





SOUTH AFRICA GENDER LANDSCAPE

This briefing showcases the gender landscape in South Africa on key indicators helpful for monitoring gender equality and designing effective policy interventions. Gender equality fosters productivity gains, minimizes losses in wealth, reduces poverty, boosts shared prosperity, and supports green, resilient, and inclusive development.

Click the measures below to explore the [World Bank Gender Data Portal](#).

Compared to:	Base Year	Region
>10% Higher Value	↗	
Equal/No Change	→	
>10% Lower Value	↘	
No Data	---	

		Country Performance				Peer Comparison		
		Baseline		Latest		Latest		
		Value	Year	Value	Year	SSA	UMC	World
HUMAN ENDOWMENTS								
Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling	Female	6.29	2010	→	5.83	2020	NA	NA
	Male	6.32	2010	↘	5.37	2020	NA	NA
Literacy rate (% 15+)	Female	91.7	2010	→	94.5	2019	59.4	83.3
	Male	94.1	2010	→	95.5	2019	72.5	90.1
Lower secondary completion rate (% of relevant group)	Female	77.5	2004	→	83.9	2019	41.3	77.3
	Male	70.7	2004	→	76.9	2019	46.0	76.7
Fertility rate, total (births per woman)		2.60	2010	↘	2.36	2020	4.56	2.39
Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women 15-19)		70.1	2010	→	67.7	2020	98.0	41.0
Maternal mortality ratio (modeled estimate per 100,000 live births)		171	2010	↘	119	2017	534	211
Pregnant women receiving prenatal care of at least four visits (% of pregnant women)		87.1	2008	↘	75.5	2016	54.3	NA
Unmet need for contraception (% of married women 15-49)		13.8	2004	→	14.9	2016	22.6	NA
Mortality from chronic vascular disease, cancer, diabetes or cardiorespiratory disease between 30 and 70 (%)	Female	26.9	2010	↘	20.4	2019	20.1	14.8
	Male	36.4	2010	↘	28.5	2019	22.7	21.7
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY								
Labor force participation rate (% 15+, modeled ILO estimate)	Female	44.5	2010	→	46.2	2021	60.2	46.3
	Male	60.4	2010	→	59.9	2021	71.7	71.7
Wage and salaried workers (% of employment, modeled ILO estimate)	Female	85.3	2010	→	86.7	2019	18.8	54.6
	Male	83.3	2010	→	81.3	2019	30.4	53.0
Employment in agriculture (% of employment, modeled ILO estimate)	Female	3.77	2010	→	3.79	2019	52.6	25.3
	Male	5.64	2010	↗	6.46	2019	53.2	27.6
Share of youth not in education, employment or training (% of youth population)	Female	37.8	2007	↘	33.8	2020	NA	NA
	Male	27.6	2007	↗	31.0	2020	NA	NA
Age dependency ratio (% of working-age population)		52.5	2010	→	52.2	2020	82.6	54.6
Women who own land both alone and jointly (% of women 15-49)		NA	NA	---	NA	NA	NA	NA
Men who own land alone (% of men)		NA	NA	---	NA	NA	NA	NA
Financial institution account (% 15+)	Female	NA	NA	---	68.1	2017	NA	63.7
	Male	NA	NA	---	66.7	2017	NA	70.6
Borrowed to start, operate, or expand a farm or business (% 15+)	Female	NA	NA	---	4.22	2017	NA	5.26
	Male	NA	NA	---	7.19	2017	NA	7.57
Firms with female participation in ownership (% of firms)		22.6	2007	↘	10.6	2020	28.0	33.1
VOICE AND AGENCY								
Firms with female top manager (% of firms)		NA	NA	---	38.5	2020	16.2	17.8
Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%)		44.5	2010	→	46.6	2021	25.9	26.1
Women who were first married by 18 (% of women 20-24)		5.60	2003	↘	3.60	2016	NA	NA
Proportion of women subjected to physical and/or sexual violence in the last 12 months (% of ever-partnered women 15-49)		NA	NA	---	NA	NA	NA	NA
Women who believe a husband is justified in beating his wife (any of five reasons, %)		NA	NA	---	5.50	2016	NA	NA

Note: The Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region includes 48 countries (all income levels), as classified by The World Bank Group. South Africa is an upper middle income (UMC) country, which includes 55 countries with a Gross National Income (GNI) per capita from \$4,096 to \$12,695 (calculated using the World Bank Atlas method). Data and definitions can be found on the [Gender Data Portal](#).

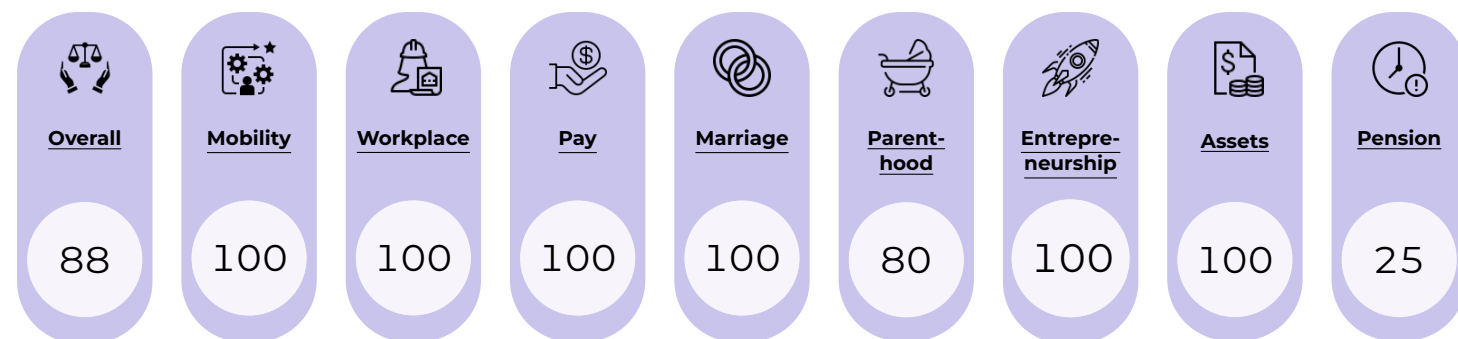
Country Baseline provides a reference from 1990 to 2010. Latest Value shows the latest available comparison from 2011 onwards. The arrow icon represents country increases or decreases over 10 percent relative to the base year. Peer comparisons show how South Africa performs relative to the region, income group, and the world. Lighter and darker shades represent values 10 percent above and below regional peer values, respectively.



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Women, Business and the Law in South Africa

Women, Business and the Law (WBL) 2022 presents an index covering 190 economies, structured around the life cycle of a working woman. In total, 35 questions are scored across eight indicators. **South Africa scores 88 out of 100**, while the regional average across Sub-Saharan Africa is 80.

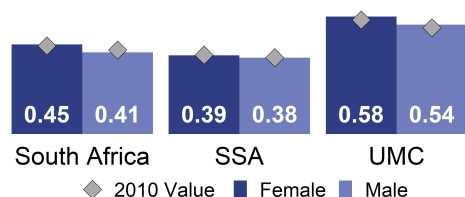


A Closer Look at Gender Equality in South Africa

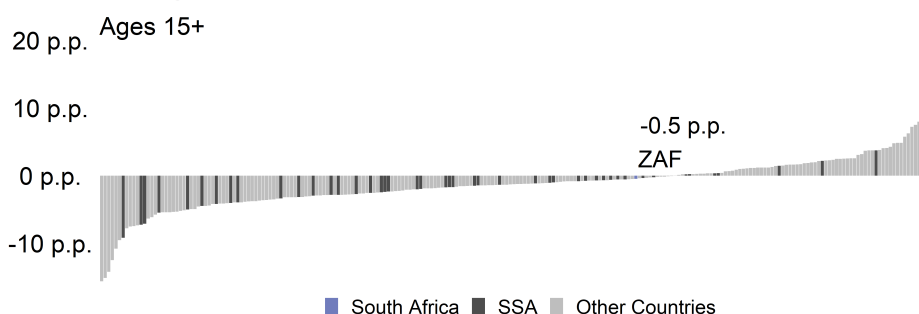
Despite some progress, gender gaps, gender-based violence, and disadvantageous social norms facing women and girls persist, and gains in human capital of women and girls remain untapped. Turning human capital investments into economic gains means addressing multiple barriers to women's economic empowerment, including improving their voice and agency.

Human Capital Index Score (0-1)

Baseline compared to 2020



Change in Female Labor Force Participation 2010-2020 (p.p.)



Unpacking the Numbers in South Africa

45 percent

A girl born today will be 45 percent as productive as if she enjoyed full education, health, and employment **(2020)**

4 in 25

16 percent of women 15 to 19 years old have had children or already pregnant **(2016)**

5.6 percent

5.6 percent of women report having ever experienced any form of sexual violence **(2016)**

7 in 100

6.6 percent of women are not able to visit family, relatives and friends on her own decision **(2016)**

1.4 times

A man is 1.4 times as likely to have used the internet to pay bills or to buy something online in the past year **(2017)**

LEARN MORE

The World Bank in Gender: This portal features the latest research, news, and events around gender equality in international development.

Women, Business and the Law: This portal includes reports, data, and news on the laws and regulations that affect women's economic opportunity.

World Bank Group Gender Strategy (FY16-FY23): This 2015 report outlines the World Bank Group's strategy to promote gender equality.

World Bank Gender Data Portal: This open data tool shares the latest statistics and research to improve understanding and inform policy choices.

AFR Gender Innovation Lab: This page features policy research by the GIL, evaluating innovative solutions to close priority gender gaps in the region.

