



THE HABITAT COMMITMENT PROJECT

Assessing the Past for a Better Urban Future

GENDER AND THE HCI



The work presented in this book is part of a larger research agenda of the Global Urban Futures Project (GUF) at The New School. The research and analysis is a collective effort by students and faculty of the Milano School of International Affairs, Management, and Urban Policy at The New School.

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FINDINGS - GENDER

Gender and the Habitat Commitment Index (HCI)

Caroline Moser, Lena Simet, Melissa De La Cruz, Young Hyun Kim and Justin Roberts

Guatemala
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BACKGROUND CONTEXT

At the 1996 Habitat II Conference, countries committed themselves to *“the goal of gender equality in human settlements development”*.¹ To achieve this goal a number of fundamental commitments were made, such as ‘integrating gender perspectives in human settlements related legislation, policies, programmes and projects through the application of gender-sensitive analysis; collecting, analyzing and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information on human settlements issues, and *“formulating and strengthening policies and practices to promote the full and equal participation of women in human settlements planning and decision-making”*’.² How far have countries advanced in achieving such ambitious commitments? To measure progress made in achieving greater gender equality, the New School study sought to analyze the urban performance relative to a country’s GDP per capita on a number of gender specific indicators relating to employment, government, poverty, land

ownership, health, and education.

MAIN FINDINGS

The regression analysis revealed, counter intuitively, that there was limited statistical relationship between gender specific indicators and GDP performance. The most important results were the following:

- Only three out of the 46 indicators that were analyzed fulfilled HCI requirements and showed a significant relationship to GDP per capita. The three indicators were:

1. Share of women in employment in the non-agricultural sector (% of total non-agricultural employment)
2. Lifetime Risk of Maternal Mortality
3. Tertiary Education

- Only 95 of the 183 analyzed countries reported data on all three indicators.
- A composite HCI score of the three indicators revealed increased performances in 84% of the 95 countries. Countries that made the largest improvements since Habitat II in the three HCI gender indicators are Turkey, Yemen, Greece, Iceland, and Mongolia. Countries that performed worse in recent years than in 1996 are Israel, Georgia, Morocco, Egypt, and Panama.
- Globally, among the three indicators, the HCI of tertiary education improved the most significantly with an increase of 22 points since Habitat II. The HCI of *no lifetime risk of maternal death* increased by 4.1 points, the HCI of *non-agricultural employment* increased by 1.33 points.

The regression analysis is visually

presented in Figure 1. The graph on the left side shows no correlation between GDP per capita and female unemployment with secondary education; the graph on the right shows a strong correlation between GDP per capita and the inverse of the indicator maternal death.

FINDINGS FROM HCI INDICATORS

Employment

The HCI of the indicator ‘*Share of women in employment in the non-agricultural sector*’ (% of total nonagricultural employment) shows significant changes since Habitat II. Among the 120 countries observed, Yemen shows the greatest increase of the HCI with 64 points. HCI scores of Turkey, Cambodia, Lesotho, and Zambia have also increased significantly by around 25 points. At the other end of the spectrum are Israel, the Dominican Republic, Morocco, and Ethiopia, who experienced decreasing HCI scores by more than 50 points. Among the top performers in recent years (countries with HCI scores larger than 98) are Argentina, Lesotho, Puerto Rico, and Germany. Countries that scored lowest in most recent years are Pakistan, Bhutan, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Madagascar.

Health

Since 1996 Habitat II, the ‘*Lifetime risk of maternal mortality*’ indicator has been widely and consistently reported, with a total of 184 nations collecting data on maternal mortality, and a total of 3661 observations. Low-income countries have higher overall reporting with all nations reporting statistics at least once between 1996 and 2015.

Ultimately it is the inverse of the indicator, namely **'No risk of maternal mortality'** that is considered desirable. The global average performance for **'No Risk'** is relatively high, with an HCI of 84. Ranking lowest are the Sub-Saharan African countries; Europe and Central Asia rank highest. Among low-income countries, Sierra Leone ranks lowest with an HCI of 83, Burkina Faso, although a low-income country, has one of the highest HCI scores with 98.

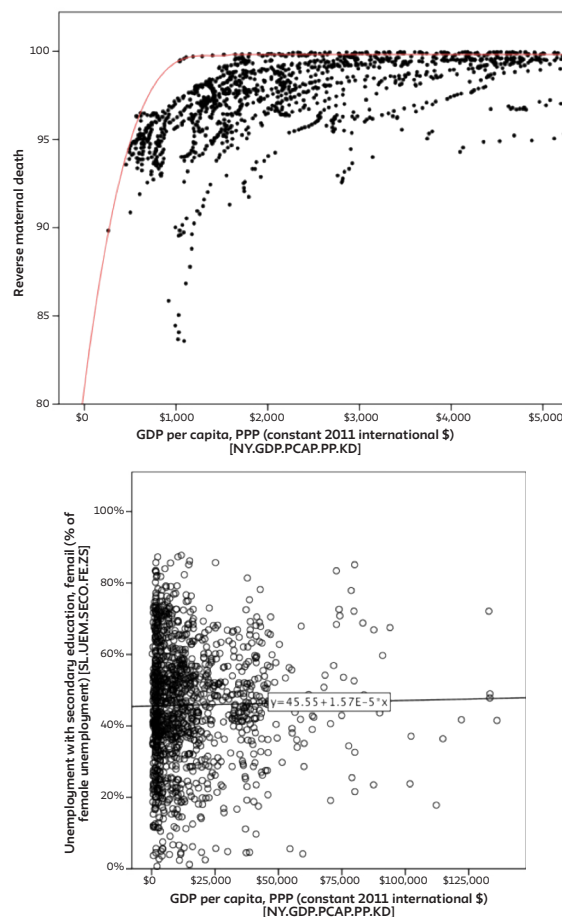
Education

Data on the 'Gross enrollment in tertiary education, % female' indicator has also been collected consistently since Habitat II with 183 countries reporting 2075 observations since 1996. In recent years, Europe scored highest of all regions; Sub Saharan Africa scored lowest. Among low-income countries Indonesia is the highest performer with an HCI of 33, Chad the lowest with an HCI of 0.6. Changes since Habitat II are remarkable; Albania increased its HCI for tertiary enrollment by 75 points, Iceland by 65 points, and Chile by 56 points. Some countries, however, experienced lower performances; Georgia decreased its HCI by 38 points, Panama by 12 points, and the Philippines by about 2 points. Overall, only 10 countries showed decreasing HCI scores in tertiary education. Top performing countries in most recent years were the United States of America, Ukraine, Australia, Finland, and Greece.

FINDINGS FROM NON-HCI INDICATORS

Given that only three out of the 46 indicators

Figure 1. Female Unemployment with Secondary Education (left) and Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death (right) correlated with GDP per capita



listed in Annex 1 showed a relationship with GDP per capita, it can be assumed that there are factors other than GDP per capita that affect gender equality. This section provides insights into three further key indicators that while not showing a relationship with GDP per capita,

nevertheless are important given their relevance to the Habitat II commitments.

Representation in government and leading positions

The importance of the indicator *'Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments'* is widely recognized, with approximately 185 countries collecting data since 1990. Although the indicator shows significant improvements since 1996, overall findings are disappointing. Globally, across all GDP per capita categories, women occupy less than 15% of seats in parliament in the majority of countries. The country that reported the most seats was Rwanda in 2014 with 64%, closely followed by Bolivia, Cuba, Sweden, and Senegal. At the other end, the Middle East did not report a single female legislator since Habitat II. The second indicator in this commitment category is *'Female legislators, senior officials, and managers'*. A total of 118 countries reported data on this indicator between 1990 and 2015, with middle and high-income countries collecting more data than lower income countries. The global average at 29% is low, with most observations ranging between 11 and 50%. Hungary reported the highest number in 1996 (64%).

Urban land / housing ownership

Embedded in the Habitat II Declaration is the development of human settlements, housing, and access to land. This means that the most important gender indicator for the Habitat Agenda undoubtedly is *'Urban land ownership'*, which refers to

female housing ownership, either jointly or singly. Despite the commitment to gender disaggregated data, few countries have collected data on this indicator since Habitat II, with a total of 42 observations recorded, mostly in African countries. This may be a consequence of the fact that this is a relatively 'new' or 'young' indicator with countries reporting on it for the first time in 2010. Results are shockingly low; as depicted in Figure 2, the majority of the countries reported female land ownership rates of less than 10%. Cameroon reported the highest achievements with 25.8% in 2011; Jordan reported a 0% land or housing ownership by women.

Female household headship

Although countries started to collect data on '*Female household headship*' in 1996, since then only 192 observations have been recorded, mostly in lower middle-income countries. The global average for this indicator is 24%; the maximum point reached over the twenty-year period is 49%. The fact that the majority of countries that have reported high rates of female headship are post crisis / post conflict countries, may bias conclusions from this indicator. In 2011, women headed 44.6% of households in Zimbabwe, 40.6% in Haiti (2012), 40% in the Dominican Republic (2013), 34% in Colombia (2010), and 28.1% in Honduras (2012). The assumption that a high rate of female headship is positive and desirable may therefore not hold true for lower-income and post conflict countries where headship in single female headed households can indicate high levels of poverty.^{3,4}

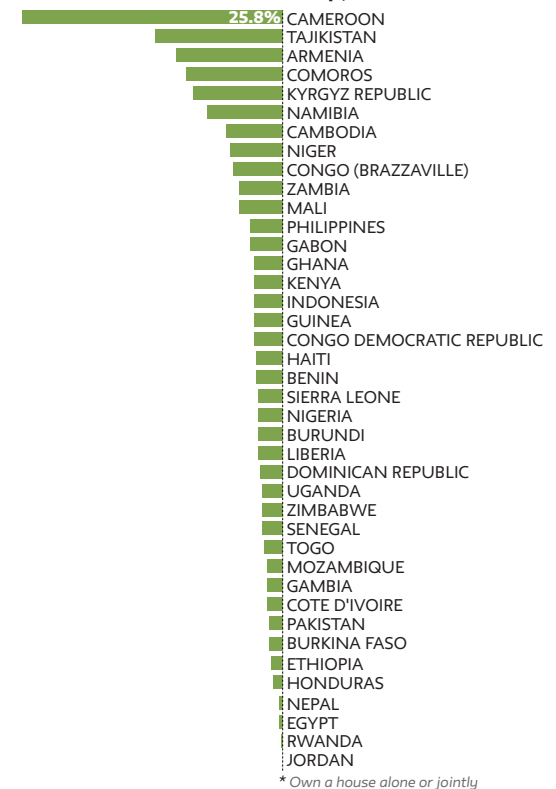
PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

This New School study has found that indicators of improvements in gender equality only depend to a limited extent on a country's GDP capacity. Performance since Habitat II is mixed; while some countries show significant progress, others have performed worse in recent years than was the case in 1996. The composite gender HCI suggests that Turkey made the greatest improvements in the three HCI indicators relative to its capacity, followed by Yemen, Greece, Iceland, and Mongolia. Since Habitat II, Turkey's composite gender HCI increased from 44 to 75 points, an increase of about 31 points. Turkey's improvement can largely be attributed to increases in the gender education HCI, which increased by 53 points. Turkey's gender employment HCI improved significantly too, by about 36 points, while its gender health HCI increased only slightly, by 3.3 points.

Egypt, Georgia, Morocco, and Egypt on the other hand performed significantly worse in all three gender HCI indicators recent years than in 1996, with a decreasing HCI score by more than 12 points. Israel had the largest drop by about 20 points, decreasing from 82 points in 1996 to 62 points in 2013. Israel's decrease can largely be attributed to its drastic drop in the HCI of female non-agricultural employment (-79 points); the HCI of lifetime risk of maternal risk remained unchanged (0.17), the gender education HCI even increased (21 points).

Considering the poor performance of countries in female land ownership and

Figure 2. Female urban land ownership, jointly or alone (in percentage of total land ownership)



representation in governments and legislative positions, the New Urban Agenda should pay particular attention to the lack of gender disaggregated urban data in these areas, and facilitate the collection and analysis of such data.

¹ United Nations, "Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II)," *UN Habitat*, 1996, p. 28

² Ibid., p. 29

³ Kimenyi, Mwangi S., and Mbaku John Mukum. "Female Headship, Feminization of Poverty and Welfare." *Southern Economic Journal* 62, no. 1 (1995): 44-52.

⁴ Chant, Sylvia H. (2003). Female household headship and the feminisation of poverty: facts, fictions and forward strategies [Online]. January 2006. Accessed July 8, 2016. <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/archive/00000574>

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