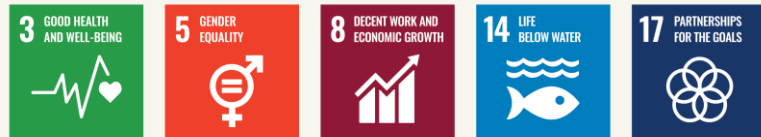




المنتدى العربي للتنمية المستدامة

إعادة الأمل، إعلاء الطموح

بيروت، 14-16 نيسان/أبريل 2025 – Beirut, 14-16 April 2025



Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, A Gender Snapshot of the Arab Region 2024

League of the Arab States
Gender Statistics Workshop

By Dominique Kanobana and Mustafa Khawaja

Cairo, 6-8 May 2025



GENDER EQUALITY IS ESSENTIAL FOR ACHIEVING ALL 17 SDGS



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Extreme poverty in the Arab region has increased significantly, from 5.8 per cent in 2000 to 12.3 per cent in 2024

Only 8.5% of mothers with newborns are covered by maternity cash benefits, ¼ of the world average (2023)

1 in 3 older women receives old-age pensions, compared to 2 in 3 older men. (2023)



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24.5 million

WOMEN and GIRLS

live in extreme poverty.

(2024 data)



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2 ZERO HUNGER



Conflict was the primary cause of acute food insecurity in the Arab region in 2023, forcing people to leave their land and areas where livestock graze, ruining food supplies and farming resources, and causing chaos in food systems and markets.

1 in 3 women, including pregnant women, suffers from anaemia. (2019)

2.2 million pregnant women suffer from anaemia. (2019)



62 million
women and girls
are moderately or
severely food insecure.

(2023 data)

2 ZERO HUNGER



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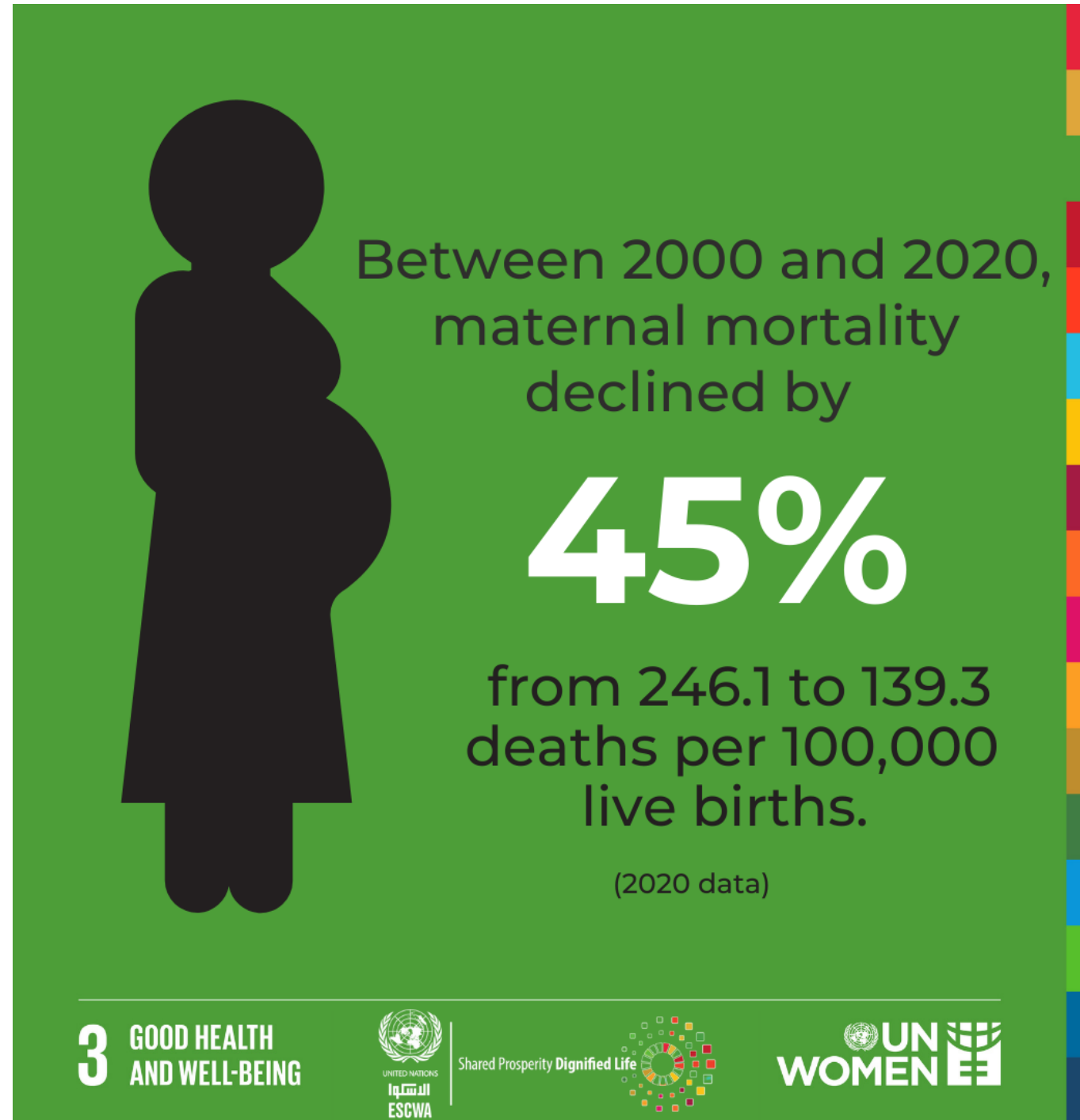


Women's health care has improved by 45% since 2000 but not enough.

1 in 5 birth deliveries is not attended by skilled health personnel. (2023)

2 in 5 women remain with unmet need for family planning. (2024)

Women in crisis settings face escalating mental and physical health risks.





There are 5.5 million more girls completing each level of education from primary to lower secondary compared to the number in 2015

In the Arab region, women are increasingly enrolling in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) majors. They have now outpaced men in the sciences, with 9 per cent of women compared to 6.3 per cent of men pursuing degrees in this area. This promising trend only, holds so much power.



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1 in 3 girls

are not in school, including 1 in 8 girls in urban areas and 1 in 5 boys in rural areas.

(2019 data)

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



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Progress towards gender equality needs to accelerate

Legal frameworks that advance gender equality are fundamental to enabling change.

Although data reporting has increased from 23 per cent in 2018 to 36 per cent in 2024, more Arab countries need to report so that advances in policy actions can be monitored.

8 countries provided evidence on legal frameworks that advance gender equality. The region gained scores out of **100** in these domains:

- **50** in laws regarding employment and economic benefits.
- **51** in overarching legal frameworks and public life.
- **64** in laws regarding violence against women
- **51** in laws regarding marriage and family.

(2024 data)



5

GENDER
EQUALITY

*Progress towards gender
equality needs to accelerate*

It is crucial to remove discriminatory laws and other structural barriers and investing in services, including on care (SDG 5) as it could support women's labour force participation



Women spend

4.7 times

as many hours a day on unpaid
work than men.





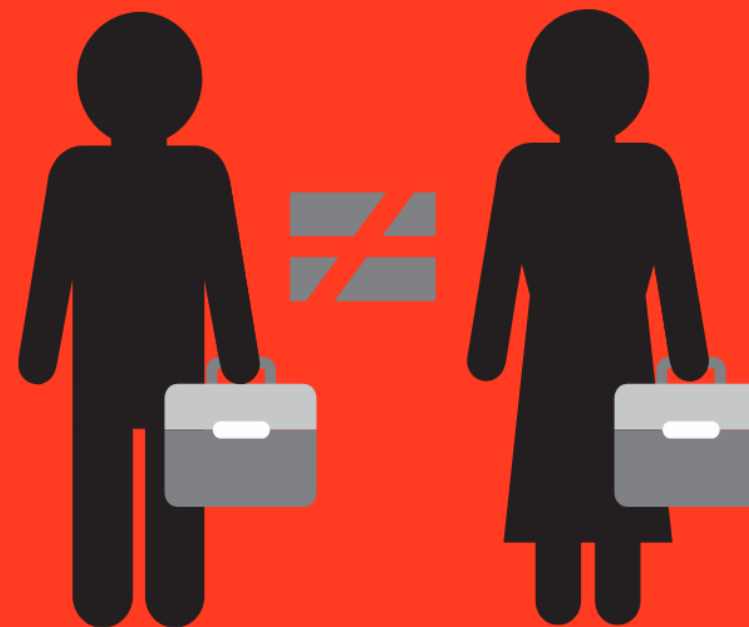
*Progress towards gender equality
needs to accelerate*

19.5% of local government positions are held by women (2023)

Among the employed women, 15.7% hold a management position (2022)

37.7 million women do not own a mobile phone (2024)

Only 64% of women use the Internet compared to 75% of men (2024)



17.7% of seats in parliament are held by women.

(2024 data)





*Progress towards gender equality
needs to accelerate*

Only 64% of women use the
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37.7 million
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(2024 data)



5

GENDER
EQUALITY

*Progress towards gender equality
needs to accelerate*

Child marriage remains high. Eliminating child marriage in the Arab region would have a significant positive impact on economic growth. It could boost the region's economy by an estimated 3 percent per annum, adding a staggering \$3 trillion between now and 2050.



29.4 million

girls were married
before the age 18.

(2023 data)





In many Arab countries. With over 341 million people (75 per cent) living in high and critical water stress areas in 2021, women and girls in poor households, slums and rural areas are particularly affected.

51 million people lack access to basic drinking water services. (2022)

More than 19,000 women and girls die each year due to unsafe water and lack of sanitation and hygiene. (2022)



26

million people
mostly women,
spend one to four
hours a day
collecting water.

(2024 data)





Lack of access to modern energy has disproportionate negative impacts on women and girls' health and safety due to their care work burdens related to cooking and domestic chores

23% of people in rural areas lack access to clean fuels and technology compared to only 7% in urban areas. (2022)



91,350

women died prematurely from exposure to household air pollution.

(2019 data)



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



The region has the lowest labour force participation rate compared to other regions, with a timeframe to close this gap estimated at **115 years**.

The findings show that excluding women from the labour force, costs the region around **\$575 billion per year**.



20%
of women are in the labour force
compared to **70% of men**.

(2023 data)





42.1% of **young women** are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to only 19.7% of **young men**

10.9% of **women** are unpaid contributing family workers compared to 2.8% of **men**.

Only 29% of **women** have a financial account compared to 46% of **men**



1 in 5

women is unemployed compared to 1 in 12 men, while 2 in 5 young women are unemployed compared to 1 in 5 young men.

(2023 data)



Despite the rising number of female graduates in science and technology fields, women remain underrepresented in employment in these sectors

- 23% of employed women hold STEM jobs. (2022)
- 8.2% of women work in manufacturing compared to 10.2% of men. (2022)



1 in 6



inventors is a **woman.**

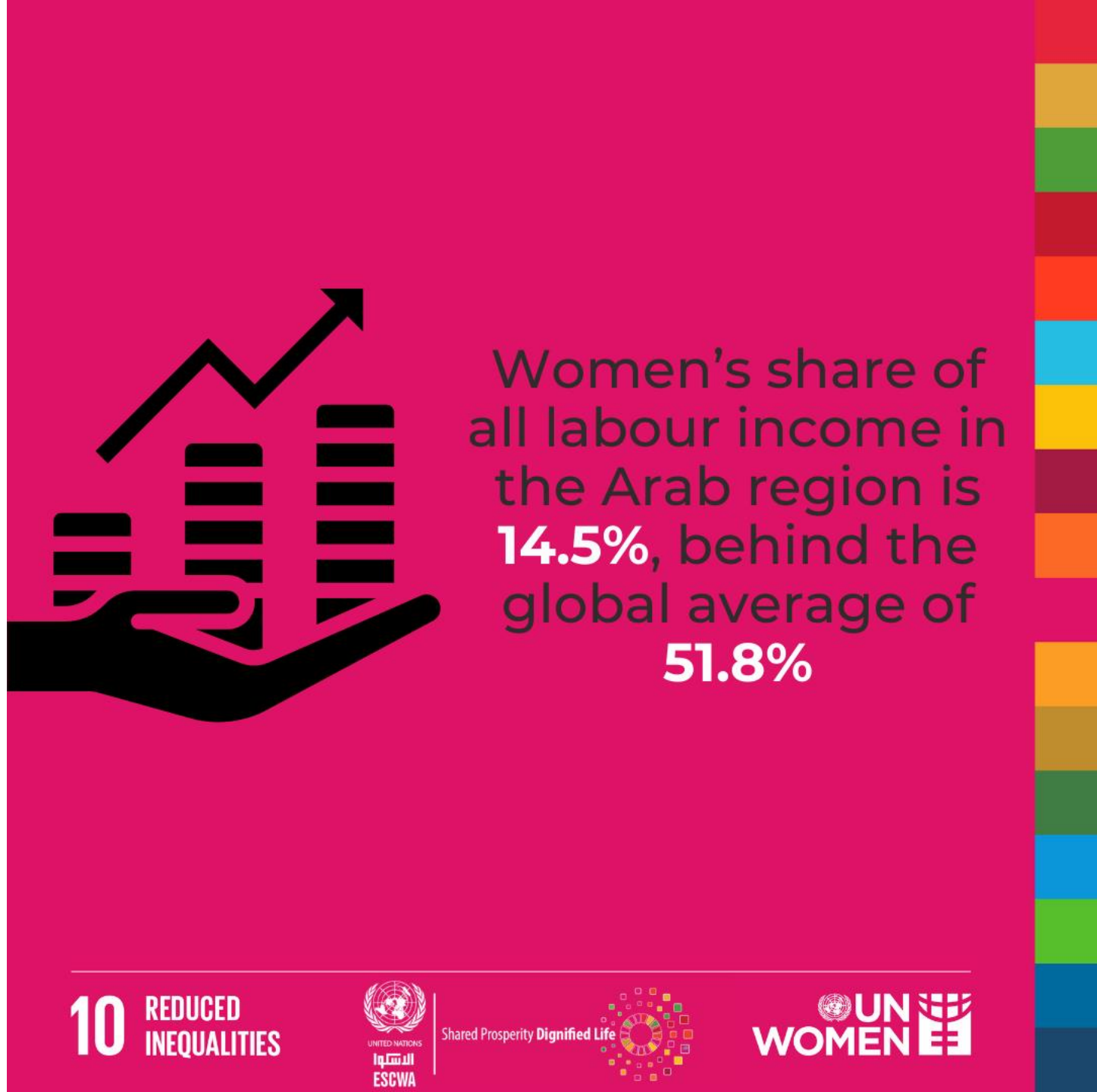
(2023 data)





20.3 million women and girls are forcibly displaced

Only 8.3% of gross domestic product (GDP) is allocated to social expenditure compared to the world average of 19.8%.





Women and girls often fear and experience verbal sexual harassment and physical violence on the streets and in public transport. In the Arab region, the availability of public transportation systems is weak. Moreover, the public transportation systems are inaccessible to most people, including those with disabilities



39% of women
are exposed to sexual
harassment in public places
compared to 22% of men.



(2019 data)



The intersection of gender inequality and environmental crises presents one of the most significant challenges for sustainable development in the Arab region.

Climate change is intensifying, with rising risks of floods, wildfires, desertification, land degradation and severe droughts disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable, many of whom are women.

The impacts of climate change, combined with unsustainable production and consumption patterns, affect women differently due to their socioeconomic position.



24.2 million women suffer from severe food insecurity, an increase of **9 million women** since 2015.

(2023 data)



The rise in the number of conflicts in the past decade in the Arab region has contributed to the devastating harm experienced by women and girls, and by civilians at large. The number of civilian deaths in armed conflicts peaked in 2024.

Civilian casualties in armed conflict zones witnessed significant increases, with 7 out of 10 recorded deaths occurring in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory



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11 countries

have national action plans to advance the women, peace and security agenda.



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



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UN WOMEN

In the Arab region, there is a significant dearth of data when it comes to gender-related concerns. Many of the administrative records do not capture information by sex; very few countries implement gender-specialized surveys, such as those capturing time use and violence against women.

Gender statistics in the Arab region must be streamlined and funded in national strategies for the development of statistics.



Policy orientation

- National statistics offices and other stakeholders to prioritize gender data production, leveraging technology and innovation to close gender data gaps over the next 5 years, affirming the critical importance of sex, age and disability-disaggregated data for advancing and tracking progress on gender equality, a strategic priority for the sustainable development goals, and noting that currently only 39.5% (2024) of gender-specific SDG indicators have available data.
- Poverty, traditional norms and limited access to education perpetuate harmful practices, such as child marriage. Around 29.4 million are forced into early marriage, mainly in rural areas. It is crucial to address these issues by challenging social norms and improving access to education and resources to protect girls' rights and well-being.
- Accelerate women's employment in the Arab States by at least 5% before 2030 through multi-disciplinary initiatives that address structural, social, and economic barriers, focusing on high-growth sectors, enabling legal and policy frameworks, positive social norms, and innovative financing, supported by a regional roadmap with clear milestones to ensure accountability and progress tracking.

Policy orientation

- Expand care services and infrastructure in the Arab States to at least double existing services by 2030 through public-private partnerships, the promotion of positive social norms for the redistribution of unpaid care work, and the creation of millions of jobs in the care economy, supported by a regional commitment with clear yearly milestones to ensure the integration of care economy policies into national development plans and alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Promote sustainable financing by leveraging blended finance, increasing public sector investment, and encouraging private sector engagement to ensure adequate long-term resources and stimulate innovation—particularly in support of women-led start-ups and the growth of existing enterprises in target economies to create jobs and expand economic opportunities for women in the Arab region.
- Government and international stakeholders must institutionalize gender-responsive humanitarian planning by mandating sex-disaggregated data. The investment in partnership with local women-led organizations is also crucial for a meaningful localized and gender-responsive recovery plan



Thank you

