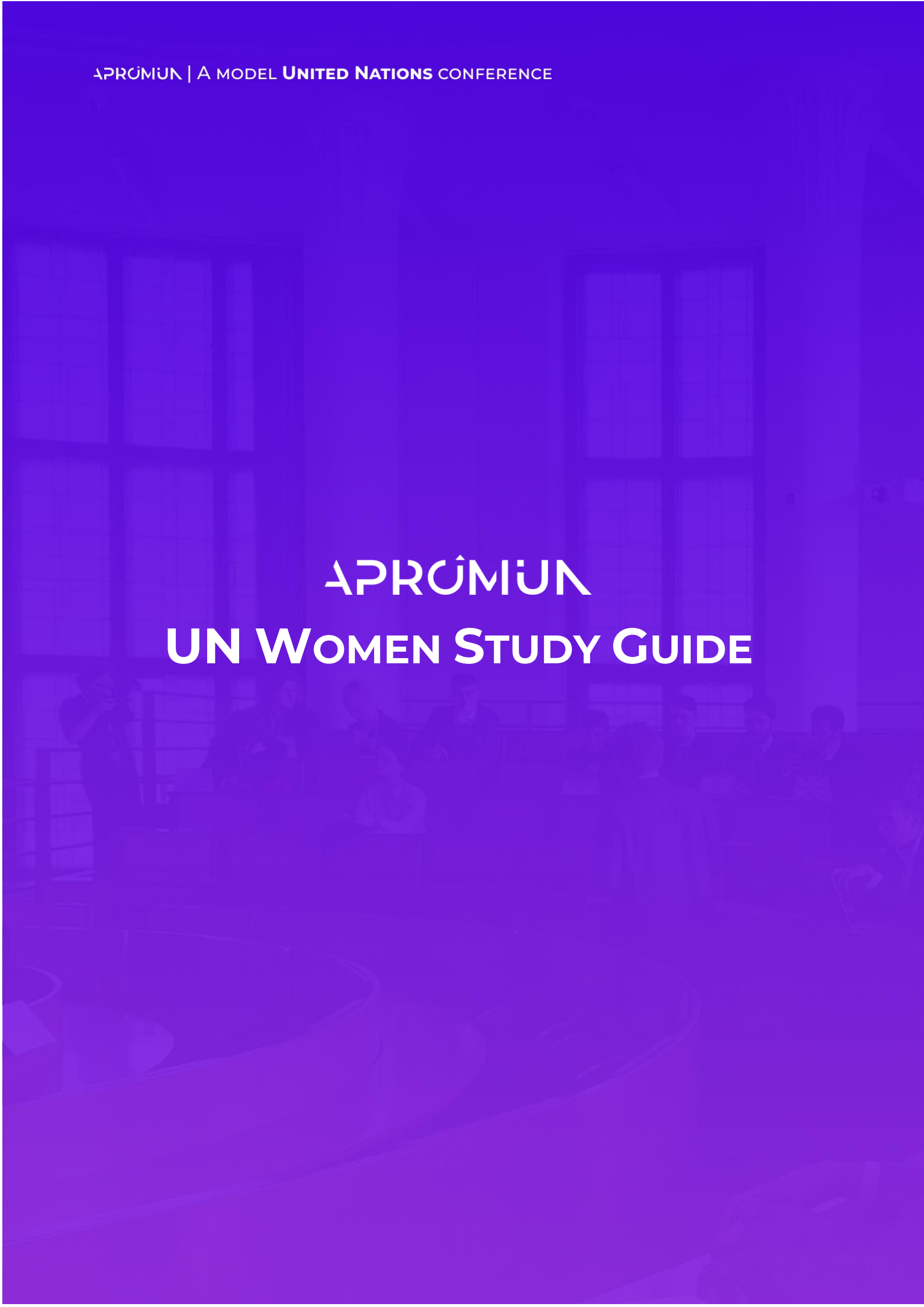


APRÔMÜN UN WOMEN STUDY GUIDE



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II. Letter from the Chairs

Dear delegates,

This is our first chance to welcome you all with utmost pleasure to the **AproMUN 2023**. We thank you deeply for choosing to participate in The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women a.k.a. **UN Women**.

With this study guide we want to provide you with the historical background of the topic, current situation and problems, some general policy and hopefully much more. It is important to note that we cannot cover each country on its own as deeply as we would like, that means this study guide should only act as a good starting ground for **your own research on your country's policy**.

We believe this study guide will help you with your research and provide you with information to make our committee sessions full of great debate and at the end to make a resolution that really makes an impact.

Lastly, we really wish for this committee to be awesome and if you have any questions regarding the topic or the MUN in general be sure to get in touch with one of us. We can't wait to see you all in **October**.

Your chairs,

Viktor and **Matúš**

III. Introduction to the Committee

UN Women is a specialized agency within the United Nations focused on promoting gender equality and empowering women globally. Here's how UN Women works:

1. Advocacy and Norms

Setting global standards and norms for gender equality and supports the implementation of international agreements like **CEDAW**.

2. Research and Data

Conducting research to understand gender disparities, inform policies, and track progress toward gender equality.

3. Capacity Building

Providing training to governments, organizations, and stakeholders to enhance their ability to promote gender equality.

4. Partnerships

Collaborating with governments, UN agencies, civil society, and the private sector to mobilize resources and expertise for gender equality.

5. Advocacy and Awareness

Engaging in advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about gender equality issues.

You as delegates will need to use these tools to create a coherent resolution. We encourage you to research more about how UNW works, and we will be providing you with links to resolutions you can read as an example of what we want to achieve.

Secondly, UNW is often looked at as a joke in the MUN community, so we would like to encourage you to take this resolution seriously without too many jokes, so it actually **passes** during the **General Assembly**.

IV. Introduction to the Topic

Women's rights and gender equality has always been very challenging topic to talk about. Since the dawn of time women have not been treated as equals to men which depending on your culture and religion might be normal but to our humble western civilizations it is not the way to go. Countries like Australia or Finland are avid women's rights fighters with their countries being well known to treat women as equals. On the other side of the spectrum are countries often in the poorer regions of the world such as South Asia. We included all 8 of the South Asian countries in our committee, with the countries being: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Let's start with the breakdown of the problem.

1. Cultural and Social Norms

1. **Historical Gender Roles:** For centuries, South Asian societies have been influenced by traditional gender roles that prioritize women's roles as homemakers and caretakers over their access to education. Girls were often expected to marry young and assume domestic responsibilities.
2. **Caste and Class Systems:** Caste and class systems in South Asia have also played a role in shaping educational disparities. Access to education was historically limited for lower-caste and marginalized communities, including girls.

2. Economic Constraints

Poverty has been a persistent barrier to girls' education in South Asia. Families struggling to meet basic needs may prioritize boys' education over girls' due to cultural and economic factors. This has led to lower enrollment rates and higher dropout rates for girls.

3. Early and Forced Marriages

Early and forced marriages have been a historical challenge for girls' education. Girls who are married off at a young age often have to discontinue their education, limiting their future opportunities.

4. Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence, including harassment and discrimination in schools and communities, has been a long-standing issue. The fear of violence can deter girls from attending school regularly.

5. Lack of Infrastructure

Insufficient school infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, has posed challenges. Inadequate sanitation facilities, long commutes, and a lack of female teachers have discouraged girls from pursuing education.

These are the 5 main problems standing between girls and education in the modern era of South Asia. You need to think of a way (which aligns with your country's policy obviously) how we can build a resolution that can help overcome every one of these barriers. This can include some of the tools listed in the previous chapter. Depending on your country you may find some policies that tackle exactly these barriers which you can use, although some delegates will be required to come up with new ideas. We will talk about already established efforts to promote girls' education in the next chapter.

V. Efforts to Promote Girls' Education

We already tackled what the ongoing issues in South Asia are and how they came to be, but it isn't all negative. There are some already established measures, programs, and organizations to combat some of these issues.

1. Government Programs

1. **Conditional Cash Transfer Programs:** Several South Asian countries have implemented conditional cash transfer programs that provide financial incentives to families, particularly in rural areas, to ensure that their daughters attend school regularly. These programs aim to alleviate the economic burden of education.
2. **Scholarship Programs:** Governments offer scholarships to meritorious girls to support their education. These scholarships cover tuition fees, books, and other educational expenses, making it more affordable for girls to pursue their studies.
3. **Girls' Education Campaigns:** Governments have launched public awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of girls' education. These campaigns challenge cultural norms and encourage families to prioritize their daughters' education.

2. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

1. **Educational Support:** NGOs operating in South Asia provide direct support to girls, including scholarships, uniforms, and textbooks. They also offer tutoring and mentoring to improve academic performance.
2. **Girls' Hostels:** Some NGOs establish girls' hostels near schools, especially in rural areas, to provide a safe and conducive living environment for girls who may otherwise have to travel long distances to attend school.
3. **Community Engagement:** NGOs engage with local communities to create awareness about the importance of girls' education. They work with parents, community leaders, and religious figures to challenge harmful stereotypes and practices.

3. International Organizations

1. **UNESCO:** UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, works closely with South Asian governments to strengthen education systems. It focuses on policy advocacy, teacher training, and curriculum development to promote gender equality in education.
2. **UNICEF:** The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supports programs in South Asia that aim to improve access to quality education for girls. These programs include teacher training, school infrastructure improvement, and menstrual hygiene management.

4. Community Initiatives

1. **Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs):** PTAs often play a significant role in promoting girls' education. They engage parents in decision-making processes related to school management and advocate for girls' rights to education.
2. **Peer Support Groups:** Peer support groups within schools empower girls to support each other. These groups address issues such as gender-based violence, menstrual hygiene, and self-confidence.

5. Legal Reforms

South Asian countries have made legal reforms to promote gender equality in education. These reforms may include raising the legal marriage age for girls, enacting anti-child labor laws, and enforcing penalties for gender-based discrimination in schools.

This is a great start, and all of these helped education and general women's rights, but problems prevail. In the case of Government Programs, Community Initiatives and Legal Reforms you should take these as an inspiration and starting ground for your own measures and policies to propose in the committee. With the NGOs and International Organizations, you can call upon them during the committee and use them as tools that are already well established.

VI. Country Specific Information

Even though we talked a lot about different approaches and measures for improving girl's education it is important for you in the debate to keep with your countries policy. You will need to research the general policy on your own, but we will provide you some basic information, strengths, and weaknesses of countries which you should base your research of.

1. Afghanistan

Afghanistan was working to promote girls' education despite challenges. After the Taliban takeover the development stopped. As of now it is prohibited for girls in Afghanistan to take part of secondary and further education. Afghanistan will argue and try to persuade other countries why this is and should be the case.

2. Australia

Australia may advocate for global partnerships and financial support to address barriers in girls' education, highlighting its commitment to gender equality and quality education as part of its foreign aid and development initiatives.

3. Bangladesh

Bangladesh could showcase its successful initiatives in promoting girls' education and call for regional cooperation to overcome common challenges in South Asia.

4. Bhutan

Bhutan might emphasize its commitment to gender equality and the importance of education as part of its Gross National Happiness philosophy. They could call for investments in infrastructure and quality education for girls.

5. Brazil

Brazil may discuss its policies aimed at reducing educational inequalities and promoting gender equality, focusing on both access and quality of education for girls.

6. China

China might highlight its investment in girls' education and the improvement of educational infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. They could also emphasize the importance of cultural and social factors in promoting girls' education.

7. Cuba

Cuba may highlight its strong emphasis on education and gender equality, showcasing its educational achievements and efforts to promote girls' education both domestically and through international cooperation.

8. Finland

Finland could share its experiences in achieving high-quality education and gender equality, emphasizing the importance of teacher training, equal opportunities, and inclusive education.

9. France

France may advocate for global initiatives to support girls' education, including funding for girls' education in crisis-affected regions and addressing cultural and social barriers to girls' schooling.

10. India

India might emphasize its efforts to empower girls through education and the importance of regional cooperation in South Asia to share best practices and overcome barriers.

11. Iran

Iran may discuss its policies aimed at improving access to education for girls and women, while also addressing cultural and social barriers to their education.

12. Japan

Japan could emphasize its support for girls' education globally, including through international organizations and initiatives, and may highlight its contributions to improving educational infrastructure in developing countries.

13. Maldives

Maldives may discuss its commitment to gender equality and the challenges it faces in ensuring access to education for girls, especially in remote atolls. They could seek international support for infrastructure development.

14. Nepal

Nepal might emphasize the importance of building infrastructure in remote areas, reducing child marriage rates, and improving girls' access to quality education. They may also call for international assistance in achieving these goals.

15. Pakistan

Pakistan may advocate for international support and cooperation to address socio-cultural norms and security issues that hinder girls' education, emphasizing community engagement and attitude change.

16. Russia

Russia may discuss its efforts to promote gender equality in education and share experiences in providing equal opportunities for girls and boys in STEM education.

17. South Africa

South Africa could discuss its policies to promote gender equality in education, including efforts to address issues like teenage pregnancy and violence against girls in schools.

18. Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka might highlight its achievements in education and emphasize the importance of inclusive and gender-sensitive educational policies, especially in conflict-affected areas.

19. United Kingdom

The UK may focus on its support for global education initiatives, including funding for girls' education in crisis zones, and emphasize the role of education in achieving gender equality.

20. United States

The USA may discuss its commitment to girls' education globally, highlighting its contributions to international initiatives and emphasizing the importance of girls' education for global development and stability.

VII. Research

Please keep in mind that this document is only a guide to your research of the topic, which should direct you to what is being discussed. The majority of the research, however, should be done by you. When researching, make sure you keep in mind these recommendations:

- Make sure you know basic information about your assigned country/group – leader, population, political system, foreign relations (especially with other members of the committee), etc.
- Check your country's policies and approach to drug trafficking, how it tries to stop it, or does not try to stop it. Find out how effective these measures have proven.
- Find out how the topic specifically affects your country. Does it provide supply or demand? Is your country on the trafficking path?
- It is recommended to familiarize yourself with the policies of other countries in the committee.

VIII. Position Paper

The position paper should be at least a half-page document, but one page is the standard, outlining your country's involvement and stance on the topic. It should cover these points:

- Present your country's approach to the agenda topic.
- Describe your country's past and present actions undertaken regarding the agenda topic, highlighting their effectiveness or lack of it.
- Introduce ideas for the resolution.
- Make sure your position paper, as well as your statements during the debates, correspond with the country's policy.
- Including factual knowledge, such as charts and statistics is highly recommended.

IX. Further Reading

Official UNICEF Position on the topic

<https://www.unicef.org/rosa/what-we-do/education>

Bit older but still interesting paper

<https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/120598/pi-girls%27-education-south-asia-192305-en.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Girls' education in Afghanistan some other South Asian countries

<https://www.griipp.net/post/restrictions-on-girls-education-across-south-asia-highlights-rising-authoritarianism>

This is a really long video but might interest you if you want to go all in

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w4WWYvzMVlw>

X. Potentially Useful Statistics

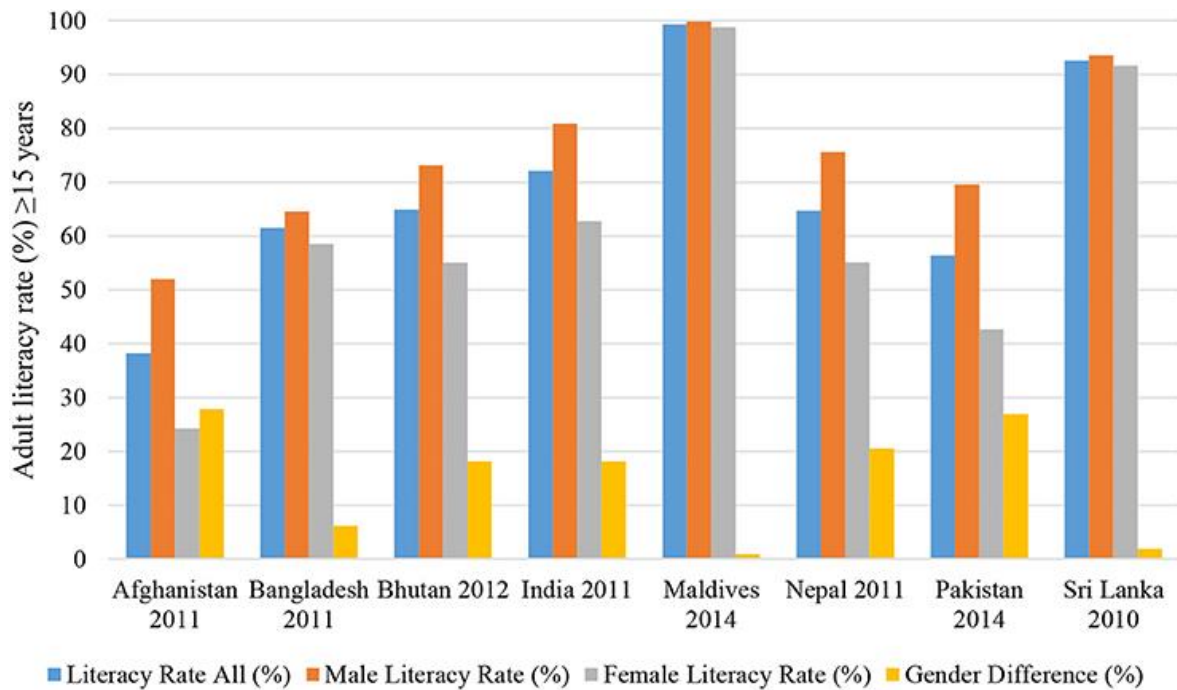


Figure 1: Literacy rate in the South Asian countries

Gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education, gender parity index (GPI) (2016)

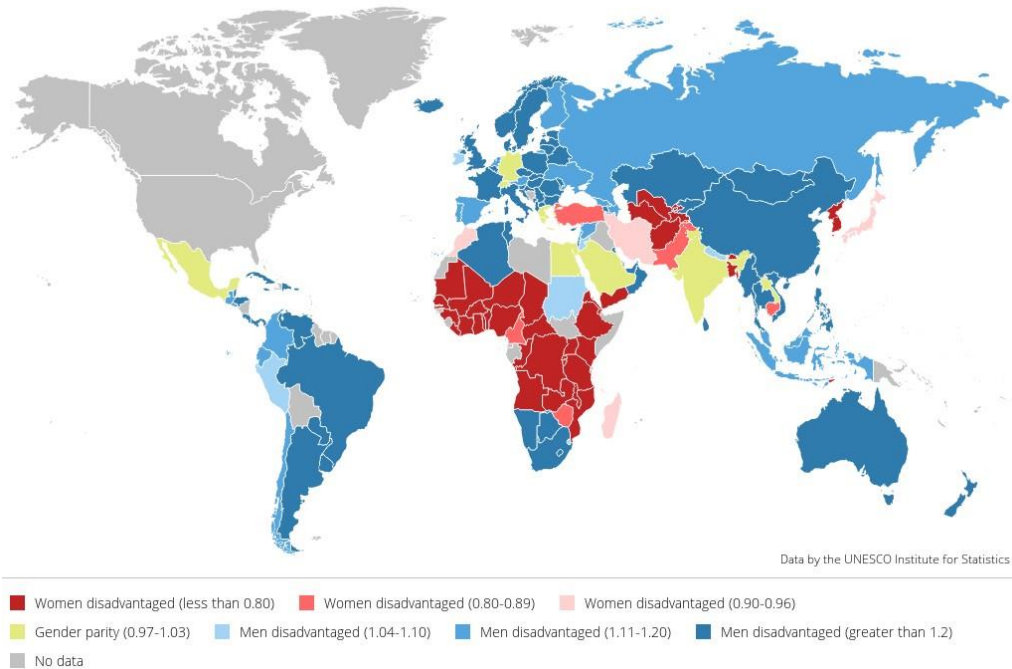
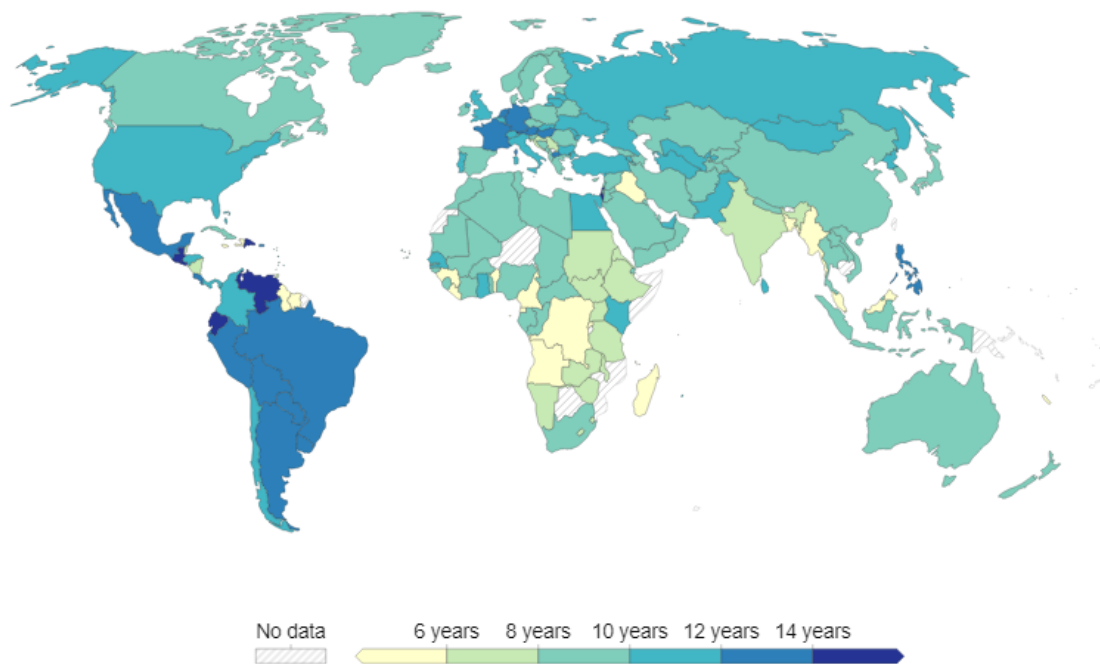


Figure 2: Ratio of women in tertiary education

Duration of compulsory education, 2021

The number of years that children are legally obliged to attend school.

Our World
in Data



Source: UNESCO via World Bank

OurWorldInData.org/global-education • CC BY

Figure 3: Duration of compulsory education



Figure 4: Rates of female labour force participation