹⁴⁶ Peters, P. E. (2010). "Our daughters inherit our land, but our sons use their wives' fields": matrilineal-matrilocal land tenure and the New Land Policy in Malawi. *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 4(1), 179-199.

¹⁴⁷ Mitchell, J. C. (1951). An outline of the social structure of Malemia area. *The Nyasaland Journal*, 4(2), 15-47.

¹⁴⁸ Berge, E., Kambewa, D., Munthali, A., & Wiig, H. (2014). Lineage and land reforms in Malawi: Do matrilineal and patrilineal landholding systems represent a problem for land reforms in Malawi?. *Land Use Policy*, 41, 61-69.

4. The province of West Sumatra, Indonesia

The matrilineal family system that characterizes Minangkabau culture is revered by many people as the foundation of their cultural identity, even if it can occasionally feel burdensome. The matrilineal family system and its effects on social norms and political structure are the core topics of Minangkabau Society. Although Minangkabau has long piqued the curiosity of social scientists as the largest matrilineal civilization in the world, the position of women is constrained only to its inheritance role. With their own family, they continued to reside in the home where they were born. Only when the extended family grows too big is it divided, and a new home is constructed close to the old one. The stable elements of society are women.

The typical Minangkabau house is an elegant illustration of the relative positions of the sexes: the woman's domain is the back of the house, which includes the separate rooms and the kitchen. The expansive front veranda, which serves as both a meeting space and reception area, is the area for men. Women are connected to the community, the extended family, continuity, and conventional knowledge. Men with involvement in politics, the rantau, change, and personal accomplishment¹⁴⁹. The region was picked because, as the community analysed before it is a matrilineal society that follows the matrilocal system of marriage; however, the involvement of women in agriculture is sharply inferior to the one in Zomba, Malawi.

¹⁴⁹ Schrijvers, J., & Postel-Coster, E. (1977). Minangkabau women: Change in a matrilineal society. *Archipel*, 13(1), 79-103.

c. Country Context: Indonesia

i. Political Environment

ii.

The absence of ideological rivalry in Indonesian politics has been highlighted and frequently lamented by commentators for the majority of Indonesia's democratic period, which began with the retirement of the authoritarian president Suharto in 1998. Islamic parties, which advocate for a greater role for Islamic principles in public life, and pluralist parties, who support a multireligious vision of the Indonesian state, have long held different ideologies within the country's party structure. However, political campaigns have typically been open to all. In order to enter politics and obtain access to the state's patronage resources, parties and politicians frequently work together across ideological boundaries. Indonesia is thus "one of the least polarized democracies in Asia," according to some commentators¹⁵⁰.

However, Indonesia's political divide has widened since 2014. The 2014 presidential election, the 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election, and the 2019 presidential election have all resulted in the country being more polarized than it has been in decades. Competition between President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) and Prabowo Subianto, his former rival, sparked a political rift between Islamists and pluralists that had been dormant¹⁵¹.

Since 2014, a number of political and social forces have combined to polarize Indonesian politics, endangering its democratic institutions and social structure. When Prabowo chose to join Jokowi's administration after the 2019 election, it was a striking illustration of how Indonesia's patronage-driven politics had continued to moderate political differences to some extent. Yet as recent political battles brought on by the coronavirus outbreak have shown,

¹⁵⁰ Tambiah, S. J. (1976). *World Conqueror and World Renouncer A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand against a Historical Background*. Cambridge University Press.

¹⁵¹ Ferrara, F. (2015). *The political development of modern Thailand*. Cambridge University Press.

Prabowo's about-face has not lessened the ideological tensions he helped fuel over the previous five years¹⁵².

iii. The Economic Situation

Since chartering the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s, Indonesia, with the largest economy in Southeast Asia, has had significant economic growth. In terms of purchasing power parity, Indonesia has the fourth-highest population in the world and the tenth-largest economy overall. Additionally, Indonesia has made significant progress in reducing poverty, with the country's poverty rate falling from over 50% in 1999 to under 10% in 2019, just before the COVID-19 pandemic struck. Assuming the G20 Presidency this year, Indonesia urged other nations to cooperate in order to build a stronger and more long-lasting recovery from the pandemic's effects¹⁵³.

The 20-year development plan for Indonesia's economy runs from 2005 to 2025. It is divided into five RPJMN (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional) medium-term development plans, each with a particular set of development priorities. The final stage of the 20-year plan is the present medium-term development plan. By boosting the nation's human capital and competitiveness in the international market, it seeks to further enhance Indonesia's economy¹⁵⁴. As a result of the pandemic's effects on its economy, Indonesia's classification as an upper-middle income country changed to lower-middle income category as of July 2021. A record-low 9.2 percent rate of poverty in September 2019 was partially reversed by the pandemic, rising to 9.7 percent in September 2021¹⁵⁵.

Indonesia's GDP is expected to expand by 5.1 percent in 2022 as the nation's economy is currently in recovery and is backed by rising commodity exports and a flexible fiscal strategy

¹⁵² Aspinall, E. (2015). Oligarchic populism: Prabowo Subianto's challenge to Indonesian democracy. *Indonesia*, (99), 1-28.

¹⁵³ Hill, H. (2000). *The Indonesian Economy*. Cambridge University Press.

¹⁵⁴ Lee, J. (2017). The Political Economy of Indonesia's Global Maritime Axis and Infrastructure Development Plan under the Jokowi Administration. *아시아연구*, 20(1), 27-52.

¹⁵⁵ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/new-world-bank-country-classifications-income-level-2021-2022>

to deal with the pandemic. However, the recovery could be hampered by more difficult global conditions and COVID-19's lasting impacts¹⁵⁶.

The stunting rate in Indonesia was successfully reduced from 37 percent in 2013 to under 24.4 percent in 2021. To ensure the development of strong and productive human capital, more work must be done. According to the World Bank's Human Capital Index¹⁵⁷, the future generation of Indonesians will suffer consequences from the lack of education brought on by the closure of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The World Bank is assisting Indonesia with its COVID-19 emergency response, which entails bolstering pandemic response components, supporting the government's free vaccination program, improving social assistance and health care systems, and taking steps to increase the financial sector's resilience¹⁵⁸.

iv. Religion

Data from the 2010 population census show that 87 percent of Indonesians identified as Muslims, followed by 9.87 percent of Christians. Indonesia is sometimes seen as a Muslim country because it has the largest Islamic population in the world. However, according to its constitution, Indonesia is not a Muslim country. The archipelago is a multifaith nation that formally recognizes six religions: Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Protestantism, and Catholicism¹⁵⁹.

On the western half of the island, where the primary maritime trade routes were located, Islam first expanded throughout Indonesia. As of right now, the majority of Indonesian Muslims

¹⁵⁶ Samuel, H., & Nurina, S. (2014). *Analysis of the effect of inflation, interest rates, and exchange rates on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Indonesia* (Doctoral dissertation, Petra Christian University).

¹⁵⁷ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/human-capital#Index>

¹⁵⁸ Djalante, R., Lassa, J., Setiamarga, D., Sudjatma, A., Indrawan, M., Haryanto, B., ... & Warsilah, H. (2020). Review and analysis of current responses to COVID-19 in Indonesia: Period of January to March 2020. *Progress in disaster science*, 6, 100091

¹⁵⁹ Effendy, B. (2003). *Islam and the State in Indonesia* (No. 109). Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

live in Western and Central Indonesia, while Christians and Hindus predominate in a number of provinces in Eastern Indonesia, including East Nusa Tenggara and Bali¹⁶⁰.

The freedom of religion is guaranteed by the Indonesian constitution. However, Indonesia has a high score on the Government Restrictions Index for religious freedom. Indonesians who follow unregistered faiths, such as animism, dynamism, and totemism, as well as the country's indigenous or traditional belief systems, are subject to legal limitations and discrimination. With few exclusions for indigenous religions, Indonesian law compels its people to list one of the authorized religions on their national identity cards. Atheism or agnosticism is rare in Indonesia, despite the fact that legal people are permitted to leave the area blank¹⁶¹.

v. Gender data

There has been some advancement for women's rights on a global scale. 16.3% of Indonesian women aged 20 to 24 who were married or in a union before turning 18 reported having done so. As of 2016, the teen birth rate had decreased from 48.5 per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19 to 36. In 2017, 77% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 who needed family planning got it taken care of using contemporary methods¹⁶².

To attain gender equality in Indonesia, however, more needs to be done. Only 21% of the seats in parliament were held by women as of February 2021¹⁶³. In 2018, 8.9% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 reported having experienced physical or sexual abuse from a current or former intimate relationship over the previous 12 months¹⁶⁴.

Only 33.6% of the metrics required to track the SDGs from a gender perspective were accessible as of December 2020, with gaps in important sectors, particularly unpaid care and

¹⁶⁰ Wanandi, J. (2002). Islam in Indonesia: Its history, development and future challenges. *Asia Pacific Review*, 9(2), 104-112.

¹⁶¹ Feener, R. M. (2007). *Muslim legal thought in modern Indonesia*. Cambridge University Press.

¹⁶² Hull, T. H., & Hull, V. J. (1977). The relation of economic class and fertility: An analysis of some Indonesian data. *Population Studies*, 31(1), 43-57.

¹⁶³ Ichsan Kabullah, M., & Fajri, M. N. (2021). Neo-ibuism in Indonesian politics: election campaigns of wives of regional heads in West Sumatra in 2019. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 40(1), 136-155.

¹⁶⁴ Herawati, R., Purwanti, A., & Pinilih, S. A. G. (2021). The bill elimination on sexual violence: Importance for Indonesian women. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology*, 10, 687-694.

domestic work. Additionally, several sectors lack equivalent approaches for routine monitoring, including gender and the environment, women's access to assets (including land), physical and sexual harassment, and poverty. For Indonesia to fulfill its commitments to the gender-related SDGs, it is crucial to close these gender data gaps¹⁶⁵.

vi. Agriculture production

One of the important economic sectors in Indonesia is agriculture. Due to the expansion of the service sector and industrialization during the past 50 years, the sector's contribution to the national gross domestic product has significantly declined. But for the vast majority of Indonesian households, farming and plantation work continue to be important sources of income. The agricultural sector's share of the national GDP decreased slightly from 15.19% in 2003 to 14.43% in 2013. About 49 million Indonesians, or 41% of the working force, were employed in the agriculture industry in 2012¹⁶⁶.

As one of the leading agricultural nations in the globe, the nation offers a wide variety of tropical goods as well as significant agricultural products, such as cassava, rice, coffee, tea, cocoa, palm oil, natural rubber, and tropical spices. Currently, Indonesia is the world's top producer of coffee, chocolate, rice, natural rubber, cloves, and cinnamon. It is also the second largest producer of nutmeg, natural rubber, cassava, vanilla, and coconut oil. the sixth-largest grower of tea and the fifth-largest producer of tobacco¹⁶⁷.

d. West Sumatra matrilineal Society

Minangkabau society uses a matrilineal structure, in which the maternal line serves as the transgenerational link. Accordingly, ancestral land and matrilineal title pass from the grandmother to the mother, who then passes it on to the granddaughter and her female line

¹⁶⁵ <https://data.unwomen.org/country/indonesia>

¹⁶⁶ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=ID>

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data>

descendants¹⁶⁸. Women are positioned at the center of the generational family in this matrilineal arrangement. The oldest sister, who typically serves as the head of the Minangkabau extended family, is referred to as the "queen mother" or Bundo Kanduang mostly because of this matrilineal social structure¹⁶⁹.

The Bundo Kanduang's duty is to impart cultural knowledge to other members of the extended family¹⁷⁰. She also plays the position of a crucial counsellor to family members and kin. But among the Melayu clan in Nagari Bonjol, the men who serve as adat officials continue to hold sway. Women are considered as less capable than men on issues relevant to the public arena, and their status inside the family as a whole remains poor, meaning they are lower in the power hierarchy¹⁷¹. Clan leadership is male-dominated, a patriarchal system frequently observed in Asia¹⁷².

Adat is a crucial component of Minangkabau local ideology and, despite being used often, is nevertheless somewhat unclear¹⁷³. Anthropologists typically translate adat as "customary law." Adat, however, can also signify "the way," as in "the way we Minangkabau do things," in its most generic sense. Thus, the term is very similar to anthropological terms like culture. More often than not, when adat is brought up, the speaker is highlighting something they feel is special to Minangkabau culture, particularly in regards to moral standards, inheritance, and parts of property management connected to the matrilineal kinship structure. Adat could be loosely interpreted as "tradition" in this meaning. That is, a single characteristic of the current culture that is believed to have historical roots and is so distinguished from other cultural elements may be referred to as adat. Adat, a classic Minangkabau proverb, is sometimes supposed to refer to syar'a, or Islamic religious law¹⁷⁴. Though adat is supposed to exist in every society, the Minangkabau adat is thought to be unique since it is founded on the

¹⁶⁸ Sanday, P. R. (2002). *Women at the center: Life in a modern matriarchy*. Cornell University Press.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid

¹⁷⁰ Ibid

¹⁷¹ Kowtha, N. R. (2013). Not separate but unequal: Gender and organizational socialization of newcomers. *Asian Women*, 29(1), 47-77.

¹⁷² Lee, M. (2003). Changing perceptions on the family and the career among Korean educated women. *Asian Women*, 16, 103-123.

¹⁷³ Peletz, M. G. (1983). *Minangkabau Social Formations: Indonesian Peasants and the World-economy*. By Joel S. Kahn. Cambridge University Press, 1980. Pp. xvi, 288. List of maps, figures and tables, Preface, Bibliography, Glossary, Index. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 14(2), 438-440.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid 27

matrilineal principles built into the clans and lineages, known as kaum¹⁷⁵. One is inherited property based on matrilineages (pusako), which includes both material and immaterial goods, most notably rice fields that have been irrigated. The area of a village's territory that is not used for sedentary agriculture and is under the supervision of the village council or the heads of the village matriclans is known as the "village commons" or "ulayat." Both property forms have evolved differently within the multiple legal system and have been the subject of various conflicts between villagers, government organizations, and Islamists¹⁷⁶.

People who are descended from the father's side are given preference in a patrilineal kinship structure, which means that people can trace their ancestry back to male ancestors¹⁷⁷. In such a case, succession and inheritance are passed down within the kinship group from the senior male of one generation to the senior male of the next¹⁷⁸. While in a matrilineal kinship structure, inheritance and descent occur through the female line¹⁷⁹. This indicates that some kinship groups are descended from the mother's family. In such a situation, a woman's brother, not her husband, is in charge of raising her children¹⁸⁰. Men control socioeconomic and political affairs, including the rights to the ownership and management of natural resources, among the Minangkabau¹⁸¹, as has occurred among the Melayu clan in Nagari Bonjol.

Despite having a special status within the matrilineal system, women do not hold a position of authority in society, and they are not involved in the management of ulayat land. Additionally, the interactions between men and women within the Melayu clan in Nagari Bonjol demonstrate deeply rooted cultural practices that have led to gender inequality¹⁸². Because of these customs, it is impolite for women to argue with the male traditional leaders. Women's ability to fight against and prevent injustice in the management of the ulayat forest

¹⁷⁵ Ibid

¹⁷⁶ von Benda-Beckmann, F. (2004). *Struggles over communal property rights and law in Minangkabau, West Sumatra* (No. 64). Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology.

¹⁷⁷ Haviland, W. A. (1990). *Cultural anthropology* (6th ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

¹⁷⁸ Vubo, E. Y. (2005). Matriliney and Patriliney between cohabitation equilibrium and modernity in the Cameroon grassfields. *African Study Monographs*, 26(3), 145-182.

¹⁷⁹ Holden, C. J., Sear, R., & Mace, R. (2003). Matriliney as daughter-biased investment. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 2(4), 99-112.

¹⁸⁰ Stark, A. (2013). The matrilineal system of the Minangkabau and its persistence throughout history: A structural perspective. *Southeast Asia: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 13, 1-13.

¹⁸¹ Upadhyay, B. (2004). Women and water issues in Gujarat, India. *Asian Women*, 19, 69-84.

¹⁸² Jayachandran, S. (2015). The roots of gender inequality in developing countries. *Annual Review of Economics*, 7(1), 63-88.

by men who occupy higher positions in society has been hampered by this traditional and institutionalized gender imbalance within the Melayu clan. Women frequently encounter gender inequality in their social interactions when it comes to having access to resources, employment opportunities, and educational opportunities. This inequality is also present when women deviate from societal norms and pursue careers that are predominately male, like law enforcement. Due to their greater level of education and propensity for demanding better access to resources, these women frequently face hostility from other clan members, which further restricts their options¹⁸³. Due to the social exclusion women experience as a result of all of these causes, they are deprived of knowledge and education, which contributes to gender inequality¹⁸⁴.

The religious component

Up until now, we have mostly looked at Minangkabau society from the perspective of adat. But Islam, with its strong patriarchal culture, has already impacted the region since more than four centuries ago. The majority of Minangkabau are nominal Muslims. Since the beginning of the 19th century, West Sumatra has been a stronghold of a severe and fundamentalist version of Islam.

Adat and Islam have merged in some ways, to the point where it is frequently difficult to pinpoint the exact origins of a given aspect of tradition. The two, however, are contradictory in other ways. Both of them have persisted in coexisting side by side since neither has made way for the other. When Islamic reform efforts from the Middle East reached West Sumatra at the beginning of this century, the distinctions grew more pronounced. These movements often combined modernism with fundamentalism. Islam needed to go back to its genuine sources, the Koran and the Holy Tradition, in order to purge it of regional traditions¹⁸⁵.

¹⁸³ Prokos, A., & Padavic, I. (2002). There oughtta be a law against bitches: Masculinity lessons in police academy training. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 9, 439-459.

¹⁸⁴ Lyness, K. S., & Thompson, D. E. (2000). Climbing the corporate ladder: do female and male executives follow the same route?. *Journal of applied psychology*, 85(1), 86.

¹⁸⁵ Siregar, F. A., Yulika, F., Nofialdi, N., Harahap, I., Ridwan, B., & Syahputra, I. (2022). Merantau in The Ethnic Tradition of Minangkabau: Local Custom Without Sharia Basis?. *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam*, 6(1), 115-138.

It should manifest in a brand-new way, free of magic and antiquated rituals, and appropriate for the spiritual atmosphere of the contemporary era. The Muhammadiyah and its female counterpart, the Aisyiyah, were the primary organizations propagating the new religious ideas. They were both created in Java in 1912 and 1917, respectively¹⁸⁶.

The new movement emphasized reason and individualism, which for West Sumatra created some conflict with the adat's collectivism. In Islam, man is held accountable to Allah alone, not to the group to which he belongs. In a similar vein, Islam does not recognize collective family rights, only individual property. According to Islamic law, only patriarchal, potentially polygynous families with the father as the responsible head are permissible¹⁸⁷. Evidently, a woman's claim to her brother's protection for both herself and her children is inapplicable in this situation. Even though women are not allowed to hold public office in either system, they are evidently far more reliant in Islam than in the Minangkabau adat system since they are treated as their father's or their husbands' property. They are respected as the guardians of the matrilineal family, whose property they may help administer, according to adat¹⁸⁸.

Although polygyny may have been practiced in the region before to the spread of Islam, it undoubtedly gained fresh legitimacy as a result. Polygyny, in the eyes of the Minangkabau people, is unquestionably an Islamic practice. One of our informants, an outspoken supporter of adat, specifically denounced polygyny as an Islamic practice that runs opposite to adat. In West Sumatra, it has never existed in its patrilocal form, where multiple wives share a same household with their shared husband. Women must naturally remain on the land owned by their own families in the communities. However, even in the towns, the wives live in their separate homes, with the husband rotating between them. Islam holds that only a man has the right to divorce, and he can do so by merely saying the correct phrase (talak) three times. In Islam, women's inheritance rights are unquestionably less favored than they are under the adat

¹⁸⁶ Ibid

¹⁸⁷ Eastin, J., & Prakash, A. (2013). Economic development and gender equality: Is there a gender Kuznets curve?. *World Politics*, 65(1), 156-186.

¹⁸⁸ Nasir, P. E., Halim, A., Herida, T., Cory, S., Sinulingga, A. A., Mukhti, A., ... & Gibran, F. (2021). Minangkabau Matriliney and Gender Equality: Cultural Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals. *Andalas Journal of International Studies (AJIS)*, 10(1), 16-33.

law. Additionally, the significant gender segregation in many Islamic nations restricts the opportunity for women to work for themselves¹⁸⁹.

In Indonesia, gender segregation never took an extreme form. In agriculture, both men and women had obligations to fulfill. However, it is evident that segregation is far more pronounced in those areas of society where Islam has had the greatest influence than it is in the secular ones. Coeducation is common in public schools, but sexes are strictly divided in religious education. Girls of marriageable age are subjected to the practice of "kurung" (lit. cage, confinement) in such circles. For Indonesian women who had never experienced such a tradition, the Aisyiyah introduced the veil, which covers the hair and neck. Perhaps nowhere else do so many girls and women follow this tradition as in West Sumatra¹⁹⁰. Conflicts are essentially inevitable, despite the official position that adat and Islam coexist peacefully as equally significant aspects of Minang-kabau culture. Leaders of modernist Islam have attacked Adat severely, and Adat has retaliated by fortifying its organizational structure. Long-lasting discord has led to a considerable compartmentalization of society, with certain segments adhering more closely to adat ideology than to Islam¹⁹¹.

¹⁸⁹ Nasir, P. E., Halim, A., Herida, T., Cory, S., Sinulingga, A. A., Mukhti, A., ... & Gibran, F. (2021). Minangkabau Matriliney and Gender Equality: Cultural Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals. *Andalas Journal of International Studies (AJIS)*, 10(1), 16-33.

¹⁹⁰ Sohn, K. (2015). Gender discrimination in earnings in Indonesia: A fuller picture. *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 51(1), 95-121.

¹⁹¹ Azzahra, A., Shadrina, S., Wardana, G. A., Yandrizal, D., & Hasim, R. (2021). Islamic Education and Concept of Gender Using a Culture Approach in Minangkabau. *Khalifa: Journal of Islamic Education*, 5(2), 155-175.

Chapter 3

The intersectionality between Religion and gender equality in Agriculture

1. Women's Involvement and Discrimination in agriculture

Due to the extra job demands placed on women that men do not, they are typically less competent than males to take advantage of economic opportunities. Although customs vary by culture and throughout time, women often handle the majority of home chores, childcare duties, and small animal husbandry in most countries. Women are less able to participate in income-generating activities because of this added job load, which is unpaid and frequently necessitates a minimum amount of time before becoming profitable. Additionally, the nature of the work—such as looking after young children and elderly family members—requires women to remain close to the house, which restricts their alternatives for paying employment. Due to a lack of time, many women create small cottage companies like handicrafts, which are frequently characterized by poor profits and little room for growth¹⁹². When examining women's workloads, gender discrepancies become more evident. In many different nations, it is believed that women spend between 85 and 90 percent of the time processing and preparing food for the household¹⁹³. Children's care and home chores are typically handled by women. These tasks may take a long time, depending on the size and structure of the family. Studies on time allocation have revealed that, when caregiving is

¹⁹² Lanjouw, J. O., & Lanjouw, P. (2001). The rural non-farm sector: issues and evidence from developing countries. *Agricultural economics*, 26(1), 1-23.

¹⁹³ Acharya, M., & Bennett, L. (1982). Women and the Subsistence Sector: Economic Participation and Household Decision-making in Nepal (World Bank staff working papers No. 526). *Washington, DC: World Bank*.

included in, women work much more than men¹⁹⁴. Even though Ghanaian women work outside the home almost as frequently as men do, they nonetheless bear a significantly higher responsibility for household duties¹⁹⁵. Women in Uganda were unable to increase their production in the market because of the time they spent caring for their families, working in their husbands' gardens, and providing food for their households¹⁹⁶. Men, however, merely stated that they lacked the funds to hire labor.

Most unpaid employment in Tanzania exhibits a clear gender bias¹⁹⁷. Women spend a lot of time collecting water and fuel, preparing food, and performing other domestic and child care tasks to make up for inadequate infrastructure, especially low-income women who live in locations with few facilities. Women (and daughters) are in charge of roughly 65 percent of all transport tasks in rural families, including trips for firewood, water, and transportation to the grinding mill, according to an analysis of household surveys from Ghana, Tanzania, and Zambia¹⁹⁸.

Any changes impacting the family or the environment frequently have different effects for men and women due to the gender-specific attribution of chores. For instance, the time required to care for sick family members or the orphaned children of relatives has increased significantly as a result of HIV/AIDS¹⁹⁹. Women are forced by deforestation to fetch firewood at ever-greater distances from the farm²⁰⁰. The time saved by decreasing infrastructure for food preparation and water collection is equal to 466 thousand and 4,590 thousand full-time jobs, respectively²⁰¹.

¹⁹⁴ Budlender, D. (2008). *The statistical evidence on care and non-care work across six countries* (No. 4). Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

¹⁹⁵ Brown, C. K. (1996). Gender roles and household allocation of resources and decision-making in Ghana. *The changing family in Ghana*, 2, 21-41.

¹⁹⁶ Ellis, A., Manuel, C., & Blackden, C. M. (2006). *Gender and economic growth in Uganda: Unleashing the power of women*. World Bank Publications.

¹⁹⁷ Fontana, M., & Natali, L. (2008). Gendered patterns of time use in Tanzania: public investment in infrastructure can help. *IFPRI Project on Evaluating the Long-Term Impact of Gender-Focused Policy Interventions*.

¹⁹⁸ Malmberg Calvo, C. (1994). Case study on the role of women in rural transport: access of women to domestic facilities.

¹⁹⁹ Addati, L., & Cassirer, N. (2008). Equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS. *Documento preparado para la reunión del Grupo de Expertos sobre el reparto equitativo de las responsabilidades entre mujeres y hombres, incluidos los cuidados prestados en el contexto del VIH/SIDA, organizado por la División de las Naciones Unidas para el Adelanto de la Mujer, Ginebra*.

²⁰⁰ Kumar, S. K., & Hotchkiss, D. (1988). *Consequences of deforestation for women's time allocation, agricultural production, and nutrition in hill areas of Nepal* (Vol. 69). Intl Food Policy Res Inst.

²⁰¹ Ibid 6

In addition to the previously mentioned inequalities in the rates at which men and women participate in the labor force, there are also significant gender differences in employment patterns within labor markets for a number of reasons that are consistent across cultures and geographies. In addition to being far less likely to work, women are also significantly more likely to engage in self-employment activities than higher-paying wage jobs as a result of family and child care responsibilities. This is crucial information. Economically active women frequently exit the labor force because of child care obligations, which results in less job experience being accumulated. Due to time restrictions, women are also more likely to hold part-time positions and informal employment relationships that pay less and/or offer less benefits but allow for greater flexibility. Additionally, there is a higher concentration of women in particular supply chain stages or tasks (e.g. packaging, post-processing). The lack of opportunity to gain new skills and capabilities due to occupational segregation into low-tech occupations hinders future professional development and reinforces stereotypes that these sectors are low-status, low-paying jobs. The fact that women get paid less even for equivalent positions with comparable levels of education and experience is a well-documented pay disparity in urban labor markets. This pay discrepancy is likely to also occur in rural labour markets. Below is further information about gender pay disparities.

Table 2 from the RIGA database²⁰² shows gender inequalities in full-time and part-time pay employment participation for selected nations. The two columns on the left illustrate the previously mentioned disparity in participation rates; female participation in rural wage labor markets is lower in each of the fourteen nations. With the exception of Nicaragua and Panama in this sample, the remaining portion of the table demonstrates how women who participate in salaried labor markets are likewise more likely than males to hold part-time work. In addition (but not shown in the table), a greater percentage of women than men are employed in seasonal jobs rather than typically better-paying year-round jobs that also typically include additional non-salary benefits in all eleven countries where the surveys allowed for the distinction to be made.

²⁰² The Rural Income Generating Activities (RIGA)

Participation in rural wage labour markets (%)			Type of contract held by participants in rural wage labour markets (% of Participants)			
	Male	Female	Male		Female	
			Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Africa						
Ghana 1998	14.6	3.8	63.6	36.4	40.7	59.3
Malawi 2004	25.8	16.6	33.4	66.6	10.9	89.1
Nigeria 2004	3.6	1.4	72.9	27.1	72.1	28.0
Asia						
Bangladesh 2000	24.2	3.1	85.1	15.1	69.2	30.9
Indonesia 2000	18.1	8.6	74.4	25.6	63.8	36.3
Nepal 2003	21.2	12.5	53.6	46.4	28.2	71.9
Tajikistan 2003	19.4	13.4	18.9	81.1	16.4	83.6
Vietnam 1998	17.0	11.5	69.3	30.7	63.2	36.8
Europe						
Albania 2005	11.5	2.4	89.4	10.6	88.8	11.3
Bulgaria 2001	23.8	23.2	85.6	14.4	84.2	15.8
Latin America						
Ecuador 1995	28.7	8.7	66.9	33.2	63.6	36.2
Guatemala 2000	30.9	7.8	86.9	13.1	75.3	24.8
Nicaragua 2001	24.9	7.8	80.3	19.7	80.6	19.4
Panama 2003	27.8	9.9	81.5	18.5	81.9	18.0
AVERAGE	20.8	9.3	75.4	35.7	66.3	46.1

Source: FAO Riga-team. Notes: Includes only individuals who are of working age (between 15 and 60 years of age). Participation rates are weighted to be nationally representative.

Women are frequently restricted to working in specific industries and occupations, frequently as a result of their inferior status in terms of human capital and negotiating ability. Wthe non-farm sector, paid employment is nearly always dominated by males and self-employment by women based on national-level case studies in Latin America²⁰³. Furthermore, women find it difficult to rise into managerial roles even when they obtain work in the official sector. Women make up between 60 and 80 percent of unskilled workers in Colombia's flower-cutting sector, for instance, but they hold a far smaller proportion of administrative and professional positions²⁰⁴. In addition, as earnings rise in businesses producing largely for export, such as textile, electronics, or various food processing industries, women tend to be replaced by men²⁰⁵.

A woman's position can be weakened by intra-household inequality both inside and outside the home²⁰⁶. In occupations with low pay, severe job instability, and generally subpar working conditions, women are overrepresented. Women are more inclined to accept lesser

²⁰³ Katz, E. (2003). The changing role of women in the rural. *Food, Agriculture, and Rural Development: Current and Emerging Issues for Economic Analysis and Policy Research (CUREMIS II)*, 1, 31.

²⁰⁴ Meier, V. 1999. Cut-flower production in Colombia – a major development success story for women? *Environment and Planning A*, Vol. 31(2): 273 – 289.

²⁰⁵ Fontana, M. 2003. The gender effects of trade liberalization in developing countries: A review of the literature. Discussion Papers in Economics, DP 101, University of Sussex.

²⁰⁶ Kapadia, K. (1995). The profitability of bonded labour: The gem-cutting industry in rural South India. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 22(3), 446-483.

pay when they have less control over household decisions, less access to resources, and lower household income²⁰⁷. The majority of women in northern India who participate in the labor force do so as a household survival tactic rather than as a way to raise their level of living or have more influence in their households.

1.3 Religion and Gender equality

Recent academic study and public conversation on international development have frequently discussed religion, women's rights, and reproductive policy²⁰⁸. These subjects have received significant attention in relation to one another rather than only attracting attention as unrelated issues²⁰⁹. The connections between religion and gender equality generally, are intrinsic, according to a range of experts and observers.

Given that religious institutions are not all the same, the role of religion in upholding standards that encourage gender inequality is complicated. Religious groups have a diverse range of voices, despite being ruled by hierarchical leadership. Religious doctrines, standards, and laws can evolve through time through internal conflicts and disputes, albeit slowly. However, in hierarchical institutions, the beliefs of the highest members of the religious hierarchy at any given time play a significant role in influencing gender attitudes.

There are a number of reasons why religious institutions' insistence on certain gender norms could be unfair to women. In the first, religion is discussed as a reaction to economic insecurity, and in the second, the significance of hierarchy in for-profit enterprises is highlighted. Regarding the former, it has been suggested that religious fervor is a reaction to financial instability and the degree of economic progress²¹⁰. If the correlation between religion and economic security is real, then it seems to reason that people who are under stress would benefit from clear, tight regulations, including behavioral norms. In addition,

²⁰⁷ Kantor, P. (2009). Women's exclusion and unfavorable inclusion in informal employment in Lucknow, India: barriers to voice and livelihood security. *World development*, 37(1), 194-207.

²⁰⁸ Echávarri, R., & Husillos, J. (2016). The missing link between parents' preferences and daughters' survival: The moderator effect of societal discrimination. *World Development*, 78, 372-385.

²⁰⁹ Wang, Q., & Sun, X. (2016). The role of socio-political and economic factors in fertility decline: a cross-country analysis. *World Development*, 87, 360-370.

²¹⁰ Norris, P., & Inglehart, R. (2004). *Cultural barriers to women's leadership: A worldwide comparison*. Journal of Democracy.

when newborn and adult death rates are high, survival instincts prioritize having a high fertility rate. In addition, when newborn and adult death rates are high, survival instincts prioritize having a high fertility rate. In such a situation, attitudes on gender roles may be strict and binary as a result of a fight for survival on the economic front.

A second element might be the hierarchical organizational systems that unite the majority of major religions. The dominant organized religions have varied degrees of access to and control over material resources, and as a result, they use their influence to establish and uphold social norms that sustain power structures and keep their hold on power. Elite groups frequently seize control in institutions, therefore patriarchal dominance in the marketplace is probably mirrored in religious institutions. Given this perspective, it is possible for religious organizations to uphold patriarchal values to the detriment of women by supporting the economic, social, and political dominance of men²¹¹. Whatever other functions religious organizations may play, such as providing comfort or even social support, if they propagate gender norms and rules that disadvantage women, they may obstruct government initiatives to close gender gaps in crucial fields like education and employment.

The heterosexual family and women's primary (unpaid) caregiving role are stressed in a society where rules embodying gender hierarchy and strict roles predominate. Divorce, abortion, and homosexuality are often viewed negatively because they go against the social norms that are expected of women (and implicitly, males) in society. Sons, on the other hand, are typically valued higher in patriarchal cultures than girls.

We may anticipate that those who display higher levels of religiosity have more gender inequitable attitudes if organized religions in their current form do actually perpetuate gender inequitable attitudes. Whether gender inequality in outcomes is a result of prevalent gendered views in a nation is a crucial question. Are there any indications that countries with higher levels of religion have gender discrepancy in well-being metrics that is more

²¹¹ Kardam, N. (2005, November). Gender and institutions: Creating an enabling environment. In *Proceedings of expert group meeting enhancing participation of women in development through an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/enablingenvironment2005/docs/EGM-WPD-EE-2005-EP> (Vol. 9).

pronounced? It is important to analyze how religiosity and the predominating religion might affect actual economic outcomes as well as perceptions. There are two transmission methods. First, gender inequality in attitudes acts as a "stealth" influence at the micro level, influencing daily actions. Norms about who in the gender hierarchy is most deserving of a job influence employers' decisions about whom to recruit and whom to fire. Families decide which member of the family will perform paid or unpaid caring work.

Therefore, we may assume that, to the extent that religion influences norms and attitudes, there will be quantifiable consequences at the national level on, for example, the gender gap in schooling, the sex ratio, and the percentage of the labor force.

The second transmission mechanism is the impact of religious beliefs on how resources are allocated by a government (for instance, for health care and education) and how laws are enforced, including those prohibiting discrimination in the workplace and governing access to loans, inheritance, and property ownership. It is likely that gender results are worse through the government channel in nations with dominant faiths that are gender unequal.

The religious affiliation of a person may affect general norms and results, suggesting that some religions may be more patriarchal than others. However, there is currently no agreement on the empirical question of whether any particular organized religion is more patriarchal than others. In comparison to other religions and the non-religious, Muslims, Hindus, and Catholics have lower rates of female labor force participation²¹². Although some new empirical data contradicts that claim, Islam has been found as much more patriarchal than other dominant religions on metrics such as education and life expectancy²¹³.

Clearly, the issue has not been settled. However, these results imply that a person's religious denomination may potentially affect their gender attitudes in addition to their level of religiosity. Based on this debate, we propose that a person's level of religiosity correlates

²¹² Psacharopoulos, G., & Tzannatos, Z. (1989). Female labor force participation: An international perspective. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 4(2), 187-201.

²¹³ Balamoune-Lutz, M. (2007). Globalisation and gender inequality: Is Africa different?. *Journal of African Economies*, 16(2), 301-348.

with how likely s(he) is to hold sentiments that are inequitable against women. Regarding the impact of a person's affiliation with a specific religious denomination, we make no theoretical predictions.

It is significant to highlight that while we can analyze association, we are unable to exactly identify causality from religiosity to gender attitudes. This reflects the idea that religiosity is a social condition that is formed, linked to factors like the welfare state's size, cultural value patterns, historical circumstances, and social divisions that may encourage religious affiliation as a means of group unity²¹⁴. As a result, there are feedback loops between more general cultural, economic, and social variables that influence religious formations.

2. Women in Muslim society

Muslim women's experiences range greatly within various societies. Their shared practice of Islam, which has a variety of effects on their daily lives and offers them a shared identity, may help them overcome their vast cultural, social, and economic divides.

i. Gender Roles

Two Quranic principles, the spiritual equality of men and women and the notion that women are meant to represent femininity and men masculinity color gender roles in Islam²¹⁵. Islam's fundamental understanding of women and men assumes that they serve complementary roles: like everything else in the universe, people were formed in pairs, and neither one can exist without the other²¹⁶. Islamic cosmology views the cosmos as an equilibrium supported by harmonious polar interactions between the pairs that comprise everything. Additionally, every external phenomenon reflects an internal noumenon, and ultimately, God²¹⁷. While some have praised Islam for traditionally portraying women in a more progressive light, others have criticized it for the discriminatory nature of its personal status rules and penal code as they relate to women²¹⁸. In general, however,

²¹⁴ Verweij, J., Ester, P., & Nauta, R. (1997). Secularization as an economic and cultural phenomenon: A cross-national analysis. *Journal for the scientific study of religion*, 309-324.

²¹⁵ Eaton, G. (2000). *Remembering God: Reflections on Islam*. Kazi Publications Incorporated.

²¹⁶ Murata, S. (1992). *The Tao of Islam: A sourcebook on gender relationships in Islamic thought*. Suny Press. Pag 91

²¹⁷ Ibid, pag 14

²¹⁸ Kazemi, F. (2000). Gender, Islam, and politics. *Social research*, 453-474.

Islamic personal status regulations make significant distinctions between male and female rights²¹⁹. For instance, Muslim men are free to practice polygamy and wed non-Muslim women, but Muslim women are prohibited from doing so²²⁰ and female heirs receive only half of what their male brothers do. Furthermore, Islamic criminal law's emphasis on witness testimony makes conviction even more discriminatory toward women. Female testimony alone is seen to be insufficient to convict a killer; a male testimony is needed instead²²¹. Although the observance of sexual modesty and plain clothes for both Muslim men and women is mandated by the literature and sunnah, some readings of the Quran claim that Islam does not specifically require women to cover their heads or faces. In reality, most modern Muslims interpret this to mean that men and women must wear attire that covers their navels and knees. Forced veiling is not a requirement of Islam as a whole; rather, it has developed as a result of several contextual factors²²². Forced veiling has been compared to the dress regulations imposed by the Taliban in Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as Islamic schools that mandate girls wear a headscarf²²³. These laws requiring women to cover up have drawn criticism for being coercive tools of gender segregation that undermine women's autonomy and agency²²⁴.

ii. Female Education

The rights of women and men to acquire knowledge on an equal basis are promoted by the Quran and sunnah (the stated or practiced example attributed to Muhammad)²²⁵. Regardless of their biological sex, all Muslims are commanded by the Quran to work hard in the pursuit of knowledge. It frequently exhorts Muslims to study, reflect, contemplate, and learn from the signs of God in nature²²⁶. Muhammad also promoted education for both sexes, saying that it was a holy obligation for every Muslim man and woman to seek

²¹⁹ Siraj, A. (2011). Meanings of modesty and the hijab amongst Muslim women in Glasgow, Scotland. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 18(6), 716-731.

²²⁰ Leeman, A. B. (2009). Interfaith marriage in Islam: An examination of the legal theory behind the traditional and reformist positions. *Ind. LJ*, 84, 743.

²²¹ Kazemi, F. (2000). Gender, Islam, and politics. *Social research*, 453-474.

²²² Mojab, S. (1998). "Muslim" women and "Western" feminists: The debate on particulars and universals. *Monthly Review*, 50(7), 19.

²²³ Rasekh, Z., Bauer, H. M., Manos, M. M., & Iacopino, V. (1998). Women's health and human rights in Afghanistan. *Jama*, 280(5), 449-455.

²²⁴ Barrett, D. (2010). British schools where girls must wear the Islamic veil. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2.

²²⁵ Jawad, H. (1998). *The rights of women in Islam: An authentic approach*. Springer.

²²⁶ Ibid

knowledge²²⁷. Like their male counterparts, women have a moral and religious duty to learn, grow intellectually, widen their perspectives, develop their talents, and then employ their potential for the good of their souls and society²²⁸. Copyists made it clear that women had the same rights to education as males by writing in the literature that it is everyone's responsibility to pursue knowledge, regardless of gender²²⁹. Some people were hesitant to embrace these principles because they thought that an educated woman who could read and write was referred to as poisonous²³⁰. Many Muslim women worldwide used this chance to pursue as much education as was legally permitted²³¹. Both sexes sought out Muhammad's teachings in great numbers, therefore it was noted that there were numerous female Islamic academics at the time of his passing²³². Women and men were both taught by Muhammad's wives, especially Aisha. Many of his colleagues and followers learnt the Quran, hadith, and Islamic jurisprudence through Aisha. Notably, there were limitations on the kind of information that might be acquired: women were free to select any area of study that was religious rather than another subject that interested them. Islam recognizes that women's primary responsibilities are as spouses and mothers, hence acquiring knowledge in areas that complement these societal roles was given great emphasis.

iii. Legal condition

All schools of Islamic law agree that only Muslims who have achieved the age of maturity are subject to the sharia's prohibitions. This includes both male and female Muslims²³³. In theory, all Muslims are on an equal footing with the law. The Quran specifically emphasizes in various verses when both are addressed in a clear and distinct manner, that its prohibitions apply to both men and women. Most nations with a majority of Muslims, as well as certain nations with sizable Muslim minorities, have a mixed legal system that combines secular state courts and positive laws with sharia-based Islamic laws and secular courts²³⁴. A few Islamic nations, including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and

²²⁷ Ibid

²²⁸ Ibid

²²⁹ Irwin, R. (Ed.). (2010). *The New Cambridge History of Islam: Volume 4, Islamic Cultures and Societies to the End of the Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge University Press.

²³⁰ Ibid

²³¹ Ibid

²³² Ibid 11

²³³ Nasr, S. H. (2009). *The heart of Islam: Enduring values for humanity*. Zondervan.

²³⁴ Otto, J. M. (2008). *Sharia and National Law in Muslim Countries. Tensions and Opportunities for Dutch and EU Foreign Policy*. Leiden University Press.

Yemen, have sharia-based criminal laws. However, most nations that utilize sharia for legal problems involving women employ it for personal law²³⁵. In addition to regulations that apply to Muslim women, there are differences depending on gender in the testimony procedure and admissible types of evidence in court cases.²³⁶ According to some Islamic jurists, several sorts of testimony from women may not be accepted. Other times, two women's testimony is equivalent to one man's in court²³⁷.

3. The Status of Muslim Women in the Workplace Today

Muslim countries as a whole have lower reported rates of female labor force participation than non-Muslim nations. In 1975, women made up 21.3% of the labor force in Muslim nations and 36.66% of the labor force in non-Muslim nations²³⁸. This is why, based on straightforward statistical comparisons, some have concluded that "Islam" is a factor preventing women from participating in the workforce. However, there is a body of research showing that "Islam" influences both supply and demand. The importance of "Islam" as an explanatory factor is also significant, as is the wide variation in economic rates across various sectors among Muslims. Low levels of female economic activity may be related to a refusal by both men and women to acknowledge the actual or desired involvement of women in labor-intensive occupations, as seen in Egypt and Bangladesh²³⁹. Large scale official surveys have produced substantially lower levels of activity than smaller sample surveys that employ more adaptable approaches. For instance, according to accepted international standards, a recent ILO/CAMPAS poll in Egypt indicated that 80 percent of women are involved in some type of labor force activity and that 37 percent of women are engaged in monetised labor force activity. Comparatively, the official labor force survey from 1983 found a rate of 13%. It was discovered that terminology like "work" and "job" did not fit how women's economic activities are perceived. When asked if their spouses worked for them, males in different

²³⁵ Esposito, J. L. (1995). *Modern Islamic World*.

²³⁶ Arzt, D. E. (1990). The application of international human rights law in Islamic states. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 12(2), 202-230.

²³⁷ Siddiqui, M. (2007). Rudolph Peters: Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law. *JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC STUDIES-OXFORD-*, 18(2), 244-245.

²³⁸ Moghadam, V. M. (1990). *Gender, development, and policy: Toward equity and empowerment* (No. 7). Helsinki: World Institute for Development Economics Research of the United Nations University.

²³⁹ World Health Organization. (2015). *Trends in maternal mortality: 1990-2015: estimates from WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and the United Nations Population Division*. World Health Organization.

research in Syria responded "no," but when asked if they would need to find a replacement should their wife pass away, they replied "yes."

There is a general trend toward more women entering the labor force. However, when it is based on a rise in the supply of labor rather than a rise in demand, rising labor force participation cannot be interpreted as a simple progressive growth for women. The 1980s saw a slowdown or stagnation in the 1970s-era substantial growth in female labor force participation, which were partly attributed to the oil boom and male labor migration. Although female participation rates are increasing globally, they frequently coexist alongside high rates of female unemployment and rising rates of male unemployment, underscoring the role of poverty in driving women's labor force involvement. Due to the fact that levels of economic activity tend to be age-specific and that higher activity rates are concentrated among younger women, education may potentially play a role in explaining rising female engagement.

In the context of Indonesia, women workers represent a segment of the population with the economic capacity to join the labor force. When someone is currently working in the job market, their gender can no longer be differentiated. On a broad scale, men and women who are in the labor market will face intense competition for jobs. Given that women and men currently have equal rights in school and that employment options are expanding for women, the participation of female migrant workers continues to rise yearly.

The Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR), which measures how many people are in the labor force, grew along with the workforce. LFPR was reported at 69.20 percent in February 2018, up 0.18 percentage points from the same month last year. Increased labor supply potential is indicated by an increase in the LFPR. Men and women have different LFPRs based on their gender. Male LFPR was 83.01 percent in February 2018, but female LFPR was only 55.44 percent. Male LFPRs declined by 0.04 percentage points while female LFPRs increased by 0.40 percentage points as compared to the conditions one year prior²⁴⁰.

²⁴⁰ Sasongko, G., Huruta, B. E., & Huruta, A. D. (2020). Female Labor Force Participation Rate in Indonesia: An Empirical Evidence from Panel Data Approach. *Management and Economics Review*, 5(1), 147-159.

According to projections based on the rising participation rate, the workforce's share will rise from 55.04% in 2017 to 55.44% in 2018. This statistic indicates that eventually, the ratio will be close to 50.3, which is the current percentage between men and women. This supports the finding that women frequently assume more leadership roles in economic development initiatives. In actuality, this growth was more notable than TPAK in 2014–2015.

Male LFPRs in Indonesia are often much higher than female LFPRs. This pattern was also present in February 2016, when male LFPRs reached 83.46% but female LFPRs only reached 52.71%, and in February 2015, when male LFPRs reached 84.58% while female LFPRs only reached 54.48%. According to this, there are approximately 85 persons in the workforce for every 100 males of working age, however there are only about 54 people in the workforce for every 100 women of working age. In the same pattern, male LFPRs were almost 30% higher than female LFPRs between the months of August 2014 and February 2014²⁴¹.

Long-term development is clearly focused on economic development, according to the LFPR report. Economic growth is not the main obsession, though. The focus will also be on other areas, such as social, cultural, educational, and political issues, to maintain a balance. Additionally, Indonesian society is currently undergoing a transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy that is entirely governed by market forces. This modification will alter the makeup, organization, and nature of the labor required. Later on, this will cause a change in the demand for professional work from both men and women.

Women are now working more professionally because of these structural changes. Now that you are in this position, you can see how important women's labor is to Indonesia's economic progress. When Indonesian culture is still oriented toward the agrarian world, women are more likely to participate in the labor force because they are more interested in activities related to the agricultural sector. However, since economic activity has now transferred to industry, women can now work as consultants, secretaries, public relations specialists, doctors, technical experts, accountants, lawyers, and many other professions. Many jobs are currently held by women because they possess the advantages that women have over men in

²⁴¹ Sasongko, G., Huruta, A. D., & Pirzada, K. (2019). Why labor force participation rate rises? New empirical evidence from Indonesia. *Entrepreneurship and Sustainability Issues*, 7(1), 166

terms of verbal communication fluency, physical speed, accuracy of craftsmanship, sharper memory, and nurturing warmth.

4. The Involvement of Women in Economic Activity in Muslims society

Women's labor in the development process has a hugely significant and untapped significance. This is true regardless of whether there are more women than men in the population because their existence is crucial to efforts to raise the bar for family welfare. The fact that one of the most frequently addressed subjects in practically every conference on Indonesian women is how to expand the role of Indonesian women in national development serves as evidence of this. The main premise behind the discussion of women's roles and development is that Indonesian women's contributions to development are still insufficient. From this presumption, the concept of Indonesian women's dual roles—as housewives and as community members—emerged. These roles require Indonesian women to be able and willing to contribute their energy and minds to the development of the social and economic community and of themselves individually. However, little is known about how development treats Indonesian women, particularly poor women who have never been able to attend women's seminars in Indonesia²⁴².

The evidence from recent years demonstrates a propensity for about half of women in the working age group to be included in the labor market. Since there is a dearth of statistical information, it is unknown just how much this female worker contributes to economic activity. The significant number of female workers who were employed in the unofficial sector or as unpaid family caregivers contributed to this scenario. Numerous them additionally hold part-time or seasonal employment. According to BPS data for 2014–2018, fewer women between the ages of 15 and 19 were participating in the labor force. Because more women are attending school, there is a rise in the number of women who are not employed. The presence of this ailment is typically detected by a decline in the number of women working in metropolitan areas. From this angle, it can be said that women, especially those living in urban

²⁴² Soetrisno, L. (1990). SOCIAL FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT. In *Social Forestry in Indonesia: Papers Presented at a Workshop Held at Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 1-3 December, 1987* (No. 25, p. 9). Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

areas, have access to more extensive educational options. If a reduction in labor force participation is observed in rural regions, it is extremely likely that population shifts (urbanization) from village to city are to blame. Due to the shrinking extent of agricultural land, rural communities now have less employment prospects. These urbanized people are anticipated to work in the unorganized sector, whether it is as factory workers, domestic helpers, laborers, street sellers, or retailers.

Based on BPS data Percentage of Formal Workers by Gender, 2015–2018, the number of female workers (female population aged 10 years and over) was 100%, but only 37.78%, 38.16%, 38.63%, and 38.20 percent of them were reported as being actively engaged in economic activities in the sense of working to generate income in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018. From that number, it was also learned that, among the remaining working-age women, 61.81% of them (or 41%) were reported to be housewives. In this situation, it is important to keep in mind that although doing the dishes does not pay the bills, it does help other family members who are the primary breadwinners. The assistance of these housewives is undoubtedly crucial for the family's head and other breadwinner family members to be at ease at work and give their full attention to their tasks. Therefore, a decent location needs to be chosen for housewife employment. In other words, the tasks involved in running this home must be viewed as economic activities. The fact that the female labor force participation rate is significantly higher than the 38.19% figure will be established if this is accepted.

The rise in female labor force participation rates demonstrates unequivocally the involvement of female employees in the process of producing national economists. However, it is believed that the fall in female labor participation rates that occurred in some of the years indicated before and that occurs in some age groups is simply being underestimated. Because these women enroll in schools or move into cities. There will be several working women who are economically active if the female labor force participation rates are multiplied by the number of women in the relevant age group.

5. Promoting Gender Equality in Islamic countries

Whether women in Muslim societies are entitled to equal rights is a subject that is occasionally raised. Are women's equal rights against their culture and religion? Let's start with the reality that almost all nations with a majority of Muslims have ratified international agreements promoting women's rights before we attempt to respond to this.

These include the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and other pertinent agreements. The Organization of the Islamic Conference's Secretary-General most recently made the following statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (November 25, 2007): "The observance of this day serves as a reminder to the entire international community of the 1999 UN General Assembly resolution 54/134, motivating the need to increase the status of women. Islam supports the religious, social, economic, legal, and political rights of women, and defending those rights is one of its most important precepts. Unfortunately, a large majority of women continue to experience discrimination, social injustice, and violence in most communities, especially in emerging and least developed nations²⁴³. The caricature of Muslim women as voiceless, voiceless victims of their culture and religion is openly refuted by the public commitments of States with majorities of Muslims. The institutionalization of such an inaccurate caricature in law and policy, as occurs, for instance, when women in Muslim minorities are denied equal citizenship rights due to their purported culture and religion, is destructive.

In-depth analysis on all types of violence against women, published by the UN Secretary-General in 2006, states that "violence against women is not isolated to a certain culture, area, or country, or to particular categories of women within a society."²⁴⁴ At least one in three women experience violence at some point in their lifetimes, it was noted when the study was presented to the Third Committee of the General Assembly²⁴⁵. In fact, gender-based violence and discrimination are widespread issues, not only among Muslims.

²⁴³ Saudi Press Agency, Jeddah, 25 November 2007.

²⁴⁴ Walby, S. (2006). In-depth study on all forms of violence against women: Report of the Secretary General.

²⁴⁵ Ibid

In Muslim cultures, it is vital to take tangible steps toward gender equality for women so that false assumptions about their culture and religion do not automatically invalidate their entitlement to rights. I'm honored to introduce the research of the Research Programme Consortium on "Women's Empowerment in Muslim Contexts" as chair of its Consortium Advisory Group (WEMC). This multi-country movement focuses on women's empowerment, indigenous rights assertions and struggles in various Muslim contexts, and upholds the notion of women's rights without reservation. Furthermore, the declaration of women's rights is not a new phenomenon; rather, it has a long history in Muslim culture²⁴⁶.

Unfortunately, at this pivotal moment in history, the rise of contemporary extreme political agendas, also known as religious "fundamentalisms," is posing a threat to women's right to gender equality in both Muslim and non-Muslim contexts. These extremists attempt to marginalize women by creating closed constituencies by opportunistically exploiting religion to mask political ambitions. At the same time, fundamentalist ideologies support patriarchal structures already in place that devalue women. Women who oppose these convergent impositions face systemic violence, which is justified by culture and religion, and are condemned, shunned, threatened, abused, and dehumanized.

Therefore, it is especially important at this time to reject the use of culture and religion as a justification for the undermining of women, as WEMC and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) have noted. In support of this goal, UNIFEM has a significant "Say No to Violence" campaign, and WEMC commemorated International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women with the slogan "No Excuses for Violence Against Women." These campaigns aim to elicit public opinion on methods for rallying the government, the general public, and the international community to oppose cultural reasons for violence against women.

In-depth study by the Secretary-General on all forms of violence against women makes the following observations: "The current increased focus on State security issues has increased the conflict between cultural relativism and the recognition of women's human rights,

²⁴⁶ Shaheed, F., & Shaheed, A. L. (2004). *Great ancestors: Women asserting rights in Muslim contexts*. Shirkat Gah-Women's Resource Centre.

including the right to be free from violence. The actions implemented following September 11, 2001 by numerous groups and societies that feel threatened and under attack have made the use of cultural relativism worse. This conflict is a significant problem in maintaining the priority needed to address violence against women on the national and international agendas."

According to the Secretary-comprehensive General's analysis of all forms of violence against women: "As a result of the current increased focus on State security issues, tension has increased between cultural relativism and the recognition of women's human rights, including the right to be free from violence. The measures that many organizations and civilizations that feel endangered and under attack have chosen following September 11, 2001, have made the use of cultural relativism worse. In order to keep violence against women firmly on the national and international agendas with the priority it requires, this tension presents a significant problem."

CONCLUSION

The main objective of this research was the investigation of the effect of women land rights on Gender equality in agriculture, believed as the main solution to the sustainable question regarding Goal N 5 in the sector of agriculture. The research has focused its analysis on two historical matrilineal society. By matrilineal societies we mean those societies or groups adhering to a kinship system in which ancestral descent is traced through maternal instead of paternal lines and which can involve the inheritance of property and/or titles. These types of societies have been chosen for having a long history of female inheritance, indeed women land rights are considered in the gender equality's literature as one of the main resolutions for women access to agriculture. Land is frequently the most significant household asset for rural women and men, boosting agricultural productivity and ensuring food security and nutrition. Evidence demonstrates a substantial correlation between stable land tenure and higher levels of agricultural investment and production, and therefore with higher incomes and improved economic wellbeing. Secure land rights for women are frequently linked to better results for them and their families, such as increased bargaining power in the home and community, improved child nutrition, and decreased gender-based violence. Women, however, often lack proper access to secure land rights in many parts of the world. In this aspect, unsurprisingly, women are disadvantaged more than males. Research have shown that women benefit from greater intra-household bargaining and decision-making power when their rights are safeguarded. This enables parents to have more control over home income and spending, which usually lowers household poverty and is advantageous to their children. There is a strong connection between women's land rights and household welfare. Improved status brought about by property rights can also enable women to participate more actively in community-level institutions, increasing the likelihood that those institutions will attend to the needs of women.

This thesis investigates how two Matrilineal societies, Zomba, Malawi and West Sumatra, Indonesia contribute or not to sustainable development through their inheritance laws, trying to understand if Women land rights are enough to reach Goal N. 5 in the Agriculture sector.

The first region to be analysed is the **District of Zomba**. The region was picked because it is a matrilineal society that follows the matrilocal system of marriage, in which land is both left to daughters and husbands move to their spouses' village after marriage, both of which take place under the matrilocal system. Given that women appear to be the 'owners' of land by tradition, this research location was chosen in order to assess the degree to which this type of system advances women's rights and identify areas within which women might use to preserve their rights.

The region of **West Sumatra, Indonesia** was chosen for the same reason as the Zomba region; it uses a matrilineal structure, in which the maternal line serves as the transgenerational link. Accordingly, ancestral land and matrilineal title pass from the grandmother to the mother, who then passes it on to the granddaughter and her female line descendants.

In the first case, whether or not a husband was present, women dominate farm work in every home. Men and women shared most tasks in the production of maize in households where husbands were more or less permanently residing on the family farm with their wives (approximately 55% of households), although women frequently assumed primary responsibility for harvesting, storage, and seed selection. While women in married families frequently assumed primary responsibility for specific agricultural duties, it was observed that males were consistently assisted in their labour by spouses and/or laborers and children.

However, in the second case, despite having a special status within the matrilineal system, women do not hold a position of authority in society, and they are not involved in the management of land. Additionally, the interactions between men and women within the clan in demonstrate deeply rooted cultural practices that have led to gender inequality. Because of these customs, it is impolite for women to argue with the male traditional leaders. Women's ability to fight against and prevent injustice in the management of the forest by men, who occupy higher positions in society, has been hampered by this traditional and institutionalized

gender imbalance within the Minangkabau society. Women frequently encounter gender inequality in their social interactions when it comes to having access to resources, employment opportunities, and educational opportunities. Due to the social exclusion women experience as a result of all of these causes, they are deprived of knowledge and education, which contributes to gender inequality.

As it emerged from the research, the second matrilineal society does not guarantee gender equality in Agriculture. The reason behind this difference has been traced within religion; indeed, the first matrilineal society analysed is a catholic region whilst the second one is of Muslim religion. Several studies have indicated how Islam, with its strong patriarchal culture, has already impacted the region of West Sumatra since more than four centuries ago. The majority of Minangkabaus, the Matrilineal society in West Sumatra, are nominal Muslims. Since the beginning of the 19th century, West Sumatra has been a stronghold of a severe and fundamentalist version of Islam. In Indonesia, gender segregation never took an extreme form. In agriculture, both men and women had obligations to fulfill. However, it is evident that segregation is far more pronounced in those areas of society where Islam has had the greatest influence than it is in the secular ones. Coeducation is common in public schools, but sexes are strictly divided in religious education. Girls of marriageable age are subjected to the practice of "kurung" (lit. cage, confinement) in such circles. For Indonesian women who had never experienced such a tradition, the Aisyiyah introduced the veil, which covers the hair and neck. Perhaps nowhere else do so many girls and women follow this tradition as in West Sumatra.

In conclusion, the third chapter analyses the consequences of fundamentalist Islam on women's economic activity with a focus on agriculture. More in detail it exposes the gender roles and norms imposed by the religion and its consequence on gender equality in the sector of Agriculture. The conclusion reached by this thesis is that, although land rights are deemed to be fundamental for the achievement of Goal N. 5 in the Agriculture sector, other factors need to be taken in consideration to reach the prefixed results. Gender norms and gender roles are fundamental for the achievement of the gender parity, and religion, especially with fundamentalist or extremist features, plays a key role in dictating economic freedom of women and their access to the agriculture job market.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I conducted in-depth research into the different matrilineal societies around the world; I decided to narrow down my research to rural matrilineal societies in countries where the economy of the country is mainly based on agriculture and the GDP is constantly growing. In addition to this I chose two matrilineal societies where there has been no intervention of International Organizations.

As a result, I chose **West Sumatra**, Indonesia and **Zomba**, Malawi. Evidence from the study of these two countries show that in in Zomba gender equality in agriculture is guaranteed, at least at a higher level, whilst in West Sumatra women still face many barriers to access agriculture. Being both matrilineal societies land rights are guaranteed in both cases.

What emerges from the second chapter's analysis of these two countries is that the element which is divergent in these two cases is Religion; as a result, the Third chapter made an analysis of the intersection of Religion, Social norms and gender roles and the effect it has on women access to Agriculture.