

assessing progress in achieving gender equality

In this report we are presenting data for all four indicators relating to Goal 3 of the MDGs, since all four are necessary to fully show progress, or lack of it, in achieving the goal. The information provided here can be used to help women see where their own country is positioned, and give them the tools to push it forward. We have included data for all regions of the world (as classified by the UN system), including Western Europe and Other Developed Countries, because the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment is a promise made to women throughout the world. It has never been an issue solely for developing countries. Like all indicators these four have their strengths and weaknesses. In particular, they are better interpreted as indicators of the extent to which some of the barriers to women's empowerment are crumbling, rather than as positive indicators of women's

well-being. By tracking the indicators we can see, for instance, that in just two years women's enrolment in school has grown in some countries, and their literacy rates have increased, both of which are essential for women to participate as full citizens in their communities. Elsewhere, women have made dramatic gains in parliamentary elections and have taken on new powers of public decision-making. But the indicators don't tell us all we need to know about the efforts to improve women's lives. This is true for several reasons:

- *The indicators, like the target, are limited in scope.* They do not tell us about the terrible impact of violence against women on their lives. They do not tell us about



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the emotional toll of gender inequality and its effect on every aspect of women's lives. They do not tell us about the long, exhausting hours that women spend caring for their families and communities.

- There is a tendency to use only the indicators relating to education since the target for Goal 3 refers to schooling. This gives a misleading picture of women's empowerment. The *Human Development Report 2002* (UNDP), for example, provides a surprisingly optimistic picture of the achievements towards Goal 3. It shows no countries as 'lagging' (those that have achieved 70 to 89% of the rate of progress required to achieve the target by 2015) and only 13 as 'far behind' (those that have achieved less than 70% of the required rate of progress). In comparison, the goals for reducing hunger and infant and child mortality show many more countries either lagging or far behind — there are 59 countries far behind in achieving the goal for infant and child mortality, for example. But the only data presented for Goal 3 is for eliminating gender disparity in education enrolment. If the other indicators — literacy, wage employment and proportion of parliamentary seats — were included, the picture would be less rosy.
- Ending disparity does not always equal empowerment. Even

BOX 5: MILLENNIUM INDICATORS DATABASE

The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) has set up a millennium indicators site at www.millenniumindicators.un.org.

This site contains information about the 8 Millennium Development Goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators, as well as definitions and sources and background material on the adoption of the Millennium Declaration.

Information on the 48 indicators includes, to the extent it is available, background data for each of the world's countries or areas, which can be related to the MDG indicators. The data primarily covers the Millennium Declaration time frame for monitoring implementation — 1990–2015 — but earlier years are shown as reference points where available. Country profiles and world or regional trends can also be extracted from this page and specialised agencies such as UNESCO, WHO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, ITU, IPU, FAO, OECD, WB provide related statistics. It is possible to view, print or download all the data series.

By tracking the indicators we can see, for instance, that in just two years' time women's enrolment in school has grown in some countries, and their literacy rates have increased. These are both essential for women to participate as full citizens in their communities. Elsewhere, women have made dramatic gains in parliamentary elections and have taken on new powers of public decision-making.

when young women enter school in equal numbers with young men, they may still suffer harassment, or be discouraged from seeking higher education that might open up more jobs to them. Women may enter the workforce in the same numbers as men but still bump up against glass ceilings and unequal pay.

Nor does ending disparity guarantee that a majority of women or men are benefiting. Gender disparity would end if only 20 per cent of boys and girls attended school, but those low numbers would not empower anyone. In a report prepared by UNDP and UNICEF on the MDGs in Africa (UNDP/UNICEF 2002), the graphs on the ratio of girls' enrolment rates to boys' in primary education and on the ratio of literate females to males, aged 15 years and older show that disparity is slowly (too slowly) ending. However, even when there is no disparity and the gender gap in primary enrolment is closed, many young people will still not be in school. At the current rate, Africa will not meet Goal 2 of universal primary education until after the year 2100. Only seven African countries are on track to meet this goal by 2015.

PROGRESS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

To assess whether there have been improvements since *Progress of the World's Women 2000* was published, we look at recent changes. The data comes from compilations and estimations made by international organizations on the basis of information supplied by national governments. In some cases, two years is not enough time for significant change to show up, but we can see patterns that reveal causes for concern as well as optimism. The pattern varies by region, with the biggest deficits in education, literacy and non-agricultural wage employment tending to be in the poorest countries or those cultures with a strong preference for sons. Women's share of seats in parliament depends less on economic strength than on the political will of governments.



An adult education class in Rio de Janeiro.

Key Findings

- Only seven developed countries — Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Netherlands and Germany — have achieved high levels of gender equality and women's empowerment on all the selected indicators.
- The developing countries with the highest levels of gender equality and women's empowerment on the selected indicators are Argentina, Costa Rica and South Africa.
- The greatest improvements have occurred in women's share of seats in parliament.
- The countries with the lowest achievement in education, literacy and non-agricultural wage employment tend to be the poorest. But women's share of seats in parliament is not related to wealth and is highest where special measures have been introduced to help get women elected, as in Mozambique where women now hold 30 per cent of the seats.
- Countries in which there is a strong cultural preference for sons also tend towards the lowest levels of gender equality.
- In many of the countries with the lowest scores, progress is too slow.

The same seven northern European countries that had the highest achievement in 2000 are the leaders again in 2002. South Africa was the leading developing country two years ago, and has now been joined

by Argentina and Costa Rica as a result of large increases in women's share of seats in parliament in those two countries. Of course, this does not mean that all other dimensions of women's lives have improved: In Argentina, for instance, the recent financial crisis has thrown nearly everyone's life into disarray, leaving women especially hard hit. Their wages have decreased, their rates of unemployment have increased and their poverty has deepened.

In general, the most positive changes since the *Progress 2000* report are in women's share of seats in parliament because this can be changed quickly in a short space of time if there is the political will. Changes in literacy, education and employment are rarely so dramatic in a similarly short space of time, since they require widespread changes in economic and cultural structures.

It is clear that in the poorest countries, women will need the support of a more just international system to achieve gender equality and empowerment; the increase in international inequality will have to be reversed.

EDUCATION: SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT

Key Findings

- A majority of countries cited in this report have achieved gender equality in secondary school education or have more girls enrolled at the secondary level than boys.
- 2 per cent of the countries have achieved gender equality in educational enrolment at the secondary level.
- 48 per cent have a higher secondary school enrolment rate for girls than for boys, often because boys leave school for employment earlier than girls.
- 34 per cent, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, have a lower enrolment rate for girls than boys.
- For the remaining 16 per cent there is no up to date data available from UNESCO.

The Gender Gap in Secondary School Enrolment

We have chosen to focus on secondary level education because primary education is being tracked in relation to Goal 2. Without secondary education women are often excluded from better-paying jobs and positions of responsibility.

Chart 1 (p. 16) shows gender disparity in secondary schooling as measured by the ratio between girls' and boys' secondary net or gross enrolment rates.

- a score of 100 indicates that the two enrolment rates are equal
- below 100 means that girls' rate is lower than boys', the traditional definition of a gender gap
- above 100 means that boys have a lower enrolment rate, often called a reverse gender gap

The chart shows that girls' inequality is worst in sub-Saharan Africa, in which 31 countries have a gender gap, with the interlinked dynamics of poverty, HIV/AIDS and conflict as the major reasons. On the other hand, the significant gender gap in girls' enrolment in Asia and the Pacific occurs primarily in South Asia, where poverty plays a role but where there is also a strong preference for sons in many communities. Too often, daughters are considered a liability whose education would be a waste of time and money.

The reverse gender gap — with a higher rate for girls' enrolment than for boys' — is more prevalent in the other regions of the world, including Northern Africa, Central and Western Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. In the last region, 20 countries have a reverse gender gap and only three



A math teacher and student at a Cambodian school for the deaf.

a gender gap. The reverse gender gap is also common in developed countries, where 19 have a reverse gender gap, four have a gender gap and only one has an equal ratio of girls and boys in school.

Although nearly half the countries surveyed had a higher enrolment rate for girls than boys, this does not mean that girls in those countries are more empowered than boys. Nor do the gender gaps in education match the gender gaps in adult life: In countries that have a higher enrolment for girls than boys, men are still likely to earn more than women when they enter the job market. This is because gender discrimination pervades the labour market in most countries and because women spend more time providing the unpaid care work that

supports their families than men do.

In addition, some of the highest reverse gender gap scores are in countries where girls' enrolment is still very low. For example, Lesotho has a reverse gender gap score of 161 but girls' net enrolment rate is only 24 per cent, and boys' rate, of course, is even lower.

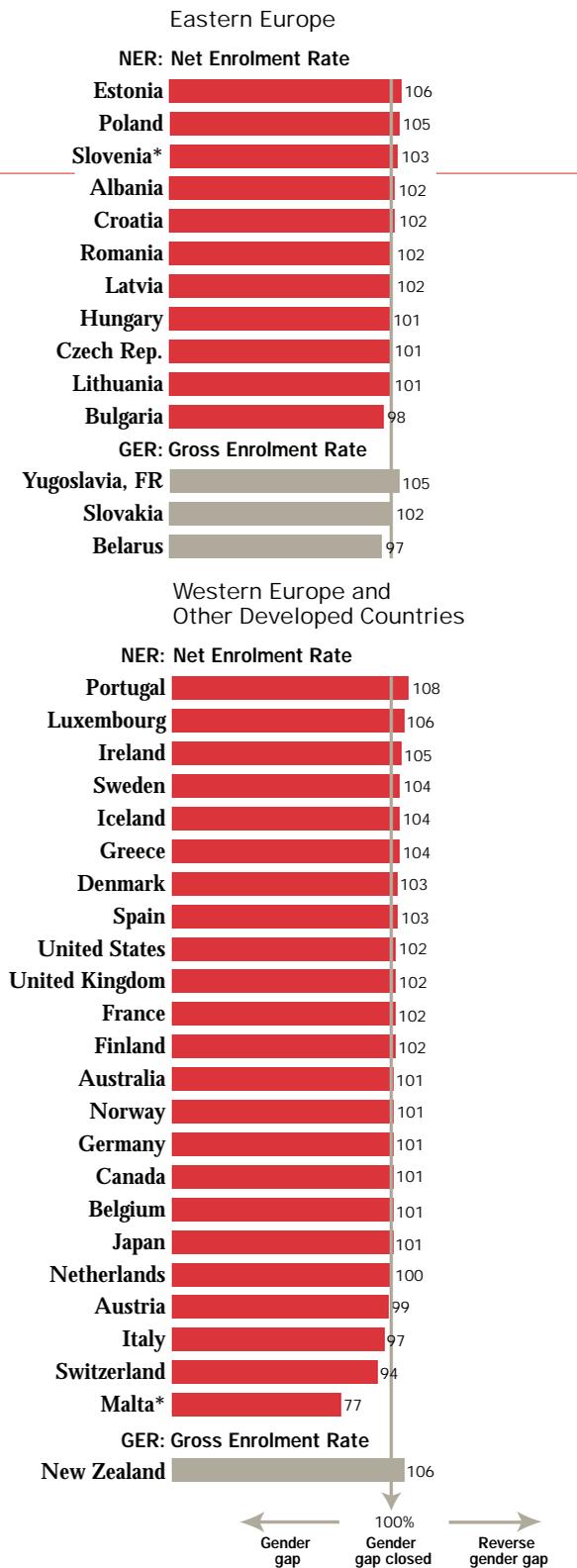
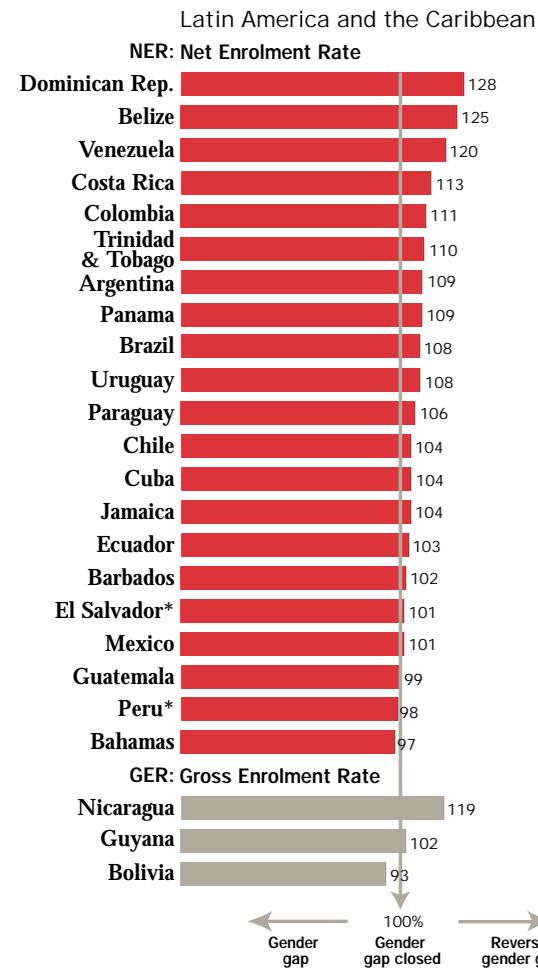
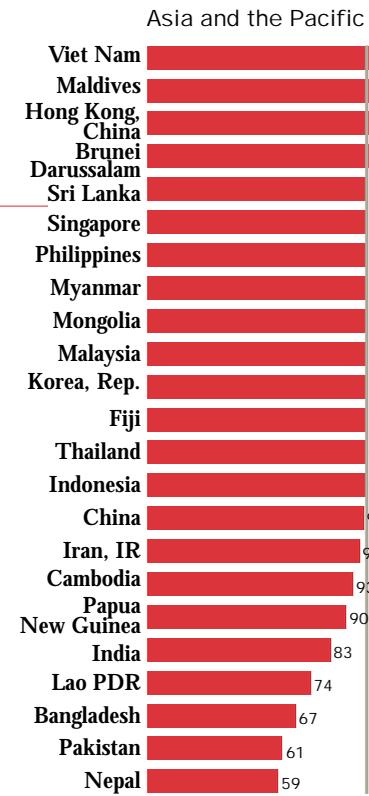
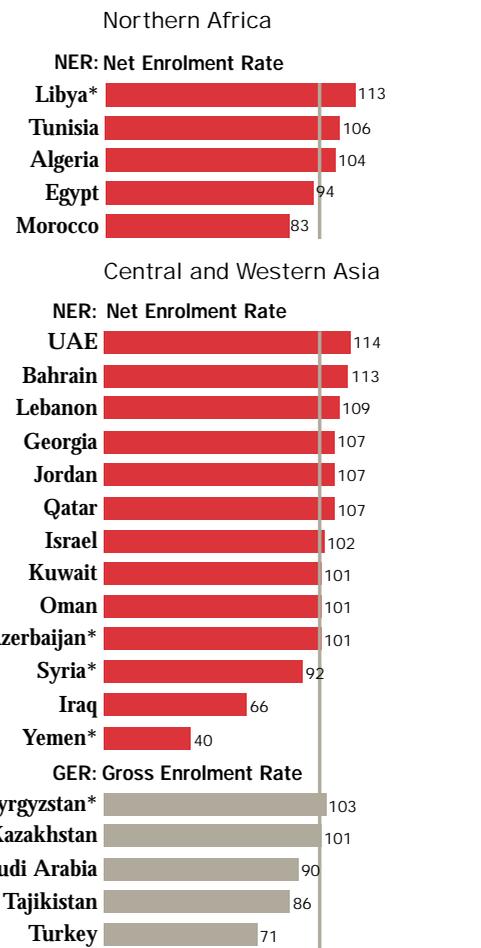
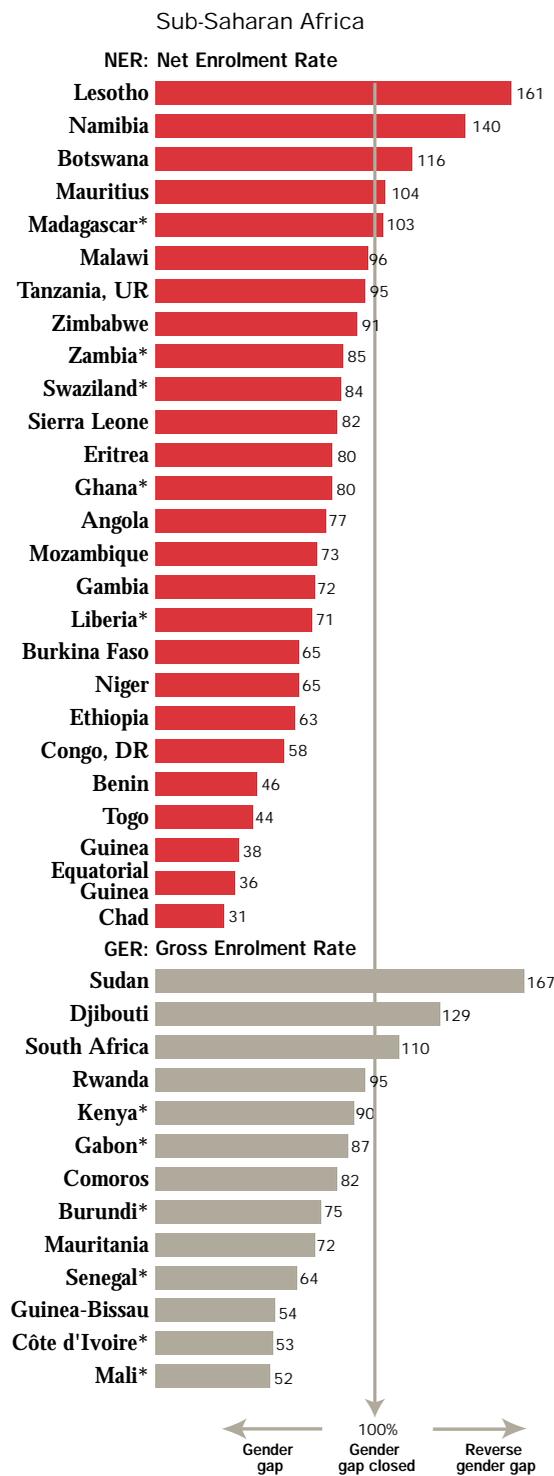
The level of girls' enrolment in secondary school is a better signpost of women's empowerment because it can show whether equality has been achieved at a high level of enrolment or a low one. Our research shows that only 20 countries have 90 per cent or more of secondary school-age girls enrolled in school, and most of these countries are in Western

Europe and Other Developed Countries. To ensure that more girls, many of whom are poor and cannot afford school fees, are enrolled, the focus for action must be on providing the means to get them into secondary education, rather than on simply ending gender disparities in enrolment.

Table 1 (p. 18-19) shows girls' secondary enrolment rate. It indicates that for many countries there is still a long way to go to achieve full enrolment. It will be important to keep track of these numbers in order to guide policy. It would be even better to begin to track completion rates, which would give a clearer picture of girls' ability to compete in the job market.

PHOTO BY JOHN VINIK-MAGNUM PHOTOS

CHART 1: Secondary Level Enrolment, Ratio of Female Rate to Male Rate, 1999/2000



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics, <http://portal.unesco.org/uis>
 *For these countries, data is for 1998/1999; for all other countries, data is for 1999/2000

Table 1: Female Enrolment in Secondary Education, 1999/2000

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	
	Net Rate
Mauritius	74
Botswana	63
Namibia	40
Malawi	40
Zimbabwe	40
Swaziland*	35
Ghana	23
Lesotho	24
Sierra Leone	22
Gambia	20
Eritrea	20
Zambia*	19
Liberia	17
Togo	14
Equatorial Guinea	14
Ethiopia	12
Madagascar	12
Benin	11
Congo, DR	9
Guinea	7
Burkina Faso	7
Niger	5
Mozambique	6
Tanzania, UR	5
Chad	4
	Gross Rate
South Africa	95
Gabon*	51
Sudan	36
Kenya*	28
Comoros	19
Djibouti	17
Senegal*	15
Mauritania	15
Côte d'Ivoire*	15
Guinea-Bissau	14
Angola	13
Rwanda	12
Mali*	10
Burundi*	6
Cameroon	n.d
Cape Verde	n.d
Central African Rep.	n.d
Congo	n.d
Nigeria	n.d
Reunion	n.d
Seychelles	n.d
Somalia	n.d
Uganda	n.d
NORTHERN AFRICA	
	Net Rate
Egypt	77
Libya*	76
Tunisia	70
Algeria	60
Morocco	27

CENTRAL AND WESTERN ASIA	
	Net Rate
Israel	89
Bahrain	87
Qatar	82
Azerbaijan*	78
Jordan	78
Lebanon	73
UAE	72
Oman	59
Georgia	56
Kuwait	50
Syria*	36
Iraq	26
Yemen*	21
	Gross Rate
Kazakhstan	87
Kyrgyzstan	84
Tajikistan	67
Saudi Arabia	65
Turkey	46
Armenia	n.d
Cyprus	n.d
Turkmenistan	n.d
Uzbekistan	n.d

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC	
	Net Rate
Korea, Rep.	94
Malaysia	93
Fiji	76
Samoa (Western)	73
Mongolia	65
Viet Nam	58
Thailand	57
Philippines*	53
China	48
Indonesia	46
Maldives	33
India	31
Vanuatu	21
Lao PDR	25
Papua New Guinea	18
Cambodia	11
	Gross Rate
Brunei Darussalam	116
Iran	77
Sri Lanka*	74
Bangladesh	56
Nepal	45
Myanmar*	35
Pakistan	32
Afghanistan	n.d
East Timor, DR	n.d
Hong Kong, China	n.d
Korea, DPR	n.d
Singapore	n.d

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	
	Net Rate
Uruguay	81
Cuba	81
Argentina	79
Jamaica	76
Chile	73
Barbados	71
Brazil	71
Trinidad & Tobago	67
Panama	64
Peru*	61
Mexico	58
Colombia	57
Venezuela	55
Ecuador	48
Costa Rica	46
Paraguay	46
Dominican Rep.	45
Belize	40
El Salvador*	38
Guatemala	18
	Gross Rate
Guyana*	82
Bolivia	76
Nicaragua	65
Bahamas	n.d
Haiti	n.d
Honduras	n.d
Suriname	n.d

EASTERN EUROPE	
	Net Rate
Estonia	93
Slovenia*	91
Hungary	88
Lithuania	88
Latvia	85
Czech Rep.	85
Bulgaria	85
Croatia	80
Romania	77
Poland	77
Albania	73
	Gross Rate
Belarus	93
Slovakia	87
Yugoslavia, FR	62
Bosnia-Herzegovina	n.d
Macedonia, FYR	n.d
Moldova, Rep.	n.d
Russian Fed.	n.d
Ukraine	n.d

WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES	
	Net Rate
Ireland	100
Japan	100
Sweden	98
Canada	98
Norway	96
Finland	96
Belgium	96
United Kingdom	95
France	94
Netherlands	92
Spain	92
Portugal	91
Denmark	91
Austria	89
Australia	88
United States	88
Greece	88
Germany	88
Switzerland	86
Italy	86
Luxembourg	85
Iceland	78
Malta	77
	Gross Rate
New Zealand	116

Sources: UNESCO Institute of Statistics, <http://portal.unesco.org/uis>
 * For these countries, data is for 1998/1999; for all other countries data is for 1999/2000



A computer-training class in Tanzania.

LITERACY

Key Findings

- There are an estimated 140 million illiterate young people in the world, of whom more than half — 86 million — are young women.
- 34 per cent of the countries covered in this report have achieved gender equality in youth literacy rates.
- 38 per cent, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, have a lower literacy rate for girls than boys.
- 14 per cent have a lower literacy rate for boys than girls.
- For the remaining 14 per cent there is no data available from UNESCO.
- In the period between 1995 and 2002, there were improvements in the literacy of young women in all the countries where there was still room for improvement.
- In those countries where less than 50 per cent of young women are literate, progress has been too slow. At current rates, none of these countries will achieve literacy for all young women by 2015.
- If current rates continue, UNESCO projects that in 2015 there will be an estimated 107 million illiterate young people, and again more than half — 67 million — will be young women.

The Gender Gap in Literacy

The literacy rate is in some ways a stronger indicator of young women's empowerment than education. It shows whether young women's schooling has equipped them with the ability to communicate by reading and writing, a set of critical skills for earning a living and participating in public decision-making.

The MDG literacy indicator is measured by the ratio of the female youth literacy rate to the male youth literacy rate. This indicator is shown in Chart 2 using data compiled by UNESCO for the MDG database. Questions have been raised about the quality of the data because most countries rely on proxy measures to gauge literacy, such as years of schooling, rather than actual tests. However, there is no alternative data available at the moment. Chart 2 (pp. 22-23) is organized in the same way as the chart for gender disparity in secondary education enrolment: A score of 100 means the rates are equal; below 100 means that the female youth literacy rate is lower than the male one (creating a gender gap); and a score above 100 means the male youth literacy rate is lower than the female (creating a reverse gender gap).

The data suggests that there is much more of a gender gap in literacy rates than there was in school enrolment. The problem is greatest in sub-Saharan

Africa where 35 out of 41 countries have a ratio of less than 100 literate females for every 100 literate males. There are particularly large gaps in parts of West Africa, where the lowest ratio is 44 in Niger. In comparison, in Northern Africa, where all four countries have a gender gap ratio of less than 100, the lowest is only 79 (Morocco).

As with school enrolment, the main problem in Asia is in South Asia, especially in Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. In Latin America and the Caribbean, most countries are at or near equality in literacy rates, and Eastern Europe has achieved gender equality in youth literacy with the sole exception of Albania, which is nevertheless close to equality. The ratio is not below 100 in any of the nations of Western Europe and Other Developed countries.

Again, as was the case when comparing enrolment rates, ending gender disparity is still an important objective in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia where women's rates of literacy are much lower than men's.

As with secondary school enrolment, while many — 34 per cent — of the countries in this report have achieved gender equality in youth literacy rates, this indicator does not tell us the actual levels of young women's literacy, which would be a better indicator of achievement.

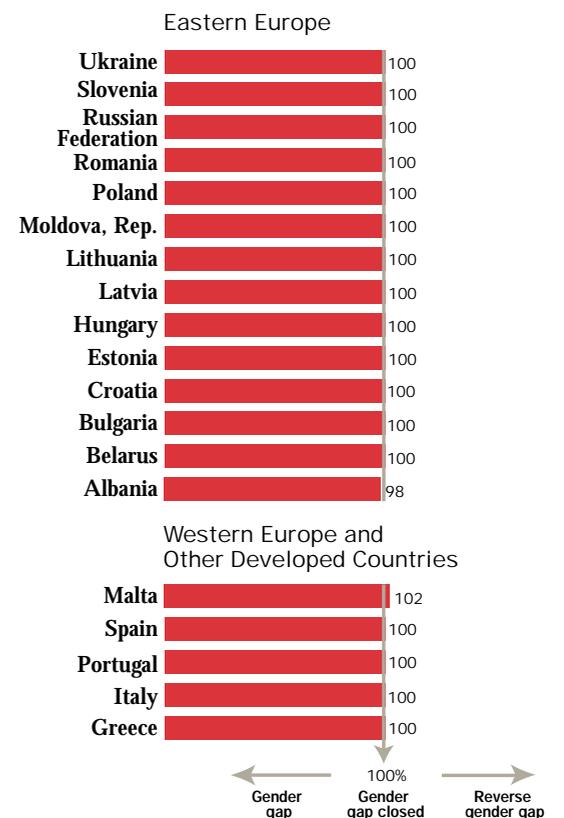
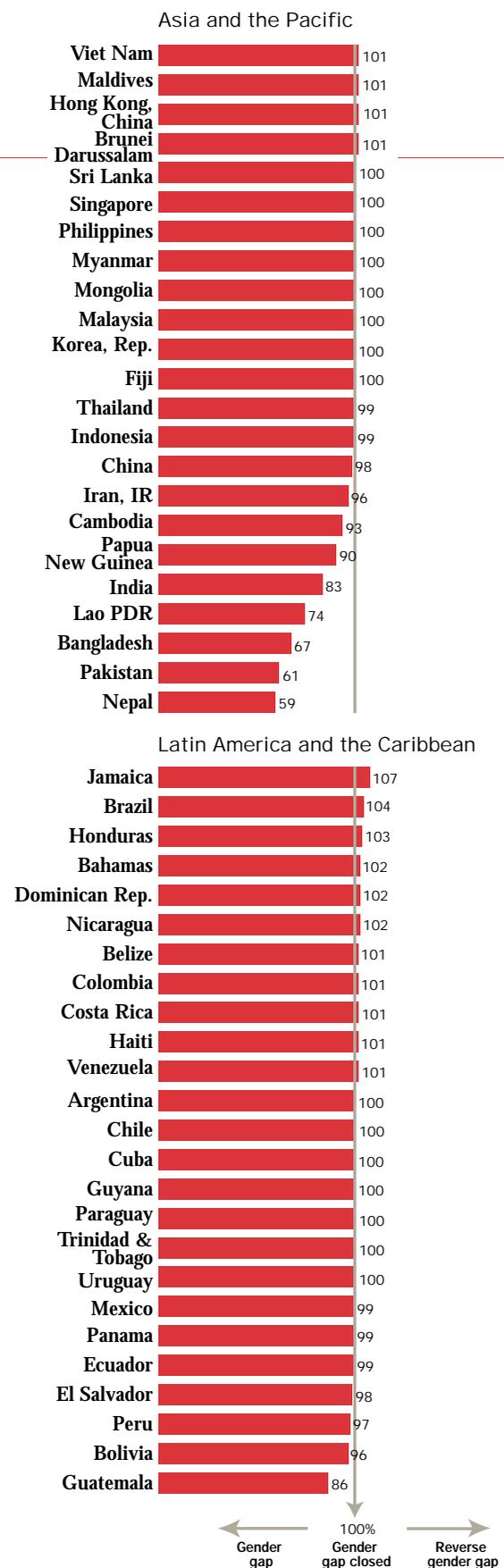
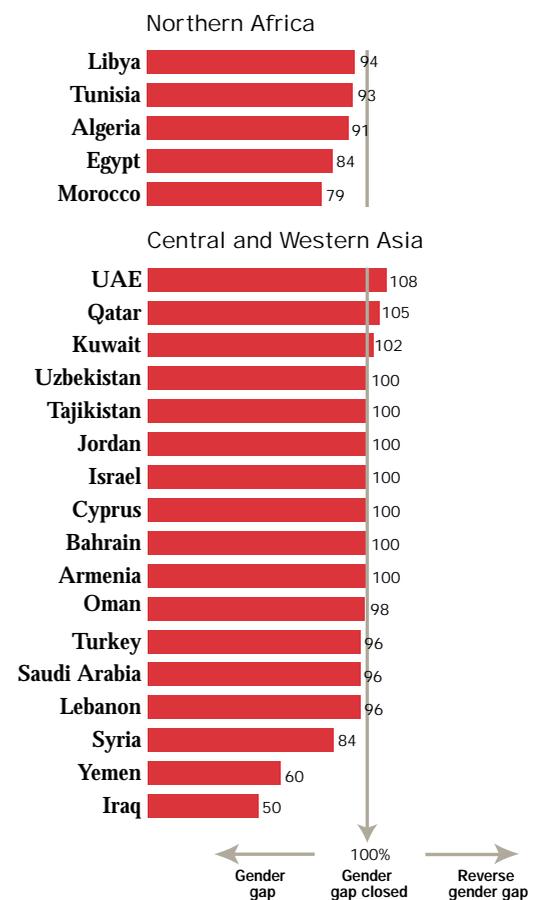
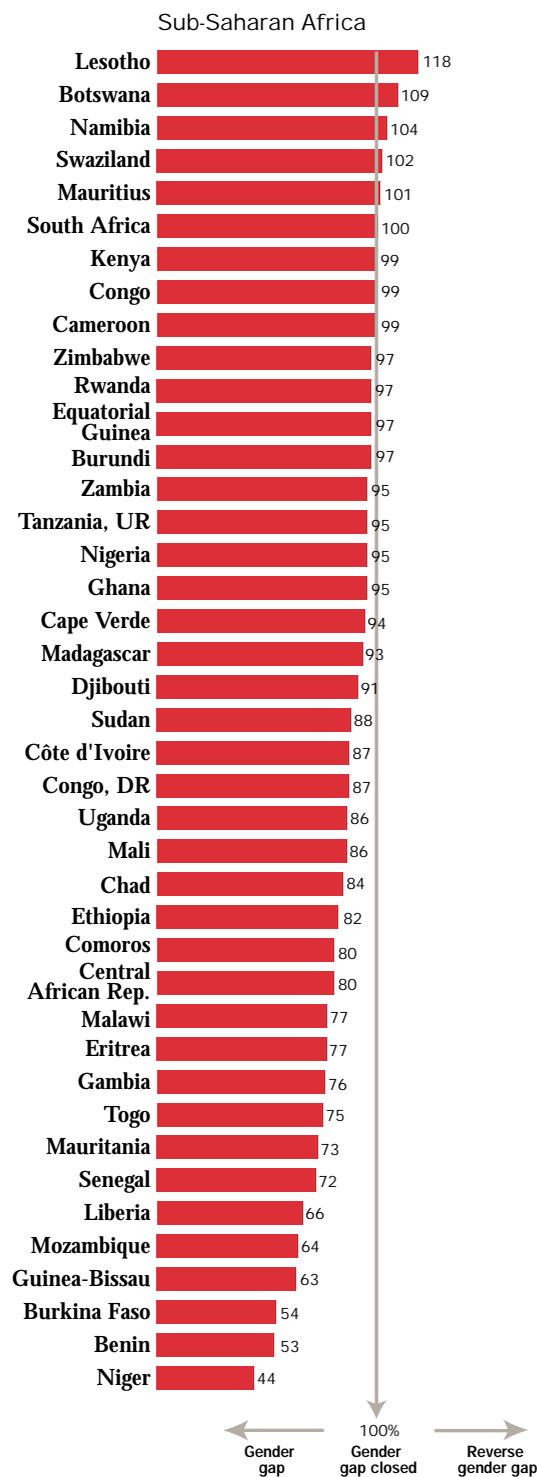
Table 2 shows the actual literacy rate of young women in 2002 by region. Not surprisingly, 95 per cent or more of young women are literate in Western Europe and Other Developed Countries. In the rest of the world, 95 per cent or more of young women are literate in 61 countries; between 50 per cent and 95 per cent are literate in 54 countries; and less than 50 per cent are literate in 11 countries.

In Central and Western Asia more than half (10 out of 17) of the nations for which there is data have achieved almost full literacy for women. In Asia and the Pacific nearly half (15 out of 24 countries for which there is data) have almost full literacy. Illiteracy remains an acute problem in both sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Changes in Female Youth Literacy Rate

Chart 3 (pp. 26-29) maps the changes in female youth literacy from 1995 to 2002. It is encouraging to note that no countries have slipped from their 1995 position, and some of the biggest increases have been in countries which previously had the lowest levels of female youth literacy: Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger and Yemen. But the rate of increase in countries with low levels of literacy is still too slow, as is evident in Table 3 (p. 29), which shows how long it will take the countries with the lowest levels of female youth literacy to achieve rates of 95 per cent or above.

CHART 2: Ratio of Female Youth Literacy Rate to Male Youth Literacy Rate, 2002



Source: Millennium Indicators Database, <http://millenniumindicators.un.org>

Table 2: Female Youth (ages 15-24) Literacy Rate (%), 2002

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Lesotho	98.7
Congo	97.3
Zimbabwe	96.3
Eq. Guinea	96.1
Kenya	95.1
Mauritius	94.9
Namibia	94.0
Cameroon	93.9
Botswana	92.8
Swaziland	92.1
South Africa	91.7
Ghana	89.9
Tanzania, UR	89.4
Zambia	86.8
Cape Verde	86.4
Nigeria	86.1
Rwanda	83.4
Djibouti	81.7
Madagascar	78.3
Congo, DR	77.7
Uganda	74.1
Sudan	74.1
Togo	66.5
Burundi	65.1
Mali	64.5
Chad	64.0
Côte d'Ivoire	63.1
Malawi	62.8
Eritrea	62.5
Central African Republic	62.4
Liberia	57.2
Comoros	52.3
Gambia	51.9
Ethiopia	51.4
Mozambique	49.2
Guinea-Bissau	47.1
Senegal	44.3
Mauritania	41.8
Benin	38.5
Burkina Faso	25.7
Niger	14.9
Angola	n.d
Gabon	n.d
Guinea	n.d
Reunion	n.d
Seychelles	n.d
Sierra Leone	n.d
Somalia	n.d

NORTHERN AFRICA

Libya	94.1
Tunisia	90.6
Algeria	86.3
Egypt	64.8
Morocco	61.4

CENTRAL AND WESTERN ASIA

Cyprus	99.8
Tajikistan	99.8
Armenia	99.7
Uzbekistan	99.6
Jordan	99.5
Israel	99.3
Bahrain	98.8
Qatar	97.5
Oman	97.4
UAE	95.1
Turkey	94.8
Kuwait	93.9
Lebanon	93.7
Saudi Arabia	91.6
Syria	80.6
Yemen	50.5
Iraq	29.9
Azerbaijan	n.d
Georgia	n.d
Kazakhstan	n.d
Kyrgyzstan	n.d
Turkmenistan	n.d

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Brunei Darussalam	99.8
Hong Kong, China	99.8
Korea, Rep.	99.8
Mongolia	99.8
Samoa (Western)	99.8
Singapore	99.8
Maldives	99.5
Fiji	99.2
China	99.2
Philippines	99.0
Thailand	98.5
Malaysia	98.0
Indonesia	97.6
Viet Nam	97.5
Sri Lanka	96.9
Iran, IR	92.7
Myanmar	91.1
Cambodia	77.0
Papua New Guinea	72.9
India	66.8
Lao PDR	62.3
Nepal	46.0
Pakistan	44.2
Bangladesh	41.4
Afghanistan	n.d
East Timor, DR	n.d
Korea, DPR	n.d
Vanuatu	n.d

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Cuba	99.8
Guyana	99.8
Trinidad & Tobago	99.8
Uruguay	99.6
Chile	99.2
Argentina	98.9
Belize	98.9
Venezuela	98.9
Costa Rica	98.7
Bahamas	98.4
Colombia	97.9
Jamaica	97.8
Paraguay	97.3
Ecuador	97.3
Mexico	96.9
Panama	96.6
Peru	95.8
Brazil	94.8
Bolivia	94.4
Dominican Rep.	92.4
El Salvador	88.2
Honduras	85.5
Guatemala	74.0
Nicaragua	73.0
Haiti	66.5
Barbados	n.d
Suriname	n.d

EASTERN EUROPE

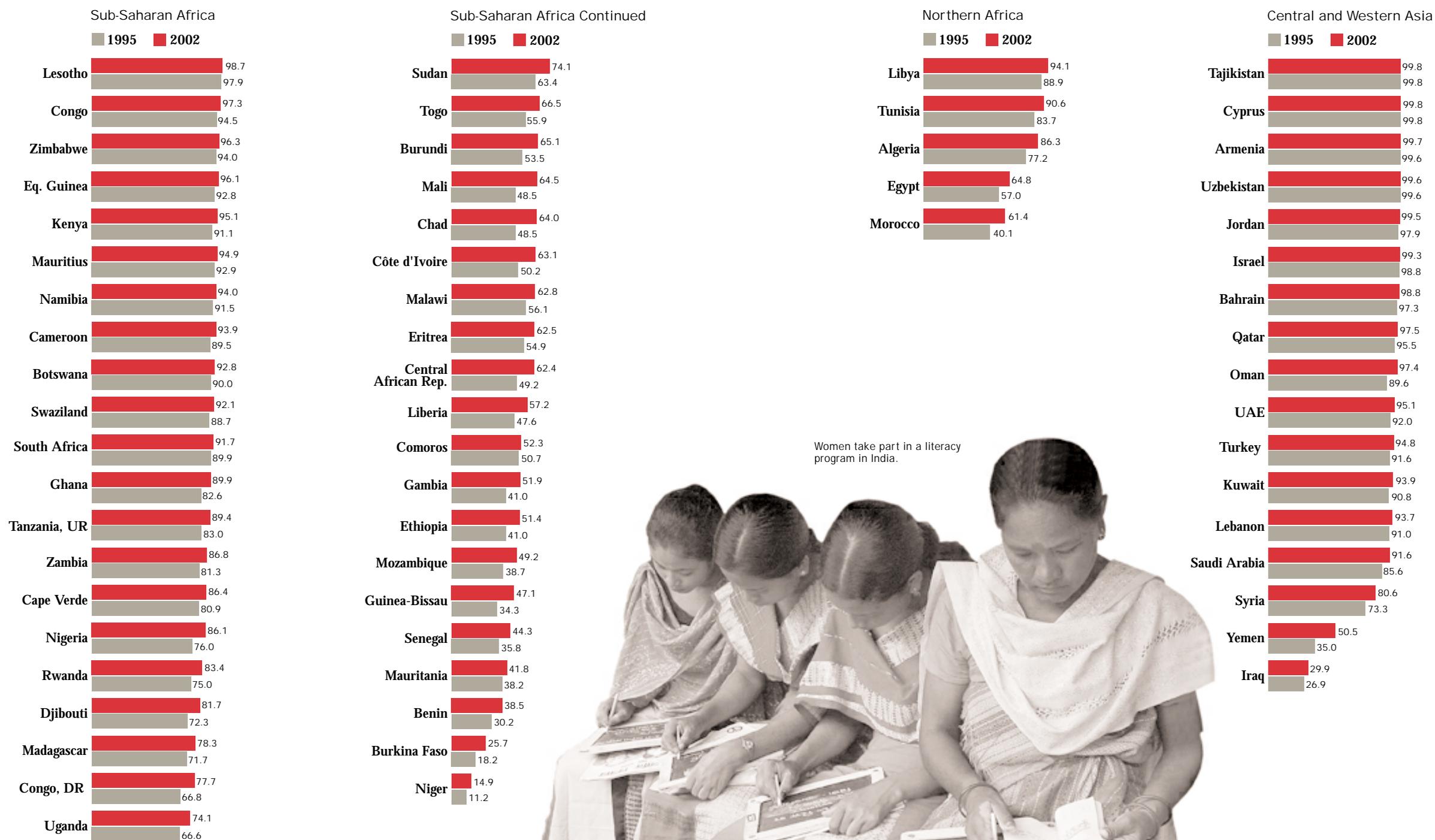
Ukraine	99.9
Belarus	99.8
Croatia	99.8
Estonia	99.8
Hungary	99.8
Latvia	99.8
Lithuania	99.8
Moldova, Rep.	99.8
Poland	99.8
Russian Federation	99.8
Slovenia	99.8
Romania	99.7
Bulgaria	99.6
Albania	96.9
Bosnia-Herzegovina	n.d
Czech Republic	n.d
Macedonia, FYR	n.d
Slovakia	n.d
Yugoslavia	n.d

WESTERN EUROPE AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Greece	99.8
Italy	99.8
Malta	99.8
Portugal	99.8
Spain	99.8

Source: Millennium Indicators Database
<http://millenniumindicators.un.org>

CHART 3: Changes in Female Youth Literacy Rate, 1995-2002



[CHART CONTINUED ON PAGE 28]

CHART 3: Changes in Female Youth Literacy Rate, 1995-2002 (cont'd.)

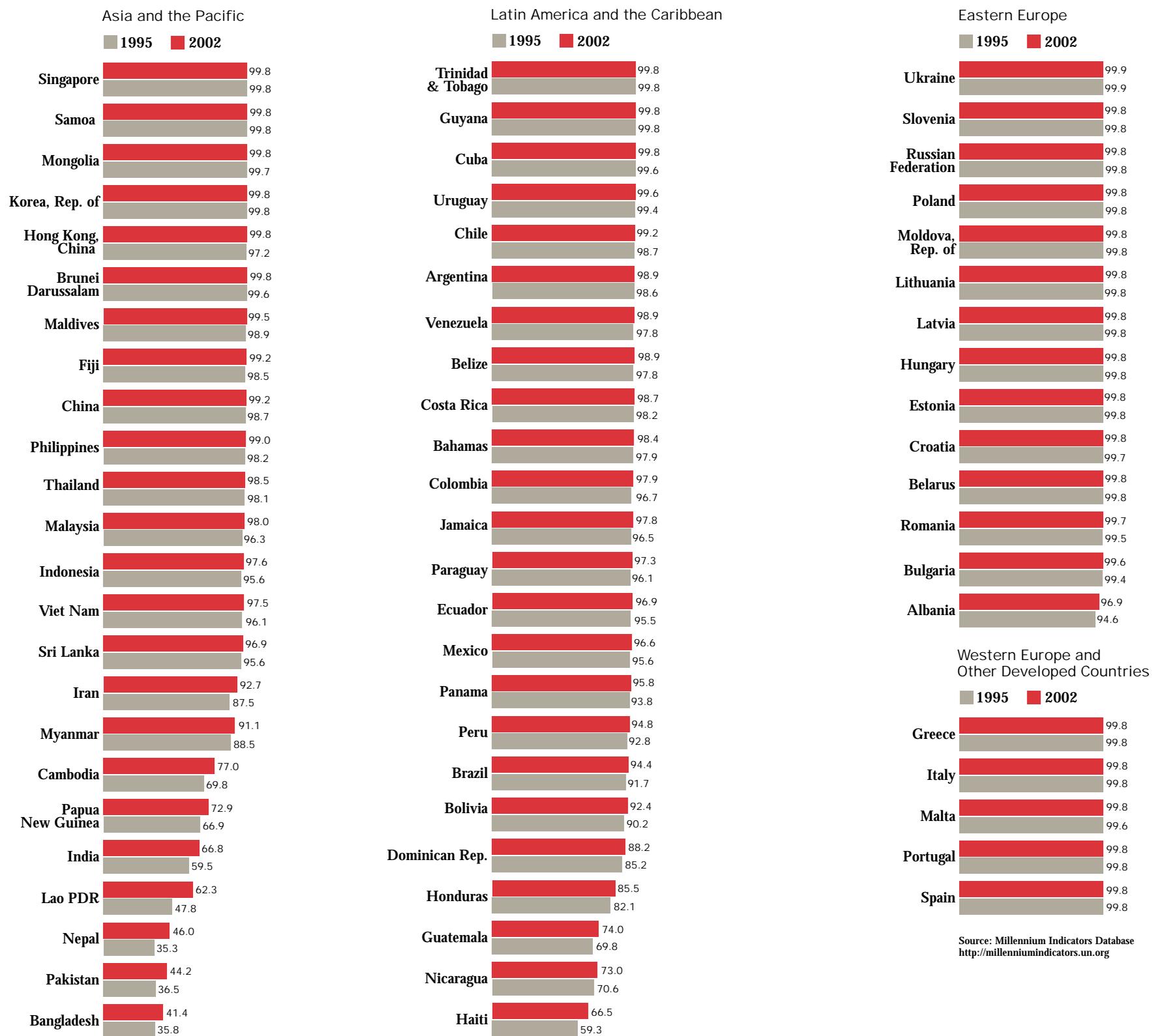


Table 3: Length of Time Needed to Achieve 95% Female Youth Literacy Rate at Current Rates of Change

	Female Youth Literacy Rate (%) 2002	Average Annual Rate of Change (%) 1988-2002	Number of Years Needed to Reach 95%
Iraq	29.9	1.6	74
Niger	14.9	4.1	45
Bangladesh	41.4	2.1	40
Mauritania	41.8	2.1	38
Burkina Faso	25.7	5.2	25
Pakistan	44.2	3.2	24
Benin	35.8	3.8	23
Senegal	44.3	3.3	23
Mozambique	49.2	3.8	17
Nepal	46.0	4.8	15
Guinea-Bissau	47.4	5.0	14

Source: Millennium Indicators Database <http://millenniumindicators.un.org>

EMPLOYMENT

Key Findings

- Women's share of non-agricultural wage employment approaches parity with that of men (is in the range of 45-55%) in less than half the countries (39 out of 87) for which data is available.
- Some evidence suggests that gender gaps persist in pay and conditions even when women's share of jobs approaches parity with men's share.
- Trends in women's share of wage employment in non-agricultural employment from the mid 1980s are mixed. Although women's share is increasing in most countries and barriers to their employment in industry and services are clearly crumbling, the benefits to women are less clear.
- The poorest women in the world are employed in agriculture or 'informal' manufacturing and services and their work is vastly undercounted in employment statistics. Indicators and targets that track employment in these areas need to be set up and monitored at the national level.

The Gender Gap in Non-Agricultural Wage Employment

As globalization has spread, moving manufacturing jobs from the developed to the developing world, women's share of non-agricultural wage employment has increased. But women remain in primarily sex-segregated jobs with lower pay and less job security. They are also suffering disproportionately from the slowdown in the global economy, which has forced many into informal, precarious work with few rights or benefits. And even as they take on more responsibilities in the paid employment sector, they remain the primary care-takers of their families. Very little of this is evident in the indicator chosen to track the realization of Goal 3 in the economy: the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector. Thus, as with the other indicators, this should not be seen as an indicator of women's well being, but of the extent to which women have equal access to this type of employment.

Table 4 (pp. 32-33) shows the female share of wage employment in the non-agricultural sector, by region and country. Women's share approaches parity with that of men (i.e., is in the range of 45-55%) primarily in Western Europe and Other Developed Countries, Eastern Europe and Latin America. The share appears to be influenced by economic structure: If agriculture is the primary means of livelihood, women's share of non-agricultural employment is small. Where non-agricultural wage work plays a greater role in the economy, women's share is higher.

Work in industry and services usually puts some money directly into the hands of women, unlike employ-



A woman assembles aircraft at a factory in Brazil.

ment on a family farm or unpaid work in a family business. Moreover, the pay is likely to be higher than the average pay for self-employment. Still, waged work is often neither secure nor well paid for the majority of people around the world. Economists generally make a distinction between 'formal' wage work which is often reasonably well paid, secure and performed in safe and healthy conditions versus 'informal' wage work, which is likely to be unregulated, poorly paid, lacking job security, dangerous — and frequently performed by women.

Because of the unregulated nature of informal wage work it is not fully covered in government surveys, so that we have only a partial picture of women's wage employment.

In general, there is far less data available for the MDG female employment indicator than for education and literacy, and that data is not up to date for a large number of countries, especially in sub-

Saharan and Northern Africa.

The ILO has data for only 13 out of 53 countries in Africa, and out of these there is recent data for only four. That data shows a wide range, from Botswana where women have 47 per cent of the non-agricultural paid employment, to Chad where they have only 6 per cent. The number is low in Chad partly because so many women are in agricultural employment, but also because 95 per cent of women's non-agricultural employment is informal (compared with 60 per cent for men), and 99 per cent of this informal employment is self-employment (the figure for men is 86%). Neither of these types of employment are reflected in the data (see Tables 5 and 6, pp. 38-39).

In Central and Western Asia there is data for only seven out of 22 countries. The range is also wide, from Kazakhstan with equal shares of men and

women in non-agricultural paid employment, to Turkey where women's share is only 10 per cent. But this figure underestimates women's share because it is based on social insurance records and many women workers in Turkey are not eligible for this insurance for a variety of reasons.

In Asia and the Pacific, data is available for 12 out of 27 countries. Women's share ranges from 47 per cent to 30 per cent, except in South Asia. There, the low figures (everywhere but Sri Lanka) reflect a situation similar to Chad: In India, for example, a high proportion of women's employment is in agriculture. And for those women in non-agricultural employment, a higher proportion of them than of men are in the informal sector, primarily as self-employed workers (see Tables 5 and 6).

In all the other regions of the world, more data is