

**Commission on the Status of Women
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INTERACTIVE EXPERT PANEL

**Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in
regard to gender equality and empowerment of women**

Gender Equality and Poverty Reduction:
Good practices and lessons learned*

Submitted by

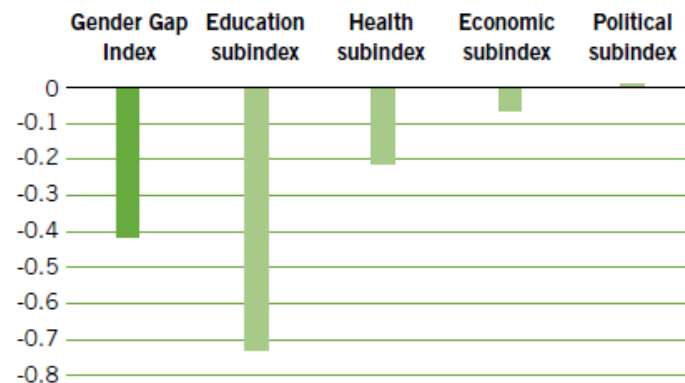
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Gender equality matters for poverty reduction

Inability to meet MDG targets for gender has serious consequences. Countries that are off-track for meeting gender equality goals will have:

- 0.1 -0.3 percentage points lower per capita income growth rates
- 0.1-0.4 more children per woman
- 15 per 1,000 higher rates of under-5 mortality
- 2.5 percentage points higher prevalence of underweight children <5

STRENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP (CORRELATION) BETWEEN 2009 GHI AND THE SUBINDICES OF THE 2008 GENDER GAP INDEX, 90 COUNTRIES



Note: In the Global Hunger Index, higher scores mean higher levels of hunger, whereas for the Gender Gap Index and its subindices, the highest possible score is 1, representing perfect equality, and the lowest possible score is 0, representing total inequality. A negative relationship means that higher gender inequality is associated with higher levels of hunger.

Because gender-relations are context specific, good practices have to be adapted to specific country contexts



Two-pronged approach to eliminating gender inequality

- Eradicate discrimination through reform of policy and legal institutions
- Promote catch-up by directly targeting resources to women

Reforming legal and property systems in sub-Saharan Africa



Photo: Stein Holden

Using low-cost, rapid, and transparent community land registration to strengthen women's land rights in Ethiopia

- Land certification in Ethiopia was carried out through a low-cost, rapid, and transparent process. Land administration committees at kebele level (the smallest administrative unit in Ethiopia) were required to have at least one female member.
- Land certificates were issued after public registration for transparency.
- Land certificates include maps and pictures of husband and wife.
- After land certification was carried out in Tigray, female heads of households were more likely to participate in land rental market, mostly as landlords. Tenure security increased their confidence in doing so.

Strengthening and increasing knowledge of women's land rights through legal reform in Uganda

- 1998 Land Law in Uganda strengthened rights to customary land and women's rights to land.
- Knowing more about provisions of the law increases the propensity to undertake soil conservation that is equivalent to increasing the length of possession by more than 15 years or the head's level of education by more than 7 years
- Legal literacy campaigns can help increase agricultural productivity
- There are now many pilot interventions in Sub-Saharan Africa to build legal literacy

Targeting financial services through women's groups in Bangladesh



Photo: Agnes Quisumbing

Women's groups build social capital and assets

- Microfinance programs directed to women's groups, group liability is a substitute for collateral
- Evaluations show positive impacts on women's empowerment, household consumption, nutrition
- Agricultural technology + microfinance targeted to women's groups help women build up assets, and reduce gender asset inequality within the household

Conditional cash transfers to improve girls' schooling in Latin America



Photo: Agnes Quisumbing

Providing conditional cash transfers to women can improve children's human capital outcomes

- PROGRESA (now Oportunidades) in Mexico began in 1997
- Program included cash transfers conditional on school attendance, regular attendance at clinics, improvement in health services, and nutritional supplements
- Cash transfers were given directly to the mother
- PROGRESA increased enrollment rates of boys and girls, particularly in secondary school; decreased child illness, adult illness, and the probability of being stunted
- Program adapted throughout Latin America, now being used in Asia and Africa to achieve other development outcomes

Improving gender-responsiveness of poverty reduction programs

- Continue strengthening women's property rights and investing in girls' schooling
- Adapt program design and service delivery to clients' needs
- Take gender roles into account when designing and implementing interventions
- Evaluate anti-poverty programs, pay attention to gender-differentiated impact
- Take account of women's diverse needs
- Remain sensitive to culture and context