

ASEAN Gender Outlook

Achieving the SDGs for all and
leaving no woman or girl behind

2024

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is the result of the collaborative efforts and partnership between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), ASEAN Secretariat, and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of UN Women, the United Nations or any of its affiliated organizations. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UN Women concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Throughout this report, references are made to the ASEAN region and Southeast Asia interchangeably. This is because, according to official SDG regional groupings, the list of countries in Southeast Asia matches the ASEAN countries, with the exception of Timor-Leste. UN Women and ASEAN recognize that Timor-Leste is not officially part of ASEAN yet. Therefore, these statements do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever concerning the accession process. For a list of any errors or omissions found subsequent to the report launch please visit our website.

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Report lead: Sara Duerto-Valero

Report authors: Tsz Yu Chang, Sara Duerto-Valero, Woojoo Hong, Sneha Kaul, Eunkoo Lee and Cecilia Tinonin, with technical inputs from Ryce Chanchai, Jessamyn Encarnacion and Andrea Sunah Espinoza Kim.

Statistics: Tsz Yu Chang, Jiwoong Choi, Sara Duerto-Valero, Woojoo Hong, Sneha Kaul, Eunkoo Lee and Cecilia Tinonin with special thanks to ASEAN Member States, particularly ACW, ASEAN Division for Statistics and ASEAN Community Statistical System (ACSS).

Strategic guidance and substantive contributions: ACW, ASCC, ASEAN Secretariat Poverty Eradication and Gender Division (PEGD), UN Women's Centre of Excellence on Gender Equality in the Republic of Korea, Aurelie Acoca, Jessamyn Encarnacion, Ramya Emadi, Maria Holtsberg and Jamshed Kazi (UN Women)

Coordination and support for the review process: ASEAN Secretariat PEGD

Editor: Mary Ann Perkins

Design: blossom.it

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In the ASEAN region...



2.66 MILLION WOMEN
2.31 MILLION MEN
in peak reproductive age live in poverty.

If climate change continues to worsen, **2.5 MILLION MORE PEOPLE** will be pushed into poverty by 2030.



17% OF WOMEN and **16% OF MEN**

do not eat enough nutritious foods.

This especially harms the health of pregnant women and their future children.



28% of women face barriers to accessing health care, including:

- costs (17%)
- distance to health facilities (9%)
- safety concerns (17%), and
- needing permission (5%)



In rural areas,

44% OF MEN and **53% OF WOMEN**

have completed upper secondary education



In urban areas, these rates stand at

68% OF MEN and **73% OF WOMEN**



22% of the seats in national parliaments or chambers are held by **WOMEN**



9% OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

per year are victims of intimate partner violence. Among victims, few seek help



Women spend

more than double

the time men spend on unpaid care and domestic work*



63% OF WOMEN

and

69% OF MEN

own mobile telephones



Gender imbalances

on land ownership are large in some countries. This reduces women's resilience to crises.



94%

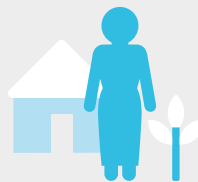
of households have access to clean drinking water at home or near their premises.



Urban/rural gaps remain large. In some countries, only

6 OF EVERY 10

women in rural areas have access to clean water.



Nearly **80%**

of people rely on clean fuels and technologies for cooking.



In some countries, as many as

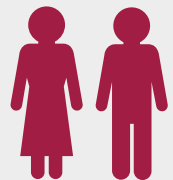
70%

of rural women cook with harmful fuels in enclosed spaces.



70% OF WOMEN AND MEN

engage in informal employment.



Women in the agriculture sector are

even more likely

to have informal jobs.



Adequate infrastructure has helped to reduce adolescent births.

With an **increase of one unit****, adolescent birth rates decrease by:

0.5% in Cambodia **0.2%** in the Philippines

0.2% in Myanmar **0.3%** in Timor-Leste



Every person wastes



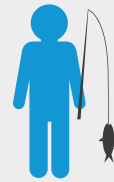
149 KG of food per year, but



17% OF ADULT WOMEN lack consistent access to enough nutritious food.



Most people in the fishing sector are men. Women make up more than



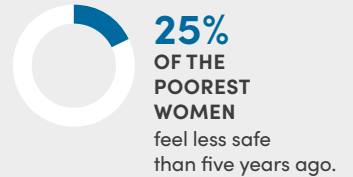
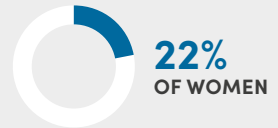
of employment in this sector in **Thailand** and **Viet Nam**.

Women often are in charge of pre and post-harvest operations, but **rarely** make fishery management decisions.



Violent crime is low and the region is one of the world's safest.

However,



Labour migrants include



They often take low-paying, informal jobs, which may expose them to abuse.



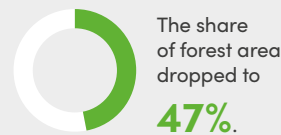
Droughts, aridity and floods

correlate with

higher child marriage and adolescent birth rates.

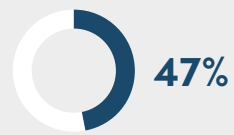


However, only **3 NATIONAL ACTION PLANS** highly prioritize gender.



There is a **correlation** between malaria incidence and forest loss.

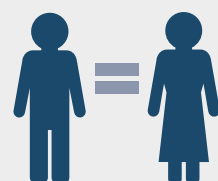
But **fewer and fewer** children are getting treatment. This worsens women's care burdens.



of official development assistance allocated to the region in 2022 sought to advance gender equality.

However,

less and less assistance is focused squarely on gender equality.



In 2050, the number of people living in cities will be

1.5 TIMES what it is today.



age 15–49 migrate to cities for employment***.



*Aggregates are based on the only 4 countries with available data: Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Timor-Leste.

**Estimates based on increases of human footprint index, as a proxy for infrastructure.

***Aggregates are based on the only 2 countries with available data: Cambodia and the Philippines.

FOREWORD

The year 2024 marks a pivotal point in ASEAN's journey. The whole ASEAN Community is moving towards completing the implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, all three ASEAN Community pillar Blueprints and the work plans of the ASEAN Sectoral Bodies, and gearing up for the development of the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and its Strategic Plans Post-2025 that will be launched in 2025. It is within this dynamic policy space where the importance of the second edition of the ASEAN Gender Outlook comes into play.

This year is also the critical halfway point in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets towards our common aspiration for a more equitable and inclusive world. The 2030 Agenda places gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at the heart of its implementation with the promise to leave no one behind.

Through the five years, ASEAN has made significant strides towards mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment across the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Gender equality has been increasingly recognized as a cross-cutting priority. Both the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda, which are complementary and mutually reinforcing, call for a people-centred approach and pledge to leave no one behind.

The ASEAN Gender Outlook, a regional flagship publication, is jointly produced by the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), ASEAN Secretariat and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). Building on the success of the first edition of the ASEAN Gender Outlook, this second edition is a testament of the commitment of ASEAN to enhance the production and use of gender data for evidence-informed policymaking and decision-making, critical to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

As the ASEAN member States continue in a collective journey towards shaping the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and the Strategic Plans Post-2025, this publication supports ASEAN policymakers and decision makers in tracking and accelerating progress towards gender equality commitments in the SDGs. The report uses internationally comparable data and statistics to review each goal from a gender perspective and shed light on the current situation of women and girls in the region. It draws special attention to the population groups at risk of being left behind and highlights existing data gaps and the need to enhance the production and use of gender statistics for evidence-based SDG implementation. It provides valuable insights to assist countries in the region in achieving gender equality outcomes. The key to success lies in coherent and coordinated efforts across the ASEAN region to harness synergies by empowering women and girls for the achievement of all the SDGs.



H.E. Ekkaphab Phanthavong
Deputy Secretary-General
ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC)

MESSAGE FROM AMMW MALAYSIA

This second publication of the ASEAN Gender Outlook serves as both a reflection of our continuous journey, and a critical tool for guiding our future efforts toward achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls across the ASEAN region. Since the launch of the first ASEAN Gender Outlook in 2021, we have witnessed notable progress in our collective commitment to gender equality. ASEAN Member States have made significant strides in narrowing gender gaps, for instance, in education, health, and economic participation. Through concerted efforts at the national and regional levels, we have seen the development and implementation of gender-responsive policies, increased awareness of gender issues, and enhanced data collection to better inform our decisions and actions.

As we are nearing towards the finish line for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we recognize that much work remains to be done. While we acknowledge the progress that we have attained, we must also confront the persistent challenges that hinder the full realization of the Sustainable Development Goals in our region. This document offers an analysis of our progress and the challenges ahead, by dissecting data at multiple levels, highlighting the specific needs of disadvantaged groups and identifying where our interventions must be intensified. Together, we will continue to strive towards a future where gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are not just aspirations.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nancy Shukri', written in a cursive style.

Dato Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri
Minister of Women,
Family and Community Development
AMMW Malaysia



INTRODUCTION

Since 2021, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women has partnered with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) periodically to produce the ASEAN Gender Outlook report. Following the approach of previous editions, the 2024 edition contains an analysis of each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from a gender perspective. Where official SDG indicators do not provide sufficient insights for gender analysis, other measures are considered.

For each indicator, official statistics from each of the ASEAN Member States are used where available. In addition, this year's edition of the ASEAN Gender Outlook includes statistics from Timor-Leste, given the country is in the process of accession. As such, the regional aggregates provided in this report also include Timor-Leste except as noted.

As different ASEAN Member States have different levels of gender data availability, not every country has been included in every graph. The availability and quality of microdata determine what can and cannot be inferred about inequalities in ASEAN Member States. In each case, it is only possible to assess who is being left behind if quality data exist.

This edition of the ASEAN Gender Outlook highlights new data where available, but also brings into focus the paucity of gender data and calls for greater investment in and prioritization of data collection and use to track progress towards gender equality and the achievement of the SDGs in ASEAN in line with the ASEAN framework for complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



The ASEAN region continues to successfully reduce extreme poverty, but gains may be lost in the face of climate change

Over the past 20 years, the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have succeeded in reducing poverty rates considerably. While in 2000 an estimated 31 per cent of people in the region lived in extreme poverty (defined as living on US\$2.15 or less per day), these rates stood below 3 per cent in 2022¹. Both in absolute and relative terms, more progress in this regard has been made in South-East Asia than in any other region. Multiple factors have contributed to this success, from the rapid expansion of free trade and infrastructure development to the extensive exploitation of the region’s natural resources and substantial investments into digitalization, tourism and other service-related sectors. Although these activities enabled substantial economic gains, some have also heightened the region’s vulnerability to disasters and other crises.

As the climate crisis unfolds and Earth’s temperatures continue to rise, some of these reductions in poverty rates may be lost. If temperature increases continue to accelerate and reach a 3°C increment (see “worse path” climate scenario in figures 1, 2 and 3), millions of people globally will be pushed into poverty by 2050, including as many as 160 million women and girls.² In the ASEAN region, given the large population sizes, approximately 1.18 million people in Indonesia and more than 520,000 people in the Philippines will be pushed into poverty already by 2030. In relative terms, however, the effects on poverty rates will hit Cambodia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic the hardest.

FIGURE 1

Poverty rate for South-East Asia in the current climate path, and assuming a worsening climate scenario, by sex (percentage)

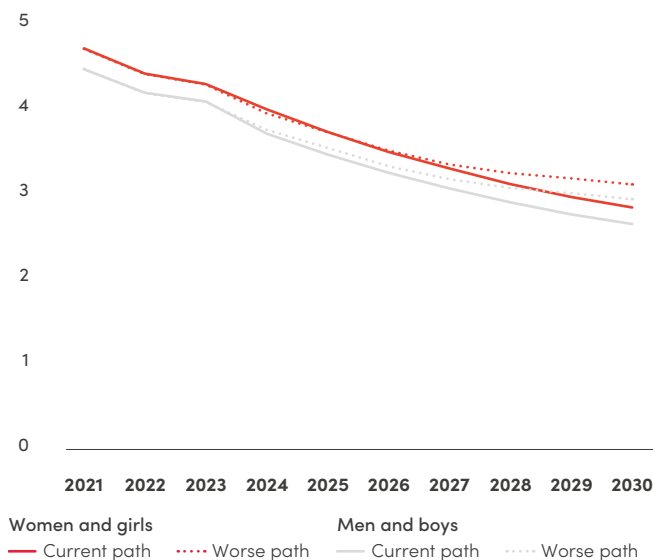
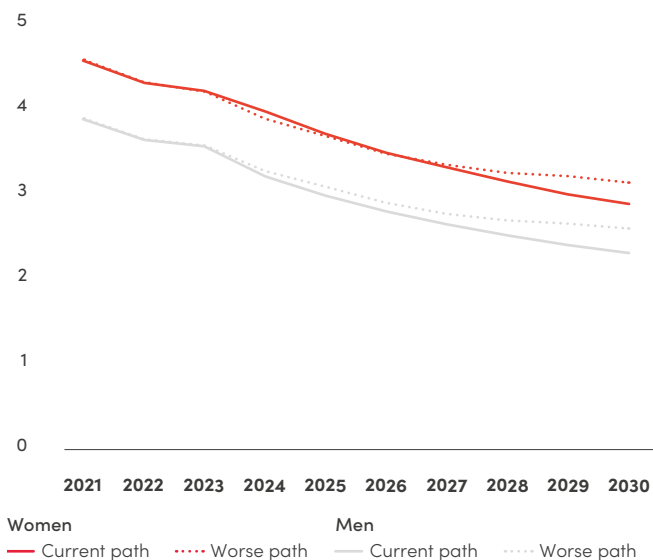


FIGURE 2

Poverty rates among people age 25–34 in South-East Asia in the current climate path, and assuming a worsening climate scenario, by sex (percentage)

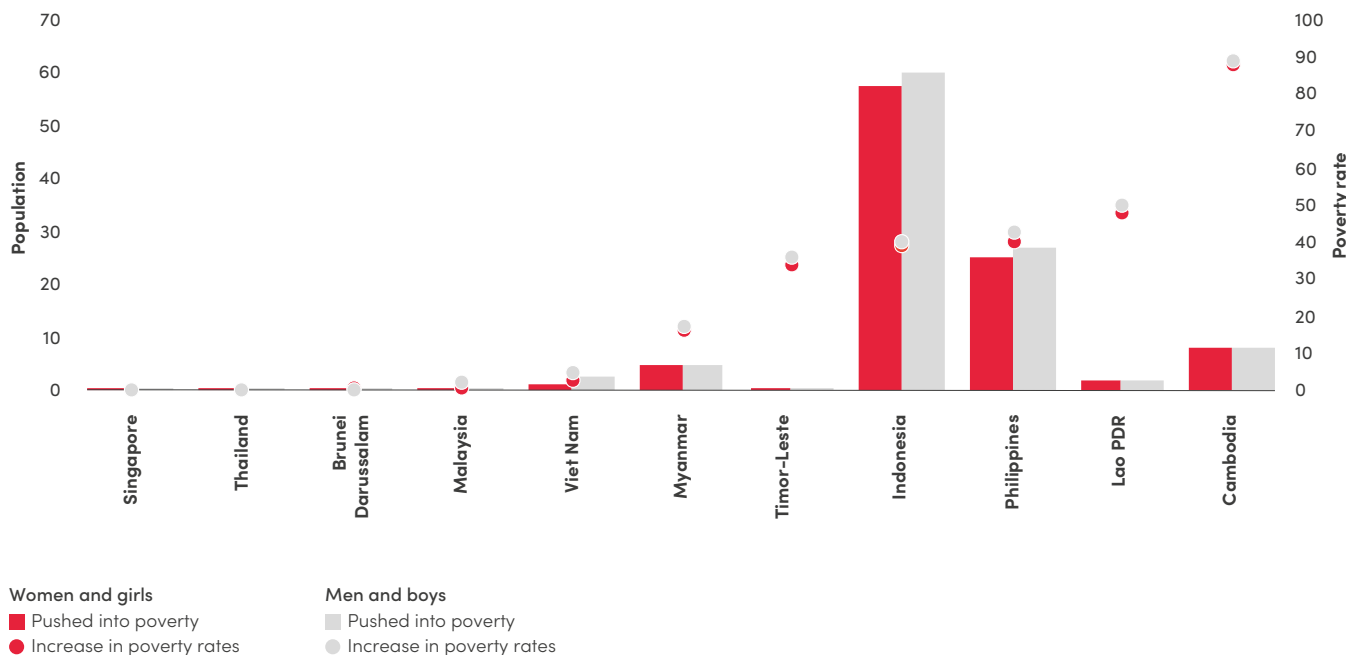


Note: The scenarios in the analysis reflect the representative concentration pathway (RCP) climate modelling adopted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Under the current scenario, average temperatures follow RCP 4.5, associated with a higher likelihood of a 2°C rise in global temperatures. Under the worse scenario, average temperatures follow RCP 6.0, associated with a higher likelihood of a 3°C rise in global temperatures.

Source: UN Women and Pardee Center for International Futures, 2023, [Gendered analysis of the impact of climate change on poverty, productivity and food insecurity: A technical report](#).

FIGURE 3

Number of people pushed into poverty (per 10,000) (left) and poverty rates by 2030 as a result of worsening climate change (percentage) (right), by sex



Note: Under a worse climate scenario, average temperatures follow RCP 6.0, associated with a higher likelihood of a 3°C rise in global temperatures.
 Source: UN Women and Pardee Center for International Futures, 2023, *Gendered analysis of the impact of climate change on poverty, productivity and food insecurity: A technical report*.

The effects of climate change on poverty are likely to derail efforts to leave no one behind, given that women are more likely than men to live in extreme poverty (figure 1). This is particularly true for women of peak reproductive age (figure 2), when the gender gap is wider and the likelihood of living in poverty is highest, likely because many women shift from paid employment to unpaid child-care work during these years. Faced with the effects of climate change, women in this age group are also more likely than men to lose their jobs (as more of them hold informal jobs)³ and their livelihoods (as they own less productive assets than men, which could be used as collateral to deal with crises⁴).

Traditions, social norms and other factors contribute to gender imbalances in the population structure of the ASEAN region, which has larger populations of boys than girls. In 2022, there were 84 million boys and 79 million girls under age 15 in the ASEAN region.⁵ As climate change continues to worsen, children’s risk of falling into poverty will increase substantially. In line with the population structure, a slightly larger numbers of boys will be pushed into poverty, while in relative terms, girls and boys have almost identical likelihood of falling into poverty in most countries (figure 3)⁶.



Who is left behind?
 Women in peak reproductive age.



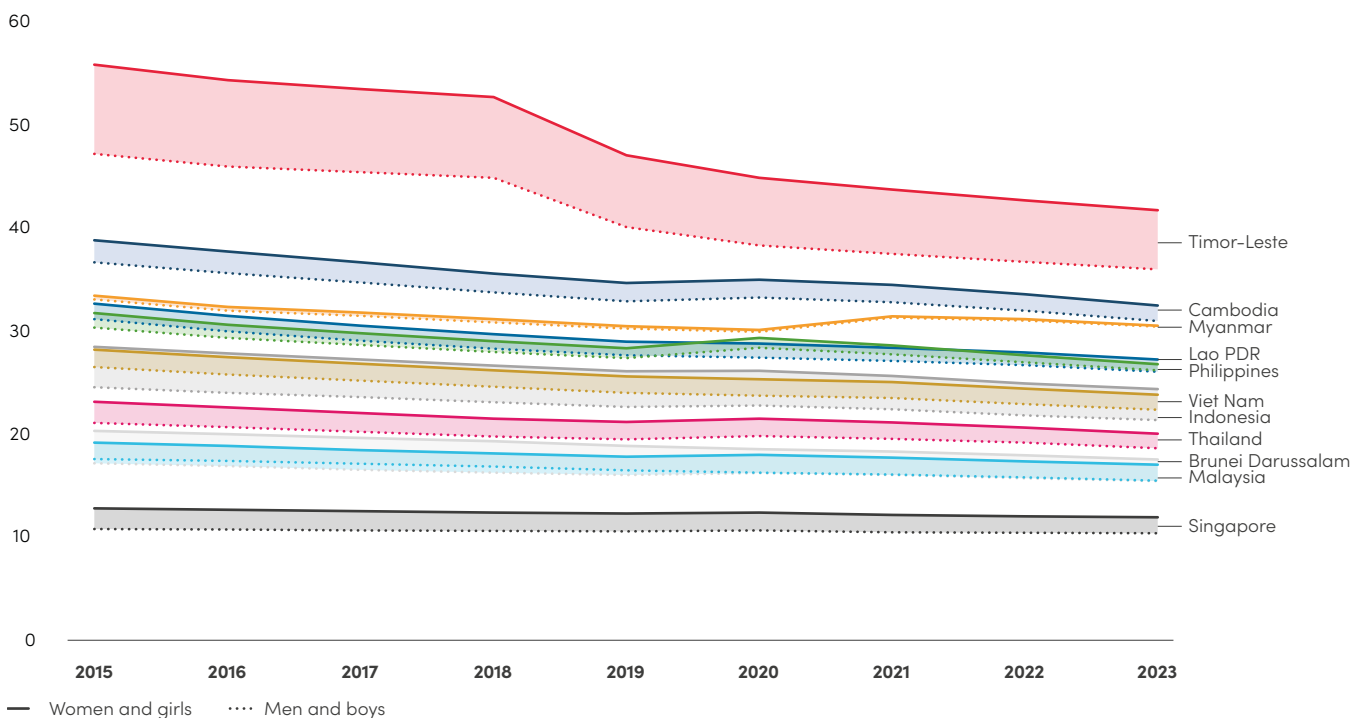
Women across the region are more likely than men to face food insecurity, with consequences for pregnant women and their babies' health

Despite substantial reductions in food insecurity over the past decade in the ASEAN region, many people still lack regular access to enough safe and nutritious food. In 2022, an estimated 17 per cent of women and 16 per cent of men in South-East Asia could not find sufficient, varied or adequate food for all their meals.⁷ In all countries, women are more likely than men to experience food insecurity. Key drivers of these gender gaps may include differences in income between women and men, unpaid work burdens that prevent women from engaging in paid employment, differences in household composition (with single mothers being more likely to care for children), and social norms that influence household behaviours such as women giving away the most nutritious food to their family members during times of shortage.

Gender gaps are relatively small in some countries but substantial in others, yet they exist across the board (figure 4). The size of the gender gap is smallest in Myanmar but, at 31 per cent, food insecurity is high across the country, and it worsened a few years ago as shocks such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and ongoing unrest drove food shortages. In Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand food insecurity also increased during 2020–2021, although not as much.

FIGURE 4

Proportion of people experiencing food insecurity, by sex (percentage)



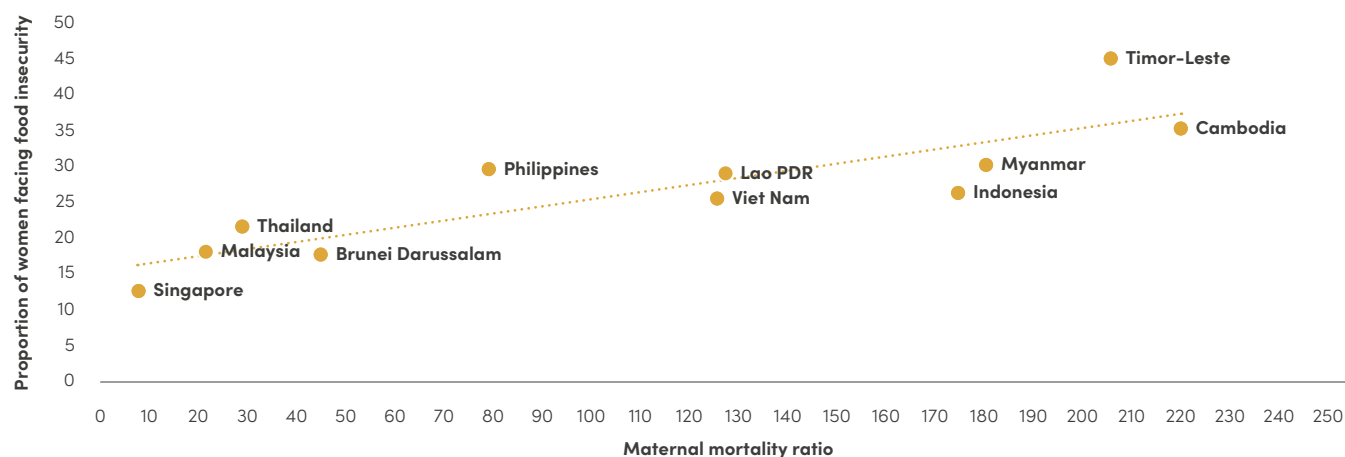
Source: UN Women and Pardee Center for International Futures, 2023, *Gendered analysis of the impact of climate change on poverty, productivity and food insecurity: A technical report*.

Despite these setbacks, substantial gains have been enabled by high economic growth across much of the region, infrastructure development and access to technology and safety nets, and millions more people now have access to quality and nutritious foods. In countries such as Timor-Leste, the share of food insecure population has dropped by more than 10 percentage points since 2015 when the SDGs were adopted. Yet, accelerated efforts are needed to achieve SDG 2 by 2030 across countries. The region's agrifood systems remain vulnerable, partly due to existing agricultural and farming practices. Deforestation and land transition, increasing use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and overreliance on cash crops and monocultures are all contributing to soil degradation and economic instability.⁸ In addition, food security gains in the region may be at stake owing to climate change and related hazards such as frequent droughts, floods and sea level rise. Like the effects on poverty described under Goal 1, the impact of climate change on food security has a gender dimension: increased food insecurity is projected to affect 240 million more women and girls compared to 131 million more men and boys, globally by 2050.⁹

The links between food insecurity and maternal mortality are well established.¹⁰ This makes pregnant women particularly vulnerable. Their health, and that of their future children is substantially influenced by nutritious diets or lack thereof (figure 5). When intake of key nutrients is insufficient, this can cause anaemia, pre-eclampsia, haemorrhage and death in mothers; and it can lead to stillbirth, low birthweight, wasting and developmental delays for unborn children.¹¹ In the ASEAN region an estimated 38 per cent of pregnant women experience anaemia, a sign of malnutrition.¹² This share has only decreased by one percentage point since 2015, highlighting that increased efforts are needed to target this particular population group.

FIGURE 5

Correlation between women's food insecurity (percentage) and maternal mortality (deaths per 100,000 live births), 2020



Note: As only 11 countries conform the sample for this report, this trend line should be interpreted with caution.

Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024). National maternal mortality ratios (MMR) estimates for some countries differ slightly from those shown here for the year 2020: according to vital statistics from the Department of Statistics Malaysia, the country's MMR is 24.8; according to Myanmar's Central Statistics Organization, the country's MMR is 204; and according to Singapore's Ministry of Health, the country's MMR is 0.



Who is left behind?
Pregnant women.



Despite some progress, costs, safety concerns and long distances deter women from accessing health care

Universal health coverage is essential to lead long, productive and healthy lives. South-East Asia scores 61 out of 100 in the universal health coverage index, which includes considerations around health-related financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.¹³ The region has room for improvement regarding access to essential vaccines (only 83 per cent of the population received a full course of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccines, 71 per cent received measles vaccines, 30 per cent received pneumococcal conjugate vaccines, and 7 per cent received human papilloma virus vaccines – all of which are far below global averages). Similarly, lack of access to health care is one of the leading causes of maternal mortality, and 134 per 100,000 women died at delivery in 2020 in the ASEAN region.¹⁴ Almost 8 per cent of births are not attended by skilled health professionals, and the rate of skilled attendance has only increased by 6 percentage points since 2015, highlighting that barriers to access essential health care affect pockets of women, largely in rural areas and poorer households.

FIGURE 6

Proportion of women who reported serious barriers to access health care for themselves, selected countries and years (percentage)



Note: Women were asked if each of the barriers “posed a big problem or not”. Two data points were selected: one for the year closest to 2010, and one for the most recent available. In Myanmar, only data for 2015–16 were available. No data were available for Brunei Darussalam, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. Data on whether women had concerns associated with not having a female health provider and having to take transportation to the health facility were only collected in Timor-Leste.

Source: Cambodia DHS (2010, 2021–22), Indonesia DHS (2012, 2017), Myanmar DHS (2015–16), Philippines DHS (2013, 2022), Timor-Leste DHS (2009–10, 2016). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

For women in the ASEAN region, key barriers to accessing health care include cost of treatment, distance to the nearest health facility, and safety, mobility or other concerns associated with going to see a doctor alone. In all cases, the most likely deterrent is a combination of these factors and not one alone, although differences exist across countries (figure 6). In the Philippines cost is a key barrier to seeking health care, while in Timor-Leste concerns about distance to a health facility or about not finding a female provider appear to be key challenges. For rural women and those that lack access to either private or public transportation, distance to a health facility might be a key issue (table 1). In the ASEAN region, there are only 8.4 physicians per 10,000 people, only 2.7 pharmacists and only 1.8 dentists. Nurses and midwives are more prevalent (34 per 10,000) but still below the global average of 37.7¹⁵. This results in large areas of each country remaining underserved by skilled health professionals.

Some progress has been achieved for women in eliminating barriers to access health care, particularly in countries with the greatest challenges, such as Cambodia, the Philippines and Timor-Leste, which have seen improvements recently. At present, however, deaths associated with air pollution and bloodstream infection due to methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, for instance, are much higher in the ASEAN region than the global average, and 857 million people¹⁶ require interventions against neglected tropical diseases. Increasing the number of skilled health professionals, including in rural areas, and expanding the coverage and reliability of public transportation could eliminate important barriers to access health care. Furthermore, investing in research and development to tackle urgent issues in the region, such as air pollution and tropical diseases, along with enhancing both health and hygiene education, could support strides towards achieving SDG 3.

TABLE 1

Proportion of women in population groups experiencing the steepest barriers to access health care for themselves, latest available year (percentage)

Barriers to access health care	Cambodia	Indonesia	Myanmar	Philippines	Timor-Leste
Need permission to go for treatment	Urban: 17%	Urban: 6%	Urban: 2%	Urban: 7%	Urban: 20%
	Rural: 30%	Rural: 6%	Rural: 5%	Rural: 11%	Rural: 42%
	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Mondul Kiri: 73%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural West Nusa Tenggara: 21%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Chin: 31%	Most deprived: Women in the middle wealth quintile in urban BARM: 66%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Manatuto: 78%
Need money for treatment	Urban: 42%	Urban: 13%	Urban: 26%	Urban: 38%	Urban: 21%
	Rural: 57%	Rural: 17%	Rural: 37%	Rural: 48%	Rural: 46%
	Most deprived: poorer women in urban Pusat*: 96%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Banten: 49%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Chin: 80%	Most deprived: Poorest women in urban BARM: 90%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Ermera: 91%
Distance to health facility	Urban: 14%	Urban: 9%	Urban: 12%	Urban: 10%	Urban: 21%
	Rural: 26%	Rural: 13%	Rural: 28%	Rural: 23%	Rural: 59%
	Most deprived: Poorest women in urban Siem Reap: 74%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural north Sumatra: 44%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Chin: 75%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Cagayan Valley: 52%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Ermera: 98%
Not wanting to go alone	Urban: 26%	Urban: 24%	Urban: 23%	Urban: 15%	Urban: 25%
	Rural: 41%	Rural: 28%	Rural: 35%	Rural: 21%	Rural: 49%
	Most deprived: Richer women in urban Kampot: 81%	Most deprived: Poorest women in urban North Kalimantan: 53%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Shan: 72%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Cagayan Valley: 43%	Most deprived: Poorest women in urban Covalima: 77%
Any of the specified problems	Urban: 50%	Urban: 34%	Urban: 40%	Urban: 46%	Urban: 55%
	Rural: 68%	Rural: 39%	Rural: 53%	Rural: 58%	Rural: 76%
	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Mondul Kiri: 100%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Banten: 76%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Chin: 92%	Most deprived: Poorest women in urban BARM: 91%	Most deprived: Poorest women in rural Ermera: 98%

Note: The selected countries are those for which DHS data were publicly available. Aggregates were calculated by utilizing DHS data and population estimates from the World Population Prospects (2022 revised estimates) for women age 15–49. BARM stands for Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Source: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Indonesia DHS (2017), Myanmar DHS (2015–16), Philippines DHS (2022), Timor-Leste DHS (2016). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?

Poorest rural women in remote regions.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



An urban-rural divide persists regarding school completion rates, with women in urban areas attaining the highest levels of education

Almost 96 per cent of children in the ASEAN region complete primary education, and 85 per cent complete lower secondary education. However, only 64 per cent complete upper secondary education.¹⁷ Girls are overall more likely than boys to successfully complete schooling at all levels, and the gender gaps widen at higher levels as boys, especially those in rural areas, are more likely to drop out (figures 7, 8 and 9). Besides bureaucratic and administrative obstacles, which are structural in some contexts, economic barriers, continue to be a key challenge to completing higher levels of education. Tuition and book costs, along with the cost of transportation and meals, may make it difficult for some households to keep their children in school. Importantly, the opportunity cost of attending school instead of working to earn an income or helping with farming and other household chores, is a key challenge and prevents many children from completing upper secondary education. This is particularly the case for boys, as they are likely to enter the labour market earlier than girls in the ASEAN region.¹⁸

Difficulties finding employment may also contribute to girls staying in school longer. While rural boys are more likely to find paid work in the agriculture sector or migrate to cities for construction work, many girls and young women struggle to find jobs. This may play in their favour as it encourages girls to complete secondary education, but once they graduate, many encounter difficulties to access employment opportunities. In 2023, an estimated 21.3 per cent of South-East Asian young women ages 15 to 24 were not engaged in education nor employment or training, compared to 14.0 per cent of young men.¹⁹

Investing in education remains a key priority as it can contribute substantially towards reducing school dropout. Investments are particularly needed in rural areas. At present, among ASEAN member States, Brunei Darussalam invests the largest share of gross domestic product (GDP) into education (4.1 per cent), followed by the Philippines (3.6 per cent) and Malaysia (3.5 per cent).²⁰ These investments are critical to promote safe and constructive educational environments. In 2021, an estimated 98 per cent of upper secondary education teachers in the region had the minimum required qualifications – one of the highest rates in the world.²¹ However, large disparities are found across and within countries. While in Thailand and Viet Nam virtually every upper secondary school teacher has the necessary qualifications, in Indonesia only an estimated 39 per cent of male teachers and 36 per cent of female teachers do.²² Discrepancies also exist between urban and rural areas in some countries, with less skilled rural teachers overall.

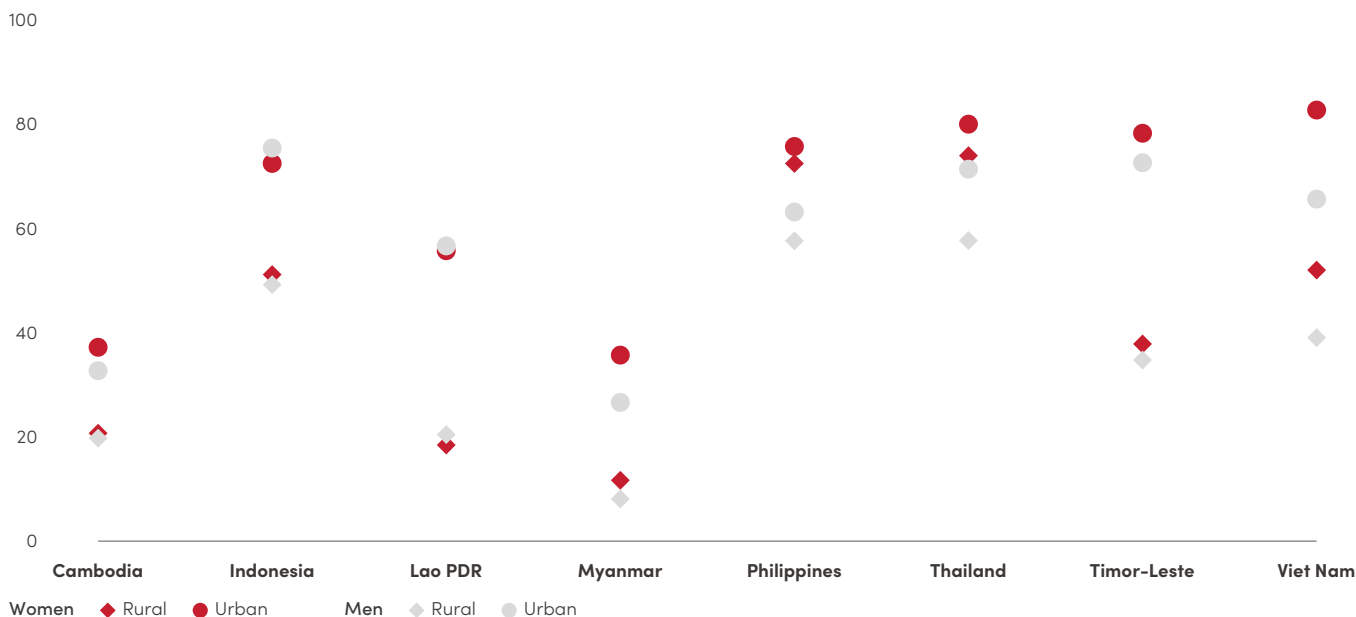
Additional barriers to learning have to do with basic facilities available in schools. Across the ASEAN region, 97 per cent of upper secondary schools have electricity, and 82 per cent have Internet access for pedagogical purposes, but only 72 per cent have computers for students. Importantly, only 68 per cent of schools have access to basic drinking water, and 70 per cent have access to basic sanitation facilities.²³ These infrastructural shortcomings may pose challenges for students, especially young girls, in the context of maintaining hygiene, especially during menstruation. Further investments in education across the region could provide opportunities for substantial achievements in this regard.



Who is left behind?
Rural boys.

FIGURE 7

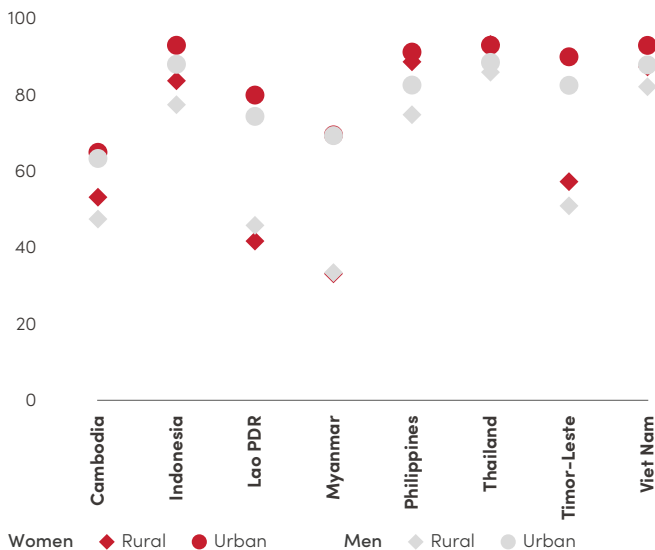
Upper secondary school completion rates by sex and location, latest available year (percentage)



Source: United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Portal (Accessed 3 July 2024): Cambodia (2021), Indonesia (2017), Lao People’s Democratic Republic (2017), Myanmar (2016), Philippines (2022), Thailand (2022), Timor-Leste (2016), Viet Nam (2021). Data with the necessary disaggregation was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 8

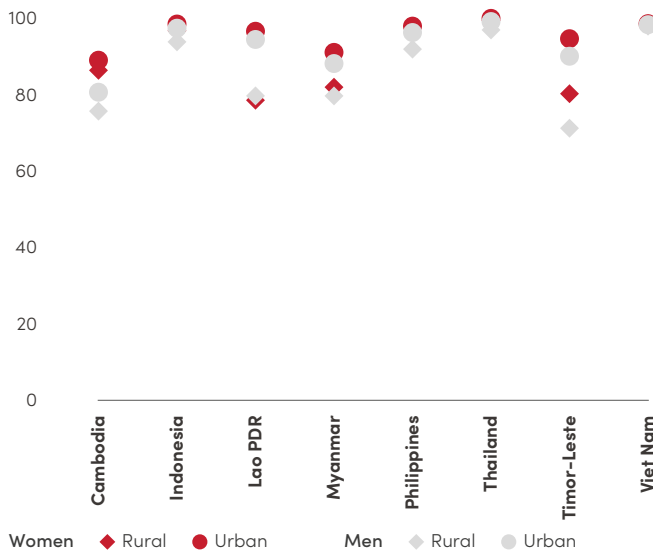
Lower secondary school completion rates by sex and location, latest available year (percentage)



Source: United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Portal (Accessed 3 July 2024): Cambodia (2021), Indonesia (2017), Lao People’s Democratic Republic (2017), Myanmar (2016), Philippines (2022), Thailand (2022), Timor-Leste (2016), Viet Nam (2021). Data with the necessary disaggregation was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 9

Primary school completion rates by sex, location, latest available year (percentage)



Source: United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Portal (Accessed 3 July 2024): Cambodia (2021), Indonesia (2017), Lao People’s Democratic Republic (2017), Myanmar (2016), Philippines (2022), Thailand (2022), Timor-Leste (2016), Viet Nam (2021). Data with the necessary disaggregation was unavailable for the remaining countries.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



Gender equality is improving across the region, but some gap areas remain

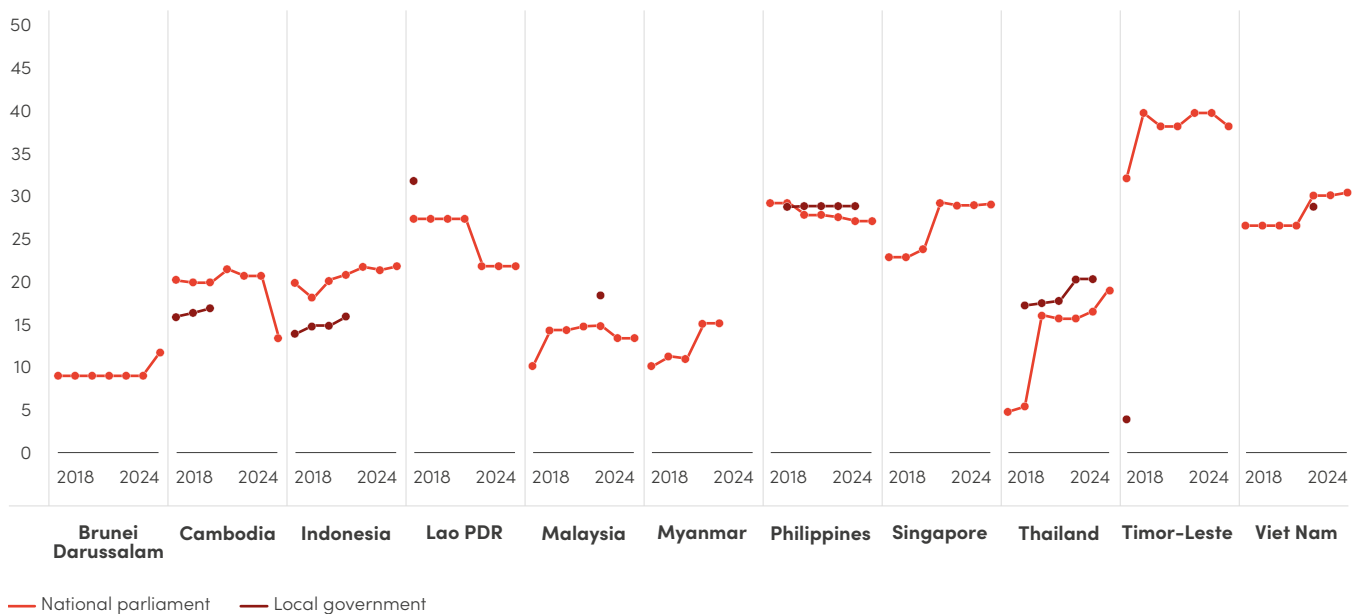
More women than ever are now participating in decision-making

In 2023, 23 per cent of seats in national parliaments in the ASEAN region were held by women – an all-time high, although still below the global average of 27 per cent.²⁴ Most countries in the region have seen substantial improvements in women’s participation in national parliaments since 2015. Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam have all registered substantial increases in women’s participation in the past decade. With 38 per cent of seats occupied by women, Timor-Leste has the highest women’s participation rate in South-East Asia, a success partly driven by the establishment of quotas for women in government. The country is also one of only three in the region with a woman serving as speaker. These include Maria Fernanda Lay (Timor-Leste, National Parliament), Khuon Sudary (Cambodia, National Assembly) and Puan Maharani (Indonesia, House of Representatives).²⁵

Available data show that women’s participation in local government has also increased overall during the same period. Thailand has seen the largest increase in this regard, while the Philippines has the highest women’s participation rate in local government among countries that report data (figure 10).

FIGURE 10

Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament and in deliberative bodies of local government (percentage)



Note: Data on the proportion of seats held by women in deliberative bodies in local government were not available for Brunei Darussalam, Myanmar and Singapore. In the rest of the countries, where values were missing for single years, these have been estimated using the previous and following years. Data on the proportion of seats held by women in national parliament were not available for Myanmar for years 2023 and 2024.

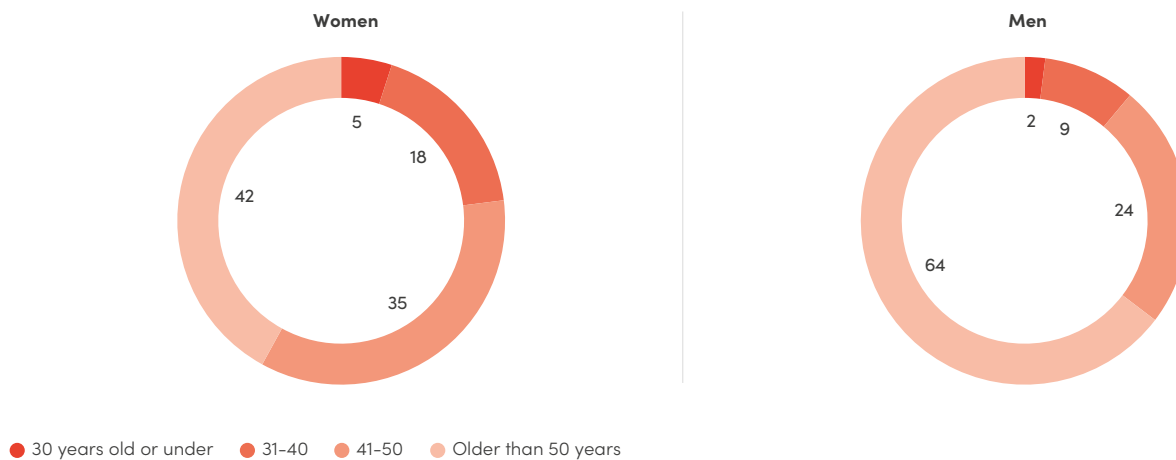
Source: United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Platform (Accessed 1 July 2024).

Still, parity is a long way off for most countries. Eliminating barriers to women's political participation is important to ensure their equal access to decision-making. In most countries, barriers are driven by social norms rather than differences in educational attainment or qualifications. The establishment of quotas and the inclusion of gender equality materials in educational curriculums across the region can contribute to overcoming these barriers. It is important to dismantle cultural norms and traditions that relegate women in politics to certain pigeonholed roles, such as Ministries of Women and other social issues. Globally, at present, women serve as 84 per cent of Ministers for Women, 68 per cent of Ministers for Family and Children Affairs, and 49 per cent of Ministers for Social Inclusion and Development. In turn, only 8 per cent of Ministers for Transport and 11 per cent of Ministers for Energy, Natural Resources, Fuels and Mining are women.²⁶ Promoting women's participation in decision-making beyond social affairs and in crucial sectors for the economy and the environment can ensure their contributions to all dimensions of sustainable development.

Finally, in order to ensure public institutions are representative of population needs, promoting the political participation of young women remains important. Across the ASEAN region, most parliamentarians are older than 40 (86 per cent), and as many as 74 per cent are older than 45 (figure 11). Only 14 per cent are age 40 or younger. In contrast, 63 per cent of the population in the ASEAN region is younger than 40.²⁷ The participation of young women in politics is important to ensure that issues relevant to younger women, such as education and employment opportunities, access to technologies and reproductive health care, and enhancing environmental policies, are included in political agendas across the region.

FIGURE 11

Proportion of seats in national parliament/chamber of selected countries, by sex and age, latest available year (percentage)



Note: The figure represents combined totals from the national assembly and senate of Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. No data with the necessary disaggregation is available for the remaining countries.

Source: IPU, 2024, [Parline database](#) (Accessed 27 May 2024).



Who is left behind?
Younger women.

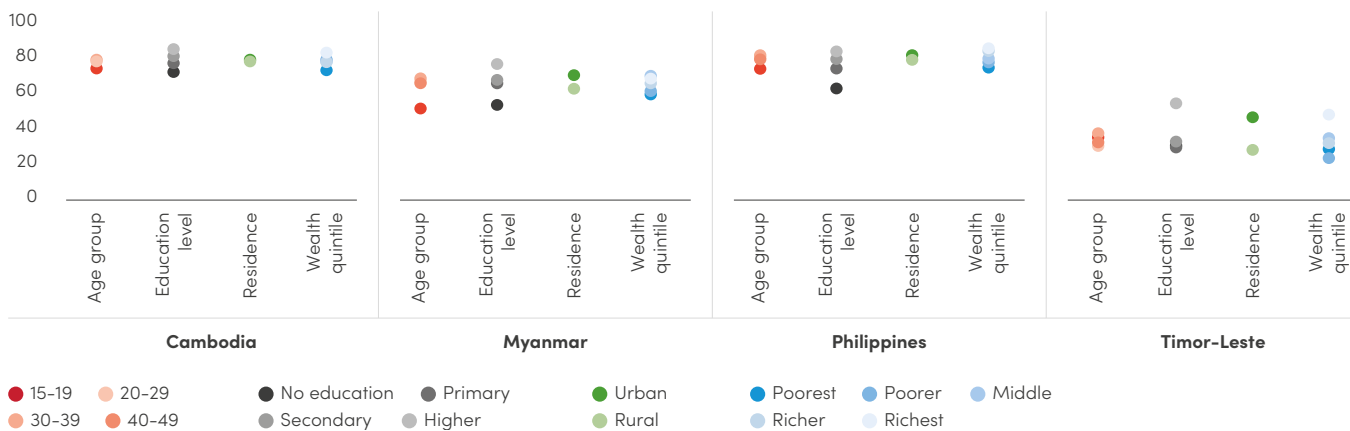
Education, wealth and age empower women to make their own reproductive health decisions

Social and cultural norms play a tremendous role in women’s agency and autonomy to make decisions. In most countries with data in the region, the large majority of women get to decide themselves when to see a health care provider or when to use contraceptives, either alone or in consultation with their partner, however, other reproductive health decisions are not fully in women’s hands (figures 12 and 13). For instance, only 81 per cent of women in Myanmar make their own decisions regarding when to have sex with their partners, and this rate stands at 40 per cent in Timor-Leste, the lowest in the region.

Marrying or living with a partner early in life correlates highly with limited agency regarding reproductive health. In all countries, partnered women age 15–19 had the lowest decision-making power regarding having sexual relations, using contraceptives and seeing a health-care provider when needed (figure 12). Women’s agency in this regard is even more limited the larger the age gap with their intimate partner. For instance, in the Philippines, 83 per cent of women whose age gap with their partner was less than five years made their own decisions regarding health care, sexual relations and contraceptive use, but only 78 per cent of women whose age gap with their partner was 10 years or larger got to make these decisions²⁸.

Women’s educational attainment is also a key contributing factor to their agency and autonomy; and it correlates highly with wealth and location. Across all countries, women that completed no education were the least likely to make their own decisions regarding reproductive health. Among women without education, those that marry

FIGURE 12
Proportion of married women age 15–49 who make their own decisions regarding having sexual relations, contraceptive use and seeking health care, by age, education, location and wealth, latest available year (percentage)



Note: Pregnant women were excluded from the analysis as reproductive health decisions for them may differ. A woman was considered to make her own decisions if she made them alone or in consultation with her partner. Data are not available for Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

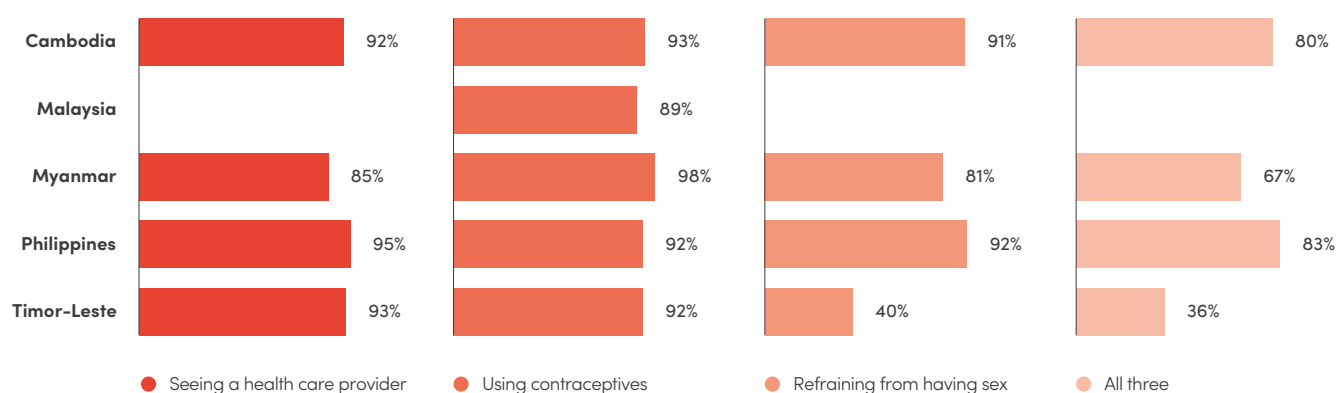
Source: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Myanmar DHS (2015–16), Philippines DHS (2022), Timor-Leste DHS (2016). Data with the necessary disaggregation was unavailable for the remaining countries.

early have an even lower chance of making these decisions. This is a key challenge as many parents in poorer households marry off their daughters to cope with poverty, but this may further worsen women's chances of leading healthy, safe and prosperous lives²⁹.

Additional factors that limit women's agency include both poverty and living in a rural area. Rural women in all countries are less likely than urban women to make their own decisions. This is likely related to their lower educational attainment, but it may also reflect social norms that are more predominant in rural areas. In addition, poverty compounds all other factors, further reducing women's chances to make their own decisions.

FIGURE 13

Proportion of married women age 15–49 who make their own decisions regarding sexual and reproductive health and rights, by type of decision, latest available year (percentage)



Note: Pregnant women were excluded from the analysis. Data are not available for Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. For Malaysia, data are only available for contraceptive use.

Source: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Department of Statistics Malaysia, SDG Indicators People Focus Area, 2014, Myanmar DHS (2015–16), Philippines DHS (2022), Timor-Leste DHS (2016). Data was not available for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?

Younger and less educated women in early marriages.

Women in the region are less and less likely to seek help when they experience intimate partner violence

Almost 1 in every 10 women in the ASEAN region has experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner in the past 12 months.³⁰ This figure stands below the global aggregate of 13 per cent. The region, however, must continue working towards eliminating violence against women (figure 14). Importantly, women victims of violence are less and less likely to seek help, whether from health services, authorities, religious leaders or others. This downward trend can be observed in all countries with available data over the past decade (figure 15). Factors deterring women from seeking help may include limited agency to leave the house alone, social norms and attitudes, limitations to find and contact service providers, lack of trust in security and justice institutions, and the belief that services may not make a difference in their lives.

Educational attainment correlates with the likelihood of victims seeking help (figure 16). Women who had no education or only completed primary school are less likely to seek help when they experience intimate partner violence. Literacy and basic knowledge of existing public institutions and justice systems, which are typically learned through formal education, are key factors enabling women to seek help when they need it. Furthermore, women who marry early are more likely to both drop out of school and fall victim to intimate partner violence. All these factors may contribute to their lower likelihood of seeking help. Across the region, 45 per cent of women victims of intimate partner violence who lacked an education or only completed primary school never sought help, compared to 41 per cent among women whose education was higher than primary.³¹

FIGURE 14

Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, 2018 (percentage)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 6 July 2024). For Malaysia, the source is the National Health and Morbidity Survey 2022, and refers to physical, sexual and/or psychological violence. Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 15

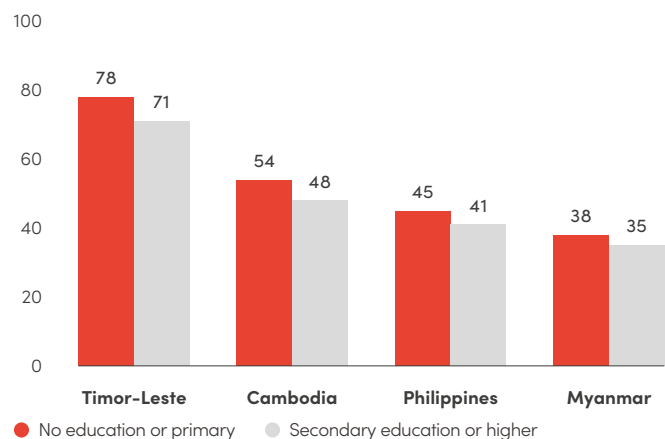
Proportion of women age 15–49 who ever experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner and never sought help (percentage)



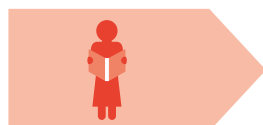
Source: [DHS STATCompiler](#) (last accessed on 23 July 2024). Data for two or more years was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 16

Proportion of women age 15–49 years who ever experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner and never sought help, by education level, latest available year (percentage)



Source: [DHS STATCompiler](#) (Accessed on 23 July 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?
Women with lower educational attainment.

In most countries, women spend more than double the time men spend caring for their families and doing domestic work

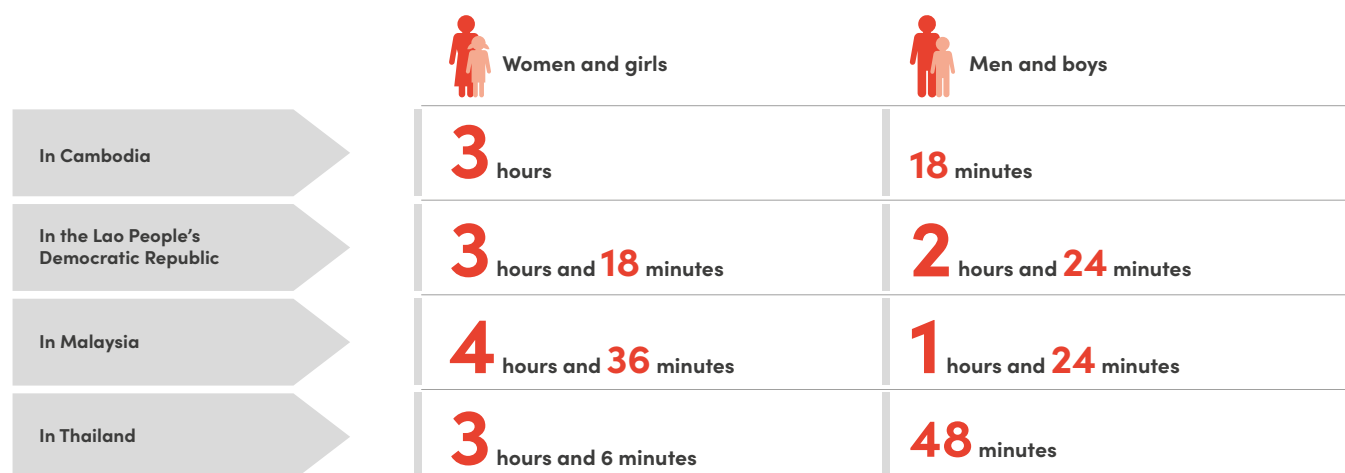
Caring involves providing services such as feeding, cleaning, educating, supervising, doing administrative tasks and many other activities. These services are necessary for the physical and emotional well-being not only of children, elders and ill people, but also of healthy, working-age adults. Immense amounts of unpaid care and domestic work, which also includes cooking, shopping for family members, making repairs, and many other tasks, are carried out daily in most households. This unpaid work enables family members to engage in paid employment and thus contributes to supporting the productivity of the labour force. In the ASEAN region, the bulk of this work is carried out by women and girls.

Time-use data in the region, the preferred source for measuring time spent on unpaid care and domestic work, is only available for Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia and Thailand³², and differences in data collection methods limit comparisons across countries. However, the data clearly showcase that women in all countries carry the lion's share of this work and typically spend more than double the time men spend in these tasks (figure 17). In Malaysia, for instance, women spend an average of five hours a day performing unpaid care and domestic tasks, while men spend merely an hour. The gaps are also large in Cambodia, where women spend three hours, but men spend less than a half hour.

Gender gaps regarding unpaid caregiving and domestic work are largest during key productive and reproductive years. Having children typically results in heightened care and domestic work burdens, which are normally carried largely by women and without remuneration. Although limitations in data availability hinder analysis for the ASEAN region as a whole, data from the Lao People's Democratic Republic illustrates these differences clearly (box 1), with the largest gender gaps taking place among people age 15–44. Although these are key reproductive years, they are also of critical importance for entering the labour market and advancing one's career. Therefore, enhanced sharing of responsibilities between women and men, coupled with affordable public care services, could contribute greatly not only to reducing burdens on women but also to enhancing women's labour force participation, thus heightening economic production overall.

INFOGRAPHIC 1

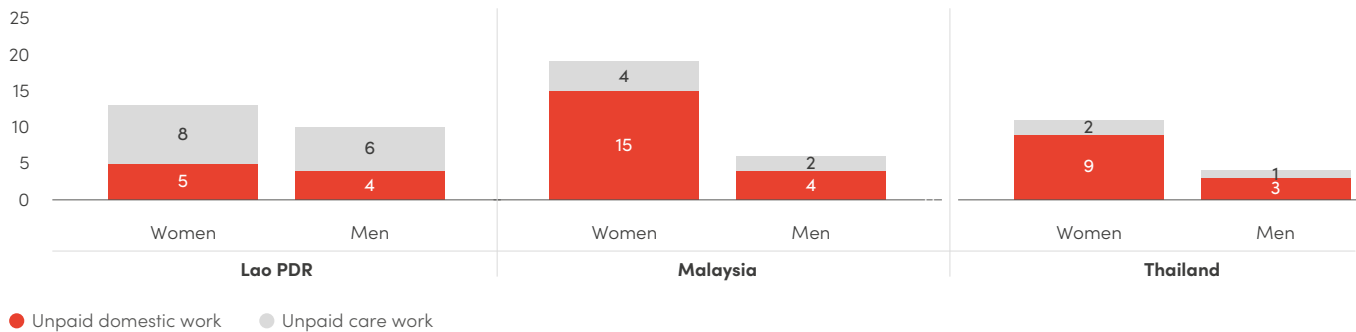
Average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic and care work per day, by sex (latest available year)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries. Age groups differ slightly across countries, due to limitations in data availability.

FIGURE 17

Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, latest available year, (percentage)



Note: Due to differences in survey methods, including target population interviewed, caution should be used for cross-country comparison. Data for Cambodia were excluded from this graph as insufficient information was recorded to disaggregate by care vs. domestic work. Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

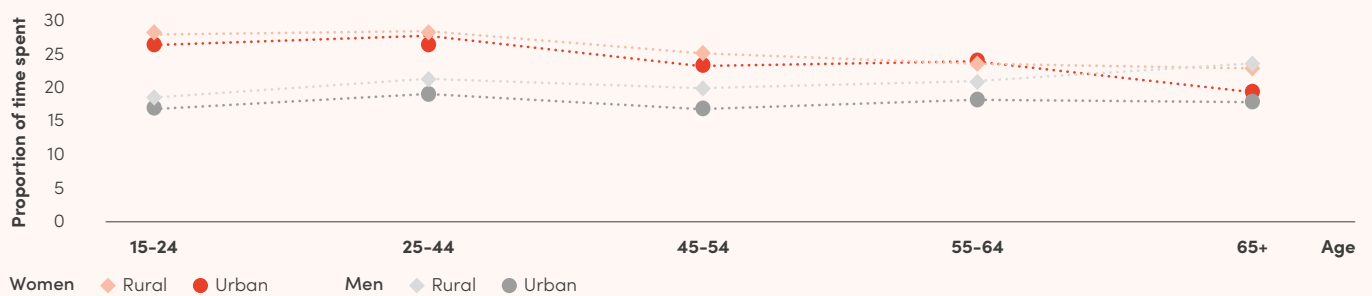
BOX 1

In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, women of reproductive age do the bulk of the caring

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic is the only ASEAN member State where data on time spent on unpaid care and domestic work activities is globally available with disaggregation by age, location and type of activity. This is critical to assess differences on the distribution of these tasks between women and men at different stages of their lifecycles. Although Lao women devote more time than men to unpaid domestic and care work regardless of age, this gap widens for those under 44. The burdens are largest for those age 25–44 years old, when most couples have young children under their care.

Throughout most of their lifecycle, women living in rural areas rather than urban areas are more likely to spend more time on unpaid care and domestic work. The lower availability of electricity, public health care, public transportation and other public services in rural areas may contribute to the heightened burdens. The gender gaps decrease substantially for older age groups, once children grow up and leave the households, and after retirement age, when men take up unpaid work activities at home.

Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, location and age in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, 2017 (percentage)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024).



Who is left behind?
Women in reproductive age.

Mobile ownership is increasing for women and men, but technology skills remain low, especially for women

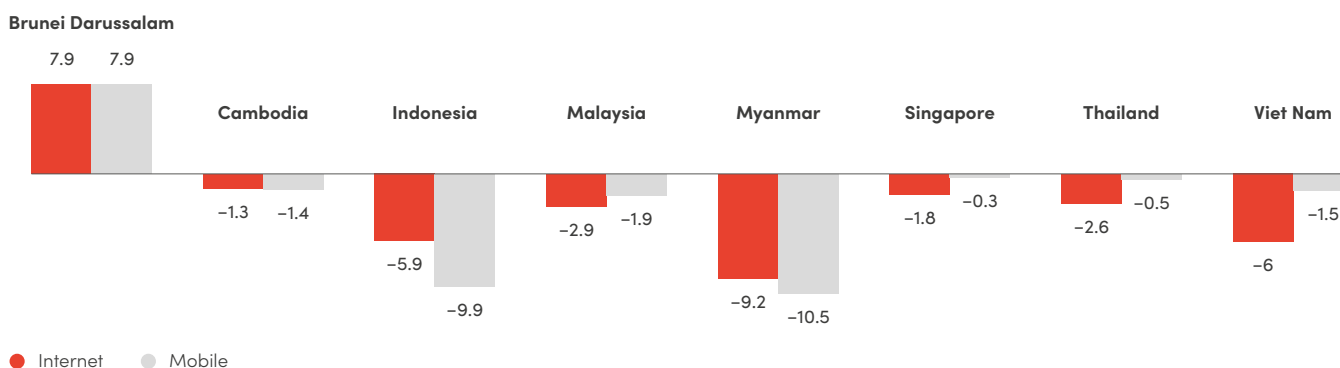
An estimated 63 per cent of women and 69 per cent of men in the ASEAN region own mobile telephones. This is an increase from 2015, when these rates stood at 58 and 67 per cent, respectively.³³ Across all countries, with the exception of Brunei Darussalam, men are more likely than women to own mobile phones, especially in Indonesia, Myanmar and Viet Nam (figure 18). This may limit women's access to information, including early warning information in times of crisis, knowledge of employment opportunities, and overall agency, as owning a mobile phone can enable regular access to the Internet and other information sources.

In tandem with the increase of mobile ownership rates, Internet access rates have increased from 2015 to 2023, from 27 to 65 per cent among women, and from 37 to 70 per cent among men.³⁴ However, not all phones facilitate Internet access, and people in low-income groups, especially women, are less likely to rely on smartphones. This contributes to larger gender gaps in Internet access than in mobile phone ownership in most countries (figure 19). Thailand and Viet Nam, which have the highest rates of smartphone ownership for both men and women in the ASEAN region, see smaller gender gaps in Internet access. However, in countries such as Cambodia and the Philippines, many of those living in the poorest households own a phone that is not necessarily a smartphone (figure 20). As many as 72 per cent of people living in the poorest households in the Philippines own a phone, but only 55 per cent own a smartphone. Facilitating their access to the internet, either through subsidies or by reducing prices, remains a key priority.

Unfortunately, the increasing access to mobile phones and the Internet over the past decades in the ASEAN region have not been matched with similar increases in information and communications technologies (ICT) skills. Across the region, ICT skills remain low, with less than 30 per cent of women and 40 per cent of men, having these skills. To encourage the safe use of online information and promote livelihood opportunities, including in the context of the digital economy, building these skills remains essential, especially among women in the poorest households, where the barriers are steeper. At present, only slightly more than 30 per cent of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) graduates in the ASEAN region are women.³⁵

FIGURE 18

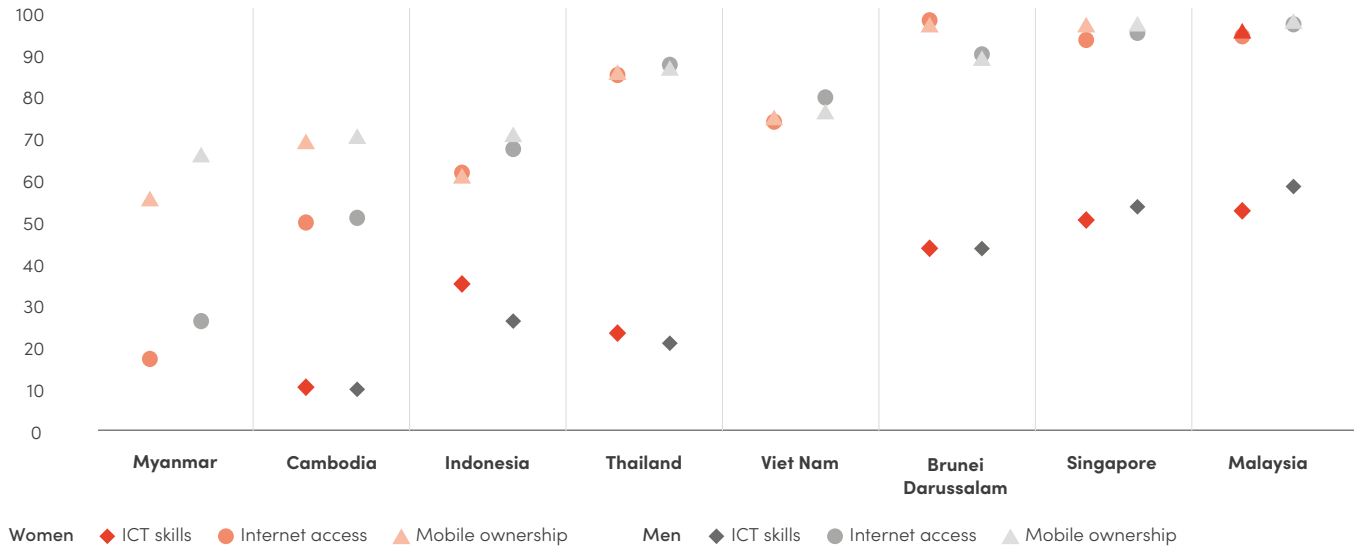
Gender gap in ownership of mobile telephone and access to the Internet, latest available year (percentage point difference)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 19

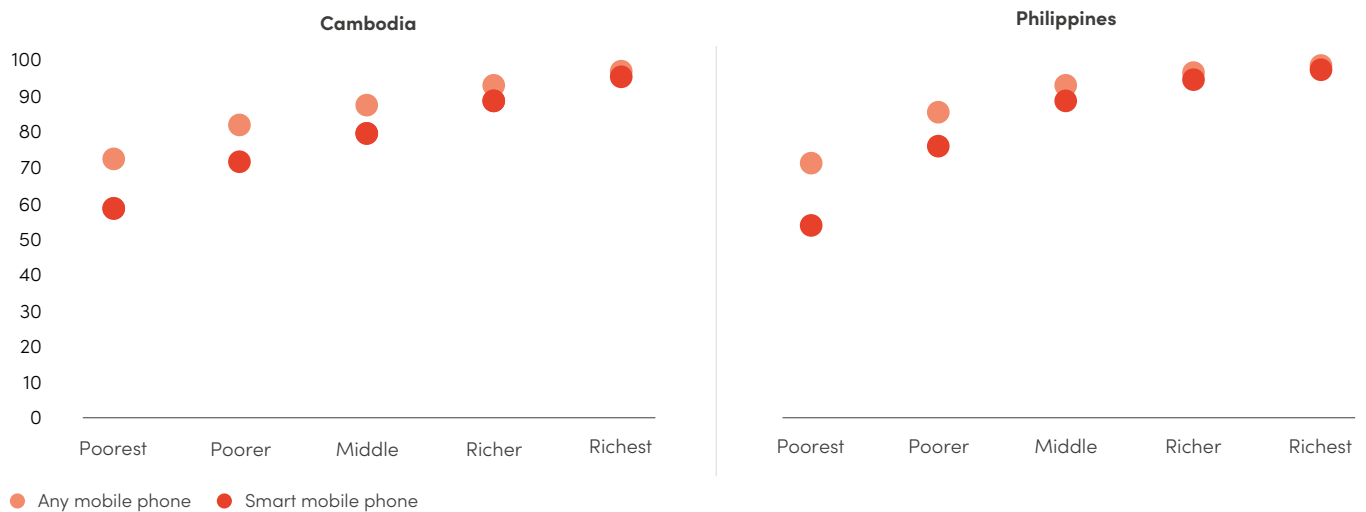
Proportion of people who own a mobile telephone and have access to the Internet and ICT skills, by sex, latest available year (percentage)



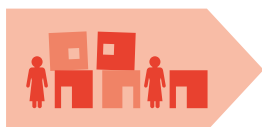
Source: United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Platform (Accessed 3 July 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 20

Proportion of women age 15–49 who own a mobile telephone in Cambodia and the Philippines, by type of telephone and wealth, 2022 (percentage)



Source: Cambodia DHS (2021–22) and Philippines DHS (2022). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?
Women in the poorest households.

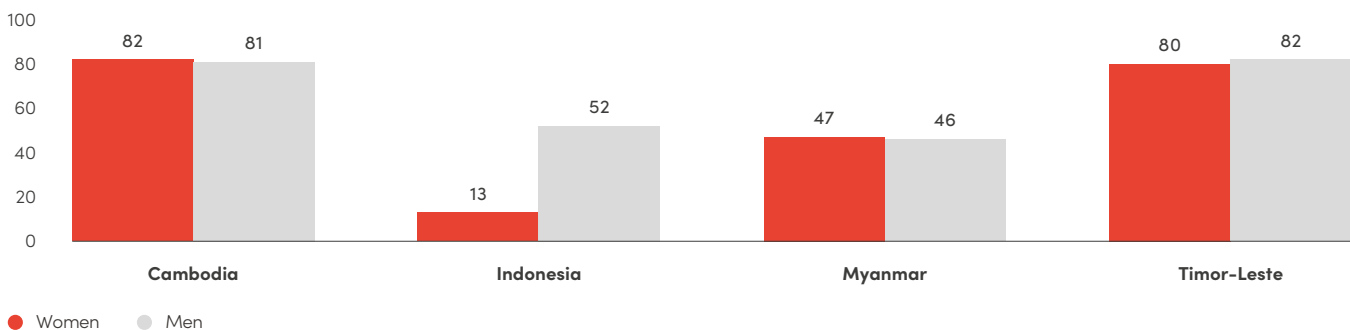
Land ownership is critical to empower women, but not every country sees gender equality in this regard

Roughly 25 per cent of employed women in the ASEAN region work in the agriculture sector.³⁶ For agricultural populations, owning the land they work can provide a safety net in the face of crises and employment stability overall. While an estimated 80 per cent of the agricultural population in countries such as Cambodia and Timor-Leste own agricultural land, these rates are far lower in Indonesia and Myanmar (figure 21). Worse yet, in all other countries in the region, data are not available, limiting opportunities to enhance the livelihoods of agricultural workers.

Where data are available, gender gaps in agricultural land ownership differ widely. While gender gaps are virtually non-existent in Myanmar, in Indonesia only 14 per cent of women living in agricultural households own agricultural land compared to 52 per cent of men. This inequality limits women's resilience, as land could be used as collateral to access financial services in the event of climate-driven reductions in agricultural yields, to cope with disasters or for entrepreneurial purposes (lacking ownership may hinder the ability of women entrepreneurs to register their businesses and expand their reach beyond local and informal networks). Moreover, agricultural land ownership may influence decision-making regarding investments in farming inputs and equipment. For instance, landowners are known to weigh in more heavily in decisions regarding transitioning to climate resilient crops, or environmentally friendly practices to preserve soil quality and overall sustainability. Thus, eliminating barriers to the ownership of agricultural land for both men and women could have substantial economic and environmental repercussions.

FIGURE 21

Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex, latest available year (percentage)



Note: In Cambodia, the individual is listed as owner/holder of use rights over the parcel if her/his name is listed in the documentation of the parcel or has the right to sell or bequeath the parcel. In Indonesia, the individual is listed as owner if the individual has the possession of legal documents over the parcel or the right to sell or the right to bequeath the parcel. In Myanmar, the indicator reflects women and men in agricultural population who own agricultural land if they report they own land (whether agricultural or non-agricultural, only one category) either alone or jointly and at least one member of the household owns agricultural land.

Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries. For Myanmar, according to the Central Statistics Office, the rates estimated from the national Living Standards Survey (2017) differ from those shown here, at 8 per cent for women and 29 per cent for men.



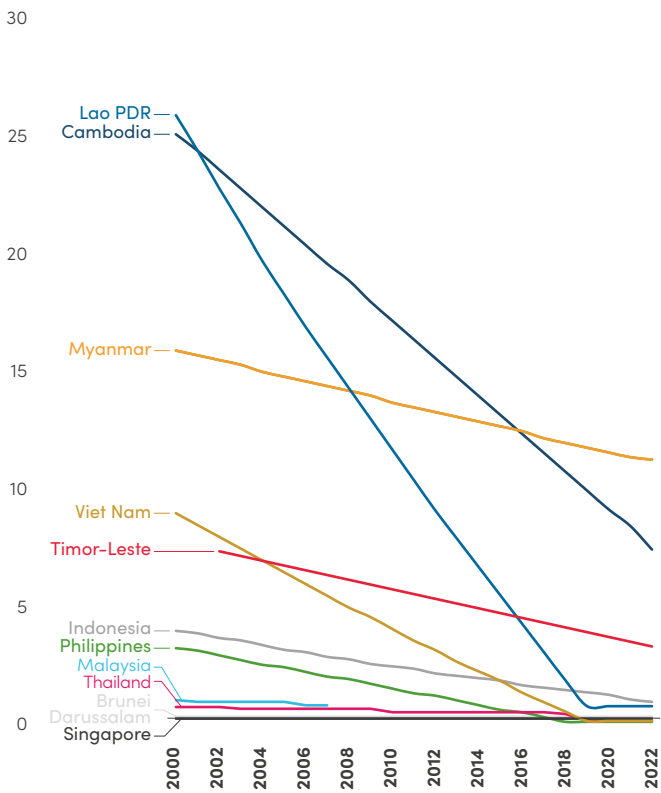
Who is left behind?
Women in agriculture in some countries.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Many rural women lack access to clean water, impeding health and hygiene

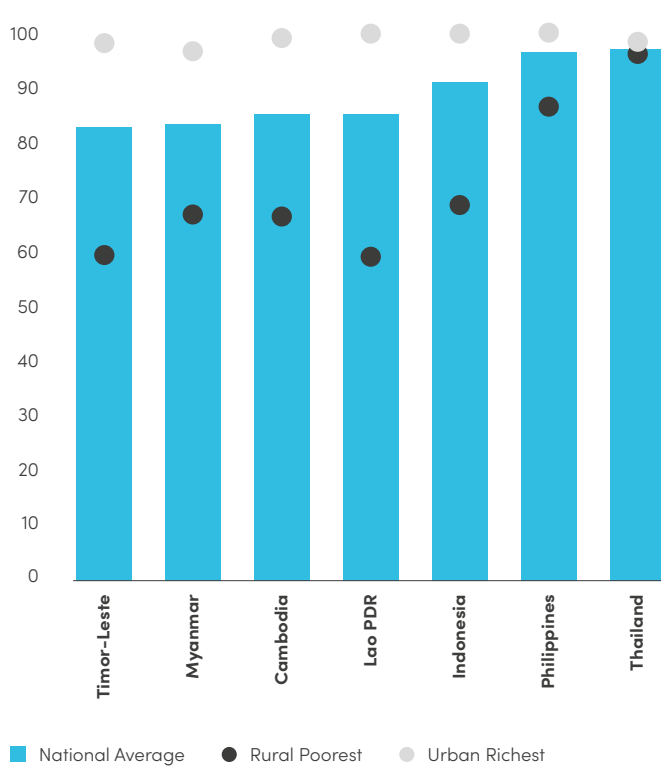
Clean water is essential for drinking, cooking, personal hygiene and overall well-being. The ASEAN region has made substantial strides towards universal access to clean drinking water, with the proportion of people having access to clean water at home or within a 30-minute walk increasing from 78 per cent in 2000 to 94 per cent in 2022.³⁷ This progress is due in part to enhanced water infrastructure, which has seen piped water networks and water treatment plants expand to better reach rural populations. The reliance on surface water for drinking purposes has decreased substantially in many countries, and is almost non-existent in others, such as Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand (figure 22). This has had tremendous positive effects on people’s health and helped reduce overall mortality, but clean drinking water remains unavailable to many, particularly women residing in the poorest households in rural areas (figure 23). In places such as the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Timor-Leste, these gaps are wide: although everyone in urban richest households has access to clean drinking water at home, roughly 60 per cent of women have it in the poorest rural households.

FIGURE 22 Proportion of population utilizing surface water as a drinking water source (percentage)



Source: United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Platform (Accessed 6 July 2024).

FIGURE 23 Proportion of women age 15–49 with access to improved water sources, by location and wealth, latest available year (percentage)

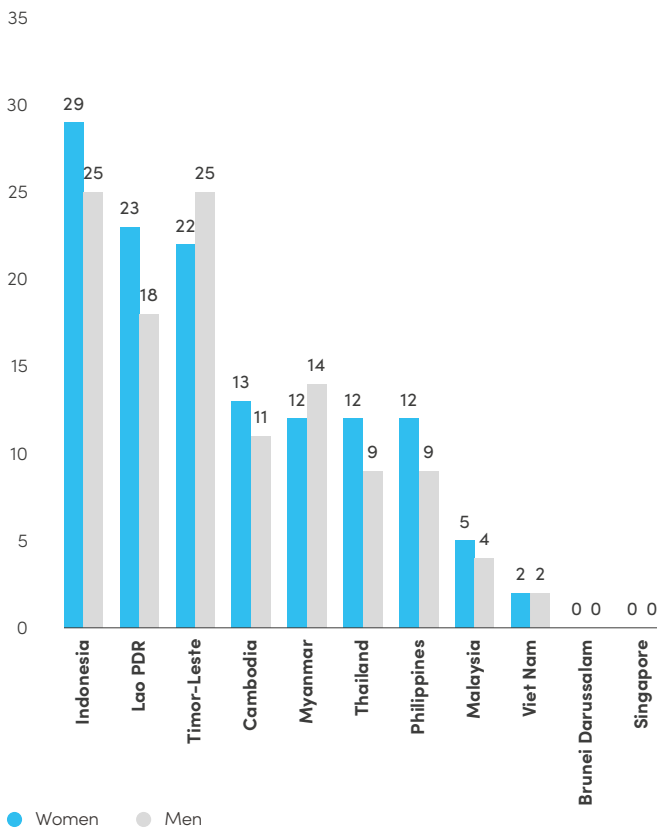


Source: United Nations, UN Women and UN Water, 2023, *From Commodity to Common Good: A feminist agenda to tackle the world’s water crisis*. Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

Lacking clean drinking water at home has important implications for the health and well-being of women and girls, who are more likely than men to die from consuming unsafe water sources across the region (figure 24), and are disproportionately in charge of fetching and treating water prior to household consumption. Mortality associated with unsafe water sources as a risk factor is highest in Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Timor-Leste. In all three countries, substantial gaps in accessing clean water exist between the richest urban and poorest rural women. Similarly, estimates for Indonesia and the Lao People’s Democratic Republic show gaps between urban and rural women’s access to a private place to wash and change during menstruation³⁸ (figure 25). Facilitating the poorest rural women’s access to clean water could not only reduce mortality and water-borne diseases, such as diarrhoea, cholera, dysentery, hepatitis A, typhoid and polio, but also reduce reproductive diseases such as infertility, endometriosis and breast cancer, and enhance women’s safety at the time of menstruation, a key consideration for enhancing their well-being, protection from violence and contributions to the labour force.

FIGURE 24

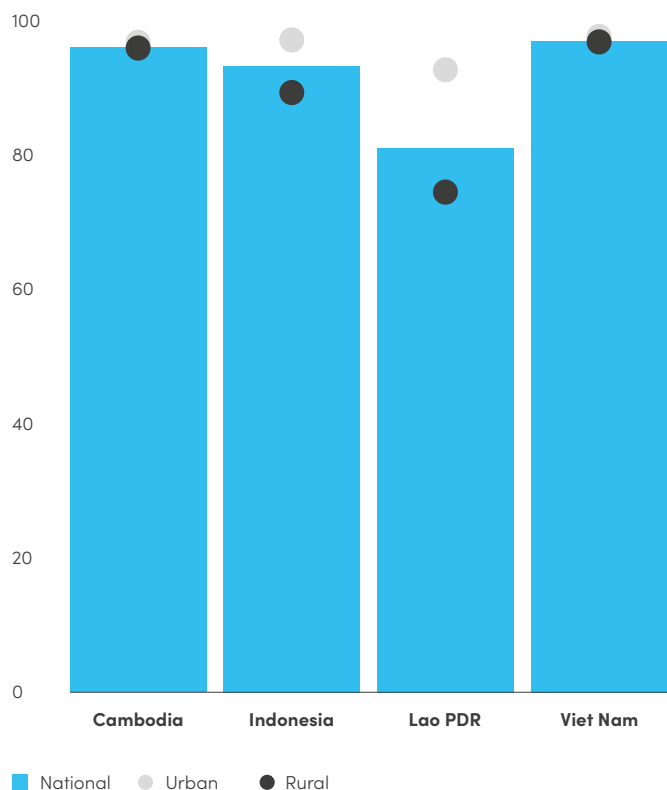
Proportion of deaths associated with unsafe water sources as a risk factor, by sex, 2019 (percentage)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 6 July 2024).

FIGURE 25

Proportion of women who have a private place to wash and change during their menstruation, by location, latest available year (percentage)



Source: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Indonesia DHS (2017), Lao People’s Democratic Republic Social Indicator Survey (2017), Viet Nam Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) (2021). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?
Women in the poorest rural households.

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

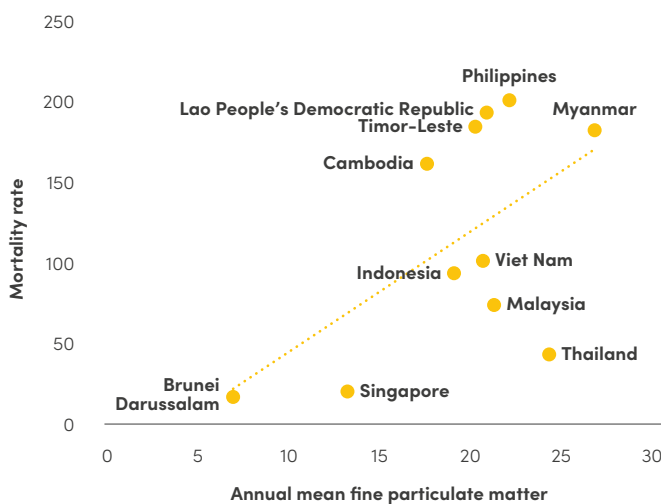
Substantial gains in access to electricity offer opportunities for improving respiratory health, but rural women remain at a disadvantage

The links between air pollution and respiratory and cardiovascular disease are well established. Over the past decades, the ASEAN region has continued to struggle with unhealthy levels of air pollution, largely driven by emissions from industry, transportation, waste management and, to a lesser degree, agricultural burning practices and forest fires. Air pollution was responsible for more than 400,000 deaths in the region in 2019.³⁹ Available data show clear correlations between average levels of fine particulate matter and mortality rates⁴⁰, with Myanmar, the Philippines, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Timor-Leste and Cambodia all showing very high levels of both air pollution and related deaths (figure 26). In Thailand and Malaysia, which also have elevated levels of fine particulate matter annually, related deaths have been somewhat mitigated thanks to more advanced health-care services and infrastructure. Yet, with the exception of Brunei Darussalam and Singapore, where air pollution levels are lower, countries across the region could see millions of lives saved and a substantial reduction in the burden of disease if air pollution levels were reduced.

Over the past two decades, the region has made substantial progress in expanding access to electricity, especially in rural areas (figure 27). This has enabled a decrease in the exposure to indoor air pollution in homes, as more and more people are using electricity for lighting and cooking. In places such as Malaysia and Singapore, almost everyone uses clean fuels for preparing meals. Viet Nam, Indonesia and Thailand have made substantial progress in recent years towards enhancing the use of clean fuels and technologies for cooking, with more than 70 per cent

FIGURE 26

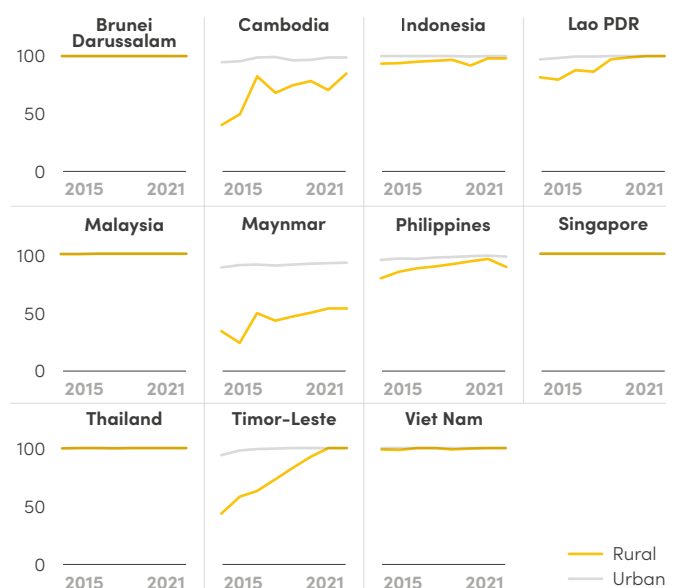
Age-standardized mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution (deaths per 100,000 population) and annual mean levels of fine particulate matter (population-weighted) (micrograms per cubic meter), 2019



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024).

FIGURE 27

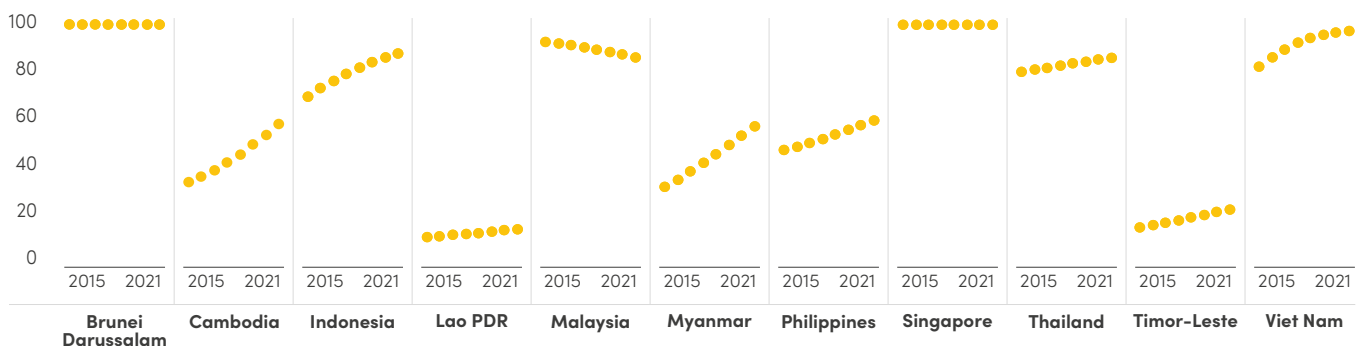
Proportion of population with access to electricity, by location (percentage)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024).

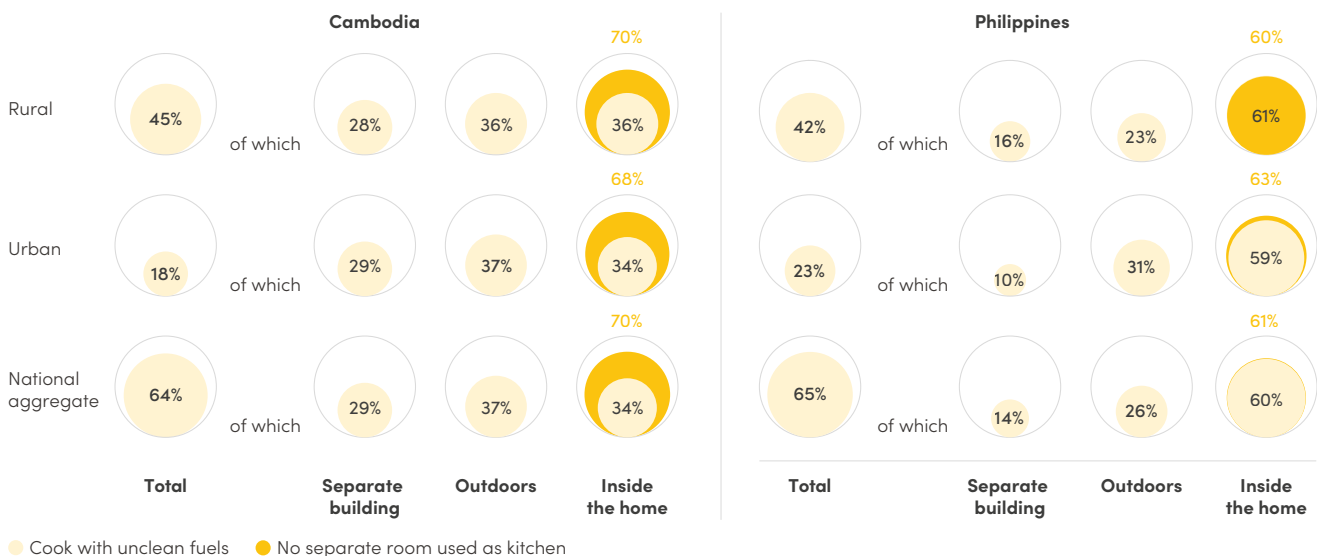
of people now using healthier cooking fuels, such as electricity and liquid petroleum gas (LPG) (figure 28). However, many households in rural areas across the ASEAN region rely on unclean fuels for cooking. As women are typically in charge of performing these tasks, they are disproportionately exposed to these harmful fumes. The health effects of using unclean fuels such as charcoal, wood or kerosene are worsened when stoves are located inside homes, without a separate room used as a kitchen, as the lack of proper ventilation creates harmful concentrations of solid particulate matter. An estimated 15 per cent of women in Cambodia and 17 per cent in the Philippines who use unclean fuels in unventilated spaces are at a disproportionate risk of respiratory and cardiovascular disease from cooking meals, and related carbon monoxide concentrations may affect all household members, including causing nausea, fatigue, asthma and even death in extreme cases (figure 29).

FIGURE 28
Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and (percentage)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024).

FIGURE 29
Proportion of women age 15–49 years, who rely on unclean cooking fuels in Cambodia and the Philippines, by location of cooking area, latest available year (percentage)

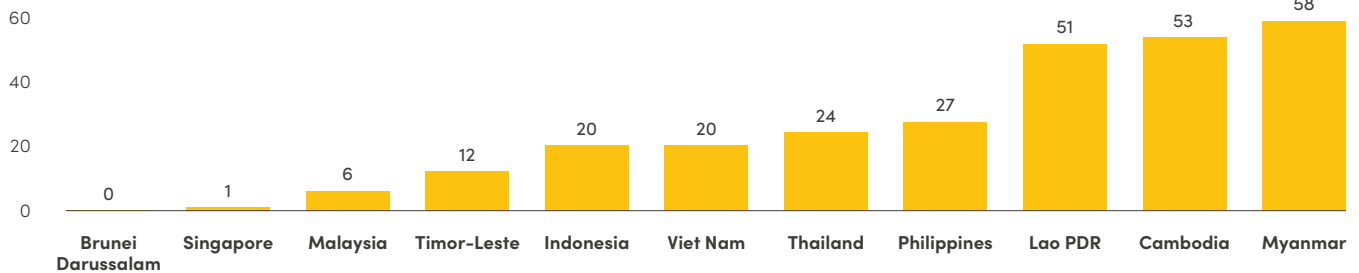


Source: UN Women calculations based on Philippines DHS (2022) and Cambodia DHS (2021–22). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

Outdoor air quality also contributes to people’s respiratory and cardiovascular health. As the region’s energy usage has risen substantially in the past decades, so have related emissions. Most electricity production in the region relies on non-renewable sources, such as coal and natural gas, and the extraction and combustion processes produce harmful fumes that contribute to outdoor air pollution (figure 30). Since 2015, reliance on renewable energy sources has, in fact, decreased across the ASEAN region, as rapid development has been accompanied by increased demand for energy, which could not be met by renewable infrastructure. To limit the health and human cost of air pollution in the ASEAN region, it is imperative to invest in reducing emissions, including by shifting away from oil production and use, limiting combustion processes for waste management and investing in clean energy. Over the past decade, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and Indonesia have mobilized the largest investments, in absolute terms, towards clean energy and research (more than \$7 billion and \$6 billion, respectively). (Figure 31), but additional investments are needed across the region. As most of this infrastructure would be located in rural areas, investments in expanding renewable energy production could offer employment opportunities for rural women if adequate training is provided.

FIGURE 30

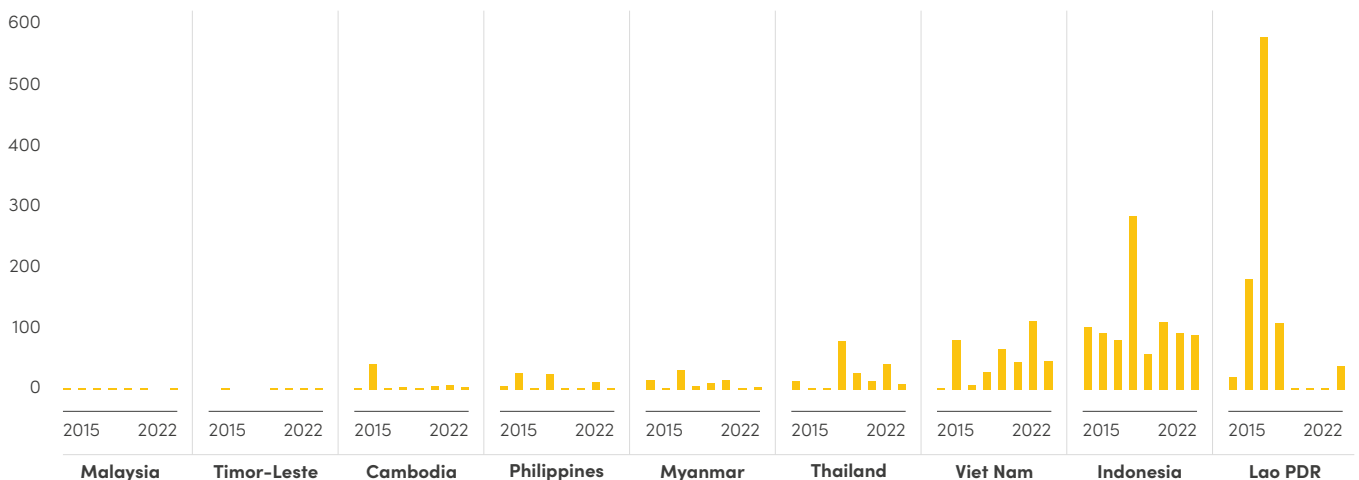
Proportion of final energy consumption that is derived from renewable resources, latest available year (percentage)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024).

FIGURE 31

International financial flows in support of clean energy, related research and development and renewable energy production, including in hybrid systems (millions of constant 2020 United States dollars)



Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?
Women in rural areas.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



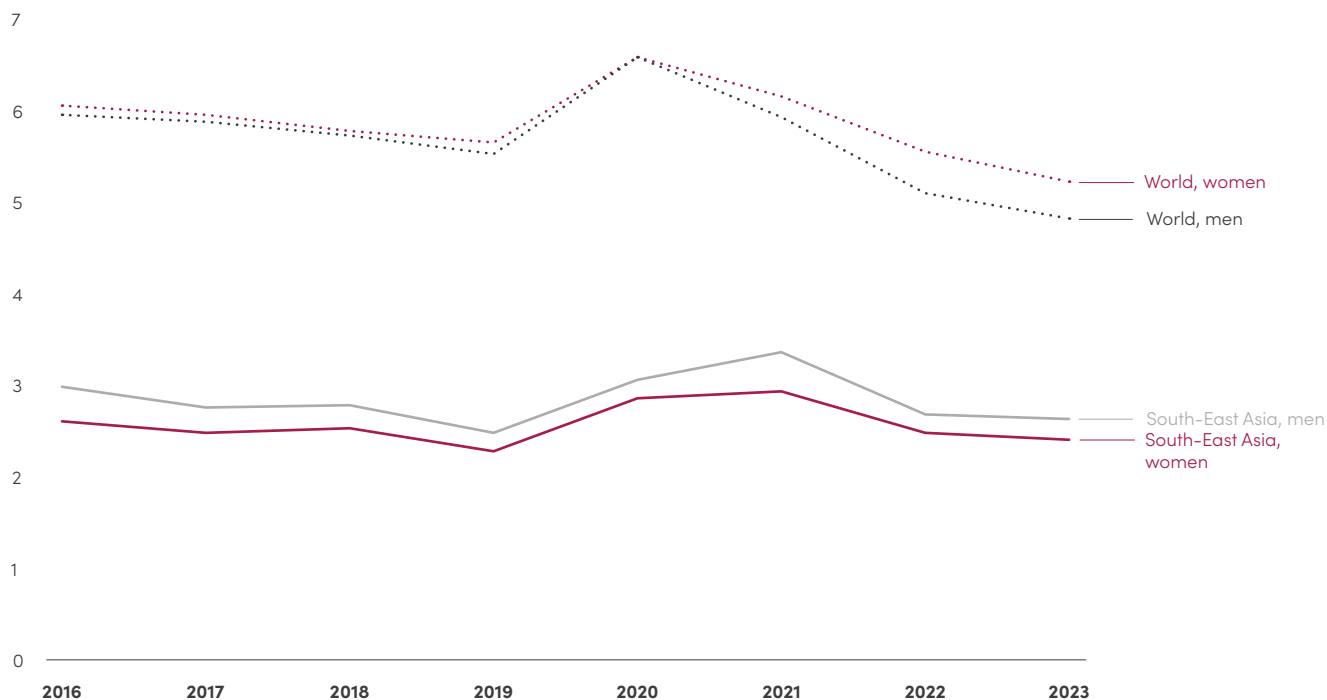
Household responsibilities, limited asset ownership and regulation shortfalls worsen women's vulnerability and overrepresentation in informal employment

The ASEAN region has remarkably low levels of unemployment. Only 2.5 per cent of people are currently looking for jobs but failing to find them, compared to 5 per cent globally. At the same time, there is an overreliance on informal jobs, which makes for a flexible job market but renders workers highly vulnerable to shocks. An estimated 70 per cent of workers in the region are engaged in informal employment.⁴¹ In some sectors, such as food services, accommodation and agriculture, the rate is even higher. During and shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic, this played to the region's advantage, as the global spike in unemployment was not matched in Southeast Asia (figure 32) and workers in the region were nimble to switch jobs to remain employed.

However, informal jobs, which fail to provide social security or unemployment benefits, and to protect workers against financial abuse, or violence in the workplace, render workers vulnerable. During crises, the lack of benefits may leave people without alternatives to maintain their livelihoods if they lose their jobs. In the agriculture sector in the ASEAN region, women are more likely than men to engage in informal employment (figure 33). As women have more limited access to financial resources and productive assets, including land, they are highly vulnerable to shocks, including environmental shocks that may affect agricultural yield.

FIGURE 32

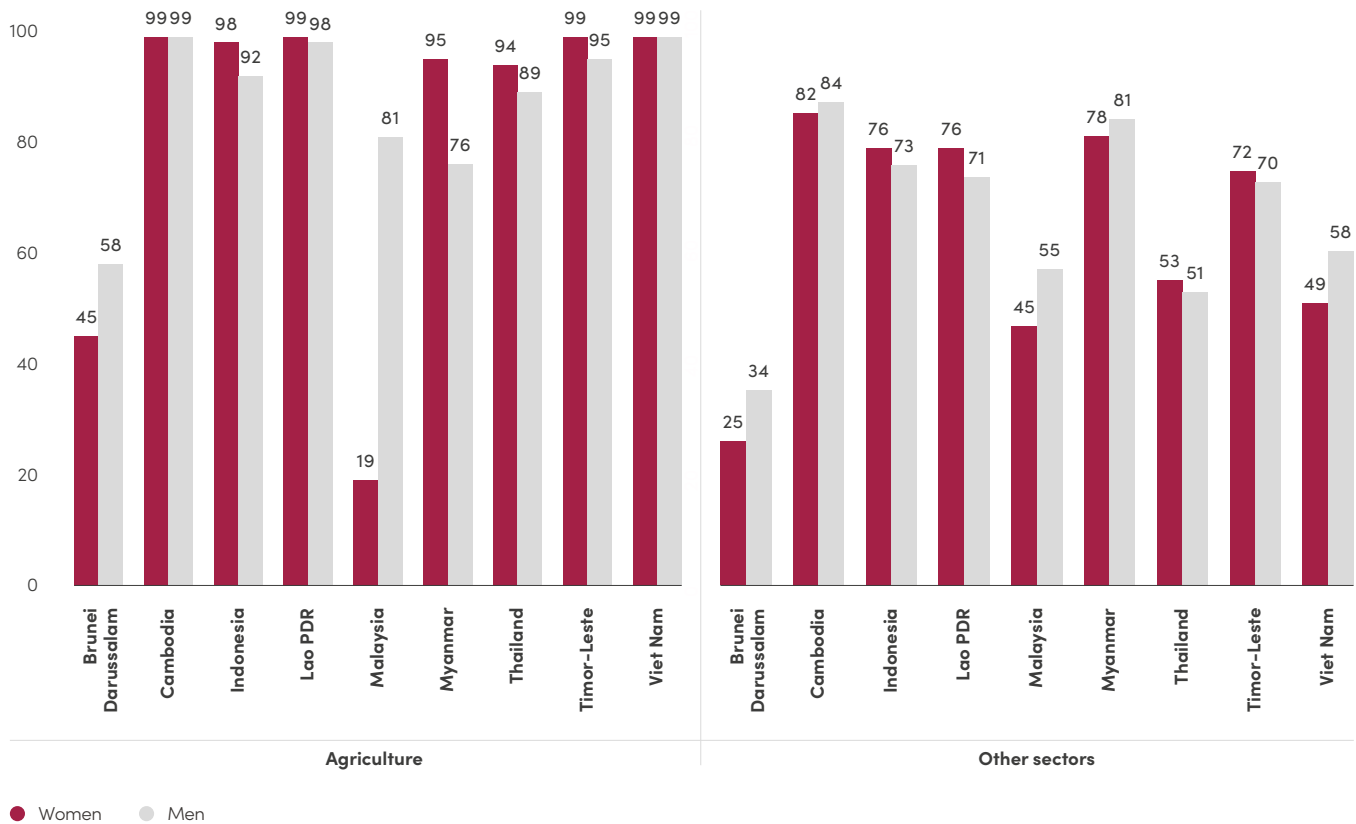
Unemployment rate among population age 15 years and older, South-East Asia and the world, by sex (percentage)



Source: ILOSTAT database (Accessed 1 July 2024).

FIGURE 33

Proportion of population in informal employment, by sex and sector, latest available year (percentage)



Note: The graph illustrates estimates harmonized in alignment with international statistical standards adopted at the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS).

Source: United Nations [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 30 June 2024). For Malaysia, Department of Statistics Malaysia, Informal Sector and Informal Employment Survey, 2021. Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

In Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Thailand and Timor-Leste, women are also more likely than men to engage in informal employment in sectors other than agriculture. The unequal distribution of caregiving and domestic tasks between women and men, may be preventing women from getting full-time jobs, and hindering their ability to participate in formal employment or to enter the labour market altogether. Efforts to promote women’s participation in the labour force are needed urgently, as this would allow both for women’s empowerment and overall economic development. At present, labour force participation rates remain lowest in Timor-Leste (28 per cent for women, 41 per cent for men) and Brunei Darussalam (53 per cent women, 72 per cent men). Other countries, such as Indonesia (53 per cent women, 82 per cent men) and Malaysia (56 per cent women, 81 per cent men) see high participation rates in the case of men,⁴² but efforts are needed to bring more women to the labour force. In tandem, ongoing efforts to formalize employment in the ASEAN region must continue to be prioritized. These efforts are bearing fruit in the light of declining rates of informal employment, which have dropped from 75 to 70 per cent between 2015 and 2023 across the region for both women and men.⁴³



Who is left behind?
Women in agriculture.

BOX 2

Employment in the digital economy in the ASEAN region

Reducing informal employment and creating decent jobs in the formal sector are essential for inclusive economic growth. Emerging sectors, such as the digital economy, can contribute to creating decent jobs if inclusive normative safeguards are established. The increasing rates of smartphone and Internet use in the ASEAN region may offer substantial business and employment opportunities, especially for younger people, who are more likely to have ICT skills. Across the region, 78 per cent of people use the Internet regularly. People in the Philippines spend an average of 9 hours and 14 minutes per day on the Internet, with similar behaviours (more than 8 hours per day) in Malaysia and Thailand. Men and boys use the Internet more than women and girls, as do younger generations compared to older generations. In all countries in the region with available data, the bulk of online content is consumed over phones rather than computers.

In line with this, the region has seen remarkable growth in digital platform employment, which refers to jobs facilitated through online platforms like ride-hailing, food delivery and freelance services. The long-term market growth prospects for the digital economy in the ASEAN region are expected to reach \$600 billion in gross merchandise value by 2030. For women to benefit from these opportunities, it is important to eliminate access barriers and build skills.

Importantly, for digital platform work to be supportive of people's livelihoods and well-being, key challenges must be addressed. At present, many digital platform workers operate outside the formal labour market, lacking benefits such as health insurance, pensions and job security. As workers are not directly employed by platforms, platform operators have no responsibilities for their protection. Furthermore, gender disparities exist in platform work, with lower pay and more limited career advancement opportunities for women compared to men (women's domestic responsibilities often result in fewer working hours and reduced earning potential from platforms). Thus, regulatory frameworks that ensure fair treatment and protection for digital platform workers are needed; as are skill development opportunities targeting women.

In the ASEAN region, the use of digital platforms in the care sector (child care, care for older people and domestic work), which is particularly relevant for women, has supported the provision of greater flexibility, timely payments and often better remuneration than that of traditional care jobs. However, the lack of regulatory frameworks continues to leave these care workers unprotected and remains a key challenge. As ASEAN works to develop a comprehensive implementation plan for its Digital Economy Framework Agreement, expected by 2025, addressing these considerations will be critical.

Sources: United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#); We Are Social and Meltwater, 2023, [Digital 2023 Global Overview Report](#); DinarStandard, 2023, [Global Digital Platform Power Index 2023](#); Google, Teamsek, Bain & Company, 2023, [E-Economy SEA 2023](#); ASEAN and European Union, 2023, [ASEAN Employment Outlook](#); UN Women, 2023, [Pathways towards decent work in the digitally enabled care economy in Southeast Asia](#).

INFOGRAPHIC 2

 **78%**
of people use the
Internet regularly

The digital economy is expected to reach
\$600 billion
GMV by 2030

Men and boys use the
Internet MORE
than women and girls



Digital platforms provide
employment opportunities
for women care entrepreneurs



Younger people use the
Internet MORE
than older people



Digital platform workers remain
underprotected
by the law



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



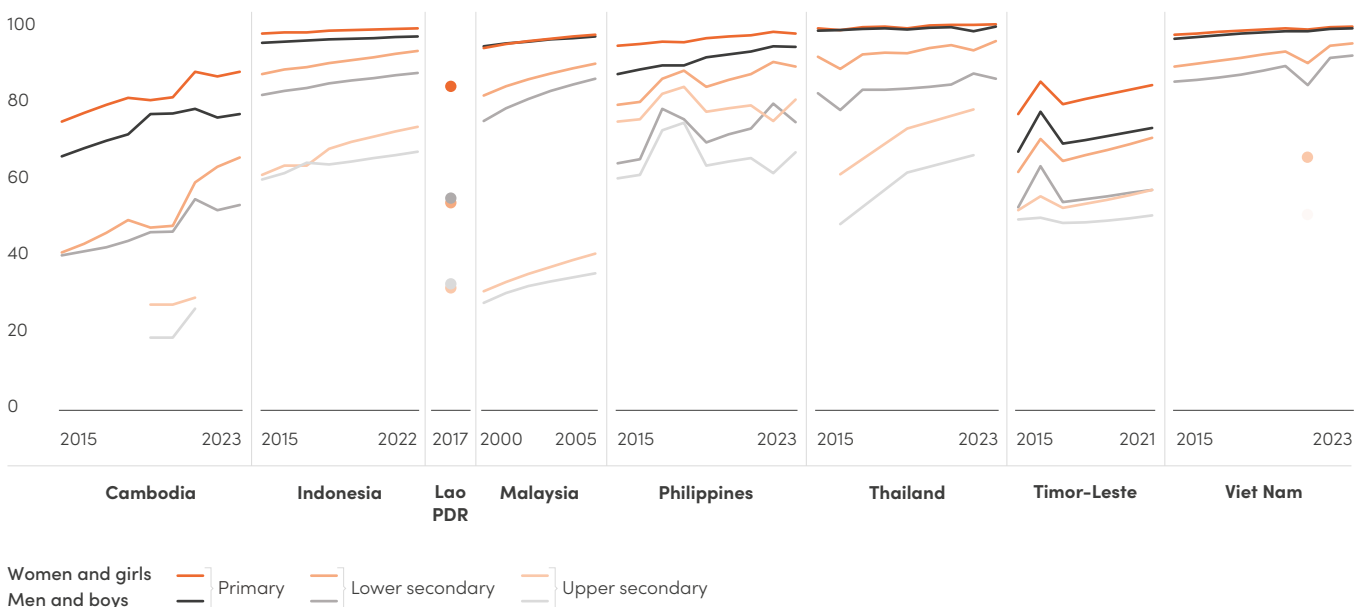
Infrastructure has played an important role in reducing adolescent birth rates in the region

Adolescent birth rates for girls age 15–19 years have decreased from 41 to 35 per 1,000 between 2015 and 2024 in South-East Asia.⁴⁴ Delaying the age at which young women deliver their first child is important, as it prevents them from dropping out of school, facilitates their career advancement, supports their overall health and builds their agency vis-à-vis their intimate partner. Several key factors are known to correlate with lower adolescent birth rates, including delaying the age of first marriage, access to contraceptives, affordable safe abortions and education opportunities.⁴⁵ The availability of infrastructure, such as schools, health facilities and transportation, enables many of these.

Across the ASEAN region, investments in infrastructure have contributed to increasing completion rates at all levels of education since 2015⁴⁶. More and more young women are completing upper secondary education, a critical period for them to learn about reproductive health and build their chances of accessing better paid jobs later in life. Thailand and Viet Nam have seen the fastest increases, although all countries have seen progress (figure 34). Malaysia leads the region by far in investments in education, both in absolute terms at more than \$14 million per year and as a percentage of GDP⁴⁷. The region, however, has seen a downward trend in investments over recent years, which could reverse recent gains, especially in rural areas, where the availability and quality of education infrastructure is lower. When education infrastructure is not fit for purpose, rural girls are less likely to finish school, increasing their chances of teenage pregnancy. In Viet Nam, for instance, teenage pregnancy rates in 2002 stood at 7 per cent for those who had only completed primary education but dropped to less than 1 per cent for those who completed secondary education.

FIGURE 34

Completion rate for primary, lower secondary, upper secondary education, by sex (percentage)



Source: United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Platform (Accessed 3 July 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries. For Malaysia, estimates from the Ministry of Education differ, and indicate that, in 2022, primary completion rates stood at 100 for girls and 99 for boys; while lower and upper secondary completion rates stood at 99 for both girls and boys.

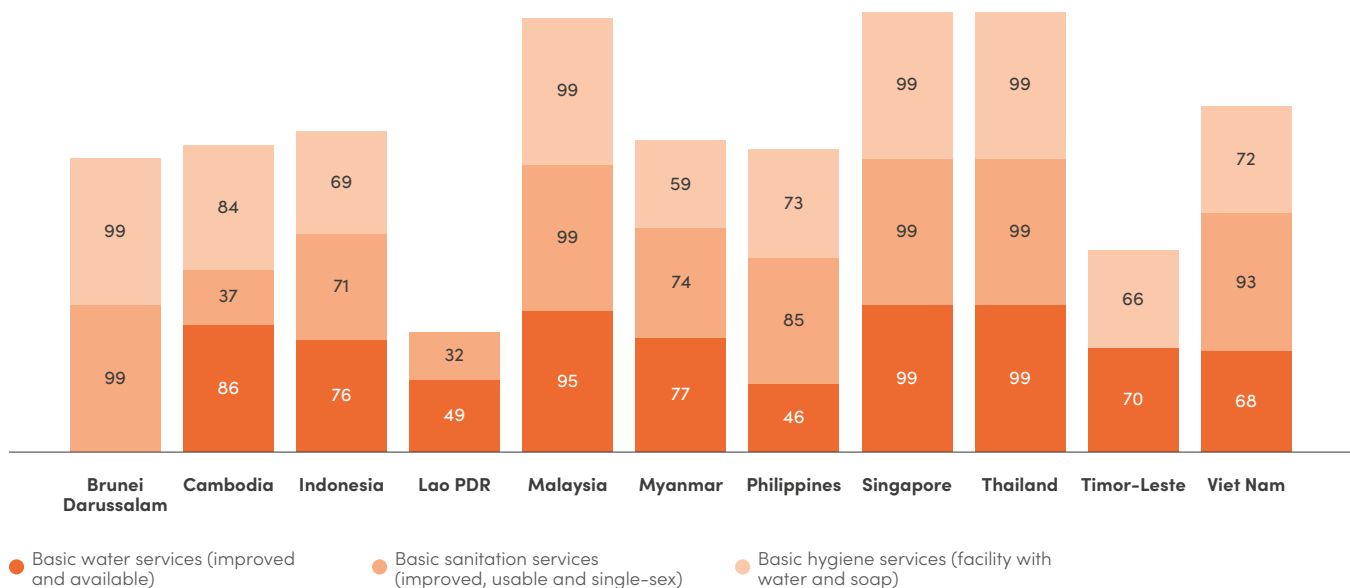
In line with the availability of infrastructure, teenage pregnancy rates in rural areas were more than double the rate in urban areas. In Cambodia, 32 per cent of teenagers without education were mothers in 2022, compared to 14 per cent for those who had completed primary only, and 5 per cent for those who completed secondary; and rural girls, once again, had higher chances of getting pregnant before age 20 (7.5 per cent compared to 5.2 per cent in urban areas).⁴⁸ In both countries, education infrastructure in urban areas was far superior to that of rural areas.

Having a school within walkable distance that includes basic facilities such as electricity, running water and adequate toilets, encourages teenage girls to stay in school, especially during their menstruation, when basic sanitation infrastructure (that is, an improved toilet facility that is usable and single-sex), is a key prerequisite for their hygiene and safety. Across the ASEAN region, basic water infrastructure is available in almost every school in Singapore and Thailand, but only in 68 per cent of schools in Viet Nam and 49 per cent in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. In Cambodia, these facilities exist in 89 per cent of the schools in urban areas compared to 85 per cent of rural schools. Similarly, basic sanitation facilities are widely available in schools in Malaysia, but only in 32 per cent of schools in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. In Cambodia, 42 per cent of urban schools have basic sanitation facilities, but only 36 per cent of schools in rural areas do (figure 35).

The association between infrastructure and development outcomes can be seen in figures 36 and 37, where the global human footprint is used as a proxy for infrastructural development⁴⁹. A map of Cambodia shows that the degree of urbanization is negatively correlated with the adolescent birth rate (figure 36). Similar associations exist in Myanmar and Timor-Leste (figure 37).

FIGURE 35

Proportion of educational facilities (primary, secondary and tertiary education) with adequate infrastructure, by type, 2023 (percentage)



Source: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 2024, *Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) data*.



Who is left behind?
Teenage girls in remote areas.

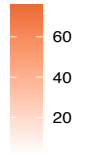
FIGURE 36

Geographical distribution of clusters with high adolescent birth rates (top 10 per cent), level of global human footprint, and education facilities, Cambodia

Note: The Global Human Footprint Index is the relative human influence in each terrestrial biome, expressed as a percentage and topographic basemap.

Source: DHS Cambodia (2021–2022), DHS Philippines (2022), DHS Myanmar (2015–2016), DHS Timor-Leste (2016), integrated with geospatial data from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) Columbia University, 2005, *Last of the Wild Project, Version 2* and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2024, *Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (HOT)*.

Global Human Footprint



Facilities & Births

- Education Facilities
- Top 10% Adolescent Birth

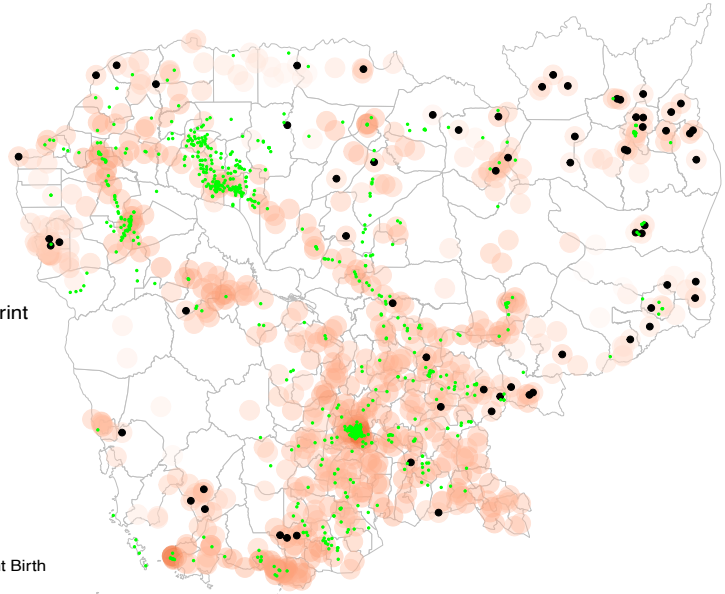
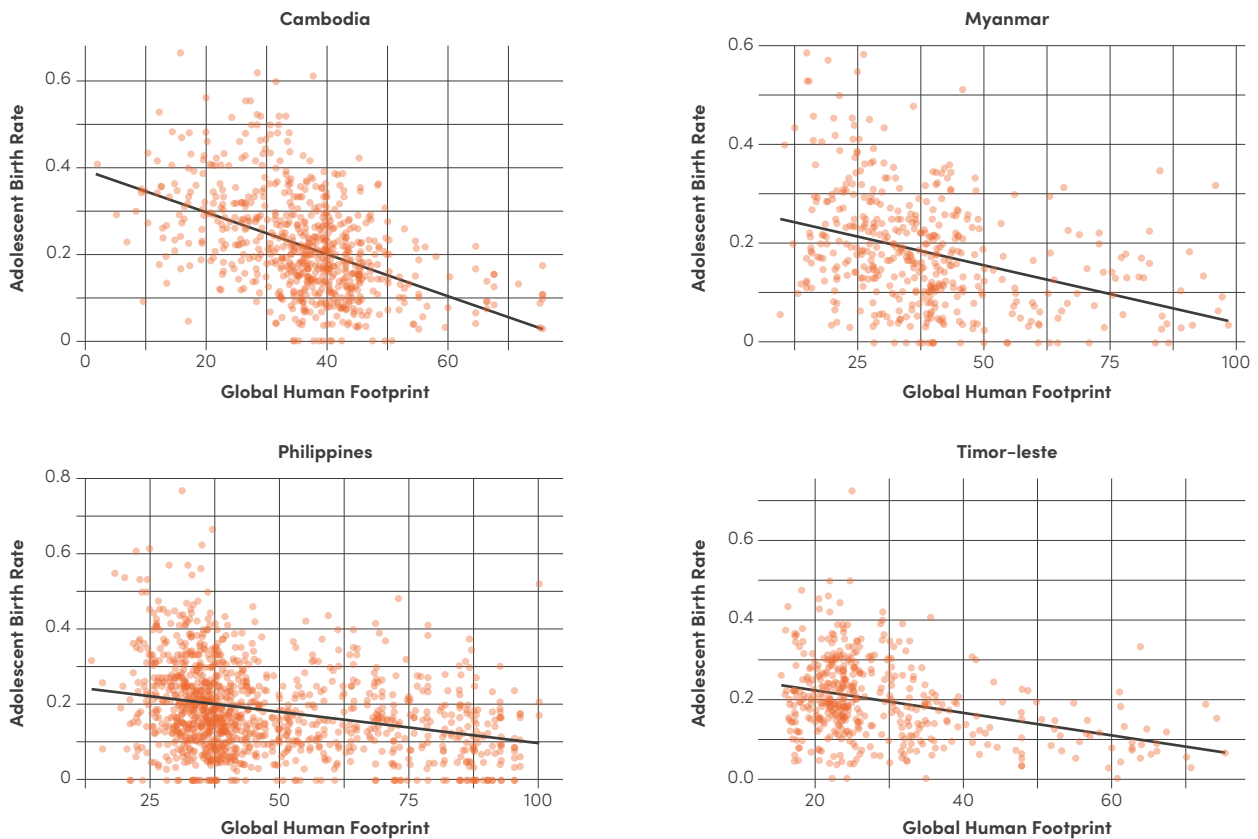


FIGURE 37

Association between adolescent birth rates (percentage) and global human footprint index (linear regression)



Note: See endnotes for measures of association depicted in the scatterplot.⁵⁰



Migrant workers take up essential work across the region, but their informal status may put them at risk of abuse

The economic integration of ASEAN member States, encompassing the exchange of goods and the movement of people across borders, has led to increased migration. In 2020, many women and men moved across borders within the region, seeking employment opportunities or for other reasons. Overall, the percentage of female migrants, including refugees, residing in the ASEAN region was lower than that of male migrants, except in Singapore and Thailand, where there were more female migrants (figure 38).

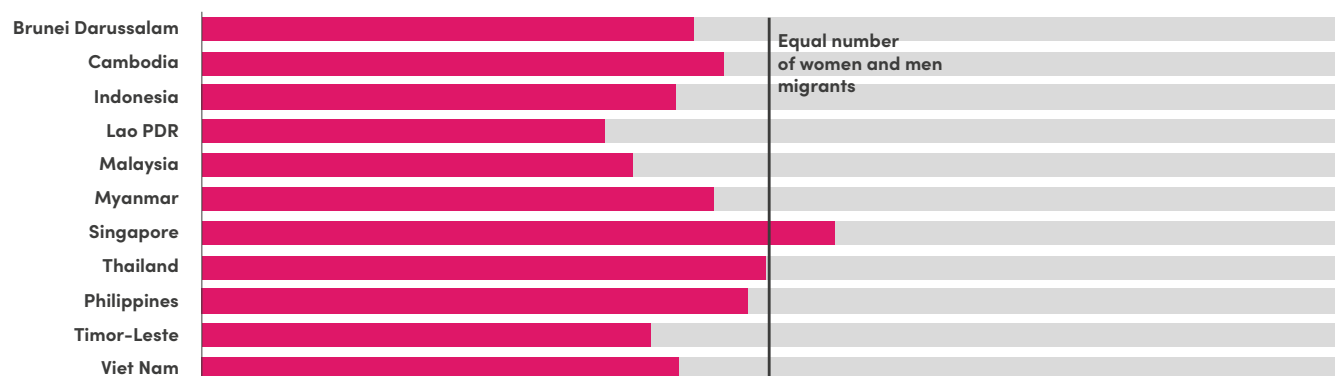
When women and men migrate for work, their experiences in host countries often differ. Firstly, they may encounter different challenges in finding jobs. Employers typically prefer men migrant workers for low-pay, physically demanding and dangerous work. As a result, women migrants may eventually be discouraged from searching for work: in all countries across the region, labour force participation rates are higher for migrant men than migrant women (figure 38). The nature of women's and men's jobs in host countries may further contribute to the distinct challenges they experience. In Thailand and Singapore, many migrant women are domestic workers, while migrant men work in construction or fishing (especially in Thailand). In Malaysia, migrant men typically work in construction, manufacturing and agriculture.

The limited economic opportunities available to migrant workers coupled with intersectional discrimination (based on sex, nationality and other factors) make migrant women and men vulnerable to unsafe jobs. In the ASEAN region, violence in the workplace remains an issue in some settings, with an estimated 11 per cent of men and 9 per cent of women, overall, reporting experiences of physical, psychological or sexual violence at some point in the past.⁵¹ These rates likely underestimate actual experiences of violence, especially for migrant workers, who may refuse to disclose their experiences for fear of retaliation, job loss or deportation.

Across the region, the bulk of the people reporting experiences of violence in the workplace note incidences of psychological violence or harassment, with men more likely than women to disclose these experiences. Women, however, are substantially more likely to report experiences of sexual violence at work, especially in Cambodia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Viet Nam (figure 40). Migrant women, especially domestic workers and others living in the same household as their employers, are disproportionately at risk of sexual violence. Many migrant workers cannot make formal complaints to authorities, especially if their work is informal or their migratory status is unregistered⁵².

FIGURE 38

Share of female migrants in the international migrant stock at mid-year, 2020 (percentage)



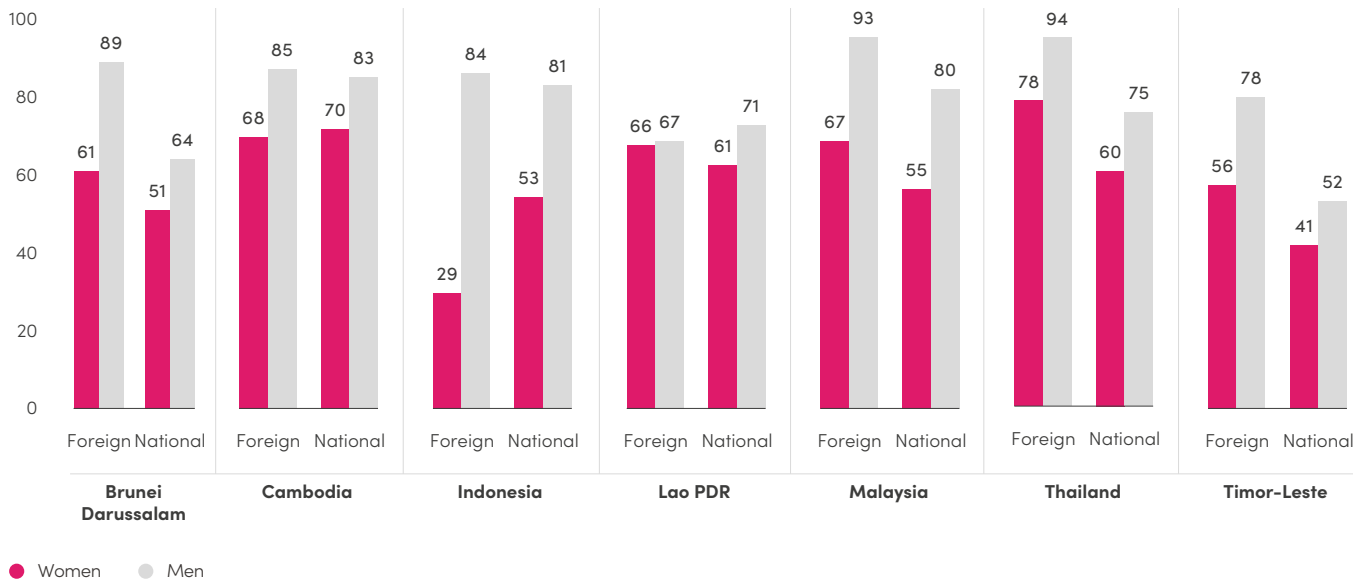
Source: IOM Data Portal.

50

100

FIGURE 39

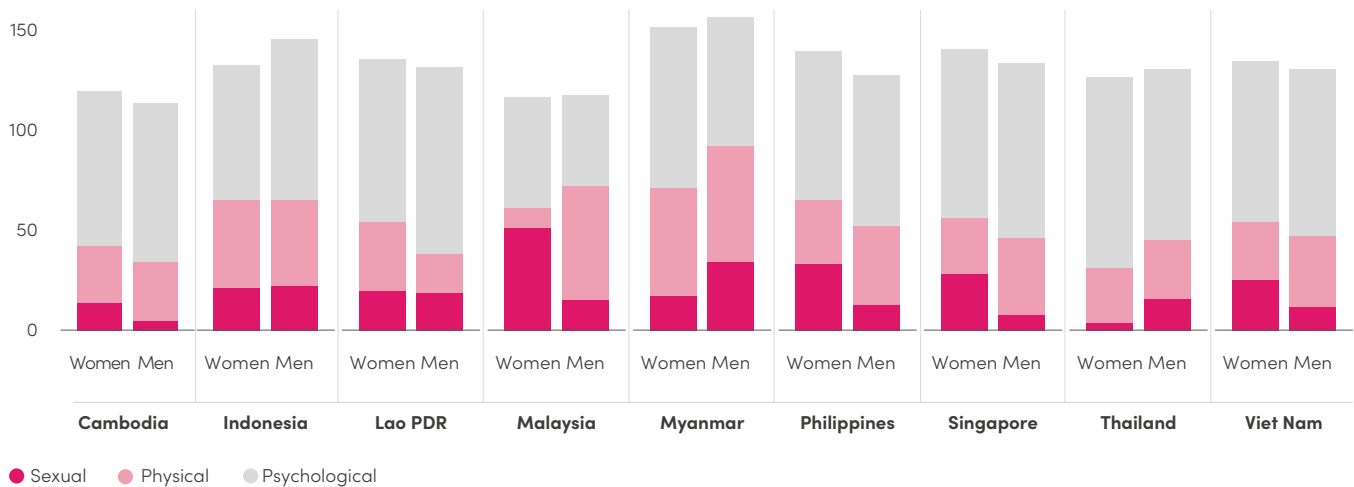
Labour force participation rate, by sex and citizenship, latest available data point, 2022 (percentage)



Note: Labour force participation rates include both people in employment and those looking for jobs in the past two weeks.
 Source: ILOSTAT database (Accessed 28 June 2024) and IOM Data Portal (Accessed 28 June 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 40

Share of reports of violence in the workplace, by sex and type of abuse (sexual, physical or psychological), 2021 (percentage)



Note: Bars surpass the 100 per cent mark because numerous people experienced more than one type of violence in the workplace.
 Source: World Risk Poll, the Lloyd Register Foundation, Gallup and ILO, [World risk poll country overviews](#). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?
 Migrants engaging in informal jobs.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES

Many women are moving to cities for employment or family reasons, and relocating to informal settlements puts their safety at risk

More than half of the world's population lives in cities, and migration to cities is expected to increase substantially by 2050⁵³. In the ASEAN region, the urban population in most countries will more than double (figure 41). This shift from rural to urban areas has continued year on year in almost all ASEAN countries, except during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many people lost jobs in urban areas and returned to their villages (infographic 3). In light of the rapid urbanization, it is critical to ensure that cities are well placed to provide not only economic opportunities but also safe and healthy spaces for people to live and thrive.

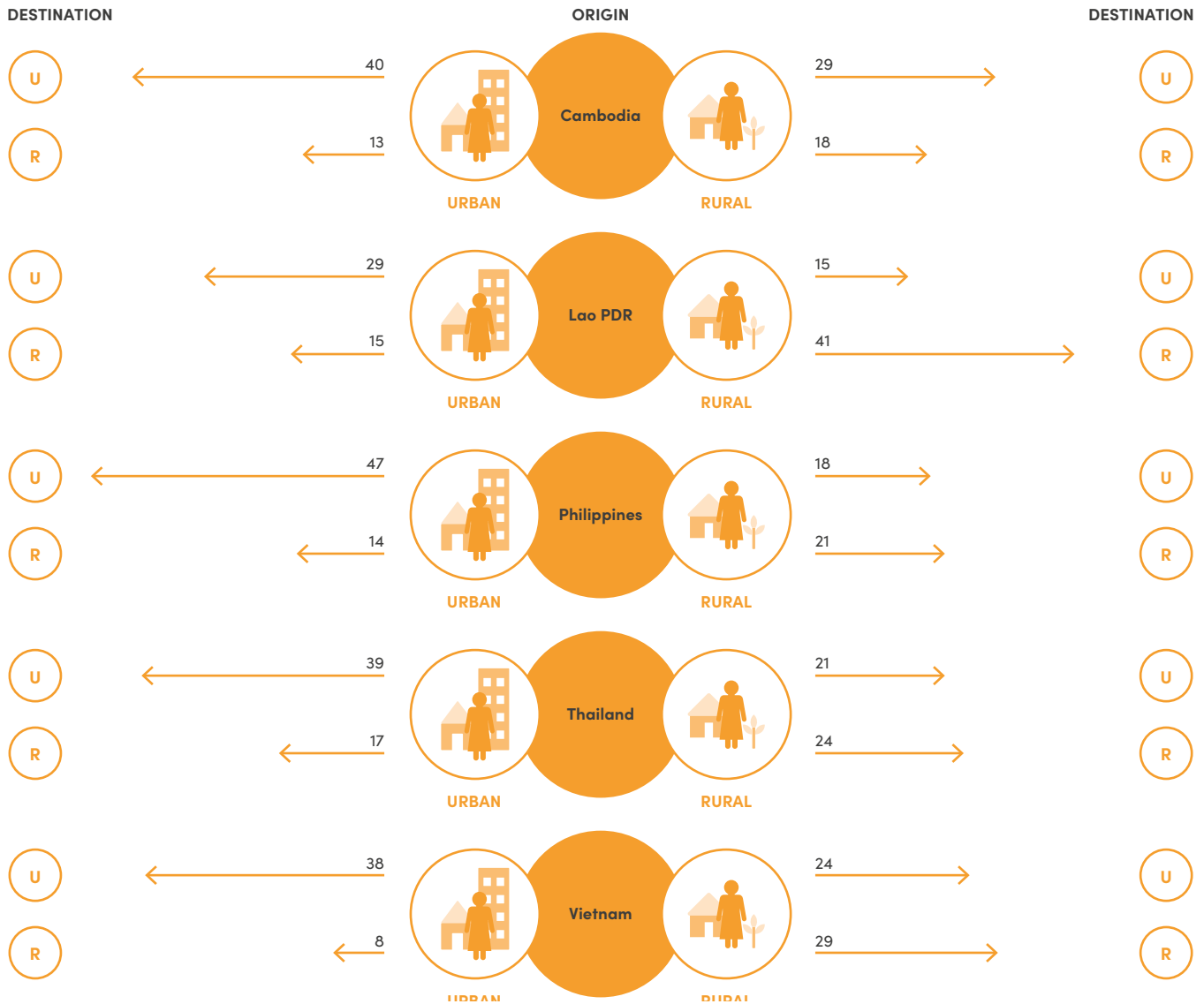
For women, key reasons for moving to cities include seeking employment opportunities, accompanying partners or other family members and other reasons such as education. All in all, the bulk of those that migrated from rural to urban areas in the ASEAN region did it for employment. Among women age 15–49 who changed residences in the past five years, 65 per cent in Cambodia and 34 per cent in the Philippines migrated for employment (figure 42). Although, for many, cities provide opportunities for prosperity, some of the rural population that migrate to cities take up jobs in construction, domestic work, caregiving and other manual work sectors. With lower average wages compared to people born and educated in cities, many of these women end up residing in slum settings in households lacking water, electricity, or confined to small and crowded living spaces.

Living in slums may pose health and safety risks for women. The incidence of diarrhoea, and various forms of infections is higher in slums, partly due to the lack of improved drinking water and sanitation facilities. Similarly, vector-borne diseases, such as dengue, are also more prevalent in these areas, as a result of overcrowding. In Thailand, the Department of Disease Control conducts surveys regularly to gather information on larval presence and breeding habitats that contribute to the transmission of dengue. This important information has demonstrated that as many as 50 per cent of people living in slums are exposed to environments with larvae or pupae of the mosquito that causes dengue; and the proportion of households exposed to these risks increases during the rainy seasons.⁵⁴ For women, especially pregnant women, exposure to dengue may pose life-threatening risks for themselves and their babies.

The health of women living in urban slums may be further challenged by disproportionate exposure to gender-based violence. In all countries in the region with available data, women living in slums were more likely than other city residents to experience physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner (figure 43). Economic stressors and overcrowding also contribute to heightened violence exposure outside women's homes. In Timor-Leste, as many as 31 per cent of women living in slums were victims of violence at the hands of someone other than their partner. This rate was 18 per cent in Myanmar (figure 44). To address this issue, some countries in the region have begun to fit public spaces in slum areas with lighting and CCTV cameras to deter perpetrators. To ensure women across the region are able to safely seize the livelihood opportunities provided by cities, these and other efforts remain important, along with providing decent work and affordable housing for all.

INFOGRAPHIC 3

Proportion of women age 15–49 who changed their residence in the past 5 years, by location of origin and destination, latest available year (percentage)



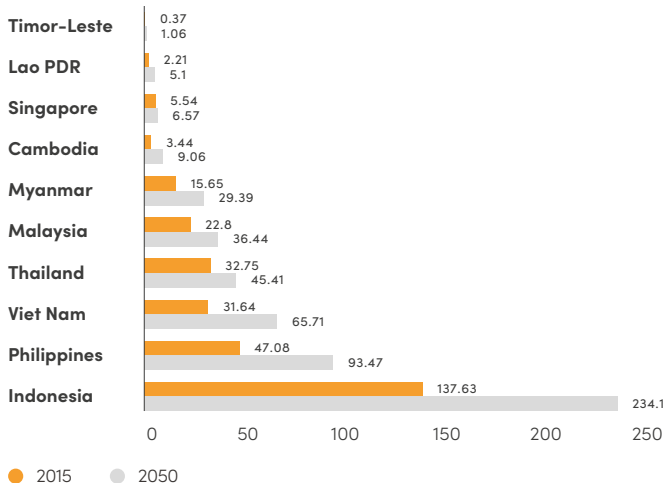
Source: UN Women calculations based on the latest available data: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Lao People’s Democratic Republic MICS (2017), Philippines DHS (2022), Thailand MICS (2022), Viet Nam MICS (2020–21). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?
Women living in slums.

FIGURE 41

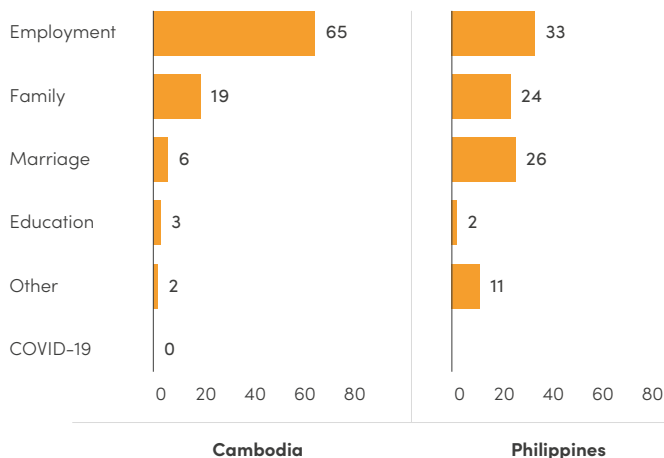
Total number of people living in urban areas, 2015 and 2050 projections (millions)



Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2018, World Urbanization Prospects.

FIGURE 42

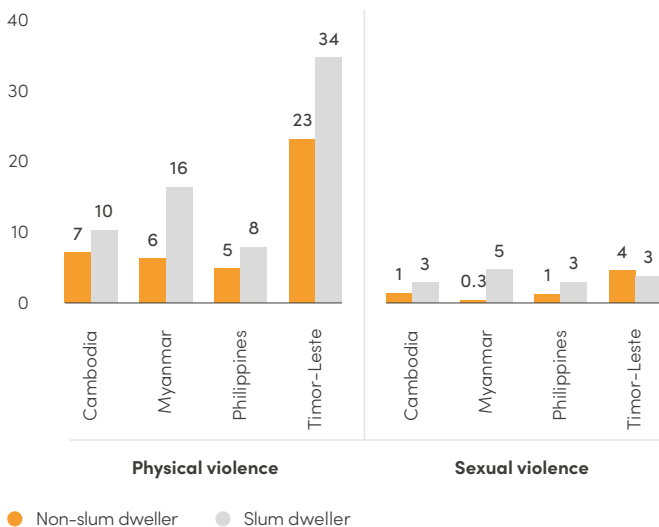
Proportion of women age 15–49 who have migrated from rural to urban areas in the past 5 years, by reason (percentage)



Source: UN Women calculations based on latest available data: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Philippines DHS (2022). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 43

Proportion of ever partnered women age 15–49 who experienced intimate partner violence in the past 12 months, by type of violence and type of dwelling, latest available year (percentage)

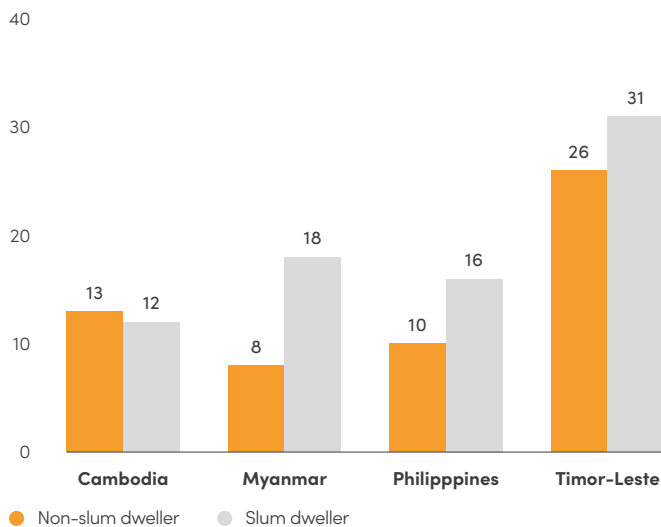


Note: Under SDG indicator 11.1.1 a ‘slum household’ meets at least one of the following criteria: (1) Lack of access to improved water source, (2) Lack of access to improved sanitation facilities, (3) Lack of sufficient living area, (4) Lack of housing durability, and (5) Lack of security of tenure. These criteria utilize the international definition of ‘slum households’ as agreed by UN Habitat–United Nations Statistics Division–UN Cities. However, in practice, methodology for measuring security of tenure is not in place; thus slum status is assessed using the first four criteria only.

Source: UN Women calculations based on the latest available DHS surveys as follows: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Myanmar DHS (2015–16), Philippines DHS (2022), Timor-Leste DHS (2016). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 44

Proportion of women age 15 and over who experienced physical violence by any perpetrator, by type of dwelling, latest available year (percentage)



Note: Under SDG indicator 11.1.1 a ‘slum household’ meets at least one of the following criteria: (1) Lack of access to improved water source, (2) Lack of access to improved sanitation facilities, (3) Lack of sufficient living area, (4) Lack of housing durability, and (5) Lack of security of tenure. These criteria utilize the international definition of ‘slum households’ as agreed by UN Habitat–United Nations Statistics Division–UN Cities. However, in practice, methodology for measuring security of tenure is not in place; thus slum status is assessed using the first four criteria only.

Source: UN Women calculations based on the latest rounds available data: Cambodia DHS 2021–22, Myanmar DHS (2015–16), Philippines DHS (2022), Timor-Leste DHS (2016). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



As the region prospers, more food is wasted while many women remain food insecure

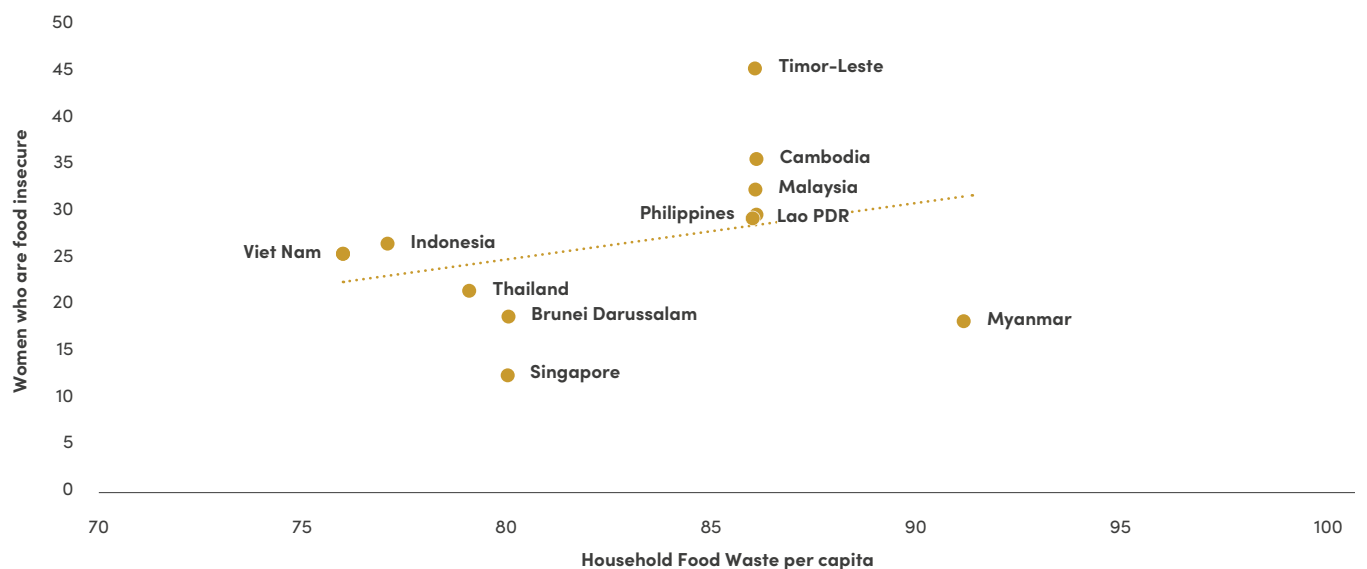
The region’s rapid economic development over the past decades has translated into increased GDP per capita and overall reductions in poverty rates (see Goal 1). Yet, large inequalities remain between the wealthiest and poorest population groups. In Malaysia and the Philippines, the Gini coefficients are larger than 40, indicating substantial inequalities.⁵⁵ As the richer population groups see their wealth accumulate, consumption patterns become increasingly unsustainable. In South-East Asia, every person consumes 8.4 tonnes of materials per year, up from 5.5 tonnes at the beginning of the century⁵⁶. This rapid increase generates pressures on ecosystems and produces large amounts of waste, which the region also struggles to manage.

More than 100 million metric tonnes of food are wasted every year in the ASEAN region, including 41 million tonnes wasted within households, 33 million in retail and the rest through various forms of out-of-home consumption. As a result, large amounts of organic waste (excluding packaging, for which recycling options are limited in the region) often go to landfills to decompose, generating large amounts of methane, a greenhouse gas that has more immediate harmful effects to the atmosphere than carbon dioxide, contributing significantly to global warming. Furthermore, food waste implies misuse of energy, water and land nutrients used to produce, harvest and transport it; and waste from food packaging contributes substantially to marine and soil pollution.

Although household food waste is on the rise across the region, food insecurity remains an issue in some countries, particularly among women. Across the region, as many as 149 kg of food are wasted per person, per year. Yet, an estimated 44 per cent of women in Timor-Leste and 35 per cent of women in Cambodia remain food insecure (figure

FIGURE 45

Proportion of women who are food insecure (percentage), and household food waste per capita (kg/year), 2021



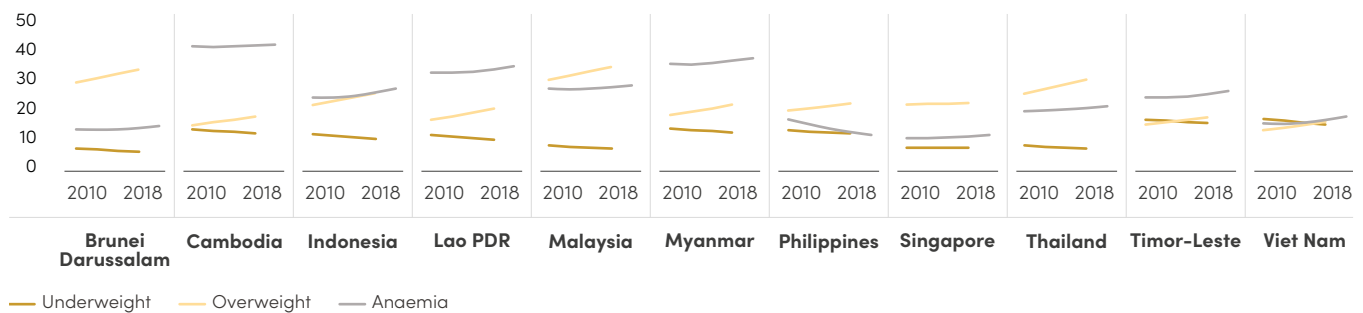
Source: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 2021, *Food Waste Index Report 2021*; and UN Women and Pardee Center for International Futures, 2023, *Gendered analysis of the impact of climate change on poverty, productivity and food insecurity: A technical report*.

45). In all ASEAN countries except for the Philippines, anaemia among women age 15–49 has risen since 2010, while the proportion of women age 20–49 that are overweight has increased (figure 46). This indicates that despite an abundance of food, population groups remain malnourished.

Women in the poorest rural households are the most likely group to be underweight (moderately or severely thin), indicating they may not be eating enough; while women in the poorest urban households are the most likely to be overweight or obese, indicating an insufficiently varied and nutritious diet (figure 47). In Myanmar, for instance, 7 per cent of the poorest rural women are underweight, and 17 per cent of the poorest urban women are overweight. In addition, provincial differences exist. Bago has the highest percentage of thin girls age 15–19 years (15 per cent of them are moderately and severely thin), while Yangon has the highest percentage of overweight women age 20–49 (30 per cent). To manage food waste, and improve the nutrition and health of women, countries in the region must prioritize strategies to promote healthy and nutritious diets, manage food supply chains and limit food-related waste and packaging.

FIGURE 46

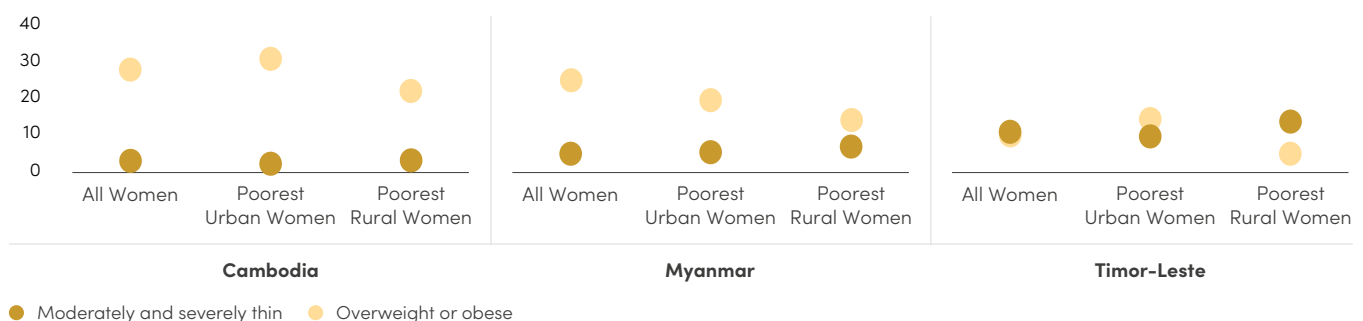
Proportion of women who are malnourished, by type of malnutrition (percentage)



Note: Data for underweight refer to women age 15–19, while data for overweight refer to women age 20–49 years.
Source: UNICEF [Global database on Women’s nutrition](#).

FIGURE 47

Proportion of women who are underweight or overweight, by wealth and location, latest available year (percentage)



Note: Data for underweight refer to women age 15–19, while data for overweight refer to women age 20–49 years.
Source: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Myanmar DHS (2015–16), Timor-Leste DHS (2016). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?

Poorest urban (overweight) and poorest rural (underweight) women.



Climate change affects women and men differently, so the climate crisis must be addressed with a gender lens

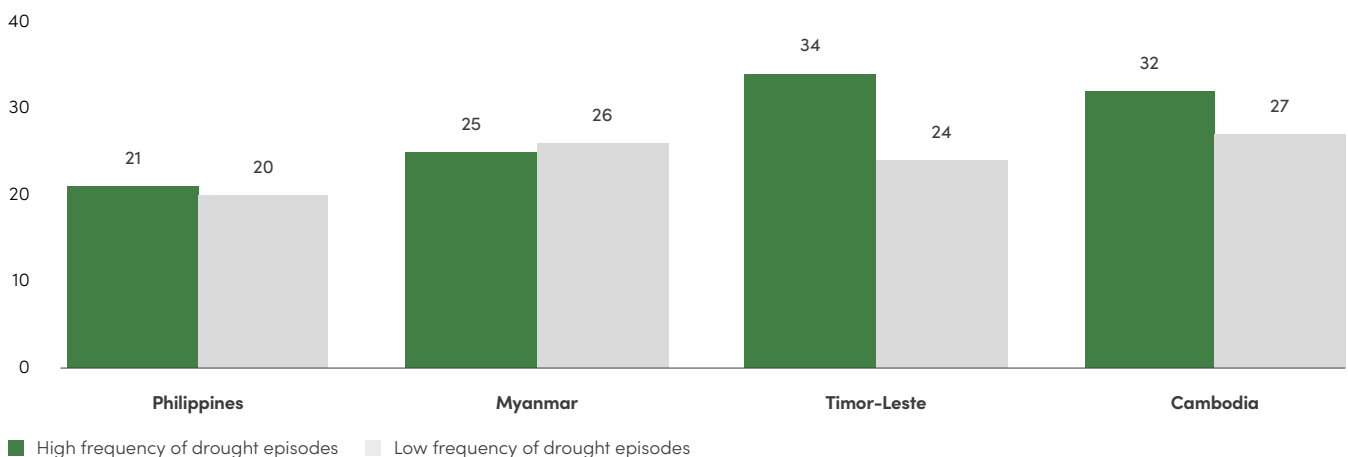
The effects of climate change are different for women and men. After disasters, for instance, many men die during rescue operations, while women bear heavy burdens to care for those sick or injured, or to collect and treat water if sources are compromised. As climate change affects human livelihoods, particularly those of people relying on natural resources for an income, related food insecurity affects women disproportionately (see Goal 2). The changing rain patterns, higher temperatures and more frequent drought episodes across the ASEAN region are also connected to increases in rates of child marriage and adolescent birth, and affect the availability of clean water and fuel.⁵⁷

For instance, in parts of Timor-Leste where drought episodes take place frequently, 34 per cent of women are married before age 18, compared to 24 per cent in regions where drought episodes are rarer. Cambodia and the Philippines also have higher child marriage rates in areas with higher frequency of drought episodes (figure 48). The effects of the changing climate on agricultural yields and other environmental livelihoods may be affecting people’s incomes, and some families may marry off their daughters to cope.

When land transition and deforestation give way to sustained increases in temperatures and overall increases in aridity, there are gendered consequences. In Cambodia, the Philippines and Timor-Leste, child marriage rates are also higher in arid clusters, compared to humid clusters. In the Philippines and Timor-Leste, adolescent birth rates are higher in arid than humid clusters as well (13 and 10 per cent, respectively, in the Philippines; and 13 and 11 per cent, respectively, in Timor-Leste).⁵⁸

FIGURE 48

Proportion of women age 18–49 who were married before age 18, by frequency of drought episodes, latest available year (percentage)



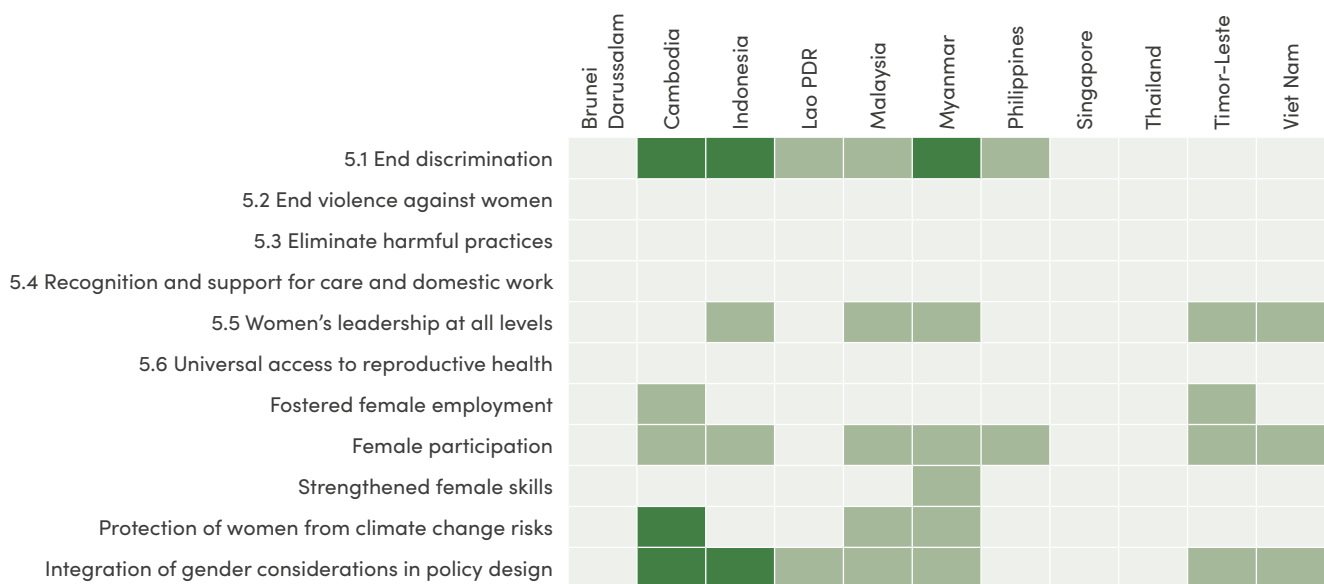
Note: The SDG indicator 5.3.1 on child marriage refers to women age 20–24, yet this age group yielded an insufficient sample size for the analysis so the age range was adjusted. All ASEAN countries where both types of data were available have been considered for the analysis. The differences across high and low drought areas are statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) for all countries considered. Drought episodes are times when the amount of monthly precipitation is less than or equal to 50 per cent of its long-term median value for three or more consecutive months. High frequency of drought episodes refers to the top 25 per cent values, and low frequency of drought episodes to the bottom 25 per cent values of cluster level drought episodes. For visual brevity, the central values of the drought episodes distribution are not shown.

Source: UN Women calculations based on DHS data and [DHS Geospatial Covariates](#) for 1980–2000. Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

Given that climate change affects women and men differently, national climate policies should address climate-related challenges with a gender lens. By adopting the Paris Agreement, national governments committed to developing climate action plans to cut greenhouse gas emissions, known as nationally determined Contributions (NDCs), which must be updated every five years. An analysis of current NDCs, however, reveals that only a few countries in the ASEAN region prioritize gender issues in their climate policies. Those that do, typically refer to activities around ending discrimination against women overall or integrating gender considerations in policy design (figure 49). For example, Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar all have more than three activities pertaining to the existence of gender and climate policies and eliminating discrimination in the context of climate change. The NDC of Cambodia includes several activities targeting women’s protection from climate change risks, an important and targeted approach that indicates national commitment to tackling the climate crisis with a gender lens. No policies target climate-related violence against women, unpaid care work, or the worsening child marriage and adolescent birth rates.

FIGURE 49

Prioritization of gender equality goals in nationally determined contributions (NDCs), latest available year



Priority

■ High Priority (over 3 activities) ■ Average Priority (1 to 2 activities) ■ Not mentioned in NDC

Note: Priority levels are determined by the number of activities related to gender equality goals: 1 to 2 activities indicate average priority, while more than 3 activities indicate high priority. The following SDG targets are included in the chart: 1) SDG 5.1 End discrimination against women, 2) SDG 5.2 End violence against women, 3) SDG 5.3 Eliminate harmful practices 4) SDG 5.4 Recognition and support for care and domestic work, 5) SDG 5.5 Women’s leadership at all levels, and 6) SDG 5.6 Universal access to reproductive health. The chart also includes five climate actions: 1) Employment: Fostered female employment, 2) Participation: Female participation, 3) Skills: Strengthened female skills, 4) Protection: Protection of women from climate change risks, and 5) Integration: Integration of gender considerations in policy design.

Methodology: The content of each NDC was examined to identify activities (planned or undertaken) related to individual SDG targets or climate actions. Where a statement applied to more than one target or action, the activity was added to each (this was the case for only a very limited number of activities).

Source: German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS), Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), [NDC-SDG Connections](#). (V2) (1.1.0). Dzebo et al.

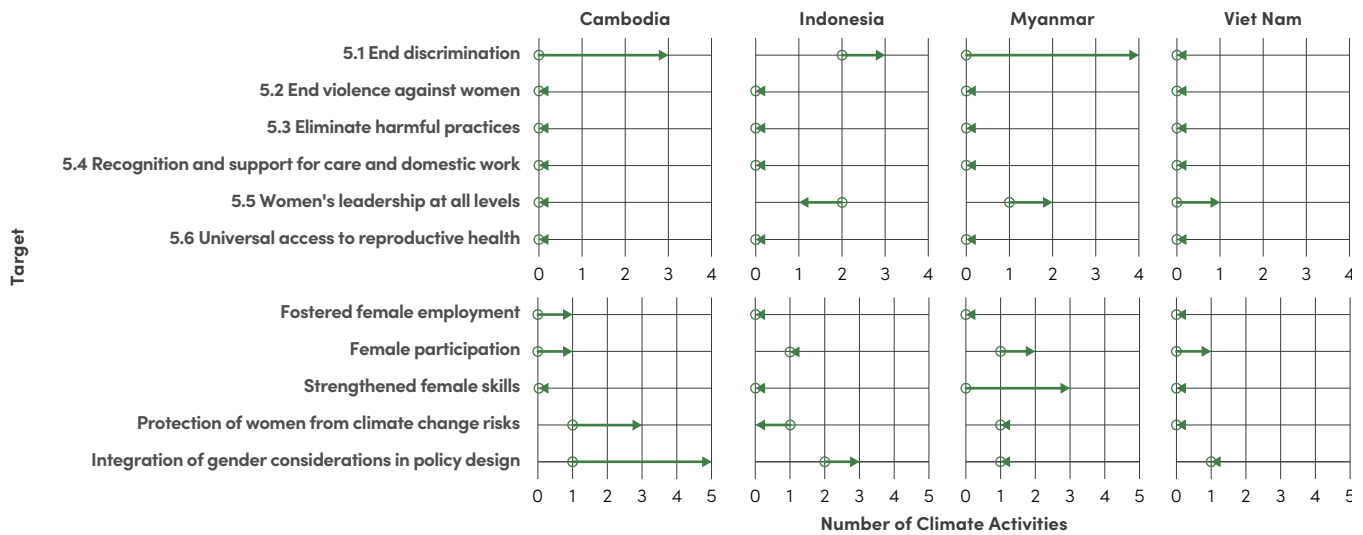
For climate action to reflect the needs of women and girls, it is important that women are involved in environmental decision-making bodies, such as climate change commissions, or as decision-makers in Ministries for the Environment. The NDCs of Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam all include at least one activity pertaining fostering women’s participation in environmental decision-making bodies, but additional efforts are needed across the region. At present, women serve as Minister for the

Environment, or equivalent, in only three countries in the ASEAN region: Siti Nurbaya Bakar (Indonesia), Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga (Philippines) and Grace Fu (Singapore).

To better integrate gender across climate plans, financing and implementation, an important first step is to reflect gender issues in NDCs. Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Viet Nam all made efforts to enhance the incorporation of gender equality goals into their NDCs over the years (figure 50). It is important that the gender equality goals set out in NDCs are translated into tangible policy actions.

FIGURE 50

Change in the number of gender equality goals between the first and second NDCs, latest available year



Note: Only countries with two NDC submissions are depicted. The number of activities in the first NDC is indicated by the circle. The number of activities in the updated NDC is indicated by the triangle.

Source: IDOS, SEI, *NDC-SDG Connections*. (V2) (1.1.0). Dzebo et al. Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?

Women in the most arid and drought-prone areas.



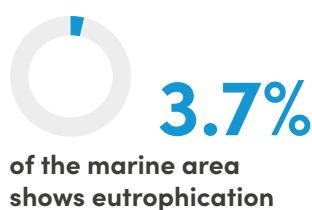
Women engage significantly in marine harvesting operations, but they rarely get to make decisions that could curb marine degradation

Healthy oceans offer substantial economic opportunities, ranging from fishing and marine harvesting, energy production, marine and coastal tourism, transportation and trade, among others. They also play an essential role in climate regulation, absorbing more than 30 per cent of the global carbon dioxide emissions from human activities and capturing 90 per cent of the excess heat generated by emissions, effectively slowing climate change down.⁵⁹ To safeguard these functions, it is important to reduce and manage marine waste effectively, protect coastlines from urbanization, land transition and deforestation, limit marine harvesting and extraction, and work on carbon sequestration and ocean surveillance.

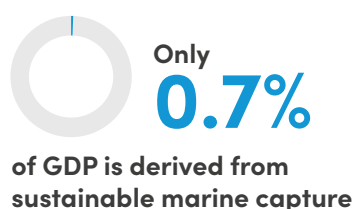
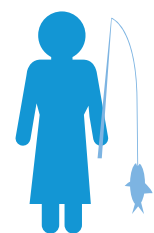
The health of the oceans surrounding the ASEAN region is in peril. Measures of chlorophyll-a anomalies, which point at the presence of coastal eutrophication or algal blooms, indicate high or extremely high concentrations in 3.7 per cent of the national waters and marine exclusive economic zones of ASEAN countries, and moderate concentrations in 2.2 per cent. Caused largely by agriculture runoff and domestic wastewater, these algal blooms compromise the health of marine phytoplankton and can cause serious damage to the ocean’s food web and marine ecosystems. In addition, the ASEAN region has more beach litter (more than 288,000 pieces per square kilometre) than any other region, 39 per cent of which originates in national territory. This poses a risk to ecosystem health and carries substantial economic costs through impacts on human health, tourism, fishing and aquaculture. To compound these challenges, the use of destructive fishing practices such as trawling and overfishing, and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, are harming the availability and biodiversity of fish and other marine life. Only an estimated 65 per cent of the fish stocks in the Eastern Indian Ocean remain within biologically sustainable levels. In the South-West Pacific, this rate stands at 77.⁶⁰ The rapid decreases in stocks for many marine species affects small-scale fishing folk disproportionately, many of whom are women, as they are unable to change harvesting areas or the gear they use, to fish more intensively. Across the region, only 0.7 per cent of GDP is derived from sustainable marine capture (Infographic 4).

INFOGRAPHIC 4

The state of oceans in the ASEAN region



The livelihoods **small scale fishers** are at stake

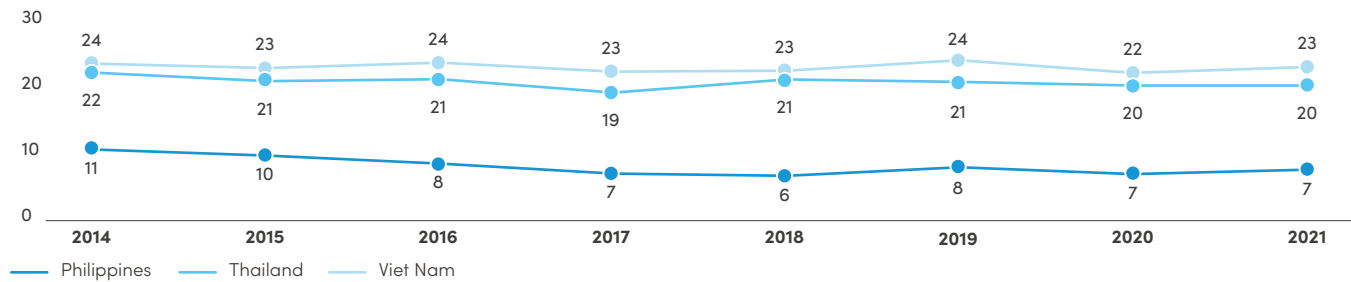


No minister in charge of fisheries or marine conservation decisions is a woman



FIGURE 51

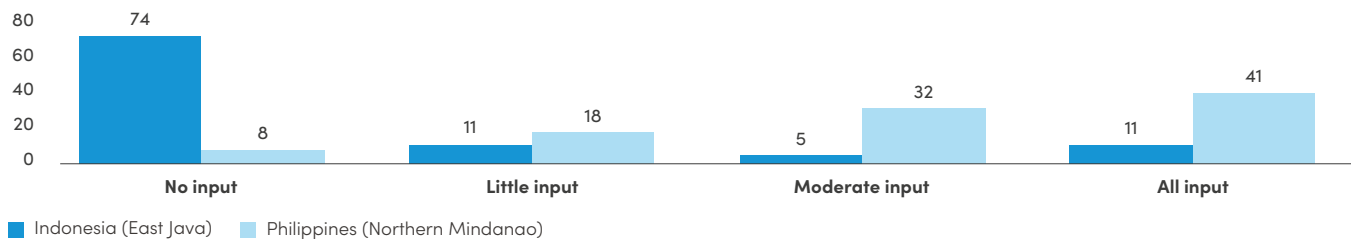
Share of fishing and aquaculture jobs held by women (percentage)



Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Statistics Resource Repository, ILO-STATISTICS - Micro data processing (Accessed 7 May 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 52

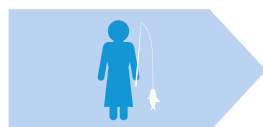
Proportion of women in small-scale fisheries who contribute to decision-making regarding the use of income generated from fishery related activities, 2022 (percentage)



Source: FAO, 2022, Empowering Women in Small-Scale Fisheries for Sustainable Food Systems. Available at <https://microdata.fao.org/index.php/catalog/2519> (Indonesia), <https://microdata.fao.org/index.php/catalog/2521> (Philippines). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries or regions.

Many people engage in large-scale commercial fishing operations, including deep-sea fishing, but small-scale fisheries still make up the bulk of the fishing operations in the ASEAN region. It is therefore critical to ensure that adequate systems are in place for both large and small-scale fishers to report their catch and uphold rules and regulations to contribute to sustainable harvesting. Limiting catches and the use of trawling and other damaging fishing practices, restricting the use of fertilizers and single use plastics, and enhancing wastewater and solid waste management systems are important steps towards preserving the health of the region’s marine environment and the livelihoods of those who depend on them.

Although the bulk of those engaging in fishing in the ASEAN region are men, more than 20 per cent of those employed in fishing and related operations are women in Thailand and Viet Nam (figure 51). Women’s presence in the sector is significant but their decision-making authority is limited. None of the Ministers in charge of managing fisheries in the ASEAN region are women. Even for small-scale fisheries, women rarely get to make individual decisions. In Thailand, as many as 23 per cent of those engaging in fishing for subsistence purposes, are women.⁶¹ In the Philippines, women make up an estimated 42 per cent of those who depend on small-scale fisheries for their livelihoods.⁶² However, according to a survey conducted among small-scale fishing folk in select regions of the Philippines and Indonesia, only 11 per cent of women in Indonesia and 41 per cent in the Philippines made all the decisions related to their fishing income (figure 52). Enhancing women’s agency to make decisions could help curb marine degradation if, for instance, they chose to invest their income in low-carbon and selective fishing gear.



Who is left behind?
Women engaging in small-scale fisheries.



Forest area is decreasing over time, which is affecting women's health and caring responsibilities

Approximately 15 per cent of the world's tropical forests are in the ASEAN region.⁶³ These not only support the livelihoods of millions of people, but also are home to thousands of species of animals, plants and fungi, many of which have high biological relevance. In addition, forests play a critical role for carbon sequestration and contribute towards limiting extreme weather and erratic rain patterns, including droughts and floods. Forests are a key ally to limit the effects of climate change and build a sustainable future. However, in the region, the proportion of land area covered by forest decreased from 51 to 47 per cent between the years 2000 and 2020.⁶⁴ Except for Latin America, this is the only region where relative forest area is decreasing. Given the biological importance of the region's forests, decreasing forest area is concerning not only for ASEAN, but also for the planet as a whole.

The bulk of the region's forest loss as a share of land area over the past decades has taken place in Viet Nam followed by Thailand. In absolute terms, however, the Lao People's Democratic Republic had the greatest loss of primary forest at 436,000 ha in 2023, equal to 237 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions, followed by Indonesia, which lost 292,000 ha, equal to 221 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. In the same year, Viet Nam lost more than 94,000 ha of natural forest, equal to 118 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions, and Thailand lost 84,000 ha, equal to 106 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.⁶⁵ In all four countries, key drivers of forest loss include forestry, shifting agriculture and commodity driven deforestation. Across the region, where some of the world's largest plantations of soil degrading crops such as oil palms and rubber trees are found, less than half of all tree cover remains natural forest. In Cambodia, Myanmar and the Philippines, for instance, most of the forests recently lost have been turned into crop land. In Timor-Leste, urbanization and the development of infrastructure were the main drivers of land transition and deforestation between 2010 and 2023 (figure 53).

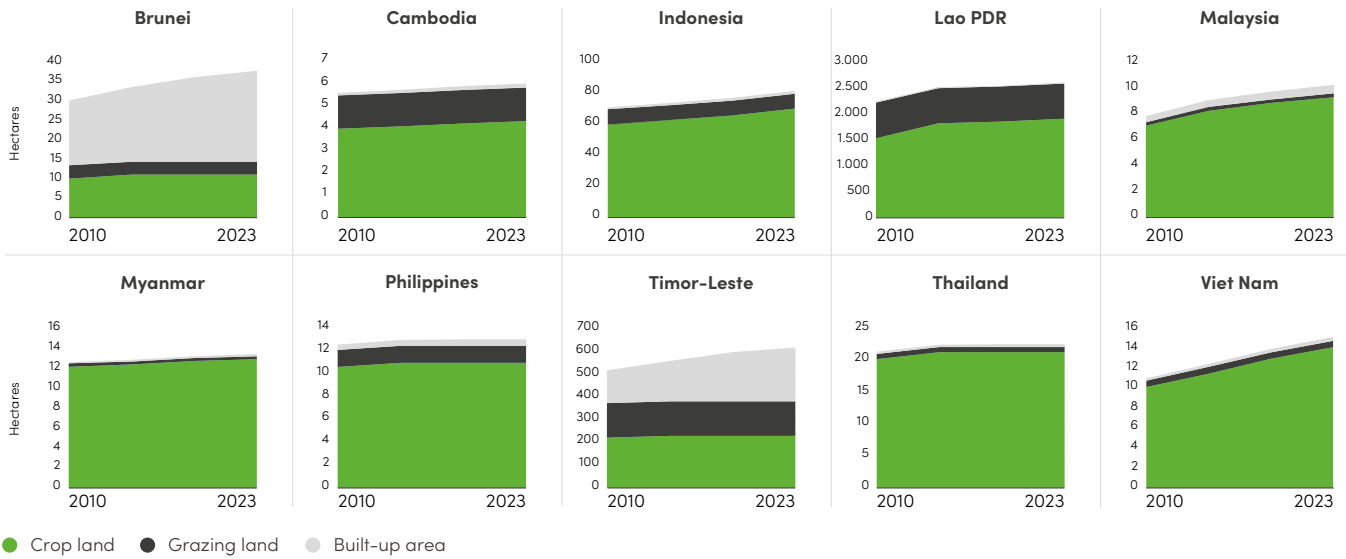
Forest loss and disturbance are making ASEAN countries less safe, especially for rural populations. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), forests build the resilience of agricultural populations by counteracting soil degradation and enhancing fertility and limiting droughts. In addition, they help restrict the spread of infectious diseases, such as malaria.⁶⁶ Data showcase a correlation between emerging hotspots for forest loss in places like Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand, and the predicted spread of malaria by 2050 (figure 54). Although the ASEAN region has made important gains in reducing malaria incidence over the past decade, an increase in malaria incidence in 2022 may have been driven, in part, by forest loss (figure 55).

As women in the ASEAN region are disproportionately in charge of caring for sick family members (see Goal 5), an increasing incidence of malaria worsens their unpaid work burdens. In most countries with available data, an estimated 13 to 20 per cent of children under 5 years of age had a fever in a two-week period. Yet, women are less and less likely to take children with fever to a health professional or other practitioner to seek treatment. This is particularly true for women living in rural and remote areas, where there are fewer health-care facilities. Although 90 per cent of women in Indonesia seek treatment for their children's fevers, in the Philippines this rate dropped from 57 to 41 per cent between 2013 and 2022, while in Timor-Leste it dropped from 73 to 58 per cent between 2009 and 2016 (figure 56). With fewer doctor visits, healing periods may lengthen, and care burdens may increasingly fall on women.

To curb the spread of disease, build the resilience of farmers, manage women's burden of unpaid work and ensure the health of ecosystems across the ASEAN region, increasing the protection of forest areas is urgent. At present, less than 37 per cent of terrestrial areas of key biodiversity relevance across the region are protected. This falls below the global average of 44 per cent and leaves the region at risk of forest loss and related human impacts.⁶⁷

FIGURE 53

Total land area used for cropland, grazing and built-up areas (millions of hectares)

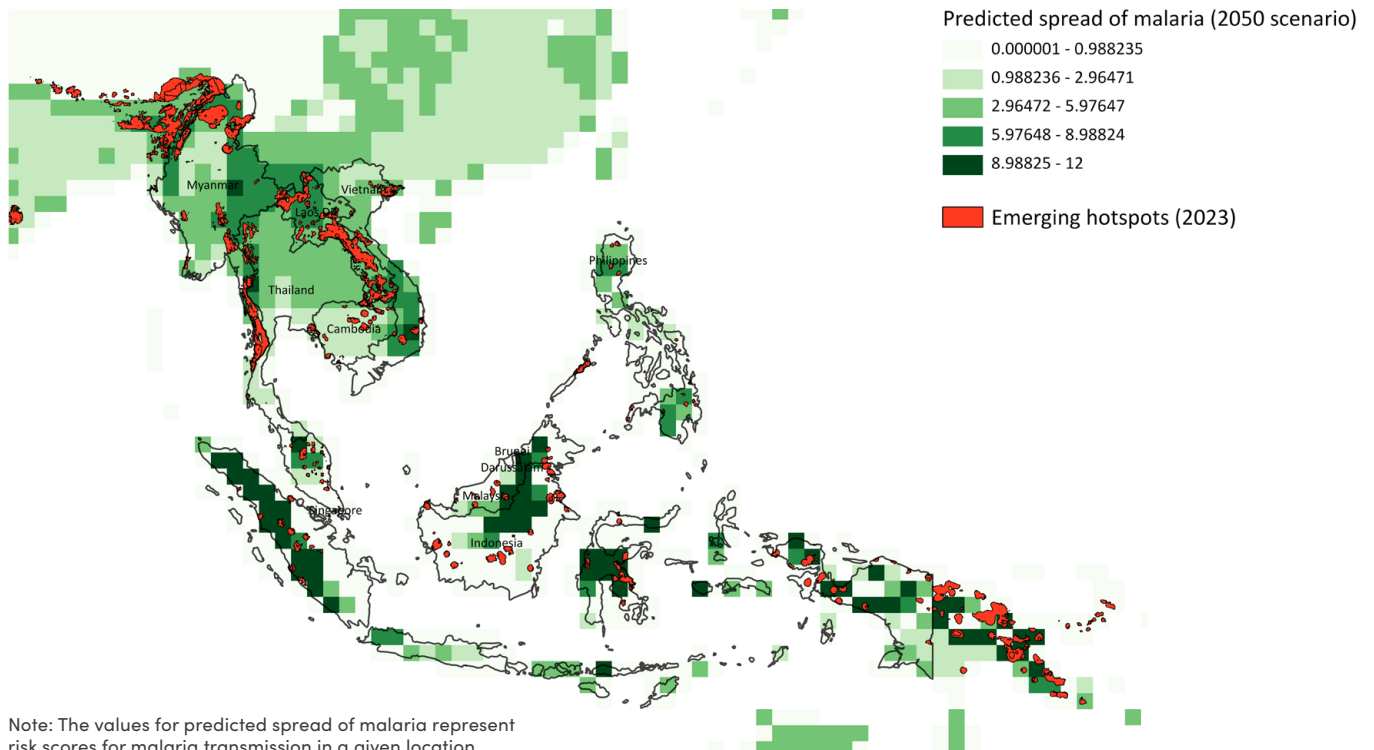


Note: Built-up areas refer to villages, cities, towns and human infrastructure. Built-up areas are computed by dividing total urban population in a country at a given year by the average urban densities in a country at that year. Grazing land: Permanent meadows and pastures (FAO). Cropland: Arable land and permanent crops (FAO).

Source: History Database of the Global Environment (2023) – with minor processing by Our World in Data. No data was available for Singapore.

FIGURE 54

Distribution of emerging hotspots of forest loss, and predicted spread of malaria by 2050

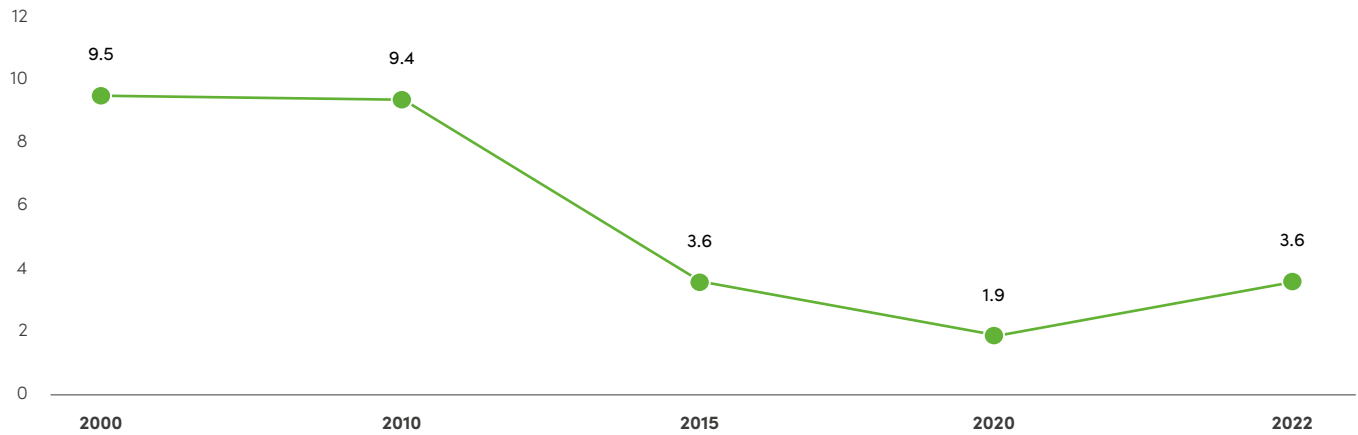


Note: The values for predicted spread of malaria represent risk scores for malaria transmission in a given location.

Source: Global Forest Watch for emerging hotspot analysis and ESRI Vector Borne Disease Dataset for predicted prevalence of malaria.

FIGURE 55

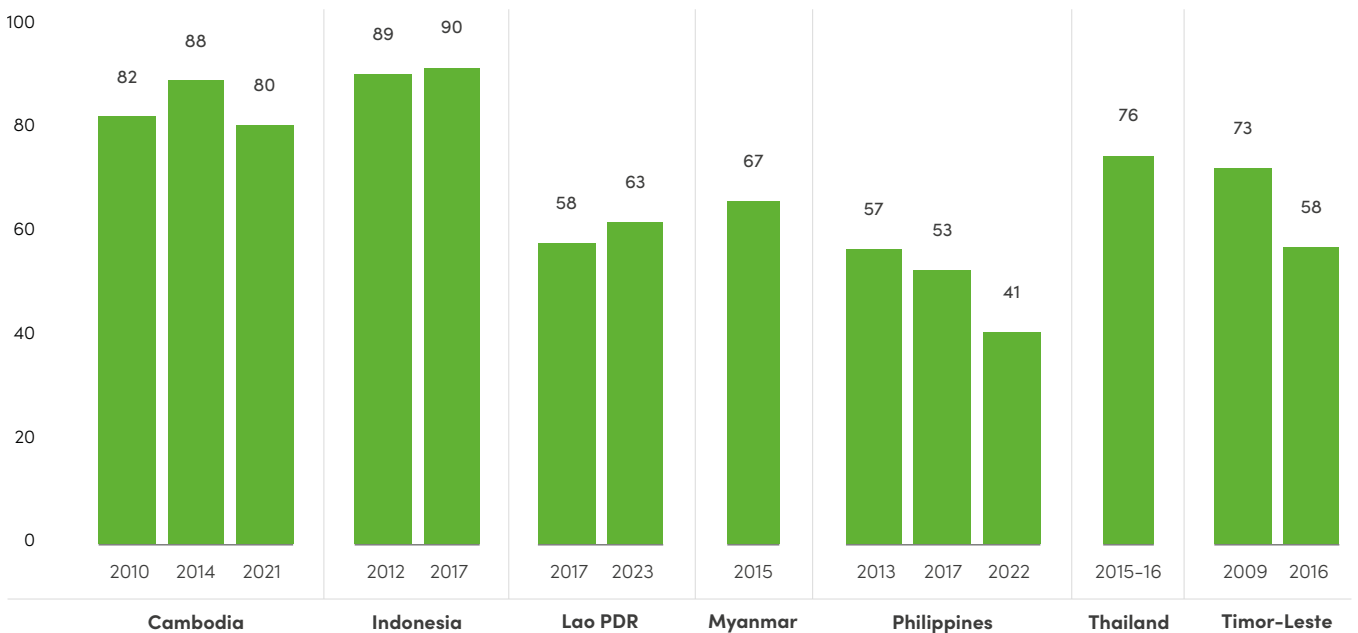
Malaria incidence South-East Asia, (new cases per 1,000 population)



Source: United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex.](#)

FIGURE 56

Proportion of children born in the five years preceding the survey with fever in the two weeks preceding the survey for whom advice or treatment was sought, latest available year (percentage)



Source: Cambodia DHS (2010, 2014, 2021-2022), Indonesia DHS (2012, 2017), Lao People's Democratic Republic MICS (2017, 2023) Myanmar DHS (2015-16), Philippines DHS (2013, 2017, 2022), Thailand MICS (2015-16), Timor-Leste (2009, 2016). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?
Mothers in rural areas.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS


ASEAN is one of the world's safest regions, and gender sensitive law enforcement and security are important to preserve safety

At 1.8 victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 people, South-East Asia is one of the world's safest regions. For women, this rate stands at 0.6, compared to 2.9 for men.⁶⁸ The rates of other types of crimes, such as theft, fraud and drug use, also remain well below the global averages⁶⁹. In recent years, however, the region has seen a worsening sense of safety among its population. When asked whether they felt less safe now than five years ago, a significant amount of people responded that they do, with women more likely than men to have a decreasing sense of safety. In Myanmar, as many as 34 per cent of women felt less safe, together with 33 per cent of men, possibly as a result of the ongoing unrest in the country. In Thailand, 33 per cent of women felt less safe, compared to 24 per cent of men, while in Malaysia, 25 per cent of women and 20 per cent of men felt less safe. In all countries except for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia and Singapore, the poorest women were the most likely to feel less safe than before (figure 57).

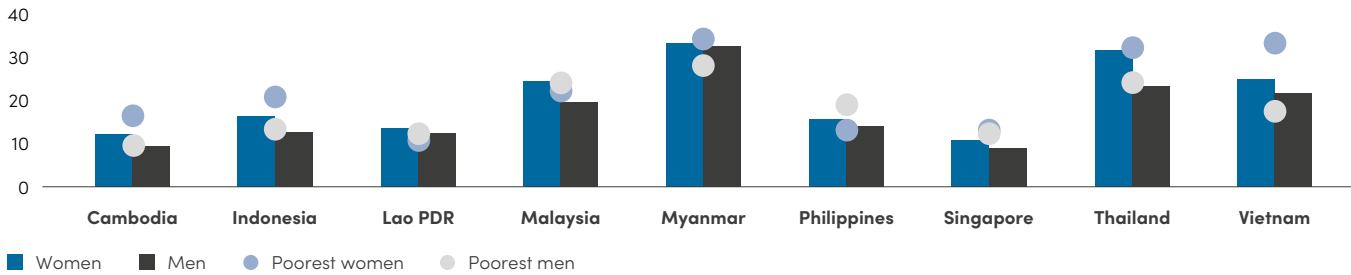
The COVID-19 pandemic, which caused economic disruptions across the region and had people fearing for their health, is a key contributor to these feelings (in Viet Nam, for instance, 63 per cent of women noted COVID-19 or health concerns were key risks). Furthermore, as a result of the global economic downturn that ensued, some people may have resorted to illicit activities to maintain their livelihoods (in Myanmar, 22 per cent of women noted crime as a concern compared to 14 per cent in the Philippines) (figure 58). During lockdowns and other periods when many people were confined to their homes, global environmental crimes such as wildlife trafficking increased.⁷⁰

In the ASEAN region, which was one of the world's quickest to overcome the economic struggles associated with the pandemic, authorities were also quick to resume seizures of illegally traded wildlife. For instance, Thailand confiscates more illegally traded tigers and their parts than any other country globally (223 over a 10-year period). Malaysia seizes more pangolins (20,854 over 12 years) than any other country in Asia. A substantial amount of the world's elephant tusks seized globally (35,000 kg over four years) were destined for Viet Nam.⁷¹ As the region is both a supply and demand market for wildlife parts, environmental law enforcement together with ramping up of sensitization efforts are proving critical. In Thailand's Kui Buri national park, for instance, outreach events were held to raise awareness and discourage people from poaching, after which poaching pressure was assessed through camera traps and interviews with locals, 67 per cent of whom noted a decline in poaching.⁷² Advocacy and law enforcement interventions are essential to ensure the safety of nearby rural populations. Similar approaches are needed for other crimes, such as amphetamine and human trafficking, which are a concern in some countries in the region and may also be contributing to the decreasing sense of safety.

Furthermore, ensuring that women, including those living in rural areas, are able to contribute to law enforcement and security is essential to enhance safety within and beyond the region. Women's participation in security forces has the potential to contribute to more inclusive approaches that consider the needs and implications of security actions for women and men. When it comes to wildlife trade, women and men typically play different roles (selling versus smuggling, for instance), so having law enforcement agencies that consider these differences may prove effective. Similarly, women from the ASEAN region play important roles in sharing the region's good practices regarding safety and peacekeeping with other countries. Over the past five years, the region has increased its overall share of military experts and staff officers contributed to peacekeeping missions. In the Philippines, more than 50 per cent of these experts are women in 2024. In Thailand, this rate stands at 30 per cent (figure 59). When it comes to peacekeeping troops, women account for less than 20 per cent in all countries. In Viet Nam and Cambodia, peacekeeping troops have the region's highest representation of women (figure 60).

FIGURE 57

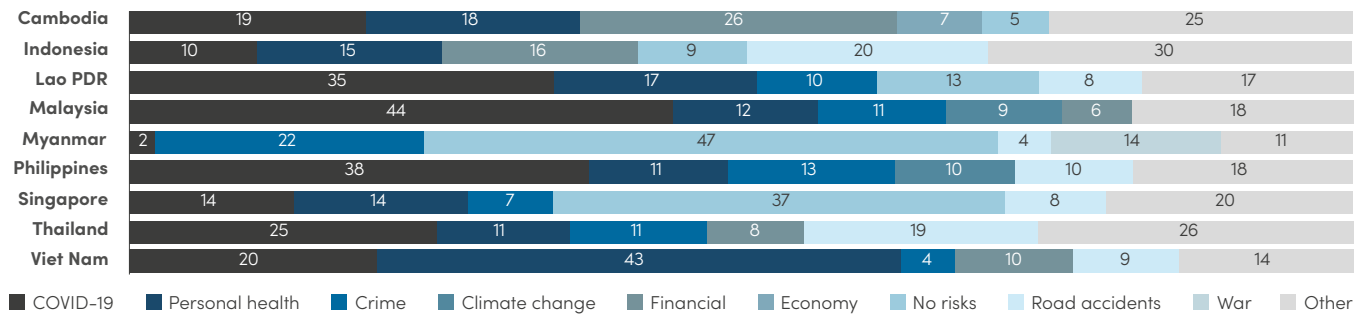
Proportion of people feeling less safe than 5 years ago, by sex and wealth (percentage)



Source: Lloyd's Register Foundation, 2022, *2021 World Risk Poll*. Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 58

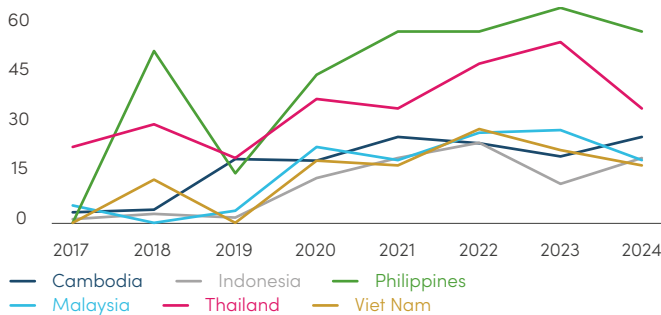
Great source of risk to safety in daily life identified by women (percentage)



Data source: Lloyd's Register Foundation, 2022, *2021 World Risk Poll*.

FIGURE 59

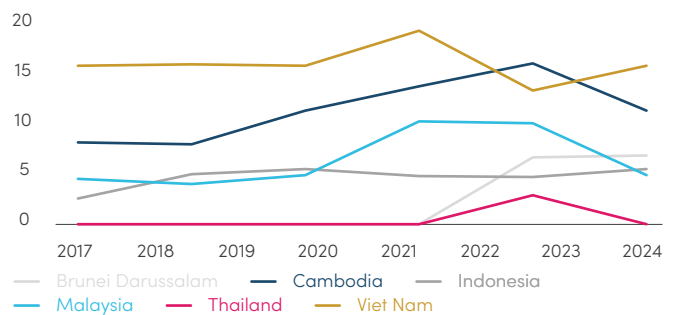
Proportion of women military experts and staff officers contributed by ASEAN Member States to peacekeeping missions (percentage)



Source: UNITED NATIONS, 2024. Operational effect and women peacekeepers: Addressing the gender imbalance. Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

FIGURE 60

Proportion of women troops contributed by ASEAN Member States to peacekeeping missions (percentage)



Source: United Nations Peacekeeping (Accessed 30 April 2024). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.



Who is left behind?
Poorest rural women.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



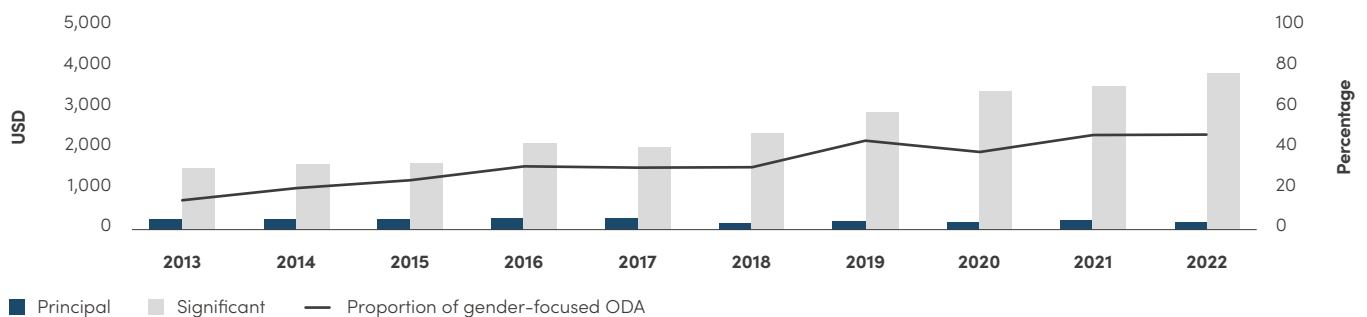
Gender-related aid flows to ASEAN countries are increasing, but allocations mainly targeting gender equality have dwindled in the past decade

Over the past decade, official development assistance (ODA) to support gender equality and women’s empowerment in the ASEAN region has increased substantially, both in absolute and relative terms. An estimated 47 per cent of all ODA allocated to the region in 2022 was targeted toward advancing gender equality, up from 14 per cent in 2013. In absolute terms, this translated into \$3.8 billion for interventions that had gender equality as a significant objective in 2022, and almost \$178 million for interventions squarely targeting gender equality and women’s empowerment as their principal objective. Although the increasing amount of funds allocated to gender issues overall is very welcome, the gender emphasis of ODA investments has diluted over the years. The total investment in projects targeting gender equality as a principal objective stood at \$256 million in 2013, roughly \$78 million more than in 2022 (figure 61). Compared to other countries in the region, the ODA package of the Philippines had the greatest emphasis on gender equality: 74 per cent of ODA focused on gender as either a principal or significant objective. Myanmar received the largest share of ODA for gender as a principal objective (figure 62).

These interventions have been critical to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment across the region. They have supported activities to build women’s agency to participate in negotiations and decision-making, to reduce their exposure to violence and, to a lesser degree, to promote the collection of gender-related data and statistics, among other initiatives. Given the ongoing crisis in Myanmar, the country has received the largest amount of allocations to women’s rights organizations, movements and government institutions (almost 9.7 million United States dollars), which are working towards promoting women’s empowerment and participation in decision-making and governance (figure 63). Similarly, substantial investments have been made towards eliminating violence against women (almost 9.3 million United States dollars allocated to Myanmar). In Timor-Leste, where rates of gender-based violence have remained high over the past two decades, substantial investments have been made to address this issue (almost 4.7 million United States dollars allocated to Timor-Leste) (figure 64).

FIGURE 61

Total allocations of ODA for gender equality and women’s empowerment (millions of United States dollars) (left) and proportion of ODA that is gender focused (right), by principal or significant objective (percentage)



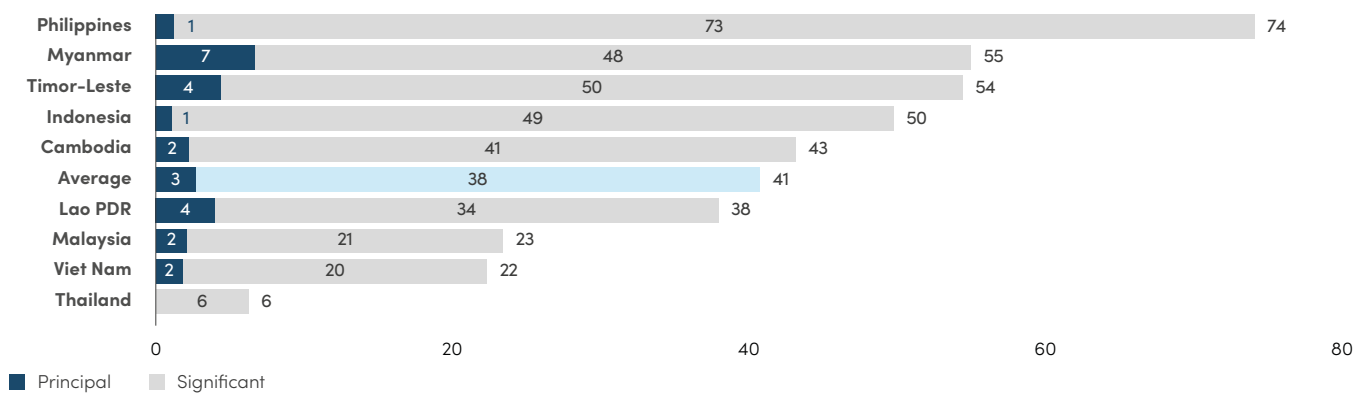
Note: The amounts for both principal and significant objective investments are based on the aggregate data from nine countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam). Brunei Darussalam and Singapore are not ODA recipient countries. Principal objective: Gender equality is an explicit objective of the activity and fundamental to its design i.e., the activity would not have been undertaken without this objective (e.g. dedicated funding). Significant objective: Gender equality is an important, but secondary, objective of the activity; it was not the principal reason for undertaking the activity (e.g. funding that integrates/mainstreams gender equality).

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Creditor Reporting System. (Accessed 8 July 2024).

Continuing and expanding these investments is critical to sustain the gains achieved across the ASEAN region, including on key issues such as women’s participation in decision-making, poverty reduction, food security and access to digital and emerging technologies. In addition, increased investments are needed to support the gender-environment nexus. Globally, only slightly more than 55 per cent of climate-related bilateral ODA has gender equality objectives.⁷³ In the ASEAN region, where climate change, marine degradation, forest loss and air quality remain key issues requiring urgent attention, increasing the share of climate-related ODA that advances gender equality and women’s empowerment can have transformative effects. Linked to this, ramping up efforts towards supporting the collection of gender data, including on environmental issues, remains a key priority.

FIGURE 62

Proportion of gender-focused ODA as a share of total ODA, 2022 (percentage)

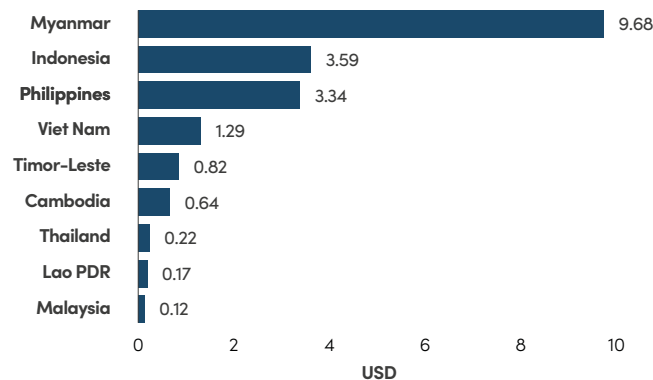


Note: Total ODA in this figure is from OECD-DAC donors

Source: OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System. (Accessed 8 July 2024). Brunei Darussalam and Singapore are not aid-recipient countries.

FIGURE 63

Amount of ODA allocated to women’s rights organizations, movements and government institutions, 2022 (millions of United States dollars)

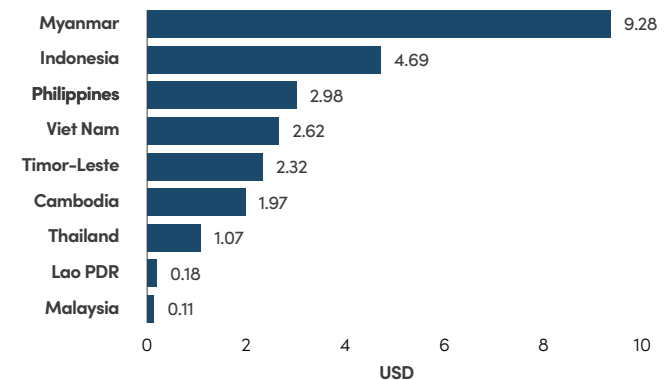


Note: Total ODA in this figure is from OECD-DAC donors.

Source: OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System. (Accessed 22 July 2024). Brunei Darussalam and Singapore are not aid-recipient countries.

FIGURE 64

Amount of ODA allocated to end violence against women and girls, 2022 (millions of United States dollars)



Note: Total ODA in this figure is from OECD-DAC donors.

Source: OECD-DAC Creditor Reporting System. (Accessed 22 July 2024). Brunei Darussalam and Singapore are not aid-recipient countries.



Who is left behind?

People who no longer benefit from investments that primarily target gender.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Adjustments have been made to account for inflation. These figures represent adjusted USD, purchasing power parity. Source: [United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 6 July 2024).
- 2 UN Women and Pardee Center for International Futures, 2023, [Gendered analysis of the impact of climate change on poverty, productivity and food insecurity: A technical report](#).
- 3 ASEAN, 2022, [Promoting decent work and protecting informal workers](#).
- 4 UNDP, 2010, [Women's command over assets: Addressing gender inequalities](#). Asia-Pacific Human Development Report Background Papers Series 2010/10.
- 5 ASEAN, [Statistics Web Portal](#).
- 6 The poverty estimates showcased in this chapter may differ from those showcased in the SDG database. This is because these predictions have been made using modelling. They build on Pardee's International Futures model, which estimates poverty rates based on per capita household consumption, adjusted for inflation and purchasing power. This estimation is grounded in a log-normal distribution of household income. For the model, initial poverty rates are sourced from survey-based data provided by PovcalNet (World Bank, 2021). Variations in the Gini coefficient influence income distribution, thereby affecting the model's outputs. Household income and consumption levels are further adjusted through the economic module's dynamics. Additionally, the model employs a top-down approach to project the future impacts of climate change on poverty. This contrasts with the World Bank's 2016 approach, which utilizes bottom-up micro-simulation techniques, leading to differences in the estimates produced by IFs model and the World Bank. For a comprehensive overview of the methodology, please refer to UN Women and Pardee Center for International Futures, 2023, [Gendered Analysis of the Impact of Climate Change on Poverty, Productivity, and Food Insecurity: A Technical Report](#).
- 7 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 8 OECD. [Food insecurity in Asia, no time for complacency](#). FAO, 2018. Regional Overview of Food security and nutrition. Available from: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/25a5f0d7-ae53-42b2-8c8e-d8a5ca967bea/content>
- 9 UNDP, 2010, [Women's command over assets: Addressing gender inequalities](#). Asia-Pacific Human Development Report Background Papers Series 2010/10.
- 10 UNICEF, 2023. [Undernourished and overlooked: A global nutrition crisis in adolescent births and women](#).
- 11 See www.unicef.org/nutrition/maternal.
- 12 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 13 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#). Estimates for South-East Asia have been used in lieu of ASEAN region for all estimates derived from this source.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 WHO, 2023, [Global report on neglected tropical diseases 2023](#).
- 17 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 18 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#). The proportion of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour in Eastern and South-Eastern Asia is 4.5% for girls and 7.7% for boys (SDG 8.7.1).
- 19 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 20 Latest estimates pertain to 2022. World Bank, [Government Expenditure on Education, \(% GDP\)](#) (Accessed 27 May 2024).
- 21 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 22 [United Nations Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#) (Accessed 6 July 2024).
- 23 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 24 Ibid.

- 25 International Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024, [Parline database](#) (Accessed 27 May 2024).
- 26 PU, UN Women, 2023, [Women in Politics: 2023](#).
- 27 United Nations, 2022, United Nations Population Prospects.
- 28 Philippines Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), 2022.
- 29 Cambodia DHS (2021-22), Philippines DHS (2022), Myanmar DHS (2015-16) and Timor-Leste DHS (2016).
- 30 Refers to ever-partnered women and girls age 15–49 years. United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 31 Author's calculations based on data for all four countries in the region with data. These aggregates must be interpreted with caution.
- 32 Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines and Viet Nam conducted either pilot time use surveys or included select questions in other surveys, but nationally representative and comparable estimates remain unavailable.
- 33 Regional aggregates for 2015 are derived from the closest available country estimates for that year. Estimates for each country are obtained from the [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#).
- 34 Regional aggregates for 2015 and 2023 are derived from the closest available country estimates for that year. Estimates for each country are obtained from the [Global SDG Indicators Data Platform](#).
- 35 Refers to STEM graduates from tertiary education (university or similar). Aggregate was calculated utilizing latest available data point for each country, which varied between 2016 and 2019. As such, these shares are expected to be slightly higher at present. According to the available data, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam are the only countries where there are more female than male graduates in this field. Source: [World Bank Gender Data portal](#) (Accessed 6 July 2024)
- 36 OECD and ASEAN, 2021, [Strengthening women's entrepreneurship in agriculture in ASEAN countries](#).
- 37 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 38 Data for this indicator is not available for Timor-Leste.
- 39 Aggregates calculated using data from United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#), and United Nations Population Prospects.
- 40 HEI, IHME and UNICEF, 2024. [State of Global Air](#).
- 41 The aggregate refers to South-East Asia as the closest regional aggregate for the ASEAN region.
- 42 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 43 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Past studies have shown that education is strongly correlated with lower adolescent birth rates. Women in rural areas are more likely to have higher adolescent birth rates due to limited access to educational resources, particularly in sexual health education (See [Hamilton et al., 2016](#)). Also, low income, low parental education, and disadvantaged neighbourhoods significantly contribute to higher teen birth rates (See [Penman-Aguilar et al., 2013](#)).
- 46 For analysis on the linkages between education infrastructure and completion rates, see UNESCO, 2023. [Global Education Monitoring Report](#).
- 47 UIS, 2024. [Unesco Institute for Statistics Database](#).
- 48 [DHS STATCompiler](#) (Accessed 3 July 2024).
- 49 The Global Human Footprint Dataset is the Human Influence Index (HII) normalized by biome and realm. The HII is a global dataset of 1-kilometer grid cells, created from nine global data layers covering human population pressure (population density), human land use and infrastructure (built-up areas, nighttime lights, land use/land cover), and human access (coastlines, roads, railroads, navigable rivers). <https://doi.org/10.7927/H4M61H5F>. (Accessed 30 April 2024)

Adolescent birth	(1) Cambodia	(2) Myanmar	(3) Philippines	(4) Timor-Leste
Global_Human_Footprint	-0.005*** (0.122)	-0.002*** (0.0003)	-0.002*** (0.0002)	-0.003*** (0.0004)
Constant	0.394*** (-0.013)	0.273*** (0.013)	0.265*** (0.008)	0.279*** (0.012)
R-squared	0.219	0.124	0.08	0.11
Observations	700	441	1,185	455
Adj. R-squared	0.218	0.122	0.08	0.11
Residual Std. Error	0.104 (df = 698)	0.108 (df = 439)	0.111 (df = 1183)	0.095 (df = 453)
F Statistic	195.491*** (df = 1; 698)	61.887*** (df = 1; 439)	102.731*** (df = 1; 1183)	57.763*** (df = 1; 453)
Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1				

Source: Cambodia DHS (2021–22), Myanmar DHS (2015–16), Philippines DHS (2022), Timor-Leste DHS (2016). Data was unavailable for the remaining countries.

- 51 Gallup, 2023, [World Risk Poll: Safe at work?: Global experiences of violence and harassment](#).
- 52 ILO, 2016, [Equality of treatment for migrant worker complaints and quality of benefits in Thailand](#).
- 53 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). (2022). [Urbanization, people mobility, and inclusive development across urban-rural continuum in ASEAN](#).
- 54 N. Sahavechaphan et al., 2024, [Identifying villages and breeding habitats for dengue transmission in Thailand: insights from long-term larval surveys](#), BMC Infectious Diseases, vol. 24, No. 1, p. 523.
- 55 World Bank, [Gini Index data](#).
- 56 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#)
- 57 UN Women, 2023, [Gendered impacts of climate change: Evidence from Asia](#).
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 N. Gruber et al., 2019, [The oceanic sink for anthropogenic CO2 from 1994 to 2007](#), Science, vol. 363, No. 6432.
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- 61 OECD [Data Explorer](#), Employment in fisheries, aquaculture and processing.
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- 63 H.J. Stibig et al., 2014, Change in tropical forest cover of Southeast Asia from 1990 to 2010, Biogeosciences, vol. 11, No. 2, pp. 247–258.
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- 65 [Global Forest Watch dashboard](#).
- 66 See www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_SOD_CCP7.pdf.
- 67 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 68 United Nations, 2024, [Global SDG report, statistical annex](#).
- 69 UNODC, 2024. [Database](#).
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- 71 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 2024, [UNODC database, wildlife seizures and trends](#) (Accessed 5 July 2024).
- 72 UNODC, 2023, [World Wildlife Crime Report](#).
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ASEAN Secretariat
70A Jalan Sisingamangaraja, Jakarta, Indonesia

<https://asean.org/>



UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific,
Rajadamnoern Nok Ave, Bangkok, 10200, Thailand

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