Role of Women Empowerment in Cotton Economy

Dr. P. Alli Rani - Director
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International School of Textiles & Management Autonomous Institute under Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu
Empowerment

“Empowerment means that people both women and men can take control over their lives: set their own agendas, gain skills (or have their own skills and knowledge recognized), increase self-confidence, solve problems, and develop self-reliance.” (Ref: UN Women, Women’s Empowerment Principles, 2011)

Empowering women is about ensuring that they can participate fully in social, economic and political life.

A two-way relationship between development and women’s empowerment. As women gain better access to healthcare, education, livelihood and political participation, they feel more empowered, and in turn, they are better able to contribute to social and economic development.

Source: UN Women, Women’s Empowerment Principles, 2011
Why are women so important to agriculture?

Female Share of the Agricultural Labour Force

Women, on average, comprise 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries and account for an estimated two-thirds of the world’s 600 million poor livestock keepers.

Source: FAOSTAT

**Female Share of Population Economically Active in Agriculture (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East &amp; North Africa</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East &amp; Southeast Asia</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: FAOSTAT 2011
Women in primary agricultural production: Women comprised 38 percent of all agricultural workers in crop, livestock, fisheries and forestry production around the world in 2019, a decrease of only 1 percentage point from 2000.

Women as a percentage of the total workforce in the cotton sector in Africa, Asia and Latin America
Involvement of Women in the Textile Industry

According to Ahmed and Raihan (2014), the textile industry has been one of the most female dominated industries in the world as more than 80% of the workforce is females.

For instance, in China, 70% of the textile workforce is made up of women, in Bangladesh the share of women in the industry is 85% and in Cambodia the share is as high as 90% (Ref: Xue, 2015; Sikder, 2019; Gavalyugova & Cunningham, 2020).

Ref: 1) Ahmed and Raihan (2014), Health Status of the Female Workers in the Garment Sector of Bangladesh Çankırı Karatekin University Journal of The Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences
Women’s Empowerment in Bangladesh: Understanding through the case of Readymade Garment Sector

Ref: Sulagna Sen Sharma; Rivera Open, DOI: 10.31532/GendWomensStud.3.1.004; 16 Nov 2020

**Women in the Global Workforce**

- **Services**: 61.5%
- **Industry**: 13.5%
- **Agriculture**: 25%

**Women in Leadership**

- **Seats in Parliament**: 23% Women
- **CEOs, Fortune 500 Companies**: 4% Women

**Working-Age Population in the Workforce**

- **Men**: 76.1%
- **Women**: 49.6%

Data as of 2015

The boost to the global annual GDP by 2025, if women played an identical role to men in labour markets.

**US$28 trillion**
Wage Gap

Globally, women only make 77 cents for every dollar men earn.

The wage gap is larger for women with children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>With Children</th>
<th>Without Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parental Leave

Only 63 countries comply with the international labour organization's minimum maternity leave standards, stipulating that mothers should be granted at least 14 weeks of paid maternity leave.

Only 28 per cent of employed women worldwide enjoy any paid maternity leave in practice.

• From cooking and cleaning, to fetching water and firewood or taking care of children and the elderly, women carry out at least two and a half times more unpaid household and care work than men. As a result, they have less time to engage in paid labour, or work longer hours, combining paid and unpaid labour.

WHEN A MAN EARNs $1 US DOLLAR, A WOMAN EARNs 77 CENTS. A WOMAN WITH CHILDREN EARNs EVEN LESS.

Primary Drivers of Women’s Economic Empowerment

Strategic Framework to Enhance Women’s Economic Empowerment

Global Statistics

- Most countries have collectively, as well as individually, made progress towards ensuring women’s empowerment within the guidelines of the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) until 2015.**

- Consider these global statistics:
  - **Health** – Compared to 1990, there are 45 per cent fewer maternal deaths globally.
  - **Education** – All developing regions have or have almost achieved gender parity (equality in the access of females and males) in primary education.
  - **Politics** – From 1995 to 2015, the percentage of women in parliament nearly doubled globally.
  - **Business management** – 25 women Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) led Fortune 500 companies in 2015, compared to only one in 1999.
  - **Entrepreneurship** – There are nearly 6 million formal, women-owned small businesses in East Asia.

  *Source: The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*
Discrimination against women is still evident

- **Health** – 800 women still die every day from preventable pregnancy-related causes; 99 per cent of these deaths occur in developing countries.

- **Water** – Women spend 16 million hours per day collecting water in 25 sub-Saharan countries while men spend 6 million hours.

- **Education** – Gender parity in primary education has been widely achieved in the Asia-Pacific region. However, it widens at the secondary and tertiary education levels.
  - According to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), female students get on average 12.3 years of education from primary to tertiary level in the Asia-Pacific compared to 12.4 for male students.

- **Politics** – Only 22 per cent of all national parliamentarians were women in 2015.

- **Business management** – Women comprised a mere 5 per cent of all CEOs on the Fortune 500 list in 2015.

**Source:** The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015
Discrimination against women is still evident

- **Work** – 50 per cent of the world’s working age women (15 or over) are in the labour force, compared to over 75 per cent of working age men, and 50.5 per cent of these world’s working women are engaged in vulnerable employment.

- **Moreover, women earn USD 24 less than men.**

- **Entrepreneurship** – Globally, 48 per cent of entrepreneurs are women but most of them tend to run smaller, informal or subsistence businesses rather than growth oriented enterprises. This is partly due to their limited access to productive resources compared to men.

- **Land/Bank account ownership** – Less than 20 per cent of landholders are women and only 37 per cent of women in South Asia own a bank account.

*Source: The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

SDG

Challenges to attain

FINANCE

More than 1.3 billion women don’t have an account at a formal financial institution

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

3. Good Health and Well-being

Challenges to attain

Literacy

The adult literacy rate has risen to 85% from 76% in 1990.

But women account for over 60% of the world’s illiterate.

Adolescent Literacy Rate (Women), 2015:

- 99% Developed Countries
- 77% Developing Countries
- 53% Least Developed Countries

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

**SDG 5: Gender Equality**

In 1993, the UN General Assembly Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women provided a framework for action on the pandemic.

But more than 20 years later, 1 in 3 women still experience physical or sexual violence, mostly by an intimate partner.

**SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**

2 billion people gained access to clean drinking water from 1990 to 2010.

But women still spend 16 million hours per day collecting water in 25 sub-Saharan countries.

Source: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf)
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

**SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**

Challenges to attain:
- World Energy Council Chairs: 4% Women, 96% Men (24 men to 1 woman)

**SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**

Wages:
- 50% of the world’s working age women (15 or over) are in the labour force compared to over 75% of working age men.
- Globally, women earn 24% less than men.

Source: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf)
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

**SDG 9**: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

**SDG 10**: Reduced Inequalities

**Challenges to attain**

**WOMEN IN SCIENCE**

Just 1/5 countries have achieved gender parity, meaning 45% to 55% of researchers are women.

**POLITICS**

The percentage of women in parliament has nearly doubled in the last 20 years.

1995: 10%
2015: 20%

But this only translates into 22% of women in parliament today.

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

**SDG**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG</th>
<th>Challenges to attain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Disasters such as droughts, floods and storms kill more women than men due to structural gender inequalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Women typically lose access to the technologies and resources they need to achieve sustainable levels of consumption and production.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf)
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

**SDG Challenges to attain**

**13 Climate Action**

**14 Life Below Water**

---

**FISHERIES**

Women make up 47% of the world’s 120 million people working in fisheries and outnumber men in both inland and marine fisheries.

- Small-scale inland fisheries: 46%
- Large-scale marine fisheries: 34%

And yet women are largely concentrated in low-skilled, low-paid jobs with irregular, seasonal employment in processing, packaging and marketing, and often work without contracts or health, safety and labour rights protections.

---

**WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN THE RIO CONVENTIONS**

- Government Delegates: 38%, 26%, 36%, 45%, 15%, 27%, 47%, 48%, 48%, 45%
- Bureau Members: 38%, 26%, 36%, 45%, 15%, 27%, 47%, 48%, 48%, 45%
- NGO Representatives: 38%, 26%, 36%, 45%, 15%, 27%, 47%, 48%, 48%, 45%

---

Source: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf)
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

Challenges to attain

SDG 15: Life on Land

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

FOCAL POINTS TO THE UN FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF)

- Women: 24%
- Men: 76%

CONFLICT

In 2000, the pioneering UN Security Council resolution 1325 recognized that war impacts women differently and stressed the need to increase women’s participation in peace talks.

But from 1992 to 2011 only 9% of negotiators at peace tables were women.

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf
Women and Sustainable Development Goals

Challenges to attain

Source: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2322UN%20Women%20Analysis%20on%20Women%20and%20SDGs.pdf
THANK YOU