

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

A CALL TO ACTION FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

REPORT OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S
HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Compete Caribbean Program Gender Workshop: The Role of
Gender Equality in Promoting Innovation and Productivity

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Jeni Klugman, Managing Director, Georgetown Institute for
Women, Peace and Security and Fellow, Women and Public Policy
Program Harvard Kennedy School



Outline

Background on the panel

Why now?

Where do we stand?

Proven and promising drivers

An emerging action agenda

Members of the HLP

HLP Co-chairs

Mitchell Baker, Mozilla
Foundation

Winnie Byanyima, Oxfam
International

Renana Jhabvala, WIEGO

Fiza Farhan, Pakistan

Alicia Girón González,
Economic Research
Institute

Michael Spence, NYU

**Simona
Scarpaleggia**, IKEA
**Luis Guillermo
Solís**, Costa Rica

**Sheikha Lubna Khalid
Al Qasimi**, UAE

Justine Greening, UK

**Samia Suluhu
Hassan**, Tanzania

Sharan Burrow, ITUC

Jim Yong Kim, World
Bank

Christine Lagarde, IMF

**Phumzile Mlambo-
Ngcuka**, UN Women

Guy Ryder, ILO

Tina Fordam, Citi
Research

**Amadou Mahtar
Ba**, AllAfrica

**Elizabeth
Vazquez**, WEConnect
Saadia Zahidi, WEF

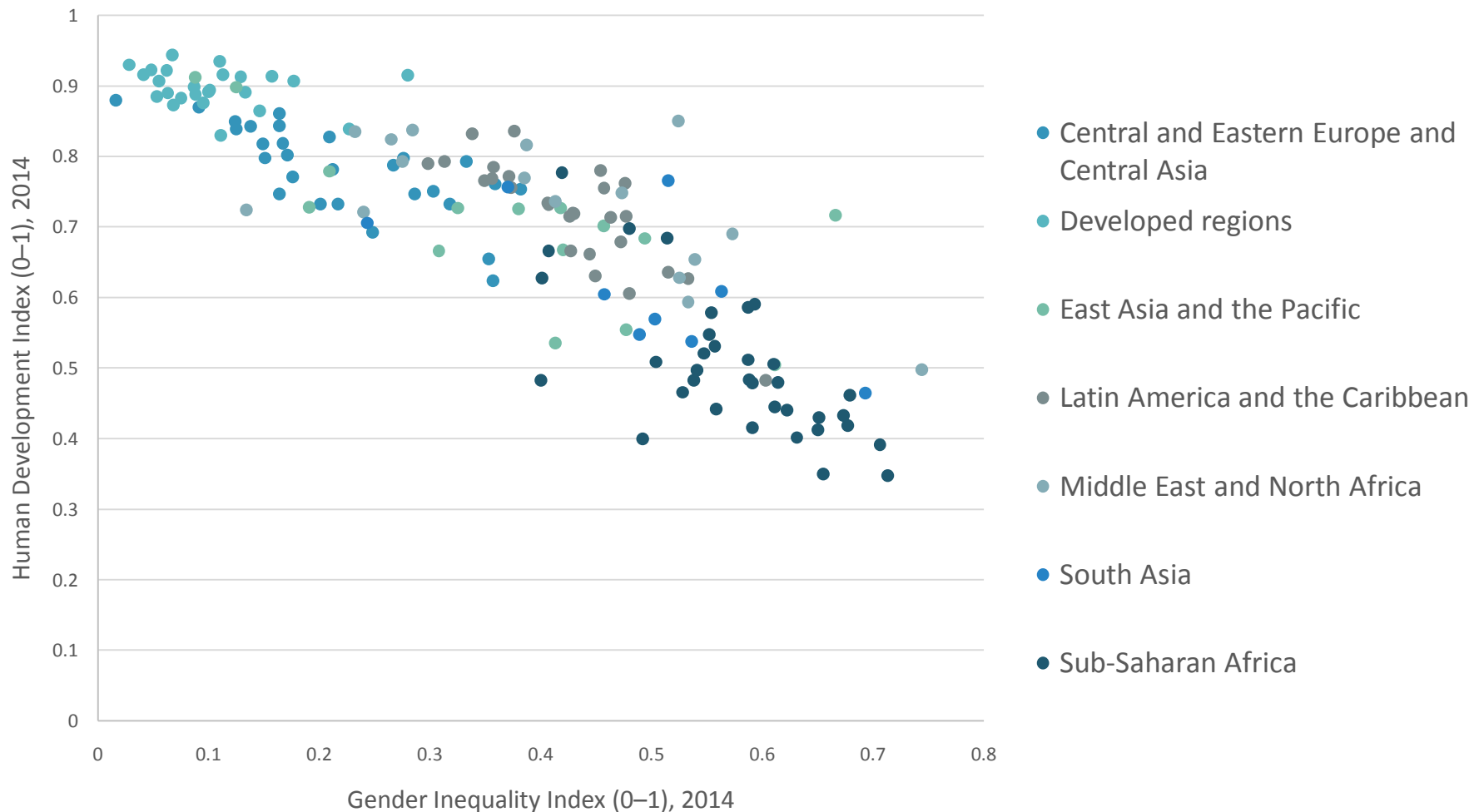
WHY NOW?

Why Now?

- Gender equality is a matter of **human rights**
- Women's economic empowerment yields **significant human development gains**
- Women's economic empowerment **benefits the economy**; the cost of large and persistent economic gender gaps is substantial
- Women's economic empowerment is **smart business strategy**; women add value throughout the business value chain

Gender equality is associated with higher human development, income, growth and national competitiveness

Correlation between human development and gender inequality



Women's economic empowerment is smart business: a value chain perspective



**As designers,
suppliers,
contractors,
marketers and
distributors**

Sourcing from women-owned enterprises can strengthen the brand and improve access to premium markets.¹³

**As business
leaders
and board
members**

One more woman in senior management or on a corporate board is associated with 8–13 basis points higher return on assets.¹⁴

As employees

Companies in top quartile for gender diversity are 15 percent more likely to have financial returns above national industry means.¹⁵

As customers

Women make or influence 80 percent of buying decisions and control US\$20 trillion in global spending.¹⁶

**As a source of
brand value
and reputation**

A commitment to women can enhance a company's reputation and brand.¹⁷

**As community
members
influencing
the market
and policy
conditions**

More than one in three private sector leaders report increased profits following efforts to empower women in emerging markets.¹⁷

**WHERE DO WOMEN
STAND, AND WHY?**

Systemic constraints contribute to persistent gaps

Systemic constraints

Adverse social norms

Discriminatory laws and gaps in legal protection

Failure to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid household work and care

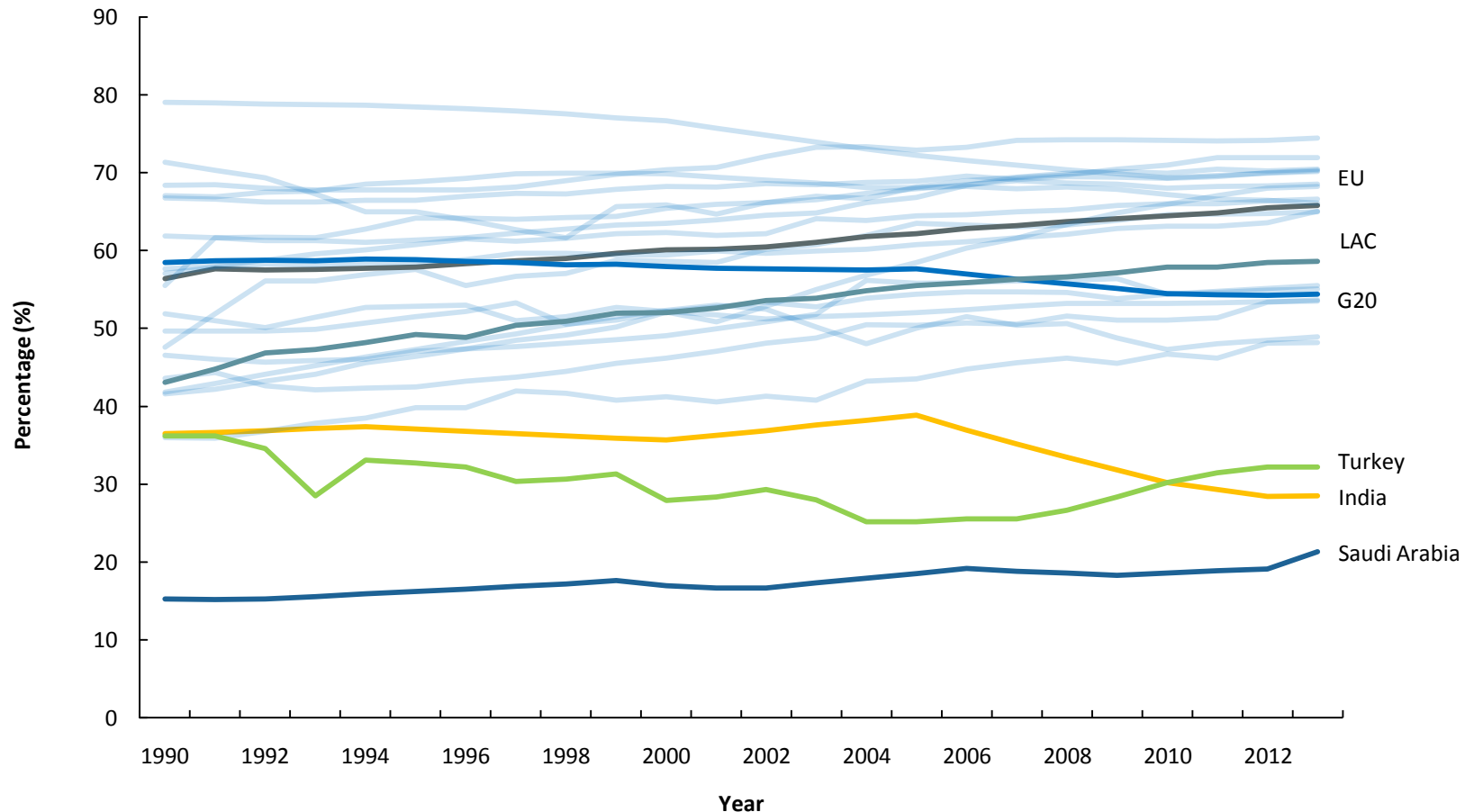
Gender gaps in access to digital, financial and property assets



Persistent gaps in women's economic opportunities

- Labour force participation
- Unpaid work
- Types of paid work
- Informal work
- Pay and prospects
- Formal enterprise ownership

Stagnating global participation, and LAC exceptionalism..



Increases in female labor force participation in LAC from 2000-10 accounted for 30% of the fall in extreme poverty over the period

**SEVEN PROVEN AND
PROMISING DRIVERS TO
EXPAND WOMEN'S
ECONOMIC
EMPOWERMENT**



1. Tackling Adverse Norms & Promoting Positive Role Models

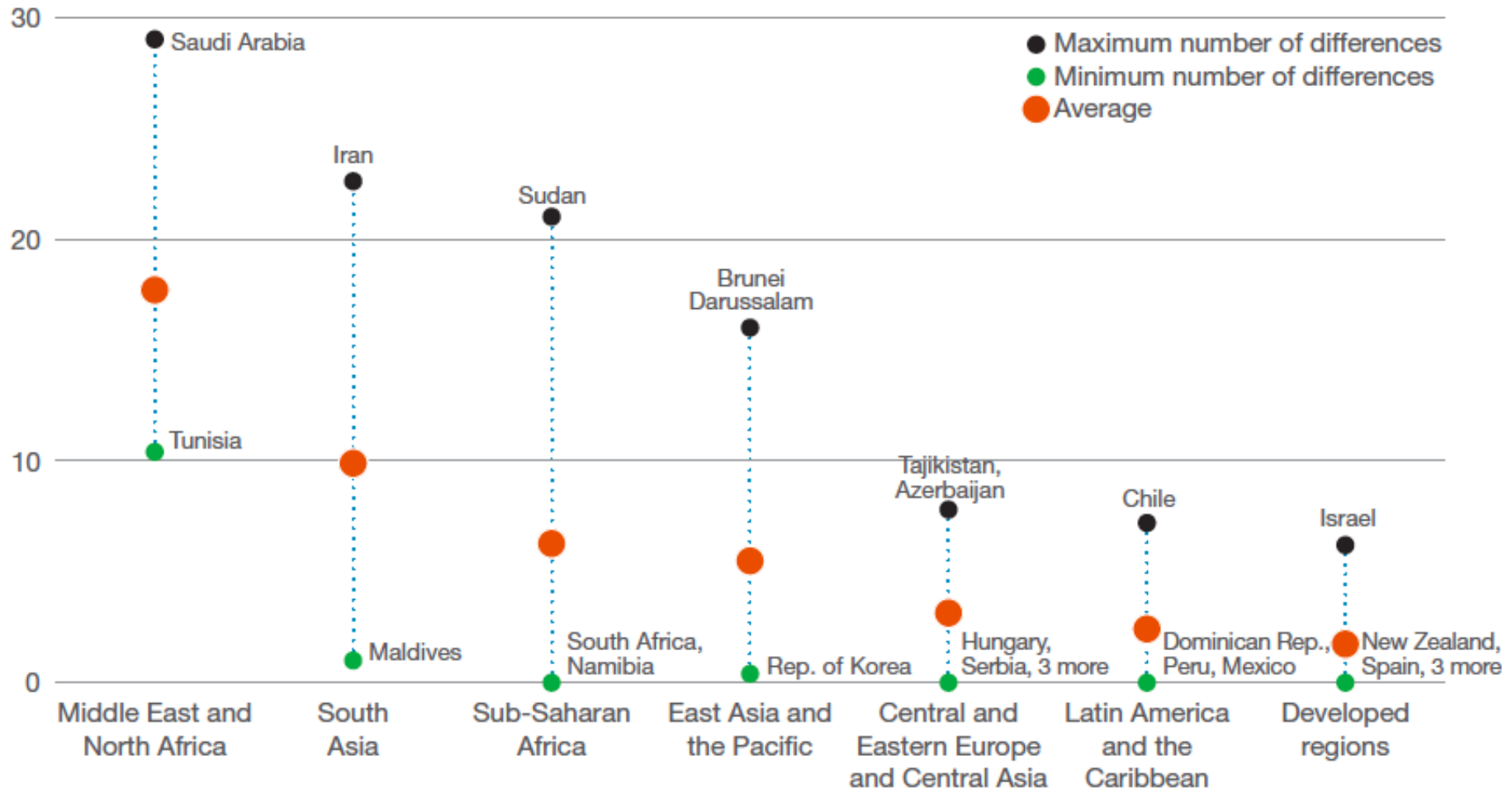
- Social norms are the rules that direct, shape or regulate practice, beliefs and institutions – affecting how women and men act, value, and aspire.
 - Conscious and/or sub-conscious - operating at the individual, household and/or collective levels
 - May be sticky, but not stagnant
- Social norms shape expectations and actions, including:
 - Perceptions of what is skilled and unskilled
 - Care responsibilities → unpaid work burden
 - Work outside the home, educational and occupational choices – for women and men
 - Leadership in communities, governments and private sector
 - Acceptability of violence against women and girls

Breaking stereotypes: Tackling adverse social norms and promoting positive role models

- ✓ Work with children and adolescents, boys and girls, to break entrenched norms
- ✓ Support girls and women moving into non-traditional fields of study and work
- ✓ Engage both women and men in community dialogue and mobilization
- ✓ Business and public sector address bias in their hiring, promotion and pay processes
- ✓ Corporate and public leaders act as champions of gender equality, creating role models and setting standards
- ✓ Support collective agency to change discriminatory behaviour and attitudes; mobilizing for legal and policy reform
- ✓ Working with media, television and radio as allies for change

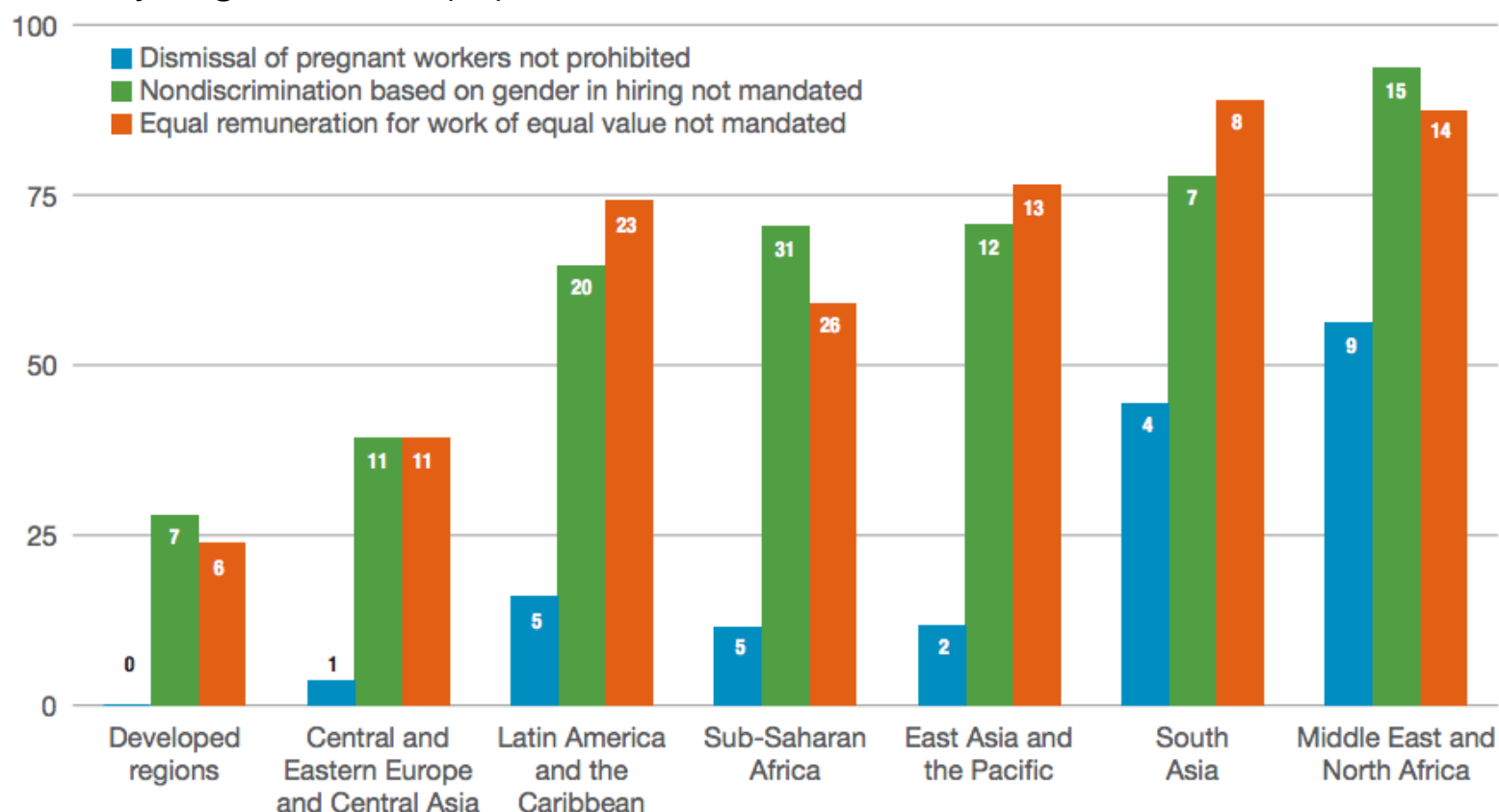
2. Gender discrimination in law is pervasive

Gender legal differences by region, 2015



Lack of legal guarantees against discrimination

Share of countries that do not prohibit key types of work discrimination against women by region, 2015 (%)



Note: 170 countries are included. Figures on bars are numbers of countries.

Source: Women, Business and the Law database, 2016.

Leveling the playing field for women: Ensuring legal protection and reforming discriminatory laws and regulations

- ✓ Ratify and implement key international conventions – including for domestic workers
- ✓ Prohibit discrimination in economic opportunities (hiring, pay, pregnancy); ensure universal access to avenues of recourse; prohibit violence against women at home and at work
- ✓ Eliminate gender-based differences in property and family law
- ✓ Reduce discriminatory laws against the informal economy, where most women workers in developing countries are engaged
 - ✓ Appropriate regulation of public space being used for livelihoods
 - ✓ Protection of casual workers, temporary workers, workers employed through brokers and other kinds of non-standard arrangements
 - ✓ Domestic workers should have legal protection; as well as migrant workers
- ✓ Legal and regulatory reforms—especially simplification of procedures—can facilitate women-owned enterprises to start up, access finance and productive resources, and trade
- ✓ Address discrimination and bias that arises in customary law through constitutional reform
- ✓ Support civil society advocacy & strategic public interest litigation
- ✓ Training and capacity building in institutions -- legislators, police officials, community leaders

3. Building Assets – Digital, Financial & Property

➤ Digital

- Large digital gender gaps - especially in internet access and mobile phone usage and ownership - impede inclusive development
- Barriers: access, affordability, and adoption (e.g., social norms, illiteracy, lack of awareness and relevant content)

➤ Financial

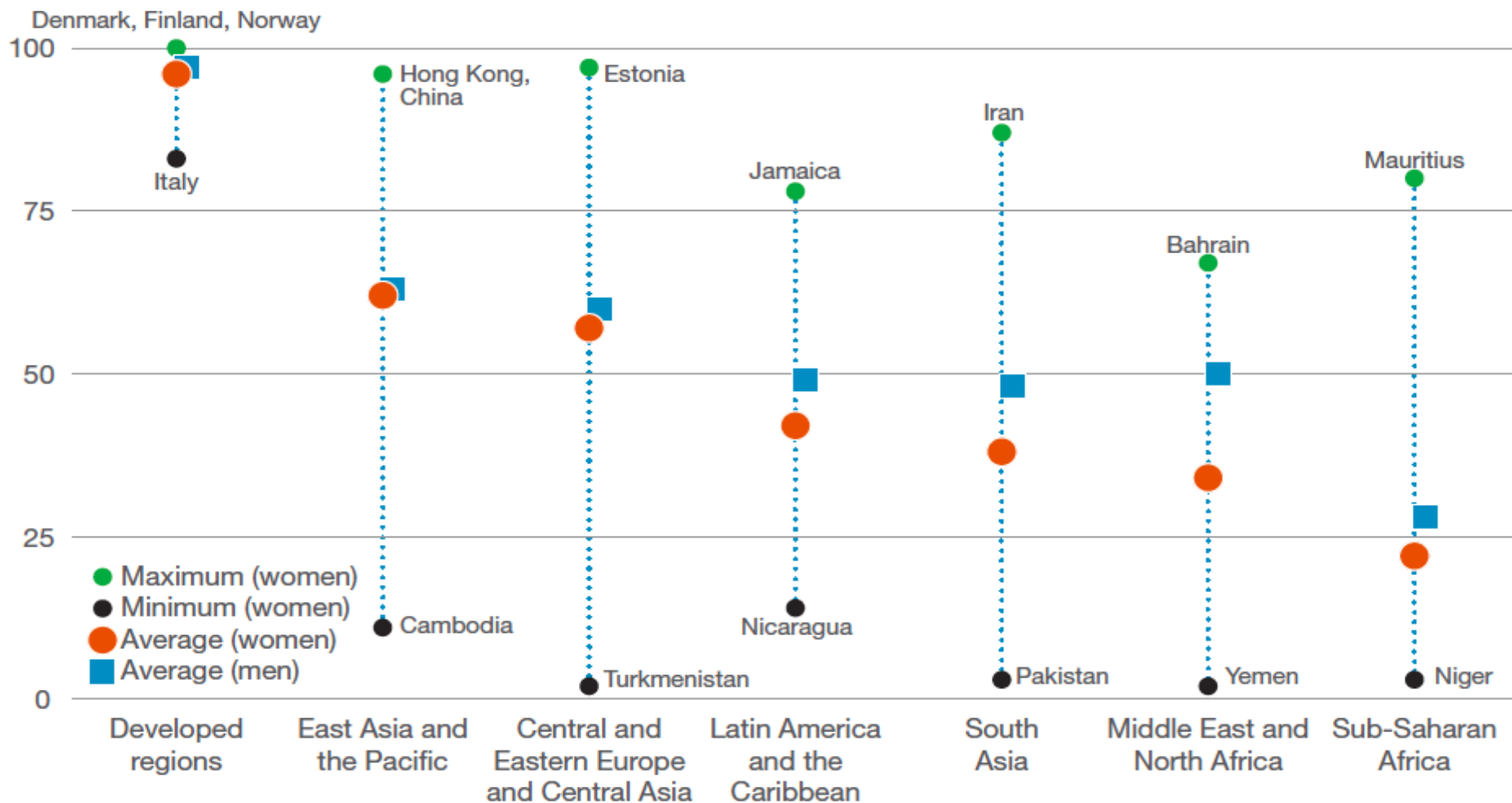
- Gender gap of 7 percentage points in account ownership (as high as 18 percentage points in South Asia); similar gaps in savings and credit accounts
- Barriers: poverty, lack of official documentation, financial illiteracy, social norms & legal discrimination

➤ Property

- Gender differences in ownership and control of property are major determinants of gender inequality
- Ownership and control of land and livestock are skewed towards men

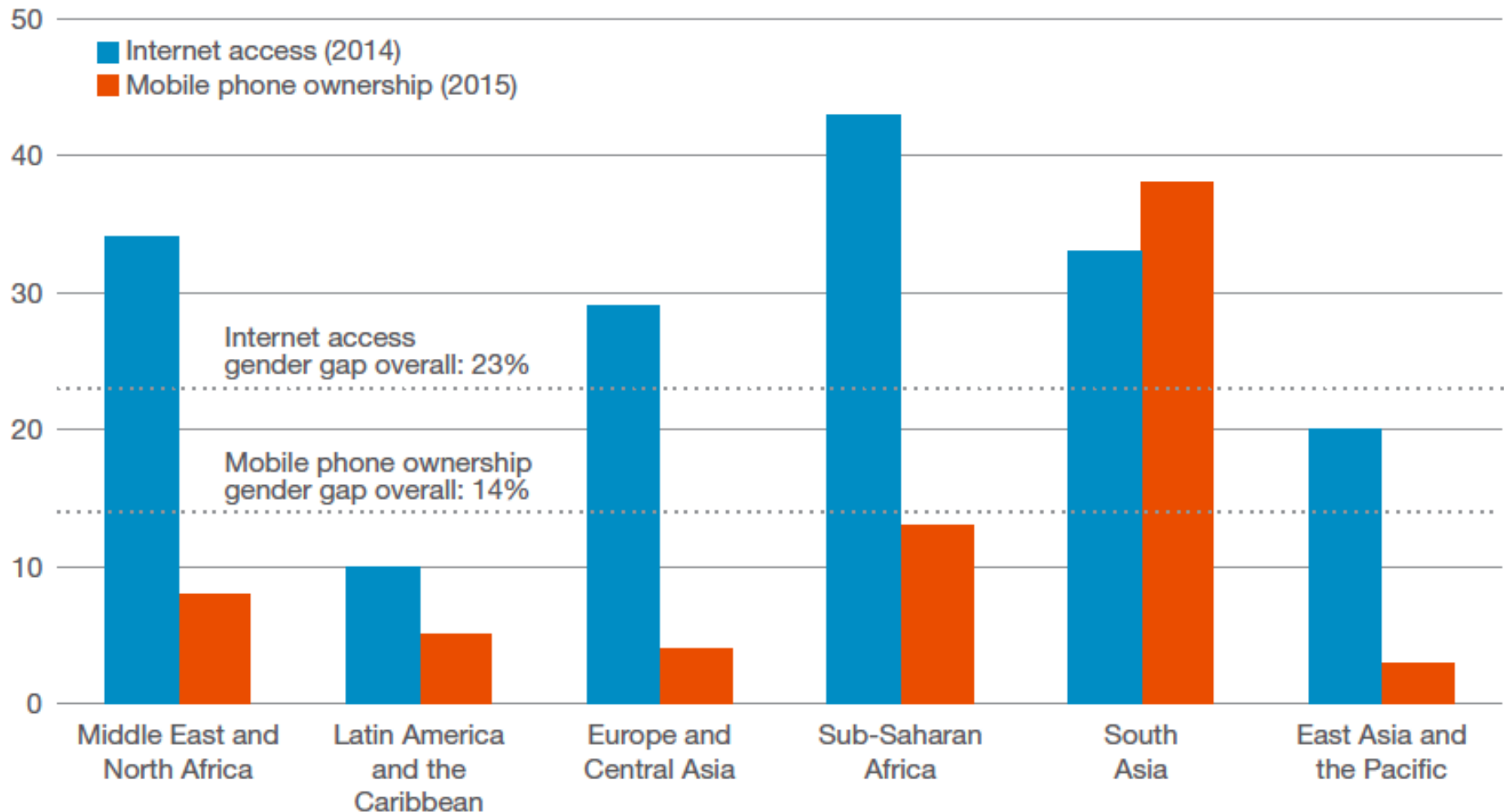
Financial access is low for men and even lower for women in many regions

Share of adults (age 15+) with financial accounts, 2014 (%)



Significant but variable regional gender gaps in internet access and mobile phone ownership

Gender gap in internet access and in mobile phone ownership, by region, 2015



Proven & promising actions to build digital assets

- ✓ Law, policies and regulations should support digital inclusion while addressing safety, privacy and data protection concerns
- ✓ Public–private partnerships can improve digital access for disadvantaged populations, with innovative solutions to serve rural and remote areas
- ✓ Address affordability for low-income customers, through reduced pricing or free access
- ✓ Training and mentoring programmes to improve women's digital literacy
- ✓ Develop local content relevant to women in developing countries

Proven & promising actions to build financial and property assets

Financial

- ✓ Reduce the costs of opening and maintaining a savings account
- ✓ Simplify procedures to obtain official personal identification
- ✓ Enable the expansion of digital financial solutions
- ✓ Better tailor financial products to women's specific needs; expand financial and business education with access to savings and insurance products
- ✓ Support financial cooperatives of women
- ✓ Eliminate legal gender differences in inheritance and property ownership

Property

- ✓ Implement reforms to improve access to property (land tenure, land titling, etc.)
- ✓ Regulate access to public space and natural resources for women to pursue their livelihoods

AN AGENDA FOR ACTION

**Action items for
governments, business, civil
society and international
development agencies**

Immediate Steps for Governments

- Eliminate discriminatory laws that restrict women's employment opportunities and introduce/ strengthen antidiscrimination and enabling laws.
- ✓ Deliver gender-smart employment and procurement practices.
 - ✓ Provide incentives for firms to close their gender pay gaps when awarding government contracts.
- ✓ Lead and support initiatives to change social norms that restrict girls' and women's occupational choices.
- ✓ Recognize women workers' organizations and create structures where they can be represented.

Immediate Steps for Business

- ✓ Challenge stereotypes through advertising and media
- ✓ Map and monitor performance on gender equality in business operations, including throughout supply chains and share success stories to inspire others in a race to the top.
- ✓ Support and normalize good quality part-time work for workers to better manage work, family and personal life.
- ✓ Invest in initiatives and mechanisms to reduce and redistribute unpaid care.
- ✓ Integrate and support women, women-owned enterprises and women's collective enterprises in supply chains.
- Adopt the Women's Empowerment Principles, a joint initiative of the UN Global Compact and UN Women.

Immediate Steps for Civil Society

- ✓ Work with women, particularly the most marginalized, to amplify their voices and support representative organizations to negotiate with local and national government and other bodies.
- ✓ Encourage women's participation and leadership in trades unions, organizations of informal workers, and employers' and business membership organizations.
- ✓ Bring together women for networking and mentoring.
- ✓ Take forward advocacy and strategic litigation to protect the rights of informal, or otherwise vulnerable, workers.

Immediate Steps for Development Agencies

- ✓ Establish and implement gender strategies, under the SDG framework, to ensure that:
 - ✓ Work on economic issues considers ways to increase women's economic empowerment.
 - ✓ Technical support and resources are allocated for implementation of institutional strategies for women's economic empowerment.
- ✓ Provide technical and financial support to women entrepreneurs.
- ✓ Work together with governments to ensure support for women's rights organizations by ensuring women's right to organize, ensuring their representation in key policymaking spaces and providing support that is available and accessible to these groups.
- ✓ Work in partnership with others to accelerate actions under each of the seven areas.
- ✓ Work together with governments to develop standards for data collection, use and dissemination.