



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Data snapshot USING SEX-DISAGGREGATED DATA TO BETTER UNDERSTAND GENDER GAPS IN AGRICULTURE



SMALL FAMILY FARMS AND
WOMEN'S DECISION-MAKING
ROLES IN AGRICULTURE

GENDER GAPS IN SECURE
RIGHTS OVER LAND

EMPLOYMENT, WORK
AND TIME USE IN
AGRICULTURAL CONTEXTS

GENDER GAPS IN
DIGITALIZATION AND
FINANCIAL RESOURCES

GENDER GAPS IN
FOOD INSECURITY

BRIDGING THE
GENDER DATA GAPS



01 Distribution of the world's farms

The majority of the world's farms are small family farms with less than 1 hectare.^{1,2}

71.9%

FAMILY FARMS WITH < 1 ha



11.4%

FAMILY FARMS WITH 1–2 ha



4.4%

FAMILY FARMS WITH 2–5 ha



12.3%

ALL OTHER FARMS



02 Agricultural production decision-making processes for small family farms are often complex

In agricultural surveys, data is often collected as if one person in the household – the 'holder' – exercises full management control and is responsible for decision-making over all agricultural production on the household farm.

Yet, for many small family farms in low-income countries, decision-making over agricultural production is not just made by one person, it is more complex.

Multiple household members may manage various agricultural production activities, either exclusively or jointly with others.



03 Different household structures⁵

Household structures can vary significantly between countries and regions: from couple households, where there is one primary male and one primary female in the household, to diverse forms of extended family households.

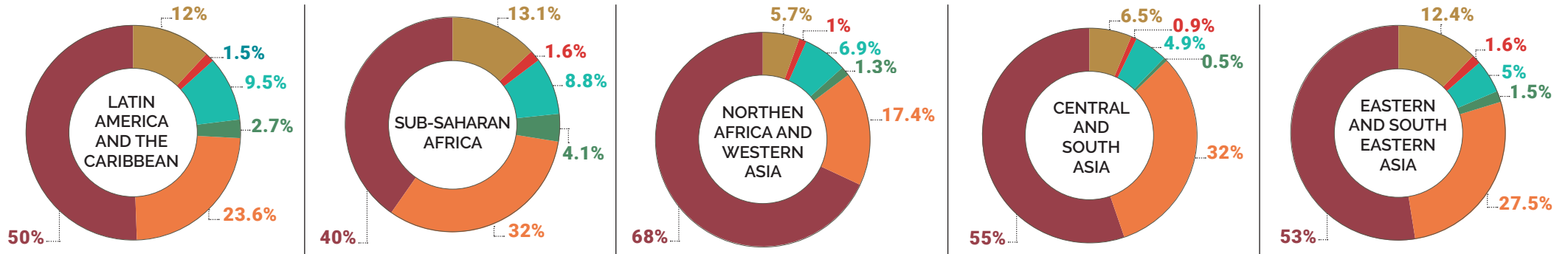


Couple households make up **68 percent** of households in Northern Africa and Western Asia, but only **40 percent** of households in Sub-Saharan Africa.³

68% IN NORTHERN AFRICA AND WESTERN ASIA
40% IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Extended family households, which include households with in-laws, aunts, uncles or grandparents, as well as polygamous households where co-wives live in the same household, make up between **17 to 32 percent** of households depending on the region.⁴

17% → 32% DEPENDING ON THE REGION



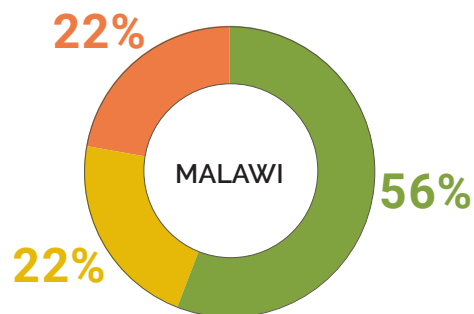
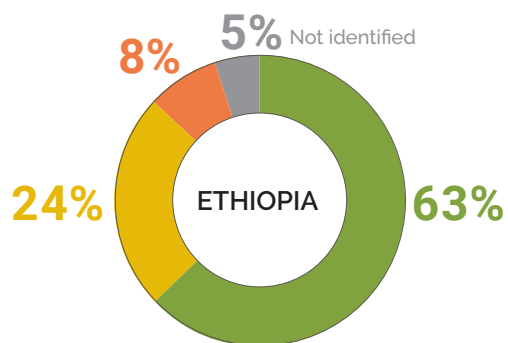
■ Couple households with and without children
 ■ Extended family households
 ■ Non-relative households
 ■ Single-father households
 ■ Single-mother households
 ■ One-person households

04 Sex-disaggregated data provides a richer understanding of men and women's engagement in agricultural production

While large gender data gaps persist, some surveys such as the **Living Standards Measurement Study - Integrated Surveys on Agriculture (LSMS-ISA)** include questions on **who makes decisions on specific agricultural activities on the family farm**. Data on plot management derived from LSMS-ISA surveys provide an opportunity to understand **how plots are managed across countries**.

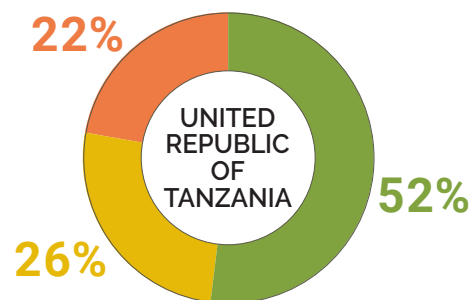
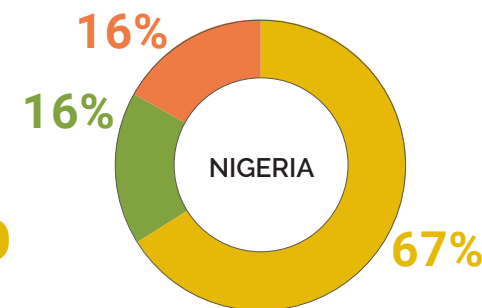
DISTRIBUTION OF DECISION-MAKING ACROSS CULTIVATED PLOTS ON FAMILY FARMS

In Ethiopia, Malawi and United Republic of Tanzania, men and women jointly manage agricultural production for the majority of plots on family farms.^{6,7}



In Nigeria, the majority of plots are solely managed by men.

67%

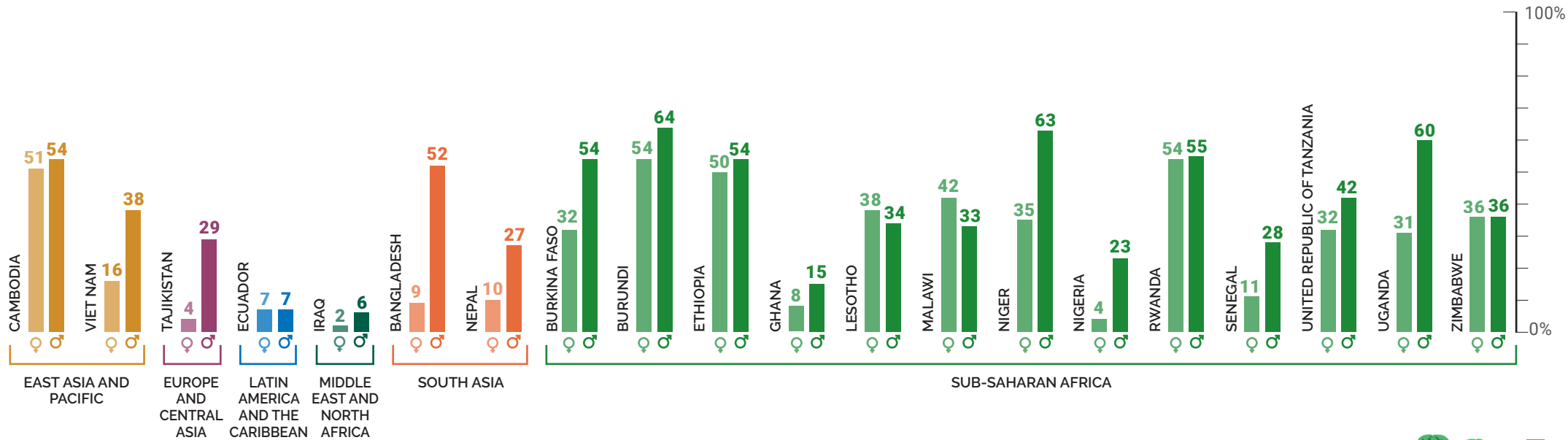


■ Cultivated plots solely managed by women
■ Cultivated plots jointly managed by men and women
■ Cultivated plots solely managed by men

05 Closing the gap in land ownership is essential for empowering women

Regardless of the type of indicator used, evidence shows that **women are significantly disadvantaged relative to men with regard to their rights to land**. This is true for all dimensions of land rights associated with agricultural land: ownership, management, transfer and economic rights.

PERCENT OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO OWN LAND IN SELECTED COUNTRIES⁸



06 Empowering women means closing the gender gap in land ownership

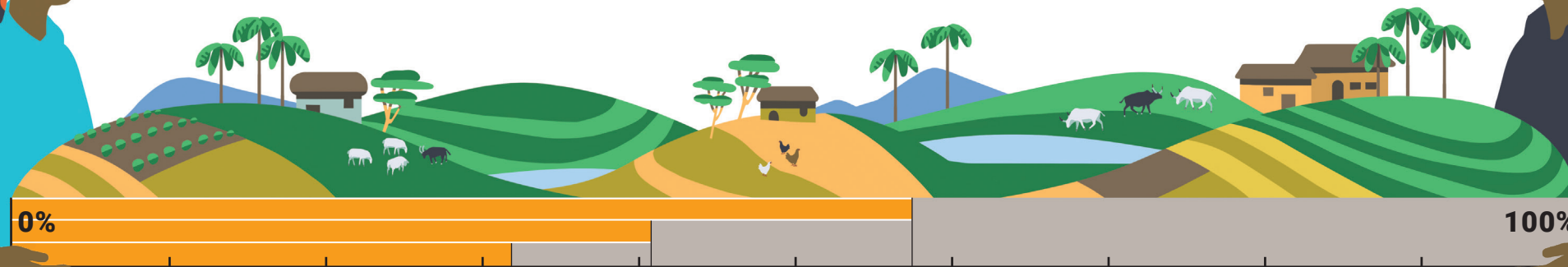
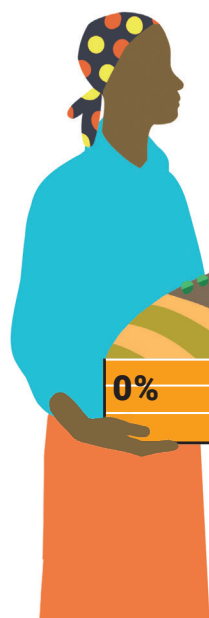
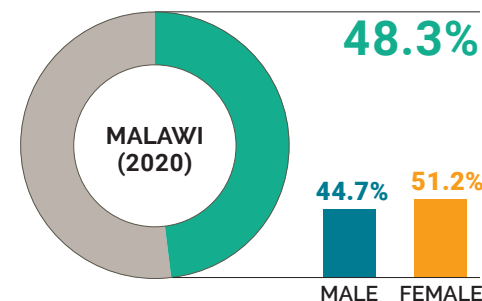
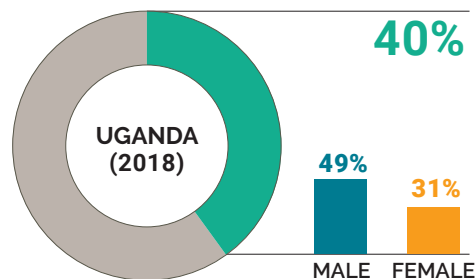
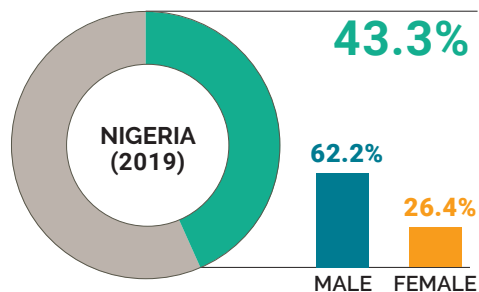


Target 5.a, for which the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the custodian agency, aims to “undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.”

Under this target, **indicator 5.a.1** monitors the progress countries make on women’s land ownership and secure tenure rights.

While the countries reporting on this indicator is still quite low, the data offers an opportunity to **understand the key statistics that can be collected in order to highlight gender gaps in land rights across countries and regions.**

SHARE OF WOMEN AND MEN OWNERS OR RIGHTS BEARERS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND BY TENURE



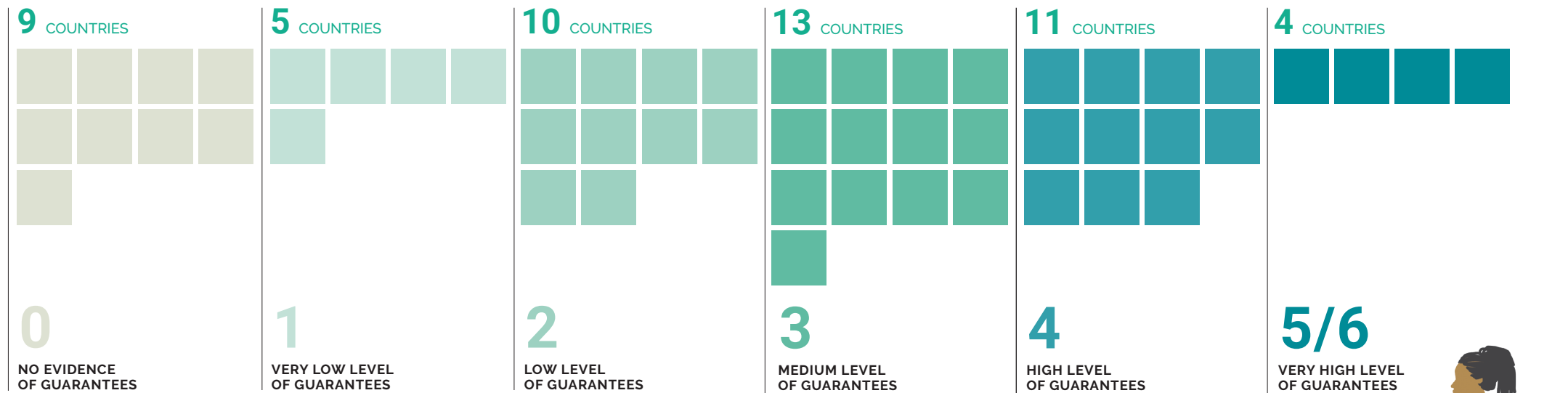
SHARE OF WOMEN AMONG OWNERS OR RIGHTS-BEARERS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

32% NIGERIA
41% UGANDA
57.8% MALAWI

07 Protection of women's land rights in national legal frameworks

SDG-Indicator 5.a.2 is an indicator that **monitors the extent to which women's land rights are protected in national legal frameworks**. It looks at the legal provisions, such as land registration, management of spousal property, inheritance, customary law and women's representation in institutions of land governance.

LEVELS OF PROTECTION FOR WOMEN'S LEGAL RIGHTS TO OWN AND/OR CONTROL LAND



Of the **52 countries** that have reported, **46 percent** do not have legal frameworks that provide adequate protection on women's rights to land, while **25 percent** offer medium protection.

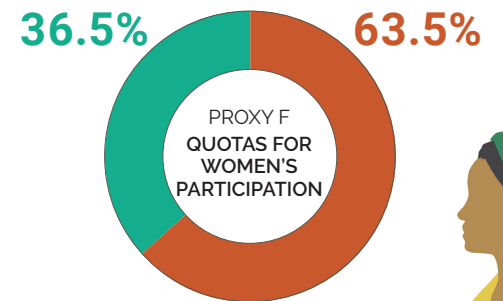
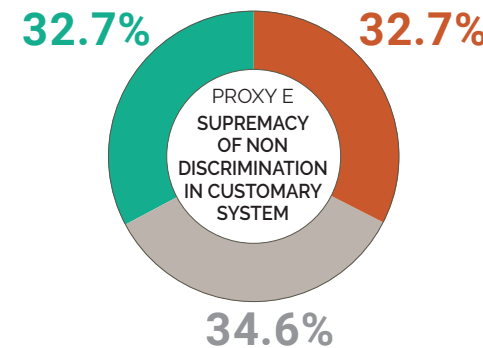
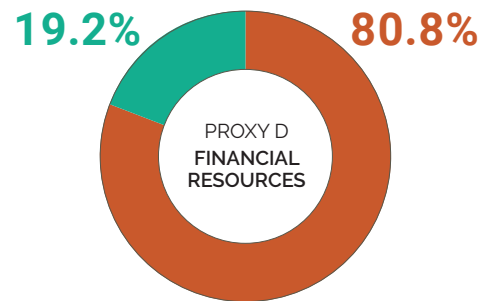
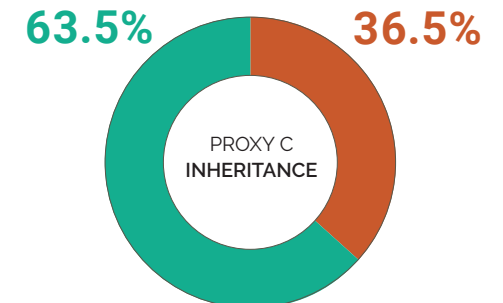
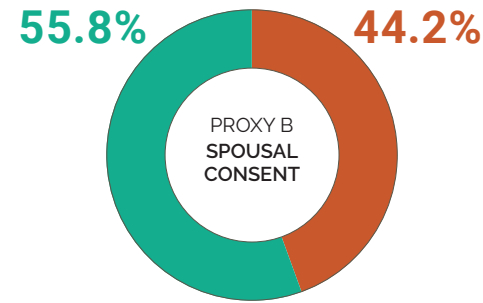
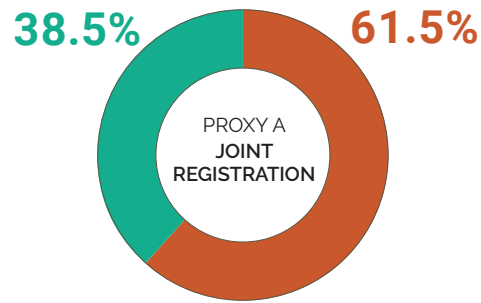


08 Countries addressing constraints women face to secure their rights to land

PERCENTAGE OF COUNTRIES IN WHICH WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED IN SIX KEY AREAS

Based on 52 reporting countries, percentage of countries offering protection on specific areas.

At the country level, the legal assessment provides key information on the gaps and achievements made in specific areas. The results suggest that despite the progress reached in countries to protect women's ownership and/or control of land, additional efforts are needed to foster more gender responsive policy and legal frameworks.



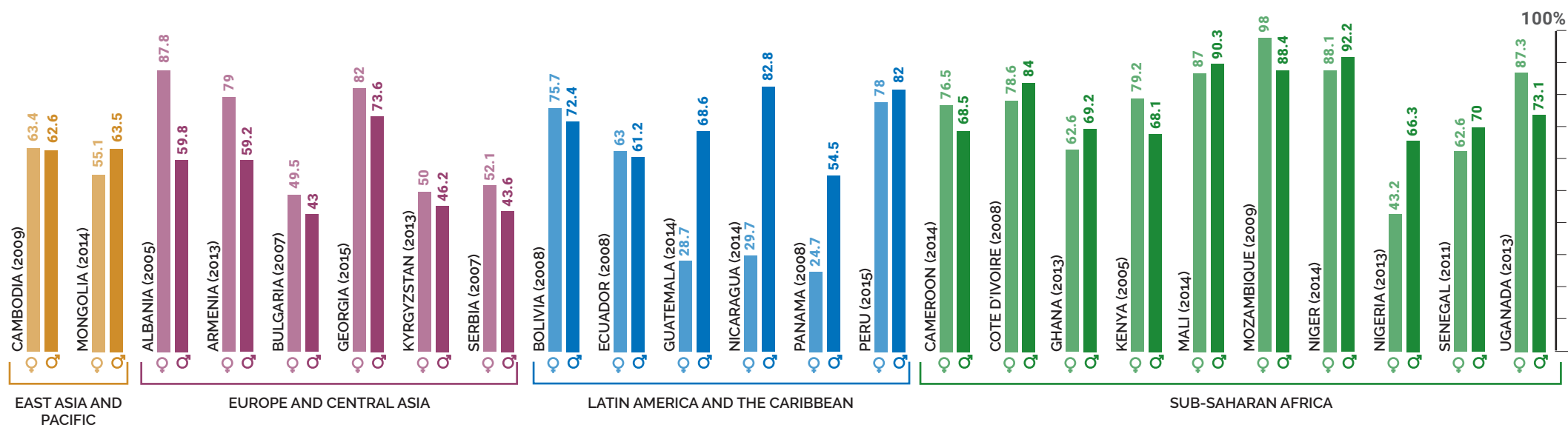
GLOBAL RESULTS PER PROXIES (N=52)

■ Yes
 ■ No
 ■ NA



09 Agricultural employment of rural men and women¹⁰

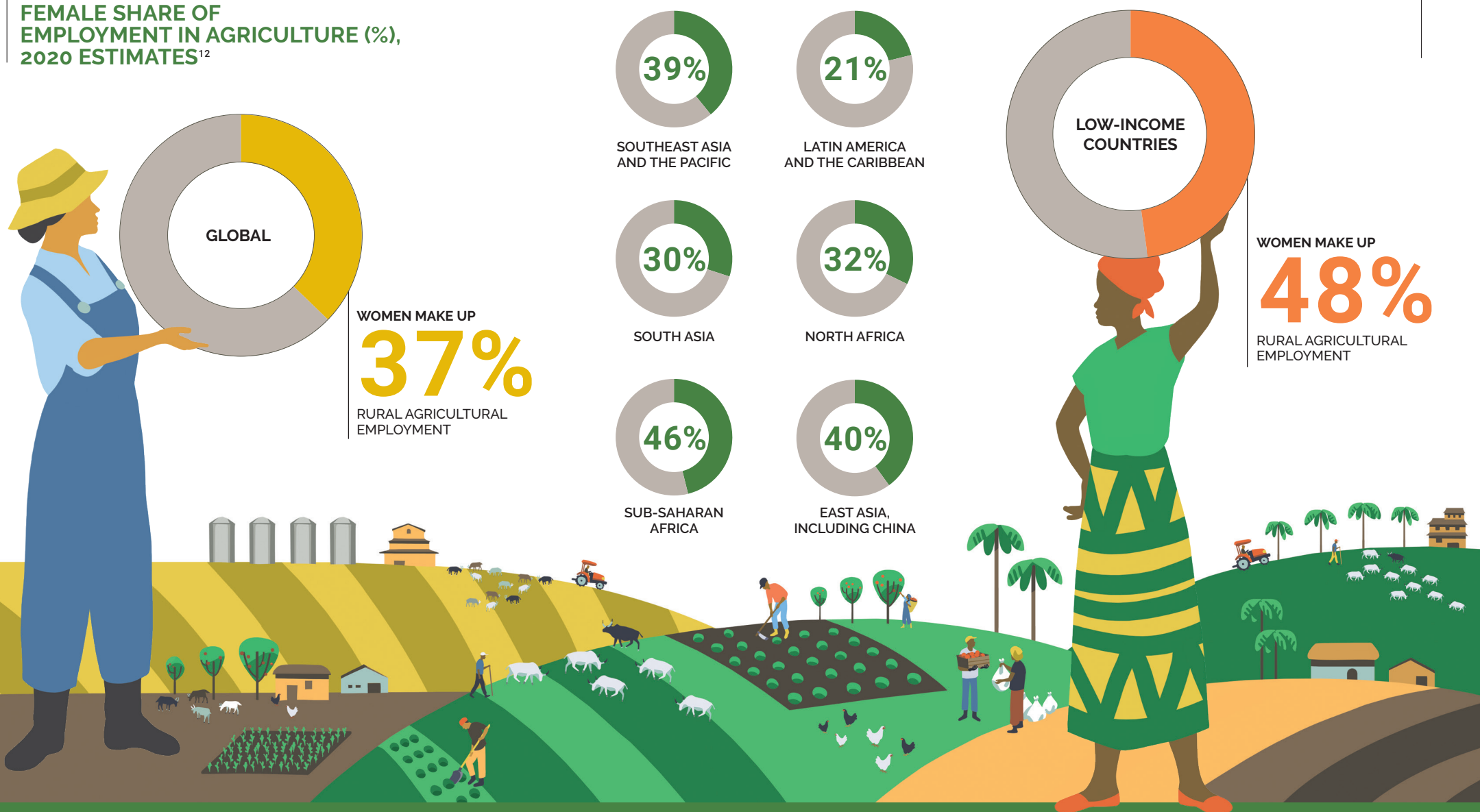
Employment is defined with reference to activities that generate goods or provide services in exchange for cash, other goods or services, for profit or gain. It includes formal and informal wage employment, self-employment activities including agricultural production for profit, piece rate work, paid domestic work, paid caregiving and subsistence agriculture, as well as unpaid work contributing to family labour in a household or family business, or to a family member's wage work.⁹ While it varies by country, in many low and middle-income countries, **agriculture is the main employment activity for the majority of rural women and men.**



10 Women's share of agricultural employment

Despite significant differences across regions, **women comprise over 37 percent of the world's rural agricultural employment**, a figure which rises to 48 percent for low-income countries.¹¹

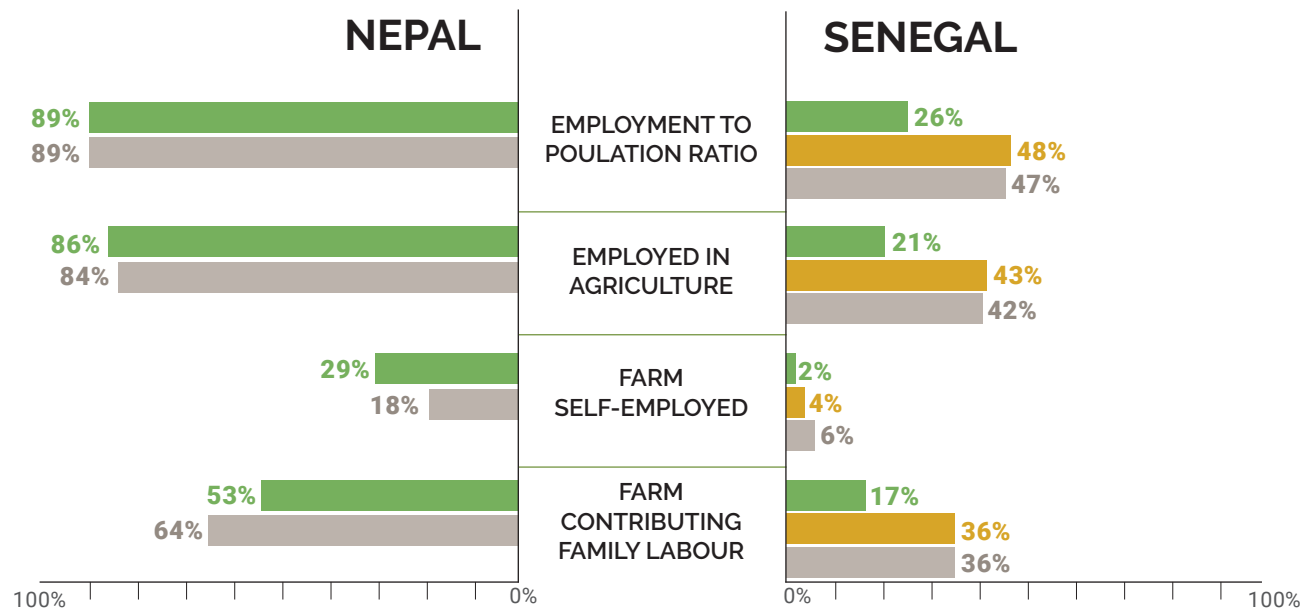
FEMALE SHARE OF EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURE (%), 2020 ESTIMATES¹²



11 The impact of male out-migration on women's employment in agriculture¹⁴

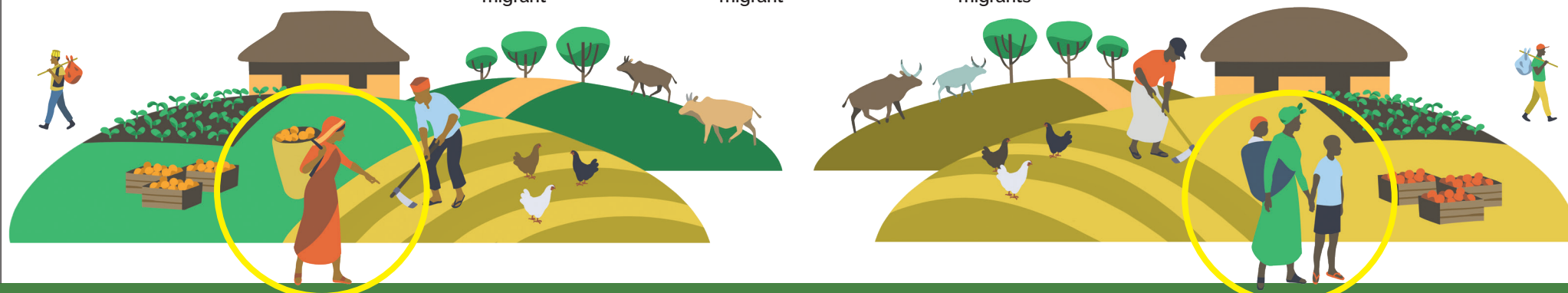
In many low-income countries, when men move out of agriculture, **women tend to remain on the farm or move out much more slowly**. While the feminization of agriculture is not a global phenomenon, in various countries **women's role in agriculture has expanded significantly in recent years because of male out-migration**.¹³

This is seen in rural areas of **Nepal**, where male out-migration is associated with significant changes in women's roles in agriculture. **Women shift from being contributing family workers to being self-employed on the farm**. These changes are stronger when migration is accompanied by remittances.



The impact of male out-migration on women's employment in agriculture is not the same across countries, however, in rural areas of **Senegal**, by contrast, a recent study found that remittances seemed to strengthen the traditional role of the male breadwinner. **Women in households with an international migrant are less likely to be in employment activities, including agricultural activities.**

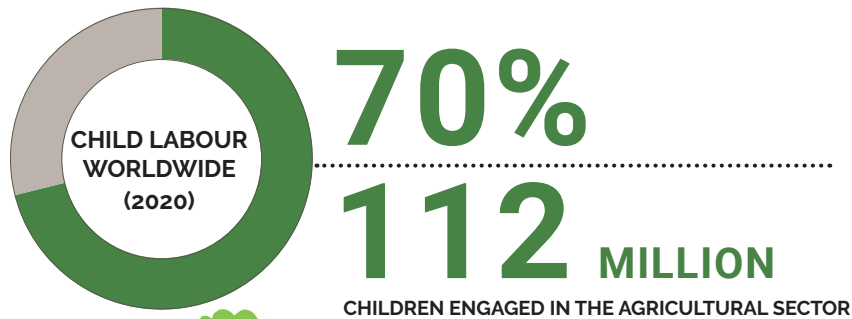
■ Women in households with an international migrant
 ■ Women in households with an internal migrant
 ■ Women in household without international migrants



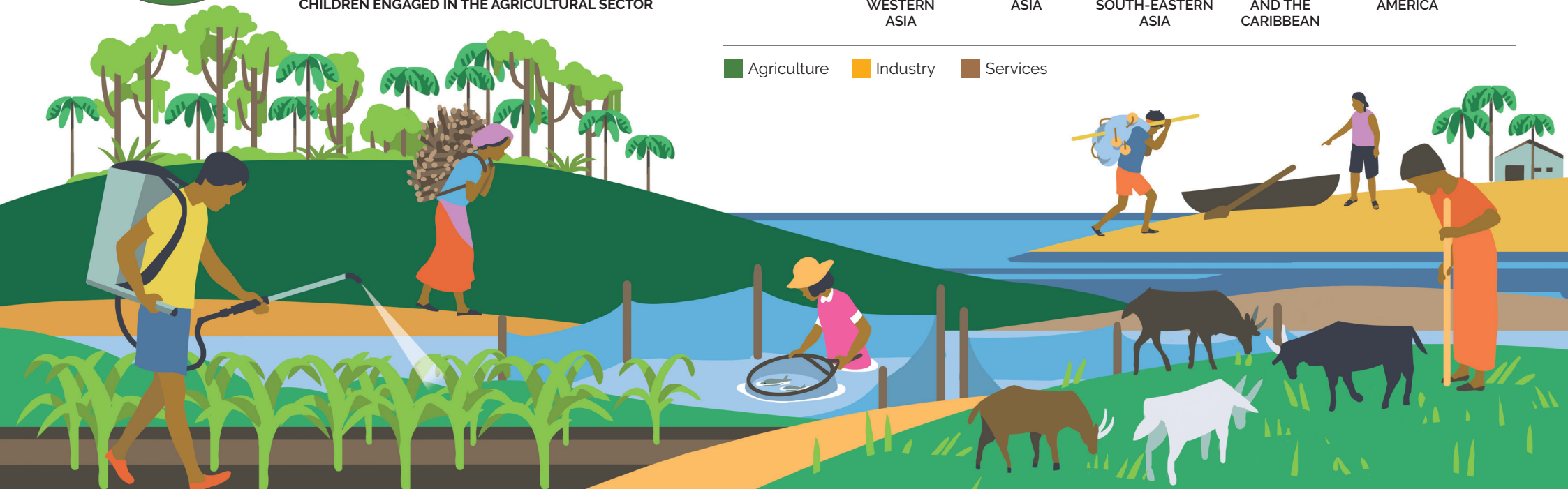
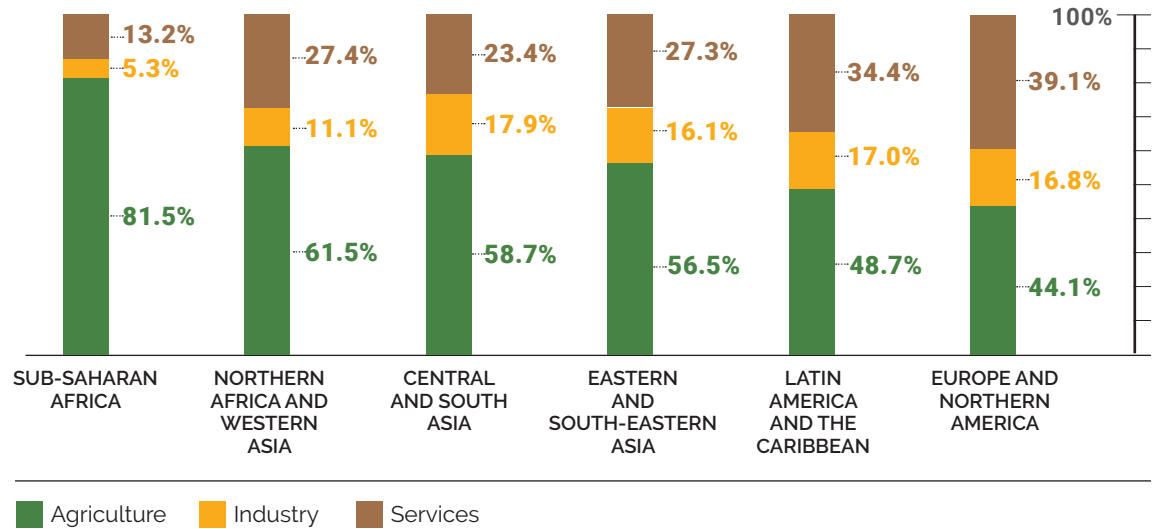
12 Child labour in agriculture

The majority of child labour worldwide occurs in the agricultural sector. This consists primarily of work in family and subsistence farming, including crop production, livestock, forestry, fishing and aquaculture.

In 2020, prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, about **160 million** children aged **5-17 years** were engaged in child labour worldwide.¹⁵ The agricultural sector accounted for the largest share of this.



SECTORAL COMPOSITION OF CHILD LABOUR BY REGION¹⁶



13 Child labour worldwide and gender gap

GENDER GAP IN CHILD LABOUR WORLDWIDE

Boys face a greater risk of child labour than girls across all measured sectors (agriculture, industry, services).¹⁷ Among child labourers, boys tend to help their fathers and girls their mothers, which **reproduces gender inequalities from one generation to the next.**

BOYS ARE

60.7%

OF ALL CHILD LABOURERS WORLDWIDE

(97 MILLION)

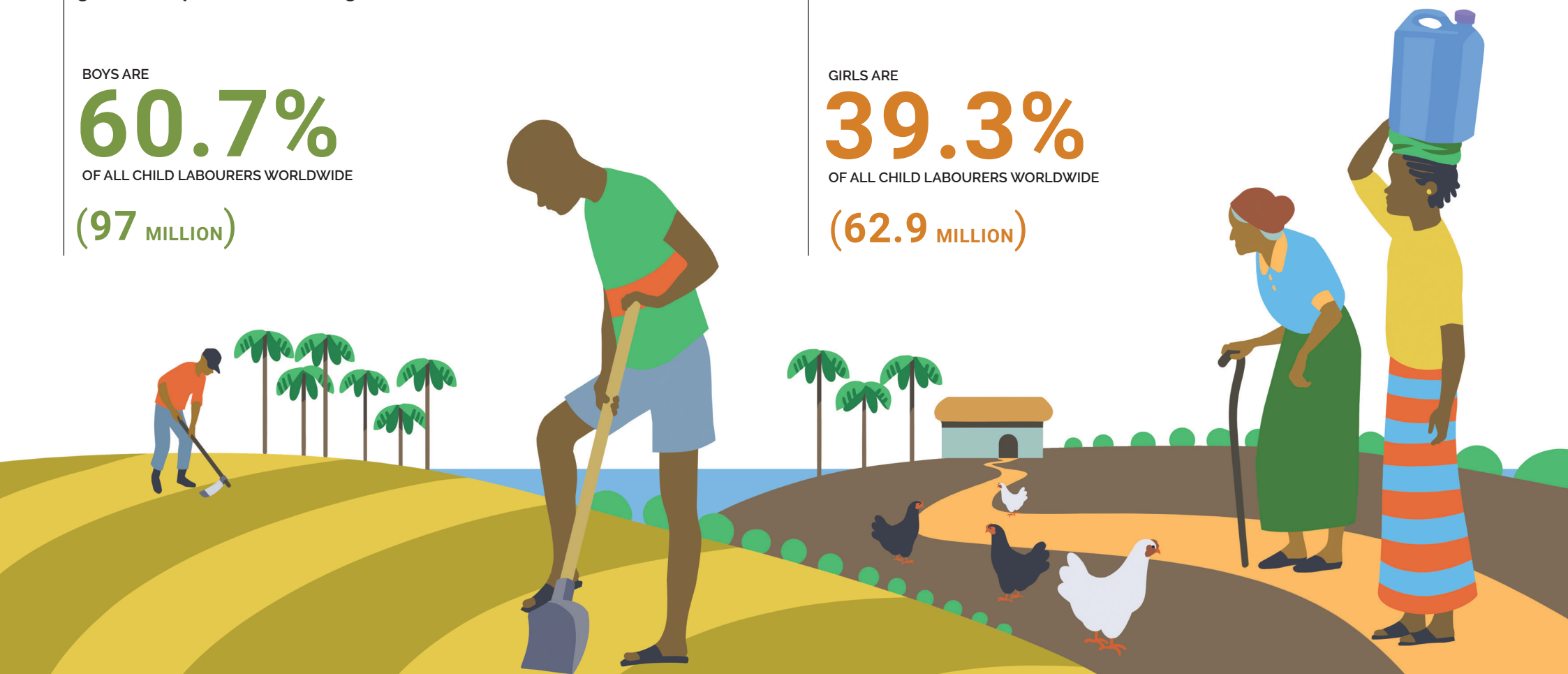
Girls are more likely to engage in less visible forms of labour. In fact, when household chores are considered, the gender gap in prevalence among boys and girls aged 5 to 14 is reduced by almost half.¹⁸

GIRLS ARE

39.3%

OF ALL CHILD LABOURERS WORLDWIDE

(62.9 MILLION)



14 Taking account of own-use production work

Empowering women requires the recognition that time spent on own-use production work, such as caregiving, subsistence agriculture, processing and preparation of food for home consumption and cleaning, **is essential for sustaining the household.** When addressing the needs of female and male farmers on family farms, women's and men's differing time constraints and responsibilities relating to own-use production work need to be taken into account.

Poverty and lack of infrastructure in rural areas mean that poorer households may need to spend longer hours on own-use production of goods and services owing to, for instance, the time it takes to **collect clean water** and to **gather natural materials for household fuel**, as well as additional **caregiving for children or sick family members.**

Studies with time-use data found that while both men and women invest substantial time in own-use production activities, **in many contexts women spent significantly more time on these activities than men.**

AVERAGE TIME MEN AND WOMEN SPENT WORKING IN RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES IN 24 HOURS (h) IN SELECTED COUNTRIES¹⁹



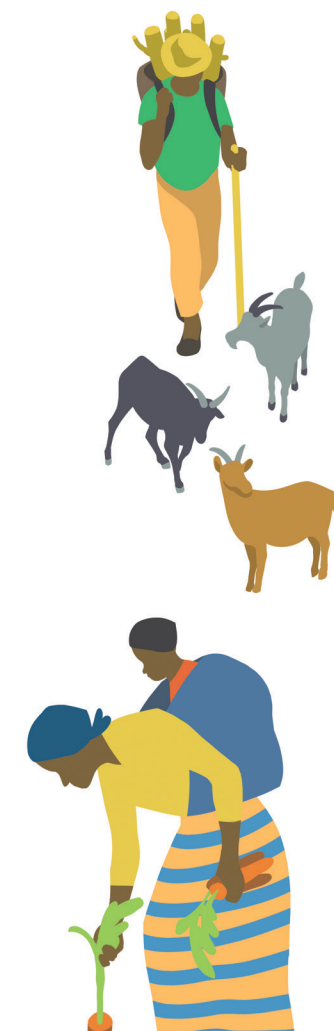
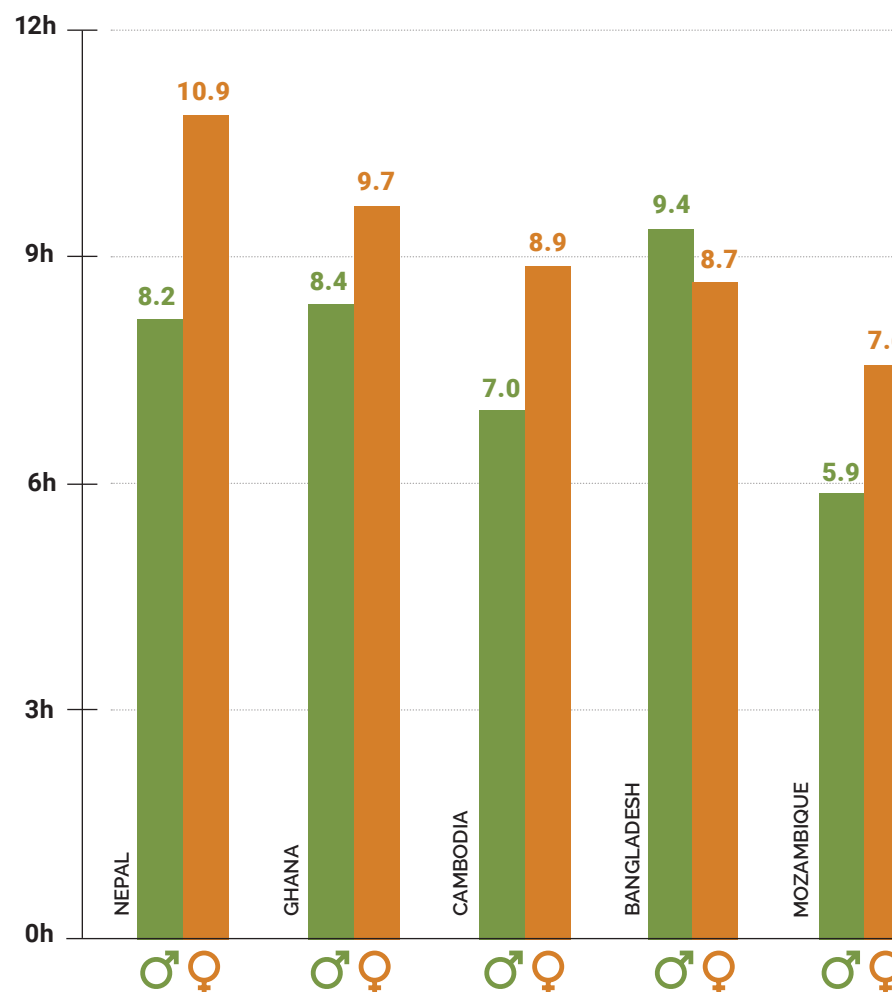
NEPAL

10.9h

WOMEN'S WORK HOURS
PER DAY ON AVERAGE

8.2h

MEN'S WORK HOURS
PER DAY ON AVERAGE

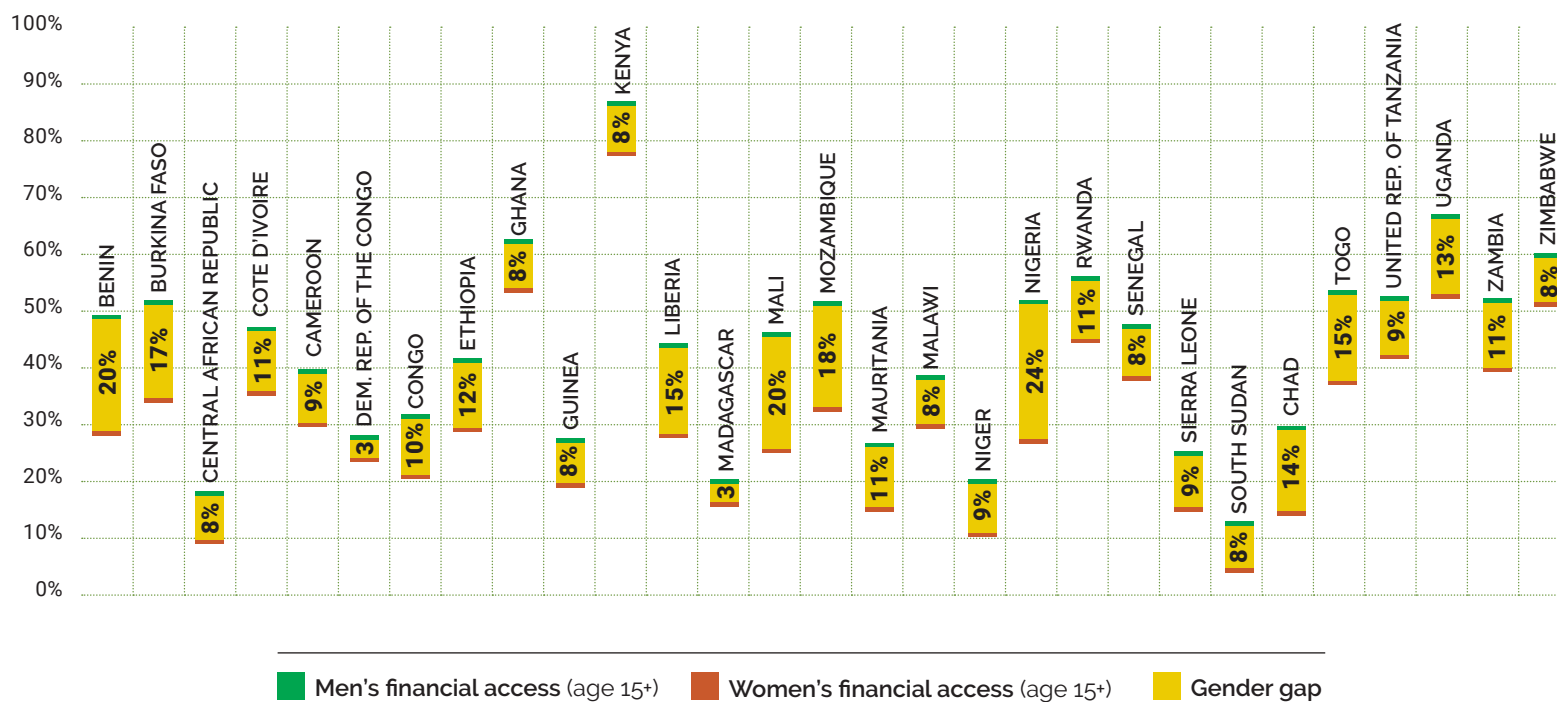


15 The gender gap in access to financial services

Improving rural women's access to financial services is an important strategy for contributing to their social and economic empowerment. Yet they are often less able to benefit from the existing financial services intended for rural communities.²⁰ While rural women's access to financial services varies across countries, the gender gap in financial inclusion has remained unchanged since 2011, at **7 percentage** points globally and an average of **9 percentage** points in low-income countries' economies.²¹

In many low-income countries with a large rural population reliant on small farm agriculture, **there are barriers to financial inclusion for both men and women, but these can often be more severe for women.** This is the case across many low and middle-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN'S FINANCIAL ACCESS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES²²



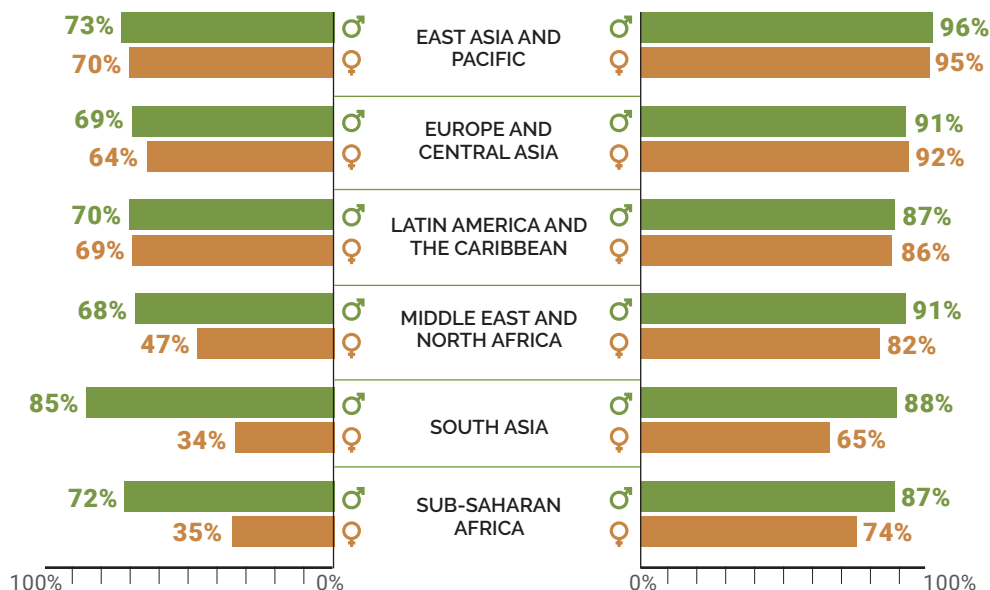
16 Improving women's digital access

Information and communication technologies (ICTs), including mobile phones, computers, internet-based services and applications, can be powerful tools for empowering women economically, politically and socially, when they are designed appropriately and when they are accessible and usable to women.

Internet access through mobile phones, for example, can provide access to real-time information about prices in different markets and allow more informed choices about where and when to buy and sell.

ICTs can provide farmers with information on methods of adapting to climate change and weather-related shocks.

MOBILE INTERNET USAGE²⁵ LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES **MOBILE PHONE OWNERSHIP**²⁶

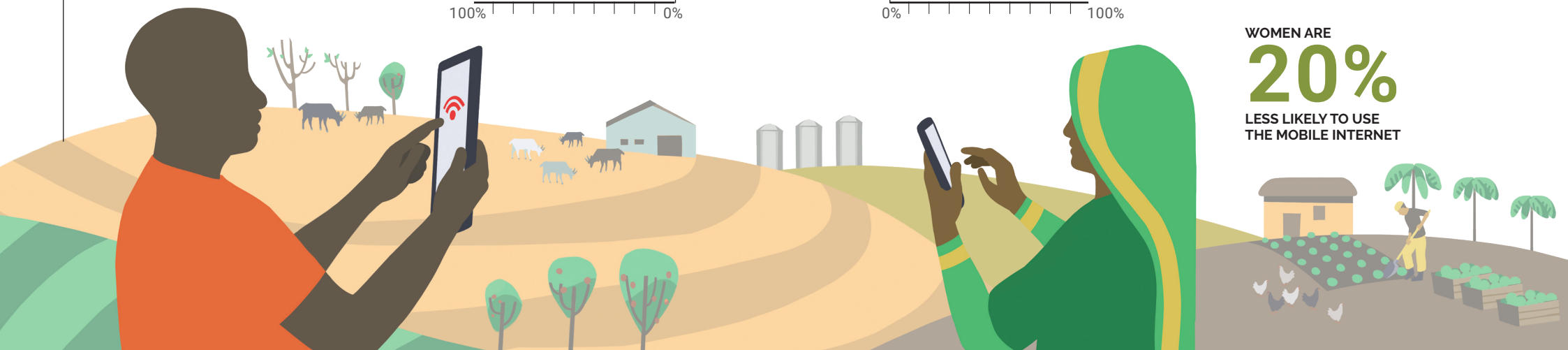


The largest gaps are in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Country studies with data disaggregated by rural and urban areas suggest that the gender divide is even greater in rural areas.²⁴

IN LOW AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

THERE ARE **8%** FEWER WOMEN MOBILE PHONE OWNERS THAN MEN²³

WOMEN ARE **20%** LESS LIKELY TO USE THE MOBILE INTERNET



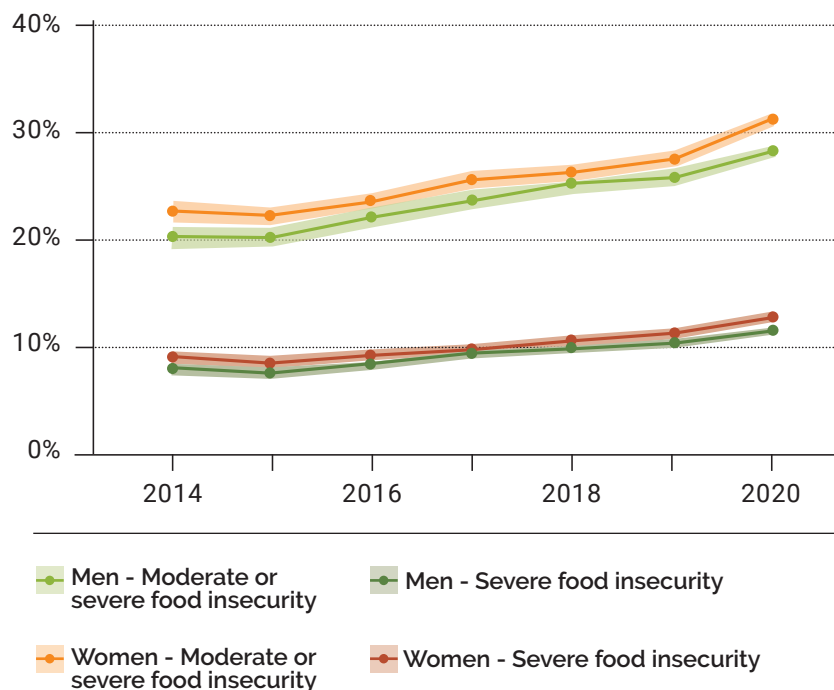
17 Global differences in food insecurity

Empowering women requires a greater understanding of potential gender differences in well-being and resilience. Measuring poverty, vulnerability, food insecurity and resilience at the household level can fail to spot intrahousehold differences.

The **Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)**, an experience-based metric of the severity of food insecurity, provides valid and reliable population estimates of food insecurity at the individual level.



GLOBAL PREVALENCE OF SEVERE AND MODERATE FOOD INSECURITY FOR MEN AND WOMEN (2014-2020)²⁷



On every continent, **the prevalence of food insecurity is slightly higher for women than for men**. The gender gap in food insecurity persists even after controlling for other socio-economic factors, such as education or income. This suggests the need to confront the underlying gender discrimination in tackling food insecurity.

The **gender gap in the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity grew even larger during the year the COVID-19 pandemic**.

THE PREVALENCE OF MODERATE OR SEVERE FOOD INSECURITY WAS

10%

HIGHER AMONG WOMEN THAN MEN IN 2020 COMPARED TO

6% IN 2019.

18 Regional differences in food insecurity

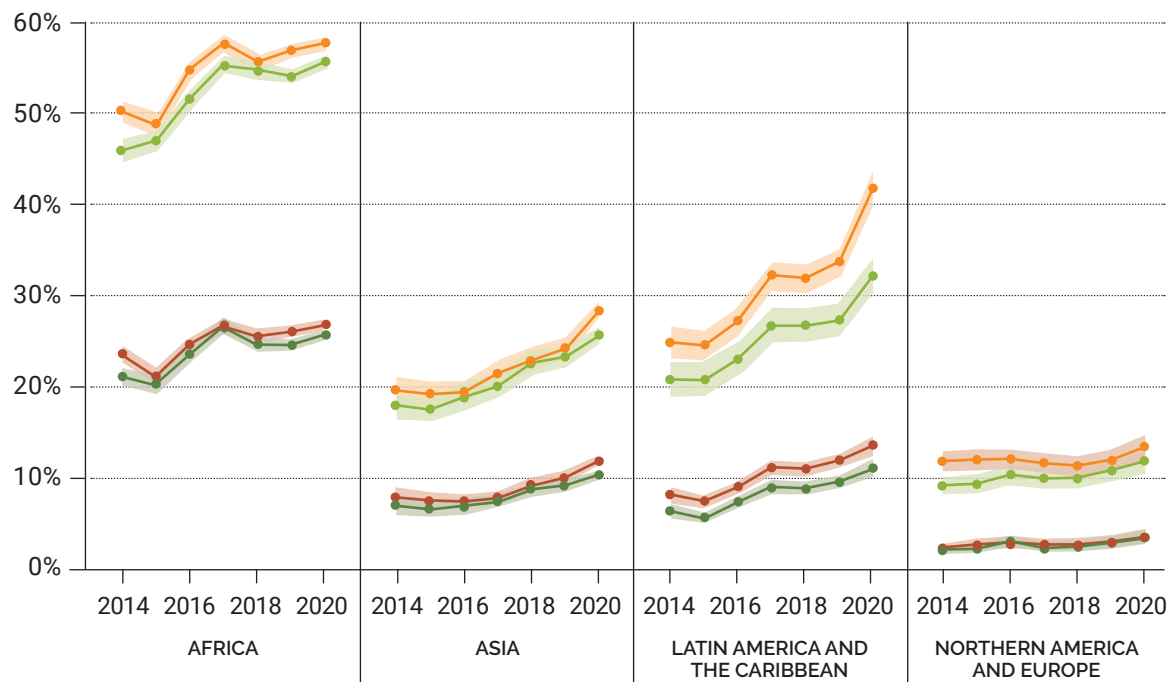
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In every region, the **prevalence of food insecurity is slightly higher for women than for men**. During the Covid-19 pandemic the increase in the gender gap in Latin America and the Caribbean was 30 percent in 2020 versus 24 percent in 2019 and Asia it was 10 percent in 2020 versus 4 percent in 2019.



PREVALENCE OF SEVERE AND MODERATE FOOD INSECURITY FOR MEN AND WOMEN BY REGION (2014-2020)²⁸



■ Men – Moderate or severe food insecurity
 ■ Women – Moderate or severe food insecurity
 ■ Men – Severe food insecurity
 ■ Women – Severe food insecurity



19 Bridging the gender data gaps

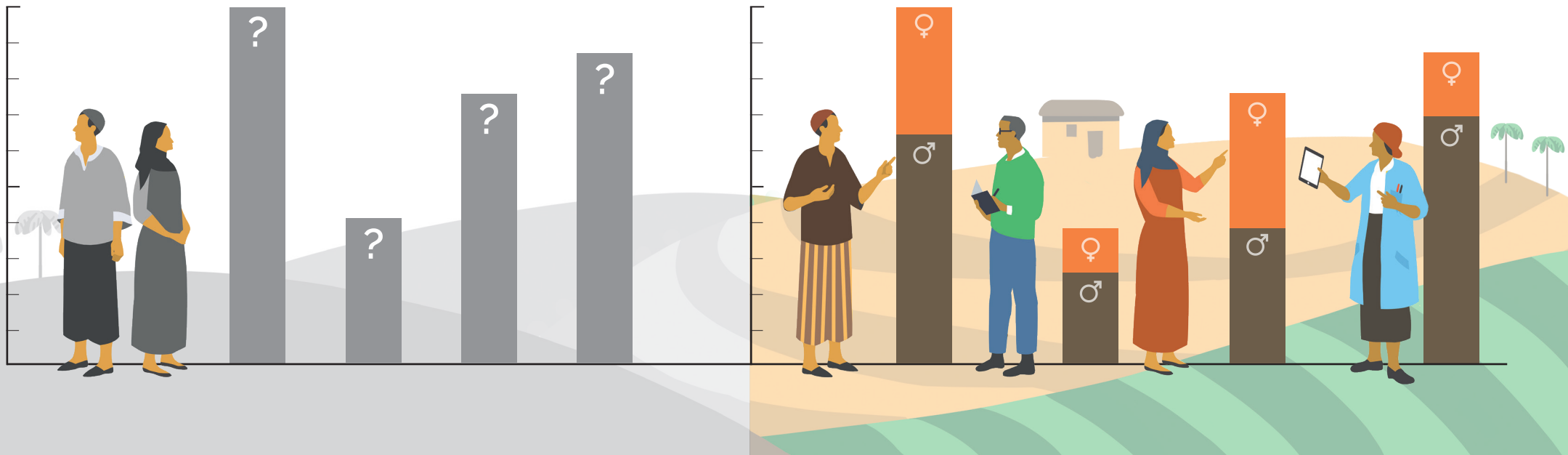
Despite the expanding scope and demand for better data, **large gender data gaps continue to exist.**

The lack of sex-disaggregated and gender-relevant data and statistics in rural and agricultural contexts means **we only have a partial picture of:**

- rural women's engagement in agricultural production;
- the extent of women's contributions to their households' well-being and food security;
- the gaps in women's asset ownership and access to important resources, services and markets;
- the full extent to which women and children face food insecurity and malnutrition; and
- the differences in the ways that men and women may mitigate and adapt to agriculture and livelihood shocks, including weather shocks due to climate change.

The lack of data makes it difficult to monitor the progress on gender equality and rural women's empowerment in agriculture, food security and nutrition. It also means that agricultural policies and interventions based on aggregate data may miss out on what works best for both rural women and men.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will help to fill some of these gender data gaps. However, **without prioritizing sex-disaggregated data collection in national statistical systems, large gender data gaps will persist.**



Acknowledgements

This data snapshot was prepared by (in alphabetical order by last name)

Melina Archer, Loïs Archimbaud, Verdiana Biagioni Gazzoli, Marya Hillesland, Susan Kaaria, Erdgin Mane and Clorinne Razzini.

We are grateful for the inputs from Huda Alsahi on the gender gaps in Digitalization, Yonca Gurbuzer for preparing the sex-disaggregated data on rural agricultural employment from Rulis, Yonca Gurbuzer and Chiara Brunelli for the inputs on SDG 5.a.1, Martha Osorio and Muriel Veldman for the inputs on SDG 5.a.2, and Lalaina Razafindrakoto for inputs on child labour. We also thank Antonio Correa Do Prado, Daniel Cullen, Elizabeth Koechlein and Libor Stloukal for their suggestions and comments; and studio Pietro Bartoleschi/BCV Associati for design and layout.



Notes

- 1 Lowder, S. K., Scoet, J. & Raney, T. 2016. The number, size, and distribution of farms, smallholder farms, and family farms worldwide. *World Development*, 87: 16-29.
- 2 Lowder, S. K., Scoet, J. & Raney, T. 2016. The number, size, and distribution of farms, smallholder farms, and family farms worldwide. *World Development*, 87: 16-29.
- 3 UN Women. 2019. *Progress of the World's Women 2019-2020: Families in a Changing World*. New York, USA. (also available at <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/progress-of-the-worlds-women-2019-2020-en.pdf?la=en&vs=3512>).
- 4 UN Women. 2019. *Progress of the World's Women 2019-2020: Families in a Changing World*. New York, USA. (also available at <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/progress-of-the-worlds-women-2019-2020-en.pdf?la=en&vs=3512>).
- 5 UN Women. 2019. *Progress of the World's Women 2019-2020: Families in a Changing World*. New York, USA. (also available at <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/progress-of-the-worlds-women-2019-2020-en.pdf?la=en&vs=3512>). While definitions vary by country, a typical definition of a household is where "one or more individuals that sleep under the same roof" or where "individuals that share food and common space".
- 6 Extrapolated from the distribution of management by sex of owned and accessed cultivated plots using the distribution of the population of plots and the shares from Slavchevska, V., De La O Campos, A. P., Brunelli, C. & Doss, C. *Beyond Ownership: Women's and Men's Land Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Rome, FAO. (also available at <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/170131495654694482/A2-ABCA-Slavcheska-et-al-2016-Beyond-ownership-working-paper.pdf>). The study includes data for Niger and Uganda as well; however, the questions in the surveys focused who worked on the plot and not who made the decisions on agricultural production on the plot.
- 7 The surveys ask different questions to inquire about who manages the plot. In Ethiopia, the survey asks: "Who in the household makes primary decisions concerning crops to be planted, input use, and the timing of cropping activities on this [FIELD]? Who are the other household members consulted by the primary decision maker on the [FIELD]?" In Malawi, the survey asks: "Who in the household makes the decisions concerning crops to be planted, input use and the timing of cropping activities on this [PLOT]?" In Nigeria, the survey asks: "Who in the household manages this [PLOT]?" In the United Republic of Tanzania, the survey asks: "Who decided what to plant on this plot in the long rainy season (separately for the short rainy season)?"
- 8 FAO's Gender and Land Rights Database: FAO. 2020. *Gender and Land Rights Database* [online]. Rome. [Cited 20 April 2020]. <http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/data-map/statistics/en/>. Indicators are taken from different studies and are based on reported ownership with exception of Bangladesh and Vietnam, which are documented ownership. In Nigeria, ownership is defined as the right to sell or use as collateral. Data is from the following years: Bangladesh 2011-2012, Burkina Faso 2010, Burundi 2010, Cambodia 2010, Ecuador 2010, Ethiopia 2011, Ghana 2010, Iraq 2013, Lesotho 2009, Malawi 2013, Nepal 2011, Niger 2011, Nigeria 2013, Rwanda 2010, Senegal 2010-2011, Tajikistan 2007, United Republic of Tanzania 2013, Uganda 2011, Vietnam 2004 and Zimbabwe 2010-2011.
- 9 With the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS Resolution I, 2013), which distinguishes between work for pay or profit, or employment, and unpaid forms of work, subsistence agriculture is excluded from employment. The new concept includes only formal and informal wage employment, self-employment activities and contributing family labour in the definition of employment.
- 10 FAO's Rural Livelihoods Information System: FAO. 2019. *RuLIS - Rural Livelihoods Information System* [online]. Rome. [Cited 20 April 2020]. <http://www.fao.org/in-action/rural-livelihoods-dataset-rulis/>. Definitions of rural and urban areas differ across countries. Data is weighted and from the following years: Albania 2005, Armenia 2013, Bolivia 2008, Bulgaria 2007, Burkina Faso 2014, Cambodia 2009, Cameroon 2014, Cote d'Ivoire 2008, Ecuador 2008, Georgia 2015, Ghana 2013, Guatemala 2014, Kenya 2005, Kyrgyzstan 2013, Mali 2014, Mongolia 2014, Mozambique 2009, Nicaragua 2014, Niger 2014, Nigeria 2013, Panama 2008, Peru 2015, Senegal 2011, Serbia 2007 and Uganda 2013.
- 11 Estimated from ILO modelled estimates for 2020 using ILO data, Trends Econometric Models: International Labour Organization (ILO). 2020. *World Employment and Social Outlook*. Geneva, Switzerland. (also available at <http://ilo.org/wesodata>).
- 12 Estimated from ILO modelled estimates for 2020 using ILO data, Trends Econometric Models: International Labour Organization (ILO). 2020. *World Employment and Social Outlook*. Geneva, Switzerland. (also available at <http://ilo.org/wesodata>).
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