



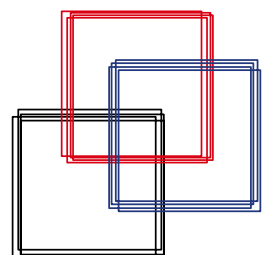
# Young and female - a double strike?

Gender analysis of school-to-work  
transition surveys in 32 developing  
countries

Sara Elder and Sriani Kring

January 2016

Youth Employment Programme  
Employment Policy Department



**Work4Youth Publication Series No. 32**

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**International Labour Office • Geneva**

January 2016

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First published 2016

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*ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data*

Elder, Sara; Kring, Sriani

Young and female - a double strike? gender analysis of school-to-work transition surveys in 32 developing economies / Sara Elder and Sriani Kring ; International Labour Office. - Geneva: ILO, 2016

(Work4Youth publication series ; No. 32)

International Labour Office

women workers / young worker / entry into working life / transition from school to work / labour market analysis / good practices / developing countries

13.01.3

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## Preface

Youth is a crucial time of life when young people start realizing their aspirations, assuming their economic independence and finding their place in society. The global jobs crisis has exacerbated the vulnerability of young people in terms of: (i) higher unemployment, (ii) lower quality jobs for those who find work, (iii) greater labour market inequalities among different groups of young people, (iv) longer and more insecure school-to-work transitions, and (v) increased detachment from the labour market.

In June 2012, the International Labour Conference of the ILO resolved to take urgent action to tackle the unprecedented youth employment crisis through a multi-pronged approach geared towards pro-employment growth and decent job creation. The Resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action” contains a set of conclusions that constitute a blueprint for shaping national strategies for youth employment.<sup>1</sup> It calls for increased coherence of policies and action on youth employment across the multilateral system. In parallel, the UN Secretary-General highlighted youth as one of the five generational imperatives to be addressed through the mobilization of all the human, financial and political resources available to the United Nations (UN). As part of this agenda, the UN has developed a System-wide Action Plan on Youth, with youth employment as one of the main priorities, to strengthen youth programmes across the UN system.

The ILO supports governments and social partners in designing and implementing integrated employment policy responses. As part of this work, the ILO seeks to enhance the capacity of national and local level institutions to undertake evidence-based analysis that feeds social dialogue and the policy-making process. To assist member States in building a knowledge base on youth employment, the ILO has designed the “school-to-work transition survey” (SWTS). The current report, which explores the differing experiences and constraints faced by young women and men in the world of work, is a product of a partnership between the ILO and The MasterCard Foundation. This report presents a gender analysis of the available datasets and highlights the persistent disadvantages that young women continue to face in the labour market. It should serve as an important contribution to the dialogue on how policy responses and programme adjustments can better address gender discrepancies in labour utilization and more effectively ensure that young women are set on a path towards self-empowerment through their labour market transitions.

It is not an easy time to be a young person in the labour market today. The hope is that, with leadership from the UN system, with the commitment of governments, trade unions and employers’ organizations and through the active participation of donors such as The MasterCard Foundation, the international community can provide the effective assistance needed to help young women and men make a good start in the world of work. If we can get this right, it will positively affect young people’s professional and personal success in all future stages of life.

Azita Berar Awad  
Director  
Employment Policy Department

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<sup>1</sup> The full text of the 2012 resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action” can be found on the ILO website at: [www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS\\_185950/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS_185950/lang--en/index.htm).



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## **Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to thank Work4Youth team members Yonca Gurbuzer and Marco Principi for technical support and valuable inputs on data processing of the school-to-work transition surveys. Valuable comments were provided by Valentina Barucci, Matthieu Cognac, Naoko Otobe and Joni Simpson. Finally, the ILO would like to acknowledge the support of The MasterCard Foundation in allowing the research to move forward, under the scope of the Work4Youth partnership.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment remain one of the most pressing challenges of inclusive growth and sustainable development. Gender equality has intrinsic value as an essential aspect of human dignity and social justice. The earlier its premises are instilled at the household and individual levels, the more powerful they become in enabling young women to take advantage of a wider range of opportunities to fulfill their goals and aspirations. Empowering young women as economic, political and social actors then pushes institutions to be more representative, which can further catalyse positive policy changes for a more inclusive development (Revenga and Shetty, 2012).

Over recent years, a wealth of studies and research has shown that enhancing gender equality, particularly through increased levels of female education, is beneficial to individual women in terms of greater decision-making power and autonomy in the household, reduced fertility and higher household income, while also contributing by a more circuitous path to wider development goals. One example of such linkages is the transmission of gains in educational access and higher income for women into the higher nutritional and educational status of their children. Research has also shown that such linkages are less apparent when the additional income gains goes to men.<sup>2</sup>

Evidence also exists to demonstrate how gender equality boosts productivity and economic growth, primarily via more effective utilization of the full array of human productive potential, i.e. that of men *and* women. The “smart economics” position sees equality in instrumentalist terms – as a means to achieve other goals, including poverty eradication.<sup>3</sup> As an example, Aguirre et al. (2012) claims that raising female employment to male levels could have a direct impact on GDP, increasing it by 34 per cent in Egypt, 12 per cent in the United Arab Emirates, 10 per cent in South Africa and 9 per cent in Japan. From the sectoral perspective, historical experience has already shown the importance of female labour to the process of industrialization. The East Asian “Tigers” benefited greatly from female-dominated manufacturing in the export sector. Agricultural production would be boosted as well; FAO (2011) estimates that agricultural output in developing countries could increase by as much as 2.5 to 4 per cent if female farmers had the same access as men to productive resources such as land and fertilizers.

While the economic benefits of gender equality are fairly clear, what remain less clear are the modalities of the inverse relationship. Unfortunately, it seems that economic growth on its own cannot increase gender equality. Some critics of the “smart economics”

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<sup>2</sup> Gakidou et al. (2010), using data from 219 countries during the period 1970–2009, found that for every additional year of education for women of reproductive age, child mortality decreased by 9.5 per cent. Similarly, evidence from a range of countries including Bangladesh, Brazil, China, India, South Africa and the United Kingdom has shown that where women have more control over household income, either through earnings or through cash transfers, it was primarily the children who benefitted in terms of nutrition and schooling (Gonzales et al., 2015; Heath and Mobarak, 2014; World Bank, 2014).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Revenga and Shetty (2012), Elborgh-Woytek et al. (2013) and Gonzales et al. (2015). Making the business case for gender equality can be particularly helpful as an advocacy tool in contexts where policy-makers may be less convinced by a rights-based approach, or believe that gender equality is a luxury only available to high-income countries.

thesis such as Seguino (2000) argue that economic growth has actually benefited from gender *inequality*, particularly in terms of occupational segregation and wage gaps.<sup>4</sup>

This report addresses the topic of gender equality from the perspective of the youth cohort aged 15–29. More specifically, it makes use of data from recent ILO school-to-work transition surveys (SWTS) to offer insight into the labour market transitions of young men and women from more than 30 developing countries. The analysis will show that being young and female can serve as a double strike for those seeking to find productive employment. With more young people going to school and staying in education for longer periods, there is a long-term trend of decreasing labour force participation rates for both sexes. Yet still the labour force participation rate of young men remained 16 percentage points higher than that of young women in 2014. Parenthood exacerbates the gaps, pushing young men into employment and young women out of employment. Gender gaps also remain evident in unemployment rates, informality rates and levels of labour underutilization. The underlying causes of young women’s weaker employment outcomes are many but certainly include early marriage, the gender roles that ascribe greater unpaid work burdens for females, limited access to productive resources and persistent job segregation.

Given the abundance of statistics and research on the labour market disadvantages of women at the aggregate level,<sup>5</sup> this conclusion will not come as a great surprise to many. Yet perhaps we would be better served as development practitioners if we *did* show surprise, or even indignation when assessing yet again the labour market disadvantages of women, and even worse young women. After so many years of expounding the importance of gender equality and gathering evidence on its social and economic gains, 20+ years after the adoption of a global platform for action on gender equality and women’s employment (the Beijing Platform), despite the widespread proliferation of gender mainstreaming policies, despite the setting of gender specific targets on nearly every youth employment policy and programme initiative of international organizations, governments, civil society and social partners, despite the progress made on educating young women around the world, we are still reporting on gender inequality at the world of work.

The increased investment in female education will not in itself bring about the productive transformation of economies if the educated young women are unable to find work. In the very regions where gender gaps in the youth labour force participation rate remain among the highest – Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa – the share of young women with a tertiary degree now outnumbers that of men. Certainly education helps in terms of longer term labour market prospects, and the SWTS data do show that young women with higher levels of education are more likely to attain stable employment and receive higher wages than those without education. But education alone is not enough to create the circumstances of gender equality in the labour market. The lingering gender gaps and exclusion of many young women from the opportunities to empower themselves and their families should certainly raise “red flags” at a time when the international community has pledged to support efforts towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 to “Achieve gender equality and empower

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<sup>4</sup> See also Duflo (2011) and Kabeer and Natali (2013). Both reports show evidence of a positive correlation between increased gender equality, especially in education and employment status, and economic growth, but less consistent evidence to support an inverse causality – economic growth leading to gender equality.

<sup>5</sup> The World Economic Forum’s *Global Gender Gap* reports (<http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2015>), the ILO *Global Employment Trends for Women* reports ([http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/WCMS\\_114243/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/WCMS_114243/lang--en/index.htm)) and the ILO forthcoming *Women at Work* report (March 2016) are three examples.

all women and girls” and SDG 8 to “Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

The ILO gives equal weight to economic and rights-based arguments for gender equality. According to the 2009 Resolution of the International Labour Conference (ILC) on “Gender equality at the heart of decent work”, gender equality is both “right and smart”. The Resolution outlines strategies for confronting gender inequalities through the complementary policy mechanisms of gender mainstreaming and development of gender-specific action where appropriate. It emphasizes that, given the tenacity of gender gaps in the labour market (quantity and quality) for youth and adults alike, a mainstreaming approach alone is not enough to overcome entrenched disadvantages. On the other hand, a purely gender-specific approach risks marginalizing the target group from mainstream resources and policy attention. The two approaches must therefore be complementary.

In the face of limited progress over the last decades, how exactly does one go about “achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value” (target 8.5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)? To paraphrase from ILO (2010a),<sup>6</sup> a first step requires granting young men and women alike the possibility to make choices about their labour market entry. Some young women will choose to work and others will choose to stay at home. The same for young men. Some young women will choose to work part-time or engage in temporary work while others will hold out for full-time permanent employment. The same for men. The important thing is that men and women alike are free to choose their respective labour market paths.<sup>7</sup>

But even freedom of choice and empowerment in the pursuit of one’s path is not enough to bring gender equality to the world of work. What matters is that both young men and women who choose to engage in economic activity are able to find productive and decent work defined according to criteria that recognize their specific values and constraints. This is no doubt easier said than done and, as a paradigm will be a long time in coming. In the meantime, the struggle for progress in promoting better opportunities for both young men and women as they enter their productive years as workers and parents will continue. Chapter 3 of the report addresses some of the lessons learned in ensuring a gender-friendly approach towards youth employment interventions.

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<sup>6</sup> Self-authored.

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that even though the focus of the report is on the constraints facing young women, this is not intended to underestimate the serious challenges also facing young men. Rather the issues discussed in the report highlight the fact that, while youth as a whole can be as a marginalized identity in the labour market, young women face specific supply and demand determinants which generate even worse youth employment outcomes. Identifying these specific determinants through analysis of the rich data provided by the SWTS can help to differentiate between the situations of both sexes and thus potentially facilitate more effective policy development.

## 1.2 Principal empirical findings

The following section highlights the main empirical findings of the report. More details on each finding can be found in chapter 2.

***The roles of young women beyond the household remain limited to a much greater extent than for young men.***

- For youth, declining labour force participation rates (LFPR) among males in all regions and mixed regional trends among females have resulted in decreased gender gaps in all regions but Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS and South-East Asia and the Pacific. Nevertheless, the size of the gap remains excessively large – above 20 percentage points – in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia.
- More than three-quarters (76 per cent) of inactive, non-student youth are female.
- The gender gap in labour underutilization of youth exists in all regions but is largest in the five countries of the Middle East and North Africa, where 49.3 per cent of the female youth population remains underutilized (as unemployed, in irregular work or as inactive non-students) compared to 32.0 per cent of the male youth population.
- Having children serves as a push factor towards employment for young men but has the opposite impact for young women. Less than one in two (45.9 per cent) young mothers work compared to more than four in five (83.6 per cent) young fathers.
- Overall, the female youth NEET rate (share of youth neither in employment nor in education or training in the youth population) among SWTS countries is double that of young males at 29.7 and 15.1 per cent, respectively.
- Across regions, the female NEET rate ranged from 22.5 per cent in the SWTS countries of sub-Saharan Africa to 42.5 per cent in the Middle East and North African region.

***The struggle for universal basic education continues, with young women still more likely to be excluded.***

- Among the SWTS countries still 5.6 per cent of young females and 3.3 per cent of young males never attended school, and another 23.7 and 22.3 per cent of young women and men, respectively, left school before completion.
- The likelihood of exclusion from education continues to be most problematic among young women in sub-Saharan Africa where still one-half (49.8 per cent) of the female youth population had either no education or limited education.
- Early marriage and motherhood remain stubborn impediments to female access to education and labour market participation in many developing countries. The shares of female adolescents (15–19) who are already mothers are especially high among countries in the Middle East and North Africa (37.8 per cent, on average) and sub-Saharan Africa (15.9 per cent).

***Gender gaps continue in the job search and in the quality of jobs attained.***

- At the global level, the female youth unemployment rate was 13.6 per cent in 2014 compared to 12.6 per cent for young men.

- Among the SWTS low-income countries, the gender gap (female-to-male) in the youth unemployment rate among university graduates was 12 percentage points compared to a 3 percentage points for youth with primary education.
- Sales work and agricultural occupations (subsistence farming and market-oriented farming) occupy the largest shares of both young male and female workers in the SWTS regions.
- The third- and fourth-ranked occupations for young female workers in the SWTS countries are teaching (7.5 per cent) and personal care work (6.8 per cent); for young men, top occupations are agricultural labourers (7.1 per cent) and building and related trades workers (6.9 per cent).
- Young men were more likely to be in working poverty in 2013 compared to young women (39.0 and 35.8 per cent, respectively).
- The gender wage gap (male-female) remains positive in all SWTS countries (between 1 and 35.8 per cent) and within all occupations.

***The labour market transitions of young women are less certain than for young men.***

- For the age group 25–29, that at which a young person would be most expected to have completed the transition, a young male is 1.9 times more likely to have completed his labour market transition than a young female.
- A university educated young woman is 1.9 times more likely to complete the labour market transition than a less-educated (primary level) woman.
- It takes an average of 7.8 months for young women to attain the first job after completing education. Young men transit quicker, with an average length of 6.9 months.
- For youth who changed jobs after the first one, the full length of transition from school to current stable and/or satisfactory job can be extremely long; the average length for young women between first and current “transited” job was 34.9 months compared to 37.3 months for young men.

***Too many young women move directly into inactivity (outside of education) and remain there.***

- One-third (32.7 per cent) of inactive non-student females had no work experience prior to inactivity compared to 18.1 per cent of inactive non-student males. With a few exceptions, the majority of countries show that young women who dropped out of the labour market continued in their inactivity.

Box 1 provides an additional summary of available qualitative indicators on female youth employment. It is worthwhile to bear in mind that job quality does matter to young people; as many as 45.8 per cent of young female workers (25 country average) and 48.4 per cent of young male workers expressed a desire to change their job. And there is little gender difference in terms of the main reasons for wanting to change. The most frequently cited reason for both sexes for wanting to change jobs was to find a higher wage. The second “top” reason was because of the temporary nature of the job, followed by “to find better working conditions” and “to make better use of one’s qualifications”.



### Box 1. Regional summaries of (limited) decent work indicators for young women

#### Asia and the Pacific

- Nearly six in ten female workers are in vulnerable employment (of which 40 per cent are in contributing family work).
- 91 per cent are in informal employment.
- Only one in three paid workers has a contract duration greater than 12 months.
- 40 per cent are employed in agriculture, 24 per cent in industry and 35 per cent in services.
- 8 per cent are in involuntary part-time work.

#### Eastern Europe and Central Asia

- Most young female workers are in paid employment; only 7 per cent are in own-account work and 12 per cent in contributing family work.
- However, informal employment rates are still 49 per cent (61 per cent in rural areas).
- Three in four paid workers have a contract duration of greater than 12 months.
- 70 per cent are in services, 15 per cent in agriculture and 14 per cent in industry. Even in rural areas, only one-third work in agriculture.
- 7 per cent are in involuntary part-time work.

#### Latin America and the Caribbean

- Most young female workers are in paid employment (68 per cent); 19 per cent are in own-account work and 12 per cent in contributing family work (with little difference between female and male shares by status).
- 80 per cent are in informal employment.
- One in two paid workers has a contract duration of greater than 12 months.
- Female work is more strongly services-based (81 per cent) than male youth work (53 per cent in services).
- 16 per cent are in involuntary part-time work.

#### Sub-Saharan Africa

- Nearly eight in ten female workers are in vulnerable employment.
- 93 per cent are in informal employment.
- Only 11 per cent of paid workers have a contract duration of greater than 12 months.
- Most young females work in services (49 per cent) but agriculture is not far behind at 42 per cent; only 9 per cent work in industry.
- 17 per cent are in involuntary part-time work.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data. For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

## 1.3 Structure of the report

Chapter 2 of the report uses recent quantitative information to present the current labour market trends of young women and the challenges they face. Section 2.1 addresses gender gaps in labour market participation and underutilization through an analysis of an innovative new data set procured by the ILO. Sections 2.2 and 2.3 then turn to the challenges that young women face in finding work and, more specifically, in finding decent work, focusing on issues of informality, occupational segregation and gender pay gaps. Section 2.4 broadens the discussion to the topic of labour market transitions and explores the degree of influence which gender exerts as young people move from school to work, and section 2.5 identifies the determinants of female disadvantages in the labour market. Finally, chapter 3 presents the policy implications and discusses good practices in both gender mainstreaming and gender-specific approaches in the promotion of decent work for youth.

## 1.4 Data sources

This report uses data from the ILO school-to-work transition surveys (SWTS) alongside some global and regional aggregates of key indicators from the ILO's Trends Econometric Model.<sup>8</sup> The household SWTS of young people aged between 15 and 29 have been conducted in 34 countries to date under the "Work4Youth" (W4Y) project. This partnership between the ILO Youth Employment Programme and The MasterCard Foundation aims to strengthen the production of labour market information specific to youth and to work with policy-makers on the interpretation of data, including on transitions to the labour market, for the design or monitoring of youth employment policies and programmes. A first round of surveys was implemented between 2012 and 2013, and a second round took place between 2014 and 2015, primarily in the same countries but with the addition of six new ones. National, thematic and regional reports summarizing survey results, as well as the data (raw and tabulated), are available on the W4Y website.<sup>9</sup>

### Box 2. Regions, income groupings and countries covered by the SWTS

#### *Regional groupings:*

Asia and the Pacific: Bangladesh,\* Cambodia, Nepal, Samoa,\* Viet Nam\*

Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Armenia, Kyrgyzstan,\* the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro,\*\* the Republic of Moldova, Serbia,\*\* the Russian Federation, Ukraine

Latin America and the Caribbean: Brazil,\* Colombia,\* Dominican Republic,\*\* El Salvador, Jamaica, Peru\*

Middle East and North Africa: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon,\*\* Occupied Palestinian Territory, Tunisia\*

Sub-Saharan Africa: Benin, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, the Republic of Congo,\*\* Sierra Leone,\*\* the United Republic of Tanzania,\* Togo, Uganda, Zambia

#### *Income groupings:*

Low-income countries: Bangladesh, Benin, Cambodia, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Nepal, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania, Togo, Uganda

Lower middle-income countries: Armenia, Egypt, El Salvador, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Congo, the Republic of Moldova, Peru, Samoa, Ukraine, Viet Nam, Zambia

Upper middle-income countries: Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Peru, Serbia, Tunisia

High-income country: Russian Federation

\* One round only in 2012–13; \*\* One round only in 2014–15.

The report covers all SWTS countries except Montenegro and Sierra Leone, in which the results were not finalized. The SWTS-based tables and figures are therefore calculated for a maximum of 32 countries.<sup>10</sup> Two rounds of survey data were analysed where possible.<sup>11</sup> The female–male distribution of the samples is presented in Annex I, table A.1 by country. In some countries, such as Egypt (2012), there were higher shares of young men in the (unweighted) sample than of young women; in others there were greater shares

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<sup>8</sup> The methodology for estimations in the ILO Trends Econometric Model is summarized in ILO (2010b). The age definition for youth used in the model is 15–24 while that used in the SWTS is 15–29. Throughout this report, the age definition is provided with each table and figure.

<sup>9</sup> The ILO Work4Youth website is: [www.ilo.org/w4y](http://www.ilo.org/w4y).

<sup>10</sup> Due to non-comptabilities across surveys, issues in data cleanliness or missing variables, not all countries could be covered in all tables or figures. The number of countries and surveys covered are provided in the table notes.

<sup>11</sup> Second round data sets were not yet available in Jamaica, Madagascar, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Ukraine and Viet Nam at the time of writing.

of young women. In most of the countries, the SWTS were implemented by the national statistical office. Only in Brazil, Nepal, the United Republic of Tanzania, Ukraine and Zambia did private institutions implement the surveys. The average sample size was 3,531 persons aged 15–29, with the smallest (1,158 youth) in the Republic of Moldova (2013) and the largest (9,197 youth) in Bangladesh (2013). National weights were applied in all countries except Madagascar (2013), where only structural weights were available. See Annex II for more details on implementation partners and sample sizes.

## **2. Labour market trends of young women and the challenges they face**

### **2.1 Participation of young women in the labour market<sup>12</sup>**

A person in the labour force is engaged to a certain extent in economic activity – either working or looking for work (the labour force being the sum of employed and unemployed persons). As a concept, the labour force has come to represent the productive potential of the people in an economy, with the segment that is employed representing utilized labour and the segment that is unemployed representing underutilized labour. For SWTS publications, the Work4Youth team has narrowed the concept further to focus on the segments of the youth population which are most “gainfully” utilized – i.e. youth investing in their education (current students) and youth in a “regular” job (paid work with contract duration of at least 12 months).

The underutilized labour potential is then measured as unemployed youth, inactive non-students and the more precarious working youth – those in self-employment plus paid workers on a temporary contract (of less than 12 months’ duration). The results do, of course, differ widely depending on the definition of labour utilization, but one aspect that remains similar regardless of definition is the end result, which shows the labour potential of young women to be significantly underutilized, and to a much greater extent than is the case for men. This section will examine both concepts, starting with the standard utilization indicators of labour force participation rate (LFPR) and employment-to-population ratio (EPR) and then analysing female prospects from a broader perspective.

#### **2.1.1 Trends in female labour force participation rates**

ILO (2010a) reported a “sort of inevitability about women’s increasing engagement in labour markets”, whereby countries and regions with female participation rates that were initially below the world median showed gradually increasing participation levels. On the other hand, in some countries where female labour force participation was much higher than the median in 1980, probably due to the prevalence of poverty in the country and the necessity of working for survival, the rates showed a long-term decline. This result means that, over time, there has been both a general increase in female economic participation overall, and a shrinking of the gap between countries with low levels and countries with high levels of participation.

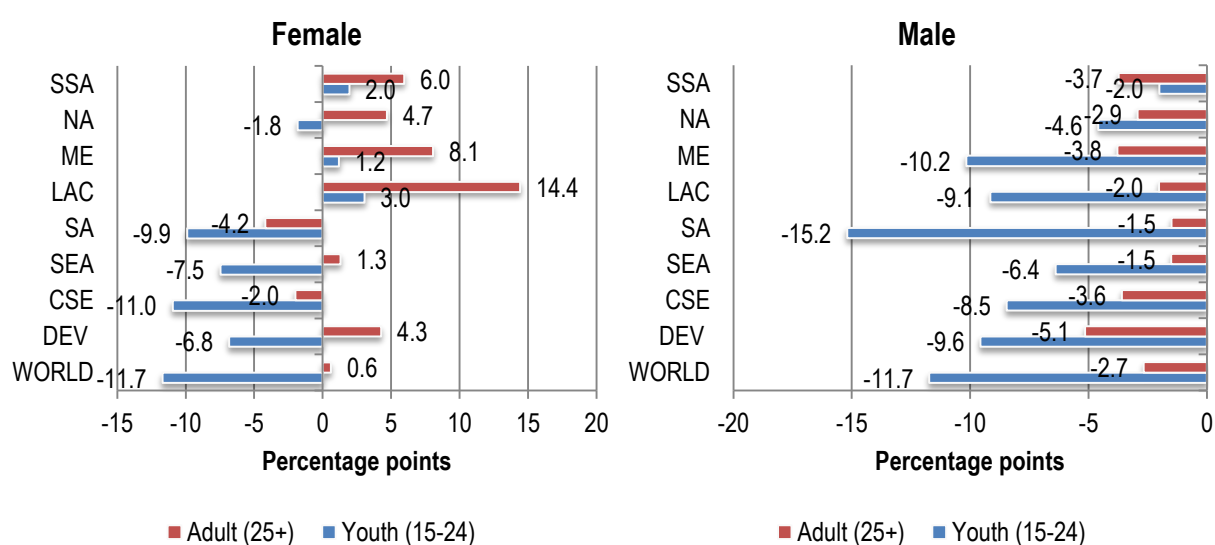
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<sup>12</sup> This section reviews the latest available global and regional estimates of the ILO for gender differences in the labour market situation of youth around the world. The regions presented here follow the groupings of previous ILO reports on global trends, including the recently published *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015* (ILO, 2015a).

Figures in the 2010 report were for the total working-age population (aged over 15) and were considered over a long time span of 28 years. It is therefore important to qualify the long-term trend by noting that increased female participation inevitably slows down over time and also to acknowledge that the age group under consideration matters. There are two diverging dynamics at play, which are hidden in the aggregate picture: one, an increase in female participation in education (see section 2.5.1) which puts downward pressure on the labour force participation rate of young women; and, two, a possible increase in female labour force participation of adult females as they exit education.

Figure 2.1 and table 2.1 show how the balance of labour force participation rates has changed over the period from 1991 to 2014 between the two age groups – youth aged 15–24 and adults aged 25+ – and between the sexes. At the global level there has been a significant decrease in the female LFPR among youth (a drop of 11.7 percentage points) and a minuscule increase in the female LFPR among adults (0.6 percentage points). The overall change in female LFPR (15+) is therefore determined by the weight of population within each age group and their respective directions in terms of the LFPR trends. In the Developed Economies and European Union (EU) region, for example, while the female LFPR decreased significantly among youth (by almost 7 percentage points), the small share of youth in the overall population and the increased LFPR among adults resulted in an overall female LFPR (aged 15+) increase of 2.6 percentage points over the period (table 2.1).

**Figure 2.1 Change in female and male labour force participation rates from 1991 to 2014, youth (15–24) and adults (25+), by region**



Notes: Regions are DEV = Developed Economies and European Union; CSE = Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS; SEA = South-East Asia and the Pacific; SA = South Asia; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; ME = Middle East; NA = North Africa; SSA = Sub-Saharan Africa. East Asia is not shown due to some anomalies in the data for China.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO, Trends Econometric Models, April 2015.

**Table 2.1 Female and male labour force participation rates, 1991 and 2014, youth (15–24), adults (25+) and total (15+), by region**

	Youth (15–24)		Adult (25+)		Total (15+)	
	1991	2014	1991	2014	1991	2014
<b>Female</b>						
World	50.6	38.9	52.9	53.5	52.3	50.3
Developed Economies and EU	52.4	45.5	49.8	54.1	50.3	52.9
Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU)	44.0	33.0	55.7	53.8	53.4	50.3
South-East Asia and the Pacific	52.7	45.2	62.1	63.4	59.1	59.2
South Asia	32.5	22.6	37.7	33.5	36.0	30.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	39.6	42.6	42.5	56.9	41.6	53.7
Middle East	12.6	13.8	13.3	21.3	13.0	19.3
North Africa	21.5	19.7	21.0	25.7	21.2	24.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	50.1	52.1	66.0	71.9	60.5	65.2
<b>Male</b>						
World	67.0	55.2	85.8	83.1	80.4	76.7
Developed Economies and EU	58.7	49.1	75.5	70.3	72.2	67.2
Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU)	56.3	47.9	80.1	76.5	74.6	70.9
South-East Asia and the Pacific	65.8	59.4	90.8	89.3	82.5	82.0
South Asia	70.4	55.2	91.8	90.3	85.1	80.7
Latin America and the Caribbean	71.3	62.1	87.3	85.3	82.3	79.5
Middle East	57.3	47.2	89.2	85.4	78.4	75.7
North Africa	51.8	47.2	87.7	84.8	75.6	74.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	58.6	56.6	91.3	87.6	79.7	76.7

Note: East Asia is not shown due to some anomalies in the data for China.  
Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO, Trends Econometric Models, April 2015.

Latin America and the Caribbean showed the largest increase in the female LFPR for both the youth and adult populations. From very low levels in 1991, the female LFPR (15+) of 53.7 per cent in 2014 is now slightly above the global average and on a par with the share in the Developed Economies.

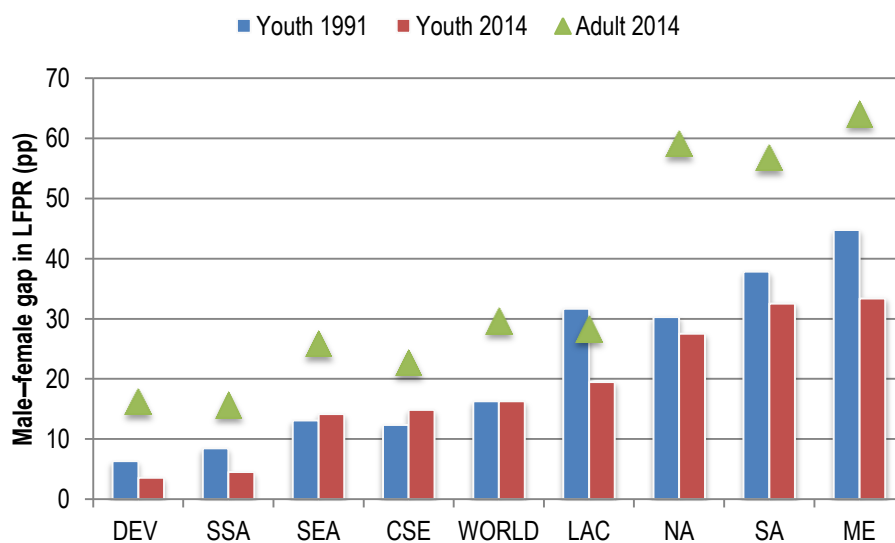
Participation rates among women also increased for both female youth and adults in sub-Saharan Africa, but in this case it is difficult to interpret the increase as a positive sign since rates were already high in 1991. In theory, in developing regions where there is still scope for improving educational enrolment – as is certainly the case in sub-Saharan Africa (see ILO, 2015a and Elder and Koné, 2013) – one would hope to see declining youth LFPRs over the period as more adolescents concentrate on their education. Despite the increase in numbers of sub-Saharan African youth who are able to go to school, it would appear to be only in the male youth population that increased enrolment in education is reflected in a declining LFPR (2 percentage points over the period). With the highest female youth LFPRs in 2014, it is safe to say that there is still work to be done to enable young sub-Saharan Africans to remain in school and avoid the necessity of earning a living at a very early age.

Declining female LFPRs in Central and South-Eastern Europe and South Asia are also not encouraging trends, as the decreases are too large to be explained by increased educational enrolment alone (especially in the former region where enrolment rates were already nearly universal at the start of the period). Rather, it is likely that limited job growth and high unemployment rates in the region are being reflected in early labour market withdrawal of some young women who give up on their job search or never bother

to try, knowing the very limited nature of their chances.<sup>13</sup> In South Asia, the regional decline in young female LFPR was driven by trends in Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka, countries where barriers to labour market entry for young women are known to be especially high and persistent (cf. Kapsos et al., 2014).

Declining trends in male LFPR are both stronger and more universal in comparison to those of women, regardless of the age group. For youth, declining rates among males in all regions and mixed trends among females by region have resulted in declines in the gender gap in youth LFPR in all regions except Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS and South-East Asia and the Pacific. Nevertheless, as is evident in figure 2.2, the size of the gap remains excessively large – above 20 percentage points – in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. In these regions, cultural restrictions placed on young women and prevailing gender norms continue to hinder opportunities for women to combine work and family life.

**Figure 2.2 Gender gaps (male–female) in youth labour force participation rates by region, 1991 and 2014**



Notes: Regions are DEV = Developed Economies and European Union; CSE = Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS; SEA = South-East Asia and the Pacific; SA = South Asia; LAC = Latin America and the Caribbean; ME = Middle East; NA = North Africa; SSA = Sub-Saharan Africa. East Asia is not shown due to some anomalies in the data for China. pp = percentage points. Youth = 15–24.  
Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO, Trends Econometric Models, April 2015.

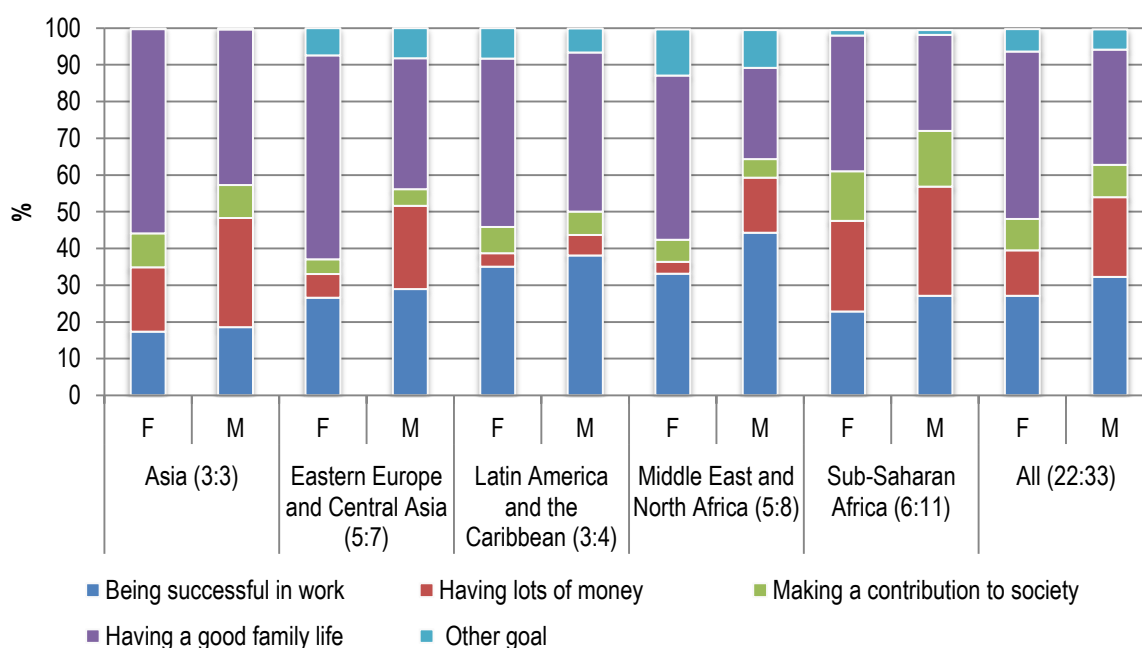
At the global level, the gender gap in labour force participation among youth remained unchanged over the long period between 1991 and 2014. While the tendency of a young person to participate in the labour force decreased for both young men and women over the period, still the LFPR of young males remained 16 percentage points higher than that of young females by 2014. Figure 2.2 also shows that gender gaps in LFPRs are significantly lower among the youth cohort compared to adults, reflecting again the influence that participation in education and child-bearing can bring to the indicator among the respective age cohorts. The following sections will analyse the data in more depth to draw out the differences in youth indicators for the student/non-student and parent/non-parent populations.

<sup>13</sup> Some researchers speak of the “feminised patterns of behaviour” which influence labour market decisions during recessions (cf. Smith, 2009). The premise is that some young women will opt to stay at home and concentrate on household duties, allowing the husband to focus on job-search activities. The degree to which such behaviour accounts for declining levels of female youth LFPR remains to be seen, but this aspect ought to be borne in mind.

This short analysis of trends in labour force participation demonstrates that a nuanced and gendered view is important in understanding labour market dynamics. The determinants of participation vary according to gender and age. Other socio-economic characteristics will also influence the labour force participation rates of youth, including geography, education level, health, culture and household wealth. This report will focus specifically on the gender and age variables, while attempting to bear the other factors in mind.

Moreover, one should always acknowledge that not all young men or women aspire to labour market participation or place primary importance to their future working life. The SWTSs generate limited information regarding the motivation of young people in a question on “main goal in life”. The results in figure 2.3 offer some interesting insights into the mentality of the young respondents in the SWTS countries. In very general terms, young women would seem to be slightly less economically-motivated than men; 27.1 per cent of young women and 32.2 per cent of young men (22 country average) said they would like to be successful in work, and 12.4 per cent of young women would like to have lots of money compared to 21.7 per cent of young men. In contrast, the young women in all regions were more likely than young men to aim for a good family life as their primary life goal. One additional “test” in the SWTS on the intention of young people for future economic participation comes with a question to current students on their intention after completion of their education. The share of current students who stated they do not wish to work in the future is very low: 1.0 per cent of female students and 0.3 per cent of male students (results not shown).

**Figure 2.3 Main goal in life of young women and men, SWTS countries by regional averages**



Notes: F = female; M = male. The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Youth = 15–29. Country data are available in Annex I, table A.2. Source: Authors’ calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 22 countries (33 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

### 2.1.2 Youth employment-to-population ratio

Trends in the youth employment-to-population ratio (EPR) follow closely those of the LFPR since the employed are the dominant share of the labour force. Female youth EPRs ranged from the extremely low 7.4 per cent in the Middle East to 47.9 per cent in East Asia in 2014 (table 2.2). The lowest EPR of young men, in contrast, was 35.4 per cent in North

Africa. It is not overly surprising then to see the largest gender gaps in youth EPRs among the regions with the lowest female shares (namely, the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia). In South Asia, the gap was as large as 29.6 percentage points in 2014, with the Middle East not far behind at 28.7 percentage points (figure 2.4). While the general trend is a slight narrowing of gender gaps between 2000 and 2014 (with the largest improvements in Latin America and the Caribbean and South Asia), the statistics imply that a long road lies ahead in the quest for equal access to work.

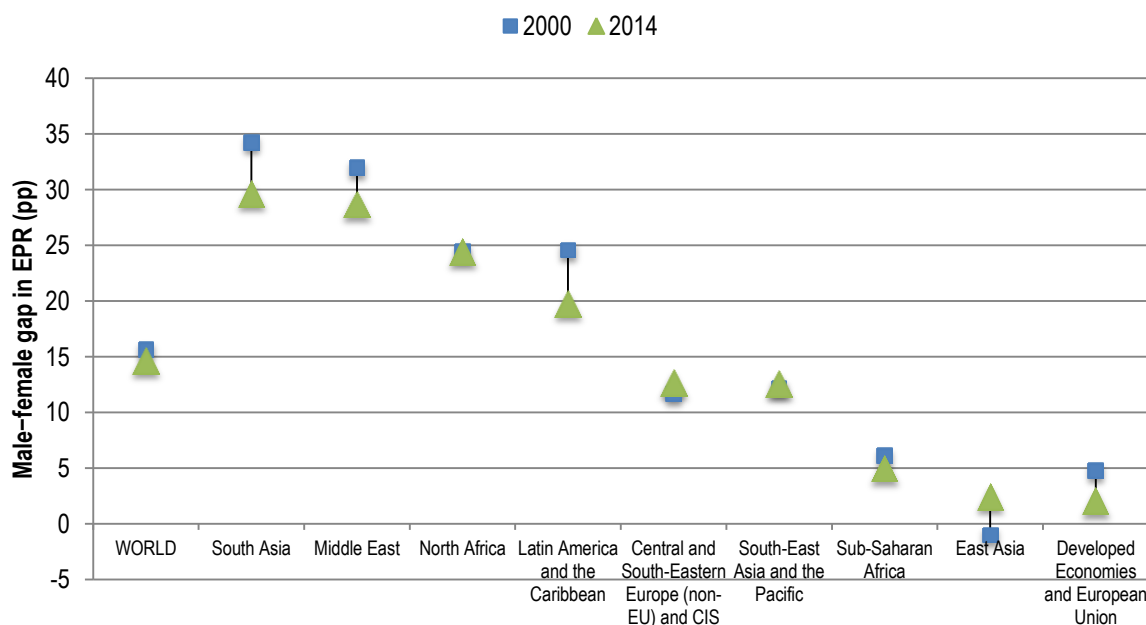
**Table 2.2 Youth employment-to-population ratio, by sex and region, selected years**

Region	2000	2008	2010	2012	2014	2000	2008	2010	2012	2014
	Female					Male				
World	38.3	35.5	33.9	33.7	33.7	54.0	50.5	48.7	48.3	48.3
Developed Economies and European Union	43.0	41.5	37.9	37.5	38.5	47.8	44.8	39.6	39.6	40.5
Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS	28.8	28.0	27.2	27.0	27.1	40.5	40.5	38.9	39.3	39.8
East Asia	60.4	49.6	47.8	48.2	47.9	59.4	51.5	50.4	50.7	50.3
South-East Asia and the Pacific	42.8	39.1	38.3	39.5	38.9	55.0	51.4	50.8	51.9	51.5
South Asia	25.1	23.2	21.3	20.2	20.2	59.4	55.2	52.4	50.0	49.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	33.5	35.3	34.2	35.2	35.5	58.1	56.7	55.0	55.4	55.2
Middle East	8.4	8.0	7.5	7.3	7.4	40.4	38.0	37.1	36.5	36.1
North Africa	12.7	12.1	11.4	11.1	11.0	37.2	38.8	38.9	35.7	35.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	43.8	45.2	45.1	45.0	45.5	49.9	50.0	49.9	50.2	50.5

Note: Youth = 15–24.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO, Trends Econometric Models, April 2015.

**Figure 2.4 Gender gaps (male–female) in the youth employment-to-population ratio, by region, 2000 and 2014**



Notes: pp = percentage points. Youth = 15–24.

Source: Reproduced from ILO (2015a), figure 2.5.

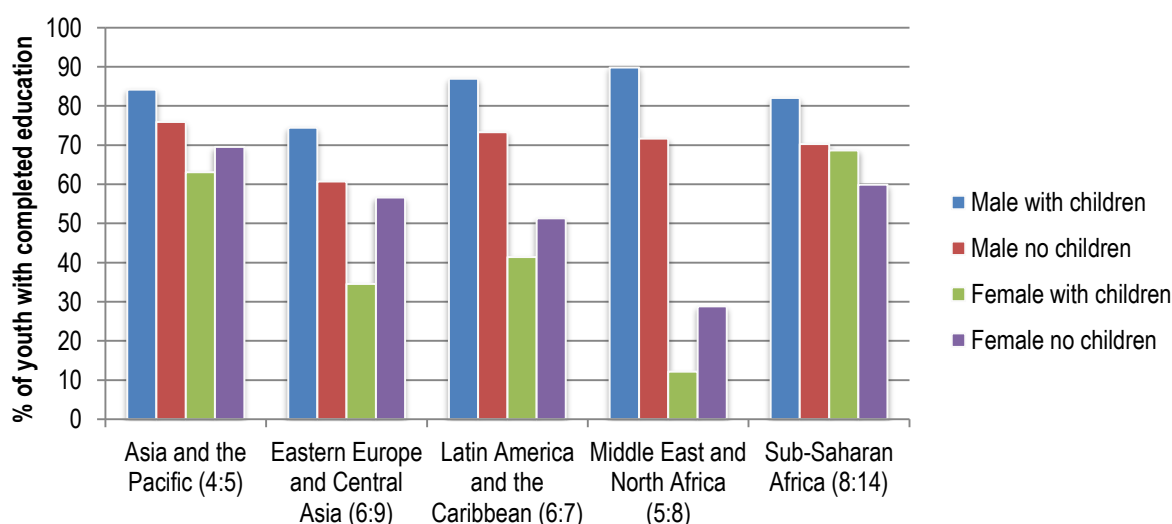
Among the SWTS countries, the female youth EPRs ranged from 7.0 per cent in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to 80.1 per cent in Cambodia (Annex I, table A.3). The highest female EPRs are found among the low-income countries (e.g. Cambodia, Madagascar and Malawi), a signal of the poverty-driven necessity to seek an income. Yet



the income–employment linkages are not perfect. We see, for example, a very low EPR for young women in low-income Bangladesh (recently moved to the lower middle-income grouping<sup>14</sup>) and lower middle-income Egypt and Occupied Palestinian Territory. These are countries where social norms opposing female employment outweigh the economic considerations of low income levels.

Having children serves as a push factor towards employment for young men but has the opposite impact for young women, as confirmed in figure 2.5. The EPR of young men (with completed education<sup>15</sup>) with children is from 8 to 18 percentage points higher than that of young men without children across the regions. For young women, it is only in sub-Saharan Africa where parenthood has a similar impact (with an EPR of 68.7 per cent for young mothers compared to 59.9 per cent of non-mothers). In the remaining regions, having children lowers the likelihood that a young woman will work. The mother/non-mother gaps in EPR are particularly high in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and the Middle East and North Africa. The diverging influence that parenthood brings to employment trends means that the gender gap in the EPR of youth with no children is significantly lower than that of young parents. Less than one in two (45.9 per cent) young mothers work compared to more than four in five (83.6 per cent) young fathers (29 country average).

**Figure 2.5 Employment-to-population ratio of non-student youth with and without children, by sex, SWTS countries by regional averages**



Notes: The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Youth = 15–29. Country data are available in Annex I, table A.3. Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 29 countries (43 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

<sup>14</sup> World Bank New Country Classifications: <http://data.worldbank.org/news/new-country-classifications-2015>.

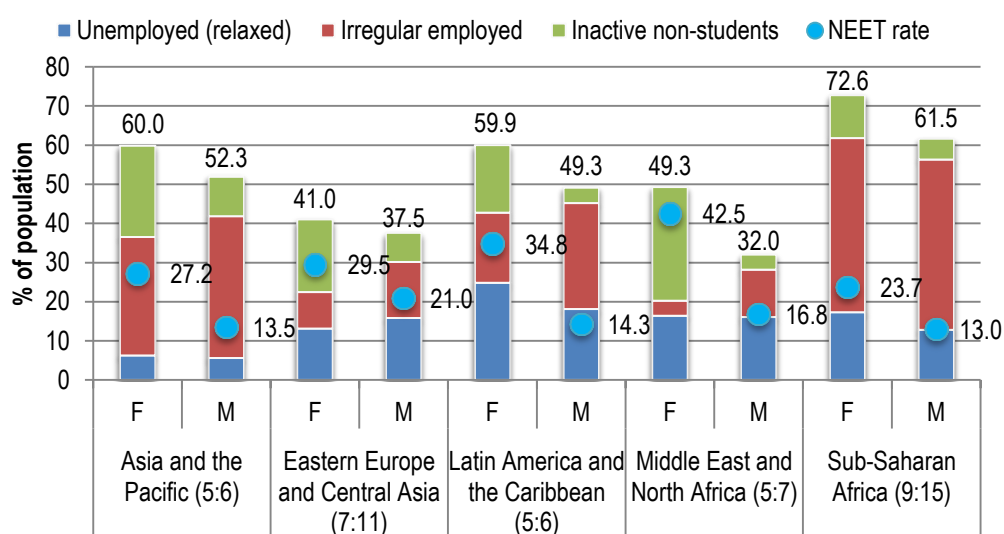
<sup>15</sup> The non-student youth population is taken as the denominator.

### 2.1.3 Labour underutilization and inactivity

As stated earlier, the ILO’s Work4Youth publications apply a more detailed categorization of the youth labour market – beyond the “standard” framework of employed, unemployed or inactive – that allows for a broader conceptualization of labour underutilization.<sup>16</sup> Underutilization of youth labour is defined in this report as the sum of the non-utilized labour potential – unemployed and inactive non-students – plus the underutilized potential of young workers in precarious situations – the self-employed plus workers on temporary contracts of less than one year in duration.

Figure 2.6 shows the share of underutilized young labour according to the framework described above and calculated as regional averages of the SWTS countries. Perhaps the most important interpretation of the results is that, in all regions, the productive potential of the female youth population remains untapped to a greater extent than that of the male youth population. The gender gap is largest in the five countries of the Middle East and North Africa, where 49.3 per cent of the female youth population is underutilized compared to 32.0 per cent of the male youth population. The region with the largest share of underutilized young labour is sub-Saharan Africa, where the majority of youth are already working but in an irregular job (44.3 per cent of young women and 43.4 per cent of young men). In all other regions, the share of young men in irregular employment is greater than the female share. In all regions except Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the share of the population that is unemployed (relaxed definition; see section 2.2) is higher for young females than males, while the share of young females that are inactive and out of school is significantly higher for females than males in all regions.

**Figure 2.6 Labour underutilization of young women and men by subcomponents and NEET rate, SWTS countries by regional averages**



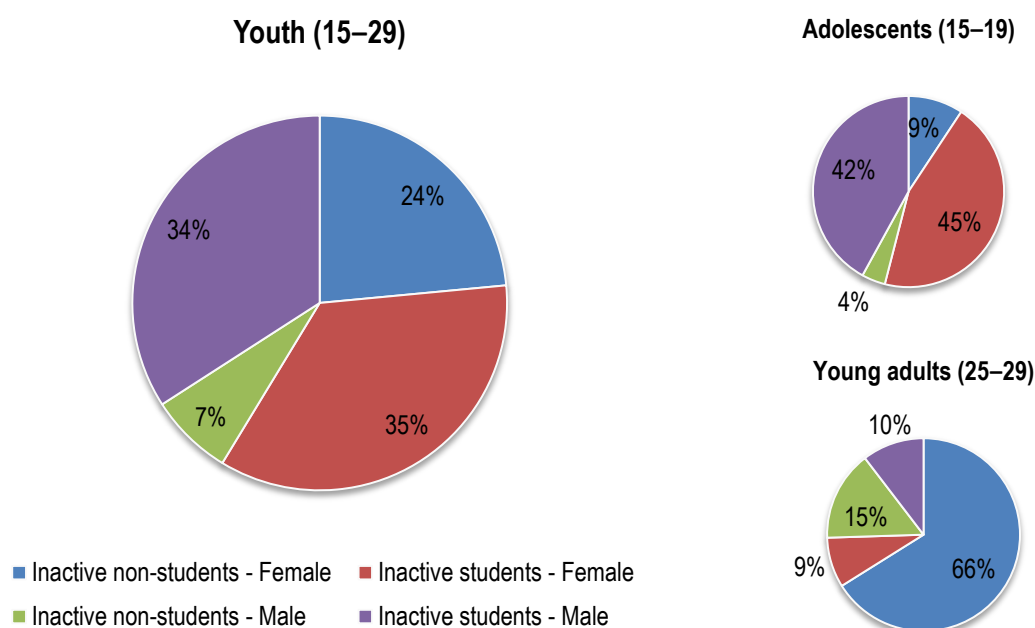
Notes: The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. NEET = not in education, employment or training. Youth = 15–29.  
 Source: Authors’ calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 31 countries (45 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

<sup>16</sup> The W4Y national and regional publications based on the SWTS (available at [www.ilo.org/w4y](http://www.ilo.org/w4y)) present the data according to both a standard labour market distribution of the youth population (by employed, unemployed, inactive) and the more detailed “alternative” distribution based on the elements identified in this section.

The inverse of labour force participation is inactivity, so as the youth LFPR decreases (as shown in section 2.1.1) the youth inactivity rate increases. However, the share of underutilized labour will not increase by the same amount (as the inactive), since this framework makes the distinction between youth who are inactive due to enrolment in school and youth who are inactive and not in school. Youth in school can be considered to be at least potentially engaged in productive activities, and numerous SWTS analyses have shown that investing in one's education brings greater returns to youth in terms of job quality attained and earning potential.<sup>17</sup> The portion of inactive youth shown in figure 2.6 is those who are inactive for reasons other than education. Such reasons can include engagement in household duties, including child care; injury, disability or illness that prevents labour market engagement; waiting for seasonal work; or reasons implying a sense of discouragement with the prospects of finding work.

As already stated, young women, regardless of region, are more likely to be inactive and not in school than young men, and in certain regions the share of young women falling within this category remains significant (at most, 29 per cent of young women in the Middle East and North Africa). Overall for the SWTS countries, 59 per cent of total inactive youth are female – 35 per cent in school and 24 per cent not in education. In comparison, 34 per cent of total inactive youth are male students while young men who are inactive but out of school account for only 7 per cent. More than three-quarters (76 per cent) of inactive, non-student youth are female, thus making inactivity a clear gender issue and one that starts from an early age; the roles of young females outside of the non-household productive sphere remain limited to a much greater extent than those of young men, and it is unlikely that the picture will change much as young women move into adulthood.

**Figure 2.7 Distribution of inactive youth by participation in education and by sex, 31 country average**

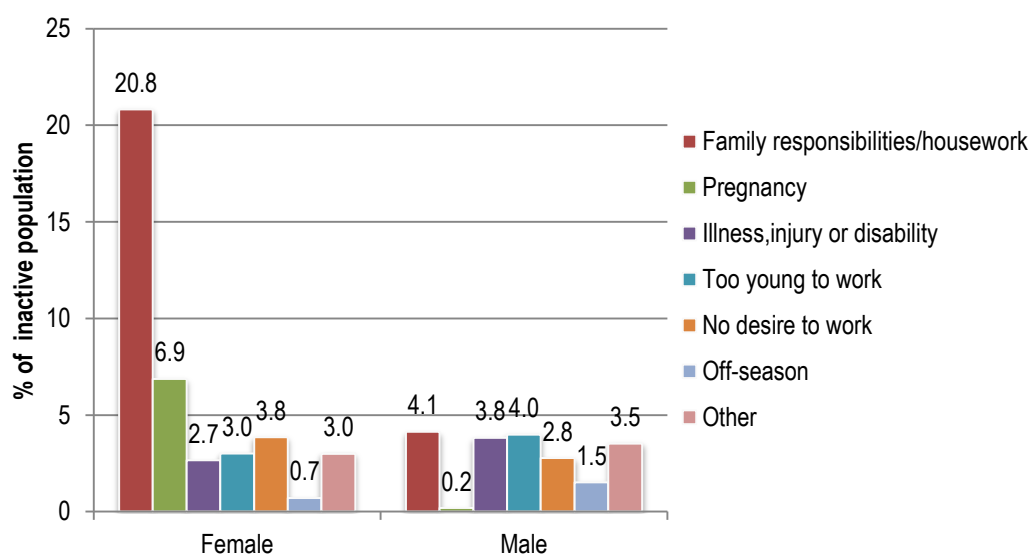


Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 31 countries (45 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Sparreboom and Staneva (2014).

Recalling table 2.1, we can assume that female LFPR will increase in adulthood, although remaining well below male shares. What remains unclear, however, is the degree to which the inactive female is able to move to activity from an earlier status as an inactive non-student, or whether this category proves to cause more stickiness in the transition to activity than for inactive students. Section 2.4.4 will help to answer this question. What seems likely from the composition of youth inactivity by age group shown in figure 2.7 is that, rather than moving from school to labour market participation as female adolescents (15–19) become young adults (25–29), many move instead to the category of inactive non-students. The composition of inactivity changes dramatically between the two age bands. Whereas, for adolescents, most of whom are still attending school, the female share among the inactive is slightly more than one-half (54 per cent), by the time youth reach adulthood (25–29), inactivity has become a strongly female domain (75 per cent female share).

**Figure 2.8 Inactive youth by reason for inactivity, by sex, 26 country average**

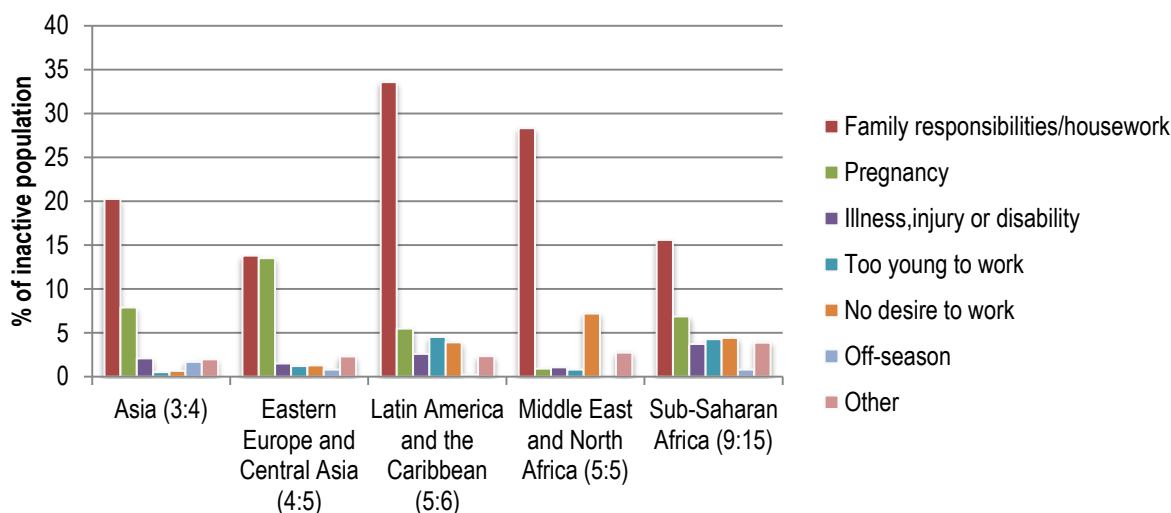


Notes: The figure excludes the majority shares of youth who are inactive due to school attendance (58.1 per cent of inactive young women and 79.1 per cent of inactive young men). Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 26 countries (35 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Using the SWTS, we can dig further into the topic of inactivity among young women to see why young women remain outside the labour market. Beyond the most obvious reason of going to school (a 58.1 per cent share for young women), it is household responsibilities and pregnancy that occupy most inactive young women (20.8 and 6.9 per cent, respectively; figure 2.8). This compares to only 4.1 per cent of young inactive men who cite family responsibilities as their reason for inactivity. Are there differences across regions? Figure 2.9 shows that young women in Eastern Europe and Central Asia are most likely to cite pregnancy as the reason for inactivity (not that they are likely to be pregnant more frequently than young women in other regions but rather that they are more likely to equate pregnancy with family responsibilities). Adding the two reasons together – family responsibilities and pregnancy – at most, 39.1 per cent of Latin American young women gave one of these reasons compared to the lowest share of 22.5 per cent of young women in sub-Saharan Africa. The sub-Saharan African females had the highest share of respondents citing illness, injury or disability as reasons for inactivity (3.7 per cent) and those in the Middle East and North Africa were the most likely to cite a lack of desire to work as the reason for inactivity (7.2 per cent).

**Figure 2.9 Inactive female youth by reason for inactivity, SWTS countries by regional averages**

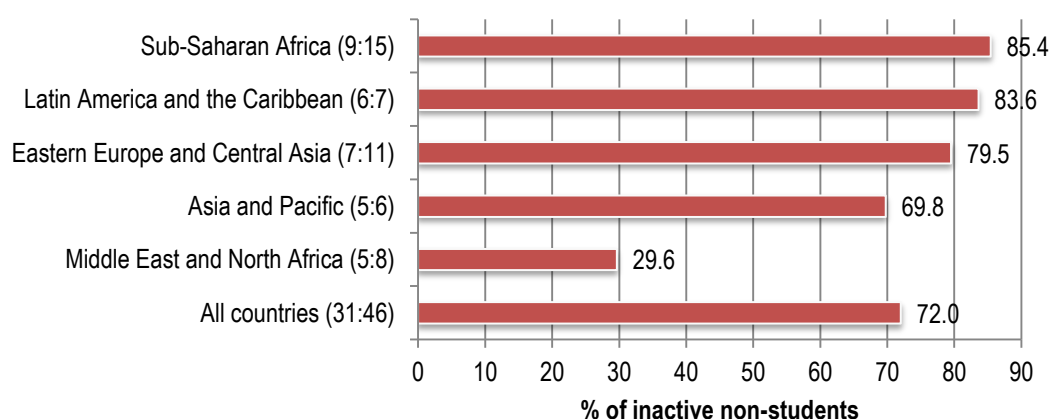


Notes: The figure excludes the majority shares of youth who are inactive due to school attendance. The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Country data are available in Annex I, table A.4. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 26 countries (35 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Taking care of the household and children is a highly valued activity and undoubtedly many women undertake these duties as a personal choice. The question remains, therefore, to what degree do young women who are inactive desire to enter (or re-enter) the labour market at a later period? The SWTS data sets allow us to investigate the question of intent among inactive non-students. Interestingly, as a global average (31 countries) almost three-quarters (72.0 per cent) of currently inactive (non-student) young females expressed a desire to work in the future (figure 2.10). However, there are strong regional variances. Less than one-third (29.6 per cent) of inactive females in the SWTS countries of the Middle East and North Africa expressed a desire to work in the future compared to more than two-thirds of inactive females in the other four regions. One might assume that at least a portion of the Middle Eastern female is expressing their opinion based on rational expectations – knowing the very limited job opportunities for women in the region – but the reality is that cultural views on female work in the region also play a role here.

**Figure 2.10 Share of inactive non-student female youth who want to work in the future, SWTS countries by regional averages**



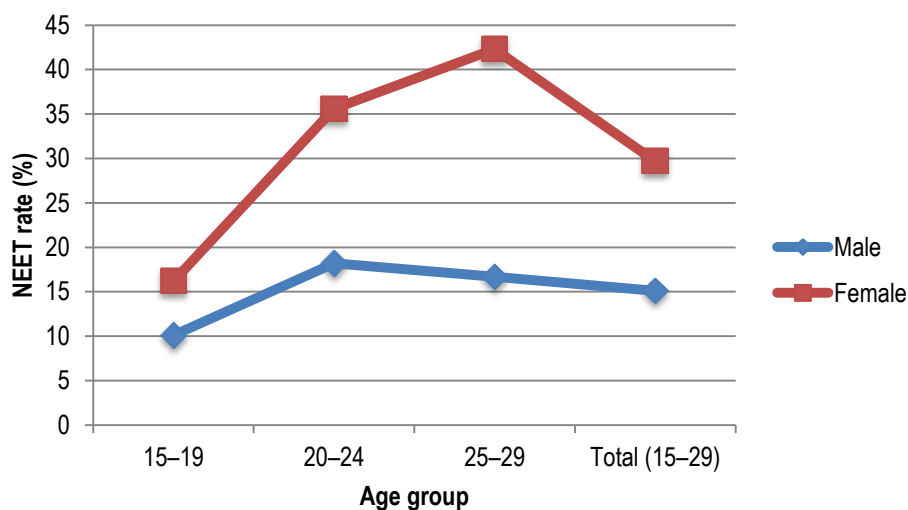
Notes: The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 31 countries (46 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Finally, a discussion on the topic of labour underutilization can also be addressed in a review of youth not in employment, education or training (NEETs). The concept merges two groups: inactive youth who are inactive for reasons other than education (the inactive non-students just discussed) and youth who are without work and looking for work, i.e. the unemployed (non-students).<sup>18</sup> The indicator is increasingly used to address a broad array of vulnerabilities among youth, touching on issues of unemployment, early school leaving and labour market discouragement. The indicator is gaining momentum, with measurement and interpretation of the concept now guaranteed by its adoption as an indicator of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 8 on economic growth and decent work.

As an indicator for understanding disadvantages in the youth labour market by sex, the NEET rate has its weaknesses. As discussed above, there is a strongly female bias among the first component of NEETs (inactive non-students) in most countries. In contrast, the second component (unemployed non-students), more often than not, has a male bias (see section 2.2). For policy purposes, therefore, it is advisable to look at the two elements in isolation, rather than in a merged NEET rate where the specific contexts of sex and age can become blurred. Overall, the female NEET rate among SWTS countries is double that of young males at 29.7 and 15.1 per cent, respectively. But look at the differences between the various age bands in figure 2.11. For adolescents aged 15–19, a period when most youth attend school, the gender gap in the NEET rate is only 6 percentage points. For young adults aged 25–29, however, the gender gap jumps to 26 percentage points with a female NEET rate of 42.3 per cent compared to a male rate of 16.7 per cent. At the upper age band, the issue of NEETs is essentially that of inactivity among female adults as the element of engagement in education is hardly relevant. From the regional perspective, there is also a wide dispersion of NEET rates. In figure 2.6, the female NEET rate ranged from 22.5 per cent in the SWTS countries of sub-Saharan Africa to 42.5 per cent in the Middle East and North African region.

**Figure 2.11 Youth NEET rate by sex and age group, 28 country average**



Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 28 countries (41 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

<sup>18</sup> Caution is advised in the interpretation of the indicator because it merges two categories – the unemployed with the inactive non-students – that result from distinct determinants and respond to different policy responses (Elder, 2015).

## 2.2 The challenge of finding work

Are young women at a disadvantage when it comes to finding work? The answer to this question is not as obvious as one might think. There are fewer unemployed female youth in the world than unemployed male youth: the composition of total youth unemployment in 2014 was 41.7 per cent female (30.6 million) and 58.3 per cent male (42.7 million) (table 2.3). In adulthood (25+), the female share in total unemployment increases, but only slightly to 43.3 per cent of the adult total. The disproportion in unemployed numbers by sex – where unemployment is primarily a male domain – is strongest in East Asia, South Asia and North Africa. It is only in Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa where slightly more young females are unemployed than young males.

**Table 2.3 Indicators on youth unemployment by sex and region, 2014**

Region	Youth unemployed ('000)		Female share in youth unemployment (%)	Female share in youth labour force (%)	Youth unemployment rate (YUR) (%)		Female–male gap in YUR (pp)
	Male	Female			Male	Female	
<b>WORLD</b>	42 699	30 579	41.7	39.9	12.6	13.6	1.0
<b>Developed Economies and European Union</b>	5 504	4 292	43.8	46.9	17.6	15.5	-2.1
<b>Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS</b>	2 224	1 561	41.2	39.9	16.9	17.8	0.9
<b>East Asia</b>	7 590	5 043	39.9	45.2	11.6	9.4	-2.3
<b>South-East Asia and the Pacific</b>	4 415	3 396	43.5	42.5	13.3	13.9	0.6
<b>South Asia</b>	8 889	3 682	29.3	27.4	9.7	10.6	0.9
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	3 825	3 863	50.2	40.1	11.1	16.8	5.6
<b>Middle East</b>	2 403	1 246	34.1	20.9	23.5	45.9	22.5
<b>North Africa</b>	2 332	1 652	41.5	28.7	25.1	44.1	19.0
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	5 518	5 843	51.4	47.6	10.8	12.6	1.8

Notes: pp = percentage points. Youth = 15–24.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO, Trends Econometric Models, April 2015.

With more unemployed young males than females in the world, why do we then talk about female disadvantages in finding work? Considering the mathematical explanation alone, the answer has to do with the more limited scope of economic activities that are available to young women, or rather the wider scope of *non-economic activities* in which young women engage. As shown in section 2.1, a young woman is 1.4 times more likely to remain outside of the labour force than a young man. This means that young women are less frequently working or available to take up work than young men. So not only are there fewer female unemployed youth than male (in most regions) but, in all regions, the size of the female youth labour force – the sum of employed youth plus unemployed youth – is smaller than that of males. This is important because the labour force is the denominator of the unemployment rate. A comparatively smaller numerator divided by a significantly smaller denominator results in a comparatively higher rate.

The Middle East is a good example of this situation: the number of unemployed young females is one-half that of young males (1.2 and 2.4 million, respectively) and the female youth labour force is one-quarter the size of the male labour force (2.7 and 10.2 million, respectively). The resulting female youth unemployment rate (YUR) in 2014 is double the male rate (a gap of 22.5 percentage points; see table 2.2):

- female YUR =  $1,246 / 2,713 * 100 = 45.9$  per cent
- male YUR =  $2,403 / 10,238 * 100 = 23.5$  per cent

So, it is only when we view unemployment as a share of the labour force – i.e. as a share of the youth who are economically active – that the female disadvantages in finding work are made visible. And this is an important distinction as it reveals the more limited options available to female youth in many parts of the world; the (comparatively fewer) young women who do participate in the labour force face a harder time finding work than their male counterparts. This is the case in all regions except the Developed Economies and European Union and East Asia (table 2.2).

In the Middle East and North Africa, the unemployment rate of young women exceeded that of young men by as much as 22 and 19 percentage points, respectively, in 2014. The gender gap has progressively worsened over time in the Middle East, while North Africa has shown some ups and downs within the 20-year period between 1995 and 2014 (ILO, 2015a, figure 2.11). Young females are also comparatively disadvantaged in the job search in Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa, although to a lesser degree than in the Middle East and North Africa, and with an improvement in the gender gap evident from 2005.

Elder et al. (2015) examined the SWTS data sets across geographic lines (urban and rural). The report found that, across 25 SWTS countries, the urban unemployment rate of young men was 17.8 per cent compared to 23.5 per cent for young women. For rural unemployment, the rates were 12.7 per cent for men and 19.7 per cent for women. This means that urban unemployment for women is, on average, 6 percentage points higher than among men, and this gap increased to 7 percentage points in rural areas. In other words, the disadvantages facing young women in finding work exist as both an urban and a rural phenomenon to an almost equal extent.

The global and regional estimates presented so far refer to the strict definition of unemployment, which encompasses those persons who meet the following three criteria as: (i) being without work; (ii) being available to work; and (iii) actively seeking work. The “actively seeking work” criterion poses problems in certain contexts where formal job-seeking institutions (e.g. newspaper advertisements and public employment services) are weak or where work is largely seasonal and informal. In many countries, a person without work is more likely to wait for word-of-mouth informal connections to lead to occasional work than to engage in an active job search. Excluding the criterion from the calculation of the unemployed is known as the “relaxed definition”. The relaxed YUR can be significantly higher than the “strict” rate, especially in low-income countries (see ILO, 2015a, figure 3.4).

For the purpose of this report, we can investigate the extent to which young women or young men are likely to fall into the category of those available to work but not actively engaged in the job search. The results, as a share of the total unemployed (relaxed definition), are shown in figure 2.12 for the SWTS countries. In all but a handful of countries, young women have a higher tendency than young men to be unemployed but not actively looking for work. Many of these young women would have been unable to undertake an active job search due to household responsibilities, but some would also qualify among those feeling too “discouraged” to bother.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, figure 2.12 also

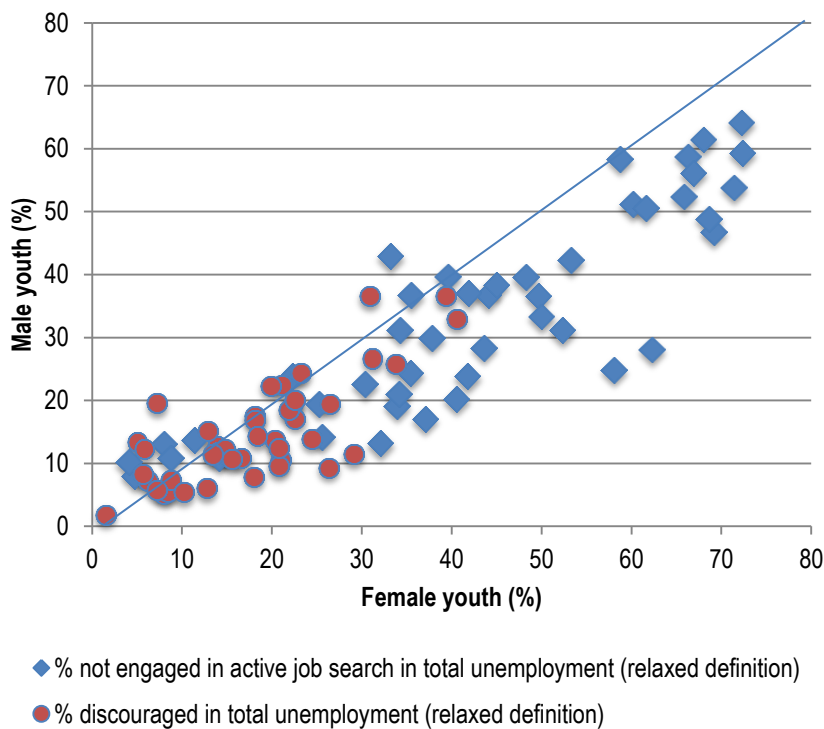
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<sup>19</sup> Discouraged workers are defined as those who are not working and who have expressed a desire to work but do not seek work for a range of reasons, implying that they felt that undertaking a job search would be a futile effort. The term is frequently used for advocacy purposes, presented as a growing phenomenon among youth during the global economic crisis and a danger to national prosperity and security. In terms of scale, however, the number of discouraged youth is small, reaching, at most, 4.9 per cent of the youth labour force among SWTS countries (7.9 per cent for young women and 3.5 per cent for young men).



demonstrates that, in the majority of countries, young women are more likely than young men to give up their job search due to discouragement.

**Figure 2.12 Shares not actively seeking but available to work and discouraged youth in total youth unemployment (relaxed definition) by sex, SWTS countries**

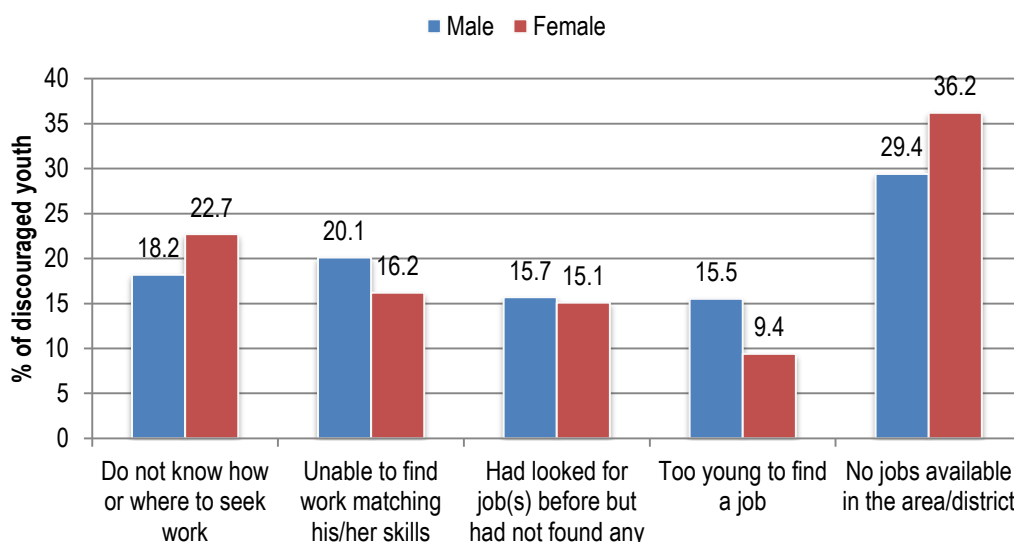


Notes: Youth = 15–29. Country data are available in Annex I, table A.6.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 31 countries (45 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Reasons for discouragement with labour market prospects are also likely to differ between the sexes and can provide certain hints as to the sociology of the two groups in terms of what they feel their options to be. In general terms, it seems that young women are more likely than young men to be pessimistic about their chances of finding work in their area or district (although this reason represents the largest share among both sexes in figure 2.13), and are also more likely to say that they do not know how or where to look for work. Both responses imply a degree of powerlessness on the part of young women to determine their own economic futures. Young men, in contrast, might at least feel more empowered to leave their parental/spousal household to find work so are slightly less inclined to cite discouragement for that reason alone. Rather, young men are more likely than young women to cite discouragement due to an inability to find work that matches their level of skills, and are more likely to give up on the search because they feel they are still too young.

**Figure 2.13 Reason for not actively seeking work among discouraged youth by sex, 24 country average**



Note: Youth = 15–29.

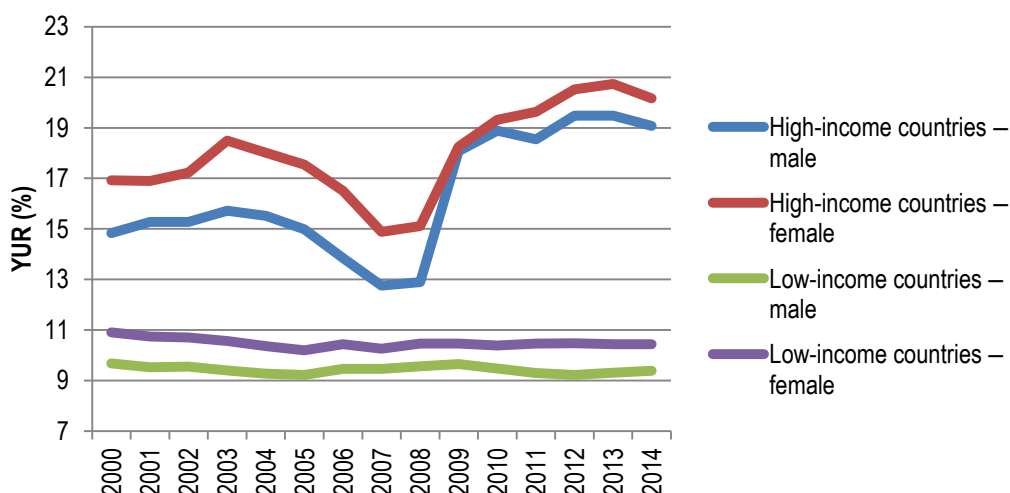
Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 24 countries (first round). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

The ILO *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015* (ILO, 2015a) demonstrates the influence of income level on youth unemployment – equating higher income with higher unemployment rates. It also looked at the influence of educational level on youth unemployment, finding that, in most regions, the rate is higher for those with higher education. Only in the European Union and in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the two regions with the largest share of youth holding higher-level degrees, were the least educated youth the most likely to be unemployed. This section investigates whether these trends are the same for both female and male unemployed youth.

First, on the unemployment–income linkages, over the period 2000 to 2014 there is a consistent gap between the YUR of high-income countries and those of low-income countries which applies to both sexes (figure 2.14). The figure highlights a few interesting points: first, the gap between the female YUR of high-income countries and that of low-income countries is slightly greater than that between males in the two groupings. The exception to this statement comes during the economic crisis period between 2007 and 2013. This leads to the second point, which is that the YUR in high-income countries proved to be highly sensitive to the global economic crisis while the YUR in low-income countries was mostly immune. And, more specifically, it was young males in high-income countries that saw the most significant jump in their unemployment rates during the economic crisis. The male YUR of high-income countries almost achieved parity with the female rate at 18.9 and 19.3 per cent, respectively, in 2010, before the female–male gap widened again the following year, albeit at a reduced level to that seen prior to the crisis.

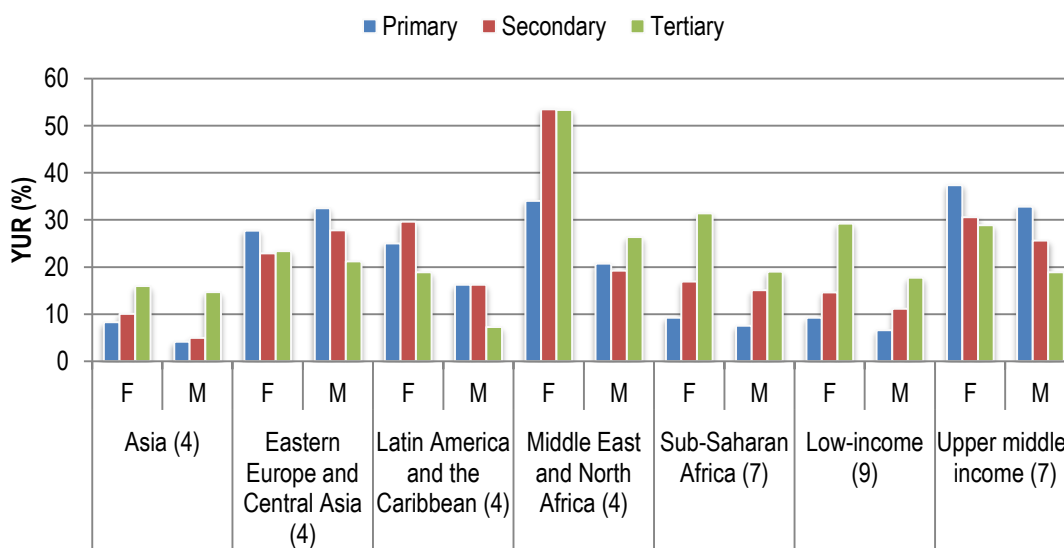
The female–male gap in YUR of low-income countries, in contrast, remained unchanged at approximately 1 percentage point over the whole period. In low-income countries, therefore, unemployment (when measured by the strict definition) continues to touch only a minority of young men and women. Rather, conditions of poverty and a lack of social safety nets act as push factors towards engagement in any income-generating activity (primarily low-productivity self-employment; see section 2.3.1).

**Figure 2.14 Youth unemployment rate by sex and income grouping, 2000–14**



Note: Youth = 15–24.  
Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO, Trends Econometric Models, April 2015.

**Figure 2.15 Youth unemployment rate (strict definition) by level of completed education and sex, SWTS countries by regional and income groupings**



Notes: F = female; M = male. The number of countries is shown in parentheses. The lower-middle income group is not shown since the figure is intended to show only the extreme income groups. Youth = 15–29.  
Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 23 countries (first round). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

In terms of YUR by levels of completed education, with a few exceptions, the trends are the same for both sexes. In the regions of Asia, the Middle East and North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa and for the low-income grouping, the SWTS results show youth with the highest level of education (tertiary) as the group with higher unemployment rates (figure 2.15). This is the case for both young women and men. With the exception of young men in the Middle East and North African countries, youth (male or female) with tertiary education were between two and three times more likely to be unemployed than youth with primary education. “Graduate” unemployment remains a significant concern in primarily lower income countries, where demand for high-skilled workers remains limited and where the more highly educated youth are prepared to invest in a longer job search to

find a job that better matches their expectations and skills level. For the Middle East and North Africa, where more than one-half of university-educated female youth remains in unemployment, one can also add as a reason the socio-cultural barriers faced by the young female jobseekers.<sup>20</sup>

However, the field of study and the occupation sought are also important factors in determining levels of graduate unemployment. Often, the concentration of young women in non-technical specializations, such as humanities, within the education system works to their disadvantage when it comes to finding work. With a growing demand for technical specializations in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) as countries move up the development spectrum, and possible saturation in humanities fields, both young men and women could potentially improve their employment chances by studying STEM subjects.

Figure 2.16 shows the distribution of young unemployed tertiary graduates by their field of specialization in school in two countries: Serbia (an upper middle-income country) and Uganda (a low-income country). It appears that both young men and women specializing in STEM subjects make a quick and easy transition into employment in Uganda. In Serbia, in contrast, where the number of jobseekers in the fields of STEM is likely to be slightly higher than the number of job openings, some young men and women with that specialization will still remain unemployed for a period. Yet the STEM graduates still look much better positioned in the Serbian labour market than youth who specialized in the humanities or social sciences (the “soft” sciences).

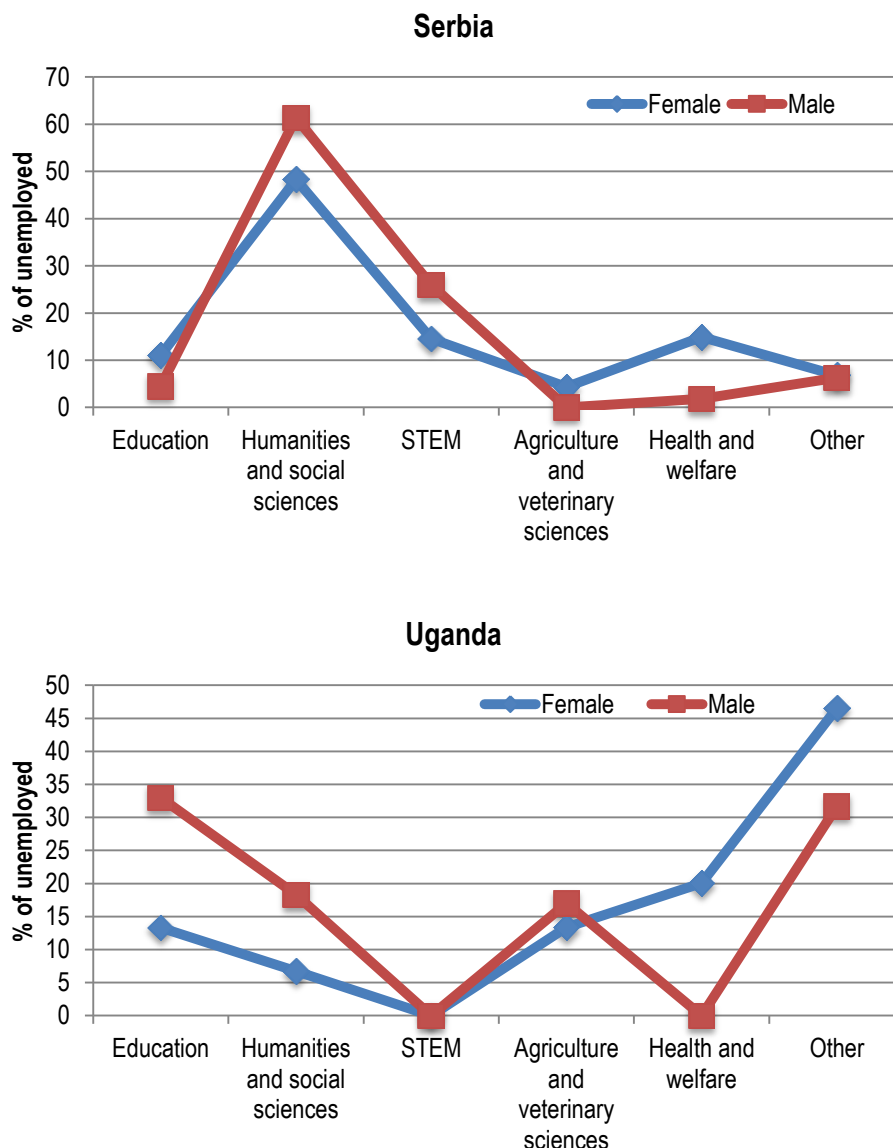
In low-income Uganda, but even more so in countries in the Middle East and North Africa, graduates must compete for a limited number of teaching jobs. While in Uganda, and also Zambia (see Annex I, table A.7), male teachers would seem to be disadvantaged in the job search, in other countries it is young female teachers who have to wait in the job queue for what is likely to be a saturated market. In Jordan and the Occupied Palestinian Territory as many as 30.1 and 38.9 per cent of young female unemployed tertiary graduates were trained as teachers. Occupational segregation, discussed in detail in section 2.3.2, whereby young women compete for a more limited spectrum of occupations, remains an important explanatory factor behind higher female unemployment rates.

In comparatively higher income regions, such as Eastern Europe and Central Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, unemployment rates are higher among youth with primary education compared to those with higher educational achievement. And again, this is true of both young men and women. But one important fact remains, which is that regardless of education level, regardless of region or income-level, females are clearly disadvantaged when it comes to unemployment. In all circumstances (with the exception of youth educated to primary and secondary level in Eastern Europe and Central Asia), unemployment rates of young women remain higher than those of young men.

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<sup>20</sup> Mansuy and Werquin (2015) refer to a recent statistical survey in Morocco in which 22 per cent of the young female respondents reported that searching for a job had been vetoed by their father or their husband.

**Figure 2.16** Distribution of young unemployed university graduates by field of specialization, by sex, Serbia and Uganda, 2015



Notes: The relaxed definition of unemployment is used here. STEM = Sciences, technology (computing), engineering and mathematics. Additional countries are shown in Annex I, table A.7. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data (2015). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Another unfortunate reality is that investing in the education of young women is not yet seen to narrow the gender gap in unemployment rates. On the contrary, higher education levels are shown to exacerbate the gaps. Among the SWTS low-income countries, the gender gap (female-to-male) in the YUR among university graduates was 12 percentage points compared to a 3 percentage point gap for youth with primary education. For the upper middle-income countries, the relative gaps were 10 points and 5 points, respectively. The conclusion is that when highly skilled jobs are rationed, it is still the young males with higher education who find work first in most developing countries.

## 2.3 The challenge of finding *decent* work

### 2.3.1 *Status in employment and other measures of job quality*

According to the previous sections, young women remain the more disadvantaged sex when it comes to joining the labour market and finding work. For the young women who do manage to find work, the quality of the job is not necessarily worse than that of young men, at least not in terms of access to paid work with stable contracts. One reason for this has to do with the type of jobs that young women take (or rather, that are made available to young women). Except in sub-Saharan Africa, the employment status most common for young women is as a paid employee, and the female and male shares in paid employment are close in size. High female shares in paid employment can reflect two differing contexts; the first being those countries where access to female work is most severely restricted and where tradition and cultural norms dictate what qualifies as “acceptable” female work. In some countries, especially in the Middle East and North Africa, one accepted outlet for female labour is in the public sector. In other countries, particularly in South Asia (Bangladesh, for example<sup>21</sup>), it has recently become acceptable for young women to earn a living in paid employment in the garment manufacturing sector.

The second context in which the majority shares of both male and female work are in paid employment is where labour market institutions are more firmly established and the economy is primarily services-based, as is typically the case in countries at the upper middle-income or high-income levels. Many of the countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and some in the Middle East and North Africa fit this description, so it is not surprising to find that the shares of young women in paid employment in these regions is high, at 79.2, 67.9 and 81.5 per cent, respectively (table 2.4).

The main differences between male and female employment statuses are found in the sub-categories of vulnerable employment. Vulnerable employment was defined as an indicator for target 1b of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – towards productive employment and decent work for all – as the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers in total employment. A high proportion of paid workers tends to indicate advanced economic development while large shares of contributing family workers and own-account workers tend to indicate low economic development and high levels of poverty (ILO, 2010a).

In all regions except Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the vulnerable employment rate of young women is higher than that of young men, although the gap is generally not large. The composition of vulnerable employment is such that, in most countries, young female workers are more often in contributing family work (helping out, without pay, in a family enterprise or farm) than young men, while young male workers are more often in own-account work.<sup>22</sup> At most, 40.2 per cent of young female workers in the SWTS

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<sup>21</sup> In Bangladesh, only 14.9 per cent of young women work but, among these, a majority is in paid employment (55.9 per cent) and more than one-third (39.5 per cent) is involved in paid work in manufacturing (primarily in the garment industry) (Toufique, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> According to the International Standard Classification of Employment (ICSE) “contributing family workers” are workers who hold a “self-employment” job in a market-oriented establishment operated by a related person, who cannot be regarded as a partner, because their degree of commitment to the operation of the establishment, in terms of working time or other factors to be determined by national circumstances, is not at a level comparable to that of the head of the establishment. “Own-account workers” are those engaged on their own in jobs where the

countries of Asia were engaged in contributing family work and 45.4 per cent of young female workers in sub-Saharan Africa were engaged in own-account work (table 2.4).

**Table 2.4 Status in employment, informal employment, stable paid employment and involuntary part-time employment, SWTS countries by regional averages**

Region	Sex	Geographic coverage	Status in employment					Share in informal employment	Share in paid employment with contract > 12 months	Share in involuntary part-time employment
			Employees	Employers	Own-account workers	Contributing family workers	Other			
Asia (4:5)	F	Total	40.6	1.2	17.1	40.2	0.9	90.9	33.7	7.8
	F	Urban	59.1	0.7	12.5	26.8	0.9	86.6	52.4	5.3
	F	Rural	34.4	1.3	18.9	44.4	1.0	92.3	27.4	8.5
	M	Total	47.1	2.7	17.6	31.9	0.8	92.1	36.4	6.9
Eastern Europe and Central Asia (7:11)	F	Total	79.2	1.0	6.5	12.1	1.3	48.8	70.7	7.2
	F	Urban	87.1	1.5	5.5	4.3	1.6	44.8	75.8	5.7
	F	Rural	63.3	0.5	6.3	28.7	1.2	60.9	56.7	9.0
	M	Total	74.3	1.4	10.9	11.9	1.4	54.4	64.4	6.7
Latin America and the Caribbean (5:6)	F	Total	67.9	1.3	18.7	11.5	1.1	79.8	54.2	16.0
	F	Urban	68.4	1.5	19.3	10.2	0.6	77.2	53.6	15.0
	F	Rural	58.1	0.8	23.6	15.7	1.9	88.5	48.3	18.2
	M	Total	67.9	2.6	17.0	12.0	0.5	81.2	52.0	11.4
Middle East and North Africa (5:8)	F	Total	81.5	1.4	5.4	11.5	0.2	75.2	64.4	5.0
	F	Urban	88.0	1.8	5.8	4.2	0.1	73.0	68.3	4.1
	F	Rural	72.6	0.5	6.5	20.4	0.1	75.1	57.8	6.0
	M	Total	81.1	3.4	6.5	8.6	0.3	75.9	63.6	3.4
Sub-Saharan Africa (9:15)	F	Total	14.8	2.9	45.4	32.5	4.4	93.0	11.2	16.7
	F	Urban	24.3	3.2	40.5	27.1	4.9	92.2	20.1	7.8
	F	Rural	10.5	2.8	46.5	35.7	4.5	92.5	7.6	5.3
	M	Total	27.3	4.3	37.9	25.8	4.7	89.7	18.9	8.5

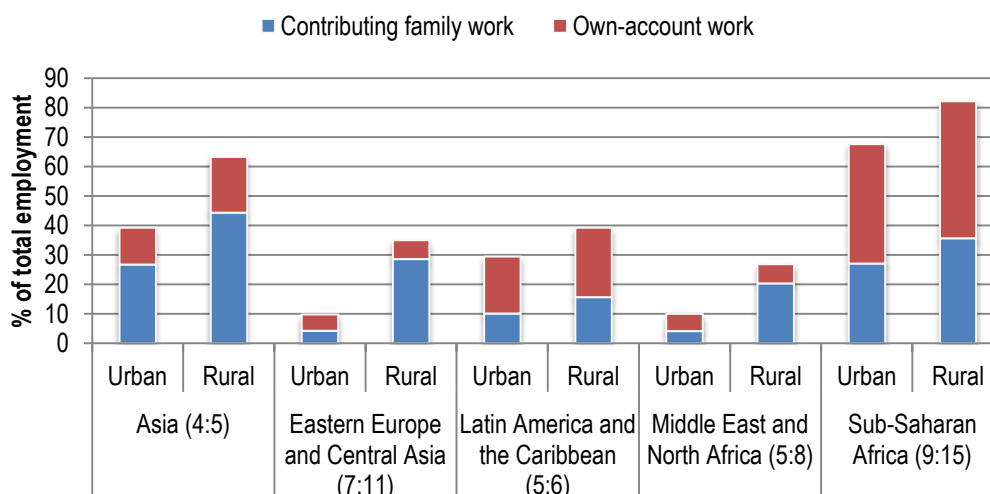
Notes: F = female; M = male. For regions, the first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 30 countries (45 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Shares of vulnerable employment are higher in rural than urban areas (figure 2.17). Among the Asian countries, for example, nearly two in three young female workers in rural areas are in vulnerable employment (18.9 per cent in own-account work and 44.4 per cent in contributing family work) compared to two in five female workers in urban areas (12.5 per cent in own-account work and 26.8 per cent in contributing family work). In sub-Saharan Africa, the two categories sum to as much as 82.2 per cent for female workers in rural areas compared to 67.6 per cent in urban areas.

remuneration is directly dependent upon the profits (or the potential for profits) derived from the goods and services produced (where own consumption is classified as part of profits).

**Figure 2.17 Vulnerable employment shares among young women by sub-categories and urban/rural, SWTS countries by regional averages**

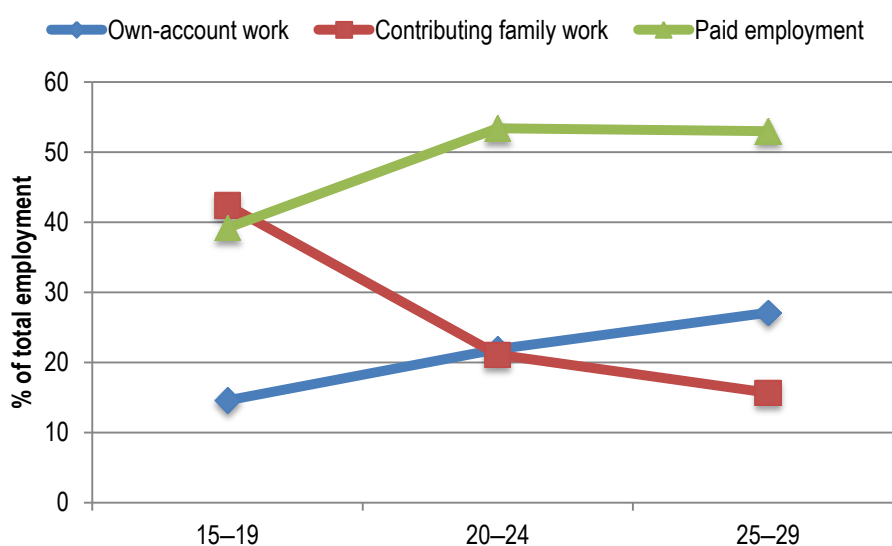


Notes: The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 30 countries (45 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

We can see from figure 2.18 that contributing family work does tend to be a temporary category for many adolescents, who then move to something else. The figure shows that 42.4 per cent of young women in that age group (as a 30 country average) were engaged in unpaid family work. The proportion falls to 21.1 and 15.7 per cent for the age groups 20–24 and 25–29, respectively. In contrast, young female workers are increasingly engaged in own-account work and paid employment as they reach the upper age bands. The likelihood of young men to serve as unpaid family workers also decreases as they age, although male shares in the employment category lags the female share regardless of age group (shares of male workers in contributing family work are 39.3 per cent (15–19), 17.8 per cent (20–24) and 8.0 per cent (25–29)).

**Figure 2.18 Status in employment of young female workers by age group, 30 country average**



Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 30 countries (45 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.



The potential advantage of paid employment over self-employment is that the paid job has at least the possibility of having a written contract of reasonable duration and entitlements such as paid annual and sick leave. Far too often, however, the SWTS have shown that paid work in developing countries can provide as little job security for the incumbent as that of a person in vulnerable employment. This finding is based on the SWTS data shown in ILO (2015a), Annex table A.11 detailing the share of young men and women (of the SWTS countries) in casual paid employment and temporary (non-casual) employment.<sup>23</sup> In most cases, young male workers had a higher likelihood of falling into these two categories, yet still the average share (25 countries) of paid female workers in the more precarious categories totalled 8.2 per cent of female employment overall (compared to 10.6 per cent of male youth employment).

The SWTS questionnaire, like a labour force survey, is designed so that the enumerator can probe the respondent on areas of economic activities which they may have undertaken in the week prior to the survey date. It is the responses to these series of questions that are used to determine if the respondent is “employed” according to the international standard. An analysis of the specific areas of economic engagement offers interesting insights into engagement in domestic work and household production work which are otherwise difficult to capture. The questions can also solicit information on whether or not youth are engaging in a multiple livelihoods approach in the context of low-income countries.<sup>24</sup>

Figure 2.19 offers a summary of youth engagement in two activities which are typically considered to fall within the female domain: domestic work and household production work. The latter activity includes work on one’s own (or a household’s) plot, farm, food garden, or providing help to grow farm produce for sale or look after animals intended for sale. Household production work is more common in low-income countries where the majority of the population lives in rural areas; hence, the higher shares of youth engaged in household production work in the regions of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. In terms of the status in employment indicators, this category would probably be classified with contributing family workers.

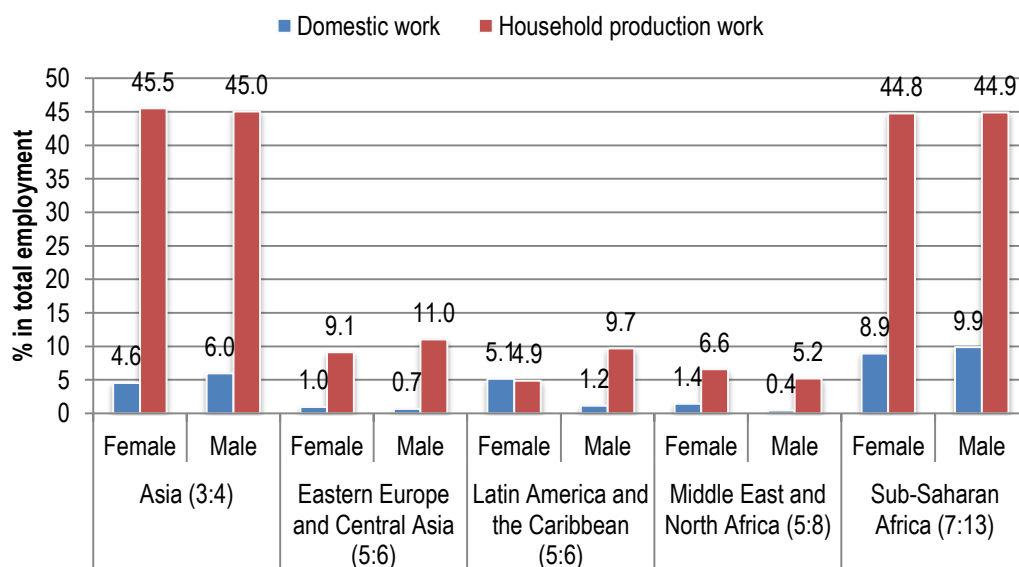
The gender gaps in the two activities are not excessively large and the direction of the gaps varies by the specific activity and across regions. Neither activity comes out as strongly female-oriented. In the regions with the largest shares of young workers in household production work – Asia and sub-Saharan Africa – both young women and young men are equally engaged (at around 45 per cent of young workers). In the same two regions, the share of young men in domestic work slightly outweighs the share of young women in domestic work. In the remaining regions domestic work is slightly more female than male. Shares of youth in domestic work remain relatively small (at most 8.9 per cent of female workers in sub-Saharan Africa and 9.9 per cent of male workers in the same region).

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<sup>23</sup> Casual labourers are defined as paid employees with contract/agreement durations of less than 12 months who give as the reason for the limited duration of the contract/agreement either seasonal work, occasional work or work based on a fixed task. A further check was made to exclude those who stated that their payment period was greater than one month. Temporary (non-casual) employment is paid employment with a duration of less than 12 months minus casual workers.

<sup>24</sup> A W4Y technical brief will focus on this topic in early 2016. See the website for details: <http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/work-for-youth/publications/technical-briefs/lang--en/index.htm>.

**Figure 2.19 Youth engaged in domestic work and household production work (as share of youth employment), by sex, SWTS countries by regional averages**



Notes: Youth = 15–29. Country data are available in Annex I, table A.8.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 24 countries (37 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

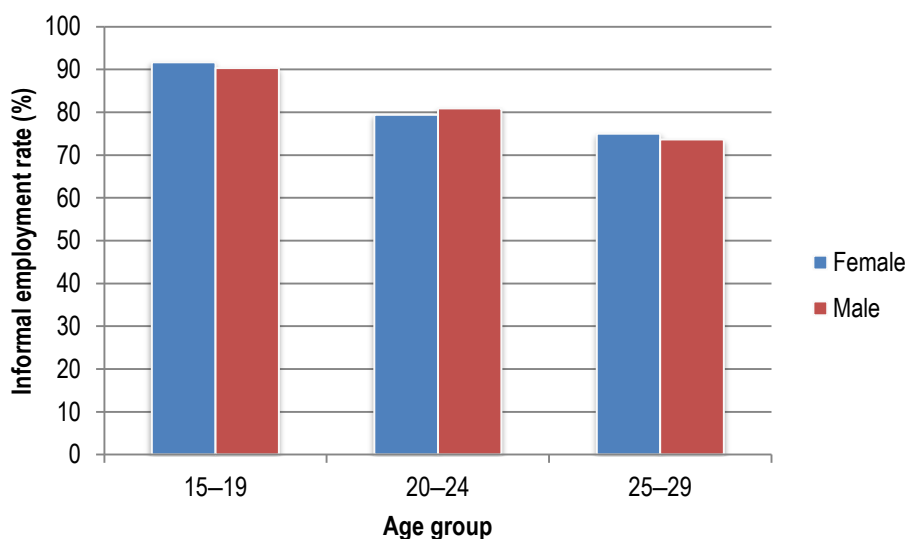
### 2.3.2 Informal employment

A previous thematic analysis of the SWTS found that informal employment among youth was an issue that was shared equally among young women and men (Shehu and Nilsson, 2014). Based on the latest SWTS figures (32 country average), the informal employment rate among young men is 76.9 per cent compared to 76.0 per cent for young women. Looking at the regional averages in table 2.4, the female informal rate exceeds the male rate only in sub-Saharan Africa (93.0 and 89.7 per cent, respectively).

Informal employment is particularly widespread in low-income countries, but the middle-income and even high-income economies are not immune since the concept measures not only jobs in the informal sector but also informal jobs in the formal sector.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, it is a phenomenon that affects all labour markets, but to different degrees and with different manifestations. It is particularly prevalent in sectors such as agriculture and services, sectors which have weak regulatory environments and feature large concentrations of women. And youth are especially prone to informal employment. The younger the youth, the higher the risk, as demonstrated in figure 2.20, since the youngest age band includes those with the lower levels of education and experience.

<sup>25</sup> ILO (2015a) calculated the informal employment rate of youth across income groupings. The report notes that among the ten low-income SWTS countries, as many as nine in ten young workers are informally employed. While the incidence improves for middle-income countries (ten lower middle-income and eight upper middle-income), shares are still above 60 per cent.

**Figure 2.20 Youth informal employment rates by sex and age group, 32 country average**



Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 32 countries (47 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Even though the informal economy provides poor quality work and inferior working conditions regardless of sex and age, there is strong evidence to suggest that women and girls are engaged in the most marginalized segments of it. In fact, the same problems that confront formal labour markets – gender discrimination, unequal pay, occupational segregation, the burdens of unpaid work – are mirrored in the informal economy and are often even more pervasive. Women in the informal economy often have fewer assets and less access to resources, including land, technology, productive inputs and skills, which makes their income-generating activities more precarious than young men's. For rural women these problems are compounded by a lack of infrastructure and service provision, which constrain both their income-generating activities and their ability to manage their household tasks.

Informal employment is rarely a choice. In the majority of cases, informality is a necessity due to the lack of opportunities in the formal economy and weak social protection mechanisms. In all cases it generates high costs, not only in terms of individual disenchantment and barriers to the growth of enterprises, but also depriving governments of much-needed tax revenue and resources to fund social protection.

### **2.3.2 Job segregation**

#### *Occupational segregation*

Women, regardless of age, are often over-represented in sectors, occupations and positions where pay tends to be moderate. Two types of segregation are evident: first, horizontal segregation, which relates to the high concentration of women in certain occupations and certain sectors and which is gender based, and second, vertical segregation, which refers to the high concentration of women in lower ranking positions.

The SWTS allows us to investigate the degree of horizontal segregation of young women, but not the vertical segregation.<sup>26</sup>

The occupational distribution of workers can reveal interesting information regarding the different patterns of jobs taken by men and women in the labour market. While occupational segregation affects both women and men and constrains their employment choices and visions, it has more serious impacts on women since they are concentrated in a narrower range of jobs than men. Moreover, the jobs that women do are often characterized by low productivity, poor remuneration, high levels of insecurity, a lack of regulation and poor working conditions. Occupational segregation remains one of the most persistent forms of gender inequality in the world of work and has been difficult to counter in all countries, irrespective of income.<sup>27</sup>

There are multiple causes of occupational segregation. The seeds may be sown in the earliest stages of the life cycle, when differing levels of parental investment in education can place girls and boys on different tracks throughout childhood and into adulthood. Social norms ascribing specific gender roles also play a major role in shaping the visions and ambitions of girls and boys, which may be further reflected in stereotypes found in the curriculum. Even where more equitable resources are directed to the education of both sexes, gendered choices in subjects mean that girls and boys may develop different aspirations and skills and eventually push them into different occupational trajectories. Even today, fewer young women are found in high growth fields, such as technology, engineering, IT and science, representing a loss to the productivity and innovation capacities of economies.

One of the most important determinants of horizontal segregation is the unequal distribution of household responsibilities which keep women and young girls out of the labour market or in contributing (unpaid) family work to a much greater degree than men. As women struggle to balance these responsibilities with earning an income, inevitably jobs which are part-time or enable the female worker to keep her children close offer the best opportunities for combining these roles even though they may be poorly paid and offer few advancement opportunities.

Figure 2.21 shows the overall distribution of occupations at the 1-digit level for young men and women (30 country average). The female share is higher as professional, service and sales workers, clerks and technicians while the male share is higher among managers, skilled agricultural workers, plant and machine operators, crafts workers and in elementary occupations. Still, the figure masks the more limited choice of occupations for

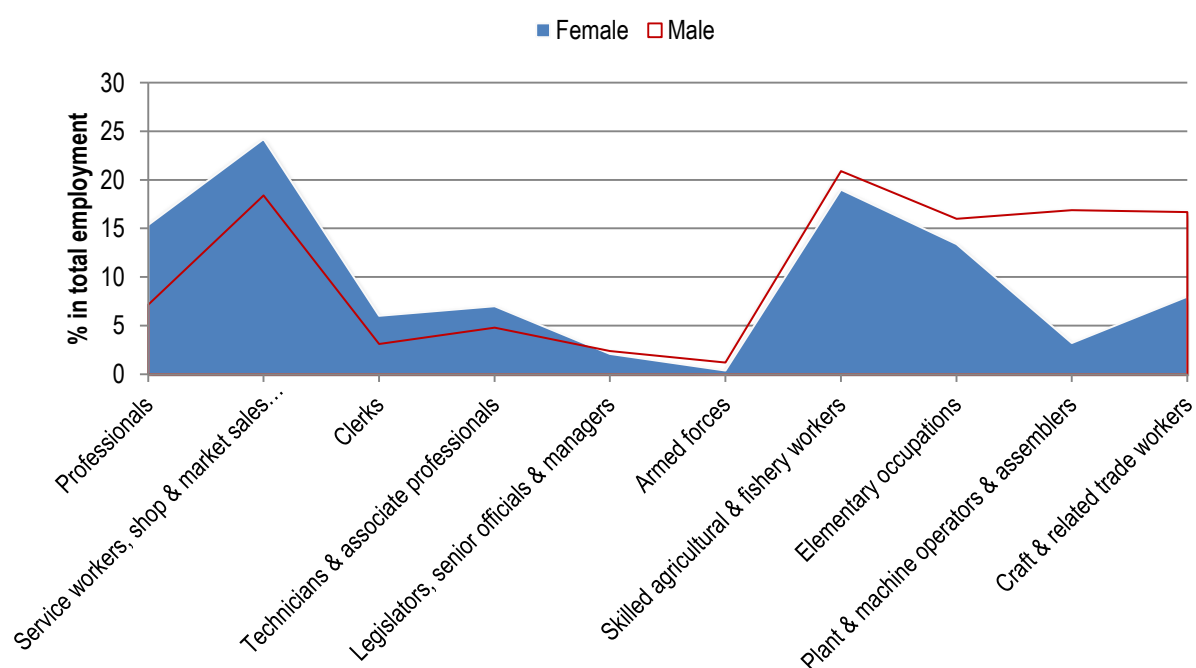
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<sup>26</sup> Motherhood can play a key role in limiting career advancement in the absence of measures to combine work and family responsibilities or provide childcare opportunities and adequate maternity coverage. Recruitment and promotion is also often hampered by the lower value attributed to women's work, which is often seen as a secondary income. Furthermore, societal beliefs that young women have less attachment to the labour market may be reflected in employers' perceptions and result in their reluctance to hire them.

<sup>27</sup> In the European Union (27 countries), for example, the top six occupations identified for women in 2012 were: shop salespeople and demonstrators; domestic helpers and related jobs, such as cleaners and laundry workers; personal care and related workers; other office clerks; administrative associate professionals; housekeeping and restaurant services workers. For men, the six occupations taking the largest share of workers were: motor vehicle drivers; building frame and related trade workers; managers of small enterprises; building finishers and related trades workers; physical and engineering science technicians; machinery mechanics and fitters. Eurofound blog, "Horizontal segregation", 11 Sep. 2013. Available at: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/industrial-relations-dictionary/horizontal-segregation>.

young women in many countries and the influence that these narrower options can have on employment outcomes. For this reason it is worthwhile to review occupations at the 2-digit level, as shown in table 2.5. Here, it is interesting to see that sales work and agricultural occupations (subsistence farming and market-oriented farming) occupy the largest shares of both young men and women, although with differing concentrations. The diversity of male- and female-dominant occupations is then only visible beyond the third ranked occupation. The fourth and fifth ranking occupations for young women in the SWTS countries are teaching (7.5 per cent) and personal care work (6.8 per cent). The data thus support the typical gender trends for over-representation of female workers in care occupations while men dominate in a variety of industrial occupations (in this case, building and related trades work).

**Figure 2.21 Youth employment by occupation (ISCO-08) by sex, 30 country average**



Notes: Occupational categories are the major groups of the International Standard Classification of Occupations, 2008. Youth = 15–29. Country data (females only) is available in Annex I, table A.9.  
 Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 30 countries (42 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Table 2.5 also shows the top five ranking occupations of young women by region. Sales work figures among the top two occupations in all regions but, beyond this, there are more regional differences than similarities. The dominance of female work in agriculture is clear in Asia and the Pacific and sub-Saharan Africa, but women in the latter region are also engaged in elementary occupations as cleaners and personal care workers. The same occupations are also important for female work in Latin America and the Caribbean, but here we find also work in customer service. In the Middle East and North Africa, professional work – as teachers, health-care workers and in administration – offers a limited number of jobs for young women. When work becomes too concentrated in any given occupation, job queues can be long. In fact, figure 2.22 does hint at a correlation between the shares of female workers as professionals and in service and sales work and the female youth unemployment rate (see also section 2.2 and figure 2.16).

**Table 2.5 Top five occupations (ISCO-08, 2-digit) of young women and men, 25 country average, and young women by regional averages**

All young women (25:34)		%	All young men (25:34)		%
Sales workers		16.1	Subsistence farmers, fishers, hunters and gatherers		10.7
Subsistence farmers, fishers, hunters and gatherers		10.6	Sales workers		10.7
Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers		7.8	Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers		8.8
Teaching professionals		7.5	Agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers		7.1
Personal service workers		6.8	Building and related trades workers (excluding electricians)		6.9

Asia and Pacific (5:6), female	%	Eastern Europe and Central Asia (6:8), female	%	Latin America and the Caribbean (4:5), female	%
Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers	18.3	Sales workers	14.1	Sales workers	22.0
Sales workers	14.0	Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers	8.9	Personal service workers	12.2
Food processing, woodworking, garment and other craft and related trades workers	12.2	Personal service workers	7.1	Cleaners and helpers	9.9
Subsistence farmers, fishers, hunters and gatherers	11.5	Teaching professionals	6.3	Customer service clerks	6.5
Agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers	7.6	Agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers	5.8	Agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers	4.4

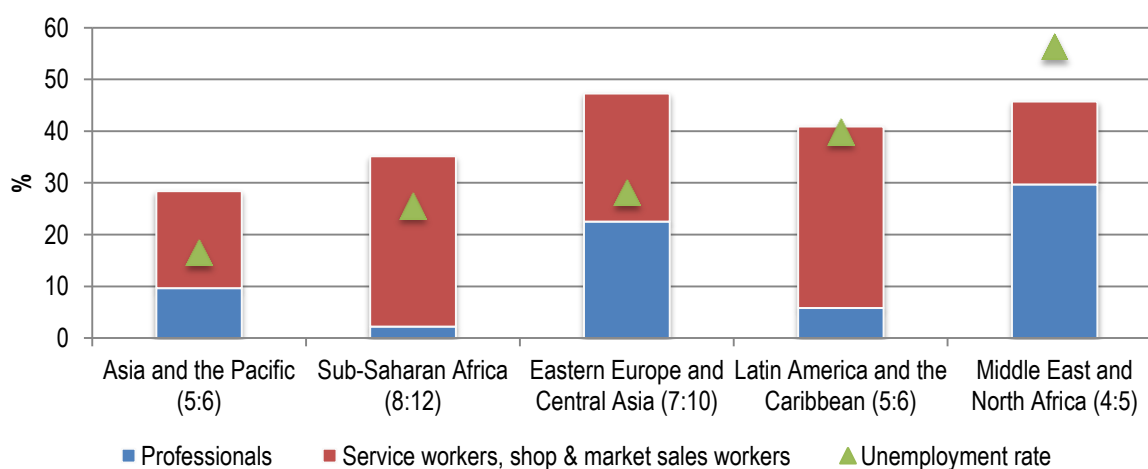
  

Middle East and North Africa (4:7), female	%	Sub-Saharan Africa (6:8), female	%
Teaching professionals	20.3	Subsistence farmers, fishers, hunters and gatherers	36.2
Sales workers	9.6	Sales workers	19.0
Market-oriented skilled agricultural workers	9.0	Food processing, woodworking, garment and other craft and related trades workers	8.2
Business and administration professionals	7.4	Cleaners and helpers	8.0
Health professionals	6.8	Personal service workers	5.0

Notes: The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 25 countries (34 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Figure 2.22 Shares of young female workers in two occupations (professionals and service workers, shop and market sales workers) and female youth unemployment rate, SWTS countries by regional averages**

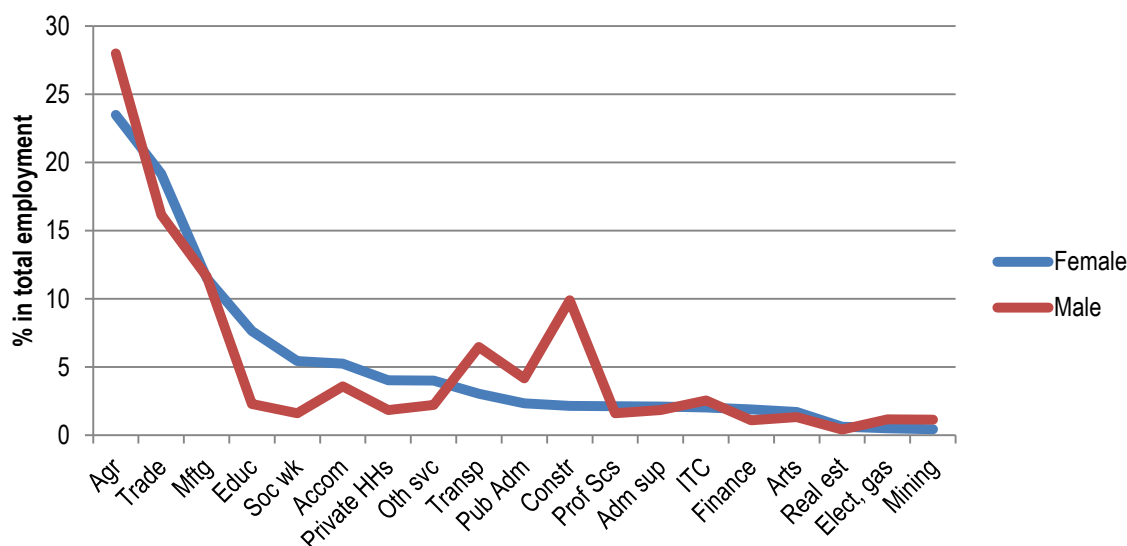


Notes: The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 29 countries (39 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

The concentration of women and men in different sectors – sectoral segregation – has also been remarkably persistent and consistent across countries and regions (World Bank, 2012). Even where structural shifts have occurred, changes in the structure of employment brought about by development have not weakened labour market segregation, merely changed the nature of segregation. For example, in many cases both young women and men have transited from low productivity jobs in agriculture into poor quality employment in the services sector (Elder et al., 2015).

**Figure 2.23 Youth employment by 1-digit sector, by sex, 30 country average**



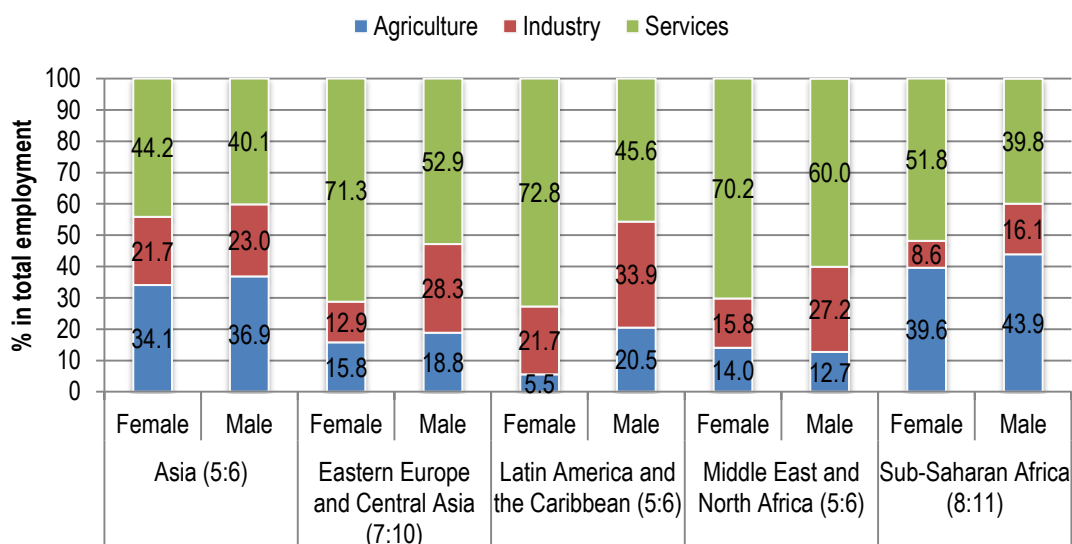
Notes: Sectors are abbreviated. For proper naming with country data, see Annex I, table A.9. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 30 countries (39 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

The sectoral distribution of young women and men is shown in figure 2.23. Regarding shares in agriculture (24 per cent for young women, 28 per cent for young men), wholesale and retail trade (19 per cent for young women, 16 per cent for young men) and manufacturing (12 per cent for both young women and men), the differences by sex are not large. Female-dominated sectors are primarily services sectors, such as education, social work and work within private households. Young men, in contrast, are more likely than young women to work in transport, public administration and certainly construction. Sectoral segregation for young women is most obvious in the SWTS countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa. In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, for example, young women were 1.4 times more likely than young men to work in services while young men were more than twice as likely to work in industry (figure 2.24).

Job segregation not only takes the form of a horizontal clustering of a particular sex into a specific type of job, but also manifests itself in the vertical dimension – constraining women's opportunities to be promoted to positions of authority and management within a job and to gain higher salaries. The “glass ceiling” can occur as a result of discrimination in recruitment processes – including non-investment in female personnel due to the expectation that they will eventually detach from the labour market when they have children – and also due to female choices to take jobs in which they feel better able to balance work with home duties.

**Figure 2.24 Youth employment by aggregate, by sex, SWTS countries by regional averages**



Note: Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 30 countries (39 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

Regarding employers' hiring preferences, evidence from certain labour demand enterprise surveys (LDES), also run under the framework of the ILO's Work4Youth project (see section 1.4), do show an element of bias. In Viet Nam, for example, 37 per cent of enterprises expressed a preference for hiring male workers for professional posts (compared to 55 per cent who claimed no preference and 8 per cent who preferred women). For production work, the male bias was even stronger at 40 per cent (Nguyen et al., 2015). In Zambia, the preference for males was 15 per cent in professional posts (4 per cent for females) and 24 per cent in production posts (5 per cent for females) (Chigunta et al., 2013). The strongest gender bias was expressed within the LDES implemented in Tunisia. In Tunisia, for production posts, there was a clear bias towards recruitment of males (preference expressed by 45 per cent of employers), but also for professional posts, 28 per cent of employers would prefer to hire males (ILO, 2015c).<sup>28</sup>

From an economic perspective, continued labour market segmentation signals labour market failures and the inefficient allocation of human resources. It also acts as a drag on efforts to reduce poverty for a number of reasons: it contributes to the underutilization of women's labour despite their investment in skills and education, and, since it clusters women in underpaid work, it deprives households of income which could be used to improve family welfare. This is particularly pertinent in the context of the widespread evidence that increases in women's income result in greater spending on the health and education of children than increases in men's income (see the discussion in section 1.1). Importantly also, from a rights point of view, segmentation counters the fundamental principles and rights of equality of opportunity and treatment in the labour market.

<sup>28</sup> The LDES are also available for Benin, Liberia, Malawi, Nepal, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. The data sets are available at the Work4Youth webpage at: [http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/WCMS\\_234860/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/WCMS_234860/lang--en/index.htm).



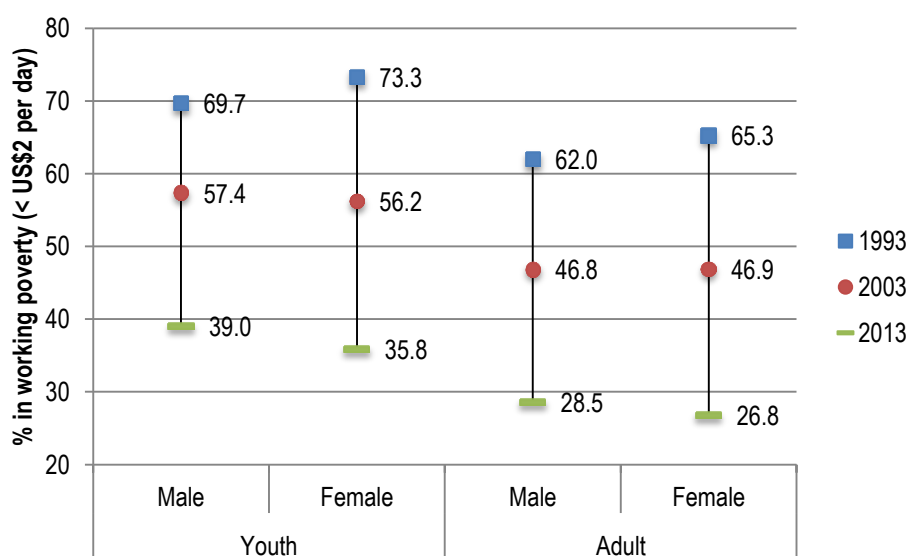
### 2.3.3 Gender pay differentials and working poverty

Around the world, young people mainly earn considerably less than their adult counterparts and, unfortunately, being young and female results in a double penalty when it comes to pay and income. This raises issues not only of equity, rights and non-discrimination but also economic concerns. Less purchasing power among young people has the effect of weakening aggregate demand, which has spin-off effects in the wider economy. Recent analysis has shown that the “youth wage discount” – that is, the gap in wages between young and adult workers – is increasing in all regions, and that this has occurred, paradoxically, in spite of increasing educational attainment and a decline in the youth share of the working age population (Grimshaw, 2014). The study also found that, while around 90 per cent of ILO member States operated some form of minimal wage, nearly half of these countries had sub-minimum wages for young people.

Lower earnings for youth are identified in recent working poverty data, as reported in ILO (2015a). The report notes that employed youth (15–24) were 1.5 times more likely than adults (25+) to be found in the extreme poverty class (living below US\$1.25 per day) and 1.2 times more likely to be in moderate poverty (living between US\$1.25 and US\$2 per day). But the working poverty data for youth had not yet been analysed by sex. This report then gives a first estimate of working poverty rates for young men and women.

Presented over ten-year periods between 1993 and 2013 in figure 2.24, the first noteworthy trend in working poverty is in its impressive decline, and especially for young women. Male youth working poverty (measured as the share of working youth living in households where the cumulative income level was below US\$2 per day) declined from 69.7 to 39.0 per cent (31 percentage points) over the long-term period. Working poverty of young women decreased even more sharply, from 73.3 to 35.8 per cent (37 percentage points). In the meantime, however, the gap between the working poverty rates of youth and adults widened. By 2013, male youth were 1.4 times more likely to be among the working poor compared to male adults and the share of female youth was 1.3 times higher than for adult females.

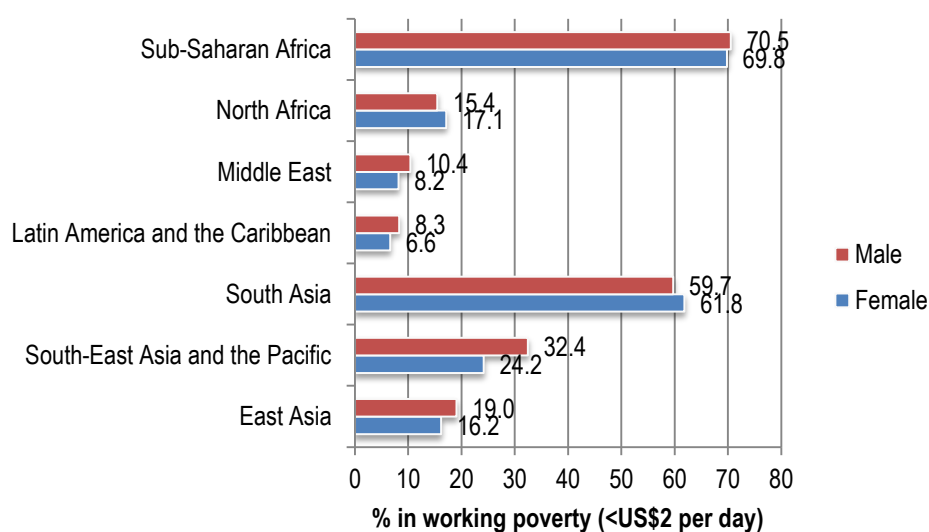
**Figure 2.24 Working poverty rates (below US\$2 per day), youth (15–24) and adults (25+) by sex, aggregate developing countries, 1993, 2003 and 2013**



Source: Authors' calculations based on the unpublished ILO data set on economic class. For methodological information, see Kapsos and Bourmpoula (2013).

There has been a reversal in the gender gap in working poverty over the long-term period. In 1993, women – young and adult – were more likely to fall into working poverty than men. In 2003, the female–male gap was reversed among youth and, by 2013, the highest shares were reported for both male youth and male adults. The regional figures are shown in figure 2.25. The male working poverty rate among youth exceeds the female rate in all regions but North Africa and South Asia, and even here gaps are small. What is perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the figure is the persistent and marked extent of working poverty among youth (and adults) in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. In South Asia, three in five young female workers are still living below US\$2 a day, while the share in sub-Saharan Africa remains as high as seven in ten.

**Figure 2.25 Working poverty rates (below US\$2 per day), youth (15–24), by sex and regional groupings, 2013**

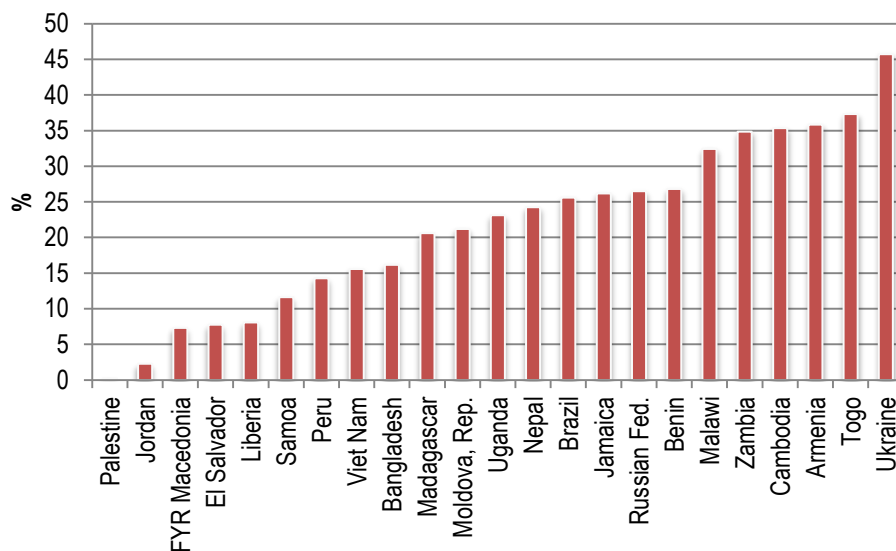


Source: Authors' calculations based on the unpublished ILO data set on economic class. For methodological information, see Kapsos and Bourmpoula (2013).

The working poverty indicator has limitations when it comes to looking at gender wage differentials since calculations are made at the household level rather than the individual level. The indicator cannot tell us if a young woman earns less than a young man, but only whether or not (not, as the case proves to be here) a young woman is more likely than a young man to work yet live in a poor household. To measure the gender pay gap more precisely, it is better to compare the average wages of young men and women directly, i.e. at the individual rather than the household level.

The ILO's *Global Wages Report 2014/15* puts the average gender wage gap at between 4 and 36 per cent of men's wages (ILO, 2014a). The range found from the SWTS data sets (first round) for paid employees only is slightly wider, from 2 per cent or less in Jordan and the Occupied Palestinian Territory to 45.7 per cent in Ukraine (figure 2.26). ILO (2014a) talks about an "explained" part of wage differentials, whereby traceable characteristics, such as the level of an individual's education, can be used as dependent variables. Another example of a measurable factor is the choice of occupation (the "segregation effect") and numerous studies have been conducted to measure its explanatory power. Kapsos (2008), for example, finds that in Bangladesh the occupation/sectoral differentials of men and women account for nearly one-third of the gender wage differential. The "unexplained" elements of gender pay gaps, in contrast, comprise what remains after adjusting for these observable characteristics. ILO (2014a) concludes that erasing the unexplained variables would reverse the wage gap in nearly half of the countries studied.

**Figure 2.26 Gender wage differentials of young wage and salaried workers, SWTS countries**



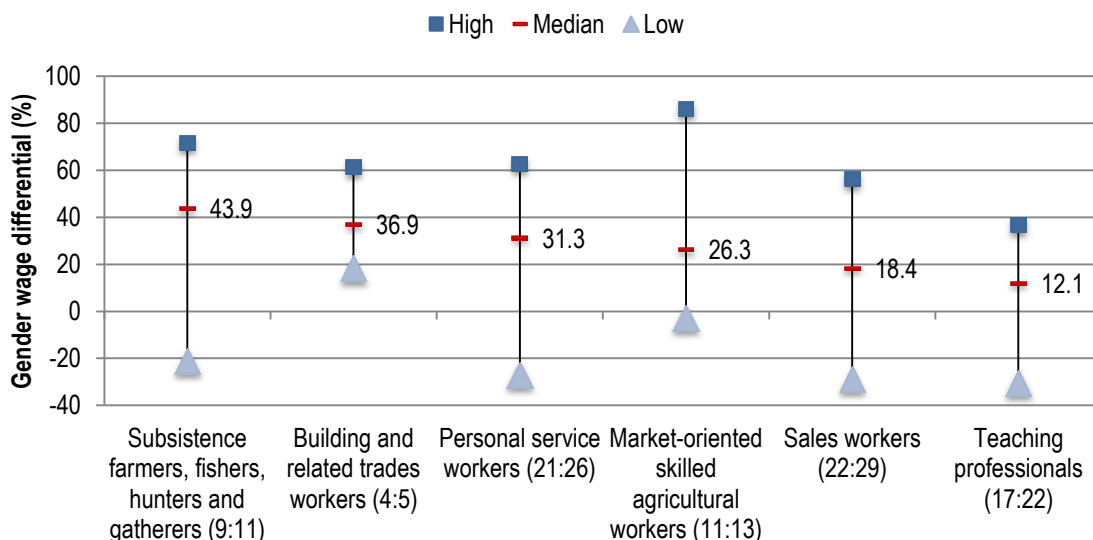
Notes: Gender wage differentials are calculated as the average monthly wage of young male employees minus the average monthly wage of young female employees divided by the average monthly wage of young male employees. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 23 countries (first round, 2012–13). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

ILO (2010a) finds that gender wage differentials are present in all occupations and skills bases. The occupations with the lowest differentials were found to be primary level education teaching and general office workers, i.e. occupations which are dominated by women. Recalling the top occupations of young women in table 2.5, two occupations came out as strongly female-dominated – teaching professionals and personal service workers. The strongest male-dominated occupation was in building and related trades, while the agricultural occupations and sales worker categories were more gender mixed. Figure 2.27 uses the SWTS wage data to show the gender wage differentials across the selection of most common occupations of young workers. The results confirm that a positive wage gap exists between young men and women, regardless of the gender composition within each occupation. The female-dominated profession of teaching does show the lowest wage differential – in this occupation young male teachers earned approximated 12 per cent more than young female teachers (17 country median). The male-dominated occupation of builder or related trades workers showed a strong pay gap of 36.9 per cent, although a higher wage differential was seen among youth engaged in subsistence farming (43.9 per cent).

So, having a large female share in the occupation can limit the pay gap to only a small degree. Does educational level have a greater influence? Not according to the analysis in ILO (2010a), which showed that a strong wage gap existed even within those occupations that require the highest skills levels (university degree). Male accountants, for example, earned 33 per cent more than female accountants. From the SWTS, we can compare more directly the gender wage differentials across levels of educational attainment. Here, again, the youth data support the general ILO data to confirm that higher levels of education do not always brings greater wage equality. For some countries shown in figure 2.28 a smaller wage gap is seen for university graduates compared to young employees with lower levels of education (Cambodia, Nepal and Russian Federation, for example). But in Bangladesh and Zambia, the wage gap was worse among those holding the highest degrees.

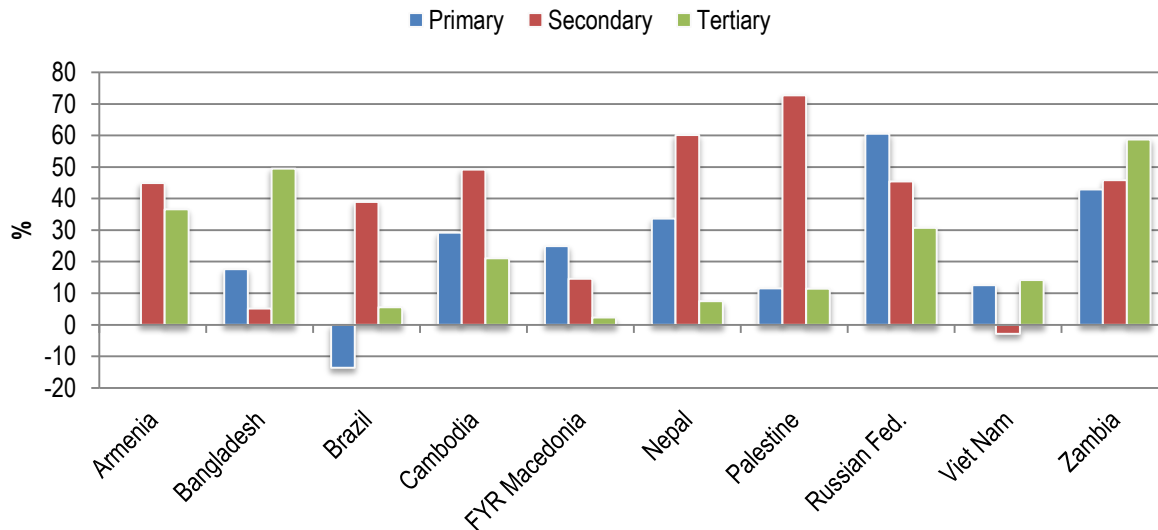
**Figure 2.27 Gender wage differentials of young wage and salaried workers by occupation, SWTS countries**



Notes: The occupation groupings are according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), 2008. Gender wage differentials are calculated as the average monthly wage of young male employees minus the average monthly wage of young female employees divided by the average monthly wage of young male employees. The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the median. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the median. Records with insufficient response rates (below 5) were discarded. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 22 countries (2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Figure 2.28 Gender wage differentials of young wage and salaried workers by level of completed education, SWTS countries**



Notes: Gender wage differentials are calculated as the average monthly wage of young male employees minus the average monthly wage of young female employees divided by the average monthly wage of young male employees. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 10 countries (first round, 2012–13). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

## 2.4 Young women and the labour market transition<sup>29</sup>

### 2.4.1 Introduction

Labour market transitions are influenced by multiple dimensions that are sometimes beyond a young person's control (Assaad and Krafft, 2014). Pathways to adulthood typically involve non-linear manoeuvring by individuals through stages of education, employment and family formation. These stages are intertwined, and success in one facilitates a prosperous transition to the next. However, the paths available at each point in time for any young person vary depending on their family background, social standing, gender and their country's national institutions.<sup>30</sup> Not only do individuals' aspirations vary according to their surroundings and socio-economic background, but so too does their likelihood of achieving those life goals.

The labour market transition of young people concerns not only the length of time between their exit from education (either upon graduation or early exit without completion) to their first entry into any job, but also qualitative elements, such as whether this job is stable, thus allowing for other transition processes, such as starting a family. Recall, however, the discussion in section 2.3 regarding the irregularity of work in most developing countries. The vast majority of today's youth remain without access to a stable job, a fact which has the potential to influence the decision-making process of youth in other variables of the transition to adulthood, such as family-building and where to live. In the lower-income countries, adulthood and family formation tend to arrive before an individual has attained the stage of productive employment. In high-income countries, where the expectation of productive employment and belief in the linearity of transition stages is stronger, there is an increasing trend to postpone family formation well into adulthood if productive jobs prove not to be forthcoming (see Lutz et al., 2006; Jacobsen and Mather, 2011).

In multiple reports on the SWTS countries,<sup>31</sup> it was demonstrated that the transition paths of the most disadvantaged youth are often the smoothest; that is, they move directly from school – if they even go to school – into the irregular employment in which they are likely to remain for a lifetime. In such cases, we can question whether a short and direct transition path serves as an indicator of success. Even in developed economies, a short transition period to first job should not be unreservedly applauded if the job does not offer a good foundation for the broader transition to adulthood.

The point here is that the interpretation of transition data is far from simple. In some cases it makes sense to look at the overall transition period, from entry into the labour market through to current job; in other cases, especially where unemployment rates are very high, analysing time to first job can offer meaningful information. In all circumstances, the role of gender is firmly fixed as an independent variable of a young

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<sup>29</sup> This section is based on previous work of co-author S. Elder for ILO (2015a).

<sup>30</sup> The finding is consistent with the notion of Punch (2002) that youth transitions are an interdependent process. Punch observed that young people in rural Bolivia negotiated their interdependence with their parents and siblings, rather than becoming fully independent adults. The persistence of these ties between young people and their families as they enter the labour market is a useful mechanism for helping youth to withstand the vulnerable and uncertain employment conditions that they are prone to face. Nilsson (2015) adds additional evidence – based on the SWTS – that birth order and the transition paths of siblings also play a role in determining individuals' pathways.

<sup>31</sup> SWTS national reports are available at: [www.ilo.org/w4y](http://www.ilo.org/w4y).

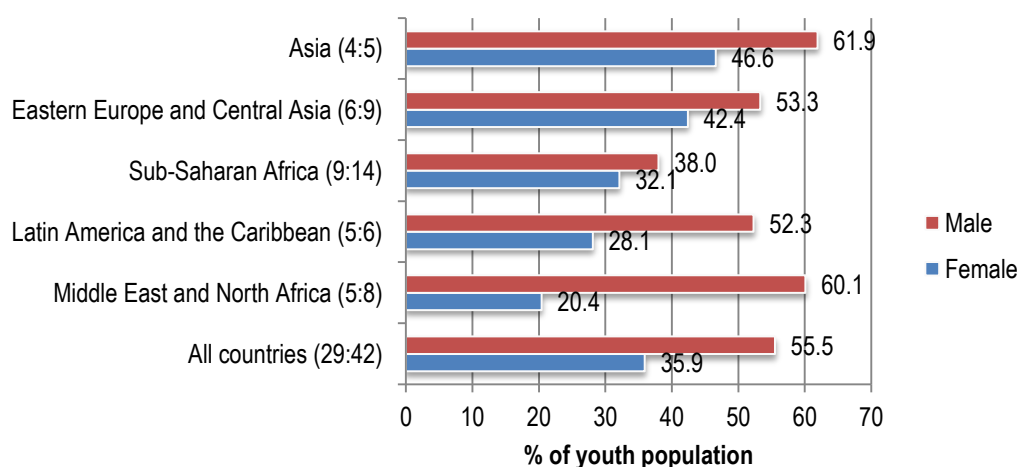
person's labour market transitions. The remainder of this section will explore the degree to which gender matters as young people move from education to economic or non-economic production in their first job and beyond.

## 2.4.2 Completed labour market transitions

Section 2.1.2 demonstrated that, in all regions, young women are much less likely to be employed than young men, but is this the case throughout the whole of the transition path? Are young females as likely as young men to have a first job but then subsequently drop out of the labour market? Do the lengths of transitions differ by sex? This section investigates these questions. But let us first take stock of the transition rates of young men and women.

If we define having transitioned as non-students who have attained either a stable job, a satisfactory temporary job or satisfactory self-employment (see box 3 for more detailed definitions), then we can already expect that more young men than young women will have transitioned, given that the male EPR is higher than the female. Still, it is interesting to note the degree to which young men have the advantage here. For the age group 25–29 – i.e. the age at which a young person would be most likely to have completed the transition – a young male adult is 1.9 times more likely to have completed his labour market transition than a young female adult (based on the 29 country average). Figure 2.29 shows that the Middle East and North Africa exhibit the largest gap by region; here young male adults are nearly four times more likely to complete the school-to-work transition compared to their female counterparts (60.1 and 20.4 per cent transitioned, respectively).

**Figure 2.29 Share of youth aged 25–29 with completed labour market transition, by sex, SWTS countries by regional averages**



Notes: The first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Country data are available in Annex I, table A.10.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 29 countries (42 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

What is the situation for adolescents (aged 15–19) and their transition rates? For this age group, we would be hard pressed to claim a positive achievement for those who have already completed their labour market transition. ILO (2015a) found that, among the low-income countries of the SWTS, 13.1 per cent of adolescents were counted as having already completed their transition – confirmation that childhoods are often too short among the poor. The corresponding share among the upper middle-income countries was 4.8 per cent.

### Box 3. ILO stages of labour market transition for youth

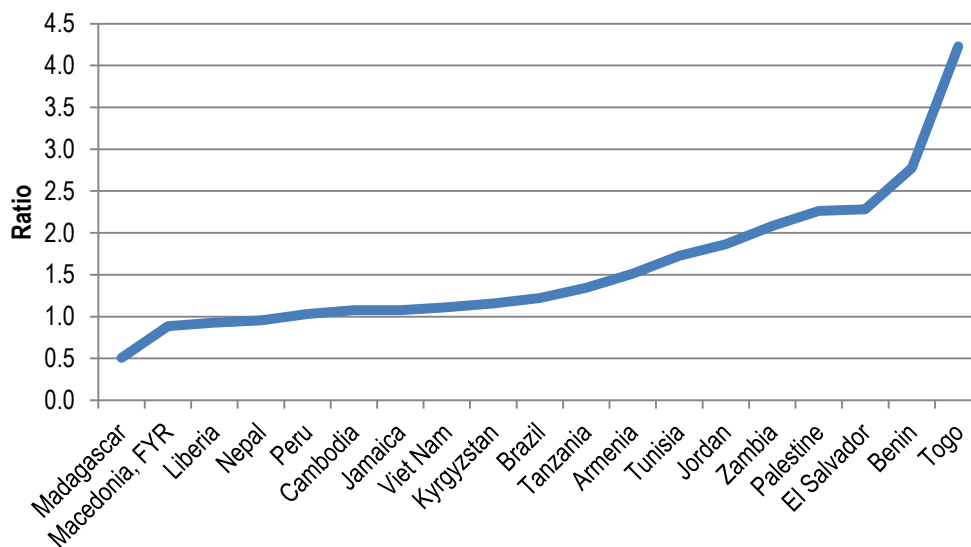
- I. Transited – A young person who has “transited” is one who is currently employed and not in school in:
  - a. a stable job
    - i. based on a written contract with duration of at least 12 months, or
    - ii. based on an oral agreement and likely to keep the job over the next 12 months;
  - b. a satisfactory temporary job
    - i. based on a written contract with duration of less than 12 months and does not want to change the job, or
    - ii. based on an oral agreement; not certain to keep the job over the next 12 months and does not want to change the job; or
  - c. satisfactory self-employment (in self-employed status and does not want to change the job).
- II. In transition – A young person still “in transition” is one who is currently:
  - a. an active student (employed or unemployed);
  - b. unemployed (non-student, relaxed definition);
  - c. employed in a temporary and non-satisfactory job
    - i. based on a written contract with duration of less than 12 months and wants to change the job, or
    - ii. based on an oral agreement; not certain to keep the job over the next 12 months and wants to change the job;
  - d. in non-satisfactory self-employment (in self-employed status and wants to change the job); or
  - e. inactive and not in education or training, with the aim of looking for work later.
- III. Transition not yet started – A young person whose “transition has not yet started” is one who is currently:
  - a. still in school and inactive (inactive student); or
  - b. inactive and not in education or training (inactive non-student), with no intention of looking for work.

In five of the 29 countries examined here, we find that not only are young adult females less likely to complete the school-to-work transition compared to young males, but young adolescent females are more likely than males to have already completed the transition at the very young age. The five (Benin, Cambodia, Malawi, Togo and Uganda) are all low-income countries (see Annex I, table A.10). At most, 26.2 per cent of females in Cambodia had already completed their labour market transitions to either stable or satisfactory work between the ages of 15 and 19.

ILO (2015a) and all SWTS national reports demonstrate the advantage that a higher level of education brings in terms of completing the labour market transition, and more specifically in making the transition to a stable job as opposed to a temporary or self-employed job. Indeed, based on our calculations, a tertiary-educated male is, on average, 1.5 times more likely to have already completed the labour market transition compared to a young male who stopped his education at the primary level. For young females, the education–transition link is even stronger; the tertiary-educated female was 1.9 times more likely to complete their labour market transition than the less well-educated (primary level) female. Yet, if we compare the transition rates (share of transited youth in the youth population) of young men and women at the highest educational level, the advantage still rests with men.

Figure 2.30 looks at the ratio of transition rates for the university educated. Transition rates of the more highly educated males exceeded those of females in 14 of the 19 countries (ratio greater than 1). Only in Madagascar, FYR Macedonia and Liberia was the university-educated female slightly more likely to complete the transition than their male counterparts. This means that, although it helps, even gaining a university education is not enough to level the playing field when it comes to women’s ability to complete the labour market transition before adulthood.

**Figure 2.30 Ratio of male-to-female transition rates of tertiary-educated youth, SWTS countries**



Note: Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data (first round, 2012–13). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

### 2.4.3 Transitions to first job and beyond

Among the SWTS countries where data could be calculated,<sup>32</sup> for young women the average length to first job from exiting formal education ranged from less than one month in low-income countries (Benin, Cambodia and Madagascar) to 21.5 months in FYR Macedonia (table 2.6). The SWTS-19 country average for young women was 7.8 months, compared to 6.9 months for young men. The transition to first job took 10 months or longer for females in seven countries (Jamaica, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, FYR Macedonia, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Tunisia and Viet Nam) compared to four countries for young men (Armenia, FYR Macedonia, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Viet Nam). In 10 of the 19 SWTS countries, the average length for young females exceeded the male transition period by at least one month (up to four months). It was only in the three Eastern European or Central Asian SWTS countries where durations proved to be significantly longer for young males (Armenia, FYR Macedonia and Russian Federation).

For many youth, the first job is not the only job they will hold before the age of 30. Some youth will have experienced numerous employment spells prior to “settling” in their current state of completed transition or will have moved between spells of unemployment or inactivity before moving back into employment. Table 2.6 shows that the length of transition for those youth who do not complete the transition with the first job can be extremely long. The average length (19 countries) for young females between first and current “transited” job was 34.9 months compared to 37.3 months for young males. Regarding the shares of youth who complete the transition at their first try, we find that slightly more young women transited with the first job (73.7 per cent) compared to young men (71.2 per cent).

<sup>32</sup> First round countries only, excluding Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Liberia, Malawi, Republic of Moldova, Samoa and Ukraine.



**Table 2.6 Average length of transition from school to first job and first to current transited job by sex, SWTS countries (months)**

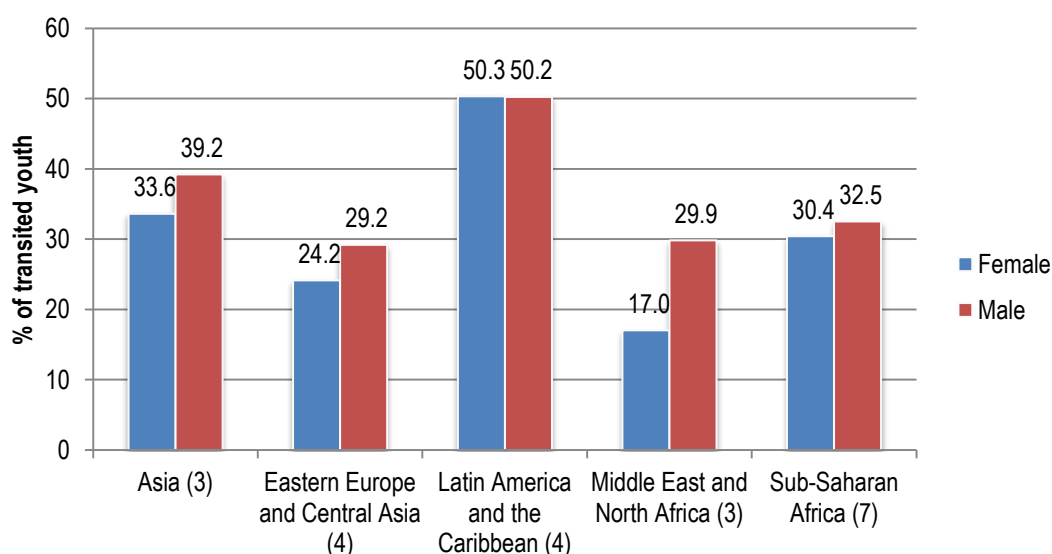
	Female		Male	
	First job	First to current transited job	First job	First to current transited job
<b>Average, SWTS-19</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>34.9</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>37.3</b>
Armenia	7.9	29.7	12.6	34.4
Benin	0.3	65.0	0.6	65.9
Cambodia	0.2	46.8	0.2	49.2
El Salvador	4.7	43.6	2.2	36.0
Jamaica	11.0	35.7	7.6	44.5
Jordan	12.1	30.3	8.8	31.7
Kyrgyzstan	10.5	31.4	8.3	32.6
Macedonia, FYR	21.5	19.9	23.9	31.5
Madagascar	0.3	51.8	0.4	53.8
Nepal	2.5	24.2	2.4	22.4
Occupied Palestinian Territory	13.2	19.9	10.0	26.1
Peru (urban)	2.5	28.1	1.4	39.8
Russian Federation	7.0	41.3	8.7	43.6
Tanzania, United Republic of	6.9	31.7	6.7	32.9
Togo	5.4	39.7	4.9	39.5
Tunisia	12.3	40.7	8.1	40.2
Uganda	5.4	31.0	3.3	34.7
Viet Nam	14.7	47.0	12.7	44.7
Zambia	8.9	5.5	7.8	6.0

Notes: Youth with no education are included in the length between first job and current transited job. In the transition to first job, however, youth with no formal education are not included. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Author's calculations using SWTS data in 19 countries (first round, 2012–13). For meta-information on reference period, etc., see Annex II.

There are some regional trends with regard to the “messiness” of the transition path and whether an individual moves directly to a first job and stays there or rather moves in and out of various spells (of work, unemployment or inactivity) before getting that “final” job. One might expect that in countries where there are long job queues for a limited number of formal jobs – reflected in high unemployment rates – a young person would be more likely to remain in the first job that they get. And there is some evidence of this from the SWTS data sets. It is in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia and Middle East and North Africa regions that youth were most likely to complete their transition with the first job (more than 70 per cent of young transited men and women). In the SWTS countries, in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa youth showed a higher tendency towards a more turbulent transition path (figure 2.31). This was particularly evident in Latin America and the Caribbean, where 50 per cent of young women and men had at least one other labour market experience in addition to the first job before gaining the current stable or satisfactory job (thus completing the transition).

**Figure 2.31 Share of transitioned youth that did not complete the transition with the first job (engaged in additional activities), by sex, SWTS countries by regional averages**



Notes: The number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Author’s calculations using SWTS data in 21 countries (first round, 2012–13). For meta-information on reference period, etc., see Annex II.

#### 2.4.4 An inactivity trap?

Another interesting “story” that can be read from the results of the SWTS is the degree to which young women move into inactivity for family reasons and stay there. Does inactivity become a lasting condition or do young women then re-engage with the labour market after having children? The database is limited by the age range but it still offers some hints regarding the “stickiness” of inactivity.

First, we note that among the currently inactive young females, consisting of 52.7 per cent of the female population (17 country average), only 14.5 per cent had worked at some point prior to becoming inactive (table 2.7). Previous labour market engagement would seem less important among the currently inactive students, but among the currently inactive non-students, having held a job prior to inactivity can serve as a signal of future labour market potential. There is a strong gender difference here: one-third (32.7 per cent) of inactive non-student females had no work experience prior to inactivity compared to 18.1 per cent of inactive non-student males. There is another glaring gender gap in the share of currently inactive youth who left work for family reasons (to have a baby or look after a family).<sup>33</sup> The average share for young inactive women is 34.5 per cent compared to 7.8 per cent for young men.

It might be assumed that the females who had worked prior to leaving for family reasons would have a better chance of re-entering the labour market compared to young women with no work experience at all. The intention to return to work was tested in the SWTS, with mixed results. Figure 2.32 shows a slight majority of countries (ten of the 17) in which young inactive women with previous work experience who left for family reasons show a slightly higher inclination towards working in the future compared to all inactive

<sup>33</sup> Other reasons for leaving work cited are: left for a better job; dismissed/let go; left because unhappy with workplace; temporary job ended; health reasons; moved area; started education/training/apprenticeship programme.

young women. But in seven countries, among which are three in the Middle East or North Africa (Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon), it would seem that having a baby or looking after the household are sufficient reasons to disincline a young woman from returning to work more definitively.

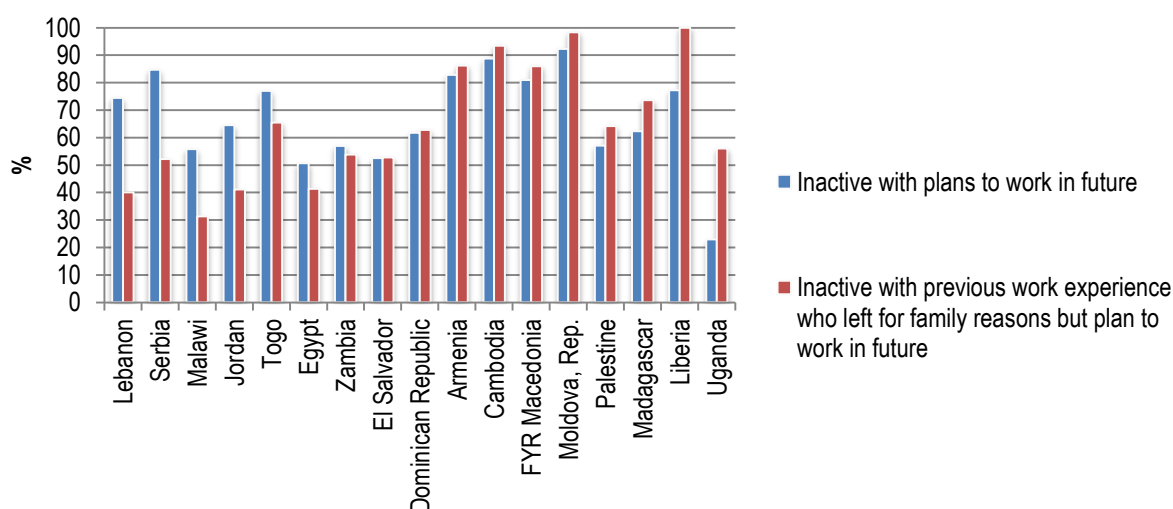
**Table 2.7** Flows to inactivity for family reasons, by sex, SWTS countries

Country	Female				Male			
	Inactive with no previous work experience		Inactive with previous work experience		Inactive with no previous work experience		Inactive with previous work experience	
	Non-students (%)	Students (%)	%	% of which left for family reasons	Non-students (%)	Students (%)	%	% of which left for family reasons
Armenia	36.0	54.5	9.5	68.5	19.6	70.7	9.7	0.0
Cambodia	8.2	40.4	51.4	59.8	12.4	68.5	19.0	20.5
Dominican Republic	16.6	56.2	27.2	31.8	8.8	72.0	19.2	4.5
Egypt	52.6	43.6	3.8	69.4	10.4	80.3	9.3	0.6
El Salvador	40.9	31.4	27.7	46.6	21.5	65.5	13.0	1.6
FYR Macedonia	40.9	55.4	3.7	24.0	11.4	82.7	5.9	0.0
Jordan	26.1	70.3	3.6	15.6	3.0	92.0	4.9	0.0
Lebanon	35.6	61.5	2.8	21.9	53.3	41.8	4.9	5.8
Liberia	32.0	60.6	7.4	19.1	12.8	82.3	4.9	2.5
Madagascar	13.2	54.7	32.1	34.6	6.8	71.4	21.8	1.6
Malawi	50.8	43.3	5.9	31.5	19.9	77.3	2.8	15.0
Moldova, Rep. of	22.9	52.5	24.7	59.7	19.5	67.8	12.7	7.3
Occupied Palestinian Territory	39.5	55.8	4.7	18.7	14.8	77.5	7.8	0.0
Serbia	16.5	72.8	10.8	14.0	13.0	75.5	11.5	0.0
Togo	44.6	44.1	11.2	24.4	28.5	66.9	4.6	16.5
Uganda	33.5	53.4	13.1	42.5	14.3	79.3	6.4	51.9
Zambia	46.5	46.5	7.0	4.7	38.4	52.5	9.2	4.4
Average (17 countries)	32.7	52.8	14.5	34.5	18.1	72.0	9.9	7.8

Note: Youth = 15–29.

Source: Author's calculations using SWTS data in 17 countries (second round, 2014–15). For meta-information on reference period, etc., see Annex II.

**Figure 2.32** Inactive young women with evidence of labour market attachment, SWTS countries



Note: Youth = 15–29.

Source: Author's calculations using SWTS data in 17 countries (second round, 2014–15). For meta-information on reference period, etc., see Annex II.

We can test the inactivity trap further by looking at where the young men and women who left the labour market due to family reasons were at the time of the survey in terms of labour market status. With a few exceptions, the majority of countries show that the young women who dropped out of the labour market continued in their inactivity. More than two out of three young women who left the labour market for family reasons remained inactive in Armenia, Egypt, El Salvador, Jordan, Lebanon and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (table 2.8). With so few evidently re-entering after leaving for family reasons, it can be assumed that there is indeed a high degree of stickiness in inactivity in these countries. The fact that there is still a severely limited movement from inactivity to activity and vice versa among young females does not bode well for the future labour utilization of this segment of the population.

On the other hand, at least three out of five once-inactive young women in Cambodia, Liberia, Malawi, Togo and Zambia were back in employment. Not surprisingly, the shares of young men who re-entered the labour market after dropping out are significantly higher than those of young women in all available countries. The one exception here is the Republic of Moldova where 61.5 per cent of young men remained inactive after leaving employment for family reasons. Shares are also fairly sizable among young men in Togo, Uganda and Zambia.

**Table 2.8 Youth who left the labour market for family reasons by current activity status, by sex, SWTS countries**

Country	Employed (%)	Unemployed (%)	Inactive (%)	Employed (%)	Unemployed (%)	Inactive (%)
	Female			Male		
Armenia	15.1	10.9	74.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Cambodia	62.0	2.9	35.0	90.2	3.3	6.6
Dominican Republic	34.3	25.1	40.6	77.0	8.2	14.9
Egypt	8.4	13.9	77.7	47.5	34.0	18.5
El Salvador	21.1	6.6	72.4	93.9	2.2	3.9
Jordan	3.9	9.8	86.3	81.0	19.0	0.0
Lebanon	11.0	21.6	67.5	0.0	100.0	0.0
Liberia	53.0	9.0	38.0	80.8	0.0	19.2
Macedonia, FYR	27.6	7.6	64.8	42.3	50.9	6.7
Madagascar	49.0	4.4	46.6	91.9	5.9	2.2
Malawi	78.3	3.8	17.9	83.9	0.0	16.1
Moldova, Rep. of	34.4	6.7	58.9	38.5	0.0	61.5
Occupied Palestinian Territory	16.7	1.8	81.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Serbia	23.0	20.5	56.5	100.0	0.0	0.0
Togo	62.0	6.0	32.0	73.3	0.0	26.7
Uganda	19.0	35.3	45.7	74.8	1.7	23.5
Zambia	80.0	0.0	20.0	59.7	0.0	40.3

Note: Youth = 15–29.

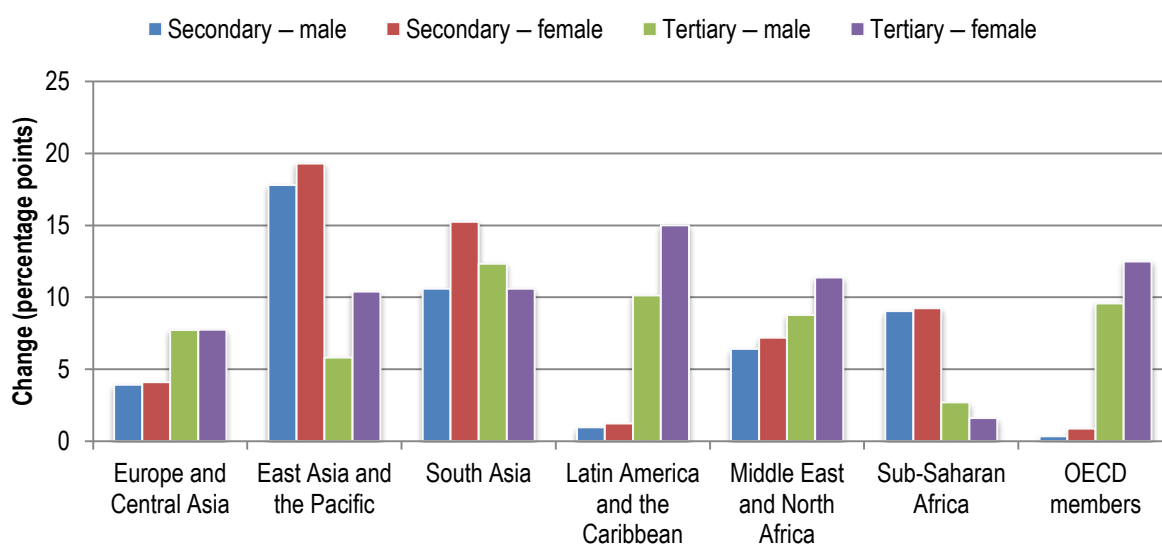
Source: Author's calculations using SWTS data in 17 countries (second round, 2014–15). For meta-information on reference period, etc., see Annex II.

## 2.5 Determinants of labour market disadvantages among young women

### 2.5.1 Educational attainment

The tendency for more youth to engage in secondary and tertiary education is a main determinant of the declining youth LFPRs. Figure 2.33 demonstrates the continued increase in school enrolment for both males and females, particularly at the tertiary level. Enrolment among females at the secondary level increased to a greater extent than among males in all regions and, with the exceptions of South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, the same could be said for the tertiary level. In fact, if there is one area where significant progress has been made in closing gender gaps, it is in educational attainment. Among the SWTS countries, a young female is now more likely to have a tertiary degree than a young male (15.0 and 11.5 per cent, respectively; figure 2.34). In the same regions where gender gaps in the youth LFPR remain the highest – Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa – the share of young women with a tertiary degree now exceeds that of men. Thus, a disconnect between investment in female education and the potential for productive transformation of economies persists in those countries where the educated young women are unable to find work.

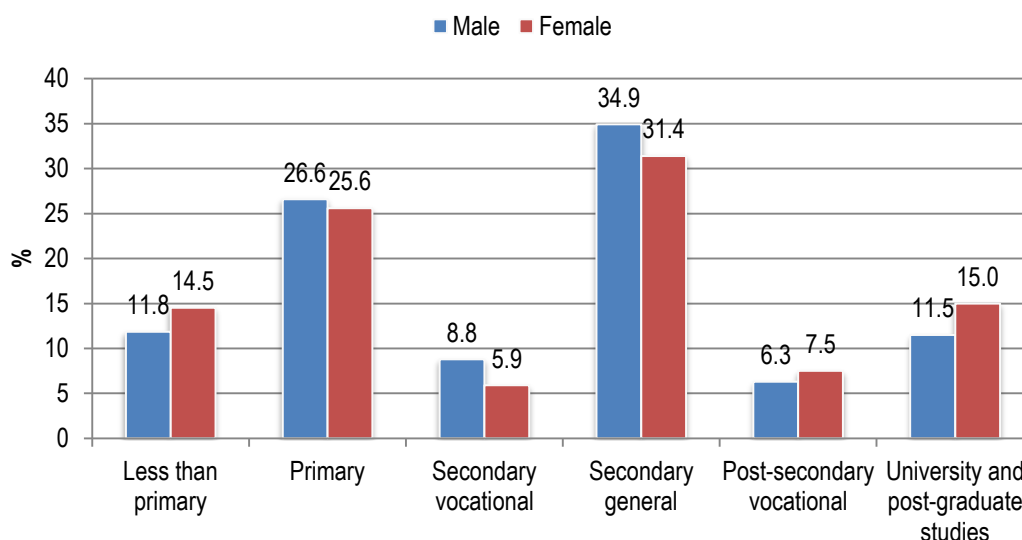
**Figure 2.33 Changes in gross enrolment ratio in secondary and tertiary education, by region and sex, 2005–12**



Notes: The gross enrolment ratio is the ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education shown.

Source: World DataBank, World Development Indicators [reproduced from ILO, 2015a, figure 2.2].

**Figure 2.34 Youth population\* by level of completed education, by sex, 30 country average**



Notes: \*Youth population with completed education. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 30 countries (39 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table 2.9 Educational attainment of youth and share of youth who never attended school or left before graduation, by sex, SWTS countries by regional grouping**

Region	Less than primary (%)	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)	Less than primary (%)	Primary (%)	Secondary (%)	Tertiary (%)
	Female				Male			
Asia and Pacific (5:6)	11.5	29.9	38.3	7.5	11.8	31.4	37.8	8.4
Eastern Europe and Central Asia (7:10)	1.7	8.4	34.9	33.0	1.3	7.5	36.7	24.6
Latin America and the Caribbean (5:6)	1.5	29.6	46.2	8.9	1.4	29.9	50.5	6.6
Middle East and North Africa (5:5)	8.5	31.6	17.3	25.4	9.5	38.6	14.7	17.7
Sub-Saharan Africa (8:12)	35.8	33.3	24.7	1.5	26.8	33.4	31.5	2.8
All countries (30:39)	14.5	25.6	31.8	14.7	11.8	26.6	34.6	11.7

Region	Never attended school (%)		Have left before graduation or completion of school (%)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Asia and Pacific (5:6)	5.1	4.8	32.6	33.5
Eastern Europe and Central Asia (7:10)	0.5	0.4	2.7	2.8
Latin America and the Caribbean (5:6)	0.8	0.6	23.8	21.9
Middle East and North Africa (5:5)	2.4	1.2	25.7	33.7
Sub-Saharan Africa (8:12)	14.0	7.3	35.8	28.5
All countries (30:39)	5.6	3.3	23.7	22.3

Notes: Educational attainment excluded current students. Vocational graduates are not shown. On regions, the first number in the parentheses is the number of countries covered in the regional average. The second number is the number of surveys (data points) included in the regional average. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 30 countries (39 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

The persistent exclusion of too many children and youth from the opportunity of education in many regions continues to present a serious concern. UNESCO (2015) reports that there are still 58 million children out of school globally and around 100 million

children who do not complete primary education. Further evidence of the inequality in access to education is given in table 2.9, which shows that, among the SWTS countries, still 5.6 per cent of young females and 3.3 per cent of young males never attended school, and another 23.7 and 22.3 per cent of young females and males, respectively, left school before completion. The likelihood of exclusion from education continues to be most problematic among young women in sub-Saharan Africa where still one-half (49.8 per cent) of the female youth population had either no education or only limited education.

Non-completion of schooling remains a concern in all regions but Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and it is a problem that touches both young males and females. In most countries and regions, the primary reason given for leaving school early was economic reasons (i.e. an inability to pay school fees or a need to earn an income). In some countries, the primary reason for young women to leave school was to get married (e.g. Bangladesh and Nepal).<sup>34</sup>

## **2.5.2 Early marriage**

Without a doubt, there is one theme that comes up again and again in this report, which is the challenge of reconciling work and family life as a key determinant of female labour force participation and quality of employment. Unequal gender relations in all countries dictate that women of all ages spend more time on domestic responsibilities than men, although this can and does change over time as gender roles evolve. In poor communities in developing countries girls and women shoulder an even greater burden of household responsibilities in the context of weak infrastructure, poor service provision and lack of utilities. This situation is even more marked in rural areas, where young girls may be withdrawn from school or work to assist with the care of dependants or chores. The availability of infrastructure to alleviate time constraints in poor communities is thus an important factor in LFPRs of women in developing countries.

In some societies young women are at risk of early marriage. Among the risk factors are norms which place restrictions on women's mobility, beliefs that marriage will "protect" young women, cultural conceptions of family honour, customary and religious practices, weak regulatory systems controlling marriage as well as endemic poverty. Early marriage is recognized as an impediment to human rights under the Universal Declaration of Rights, which states that consent to marriage cannot be "free and full" when one of the parties involved is not sufficiently mature to make an informed decision about a life partner. Similarly, CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women), covering the right to protection from child marriage in article 16, states, "The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage."<sup>35</sup>

Early marriage, especially for very young adolescents, can compromise young women's physical and emotional development, result in early pregnancy and social isolation, interrupt their schooling and limit their opportunities for training and job opportunities (UNICEF, 2014). Early marriage also contributes to the underinvestment in girls' education and general welfare in childhood since a girl is perceived as no longer being of value to her birth family on her marriage. Enabling girls to stay in school longer, however, has been shown to be one of the key factors in avoiding early marriage.

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<sup>34</sup> See Elder, 2014, table A.4.

<sup>35</sup> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Article 16, General Recommendations 21, paras 36–39.

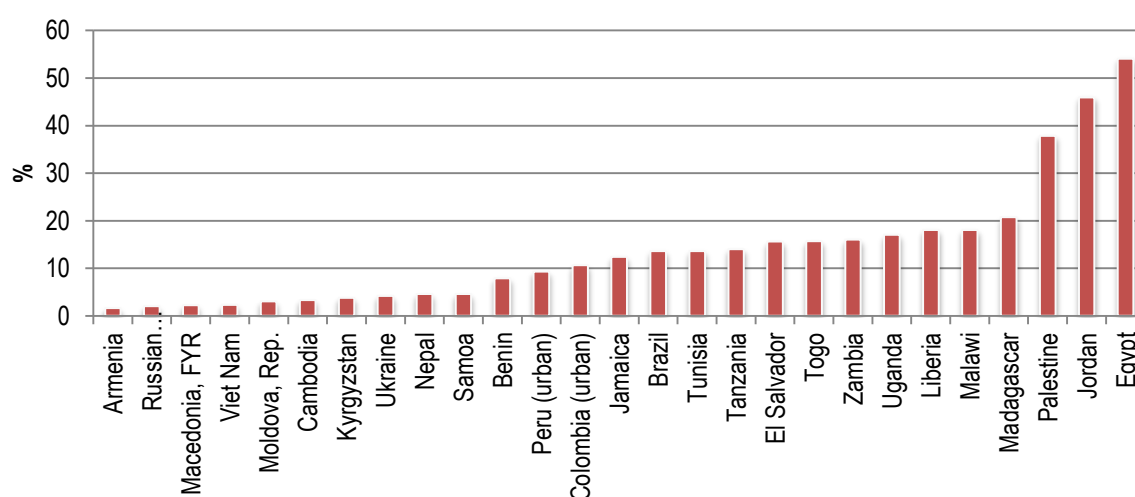
According to UNICEF data (UNICEF, 2014), 700 million women today – roughly 10 per cent of the world’s population – were married before their 18th birthday, and more than one in three (about 250 million) were married before the age of 15. Although there is a downward trend in the rates of child marriages, the total number of girls marrying before the age of 18 continues to grow due to the rapid growth of the youth population in some regions. UNICEF data show one in six female adolescents (aged 15–19) as currently married or in union at the global level. South Asia has the highest proportion of married adolescents (29 per cent), followed by West and Central Africa (25 per cent) and Eastern and Southern Africa (20 per cent).

The SWTS data also provide evidence of early marriages in some countries: in six countries, the share of female adolescents (15–19) already married was greater than 10 per cent (from Nepal at 10.6 per cent to as high as 39.8 per cent in Bangladesh). Additionally, the data reveal that more than 4 per cent of those already married were wed before the age of 15 in Benin, El Salvador, Liberia, Madagascar, Nepal and Uganda (Annex I, table A.5).

### 2.5.3 Early pregnancy

Adolescence marks the emergence of sharply different trajectories for young women and men. With puberty, childbearing potential begins. In some cultures this means that greater restrictions are placed on girls. While both young women and men may be involved in sexual activity, the consequences of unplanned pregnancy are primarily borne by young women, curtailing both schooling and future job prospects. Adolescent pregnancies are more likely in poor, uneducated and rural communities. In some countries, becoming pregnant outside marriage is not uncommon although it brings with it the risk of social ostracism. For adolescents, maternity carries both economic and health risks. It is a major contributor to maternal and child mortality and sets a course for a lifetime of working poverty. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2012), in low- and middle-income countries, complications arising from pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death in young women aged 15–19 years.

Figure 2.35 Adolescent females (15–19) with children, SWTS countries



Notes: Data are not available in Bangladesh. In Egypt, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Tunisia, only married females were asked the question on number of children.

Source: Authors' calculations using SWTS data in 27 countries (first round 2012/13). For meta-information on reference period, etc., see Annex II.

Global data shows a strong though uneven decrease in birth rates among adolescent girls since 1990. However, despite this fall, 11 per cent of all births worldwide are still to girls aged 15–19 and the vast majority of these births (95 per cent) occur in low- and middle-income countries. The average global birth rate among this age group is 49 per



1,000 girls (WHO, 2014). Figure 2.35 shows the share of female adolescents (15–19) that already have children among the SWTS countries. The shares are especially high among countries in the Middle East and North Africa (37.8 per cent, on average) and sub-Saharan Africa (15.9 per cent) but also among countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region (12.3 per cent). As in early marriage, education can play an important role in reducing fertility among this age group. Thus, increased schooling for girls and adolescents is both a cause and an effect of their reduced fertility.

#### **2.5.4 Unpaid work burdens**

One of the biggest obstacles to decent work that adult and young women face is the extent of their household responsibilities. Unpaid care work reinforces labour market segmentation – restricting women’s and girls’ abilities to participate in education, skills training, networking, finding formal sector jobs or simply resting. Women’s resulting time poverty and a lack of organized childcare limits their employment options (pushing them towards low-status, low-income, informal or part-time work) and reinforces a dependency on male breadwinners.

When the state lacks the capacity or political will to provide care services, households take on the greater share of its provision. In rural communities, in particular, the gender division of labour makes women’s and girls’ work more arduous and time consuming in the absence of adequate infrastructure, utilities and services. Girls and young women are at risk of being withdrawn from schooling (see section 2.5.1) or the labour market to help run households, care for siblings and dependent relatives, collect fuel and water and carry out other chores.

Even where care work is paid, it is undervalued and poorly regulated. Domestic workers, community health workers and migrant workers perform care work for remuneration, but their work is often underpaid and they often have little legal or social protection. As was demonstrated in section 2.3.1, in many countries paid domestic work is not necessarily a female-dominated domain, at least not when it comes to youth.

Unpaid household work, also typically a female domain, is often treated as an unlimited private resource which is also undervalued. Policies are often silent on this type of work even though it continues to play a key role in women’s work. Unless directly linked to a household enterprise, unpaid care work remains hidden from the statistics produced from labour force surveys, systems of national accounts and GDP calculations, yet it is an invaluable resource for households and economies. Additionally, in times of crisis it also acts as a shock absorber, shifting the burden of mitigating cuts in services and the loss of jobs and incomes onto women and girls.

Feminist economists have long called for unpaid care work to be given economic value. Elson (2008) proposes a model with three interconnected dimensions that seek to address and incorporate unpaid care work into the development agenda. The model seeks to “recognise, reduce and redistribute” this type of work by finding practical entry points for addressing the disproportionate burden on women and girls, while acknowledging that an adequate level of care and other social reproduction activities is necessary for the well-being of society and the economy.

In 2013, the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians adopted the Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization (ICLS, 2013). The Resolution offers a welcome update of the standards defining “statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment”, as adopted by the 13th ICLS more than 30 years ago, in 1982. It responds to critiques regarding the limitations of unemployment and employment statistics in allowing for a more nuanced classification of how people use their time in contributing to productive

activities, paid or non-paid. This will mean that, for the first time, labour statistics will allow countries to capture “own-production service activities” that fall within the System of National Accounts (SNA) “General” production boundary (but not the SNA production boundary). Such activities include care services such as: (i) preparing and/or serving meals, household waste disposal and recycling; (ii) cleaning, decorating and maintaining one’s own dwelling or premises, durables and other goods, and gardening; and (iii) childcare and instruction, transporting and caring for elderly, dependent or other household members and domestic animals or pets. Statistics based on the new Resolution will be slow in coming, but it is safe to say that the expansion of the concept of “work” will be watched with great anticipation by persons interested to see a more systematic capturing of unpaid care activities.

In the meantime, various studies have attempted to quantify and give value to unpaid care work. One means is to employ time-use surveys which can quantify the gender gaps in household work. FAO (2010) reports on a study undertaken in three African countries (Benin, Madagascar and Tanzania) which found that women worked at least ten hours longer than men every week when both SNA and non-SNA (household production) work were considered, but worked between five and ten hours less than men in SNA work. Another cross-country study suggests that women devote one to three hours more per day to housework than men; two to ten times the amount of time per day to the care of dependants, and one to four hours less per day to market activities (World Bank, 2012).

A further step in recognizing the value of unpaid work is through estimations of its economic contribution. A six country study by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD, 2010) suggests that the value of household work contributes between 10 and 30 per cent of GDP. Waring et al. (2013) go further to estimate the value of care work at the global level. This report suggests that in 2009–10, the care economy was estimated to be worth \$762.5 billion, of which \$112.4 billion (or 8.8 per cent of total GDP) was paid care and \$650.1 billion (50.6 per cent of total GDP) was unpaid care. Women contributed to 77 per cent of paid care work and 66 per cent of unpaid care work.

### **2.5.5 Coping with the impacts of HIV/AIDs**

In 2012 there were approximately 2.1 million adolescents living with HIV (WHO, 2013). Adolescents aged 10–19 and young people aged 20–24 continue to be vulnerable to infection despite numerous policy measures over the past three decades. On the more positive side, there has been laudable progress in reducing HIV infections among youth and progress in the spread of knowledge on safe sex practices in the highest risk region of sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately, still young women are the most at risk; HIV prevalence among young women remains more than twice as high as among young men (UNAIDS, 2013). Unequal gender relations that make it difficult for young women to refuse sexual activity or engage in safe sex practices can contribute to greater infection rates among young women.

As in the case of early pregnancy, HIV/AIDs can result in social and economic exclusion, the interruption of schooling and the limitation of training and job opportunities. Young people living with or affected by HIV often find themselves at a disadvantage in the labour market and thus become especially vulnerable to unemployment, underemployment and poverty. When the challenges young men and women face to secure decent work become difficult to overcome, a subsequent sense of discouragement and social exclusion may put young people at a higher risk to undertake hazardous work and related behavior (ILO, 2014b).

In countries with high infection rates, young women are often forced into care-giving roles for family members who are sick, or take the place of infected adults in the household

in caring for child dependants. In the context of weak public health systems and service provision, the burden of care for the sick more often falls on women and girls. A joint UN report estimates that up to 90 per cent of home care for HIV infected persons is provided by women and girls (UNAIDS et al., 2004).

### **2.5.6 Exploitative migration**

Analysis by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) has shown that, in 2010, there were 27 million international migrants aged between 15 and 24 years old in the world, accounting for 12.4 per cent of the 214 million migrants worldwide. When migrants aged between 24 and 30 are added, the percentage rises steeply, accounting for 30 per cent of the total number of international migrants (UNDESA, 2011).

Migration can be a positive and empowering experience, exposing young people to new ideas and skills and giving them greater economic opportunities. In some cases, however, migration can be fraught with risks and vulnerabilities, particularly where migration is not a genuine choice but rather a survivalist option in the face of bleak employment opportunities in local labour markets. Young women in particular often face labour market discrimination in their own communities which compels them into low-skilled work in foreign labour markets. Migration for domestic work, for example, continues to grow as a result of both supply and demand factors. As women in advanced countries participate in greater numbers in the labour force, this fuels greater demand for care workers, often from other countries. ILO estimates place the numbers of domestic workers at at least 52.7 million in 2010, an increase of 19 million since the mid-1990s. Domestic work accounts for 7.5 per cent of women's wage work worldwide (ILO, 2013a). While many women with limited schooling may take this type of work, so do some highly educated women facing limited options in their home countries. The result is thus de-skilling and the loss of the investment that has been made in their education.

Young women who migrate can face serious abuse and exploitation. Where additional marginalized identities, such as ethnicity, caste and class, also define young migrant women, this adds further layers of vulnerability. In some cases this has resulted in countries attempting to restrict the outflow of female migrants. Paradoxically, this can potentially not only increase the scale of undocumented migration but also heighten vulnerabilities. A young woman with her rights protected by official migration processes is far less vulnerable than one with irregular migration status. Restrictive migration policies can also put young women at risk of trafficking – one of the most serious violations of human and labour rights. Though difficult to quantify because of its clandestine nature, according to ILO estimates, almost 21 million people are victims of forced labour – 11.4 million women and girls and 9.5 million men and boys (ILO, 2012b).

### **2.5.7 Limited access to productive resources**

Women, both young and adult, have more limited access to resources than men in areas such as land, technology, information, networks and skills development. Access to formal finance is also severely limited for women, which is one reason why women in developing economies are increasingly turning to microfinance. In agriculture, women are less likely than men to own land or livestock, adopt new technologies, use credit or other financial services or receive education or training (FAO, 2011). Women therefore tend to have smaller farms and are less likely to be engaged in the production of commercial crops than men. Their productivity is also often lower. For example, in districts in Ethiopia, the value of output per hectare of female-headed households is estimated to be 35 per cent lower than that of male-headed households, a disparity stemming mainly from unequal access to productive resources (Bertini, 2011).

Women are also less likely to be entrepreneurs (as detailed in section 2.3.1) and when they do turn to self-employment, female entrepreneurs often operate smaller firms. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, half of the established businesses owned by women have no employees compared to 38 per cent of businesses owned by men (World Bank, 2014). Sometimes discrimination in access to resources can be overt, such as in legislation. Unequal provisions in family law, such as head-of-household provisions, the lack of joint-titling of land, inequitable inheritance laws and discriminatory principles in customary laws, can represent direct obstacles to equality.

### 3. Policy implications and good practices

The data presented in this report has shown that young women remain disadvantaged in the labour market. From unemployment rates to informality rates and levels of labour underutilization, gender gaps are present in all regions covered by the SWTS. Section 2.5 presented some of the underlying causes of young women's weaker employment outcomes, including early marriage, gender roles which ascribe greater unpaid work burdens to females, greater limitations on access to productive resources and persistent job segregation, among other factors.

An increasing body of evidence shows that pre-existing gender differences and inequalities in the labour market affect the outcomes of all areas of youth employment interventions. Youth employment outcomes for women fall short of outcomes for men again and again due to the context-specific combination of economic and social pressures. Nonetheless, the news is not all bad when it comes to progress in promoting better opportunities for young women. A wealth of national experiences has shown that change is possible when appropriate policy interventions are put in place to empower young women to transform their lives. Adjustments can be made to adapt programme and policy designs to meet women's needs more effectively and thus avoid repeating previous mistakes.

Evidence on the most effective interventions is being presented in a growing body of literature, including the meta-analysis summarized in box 4. The remainder of this section discusses good practices in both gender mainstreaming and gender-specific approaches to yield more equitable results in youth employment interventions using the framework of interventions outlined in the "Call for action" on youth employment adopted by ILO constituents at the International Labour Conference (ILC) in 2012.<sup>36</sup> The precise content of policies and programmes at national and local level will, of course, depend on the particular gender relations and the economic, social, political and institutional structure of a country, but this section will point to certain good practices both in mainstreaming gender considerations within youth employment policies and programmes and in gender-specific approaches to improving the labour market results of young women.

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<sup>36</sup> The five main areas of intervention to support youth employment as outlined in the "Call for action" include: (i) stimulate demand and create jobs for youth through pro-employment and macro-economic policies; (ii) invest in providing opportunities in education and training to enhance employability and facilitate school-to-work transitions; (iii) improve labour market integration of young people through targeted labour market policies; (iv) support career options through entrepreneurship and self-employment; and (v) ensure that young people receive equal treatment and are afforded rights at work. The full text of the 2012 resolution *The youth employment crisis: A call for action* can be found on the ILO website at: [http://www.ilo.ch/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS\\_185950/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.ch/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS_185950/lang--en/index.htm).

#### **Box 4. A Roadmap for promoting women's economic empowerment: A meta-analysis**

In 2013, the United Nations Foundation entered into a partnership with the Exxon Mobil Corporation to build a Roadmap for promoting women's economic empowerment by identifying the most effective interventions as well as measures to assess programme outcomes. The resulting Roadmap highlights findings of 18 evaluations across four categories of employment – entrepreneurship, farming, wage employment and young women's employment. Some studies conducted new data analysis while others reviewed the existing evidence. The project includes a total of 136 published empirical evaluations and offers a valuable resource on "lessons learned" in maximizing project and programme results for young women (as well as for adults).

A summary of lessons specific to the economic empowerment of young women or related to young women follows:

- For young women, demand-oriented skills training, on-the-job training, vouchers and/or wage subsidies effectively increase their employability and earnings.
- Cash grants or incentives to young women for education increase their school attendance and may improve their educational outcomes; while large cash grants with no conditions may help to increase young women's employment chances and income and have sizeable social benefits.
- Livelihood programmes that combine reproductive health with income generation and asset building show promising results for young women in low-income settings and in socially conservative environments, but need to be further evaluated before they can be delivered at scale.
- Access to childcare is proven to increase women's wage employment and earnings; however, childcare programmes must be designed to ensure quality, affordability and cost effectiveness.
- Capital alone, either as a small loan or a grant, is not enough to grow women's subsistence-level businesses; very poor women need more comprehensive services in order to break free from low-earning subsistence-level businesses, rather than single services or small levels of capital (in-kind, grants or loans).
- Successful projects with small-scale women farmers or agricultural producers are those that provide an integrated suite of services rather than one single service. The services must target production and marketing and be tailored to address social constraints.

Source: <http://womeneconroadmap.org/>

### **3.1 Stimulate demand and create jobs for youth through pro-employment and macroeconomic policies**

Youth employment trends are related to overall employment trends but are exacerbated by the fact that youth employment is particularly sensitive to business cycles (ILO, 2015a). Sections of the current report have provided additional evidence that youth are likely to have higher unemployment rates, higher rates of informality and irregular employment, and higher working poverty rates than adult workers. This reflects their lower levels of accumulated work experience, and more limited access to networks and skills than adult workers. Employers are therefore more likely to let them go before adult workers. For young women, their situation may be even more precarious and they may be among the first to lose jobs; although ILO (2010a) notes that the crisis impact on jobs is highly dependent on the sectoral distribution of employment. If the sectors that were hardest hit by the crisis were male-dominated sectors, then the unemployment numbers of men (and young men) should rise faster those of women (and young women), and vice versa for female-dominated sectors.

In any case, countercyclical policies remain an essential tactic to ensure that aggregate demand continues to be stimulated and that young women and men are both targeted through these measures. Sectoral policies to support potential growth sectors also offer the potential to boost labour demand for young entrants.<sup>37</sup> Demand-side interventions, such as expanded employment-intensive public works programmes and

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<sup>37</sup> See ILO (2015a), chapter 5 for additional details on policy options for youth employment.

training opportunities, for example, can help to create jobs for youth, even if these are only short term. Another area in which demand can be stimulated and binding constraints on private sector growth removed is through enabling access to finance for young people and supporting enterprise development with young entrepreneurs (addressed also in section 3.4).<sup>38</sup>

#### **Box 5. The ILO mandate on gender equality**

The ILO's mandate to promote gender equality in the world of work is enshrined in its Constitution and reflected in relevant international labour standards. The four key ILO gender equality Conventions are the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) and Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183). Conventions 100 and 111 are also among the eight fundamental Conventions and the principles and rights enshrined in those Conventions are found in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

The ILO mandate on gender equality is reinforced by related Resolutions adopted by its highest decision-making body, the International Labour Conference. The most recent of these is the Resolution concerning Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work, adopted in June 2009; and the Resolution concerning the Promotion of Gender Equality, Pay Equity and Maternity Protection, adopted in June 2004.

The ILO's gender equality mandate is also set in the context of an array of international instruments advancing equality between women and men. Amongst others, these include the UN Charter itself, numerous resolutions of the General Assembly, the 1997 UN Economic and Social Council's Agreed Conclusions on gender mainstreaming, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and its follow-up, and the Millennium Development Goals and the soon to be adopted Sustainable Development Goals.

Source: Website of the ILO Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch (GED): [www.ilo.org/gender](http://www.ilo.org/gender).

In order to ensure participation of young women in demand-side interventions, such as public works, additional mechanisms may need to be included to help them to overcome the constraints that tend to keep them at home (more so than young men). Unless the constraints that prevent young women from participating in public works programmes (or training programmes; see section 3.2) are directly addressed, inequitable access to employment is reinforced. Transport allowances, ensuring safe transport, childcare opportunities, setting appropriate wages, as well as imposing quotas for females have proven to be very effective in encouraging young women to participate in such schemes and training opportunities.

Monetary, fiscal and financial reform offer additional mechanisms for opening up productive resources for young women, including in efforts towards gender-responsive budgeting.<sup>39</sup> The regulatory environment for microfinance will need to take into account not only the constraints facing young women in terms of collateral and assets but also address the competing household constraints on control of resources. Specific microfinance products and services can be designed to address the particular risks facing young women and their more limited position in the labour market.

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<sup>38</sup> Development of value chains is one means of boosting job creation. In this regards, tools exist to promote the gender-sensitive approach to value chain development. See, for example, Mayoux and Mackie (2008).

<sup>39</sup> See <http://www.gender-budgets.org/>.

### 3.2 Invest in education and training to enhance employability and facilitate school-to-work transitions

Education, training and lifelong learning foster a virtuous cycle of improved employability, higher productivity, income growth and development. Yet still deficits remain in ensuring equal access to education and training, and also in ensuring that skills development is geared toward meeting current and future demand in the labour market. Skills and qualifications that do not meet labour market requirements and insufficient vacancies remain major constraints on the employability of young people. The evidence on mechanisms for improving the outcomes of young women in education, training and the school-to-work transition is growing, as highlighted below:

#### *Access to education and training*

- Despite significant improvements in educational attainment, particularly at primary level as a result of concerted efforts by governments under the Millennium Development Goals, many girls are still being left behind when it comes to access. Governments have put in place a range of incentives to encourage parents to keep girls in school. Among them are in-kind incentives, including food products, as well as conditional cash transfers, scholarships and subsidies targeting rural communities. All these have proven effective in different contexts, and the numbers of girls in primary school have risen even in cultures which place social restrictions on girls.
- Evidence is also emerging that unconditional cash transfers can play a role in increasing the autonomy of young women. In Malawi, for example, a cash transfer programme with no ties did not improve schooling outcomes, but it did allow girls who had dropped of school to postpone becoming economically dependent wives and mothers by providing a temporary source of independent income. As a result, teen pregnancies and marriage rates fell significantly in the target group (Baird et al., 2013). Another important means of improving school attendance is through infrastructural development. In Pakistan and Afghanistan, for example, the creation of roads and safe methods of transport led to increases in the number of girls remaining in school.
- For young girls and adolescents who never attended school or dropped out because of early pregnancy and early marriage (see sections 2.5.2–3), second chance opportunities are particularly important to avoid their complete detachment from the labour market, with its attendant risks of poverty and dependency on other family members. Specific interventions targeting young women in these circumstances may be appropriate. Such interventions may combine remedial education with technical and employability skills.
- Regardless of the type of training, skills interventions for youth show consistent evidence of higher drop-out rates among female than among male participants. Evaluations tend to point to the more stringent constraints under which young adolescents or women have to make decisions regarding skills acquisition, which result in poorer outcomes in terms of skills acquired, job offers and income gains. In an evaluation of an on-the-job training programme in Malawi, for example, Cho et al. (2015) found that girls could not attend the training as regularly as boys and were less likely to end up with job offers from their trainers. Cash transfers may be

an important incentive to enable girls to participate in these opportunities, but the provision of childcare opportunities, transport allowances and guaranteed safe methods of transport are equally important.<sup>40</sup>

- In addition to technical skills, young women would also benefit from the opportunity to acquire portable soft skills, such as communication and problem-solving skills, which can enhance employability across sectors and jobs. Many interventions targeting young women also include a range of life skills to enhance their empowerment and autonomy (see box 6).

**Box 6. Livelihoods training for adolescent girls living in the slums of Allahabad, India**

The project focused on expanding the decision-making power of young women by building social networks and developing financial and income-generating capacities. Rather than focusing solely on technical skills, the project also provided training in life skills as a means of transforming the ways in which girls viewed themselves and how they are perceived in their community. At the onset of the project, literate 14–19-year-old girls who had their parents' permission were trained to be peer educators. The peer educators attended a six-day reproductive health training course and a two-day peer-education training course to improve their communication skills. Each peer educator was expected to visit every household in her locality and invite all eligible young women to participate in the project. Groups of adolescent girls were then formed to meet once a week with a peer educator. These meetings were used as the vehicles in which to hold discussions on reproductive health, vocational training and savings account information, including providing assistance to open accounts. Evaluation of the project using a control group outside the project showed that girls aged 14–19 who took part in the project were significantly more likely to know about safe locations for unmarried women to congregate, be a member of a group, score higher on indexes measuring social skills and self-esteem and to have greater knowledge about reproductive health.

Source: Youth Employment Inventory; <http://www.youth-employment-inventory.org>

*Overcoming supply-side biases and occupational segregation*

- Occupational segregation is another long-standing and stubborn problem that permeates all aspects of the labour market. Although manifested in the labour market, the roots of occupational segregation are found in the gender norms, the household division of labour and the allocation of resources from the beginning of the life cycle. An important first step in broadening occupational segregation is to ensure that all girls have access to schooling. However, it is not just the level of education achieved, but also changes in the quality and relevance of education and training that is important (see box 7 on a gender mainstreaming approach to training). Indirect discrimination results in girls being stereotyped as less interested or capable in certain subjects – for example, maths and sciences. Textbooks often show men in dominant commercial roles and women in subservient, subordinate roles. Curricula reform thus remains important, including the removal of gender stereotypes with accompanying guidance for girls into the more stereotypically male STEM fields.
- In many cases, public awareness raising on gender roles will be necessary to broaden young women's visions and aspirations and gain support from the wider community for a broader role for women.<sup>41</sup> At the same time, if young women are

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<sup>40</sup> In a recent review of cash transfer programmes in South Africa, Plagerson and Ulriksen (2015) find that the positive impacts of cash transfers in empowering vulnerable women were mostly coincidental and that impact for women could be greater if care facilities and social services were better developed.

<sup>41</sup> An exciting example is the “Because I am a Girl” campaign organized by Plan International. See <https://plan-international.org/what-we-do/because-i-am-girl>.



increasingly encouraged to pursue non-traditional, male-dominated fields, measures will need to be put in place to ensure their safety, including through public awareness raising, dialogue with community leaders and sensitivity training in human resources and among male employees.

- Skills training for young women will also need to eliminate supply-side biases to prevent the investment in skills development from being squandered. Training in traditional “female” skills, such as tailoring, cooking or hairdressing, will often mean that young women end up in already saturated occupations where there is little or no demand. All skills training therefore needs to be based on sound analysis of demand in the local labour market (see box 8 for an example of good practice in locally driven gender analysis and action in Zimbabwe).

#### **Box 7. Gender mainstreaming in training institutions in Central America**

The national training institute in Costa Rica, Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje (INA), was the first of several national vocational training institutions in Central America to embark on a comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategy, with the objective of improving the employability of women.

The strategy involved first undertaking a diagnostic of gender segregation within specific training programmes and then making recommendations for a gender policy. The INA gender policy and five-year action plan (2013–17) were launched in 2013. With the support of the ILO and the Spanish-funded project FOIL (Fomación, orientación et incerción laboral), similar studies and validation workshops are being replicated throughout the region with the aim to roll out gender mainstreaming strategies within other national training institutions.

Source: ILO Skills for Employability Policy Brief, *The gender divide in skills development: Progress, challenges and policy options for empowering women*, April 2014; [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---ifp\\_skills/documents/publication/wcms\\_244380.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_244380.pdf).

#### **Box 8. Community-based transformation action plan in Zimbabwe**

In 2014, the United Nations in Zimbabwe launched the country's first Joint Programme on Gender Equality, to be implemented with support from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). The ILO, with UN Women, was given responsibility under the programme's pillar for Women's Economic Empowerment and Working Conditions. The project aims for a female-led community-based transformation of rural areas in impoverished regions of rural Zimbabwe.

The project mobilizes the local community to assess local market demand and income-generating opportunities for women and then develop a Community Gender Transformation Action Plan (CGTAP). The ILO's Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) methodology is adapted for delivery of vocational training, along with core skills for improved employability and specific modules relating to gender transformation. Emerging lessons on the CGTAP implementation in Zimbabwe, which has preliminarily focused on transforming opportunities for vulnerable women in the poultry and horticulture sectors, have found that (i) the provision of gender transformation training boosts women's self-awareness and confidence levels; (ii) the programme should be wholly owned by local communities and with the women leading, but providing space for other actors in the community; and (iii) having women in decision-making positions, i.e. within local-level government structures (ward councilor) facilitates the success of the programme.

Source: “ILO joins UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA in the country's first Joint Programme for Gender Equality”, ILO press release, 10 April 2014; [http://www.ilo.org/addisababa/whats-new/WCMS\\_240842/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/addisababa/whats-new/WCMS_240842/lang-en/index.htm); and unpublished powerpoint presentation, “Empowering women for effective participation in structural transformation in the rural economy”, at ILO Regional Conference “What works to boost labour demand for youth: the role of structural transformation”, 21-23 October 2015, Livingstone, Zambia.

### **3.3 Improve labour market integration of young people through targeted labour market policies**

Labour market policies are geared toward promoting a smooth interaction between labour supply and demand, and as such can be helpful in redressing some of the disadvantages faced by women in the labour market. These policies include activation measures for the unemployed and other target groups, including job orientation measures, self-employment, public works and special job creation programmes, as well as financial

assistance that aims to compensate individuals for loss of wage or salary (such as unemployment benefits or cash transfers).<sup>42</sup> Employment services are the system used to facilitate the implementation of both passive and active labour market policies. Specific labour market policies that can enable young women to access a wider range of jobs include career counselling and setting quotas, targets and financial incentives for placement in enterprises. The latter can be supported through active labour market policies (ALMPs), such as wage and training subsidies and national programmes to support labour market training and internships with stipends.<sup>43</sup>

Poorly functioning labour information systems are also an issue in labour supply and demand mismatches, as are the mechanisms of job search used by young jobseekers. The SWTS show that young women are even less likely than young men to use public employment services (PES), relying instead on informal networks to find job opportunities. There is a need, therefore, to build the capacity of PES to target young women and support them in job-search techniques, including raising gender awareness among job counselors.

Work experience is highly valued by employers. However, young women in particular are very likely to be trapped in a vicious cycle of not being able to gain a job because of lack of work experience. Interventions to support young women in gaining work experience are therefore also extremely important. One way to do this is through apprenticeships. Young men tend to have greater access to apprenticeships than young women, and in a wider range of occupations (Steedman, 2012). Supporting young women's access to apprenticeships (including through targeting, quotas and stipends) and internships can help them to gain valuable work experience in order to access a wider range of job opportunities (see box 9).

#### **Box 9. Facilitating the labour market transition of young women in Liberia**

In Liberia, the Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (EPAG) project, implemented by the Ministry of Gender and Development, supported young female graduates in their transition to the workforce through training, job placements and internships. The project provided 2,500 young women with six months of training on job skills or business skills, followed by a six-month placement with a business. Transport and childcare allowances were also provided. Preliminary evaluations found that employment offers were 50 per cent higher and incomes generated 115 per cent higher among trainees than those in the control group.

Source: Buvinić et al., 2013.

### **3.4 Provide career options to young people by supporting entrepreneurship and self-employment**

Despite the fact that own-account work remains the largest source of employment creation in many low-income countries, most young people still aspire to wage employment and remain wary of starting a business. Young women are even less likely than young men to contemplate starting a business and, when they do, enterprise development prospects are often limited. Barriers to growth for women entrepreneurs include: (i) the difficulty of obtaining individual loans from financial institutions; (ii) domestic duties at home that decrease the amount of time women can spend on their businesses; and (iii) restrictive gender norms concerning women in business (Stangl et al.,

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<sup>42</sup> For an excellent review of good practices in gender-sensitive labour market policies in the framework of national employment policies, see Goulding (2013).

<sup>43</sup> Buvinić et al. (2013) report positive evaluation results from the promotion of female employment in non-traditional fields through labour market training programmes in Latin American countries.

2015). Entrepreneurship programmes targeting young people will therefore need to incorporate specific components to take into account the obstacles facing young women, including lack of access to skills, finance, assets and other resources like family support. As in previous sections, lessons have been learned regarding mechanisms to overcome some of the gender-based constraints of entrepreneurship and enterprise development. Some solutions are outlined below (see also box 10).

- Young women, like adult women, have more limited access than men to formal financial institutions to support enterprises. Perhaps more troubling is recent evidence showing that even when loans or grants were forthcoming to female business owners in Uganda, no positive gains in terms of profit were evident. The impact assessment of access to finance in Uganda (Fiala, 2015) posits that women experience a degree of family pressure that limits their investment in the business, meaning that even expanding access to finance for young women will not be sufficient in itself to support growth in female-led microenterprises.
- While women tend to operate smaller enterprises and farm a more limited range of non-commercial crops than men, this does not mean that they are less capable than men. Rather, unequal access to productive resources, including land, technology, market information, skills, agricultural inputs and credit are key determinants of their lower productivity. Capital alone, as a small loan or a grant, is often not enough to enable women to move beyond subsistence level production (Buvinić et al., 2013). Interventions that combine finance (especially grants) and business training, although more costly, seem to be more effective in supporting women's business start-up than either finance or business training alone (Patel, 2014; see also box 10).

#### **Box 10. "What works" in women's entrepreneurship development**

On 18 September 2015, the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) unit of the ILO brought together some of the leading experts in undertaking rigorous qualitative and quantitative evaluations of interventions seeking to support women's entrepreneurship development. A report (ILO, 2015a) was prepared to summarize the evidence shared at the meeting as well as the subsequent discussion among participants regarding the remaining work to be done to maximize the returns on programming for women's entrepreneurship development. Recommendations from the discussion include:

In terms of evaluation:

- Take into account the cost-effectiveness of various bundled interventions;
- Have better targeting according to the women and firm profiles;
- Promote women's networks, peer learning, and mentoring;
- Use more qualitative methods within rigorous studies;
- Evaluate impacts over longer time period (2 or more years).

In terms of programming

- Address barriers women face with gender-responsive measures such as networks, gender norms, involving men;
- Consider trade-offs of increasing intensity of gender-sensitive measures.

Source: Summary report, What in entrepreneurship development helps women entrepreneurs to succeed? An ILO-WED workshop on what the evidence is telling us, September 18, 2015; [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_417046.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_417046.pdf).

- Capital delivered as in-kind inputs can also help women to ensure that the investment remains within their productive activities rather than being diverted for household use or passed on to relatives. New technologies are also proving to be an important mechanism for supporting the productive activities of women. Mobile phones, for example, are a cost-effective way of delivering financial products and services, savings facilities, cash transfers and market information to poor women farmers, without the need to travel long distances.

- Developing life skills and providing technical training and post-training support, mentoring, market and credit access can help to reduce the economic and social vulnerabilities of women. Evidence from a two-pronged intervention in Uganda in which adolescent girls were provided with vocational training in combination with information on sexual health, reproduction and marriage showed highly positive results: participating girls' likelihood of engaging in income-generating activities rose by 72 per cent (mainly driven by increased participation in self-employment) and monthly consumption expenditures were increased by 41 per cent. Teen pregnancy fell by 26 per cent, and early entry into marriage/cohabitation fell by 58 per cent (Bandiera et al., 2015).
- Given the very high rates of informality among young people, strategies must also be put in place to support transitions to the mainstream economy. As discussed in the report, young women are often found in the most marginalized segments of the informal economy with fewer assets, greater risks and lower income. An integrated package of support is needed, including access to resources, to enable young women to increase productivity and ensure that their enterprises are in the demand-driven segments of the local economy. Reforms in labour law may also be appropriate to overcome gaps in protection for the sectors where young women are located either as workers or operators of enterprises. Importantly, creating a supportive environment for dialogue between actors in the informal economy is the cornerstone of transitioning out of informality. Young women are even less likely than young men to be organized, to be able to negotiate and to engage in social dialogue.

### **3.5 Ensure that young people receive equal treatment and are afforded rights at work**

The overlapping marginalized identities of being young and being a woman mean that the wage position of young females is, more often than not, doubly precarious (in comparison to that of young men and adults). Pay differentials remain one of the most persistent forms of inequality between men and women. Many factors contribute to the gap and it is difficult to distinguish between differences that result from labour market characteristics (skills, educational level, participation rates, etc.) and direct or indirect discrimination. Efforts to address the problem need to deal with labour market inequalities and also the more fundamental attitudes to the roles of men and women that pervade society, the value of female or male skills and the demands of balancing work and family/household responsibilities.<sup>44</sup>

The “Call for action” makes the point that young workers have the same rights as adult workers, so youth employment measures must be careful to avoid discrimination and inequity in areas such as wages, employment protection and social protection (see box 11). For young women, the issue is further complicated by employers' perceptions that the costs of hiring them are higher as a result of maternity protection and higher staff turnover for family reasons. Young women are also likely to be in those sectors and jobs which are most vulnerable to inadequate protection within the labour law – domestic work, for

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<sup>44</sup> The ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) is a key normative instrument in promoting the principal value of equal pay for men and women for work of equal value. To date, the Convention has been ratified by 171 ILO member States. See the ILO Issue Brief on “Pay Equity - A key driver of gender equality” for a general overview of what companies can do to reduce the gender wage gap; [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/Publications/WCMS\\_410196/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Informationresources/Publications/WCMS_410196/lang--en/index.htm).

example, but also part-time work in general. Labour laws therefore need to close these gaps, catch up with the changing dynamics of the labour market and increase enforcement in areas where laws already exist (see box 12).<sup>45</sup>

#### **Box 11. Analysis of the regulatory environment with a gender lens**

According to the survey of 173 countries for the World Bank's *Women, Business and the Law* report (World Bank, 2015), 100 countries restrict women from pursuing the same economic activities as men. In certain cases, women are legally prohibited from holding particular jobs (for example, distilling alcohol and producing or mixing liquors in Argentina). Labour laws and regulations have an important role to play in young women's employment outcomes. There are a host of policies and legislation which can have important negative impacts as a result of direct and indirect discriminatory provisions. It is important therefore that, at the country level, reviews and analysis of the national regulatory environment be undertaken to identify features and gaps which contribute to disadvantaging women. Although directly discriminatory legislation is now rare, it can still make its appearance in provisions of other laws, such as inheritance laws, land ownership laws, head of household provisions in family law, taxation laws, customary and traditional laws. It can also be found in regulations which restrict the migration of young women for work to overseas destinations. These often have the unintended consequences of increasing irregular migration and thus significantly exacerbating vulnerability.

Such a review is needed at country level to understand and rectify the specific legal obstacles to the empowerment of young women, and ensure that regulations are compatible with equality and anti-discrimination laws where they exist. Where equality legislation does not exist, an important first step is to draft such legislation in full consultation with tripartite bodies and women's organizations.

A further area of review in understanding the economic empowerment of young women is the regulatory environment for enforcing principles of equal pay for work of equal value. With gender wage gaps existing in all occupations, and with younger women facing a further wage penalty because of their age (see section 2.3.3), measures to address wage inequality are essential. The ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) provides guidance to develop national legislation in line with international standards.

#### **Box 12. Domestic worker legislation in the Philippines**

According to an ILO study, the Asia-Pacific region employed 21.5 million domestic workers in 2010, the highest number of all regions (ILO, 2013a). In most countries in the region, domestic workers, a majority of which are women, are excluded from the scope of labour legislation. Domestic workers are therefore left vulnerable to abusive practices and decent work deficits, frequently working long hours for low wages, with no social protection benefits and no voice or representation arrangements in place (ILO, 2013b).

The Government of the Philippines, which has approximately 1.9 million domestic workers, played an active role in the ratification in 2012 of the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189), adopted by the 100th session of the International Labour Conference. A Philippine Law for Domestic Workers (Kasambahay Law) was signed by President Benigno S. Aquino III in January 2013. The law extends to domestic workers the same rights as formal sector workers. It establishes specific contractual rules and mandatory benefits, sets a minimum wage and puts in place mechanisms for rescue in case of abuse and settlement of disputes. The law defines special arrangements for domestic workers aged between 15 and 18, particularly regarding working hours, access to education and involvement of parents in the stipulation of contracts. In addition, it gives dispositions for the development of a skills and competency-based wage system. The Philippines' Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) has closely followed the provisions of the Kasambahay Law to define profiles and related competencies for domestic workers within the Philippine TVET Qualification and Certification System. TESDA will now follow through in the development of competency-based training curricula, instructional materials and assessment mechanisms to allow the regulated awarding of qualifications.

For more information, see [www.tesda.gov.ph](http://www.tesda.gov.ph) and [www.bwsc.dole.gov.ph](http://www.bwsc.dole.gov.ph)

With personal service work (see section 2.3.2) already taking the fifth ranking as top occupational outlets of young women in the SWTS countries and knowing the inevitable expansion of the care economy, the sector brings a great deal of promise in absorbing

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<sup>45</sup> Regarding protection of part-time work, which attracts more young people than adults and more women (young and old) than men, ILO (2015a), section 5.3.2 makes reference to efforts in certain countries to reform the legal framework to allow equal treatment of part-time workers with full-time workers and fixed-term and agency workers with permanent and regular workers.

young labour market entrants. An important area for ILO work (and others) will be to work with to promote decent jobs in this sector, in other words “taking care of the caregivers” as phrased in Maybud (2015). The lack of organization and voice for young women is both a cause and an effect of their lack of empowerment. Due to cultural and social constraints, limited time as a result of household responsibilities and the nature of the work in which young women are often engaged, they are less likely than young men to be involved in trade unions, small business groups, informal economy associations and other groups. Facilitating their organization and building negotiating capacity and collective strength is a key route to empowering young women.

Trade unions and employers’ organizations have important roles to play in reaching out to young women and ensuring their services are relevant to young women’s needs. Employers’ organizations have the potential to influence demand side barriers, in recruiting young women and raising awareness of gender-specific issues amongst their membership. In a survey of approximately 40,000 employers across 42 countries, only 2 per cent reported having adopted a talent sourcing strategy to recruit more women (World Bank, 2014). IFC (2013) and ILO (2015b) both make important contributions to the role of the private sector in promoting employment equality by making the business case for investing in women’s employment. With regard to the business case “to support better employment opportunities for women beyond minimum statutory compliance”, IFC (2013) provides evidence to endorse the following benefits:

- positive results in companies around the world that have practiced inclusive recruitment and training policies in becoming an “employer of choice”;
- reductions in absenteeism and staff turnover;
- increases in productivity and innovation through strengthened diversity;
- better relations with the local community; and
- broader insights into consumer preferences and buying patterns.

ILO (2015b) includes a detailed checklist of measures and actions companies and employers’ organizations could consider to advance more women in business and management. The measures were developed in consultations during five regional workshops organized by the ILO in 2012–13 in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Middle East and North Africa, Eastern Europe and CIS countries, which brought together employer and private sector representatives, and gender experts from more than 57 countries.

### **3.6 Addressing unequal household responsibilities in unpaid care work**

Evidence has shown that, in all countries, women have a disproportionately high share of household responsibilities as a result of gender roles and norms. Hours spent on unpaid care work in the home is one of the most important determinants of women’s employment outcomes, impeding their ability to engage in paid work, training, full-time work and formal sector jobs. It can limit career advancement and eventually lead to detachment from the labour market with a depreciation of skills and decreased bargaining power upon labour market re-entry (for those that do re-enter).

While much of the burden of household responsibilities is taken by adult women, young women are not immune and they often take on increasing responsibilities as they get older or marry early. In certain contexts their schooling and training opportunities may have been interrupted to care for dependants in the household and support their mothers in completing household chores. In developing countries, particularly in rural contexts, these burdens are intensified.

All in all, the current evidence from the SWTS shows that progress in empowering women to strike a better balance between unpaid care work and paid employment is slow

at best. An important part of recognizing the contribution that unpaid care makes to societies and economies is to give it economic value and bring it under the purview of policy attention. Rather than considering the provision of unpaid care as an unlimited resource and a private family responsibility, it should be identified as a major determinant of gender gaps in employment outcomes. The Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization adopted in 2013 (described in section 2.5.4) should help in this regard. Ultimately, unpaid care work must be accounted for in GDP calculations and systems of national accounts.

Such recognition can lead to prioritization of infrastructural development in rural areas in order to support women. Road construction, development of electricity and other utilities, irrigation and sanitation can significantly reduce the time that rural women have to spend in maintaining their households. Buvinić et al. (2013) report on evidence from South Africa which found that rural electrification increased the labour force participation of women by 9.5 percentage points. Improvements in water infrastructure, on the other hand, were found to have little, if any, impact on female non-household employment. The extension of services, such as public transportation, can also increase women's and girls' mobility, and labour-saving technologies, such as fuel-efficient stoves, can reduce women's time spent gathering fuel. In Cambodia, for example, providing access to low cost, fuel-efficient cooking stoves was found to reduce the time that women had to devote to collecting firewood and subsequently increased their incomes by freeing up time for non-household production (World Bank, 2014).

The development of childcare facilities is also critical to opening up new opportunities for employment and training. In Kenya, for example, the introduction of preschool nurseries next to schools significantly reduced the burden on siblings – usually girls – to care for younger children (ILO, 2012a). One of the particular advantages of increasing childcare provision is that it not only allows women to participate in the labour market but, as a labour-intensive occupation, it also generates employment (see box 13).

**Box 13. Childcare provisions to support women's engagement in training and work, Mexico**

Mexico established a government-sponsored day-care programme to support female labour force participation as well as promote child development. The programme provided financial support to individuals and organizations to set up day-care facilities and encouraged participation through a subsidy for low-income mothers. The programme targeted low-income families, with the condition that the woman had to be engaged in either training, work or job seeking. In 2011, 45,000 jobs were created for day-care providers and staff, mainly women, and 300,000 children were enrolled. As many as 10,000 day-care centres were registered with the scheme.

Source: ILO (2012a).

Finally, reducing the burden of unpaid care work on young women cannot occur without a more overarching evolution of gender roles. Gender norms are socially constructed and can and do change over time. Public awareness campaigns can play a role in stimulating changes in perceptions about the gender division of labour at the household level. Incentives to support education and training can also influence the cost-benefit analysis at household level regarding education, training and labour market participation of women. Also relevant are efforts to engage men in the discussion under the growing recognition that men have a clear role to play in supporting women's economic empowerment.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> ILO (2014c) provides guidance on approaches to engage men in women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship development.

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## Annex I. Additional data tables

Table A.1 SWTS countries by sex disaggregation of sampled youth populations

Country	Year	Weighted sample		Unweighted sample	
		Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)
Armenia	2012	55.8	44.2	56.5	43.5
	2014	55.6	44.4	44.2	55.8
Bangladesh	2013	53.4	46.6	54.6	45.4
Benin	2012	49.4	50.6	49.5	50.5
	2014	51.8	48.2	48.8	51.2
Brazil	2012	50.0	50.0	50.2	49.9
Cambodia	2012	54.8	45.2	54.6	45.4
	2014	56.0	44.0	44.2	55.8
Colombia (urban)	2013	49.5	50.5	50.9	49.1
Congo, Rep. of	2015	49.0	51.0	51.6	48.4
Dominican Republic	2015	48.2	51.8	50.4	49.6
Egypt	2012	48.9	51.1	39.8	60.3
	2014	48.1	51.9	51.7	48.3
El Salvador	2012	52.1	47.9	58.8	41.2
	2014	52.2	47.8	47.6	52.4
Jamaica	2013	49.8	50.2	50.9	49.1
	2015	49.7	50.3	51.0	49.0
Jordan	2012	48.0	52.0	46.1	53.9
	2014	52.4	47.6	52.4	47.6
Kyrgyzstan	2013	48.6	51.5	51.4	48.6
Lebanon	2014	51.5	48.5	48.9	51.1
Liberia	2012	53.4	46.6	53.3	46.7
	2014	50.8	49.2	50.4	49.6
Macedonia, FYR	2012	48.2	51.8	46.1	53.9
	2014	48.2	51.8	56.5	43.5
Madagascar	2013	51.9	48.2	55.5	44.5
	2015	52.8	47.2	46.8	53.2
Malawi	2012	52.9	47.1	53.2	46.8
	2014	51.4	48.6	46.5	53.5
Moldova, Rep. of	2013	44.8	55.2	52.2	47.8
	2015	49.4	50.6	50.8	49.2
Nepal	2013	45.7	54.3	46.2	53.8
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2013	50.4	49.6	49.2	50.8
	2015	52.3	47.7	51.3	48.7
Peru (urban)	2013	50.6	49.4	47.4	52.6
Russian Federation	2012	50.3	49.7	50.4	49.6
	2014	49.6	50.4	50.4	49.6
Samoa	2012	49.0	51.0	50.3	49.7
Serbia	2015	48.8	51.3	47.3	52.7
Tanzania, United Rep. of	2013	48.5	51.5	49.5	50.5
Togo	2012	54.2	45.8	54.2	45.8
	2014	54.3	45.7	44.9	55.1
Tunisia	2013	49.4	50.6	48.5	51.5
Uganda	2013	52.5	47.5	52.5	47.5

	2015	54.7	45.3	45.6	54.4
Ukraine	2013	48.9	51.1	50.9	49.1
	2015	48.9	51.1	51.3	48.7
Viet Nam	2013	50.5	49.5	50.8	49.2
	2015	49.1	50.9	49.1	50.9
Zambia	2012	50.6	49.4	51.3	48.7
	2014	52.4	47.6	53.8	46.2

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 32 countries. For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.2 Main goal in life of young respondents, by sex, SWTS countries (%)**

Country	Being successful in work	Having lots of money	Making a contribution to society	Having a good family life	Other goal	Being successful in work	Having lots of money	Making a contribution to society	Having a good family life	Other goal
	Female					Male				
Armenia	23.8	5.3	5.3	63.5	2.2	27.5	31.7	9.8	27.2	3.8
Cambodia	10.8	18.9	5.0	65.3	0.0	12.6	22.0	7.0	58.4	0.0
Egypt	44.9	0.9	0.7	14.7	37.5	69.8	10.2	0.8	7.1	9.5
El Salvador	29.7	1.0	4.2	65.1	0.0	36.2	1.3	3.1	59.4	0.0
Jamaica	40.6	6.8	14.8	20.9	16.6	38.2	13.1	13.1	21.7	13.6
Jordan	38.7	4.6	4.8	46.7	5.2	53.2	22.1	3.5	17.2	4.0
Lebanon	30.7	5.1	4.8	58.3	0.0	26.9	16.3	2.1	53.3	0.0
Liberia	22.3	20.5	38.3	18.5	0.5	17.5	21.4	28.3	32.2	0.6
Macedonia, FYR	30.3	3.9	4.4	61.4	0.0	30.6	13.5	5.9	50.0	0.0
Madagascar	21.7	33.0	3.8	41.6	0.0	26.8	40.2	4.0	29.0	0.0
Malawi	19.3	24.9	11.7	44.1	0.0	22.7	31.1	14.4	31.8	0.0
Moldova, Rep. of	23.8	10.9	2.9	61.8	0.7	29.9	35.8	1.5	31.7	1.1
Nepal	21.9	13.9	18.6	45.6	0.0	22.1	29.5	14.1	34.4	0.0
Occupied Palestinian Territory	26.3	2.0	11.7	53.2	6.8	35.3	13.1	7.8	37.5	6.3
Peru	39.6	5.5	3.9	34.7	16.3	48.6	6.8	3.6	28.6	12.4
Serbia	32.5	3.4	4.3	56.1	3.8	31.8	9.0	3.7	50.7	4.8
Togo	34.3	29.5	5.6	29.6	0.0	43.3	29.5	8.3	18.2	0.0
Togo	21.5	24.2	6.4	47.9	0.0	32.4	29.0	10.9	27.7	0.0
Tunisia	48.5	4.6	5.0	39.9	1.4	61.3	16.5	5.0	15.1	1.6
Uganda	18.8	30.6	10.0	40.3	0.0	23.2	45.7	10.2	20.5	0.0
Ukraine	21.9	6.6	5.0	21.7	44.6	19.3	15.3	3.6	15.3	46.2
Viet Nam	19.4	19.7	4.2	55.8	0.7	21.0	37.7	5.9	34.3	1.0
Zambia	38.8	7.5	22.0	31.6	0.0	38.2	12.2	28.7	20.9	0.0

Notes: For countries with two survey rounds, only the latter round is shown. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 22 countries. For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.3 Employment-to-population of youth with completed education, by sex and parental status, SWTS countries**

Country	Year	With children		With no children	
		Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)
Armenia	2014	23.5	78.3	46.9	59.1
Benin	2012	51.7	67.1	41.9	43.3
Brazil	2012	40.8	83.9	57.2	77.8
Cambodia	2014	78.6	99.2	91.4	93.1
Colombia (urban)	2013	61.1	93.4	71.9	77.9
Dominican Republic	2015	41.8	91.7	48.2	77.2
Egypt	2014	9.3	95.6	22.4	72.6
El Salvador	2014	26.7	86.3	34.9	73.3
Jamaica	2013	40.4	78.6	47.8	57.0
Jordan	2015	13.1	94.8	26.6	72.9
Lebanon	2014	28.1	100.0	52.7	86.1
Liberia	2014	69.5	50.9	53.9	39.2
Macedonia, FYR	2014	30.1	69.0	49.5	48.2
Madagascar	2015	89.4	98.4	87.0	92.7
Malawi	2014	73.9	94.5	67.5	82.9
Moldova, Rep. Of	2015	30.3	71.3	64.7	55.4
Nepal	2013	56.2	89.6	59.6	76.7
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2015	4.7	76.6	17.8	62.5
Peru (urban)	2013	46.9	95.4	64.2	76.8
Russian Federation	2012	57.4	93.2	75.6	80.6
Samoa	2012	22.4	44.2	28.1	34.3
Serbia	2015	36.8	72.2	48.8	57.6
Tanzania, United Rep. of	2013	58.7	84.2	34.4	63.5
Togo	2014	67.8	81.4	54.2	57.8
Tunisia	2013	10.9	93.6	35.8	63.3
Uganda	2015	75.8	90.2	66.5	86.1
Ukraine	2013	43.8	83.4	74.0	75.3
Viet Nam	2013	81.3	91.3	81.0	84.6
Zambia	2014	59.0	76.4	49.7	63.7
Armenia	2014	23.5	78.3	46.9	59.1
Benin	2012	51.7	67.1	41.9	43.3
Brazil	2012	40.8	83.9	57.2	77.8

Notes For countries with two survey rounds, only the latter round is shown. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 29 countries (43 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.4 Inactive youth by reason for inactivity, by sex, SWTS countries**

Country	Sex	Attending education or training (%)	Family responsibilities/housework (%)	Pregnancy (%)	Illness, injury or disability (%)	Too young to work (%)	No desire to work (%)	Off-season (%)	Other (%)
Armenia	Male	76.5	2.0	0.0	5.3	1.4	0.2	1.2	13.5
	Female	55.5	24.6	14.2	1.4	1.0	2.3	0.1	0.9
Benin	Male	84.3	7.9	0.0	1.9	0.7	0.9	0.8	3.4
	Female	62.6	23.3	7.1	1.4	0.3	0.7	0.5	4.2
Brazil	Male	57.1	2.5	0.0	9.0	11.3	10.2	1.6	8.5
	Female	32.4	29.8	10.1	4.1	4.7	10.5	0.1	8.2
Cambodia	Male	83.0	2.4	0.0	8.3	3.2	0.1	2.3	0.6
	Female	47.0	29.2	17.5	3.3	1.5	0.4	0.8	0.3
Congo, Rep. of	Male	83.7	1.0	0.0	3.0	3.4	1.9	2.8	4.1
	Female	71.3	6.3	9.8	4.2	3.2	1.7	1.5	2.0
Dominican Republic	Male	58.6	2.9	0.7	8.3	16.7	9.6	0.0	3.2
	Female	48.7	24.2	8.2	3.2	10.0	3.2	0.0	2.5
Egypt	Male	84.0	0.3	0.0	2.7	0.0	0.9	0.0	12.1
	Female	50.4	37.8	0.8	1.2	0.3	8.2	0.0	1.5
El Salvador	Male	61.4	9.8	0.0	2.9	16.0	8.2	0.4	1.3
	Female	31.6	53.2	3.8	2.3	5.0	3.6	0.2	0.3
Jamaica	Male	87.5	2.0	0.0	4.7	0.4	2.4	0.7	2.3
	Female	78.3	8.6	6.6	2.5	1.3	1.1	0.3	1.3
Jordan	Male	92.1	0.3	0.0	2.2	0.1	1.0	0.0	4.2
	Female	57.0	32.1	0.3	0.8	0.1	6.1	0.0	3.6
Lebanon	Male	94.6	0.2	0.0	0.6	2.2	0.7	0.0	1.7
	Female	69.3	13.2	1.4	0.9	2.0	8.5	0.0	4.7
Liberia	Male	62.7	17.0	1.7	2.6	3.8	4.0	0.9	7.3
	Female	41.6	26.1	12.6	6.1	8.2	1.7	0.3	3.5
Macedonia, FYR	Male	87.3	1.3	0.4	2.6	2.6	1.1	0.0	4.7
	Female	62.7	28.2	1.5	1.6	1.3	0.9	0.0	3.8
Madagascar	Male	92.0	1.0	0.0	4.2	1.8	0.8	0.0	0.2
	Female	70.2	16.7	5.3	4.5	0.4	1.8	0.5	0.8
Malawi	Male	78.1	7.0	0.0	4.1	3.6	3.2	0.0	4.1
	Female	57.9	16.5	5.2	5.3	4.4	5.4	2.2	3.2
Moldova, Rep. of	Male	74.6	0.0	0.4	4.4	0.0	0.4	17.3	2.9
	Female	54.6	0.0	36.5	2.8	0.0	0.0	3.9	2.2
Nepal	Male	90.4	2.6	0.0	1.3	0.8	1.3	1.7	1.9
	Female	75.7	17.2	2.9	0.5	0.1	0.7	1.7	1.1
Occupied Palestinian Territory	Male	86.4	0.8	0.0	4.2	2.4	4.5	0.2	1.5
	Female	55.1	34.7	0.6	0.8	1.3	5.9	0.1	1.5
Peru (urban)	Male	80.9	4.3	0.0	4.0	4.4	4.2	0.3	1.8
	Female	54.5	34.9	1.2	2.5	2.9	1.5	0.4	2.2
Serbia	Male	88.2	2.0	0.0	2.7	2.5	1.5	0.0	3.3
	Female	80.2	11.1	3.1	1.2	0.7	2.1	0.1	1.5
Tanzania, United	Male	80.1	4.2	0.9	1.8	0.2	2.5	4.6	5.5

Rep. of	Female	60.2	10	3.9	5.2	2.2	11.6	1.2	5.6
Togo	Male	70.9	6.6	0.0	3.4	9.2	3.2	1.0	5.7
	Female	55.0	18.6	9.9	2.1	6.1	2.0	0.9	5.5
Tunisia	Male	91.7	0.3	0.0	3.6	1.1	1.1	0.2	2.0
	Female	62.6	23.8	1.6	1.7	0.3	7.3	0.0	2.7
Uganda	Male	81.1	2.2	0.0	7.4	2.6	3.3	0.4	2.9
	Female	59.8	17.4	5.6	6.5	4.4	1.5	1.4	3.5
Ukraine	Male	82.3	2.7	0.0	1.9	5.0	2.6	1.9	3.6
	Female	56.5	7.1	25.9	0.8	3.6	2.5	0.2	3.4
Viet Nam	Male	75.1	6.8	0.0	6.5	0.4	1.9	5.8	3.5
	Female	75.4	11.6	1.6	0.8	0.5	1.6	3.8	4.7
Zambia	Male	73.6	6.9	0.0	2.9	4.5	5.5	0.0	6.5
	Female	62.5	9.4	5.5	3.1	3.6	6.8	0.3	8.8

Notes: The figure excludes the majority shares of youth who are inactive due to school attendance. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 26 countries (35 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.5 Distribution of young married females by age of marriage and share of married female adolescents aged 15–19, SWTS countries**

Country	Married/Co-habiting	Share of females aged 15–19 who are married (%)	Age of marriage or cohabitation			
			Between 0 and 14 (%)	Between 15 and 19 (%)	Between 20 and 24 (%)	Between 25 and 29 (%)
Armenia	Married	2.7	0	27.9	61.0	11.1
Bangladesh	Married	39.8	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Benin	Married	8.1	4.1	56.7	34.8	4.4
Brazil	Married	13.9	1.3	50.7	39.7	8.3
	Co-habiting	–	10.5	59.3	25.6	4.6
Cambodia	Married	6.7	0.1	44.3	47.1	8.5
Colombia (urban)	Married	0.7	1.4	33.2	47.9	17.5
	Co-habiting	–	4.2	51.9	36.7	7.2
Egypt	Married	5.6	1.0	53.1	42.8	3.1
El Salvador	Married	1.0	4.8	57.8	25.0	12.4
	Co-habiting	–	8.4	71.9	16.7	2.9
Jamaica	Married	1.9	0	16.1	73.5	10.4
	Co-habiting	–	3.2	60.1	29.0	7.8
Jordan	Married	3.1	0.2	54	39.5	6.4
Kyrgyzstan	Married	8.9	0	47.7	48.5	3.9
Liberia	Married	2.7	7.7	51.5	28.4	12.4
Macedonia, FYR	Married	2.1	0.4	33.3	47.7	18.7
Madagascar	Married	15.9	7.5	67.8	22.1	2.6
Malawi	Married	17.7	3.3	73.8	21.4	1.6
Moldova, Rep. of	Married	3.6	0	31.2	53.9	15
Nepal	Married	10.6	4.0	50.1	41.6	4.3
Occupied Palestinian Territory		5.1	0	62.5	34.7	2.8
Peru (urban)	Married	1.4	0	46.2	41.9	12.0
	Co-habiting	–	2.5	54.9	36.4	6.3
Russian Federation	Married	1.2	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.



Samoa	Married	3.9	0.3	25.7	61.0	13.0
Tanzania, United Rep. of	Married	4.4	0.8	43.3	52.4	3.5
Togo	Married	2.9	0.5	65.5	30.5	3.5
Tunisia	Married	2.0	0	21.1	50.7	28.3
Uganda	Married	16.1	5.1	68.9	22.1	4.0
Ukraine	Married	4.6	0	27.0	64.9	8.0
Viet Nam	Married	5.8	0.6	31.5	54.1	13.8
Zambia	Married	5.9	3.6	49.9	39.3	7.2

Note: n.a. = Not available; – = Not relevant.

Source: Authors' calculations using SWTS data in 28 countries (first round 2012/13). For meta-information on reference period, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.6 Unemployed youth (relaxed definition) not engaged in an active job search and discouraged youth by sex, SWTS countries**

Country	Year	Not engaged in active job search		Discouraged youth	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>% of youth unemployment (relaxed definition)</i>					
Armenia	2014	37.8	30.0	13.9	12.7
Bangladesh	2013	4.7	8.0	1.5	1.8
Benin	2012	44.1	36.7	18.1	17.5
Brazil	2012	41.9	37.0	15.0	11.4
Cambodia	2014	43.6	28.4	5.1	13.4
Colombia (urban)	2013	8.0	13.1	6.2	7.1
Congo, Rep. of	2015	34.3	31.2	14.0	11.8
Egypt	2014	37.1	17.1	21.0	10.5
El Salvador	2014	72.3	59.4	23.2	24.3
Jamaica	2013	39.6	39.7	18.1	16.9
Jordan	2015	40.5	20.2	14.8	12.2
Kyrgyzstan	2013	48.3	39.6	22.3	19.2
Lebanon	2014	25.2	19.4	15.5	10.7
Liberia	2014	58.7	58.4	30.9	36.5
Macedonia, FYR	2014	14.1	10.8	8.4	5.5
Madagascar	2015	34.1	21.0	22.6	17.1
Malawi	2014	68.6	48.9	33.8	25.8
Moldova, Rep. of	2013	8.7	10.9	8.8	7.4
Nepal	2013	45.0	38.3	31.2	26.7
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2015	62.3	28.1	20.8	12.4
Peru (urban)	2013	53.3	42.3	7.2	5.8
Russian Federation	2012	35.4	24.3	10.2	5.4
Samoa	2013	22.3	23.8	5.8	12.2
Serbia	2015	35.5	36.7	12.9	15.1
Tanzania, United Rep. of	2013	60.1	51.2	7.2	19.5
Togo	2014	66.9	56.2	39.3	36.5
Tunisia	2013	32.1	13.2	18.0	7.8
Uganda	2015	72.2	64.1	21.1	22.4
Ukraine	2015	33.2	42.9	19.9	22.3
Viet Nam	2013	52.4	31.1	26.3	9.3
Zambia	2014	61.6	50.6	22.6	20.1

Notes: For countries with two survey rounds, only the second round is shown. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 31 countries. For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.7 Distribution of young unemployed university graduates by field of specialization, SWTS countries**

Country	Education		Humanities and social sciences		STEM		Agriculture and veterinary sciences		Health and welfare		Other	
	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)
Armenia	13.7	3.4	42.1	41.4	14.0	28.5	1.4	1.7	22.4	8.3	6.5	16.8
Cambodia	0.0	0.0	77.1	98.6	22.9	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dominican Republic	11.1	0.0	44.4	24.3	9.8	70.3	0.0	0.0	23.1	0.0	11.5	5.5
El Salvador	0.0	0.0	11.3	9.1	19.1	0.0	1.4	25.4	0.0	0.0	68.2	65.4
Jordan	30.1	5.9	23.2	35.2	34.0	42.4	0.6	0.0	5.6	8.3	6.5	8.3
Lebanon	13.5	0.0	45.9	20.6	18.9	41.2	0.0	0.0	8.1	2.9	13.5	29.4
Macedonia, FYR	13.7	6.2	37.5	25.8	19.3	44.8	8.8	6.4	9.9	3.7	10.9	13.2
Madagascar	15.4	0.0	59.4	70.4	0.0	29.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.3	0.0
Occupied Palestinian Territory	38.9	11.3	31.9	54.0	10.3	18.1	0.0	0.0	6.7	9.6	12.1	7.0
Serbia	11.1	4.5	48.3	61.4	14.6	26.0	4.4	0.0	14.9	1.8	6.8	6.3
Uganda	13.3	33.0	6.7	18.3	0.0	0.0	13.4	17.0	20.1	0.0	46.6	31.7
Zambia	11.3	20.3	22.4	10.0	11.1	49.8	0.0	0.0	16.1	0.0	39.0	20.0

Notes: F = female; M = male. The relaxed definition of unemployment is used here. STEM = Sciences, technology (computing), engineering and mathematics. Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data (2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.8 Youth engaged in domestic work and household production work (as share of youth population), by sex, SWTS countries**

Country	Year	Worked as a domestic worker for a wage, salary or any payment in kind		Worked on own (or household's) plot, farm, food garden, or helped in growing farm produce for sale or in looking after animals intended for sale	
		Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)
		Armenia	2012	0.0	0.3
	2014	0.3	0.2	1.5	4.0
Benin	2012	4.6	1.4	9.2	9.3
Brazil	2013	3.4	1.0	1.4	4.7
Cambodia	2012	0.8	0.2	30.3	36.9
	2014	3.2	4.0	36.6	44.1
Dominican Republic	2015	2.3	0.3	0.7	2.6
Egypt	2012	0.0	0.3	3.6	5.6
	2014	0.2	0.3	1.3	5.1
El Salvador	2012	1.0	0.3	1.6	11.1
	2014	2.3	0.1	0.9	13.5
Jamaica	2013	1.1	0.3	1.3	6.1
Jordan	2013	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.3
	2015	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.4
Lebanon	2014	0.2	0.1	0.8	1.3
Liberia	2012	8.3	12.8	20.2	24.5
	2014	3.5	6.6	18.8	22.3
Macedonia, FYR	2012	0.3	0.1	7.3	5.2
	2014	0.4	0.3	4.0	5.8

Madagascar	2013	2.0	0.9	49.1	48.6
	2015	1.4	0.8	47.6	49.6
Malawi	2012	2.5	2.9	25.3	31.9
	2014	6.7	7.9	37.1	39.5
Nepal	2013	3.8	6.5	20.9	21.6
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2013	0.1	0.2	0.2	1.5
	2015	0.1	0.0	0.1	1.6
Peru (urban)	2012	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.9
Serbia	2015	0.1	0.1	0.7	1.8
Togo	2012	3.4	1.5	25.6	28.9
	2014	3.8	1.0	23.3	27.0
Tunisia	2013	0.5	0.4	2.4	5.7
Uganda	2013	1.0	0.9	27.8	21.6
	2015	7.6	7.5	27.4	28.6
Ukraine	2013	1.0	1.0	3.0	5.5
Viet Nam	2013	1.1	2.6	19.0	20.9
Zambia	2012	6.4	10.8	10.5	12.9
	2014	10.2	17.9	21.6	32.3

Note: Youth = 15–29.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 24 countries (37 surveys in 2012–13 and/or 2014–15). For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.9 Youth employment by occupation (ISCO-08), female**

Country	Year	Legislators, senior officials and managers (%)	Professionals (%)	Technicians and associate professionals (%)	Clerks (%)	Service workers, shop and market sales workers (%)	Skilled agricultural and fishery workers (%)	Craft and related trade workers (%)	Plant and machine operators and assemblers (%)	Elementary occupations (%)	Armed forces (%)
Armenia	2012	4.7	33.1	12.6	8.2	21.8	8.7	1.9	0.8	8.1	0.0
Bangladesh	2013	0.4	9.7	1.2	1.1	6.6	23.5	44.5	2.7	7.2	0.4
Benin	2012	0.6	1.0	2.6	1.2	38.4	26.8	11.3	0.6	17.4	0.1
Brazil	2013	2.4	6.3	5.8	19.1	40.2	0.8	3.9	1.8	18.6	0.0
Cambodia	2014	0.5	3.4	1.6	2.1	25.8	42.8	18.7	0.4	4.7	0.0
Colombia (urban)	2013	8.9	3.6	22.7	23.3	24.7	0.3	5.7	1.1	4.4	4.8
Egypt	2014	1.0	25.4	12.2	6.9	15.0	23.1	2.1	9.0	5.3	0.0
El Salvador	2014	0.9	4.4	2.4	5.9	40.1	1.4	8.8	2.6	30.4	0.0
Jamaica	2013	4.5	10.8	5.6	23.6	41.0	2.2	0.7	0.5	11.0	0.0
Jordan	2012	0.3	54.6	8.6	11.8	11.6	1.4	3.7	0.3	7.7	0.0
Kyrgyzstan	2013	1.4	9.5	5.1	1.5	17.7	55.1	5.6	0.3	3.1	0.6
Liberia	2014	0.0	1.8	1.2	0.0	58.4	30.7	0.0	0.1	7.8	0.0
Macedonia, FYR	2014	0.5	24.7	10.0	7.0	27.3	2.4	6.9	7.8	13.4	0.0
Madagascar	2013	0.2	2.2	0.5	0.5	10.1	59.4	9.3	0.7	16.5	0.0
Malawi	2014	0.0	3.6	1.0	0.1	18.6	49.2	9.1	0.1	18.3	0.0
Moldova, Rep.	2015	9.8	21.5	13.9	2.3	22.2	7.2	10.6	1.0	11.6	0.0
Nepal	2013	1.2	14.1	1.7	1.7	15.1	46.1	5.6	0.9	11.2	0.2
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2013	4.3	41.0	14.3	7.2	20.9	6.3	4.0	0.8	1.3	0.0
Peru (urban)	2013	0.0	9.2	14.7	11.8	28.1	1.4	7.3	0.9	26.7	0.0
Russian Federation	2012	3.5	24.8	17.0	6.6	29.9	6.9	4.6	1.3	5.3	0.0
Samoa	2013	2.8	17.3	6.5	20.0	18.0	21.6	2.5	6.2	5.0	0.0
Serbia	2015	0.2	17.1	15.1	10.0	34.8	5.4	5.4	2.7	7.8	0.4
Tanzania, United Rep.	2013	0.0	1.8	1.1	3.1	20.8	10.6	27.7	0.1	34.8	0.0

Country	Year	Legislators, senior officials and managers (%)	Professionals (%)	Technicians and associate professionals (%)	Clerks (%)	Service workers, shop and market sales workers (%)	Skilled agricultural and fishery workers (%)	Craft and related trade workers (%)	Plant and machine operators and assemblers (%)	Elementary occupations (%)	Armed forces (%)
Togo	2014	1.5	2.0	1.5	1.5	30.3	36.8	14.0	1.6	10.7	0.0
Tunisia	2013	1.0	6.0	12.8	5.0	16.7	16.9	7.1	19.3	15.2	0.0
Uganda	2013	0.2	3.9	1.2	0.4	24.1	57.8	3.6	0.3	8.4	0.2
Ukraine	2013	8.2	35.1	8.4	7.2	25.9	1.6	4.8	1.9	4.6	0.0
Viet Nam	2013	0.4	10.1	4.7	4.6	18.7	5.3	13.7	9.9	32.0	0.5
Zambia	2014	2.7	3.9	0.9	3.1	33.9	16.9	2.6	0.7	35.0	0.3

Note: For countries with two survey rounds, only the second round is shown. Non-response is not shown so rows do not always add to 100 per cent.  
Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data in 29 countries. For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.

**Table A.10 Youth population with completed labour market transition by sex and age group**

Country	Age	15–19		20–24		25–29	
		Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Male (%)
Armenia	2014	0.6	2.4	18.5	27.6	29.8	53.7
Bangladesh	2013	9.7	28.8	11.5	46.0	17.9	67.3
Benin	2012	8.1	4.2	26.6	14.5	39.2	39.9
Brazil	2012	7.8	12.9	25.7	48.3	33.8	64.5
Cambodia	2014	26.2	17.6	43.4	41.1	51.7	60.1
Congo, Rep. of	2015	2.8	3.7	9.6	10.9	24.5	32.5
Dominican Republic	2015	2.9	7.0	15.9	38.4	28.9	50.2
Egypt	2014	3.3	15.5	9.2	30.1	11.1	56.4
El Salvador	2014	4.9	13.3	21.4	45.1	21.6	62.1
Jamaica	2013	3.2	7.2	20.5	35.2	31.6	49.4
Jordan	2015	1.0	13.3	9.3	41.8	23.1	77.4
Kyrgyzstan	2013	6.0	7.7	25.5	40.2	47.3	62.5
Lebanon	2014	1.2	8.3	14.5	39.6	42.8	74.6
Liberia	2014	3.2	5.2	10.0	8.5	18.3	21.1
Macedonia, FYR	2014	2.0	3.2	15.8	20.7	32.7	41.3
Madagascar	2015	26.0	28.9	44.5	44.6	60.8	60.0
Malawi	2014	11.4	9.1	28.6	25.9	26.7	35.1
Moldova, Rep. of	2015	1.7	6.0	24.1	24.1	41.8	57.1
Nepal	2013	5.4	7.5	15.2	19.7	37.1	46.9
Occupied Palestinian Territory	2015	0.4	10.6	3.3	29.7	10.8	48.0
Peru (urban)	2013	5.0	9.5	17.7	29.0	31.6	41.3
Serbia	2015	0.9	3.6	11.5	18.0	33.1	44.6
Togo	2014	13.7	6.4	24.0	18.6	35.2	28.6
Tunisia	2013	3.4	7.0	12.0	20.7	20.7	46.8
Uganda	2015	16.2	10.1	29.5	33.3	37.0	50.1
Ukraine	2015	4.0	4.0	44.8	31.1	75.1	56.4
Viet Nam	2013	18.5	23.8	42.0	51.6	69.5	75.9
Zambia	2014	6.5	6.7	13.2	14.7	17.0	17.1

Note: For countries with two survey rounds, only the second round is shown.

Source: Authors' calculations based on ILO SWTS data. For meta-information on reference periods, etc., see Annex II.



## Annex II. Meta-information on the ILO school-to-work transition surveys

School-to-work transition surveys (SWTS) were carried out between 2012 and 2015 within the framework of the Work4Youth (W4Y) partnership between the ILO Youth Employment Programme and The MasterCard Foundation. The W4Y project has a budget of US\$14.6 million and runs for five years to mid-2016. Its aim is to “promote decent work opportunities for young men and women through knowledge and action”. The immediate objective of the partnership is to produce more and better labour market information specific to youth in developing countries, focusing in particular on transition paths to the labour market. The assumption is that governments and social partners in the project’s target countries will be better prepared to design effective policy and programme initiatives once armed with detailed information on: (i) what young people expect in terms of transition paths and quality of work; (ii) what employers expect in terms of young applicants; (iii) what issues prevent the two sides – supply and demand – from matching; and (iv) what policies and programmes can have a real impact. Information on the survey implementation partners, sample size, geographic coverage and reference periods is provided in the following table. Micro data sets are available at [www.ilo.org/w4y](http://www.ilo.org/w4y).

### ILO school-to-work transition surveys: Meta-information

Country	Implementation partner	Sample size	Geographic coverage	Reference period
Armenia	National Statistical Service	3 216	National	Oct–Nov 2012
		2 710		Sep–Oct 2014
Bangladesh	Bureau of Statistics	9 197	National	Jan–Mar 2013
Benin	Institut National de la Statistique et de l'Analyse Economique	6 917	National	Dec 2012
		4 306		Dec 2014–Jan 2015
Brazil	ECO Assessoria em Pesquisas	3 288	National	Jun 2013
Cambodia	National Institute of Statistics	3 552	10 provinces	Jul–Aug 2012
		3 396	National	Jul–Aug 2014
Colombia	Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística	6 416	Urban	Sep–Nov 2013
Congo, Rep. of	Direction Générale de la Formation Qualifiante et de l'Emploi	3 276	National	May–Jun 2015
Dominican Republic	Banco Central	3 554	National	Jul–Sep 2015
Egypt	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics	5 198	National	Nov–Dec 2012
		5 758		Nov–Dec 2014
El Salvador	Dirección General de Estadística y Censos	3 451	National	Nov–Dec 2012
		3 604		Oct–Dec 2014
Jamaica	Statistical Institute of Jamaica	2 584	National	Feb–Apr 2013
		3 666		Jun–Sep 2015
Jordan	Department of Statistics	5 405	National	Dec 2012–Jan 2013
		3 749		Mar–Apr 2015
Kyrgyzstan	National Statistical Commission	3 930	National	Jul–Sep 2013
Lebanon	Consultation and Research Institute	2 627	National (Lebanese nationals only)	Nov 2014–Jan 2015
Liberia	Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services	1 876	National	Jul–Aug 2012
		2 416		Jun–Jul 2014
Macedonia, FYR	State Statistical Office	2 544	National	Jul–Sep 2012
		2 474		Jul–Oct 2014



Country	Implementation partner	Sample size	Geographic coverage	Reference period
<b>Madagascar</b>	Institut National de la Statistique	3 300	National	May–Jun 2013
		5 044		Apr–May 2015
<b>Malawi</b>	National Statistics Office	3 102	National	Aug–Sep 2012
		3 097		Sep 2014
<b>Moldova, Rep. of</b>	National Bureau of Statistics	1 158	National	Jan–Mar 2013
		1 189		Apr–May 2015
<b>Montenegro</b>	Statistical Office of Montenegro	2 998	National	Sep–Oct 2015
<b>Nepal</b>	Center for Economic Development and Administration	3 584	National	Apr–May 2013
<b>Occupied Palestinian Territory</b>	Central Bureau of Statistics	4 320	National	Aug–Sep 2013
		4 141		Jun–Jul 2015
<b>Peru</b>	Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática	2 464	Urban	Dec 2012–Feb 2013
<b>Russian Federation</b>	Russian Federal State Statistics Service	3 890	11 regions	Jul 2012
		3 415		Mar 2015
<b>Samoa</b>	Bureau of Statistics	2 914	National	Nov–Dec 2012
<b>Serbia</b>	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia	3 508	National	Mar–Apr 2015
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	Statistics Sierra Leone	Not yet available	National	Oct 2015
<b>Tanzania, United Rep. of</b>	University of Dar-es-Salaam, Department of Statistics	1 988	National	Feb–Mar 2013
<b>Togo</b>	Direction Générale de la Statistique et de la Comptabilité Nationale	2 033	National	Jul–Aug 2012
		2 708		Mar–Apr 2014
<b>Tunisia</b>	Institut National de la Statistique	3 000	National	Feb–Mar 2013
<b>Uganda</b>	Bureau of Statistics	3 811	National	Feb–Apr 2013
		3 049		Jan–Apr 2015
<b>Ukraine</b>	Ukrainian Center for Social Reform	3 526	National	Feb 2013
		3 202		Apr–May 2015
<b>Viet Nam</b>	General Statistics Office	2 722	National	Dec 2012–Jan 2013
		2 234		May–Jun 2015
<b>Zambia</b>	IPSOS Zambia	3 206	National	Dec 2012
		3 296		Oct–Dec 2014



This report explores the experiences and constraints faced by young women and men in the world of work. Based on the school-to-work transition surveys (SWTS) of 32 developing countries run between 2012 and 2015, the report concludes that being young and female serve as a double strike for those seeking to find productive employment. Despite the progress made in the educational attainment of young women around the world, still sizable gender gaps remain when it comes to the labour market transition and with regards to the quality of work in which young women and men engage. Making progress in gender equality thus calls for a more aggressive approach to youth employment policy-making; one that acknowledges and adjusts for the gender-specific constraints that restrict the transformative labour market transitions of young women and leads them on the path to self-empowerment.

The SWTSs are made available through the ILO “Work4Youth” (W4Y) Project. This Project is a five-year partnership between the ILO and The MasterCard Foundation that aims to promote decent work opportunities for young men and women through knowledge and action. The SWTS is a unique survey instrument that generates relevant labour market information on young people aged 15 to 29 years. The survey captures longitudinal information on transitions within the labour market, thus providing evidence of the increasingly tentative and indirect paths to decent and productive employment that today’s young men and women face.

The W4Y Publication Series covers national reports, with main survey findings and details on current national policy interventions in the area of youth employment, regional synthesis reports that highlight regional patterns in youth labour market transitions and thematic explorations of the datasets.

# Work4Youth



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ISSN 2309-6780