

INDICATOR ANALYSIS

PROPORTION OF SEATS HELD BY WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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How is this indicator calculated?	<p>This indicator is currently measured as the number of elected positions held by women in legislative/deliberative bodies of local government, expressed as a proportion of the total occupied positions in local government (1). Thus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P = the population proportion • x = the number of positions held by women in legislative/deliberative bodies of local government • n = all occupied positions in local government <p style="text-align: center;">Indicator Formula: $P = x/n$</p>
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GLOBAL TRENDS

What are the global patterns for this indicator?	<p>Global trends indicate that, overall, women's participation in local government remains low. For example, sources report that fewer than 5% of the world's mayors are women, and that women make up an average of just 20% of local councillors in governments worldwide (2). These global trends reflect a median number as, in some countries, women's representation in local government is less than 1 per cent, and in others, it is close to parity (2).</p>
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RELEVANCE TO UNDERSTANDING RELATIONSHIPS AMONG GENDER, HEALTH, FRAGILITY/PEACE

How could this indicator contribute to our understanding of how gender, health and fragility and peace influence one another?	<p>Women's ability to participate in political decision-making is a strong determinant of women's empowerment (1). Furthermore, women's participation in local government can help prioritize gender-specific concerns in local policy. Indeed, women in local government can help ensure that local women's perspectives are represented in the decision-making process. This, in turn, could help promote gender-inclusive policies that may lead to better healthcare, education, and economic opportunity for local women. Thus, the inclusion of women's perspectives in local governments is a crucial component of women's representation and equality within society, and can in this way contribute to greater political stability and more peaceful societies</p>
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UTILITY

What does the indicator measure?	<p>This indicator measures women's representation in local governments. It may also serve as a measure of the degree to which women have equal access to participation in political decision-making (1). In this way, this indicator may also serve as a measure of gender equality in a particular region or locality.</p>
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What does it NOT measure - what does it miss?	<p>This indicator does not measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The <i>quality</i> of women’s governmental participation (holding a seat does not necessarily mean that women have free and full access to meaningful decision-making). b) What the barriers to women’s participation in government may be <p>The proportion of women who occupy positions other than those in the legislative/deliberative body.</p>
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AVAILABILITY	
Sources for indicator (CRVS, DHS etc. – include links);	<p>Administrative data based on electoral records will be the main source of data on elected members of local government (1). In countries where the electoral records are electronic and centralized, information on numbers of women and men in elected positions will be made available as soon as the official results of elections are released (3). When such information is not readily available, National Statistical Offices may choose to conduct surveys which may take the form of (a) local government censuses or surveys; (b) establishment surveys; and (c) municipality surveys in order to obtain the necessary information (4).</p> <p>Data for this indicator is available from the following databases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SDG indicator database (country level 2000-2021) https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage 2. UNECE database (country level 1980; 1990; 1995; 2000-2020) https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb2015/pxweb/en/STAT/STAT__30-GE__05-PublicAnddecision/0035_en_SDLocalGov_r.px/
Dates available;	Data is mostly available for the 2018-2021 period, with data also available in the 1980-2018 period but with significant variation by country. After establishing an international methodology, the data will be compiled annually, in January of each year, and/or after local elections have taken place (1). Results of the data will be available in the second quarter of each year (1).
Availability across geographic areas;	There are currently 243 observations available on the SDG database which cover a broad range of world regions. The number of countries with available data is expected to increase after the methodology of the indicator is used consistently across countries and regions (1).
Availability in conflict affected settings;	Data in conflict affected settings may be more difficult to acquire depending on whether or not local governance systems are still in place, and depending on whether or not data collection methods, such as local government surveys, can be safely distributed and collected. Data is available for the dates in conflict affected countries: Yemen (2006, 2020); DRC (No data); Libya (No data); Afghanistan (2019); Somalia (2018); Syria (No data); South Sudan (2020).

GRANULARITY	
<i>Disaggregation at national level</i>	
Data disaggregated by sex;	N/A
Data disaggregated by identity group (race, ethnicity);	No.
Data disaggregated by income	No.
Data disaggregated by citizenship;	No.
Data disaggregated by migration background;	No.
<i>Disaggregation at sub-national level</i>	
Data disaggregated by identity group (race, ethnicity);	No.
Data disaggregated by income.	No.

SOURCES OF BIAS	
What bias can exist with this data?	<p><i>Selection bias:</i> the indicator may not be an accurate representation of the entire population, as it does not measure the proportion of seats held by women who are not elected to legislative/deliberative bodies of local government. The indicator may also miss Indigenous forms of local government where women's participation may figure prominently.</p> <p><i>Social Desirability Bias:</i> sometimes, respondents seek to gain the approval of the person/institution conducting the survey. For this reason, some countries may over-report the number of women who occupy seats in legislative/deliberative bodies of local government. This is especially relevant as data for this indicator is based on official statistics received from a country's own offices.</p> <p><i>Non-response Bias:</i> a low response rate can further result in bias of the statistics obtained.</p>

VALIDITY	
Clear and accepted international standards for indicator;	This SDG indicator has been classified as a tier 2 indicator by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators. A tier 2 indicator is described as: "Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by countries" (5).
Validity of measurement of indicator generally accepted;	The validity of the United Nations' future measurement/data collection method is generally accepted. However, issues with previously mentioned bias in data collection may undermine the validity of the measurement in a particular setting.

RELIABILITY	
Reliability of indicator generally accepted;	Because the indicator has not yet been widely measured according to an internationally accepted standard, the indicator may not currently be adequately reliable.

COMPLEXITY	
Enables analysis across time and location.	Because this indicator will be consistently measured annually in each country, it can provide an opportunity for analysis across time and location.

OTHER REFLECTIONS	
Are indicator values imputed/modelled?	No.
Other reflections on debate, accuracy, etc.	<p>It is unclear whether this indicator accounts for women's positions in Indigenous governance, where a significant proportion of women may hold positions in local Indigenous systems of governance.</p> <p>This indicator does not consider other positions in local government outside the legislative/deliberative body. Local government officials holding executive positions who are not simultaneously holding a position within the legislative/deliberative body, or who are appointed and not elected, are not considered in this indicator (1). Furthermore, as previously stated, this indicator measures women's representation among members of local government, and does not measure the <i>quality</i> of their participation. Thus, it may be necessary to use other indicators that can better measure women's ability to participate in political decision-making in local governments in conjunction with this indicator.</p>

References

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