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THE GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX

The Need for Contextualized Insights

Report Findings

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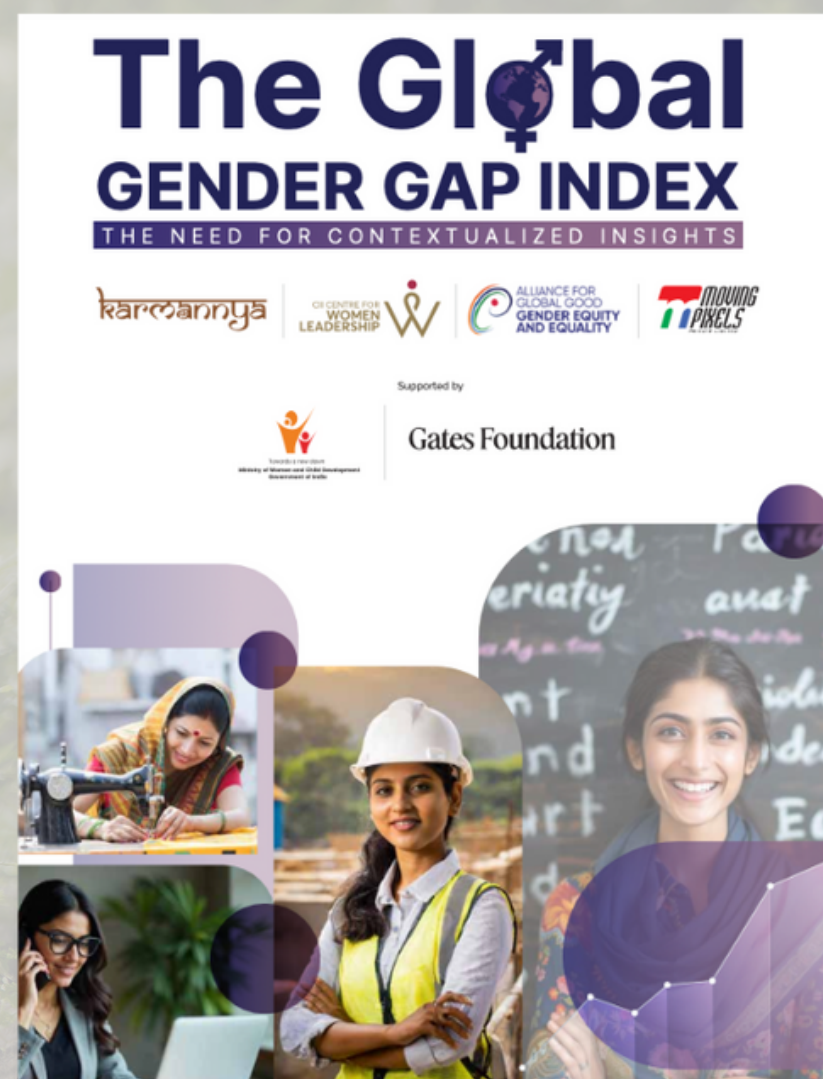
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Analysis incorporates real-world challenges faced by policymakers in translating global rankings into effective local interventions.

SETTING THE CONTEXT



Critical Global Indicators:

- 25.7 percentage point difference between male and female labor force participation worldwide
- Women globally spend 2.7 times more time on unpaid care work than men
- Closing gender gaps could increase global GDP per capita by 20%
- At the current pace, gender parity will take 131 years to achieve

Regional Variations Tell Different Stories:

- High-income countries: Women have greater access to formal employment and social protection
- Low-income countries: Women predominantly engaged in informal sector and vulnerable employment
- Asia-Pacific region: Houses 65% of global informal workforce, with majority in India and China

OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

The goal was straightforward:
build a measurement **approach that captures both policy efforts and outcomes**, recognizing that countries follow different paths to gender equality based on their economic structure and development stage.

- To emphasize the importance of contextualizing and proposing modifications to the gender gap assessment
- To assess the global status of gender gap metrics, focusing on the GGGI, to foster wider recognition and suggest better evaluation tools.
- To propose a more nuanced measurement framework, ensuring that country-specific progress and challenges are accurately reflected in global and national gender gap measurement.
- To suggest broad recommendations on contextualizing the Global Gender Gap Index and to offer more detailed recommendations specifically for India to track its progress.

UNDERSTANDING THE GLOBAL GENDER GAP INDEX

Rank	Economy	Score	
		0–1, 1=parity	
1	Iceland	0.926	
2	Finland	0.879	
3	Norway	0.863	
4	United Kingdom	0.838	
5	New Zealand	0.827	
6	Sweden	0.817	
7	Republic of Moldova	0.813	
8	Namibia	0.811	
9	Germany	0.803	
10	Ireland	0.801	
11	Estonia	0.799	
12	Spain	0.797	
13	Australia	0.792	
14	Denmark	0.791	
15	Barbados	0.786	
16	Costa Rica	0.786	
17	Switzerland	0.785	
18	Nicaragua	0.783	
19	Lithuania	0.783	
20	Philippines	0.781	

Published annually since 2006, this index has become the most widely referenced tool for measuring gender equality worldwide, ranking 146 countries in 2024.

- The Global Gender Gap Index, published annually by the World Economic Forum, is a framework for measuring gender equality across four key dimensions:
- Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment.
- Among the various indices that track gender disparities globally, the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) developed by the World Economic Forum is one of the most widely referenced in both academic and policy circles. Given its prominence and influence on global discourse and national strategies, this report focuses on the GGGI to explore how it can be further strengthened to reflect diverse development contexts

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The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index measures gender disparities across four key domains using a **0–1 scale** where 1 represents complete parity.

Economic Participation and Opportunity (Female-to-Male Ratio)

- Labour Force Participation Rate
- Wage Equality for Similar Work
- Estimated Earned Income
- Legislators, Senior Officials, and Managers
- Professional and Technical Workers

Health and Survival (Female-to-Male Ratio)

- Sex Ratio at Birth
- Healthy Life Expectancy

Educational Attainment (Female-to-Male Ratio)

- Literacy Rate
- Enrolment in Primary Education
- Enrolment in Secondary Education
- Enrolment in Tertiary Education

Political Empowerment (Female-to-Male Ratio)

- Women in Parliament
- Women in Ministerial Positions
- Years with Female Head of State (Last 50)

LIST OF MAJOR GENDER GAP INDICES PUBLISHED WORLDWIDE

The Global Gender Gap Index is part of a broader ecosystem of gender measurement tools developed by international organizations. Some of the key indices that collectively shape our understanding of global gender equality are follows.

Gender Index	What it measures	Published by
Gender Inequality Index	Measures gender-based disadvantages in health, empowerment, and labor market participation.	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI)	Compares human development indicators (health, education, income) by gender.	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Women, Business and the Law (WBL) Index	Legal barriers to women’s economic participation across multiple categories.	World Bank
Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI)	Public attitudes and biases affecting gender equality.	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Gender Parity Index (GPI)	Educational gender gaps in enrollment and literacy rates.	UNESCO

THE NEED FOR BETTER ASSESSMENT



The Measurement Challenge

Current frameworks apply uniform standards across vastly different economic and social contexts, potentially missing genuine progress and misdirecting policy interventions.



Why This Matters

Guides policy design and implementation strategies, making measurement accuracy essential for developing effective programs that address real barriers to gender equality.



Key Insight:

Development varies significantly across geographies. High-income countries offer greater formal employment access, while low-income countries see higher informal sector participation. These structural differences demand contextualized measurement approaches.

Context-specific measurement strengthens global efforts toward gender equality by guiding policies and investments where they're needed most.

LIMITATIONS OF CURRENT MEASUREMENT

Our analysis reveals five key areas where current gender gap measurement approaches could be enhanced to better serve policy development and strategic planning.

- **Uniform standards** don't account for varying resource constraints and economic structures across countries
- **Informal Economy:**
 - 65% of Asia-Pacific's workforce – unmeasured.
 - 92.2% of unpaid female workers in rural enterprises invisible
- Only 2 health indicators used; excludes nutrition, mental health, and healthcare access
- Focuses on national politics; **misses grassroots democratic participation** achievements
- The Economic Participation sub-index uses wage data from only 12,000 business leaders, inadequately representing informal sectors and lower-income groups.

CONTEXTUALISING THE INDEX - THE MISSING PIECES



Countries follow different pathways to gender equality based on their economic structure and development stage. Universal standards miss these diverse approaches.



About 65% of the informal workforce resides in the Asia and Pacific region, with the majority living in India and China

Low-income countries may lack formal sector resources while excelling in grassroots democracy. Agriculture-based economies show different patterns than service economies, requiring **approaches that capture informal contributions**.



India has over 1.4 million elected women in Panchayati Raj Institutions

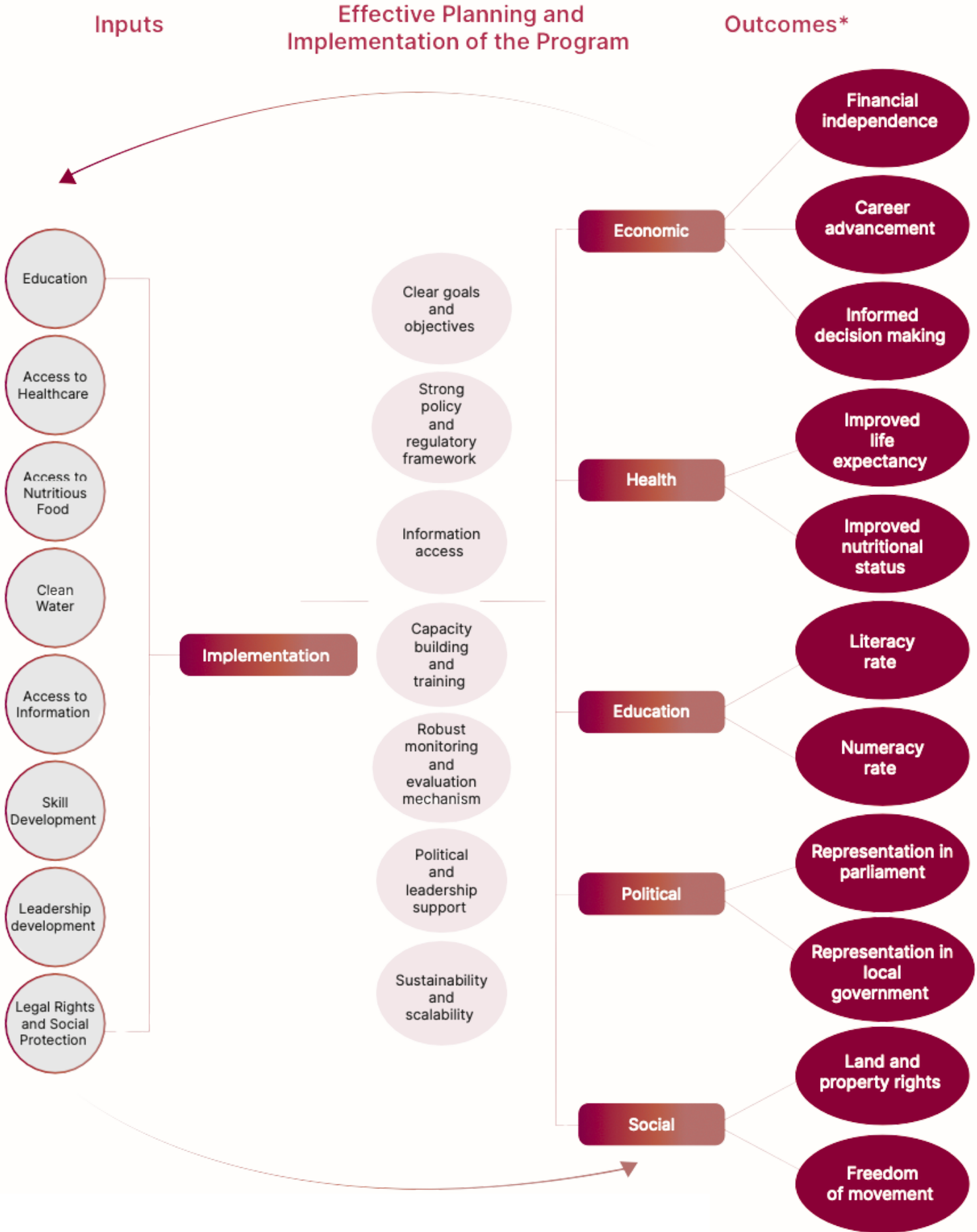
Unique innovations like India's Panchayati Raj system remain invisible to frameworks focused only on national representation. Without context, policy recommendations may prove ineffective for local conditions.

OUR SOLUTION & APPROACH

We propose a dual input-output approach that measures both what countries achieve and how they work toward equality – evaluating resource access, policy infrastructure, and institutional capacity alongside traditional outcome indicators.

Better measurement drives better policy. When we accurately capture how countries achieve gender equality, we can replicate what works and fix what doesn't.

An input-based and outcome-based approach to measuring gender disparities in the Indian context



ENHANCING THE GLOBAL GENDER GAP MEASUREMENTS

Five strategic improvements can make gender gap measurement more effective

- ➔ Economic Context Integration
- ➔ Expanded Indicator Coverage
- ➔ Social Equity Domain
- ➔ Trend Analysis Over Rankings
- ➔ Improved Data Quality

GLOBAL LEVEL MEASUREMENT ENHANCEMENTS

- Introduce a New Domain on Social Equity
- Incorporate Economic Context into GGGI
- Expand the Number of Indicators
- Strengthen Economic Participation Metrics



- Improve Education and Political Representation Metrics
- Enhance Health and Survival Metrics
- Add Country-Specific Trends and Policy Tracking
- Account for Gender Disparities Faced by Men

INDIA-SPECIFIC ENHANCEMENTS



Comprehensive Economic Assessment

- Integrate PLFS data to capture **informal sector contributions**
- Use **Time Use Survey** data to quantify unpaid care work
- Recognise **women's roles in agriculture and family enterprises**
- Track post-maternity employment and career progression

Tailored Recommendations for India

Three specific improvements would better capture India's unique context and achievements while identifying genuine areas needing attention.



Multi-Tier Governance Recognition

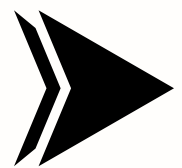
- Include **Panchayati Raj Institution** participation as core political indicator
- Measure **women's roles in Self Help Groups** and cooperatives
- Assess decision-making authority, not just representation numbers
- Track **policy influence at grassroots level**



Contextual Health and Education Metrics

- Include nutrition indicators relevant to India's context
- Measure healthcare access and quality, not just outcomes
- Track learning outcomes alongside enrollment rates
- Assess skills development and employment linkages

Next Steps



Effective measurement should help policymakers understand what works, where to focus resources, and how to build on existing strengths. It should recognize that countries reach gender equality through different routes – some through formal employment, others through grassroots democracy, many through combinations we haven't fully mapped yet.



Accurate measurement is fundamental to effective policy. When we enhance how we assess gender equality, we create better conditions for achieving meaningful progress that benefits everyone. The goal is not perfect rankings, but practical frameworks that help countries build more equitable societies.

Thank You!

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