

East and North-East Asia: An Analysis of the Beijing+25 Review Reports

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

GBV: Gender Based Violence

GBViE: Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies

GRB: Gender-responsive budgeting

NAPVAW: National Action Plan on Violence Against Women

PoVAW: Prevention and Protection of Violence against Women

SDV- 2030: Sustainable Development Vision 2030

SME : Small and Medium Enterprises

SRH: Sexual and Reproductive health

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

VAWG: Violence against Women and Girls

Introduction

The world is in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic. Women health workers are at the forefront of the health response to the crisis. With lockdowns and curfews implemented in several parts of the world, the incidence of violence against women and girls has increased. Women are over-represented in sectors hardest hit by the outbreak such as manufacturing, garment, tourism and hospitality. Lastly, but as importantly, the burden of additional care work and domestic chores falls on the shoulders of an already over-burdened womenfolk. In short, the pandemic has exacerbated gender inequalities and discriminatory social norms that exist in our society.

The COVID-19 crisis is a wake-up call for our planet. It is relevant that we introspect our policies and deal with the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of development in an integrated manner. The Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are critical resources that member States could use to move forward without leaving anyone behind. The 2030 Agenda -with its commitment to leave no one behind -and the Beijing Platform- with its wide and far-reaching scope- could together forge a more equal and inclusive planet. Such synergies need to be harnessed in order to create a more gender equal Asia and the Pacific.

The Asia-Pacific Beijing+25 Review

In 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted and subsequently endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly. Every five years since 1995, progress in achieving the strategic objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is reviewed by the Commission on the Status of Women. The fifth review marks the twenty- fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In its resolution 2018/8, the Economic and Social Council called upon all States to undertake national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Platform for Action. Additionally, the resolution encouraged “regional commissions to undertake regional reviews so that the outcomes of intergovernmental processes at the regional level can feed into the 2020 review”.

In accordance with this mandate, ESCAP, in cooperation with the UN-Women and with the support of the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (RCM-TWG-GEEW), undertook in 2019 a [regional review](#) of progress in implementing the Platform for Action in Asia and the Pacific. Out of its 49 member States and 9 associate members, ESCAP received 45 reports. The analytical review encompassed ESCAP member States geographically located in the Asia-Pacific region.

The 25-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2020 was the first time that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was reviewed with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development fully in place. The Beijing+25 review harnesses the synergies between the Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda to consolidate efforts to accelerate the achievement of key international commitments on gender equality.

The 12 critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action have been clustered into six overarching themes that highlight the alignment of the two frameworks (see table 1) : inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work; poverty eradication, social protection and social services; freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes; participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions; peaceful and inclusive societies; and environmental conservation, climate action and resilience-building. In addition, member States have reported on their key priorities, achievements,

and challenges with regard to gender equality; national institutions, processes and partnerships; and data and statistics for advancing the empowerment of women and girls in the region.

The present document contains a summary of the identified achievements, challenges, and key actions taken by the ESCAP members and associate members of the East and North-East Asia sub-region to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment. The countries that have submitted their national review reports¹, and are therefore included in this report, are: China, Japan, Korea (Republic of), Macao, China, and Mongolia. Hong Kong, China, and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea have not submitted their national review reports. Furthermore, the key priority areas for action for countries in the region for the next five years are identified, with a view to accelerate the achievement of gender equality in the region of progress in implementing the Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda.

Table 1. Linkages between the Beijing+25 Review, the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda

Beijing +25 Clusters	Critical Areas of Concern	Sustainable Development Goals
<i>Inclusive development, shared prosperity, and decent work</i>	A. Women and poverty F. Women and the economy I. Human rights of women L. The girl child	SDGs 1, 2, 5, 8, 9 and 17
<i>Poverty eradication, social protection, and social services</i>	A. Women and poverty B. Education and training of women C. Women and health I. Human rights of women L. The girl child	SDGs 1,2, 3, 4 and 5
<i>Freedom from violence, stigma, and stereotypes</i>	D. Violence against women I. Human rights of women J. Women and the media L. The girl child	SDG 5
<i>Participation, accountability, and gender-responsive institutions</i>	G. Women in power and decision-making H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women I. Human rights of women J. Women and the media L. The girl child	SDGs 5, 16 and 17
<i>Peaceful and inclusive societies</i>	E. Women and armed conflict I. Human rights of women L. The girl child	SDGs 5, 10, 16, 17

¹ For the national review reports, see: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw64-2020/preparations> . (accessed 27/10/2020). Unless otherwise specified, all information reported in this document has been taken from the respective national review reports submitted by member States for the Beijing+25 Review.

<i>Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation</i>	K. Women and the environment I. Human rights of women L. The girl child	SDGs 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 17
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Achievements and challenges

“It is time to stop trying to change women, and start changing the systems that prevent them from achieving their potential. Our power structures have evolved gradually over thousands of years. One further evolution is long overdue. The 21st century must be the century of women’s equality”

-UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres²

The following section reviews the key achievements of the countries in the sub-region with respect to advancing gender equality over the last five years and challenges faced in its pursuit.

Achievements:

Adoption of laws, regulations, action plans and policies

Countries in the sub-region have adopted laws, regulations, action plans, and policies to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Five countries in the sub-region have a valid gender strategy or national action plan on gender equality and have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).³ Furthermore, countries have adopted progressive legislations to prevent violence and to promote women’s economic participation and leadership. Countries in the sub-region have passed laws, regulations, action plans, and policies to tackle different forms of violence, support women’s political participation and advancement in career, and leadership.

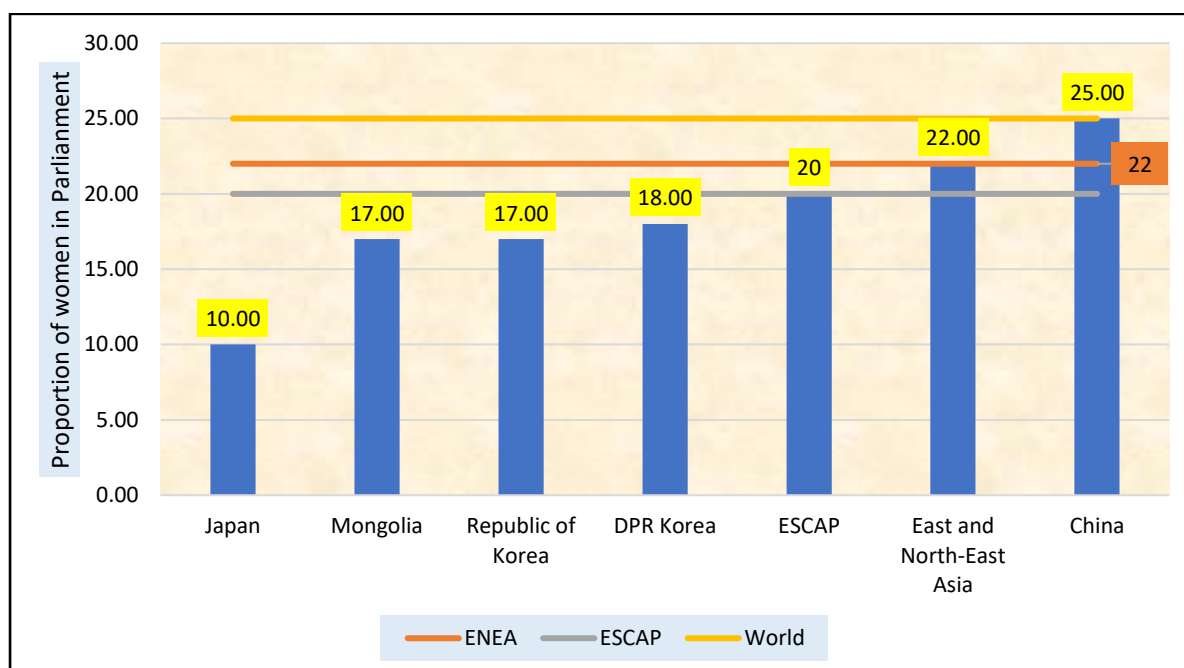
Women’s political participation and decision-making

Women’s participation in public life and decision-making is critical in advancing the agenda of gender equality. No country in the sub-region has surpassed the internationally agreed upon threshold of 30 per cent representation of women in parliament. However, the average participation of the sub-region at 22 per cent is the highest in the Asia and the Pacific and is higher than the ESCAP average of 20 per cent. This is still lower than the world average of 25 per cent. In the East and North-East Asian sub-region, over the last five years, countries have adopted laws and regulations, collected and analysed data, and implemented capacity building programs to promote women’s political participation and decision-making.

² ‘Make this the century of women’s equality’. See <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/02/1058271> (accessed 27/10/2020)

³United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol.1249, No. 20378.

Figure 1 Proportion of women in parliament, ENEA, 2020 (simple average)



Source: ESCAP Online Database based on IPU see: <https://dataexplorer.unescap.org/> (accessed 27/10.2020)

In China, Article 6 of the “National People’s Congress and Local People’s Congress Election Law”, revised in 2015, stipulates that representatives of the National People’s Congress and local People’s Congress should be broadly representative and include women representatives. Japan adopted the Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field in 2018. In Mongolia, amendments were made to the Law on Elections in 2016, which now requires at least 20 per cent of candidates nominated by a party or coalition to be represented by one gender. Action has been taken to promote women’s representation in leadership positions in central public administration. The Republic of Korea provided mentoring and capacity building opportunities to develop the future crop of women leaders. The country also introduced specific target figures for representation of women high-rank public officials and women managers in public institutions.

Strengthened national machineries

The presence of relevant national institutions and processes are critical to implement and build synergies between the commitments made in the Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All countries in the sub-region have reported the presence of national machineries (national coordination mechanism) for gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, and have formal mechanisms for stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see tables below). In all member States, the 2030 Agenda has been localised.⁴

⁴ See section on ‘National institutions, processes and partnerships’ for more details.

Table 2 Stakeholder participation in national coordination mechanism for implementation of Beijing Platform and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ENEA

Civil Society Organizations	Women’s Rights Organizations	Academia	Faith Based Organizations	Parliament s/Parliamentary Committees	Private Sector	United Nations System
Japan Republic of Korea Mongolia	Japan Republic of Korea Macao (China) Mongolia	Japan Republic of Korea Macao (China) Mongolia	Japan Macao (China) Republic of Korea	Macao (China) Mongolia	Japan Republic of Korea Macao (China) Mongolia	Japan Mongolia

Red : Stakeholder participation in Beijing Platform only
Yellow: Stakeholder participation in 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development only
Green: Stakeholder participation in both

Challenges:

Gender norms and stereotypes

All member States in this review identified that the translation of policies, plans, and programs to concrete actions is stifled by adverse gender norms and stereotypes. Negative gender norms and stereotypes present obstacles for women to progress at work, to gain access to public offices, makes them vulnerable in detrimental situations, especially to violent actions and, as survivors, they could be susceptible to secondary victimisation.

In the Republic of Korea, while institutions have been strengthened, a study conducted by the Korea Women’s Policy concludes that the perception of gender inequality persists. The study involved a survey which found noted that 77 per cent of the women and 48 per cent of the men “perceive that women experience inequality”. This shows the need to strengthen gender equality education. Many countries also noted the need to raise the awareness and understanding of parliamentarians, public service employees, and the public more broadly. Gender policies plans and programs that account for norms and stereotypes in its design are more likely to result in sustainable outcomes.

Women’s economic empowerment

Countries in the sub-region noted the difficulties in advancing women’s empowerment and enabling their economic participation. In Japan, it has been reported that working women face difficulty in achieving work-life balance due to long work hours. Although the employment rate for Japanese women aged 25-44 is about 80 per cent, a large proportion of working women are engaged in unstable and non-regular work. This effectively leaves them with job instability. In the last five years, the Japanese government has taken action to improve their work conditions and support their transformation to regular workers. Gender pay-gap, discriminatory work culture, and the burden of domestic work and childcare exacerbate women’s journey towards sustainable economic empowerment.

In China, new challenges to women’s fair employment and entrepreneurship have emerged, including supply-side structural reform, industrial restructuring, and implementation of the “Universal Two-Child Policy”. In Mongolia, women’s labour force participation is lower than that of men and the labour markets are highly segmented by gender. The national review report avers that this is influenced by

factors such as the high enrolment rates of women in tertiary education, thereby foregoing employment opportunities, time-poverty due to domestic and childcare responsibilities, and early retirement of women from work vis-à-vis men.

Box 1 Institutional obstacles to gender equality in Mongolia

While policy and legal frameworks have advanced in Mongolia, there remains the following institutional barriers to advancing gender equality:

- a) Policy, legislative and implementation gap
- b) Insufficient technical and financial resources, especially for the national machineries
- c) Broadening and strengthening of application of gender-responsive budgeting
- d) Lack of understanding and awareness of, and appreciation for, gender equality amongst politicians, policy makers, and public servants
- e) Inadequate communication, coordination and capacity impeding the mainstreaming of gender across the government sector as well as civil society organizations.

Source: [National review report of Mongolia](#)

Women's leadership

The participation rates of women in parliament in all member States in the sub-region fall below the world average of 25 per cent. Countries in the sub-region have adopted laws, collected and analysed data, conducted capacity building and mentoring initiatives to bolster women's political participation and decision-making. Women's political participation face challenges that resonate with women's engagement in other spheres. Firstly, care work and its attendant phenomena of time-poverty is a significant barrier to women venturing into politics and political participation. Secondly, there is the prevalent perception that leadership is a male domain which unduly loads the die against women's foray into leadership positions. Thirdly, the prevalence of violence against women in political positions is another concerning factor.

To promote women's leadership, it is important to understand the challenges that stand in their way. Japan conducted a study that examined factors that obstruct women's political participation, including harassment against women leaders, and is researching the efforts made by local governments to create a favourable environment for assembly members to tend to both family life and political pursuits. In Mongolia, the glass ceiling impedes the participation of women in decision-making. Mongolia's national review report shows that while women make up 60 per cent of the core civil service, only 25 per cent of women are in higher executive positions and almost none among political appointees. After the 2015 Election law that set a 20 per cent quota for candidate nomination, women's representation is now at 17 per cent in the Parliament, the highest since 1992.

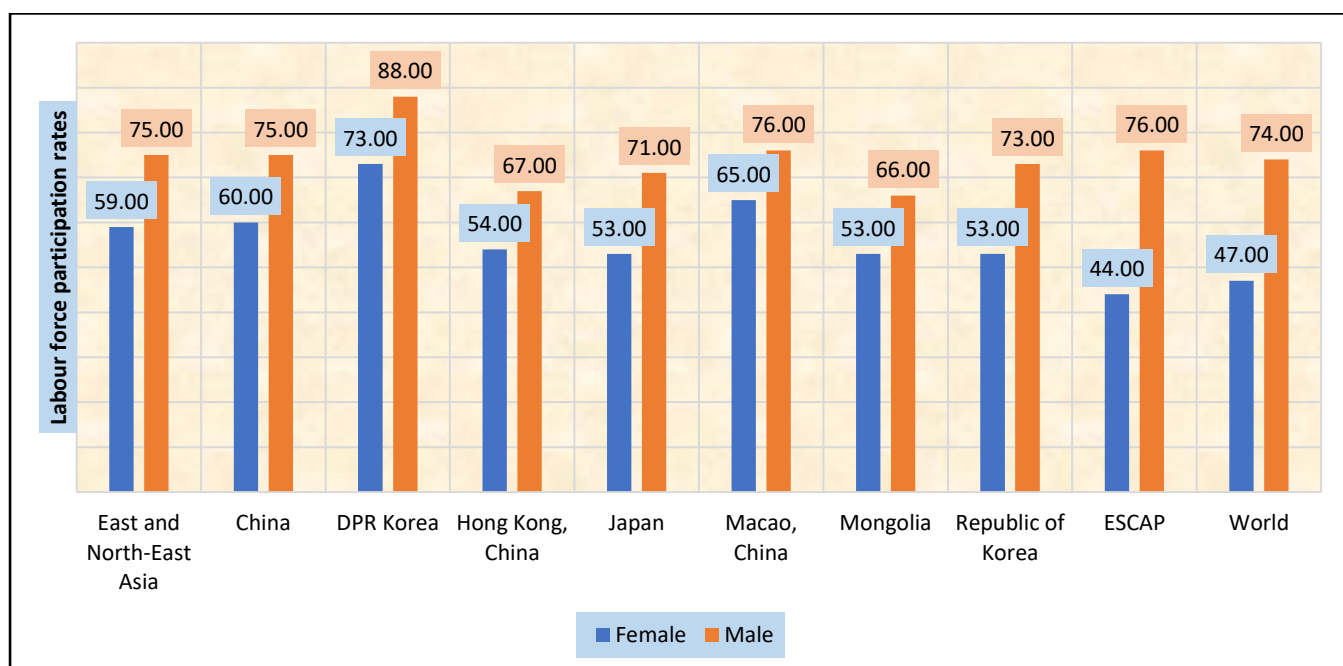
Actions taken to advance gender equality

A. Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

Data estimates show that women’s labour force participation in the East and North East Asia sub-region has decreased over the last five years from 61 per cent in 2015 to 59 per cent in 2020.⁵ In the meantime, male labour force participation rate has been estimated to have dipped from 76 per cent to 74 per cent over the last five years. The labour force participation of women in the subregion at 59 per cent is much higher than regional and global figures of 44 and 47 per cent, respectively. However, as shown in Figure 1, labour force participation rates across the sub-region have gender gaps. The gap is the starkest in the Republic of Korea, followed by Japan, and shortest in Macao, China. Notably, the gender gap in the sub-region is smaller than in the Asia -Pacific region and the global gender gap, which is 32 per cent and 27 per cent respectively.

To advance gender equality in the women’s paid work and employment, countries strengthened and enforced workplace laws, introduced gender-responsive labour market policies, and took measures to prevent sexual harassment and sexual violence at work.

Figure 2 Labour force participation rate, by gender, ENEA, 2020 (estimated)



Source: ESCAP Online Database based on ILO Data see: <https://dataexplorer.unescap.org/> (accessed 27/10.2020)

In China, the government is directing efforts to promote women’s employment in new areas such as platform economy, crowdsourcing, and sharing economy.⁶The government is encouraging women’s

⁵ ESCAP based on ILOSTAT. See : <https://dataexplorer.unescap.org/> (accessed 27/10.2020)

⁶ To know more about platform economy/ sharing economy, see:

<https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/nl/Documents/humancapital/deloitte-nl-hc-reshaping-work-conference.pdf> [accessed 22/11/2020].

Crowdsourcing “involves obtaining work, information, or opinions from a large group of people who submit their data via the Internet, social media, and smartphone apps”. See:

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/crowdsourcing.asp> [accessed 22/11/2020]

entrepreneurship through creation of women makers' space, incubators, service platforms and guaranteed loans. China is also providing vocational skills for women, particularly in the field of agriculture, with a view to create professional women farmers. It is reported that about 1.5 million women have been awarded agricultural technician titles and green certificates, and some 53,000 women's professional cooperative organizations have been established. Special employment service activities such as "Employment Assistance Month" and "Spring Breeze Action" are continuously organized, helping women with employment difficulties find jobs and promoting the employment of female migrant workers.

In Japan, under the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement, the national and local governments, as well as private enterprises with 301 or more permanent employees, are required to develop and announce an action plan concerning the promotion of women. The act has been subsequently revised to include under its ambit private enterprises with 101 or more permanent members. It has been reported that these measures resulted in an increase in the number of women employees, rising employment rate of women in child raising age (25 to 44 years of age), longer employment periods and more women in managerial positions. In Japan, since 2017, employers are under the legal obligation to implement measures to prevent and address discrimination related to pregnancy, childbirth, and parental leave. The government is also trying to address the issues concerning nonregular employment through the 'Conversion to Regular Employee and Treatment Improvement Plan' established in 2016.

In the Republic of Korea, the Sixth Basic Plan for Equal Employment Equalization (2018-2022) mandates businesses that received low ratings from the Affirmative Action system to report their gender wage gap status and to propose ways to close this gap. The government runs the Women's Re-employment Centers across the country which provides customized services for career-interrupted women, such as counselling and vocational training. Since October 2018, the statutory punishment for power-based adultery and indecent assault in workplace has been further toughened. Businesses with more than 10 employees are mandated to conduct preventive education of sexual harassment in the workplace, and penalties have been increased for non-compliance. The Act on the Prevention of Sexual Violence and the Protection of Victims has been amended to oblige the head of the competent institution or the employer to report the occurrence of sexual violence in the workplace and to take appropriate measures, such as change of work place and granting a paid leave. Workplaces are required to post materials for sexual harassment prevention training in the workplace and failing to do so attracts penalties. The government will also take into account the participation in sexual violence prevention education when deliberating personnel management within public institutions, such as promotion and transfer.

In Mongolia, the Law on Employment Promotion supports services to find employment for traditionally discriminated groups such as people with disability, the elderly, people released from correctional facilities, and school drop-outs. The Employment Promotion Programs target a variety of target groups such as job seekers, people at risk of becoming unemployed, people with difficulty finding work, herders, owners of micro-businesses, the self-employed, and individuals at the onset of establishing a partnership or cooperative.

To support requests for unpaid care and domestic work and promote reconciliation between professional and family life, countries in the sub-region have primarily introduced or strengthened family leave policies, expanded childcare facilities and support for older persons, and included unpaid care and domestic work in national statistics and accounting.

In response to the Universal Two-Child Policy, China has explored ways to expand the provision of childcare services in the 0-3 age group. On the other hand, in order to alleviate the pressure of the "only child" to care for parents, provinces and autonomous regions such as Fujian and Henan have

established a system of care leave for the “only child”, solving the problem of insufficient resources for the care of the elderly, and increasing social support for the employed “only child” to take care of his/her parents. Furthermore, in 2018, China organized its second national time-use survey covering interviews of 48,580 people from 20,336 households. The results show that women spend 1 hour 21 minutes per day more on household chores than men.

Given the high employment rate among Japanese women aged 25-44, the Government of Japan plans to build childcare facilities to accommodate 320,000 children by the end of 2020. Parental leave has been extended for workers till their children turn 24 months (from 18 months, previously) if unable to secure childcare services. Workers caring for elderly parents are now exempted from over-time work. Using latest data, Japan has estimated and published the monetary value of unpaid work.

The Republic of Korea has added 574 state and public childcare facilities and plans to add at least 550 annually, with the goal of enrolling 40 per cent of all children in state or public childcare facilities. To reduce the Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) teachers’ workload, assistant teachers and substitute teachers have been added to facilities. Since June 2019, it is mandatory for all day care centres to be accredited so that quality can be controlled. In addition, the government provides support to single-parent families via increased childcare allowances, educational subsidies to single-parent under 24 years of age, and relaxing the eligibility criteria for single-parent family certificates. The government also runs family and childcare support programs for children with disabilities under the age of 18 and their families, with the aim to reduce care burden and to support normal social activities for guardians. Eligible families can use up to 600 hours of childcare services per child annually. Since 2018, employers are expected to guarantee three-day infertility leave at the request of their employees.

In Mongolia, the Law on Granting Allowance for All Mothers, Single Parent and Multiple Children mandates monthly cash transfers from the fifth month of pregnancy until birth, monthly cash benefits for mothers taking care of children from birth up to three years, special cash benefits for twins below the age of four, and single parents with three or more children. Mongolia had adopted a Childcare Service Law in 2016, its implementation, however, has been postponed to 2021 due to national economic difficulties. The Law on Elderly of Mongolia, approved in 2017, determined a variety of social protection services available to the older people in the country. Mongolia also collected data on time-use which could feed into SDG 5.4 ‘recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate’.

Box 2 Republic of Korea supports single-parent families

In the Republic of Korea, the average single-parent family income is estimated to be about half of that of households with two parents. Assets are estimated to be 20 per cent lower than families with two parents. The financial burden on single-parent families is expected to worsen over time. To alleviate their burdens, the government designed and implemented the following policy interventions:

- I. Increased childcare allowances for single-parent families.
- II. Eligibility criteria for single-parent certificate has been loosened: From 2018, the government expanded the scope of the eligibility for the single-parent family certificates from 52 per cent to 60 percent of the median income. With the single parent family certificate, the household can benefit from discounted utility bills, a higher priority level given on the waiting list for a day care facility and public rental housing and other voucher programs.
- II. Special support to single parents aged 24 or younger: For single parents aged 24 or lower, additional support is available through childcare and self-reliance. Tuition assistance of 1.45 million KRW is also given to young single parent preparing for the General Education Diploma (GED). Tuition and registration fees are supported by government for single teen-parents enrolled in high school. Young single parent in education or employment can also receive self-reliance assistance allowances for pursuing education or looking for jobs.

Source: [National Review Report of the Republic of Korea](#)

B. Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

Poverty is multi-dimensional in nature and its impacts are likely to be worse for women vis-à-vis men and this exacerbates gender inequality. Globally, between age 20 and 34 years, women are more likely to be living in poor households than men.⁷ Households with children are among the poorest, while single parents with children, and predominantly single mothers with children, face a higher risk of poverty.⁸ Living in poverty can result in nutritional deficiencies and poorer educational outcomes. Shocks in the form of job loss or health problems could put families in poverty. Unfortunately, data on female poverty is scarce. To alleviate poverty among women and girls, countries in the sub-region have been mainly adopting social protection policies, supporting women's entrepreneurship, and supporting decent work for women.

In China, women are considered not only as recipients of poverty alleviation programs, but also as important agents of poverty eradication. For single-parent households in Japan, assistance is provided through Public Employment security Office to find jobs. Furthermore, the government is requesting companies to cooperate with the employment of single parents as a priority, supporting their initiatives, and providing information on the cooperating companies through "Hello Work" and others.

The entrepreneurship development program in Mongolia provides support for small-scale entrepreneurship by providing microloans. While this program is not specifically focused on women entrepreneurs, 47.4 percent of beneficiaries receiving microloans were women in 2016. Grants are also provided to people with disability to start or expand their microenterprises and subsidies are provided to employers who hire persons with disabilities.

In the Republic of Korea, new job centers are providing employment support services to women whose careers have been interrupted for various reasons. These centers have training courses in high value-added sectors as well as in consulting services for prospective entrepreneurs. In 2014, the government

⁷ World Bank, "Gender Differences in Poverty and Household composition through the life-cycle", Policy Research Working Paper, No. 8360 (Washington D.C., World Bank, 2018).

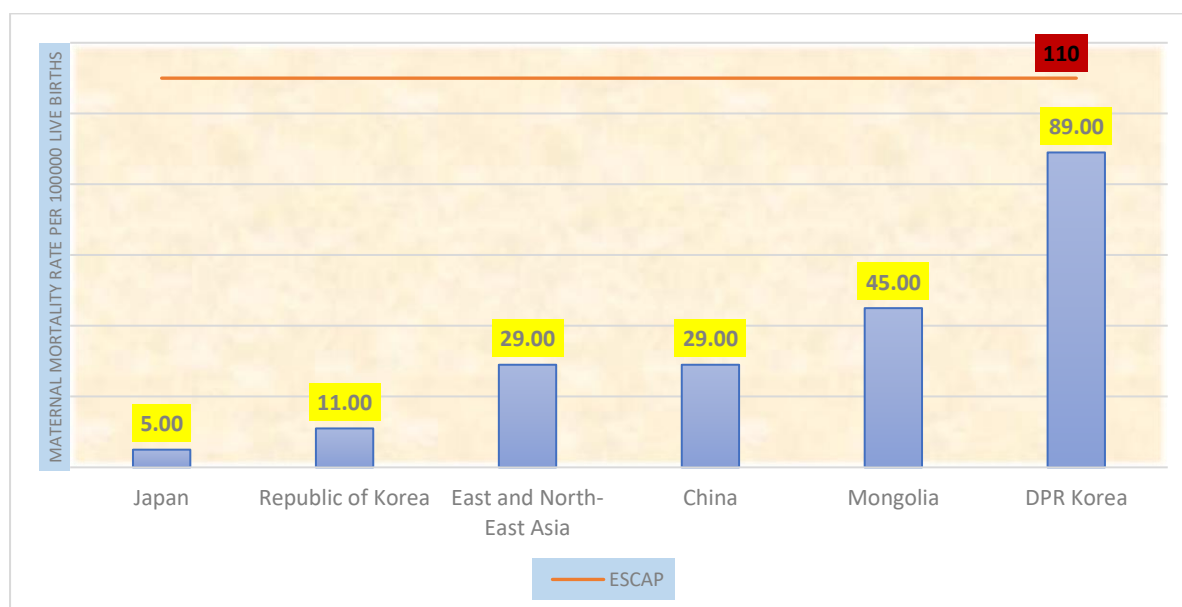
⁸ World Bank, "Gender Differences in Poverty and Household composition through the life-cycle", Policy Research Working Paper, No. 8360 (Washington D.C., World Bank, 2018).

introduced Basic Pension in 2014 which made the elderly in the bottom 70 per cent income bracket eligible for a basic pension benefit of KRW 250,000 per month. About 62 per cent of the beneficiaries were women in 2014. In Mongolia, cash allowance is provided for “honoured mothers” who gave birth to six or more children (1st medal of honour) and to those who gave birth to four or more children (2nd medal of honour).

Health

Unequal access to healthcare undermines inclusive and sustainable development. Furthermore, health shocks can drive families deeper into poverty. To promote inclusive development, to prevent households from falling into poverty and to improve the health outcomes for women and girls, countries in the sub-region have expanded and provided access to health services, including but not limited to, maternal and child health services, conducting awareness and health promotion campaigns, especially in schools where comprehensive sexuality education has been incorporated into the curriculum.

Figure 3 Maternal mortality rates, per 100000 live births, ENEA, 2017



Source: ESCAP Online Database based on UNFPA. See <https://dataexplorer.unescap.org/> [accessed on 27/10/2020]

In 2018, through the Action Plan on Maternal and Infant Safety, China is strengthening five major areas including the “prevention of pregnancy risk, emergency treatment, quality and safety improvement, specialized capacity building, and convenience services”. In Japan, the Comprehensive Support Centers for Families with Children work as one-stop centers that offer seamless and comprehensive support, in response to a wide range of needs concerning pregnancy and child-rearing. In Mongolia, adolescent health cabinets provide adolescents and young people with sexually transmitted infections screening and treatment services, counselling, and management of general health problems in 11 provinces and four districts of Ulaanbaatar. The country has developed guidelines for primary-level health professionals on adolescent mental health.⁹

To increase access to mental health services and to strengthen early detection and interventions for mental disorders, Korea expanded the target population for depression screening as part of the

⁹ For more details on family planning and the working of adolescent health cabinets, see: https://mongolia.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/UNFPA_FPsituationalanalysis_ENG.pdf (accessed 22/11/2020)

national health check-up program. Previously, the target ages for screening were 40 and 66. Now the depression screening cycle is ten years between the ages 20 and 70. In Korean schools, sex education classes are organised which cover preventive measures, giving appropriate information and knowledge to students in different developmental phases so that they can develop a healthy attitude towards sex. The school sex education standard is divided into five levels: primary, intermediate, and upper levels in elementary school, as well as middle and high school levels.

In Macao, refugee women and girls as well as women and girls in other humanitarian settings are provided access to sexual and reproductive health services. This includes meals, accommodation, financial assistance, counselling services, referral to medical services, assistance to minors in school, etc.

Education

In order to improve the educational outcomes of women and girls, governments in the sub-region are taking efforts to enhance access, retention in, completion of education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and skill development, undertaking curriculum reform and offering gender training to teachers.

In China, there is reported gender segregation in vocational education. The proportion of women university students studying humanities and social sciences is much higher than that of men. Around 80 per cent of the boys choose natural or physical sciences in school, whereas only half of the girls opt for it. China aims to enhance gender sensitivity in the process of vocational education and conduct targeted education and training to promote women's career in emerging industries. China has also incorporated gender equality into its teacher training programs and courses to increase gender awareness among educators.

In a bid to encourage women to participate in science, Japan has appointed women who are active in the field as "STEM Girls Ambassadors". The ambassadors deliver lectures across Japan and inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers. The initiative shares experiences of women's participation and advancement in local companies in a bid to support employment in local companies. To encourage middle and high school girls to pursue science, the government offers opportunities to interact with women who are active in the field, including researchers, engineers, and university students. The government further supports universities and other institutions that cooperate with communities and businesses to take relevant measures, such as organizing laboratory classes, symposiums, and visiting lectures. For example, the Restart Postdoctoral Fellowship program offers fellowships to researchers who have to take a break from their research due to maternity leave and childcare responsibilities. This Fellowship thereby supports their return to research.

In the Republic of Korea, a textbook monitoring team has been set up to review and revise any gender discriminatory contents in the educational materials. To improve teachers' professionalism on gender equality education and to eliminate teachers' bias about gender roles, courses on gender equality are regularly offered in qualification and job trainings.

C. Prevention of violence, stigma and stereotype

Freedom from violence, stigma, and stereotypes is fundamental to achieving gender equality. In the ENEA sub-region, around 31 per cent of the women in Mongolia, 39 per cent in China, and 15 per cent in Japan have experienced physical or sexual violence, or both, by an intimate partner in their lifetime (see table 3 below). Around 13 per cent of the women in Mongolia, 9 per cent in China, and 4 per cent in Japan reported having experienced such violence within the preceding twelve months of the survey.

In the last five years, countries in the sub-region have prioritised actions against intimate partner violence, domestic abuse, sexual harassment, technology-facilitated violence, and trafficking in women and girls. To address violence against women and girls, countries have resorted to introducing or strengthening laws and their implementation, providing services for survivors, and taking preventive measures against violence.

Table 3 Proportion of women disclosing experience of partner and non-partner violence, ENEA, as of July 2020

	<i>Intimate Partner Violence among ever-partnered women (%)</i>		<i>Non-partner violence since age 15 among all women (%)</i>			
	Physical and/or sexual violence		Physical violence by non-partner		Sexual violence by non-partner	
	Lifetime	Last 12 Months	Lifetime	Last 12 months	Lifetime	Last 12 months
China (2012, 15-49 ages)	39	9	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Japan (2000, 18-49 ages)	15	4	5	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Mongolia (2017, 15-64 ages)	31	13	17	5	14	3

Source: kNOwVAWdata from UNFCA see: https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/knowvawdata_regional_vaw_map_july_29_2020_final.pdf (accessed on 27/10/2020)

n.a.= data not collected/not available in source report

Newer and emerging forms of violence on the digital space are being tackled by some countries. In Japan, the Anti-Stalking Act was revised in December 2016, and sending messages via social media and writing comments on the victim’s personal webpages such as blogs were added to regulated acts. The Republic of Korea established a digital crime prevention system in 2017. To protect children from cybercrime, the National Police Agency in Mongolia started a campaign called “Unfriend”, which resulted in more than 500 people making complaints and requests to Facebook.

Many countries are providing free legal services, hotlines, digital applications to report violence, emergency shelters, and safe spaces for survivors. In the Republic of Korea, Comprehensive Support Centers for Sexual Violence Victims are located within hospitals. These centers have police officers to ensure collection of evidence in a timely manner and to avoid further harm as victims are not required to make multiple statements of their sex assault experience. Support centers across the country support survivors and provide home-visit counselling and companion services for child survivors. Further, professionally trained testimony assistants ensure the victim’s right to testify, especially that of children and women with disabilities who have difficulty in communicating. During the investigation and trial procedure, the testimony assistant mediates and assists victims understand questions and deliver testimony for judicial fact-finding and prevent secondary victimization. Self-reliance centers also provide support to survivors of sex trafficking with vocational training, employment support, and educational guidance, which supports survivors to be treated and possibly even overcome social prejudice, stigma, and stereotypes.

Box 3 The Republic of Korea fights digital crime through comprehensive measures

The Republic of Korea adopted the “Comprehensive Countermeasures against Digital Sex Crime” and established a digital crime prevention system in September 2017. The government has established the Digital Sex Crime Victims Support Center to provide one-stop support services such as counselling, content deletion, investigation, and legal and medical assistance. Further, every provincial police agency has a “Cyber-Sexual Violence Investigation Team” and every police station has a “Special Investigation Unit on Cyber-Sexual Violence” that responds to online sexual violence.

Source: [National review report of Republic of Korea](#)

The National Statistics Organisation of Mongolia conducted a national study in 2017 that provided an overall view of the status of gender-based violence in the country. The study revealed that more than half of all Mongolian women have experienced physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence. The curriculum of the Police School of the Law Enforcement of the University of Mongolia includes compulsory training on combatting and preventing GBV and domestic violence. To improve the services of the one stop support centers in the country, trainings were conducted for related officers on the key gender equality legislation and policies of the country, sexual harassment at workplace, criminalization of victims, work-home balance, and some basic concepts on gender and survivor protection activities.

Public awareness raising and the concomitant change in attitudes is considered to be the most important strategy for preventing violence against women and girls in the sub-region. Since 2008, Mongolia has been organizing a 16-day campaign to combat gender-based violence every year. Over 700 men in Mongolia have signed the #HeForShe pledge to be outspoken allies for women. In Korea, the Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence was amended in 2015 to establish the Domestic Violence Eradication Week (November 25 to December 1), with the aim of raising public awareness on domestic violence. The campaigns emphasized that domestic violence is a crime and not a “private family affair”, thereby leading to an increase in the reporting of incidents of violence. The national review report notes that 55 per cent of respondents answered that they will call the police when they experience domestic violence at home in a 2013. This rate increased to 61 per cent in 2016. In Korea, domestic violence offenders who receive a protective order from the Court and are recommended by police or counselling centers participate in counselling programs at the Domestic Violence Counselling Centers across the country.

Box 4 China regulates online car-hailing businesses to prevent violence against women

Since the advent of platform-based ride-hailing services, there have been many cases in which women had been raped and killed by drivers. In order to regulate the ride-hailing services and to ensure operational safety as well as legitimate rights and interests of passengers, in July 2016, seven ministries, including the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, jointly issued the “Interim Provisions on the Administration of Online Car-Hailing Operations and Services”. The provisions imposed strict requirements on the qualifications of online ride-hailing platform and drivers. In May 2018, the Ministry of Transport issued the “Reputation Assessment Measures for Taxi Services”, officially incorporating online car-hailing service into the assessment system.

Source: Excerpt from the [National Review Report of China](#)

The media’s representation of women is an important avenue to promote empowering messages about women and girls and advance gender equality. At the same time, media can also be a vehicle that reinforces negative stereotypes about women and girls. The Beijing Platform for Action considers women’s increased participation in the media as an important means to combat negative social norms. In 2016, the Press Institute of Mongolia and UNFPA Mongolia partnered to combat GBV by

mentoring and training journalists. Activities included a journalism competition, the creation of a GBV focused media network, and a mentoring program. In China, Article 9 of the “Advertising Act” clearly prohibited any advertisement content “containing obscenity, pornography, gambling, superstition, terror, violence, and ethnic/racial/religious/gender discrimination.” The law was amended in 2015 to strengthen penalties for offenders. In the Republic of Korea, the Korean Communications Standards Commission applies Article 13 (Discrimination Prohibition) of its "Rules on Broadcast Advertising Review" to prohibit depictions that encourage discrimination, prejudice or conflict based on gender, age, or occupation in broadcast advertising.

Box 5 Providing services to child survivors of violence: The Republic of Korea

Victims of sexual violence and child abuse are eligible to apply for a free legal service from professional legal adviser, either from private lawyers who are willing to participate in the public defender system, or staff lawyers of the Korea Legal Aid Corporation as full-time public defenders. All expenses are covered by the Ministry of Justice.

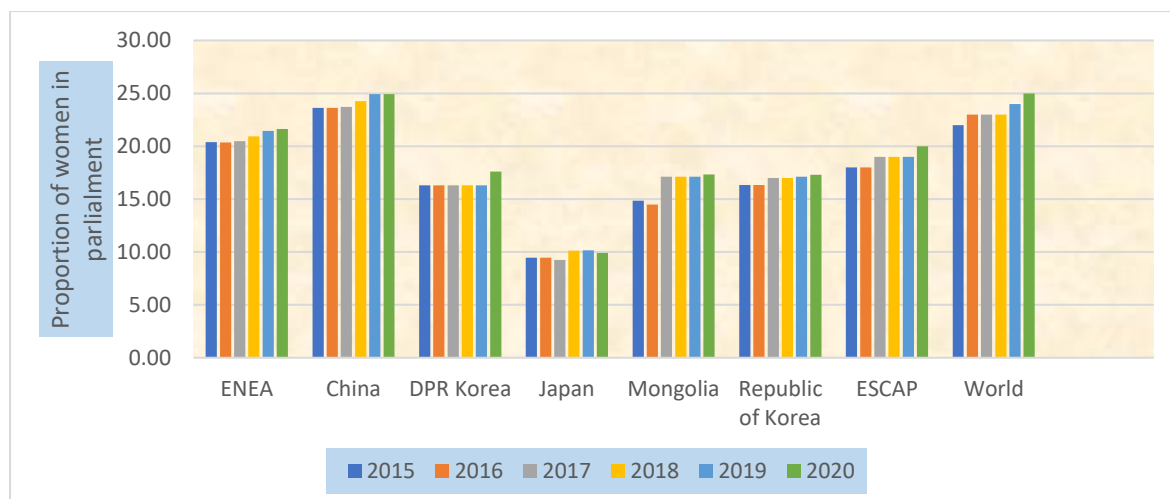
In protecting children and youth from sex offenses, the government operates the Rehabilitation and Treatment Program for Young Victims of Sex Trafficking and strictly responds to sex offenses with the Sex Offenders Information Disclosure and Notification System to prevent recidivism. The government also implements the Employment Restriction and Mandatory Reporting System for Sex Offenders to restrict sex offenders’ access to children and youth related organizations in advance. In accordance with the Act on the Protection of Children and Youth against Sex Offenses, information of sex offenders who received a disclosure order from the court is made publicly available online. When a sex offender moves into or out of the area, local residents with children and youth under age 19 and related organizations are notified by mail.

Source: Excerpt from the [National Review Report of Republic of Korea](#)

D. Accountability, participation and gender-responsive institutions

Women’s participation in public life and decision-making is critical in advancing the agenda of gender equality. For countries in the sub-region, the average political participation of women has increased since 2015, but lags behind global trends: women’s representation in the region is 22 per cent, whereas the global average is at 25 per cent. In the ENEA sub-region, countries adopted laws and regulations, collected and analysed data, and implemented capacity building programs to promote women’s political participation and decision-making.

Figure 4 Women in parliament, by percent, ENEA, ESCAP and World, 2015-2020 (simple average)



Source: ESCAP Online Database based on IPU. See <https://dataexplorer.unescap.org/> [accessed on 27/10/2020]

In China, Article 6 of the “National People’s Congress and Local People’s Congress Election Law” revised in 2015 stipulates that representatives of the National People’s Congress and local People’s Congress should be broadly representative and that there should be a number of women representatives, whose proportion should be increased gradually. Since 2014, special training on women’s leadership has been provided as part of the national civil service training program.

Japan adopted the Act on Promotion of Gender Equality in the Political Field in 2018. This Act stipulates state and local governments to formulate policies to promote gender equality in politics, without taking away the freedom of political parties. It also stipulates political parties to voluntarily work on promoting gender equality in politics. Since its adoption, it has been reported that various political parties have undertaken initiatives, including adopting targets for nomination of candidates who are women. It has been noted that in the election of the members of the House of Councillors after the adoption of the Act, the percentage of female candidates was 28.1 per cent, increasing by about 3 percentage points from 24.7 per cent in 2016.

In Mongolia, amendments were made to the Law on Elections in 2016, which now requires at least 20 per cent of candidates nominated by a party or coalition to be represented by one gender. In the central public administration, the Law on the Promotion of Gender Equality stipulates that the "representation of any one sex in decision-making positions in public administration shall not be less than 15 per cent among state secretaries and heads of agencies, 30 per cent among heads of department in ministries and agencies". It has been reported by Mongolia’s national review report that since 2012, the share of women as top-level executives in state administrative institutions has grown gradually to 24 per cent in 2017. Similarly, the Republic of Korea adopted a Five-Year Plan to Enhance Women’s Representation in the Public Sector in November 2017. This plan intends to conduct annual stocktaking of female high-ranking officials and female executives at public institutions, and regular monitoring of the situation by government.

The Academy of Promising Women Leaders in the Republic of Korea supports women professionals to be leaders in their respective organizations through customised education tailored to particular careers and network building. By providing on-site and online courses and mobile services, this academy provides educational opportunities that are free from time and location limitations. The Mentorship for Young Women is another initiative that provides role models through women mentors to women college students, women jobseekers, and women in their early career. Through the mentorship program, mentees were able to develop leadership and receive emotional support.

Accountability and Gender-responsive institutions

The presence of accountable and gender-responsive institutions is a key component to realize the vision of a gender-equal society. In the ENEA sub-region, all member States have valid national action plans or strategies to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Two countries, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea, have National Human Rights Commission which have mandated to address issues relating to gender discrimination. Increasingly, gender-responsive budgeting is seen as a way to institutionalize the allocation of government resources for gender equality. In the Republic of Korea, gender-responsive budget has been implemented in central, local, and regional government agencies since the fiscal year of 2013.

In Mongolia, the Ministry of Finance is implementing a Gender Strategy for organizations and agencies under its authority. This strategy aims to build capacities of the Ministry, General Authorities of Customs and Taxation to conduct gender analysis for GRB policy planning processes; and introduce GRB methodology in the budgetary processes under the authority of the MOF and some budget administrators.

Box 6 National Human Rights Commission of Korea writes against the Abortion Ban

The National Human Rights Commission of Korea submitted a written opinion on the issue of abortion to the Constitutional Court stating that enforcement of the criminal laws on abortion infringes on women's right to self-determination, right to health, right to life, and reproductive rights on 25 February 2019. The Commission noted that criminalizing abortion under the current Criminal Act and allowing abortion only in limited cases under the Mother and Child Health Act violates women's freedom and right to decide to terminate their pregnancy. In April 2019, the Constitutional Court ruled the abortion ban as unconstitutional, ordering the law to be revised by 2020.

Source: Excerpt from the [National Review Report of the Republic of Korea](#)

E. Peaceful and inclusive societies

Peaceful and inclusive societies require meaningful participation of women in peace processes, security agreements, humanitarian action, conflict resolution, and crisis response. The Asia-Pacific region has witnessed numerous protracted conflicts, humanitarian crises, and natural disasters – all of which exacerbate women's vulnerability to violence, exploitation, and violation of their rights. 2020 marks two decades since passage of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Two countries in the sub-region, namely Japan and the Republic of Korea, have national action plans for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325.

Both being donor countries, their interest in women, peace, and security are focussed on conflicts abroad. Japan is currently on its second National Action Plan and provides pre-deployment training, including lectures on sexual violence as well as sexual exploitation and abuse in conflicts, in order to enable Japanese personnel sent for UN PKO missions to fully understand the issue of WPS. Japan reports strengthened collaboration with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Since 2016, the country has reported to provide financial aid for the Office to address sexual violence in conflict affected countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. Shinzo Abe joined the Circle of Leadership on the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations operations, which was created based on the initiative of UN Secretary-General Guterres.

The Republic of Korea conducts Gender Impact Assessment on newly enacted or revised laws and major policies in the defense, diplomacy, peace, and unification fields. The Third Basic Plan for Inter-Korea Relationship Development (2018-2022) lays out plans to expand inter-Korean cooperation and exchange in various sectors, including women's affairs. To support women's representation in inter-Korean relations and to develop agendas and tasks for inter-Korean exchange and cooperation for women, the government has funded research on specific gender impact assessment at national research institutes. Furthermore, when planning and implementing humanitarian projects, one of the top priorities of the Korean government is to empower women and girls and the community they belong to, as well as to respond to their urgent humanitarian needs. The Korean government launched an initiative named "Action with Women and Peace" in June 2018 to scale up its contribution in the areas of women, peace, and security, which have become major issues in the international community.

F. Environmental conservation, climate action and resilience-building

Environmental depletion and climate induced changes disproportionately impact women and add increased pressures on women's time, income, health, nutrition, and social support systems. To integrate gender concerns into environmental policies and disaster risk reduction, member States are

promoting women's participation and leadership in environmental and natural resource management and governance and have strengthened the evidence base and raised awareness about the disproportionate vulnerability of women and girls to the impacts of climate change.

In China, the participation of women in environmental policymaking and disaster management has increased over the last five years. Studies are being conducted on identifying the gender impact of climate change and data is being collected on gender with respect to disaster reduction. The China Women's Development fund sends "mother parcel" for women in disaster hit areas. Special disaster prevention trainings are conducted for women in rural areas, which are in line with the needs of women's daily lives.

Box 7 Environmental challenges in Mongolia

Mongolia is one of the countries in the sub-region to enact a national program on climate change. The country faces some pressing environmental challenges, namely:

Burning of coal in power plants: During winter, the air quality in Ulaanbaatar is amongst the worst in the world. Air pollution levels often reach hazardous levels as a result of emissions from coal stoves, power plants, boilers, and vehicles. The poor air quality triggers health problems including asthma, allergies, and other upper respiratory illnesses, resulting in a sharp growth of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, as well as heightened pregnancy risks and higher under-five mortality rates.

Desertification and deforestation: There are approximately 66 million sheep, goats, cattle, horses, yaks, and camels in Mongolia. The large number of livestock animals has resulted in overgrazing and depletion of scarce water sources. Overgrazing in turns causes soil erosion, desertification, and the replacement of good grazing grasses with dry weed called "sword grass". Livestock-breeding women and men should be capacitated to fully reap the benefits of their growing herds and to constructively contribute to the protection of pastures and control of desertification by improving live-stockbreeding practices.

Source: [National Review Report of Mongolia](#)

In Japan, the Basic Disaster Management Plan calls for the expansion of women's participation in policy and decision-making processes for disaster prevention and at the actual site of disaster prevention, including the running of shelters. The Plan urges local governments to facilitate women's participation at every site and organization of reconstruction and recovery from the standpoint of gender equality and to give due consideration to gender perspectives in the running of shelters.

Air pollution is a key environmental issue in Mongolia. So far, Mongolia has committed to a low carbon pathway by developing the National Action Program on Climate Change, Green Development Strategy 2015, and the Sustainable Development Vision. Mongolia has adopted an Environmental Sector Gender Strategy that promotes equal opportunities for participation and equal access to benefits in the environmental sector.

In Korea, the government has been planning and performing long-term environmental health birth cohort study for children from 2015 to 2036.

National institutions, processes and partnerships to advance gender equality

The presence of relevant national institutions and processes are critical to implementing and building synergies between the commitments made in the Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. All countries in the subregion have reported the presence of national machinery (national coordination mechanism) for gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. All member States in the region have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and consider gender equality as a key priority in national plans or strategy for Sustainable Development Goals implementation. All member States have formal mechanisms for stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In all member States, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been localized. China's "National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", released in 2016, has specific a plan for the implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets.

In Japan, the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, headed by the Prime Minister, formulated the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles in December 2016. The guiding principles include an understanding of gender equality and gender mainstreaming as being indispensable for achieving the 2030 Agenda and an acknowledgement of the crucial role played by gender statistics in supporting policymaking.

In Korea, K-SDGs have been established to ensure the national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It has 17 goals and 122 detailed targets, with one of the goals being "ensuring gender equality together". To enhance coordination and cooperation for gender policies, the Korean government has placed gender equality policy officers in eight key ministries.¹⁰ To promote sustainable development in accordance with the Sustainable Development Act, the government established the Sustainable Development Committee that operates under the Minister of Environment. The Minister of Gender Equality and Family participates in the committee to work on the institutional process for implementation of SDGs.

In Mongolia, the Sustainable Development Vision 2030 (SDV 2030) incorporates Mongolia's aspiration to be a stable, multi-sector economy with middle/upper middle-income classes with a conscious desire to preserve ecological balance along with stable, democratic governance. Fully aligning with SDG 5, the SDV 2030 aspires for gender equality in social development. The national machinery for gender equality in Mongolia, namely, the National Committee on Gender Equality, faces many challenges that is applicable, if not to this sub-region, but to countries in other sub-regions. It has been reported that the committee does not have adequate resources, financial and human, to operate across the country. As a result, much of their work is funded by international donors and thus does not feed into policymaking at the national or sub-national levels.

¹⁰ Country Statement by the delegate of the Republic of Korea at the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on the Beijing+25 Review. See: <https://www.unescap.org/intergovernmental-meetings/asia-pacific-regional-review-25th-anniversary-beijing-declaration> [accessed 22/11/2020]

Data and statistics

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development considers data as one of the key means of implementation. The Beijing Platform of Action recommended governments to produce and disseminate statistics disaggregated by sex. Data gaps in gender statistics is a key impediment to advancing gender equality in the region.

Seven out of 9 targets (6 targets and 3 means of implementation)¹¹ of Goal 5 have been reported to have insufficient data in the sub-region. These include data regarding violence against women and girls, early marriage, unpaid work, reproductive health and rights, equal economic rights, use of technology, and gender equality policies. There are also gaps in available data on the most vulnerable groups of women: older women, women with HIV/AIDS, and women with disabilities.¹²

Over the last five years, with respect to gender statistics, countries have made most progress in conducting new surveys to produce national baseline information on gender-related topics, in developing centralised database or dashboard on gender indicators and in producing knowledge products on gender statistics. All member States in the sub-region countries have started data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other goals. In all countries, major surveys provide sex-disaggregated data.

Countries across the sub-region are investing resources to devise better data collection strategies to acquire sex-disaggregated data. Cognizant of the importance of data in informing policy interventions, countries are investing in infrastructures to track data or indicators related to gender equality. In China, the National Bureau of Statistics has developed a comprehensive statistical database of social science, which includes gender statistics. In Mongolia, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the National Committee on Gender Equality and the National Statistics Office to create a gender-specific information database through the collection of sector and local development-relevant sex-disaggregated statistical data and the development of a methodology for their application in policy planning and implementation processes. Mongolia has developed 216 for the collection of gender-disaggregated data, in areas including population, education, health, poverty, gender-based violence, labor, decision making, governance, human rights, media, environment, gender-sensitive planning and budgeting, and the gender index. Ministries are expected to integrate these sex-disaggregated indicators into their routine statistics in the near future.

Several countries in the sub-region also show interest in understanding the impact of care responsibilities on women's economic participation. For this reason, countries are turning towards using time-use surveys to make policy decisions that better support women's economic empowerment. In 2018, the National Bureau of Statistics in China organized the second National Time-Use Survey. Japan's Economic and Social Research Institute estimated and published the monetary value of unpaid work by the end of 2018. The fourth round of time use survey in Mongolia was kicked off in March 2019. Mongolia, with technical assistance from UNFPA, also conducted its first nationwide survey on gender-based violence, using internationally recognized methodologies.

¹¹ Means of implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development refers to finance, trade, capacity building and/or science, technology and innovation). See <https://www.unescap.org/2030-agenda/means-of-implementation> [accessed 28/10/2020]

¹² ESCAP, 2020. Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report. United Nations: Bangkok https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/ESCAP_Asia_and_the_Pacific_SDG_Progress_Report_2020.pdf

See p. 72

In the Republic of Korea, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family and Statistics introduced a new regular education course on gender statistics in the Statistical Institute in 2019. Through this, the government plans to promote gender statistics courses to connect labour statistics with gender-responsive policies and to train statisticians who specialize in the related field.

Table 4 Status of Data Disaggregation in East and North East Asia

Geographic Location	Income	Sex	Age	Education	Marital Status	Race/Ethnicity	Migratory Status	Disability
China	China	China	China	China	China	China	China	China
Japan	Japan	Japan	Japan	Japan	Japan	Mongolia	Mongolia	Macao
Republic of Korea	Republic of Korea	Republic of Korea	Republic of Korea	Republic of Korea	Republic of Korea			(China)
Macao (China)	Macao (China)	Macao (China)	Macao (China)	Macao (China)	Macao (China)			Mongolia
Mongolia	Mongolia	Mongolia	Mongolia	Mongolia	Mongolia			

Key priorities and recommendations

Eliminating violence against women and girls

Despite the efforts of countries to address violence, countries in the sub-region have a long way to go to eliminate violence. Efforts should be directed towards adopting legislations that cover all forms of gender-based violence and ensure their just implementation without covering to the adverse effects of gender norms, stigmas, and stereotypes.

Recommendations:

- I. Adopt appropriate laws, regulations, and action plans to address new and emergent forms of violence against women and girls.
- II. Develop legislations to protect the rights of women and girls in the digital space and to prevent cyber-bullying and child pornography.
- III. Adopt comprehensive anti-trafficking legal and regulatory frameworks and strategies, and provide protection, rehabilitation, repatriation, and reintegration assistance to survivors.
- IV. Establish linguistically and culturally appropriate and accessible multisectoral services for survivors of violence, including migrant women and girls and children.
- V. Provide for publicly funded and professionally trained testimony assistants to ensure survivor's right to testify, especially those of children and disabled who have difficulty in communicating.
- VI. Provide gender training for enforcement officers in the judiciary, police forces, and health forces to ensure laws and action plans turn into reality.
- VII. Strengthen data collection and evidence on violence against women and girls, including new and emergent forms of violence.
- VIII. Capacitate relevant personnel on gender statistics, its use and how it can inform evidence-based policy making.
- IX. Organize comprehensive sex education classes at schools and provide information on sexual and reproductive health to youth and adolescents
- X. Disseminate violence prevention information and run advocacy actions using public media.
- XI. Collaborate with all relevant stakeholders, including civil society organizations, and engaging men and boys and women and girls to raise awareness about violence prevention. Promoting the sharing of survivors' stories and their fight for justice would normalize the reporting of violent incidents.

Political participation of women

The political participation of women in the sub-region as a whole compares favourably to the rest of Asia and the Pacific. Women's political participation and leadership in the sub-region face challenges that resonate with women's engagement in other spheres. Firstly, care work and its attendant phenomena of time-poverty is a significant barrier to women venturing into politics and political participation. Secondly, there is a perception of leadership as a male domain which unduly loads the die against women's foray into leadership positions. Thirdly, the prevalence of violence against women in political positions is another concerning factor. Addressing these factors can have a positive impact on women's political participation and leadership.

Recommendations:

- I. Promote positive role models from all spaces to influence women's leadership aspirations and approaches
- II. Adopt temporary measures such as gender quotas for parliamentary and local governance to increase women's representation and participation
- III. Expand and protect civic space for women's organizations and networks

- IV. Challenge norms that prevent women from becoming leaders by engaging in community dialogue, awareness raising, and sustaining dialogue with men
- V. Create mentoring and networking events for women leaders
- VI. Conduct mock parliaments at national and sub-national events to expose women to the machinations of political participation and generate interest in pursuing it.
- VII. Support women candidates contest elections through sustained mentorship.
- VIII. Provide gender-responsive infrastructure and public services, including early education, childcare and elderly care facilities which will enable women to free-up time that can be used for community engagement

Economic Empowerment of Women

For women's economic empowerment to be a reality, labour market policies need to respond to the lived realities of women's everyday lives. Discriminatory norms and gender stereotypes hinder the fair economic participation of women in the region, be it in terms of equal pay, pay equity, recruitment, retention, or promotion. The pervasiveness of violence and harassment at workspaces prevents women from engaging in economic activities. For the member States of the sub-region, changing demographic patterns, new policies, the burden of domestic and care work prevent the economic empowerment of their women.

Recommendations:

- I. Adopt gender-responsive labour market policies, including affirmative action appropriate family leave policy and flexible work arrangements to attract women to engage in economic activities.
- II. Support the gradual formalisation of the informal economy with the aid of ILO Recommendation 204.
- III. Adopt laws, policies, and regulations to promote women's career advancement in public and private sectors.
- IV. Adopt laws, policies, and regulations to prevent and redress sexual harassment at the workplace. Ensure managers undergo mandatory training on sexual harassment and violence. Career advancement of managers could take into consideration their treatment of sexual harassment cases.
- V. Strengthen the provision of childcare and elderly care provisions to support the burden of unpaid work. Such provisions need to incorporate the needs of single-parents, parents whose children have disabilities, and ensure fair treatment to the care workers.
- VI. Ensure an enabling policy environment to support women entrepreneurs by addressing the financial, technological, and scaling-up challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

Gender Norms and Stereotypes

Gender norms and stereotypes are all pervasive. Adverse gender norms and stereotypes has the effect of holding women back from becoming the best version of themselves. Every action taken to promote gender equality should examine the underlying gender norms and stereotypes that create the problem and devise measures to transform these underlying power machinations. It is only when these negative gender norms and stereotypes are transformed that gender equality can become a reality.

Recommendations:

- I. Encourage male role models, leaders, public figures, and others who resonate with audiences to promote progressive messages through various mass media forums.
- II. Develop ethical codes for media houses to follow while reporting gender events and provide training for media personnel on the same
- III. Integrate key legislations on gender equality into the national educational system

- IV. Conduct gender analysis of textbooks and curriculum to weed out harmful depictions of gender-norms and stereotypes
- V. Conduct gender equality classes in schools. Conduct mandatory gender training and training on managing sexual harassment and abusers for all managers at public and private institutions, including educational institutions.
- VI. Carry out gender analysis of draft laws prior to their submission to the government and the parliament by experts in the field of gender analysis of legislations and ensure that every law addresses the underlying gender norms and includes a transformative component.
- VII. Ensure that every legislation, action plan, regulation, and policy has a transformative component that addresses the underlying adverse social norms which result in gender discrimination.

Key messages

Address violence against women by focusing on implementation, spreading awareness, analysing data, and forging partnerships

Countries in the sub-region have adopted laws, policies, and action plans to address gender-based violence and providing support services for survivors of violence. Despite these measures, violence against women persists. Going forward, countries need to focus on the implementation of existing laws, policies, and action plans by training justice and police personnel and health responders, spreading awareness amongst the general public to normalize the reporting of violent incidents, generating data and using it to inform policymaking, and forging partnerships with civil society, private sector and development partners to prevent gender-based violence.

In the next five years, the Republic of Korea plans to conduct surveys of violence against women such as stalking and dating violence, along with existing surveys on sexual violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment. To ensure managers respond properly to cases of sexual harassment or violence, and to prevent secondary damage, the government plans to provide compulsory education for people in management-level separately from other employees. Going forward, Mongolia aims to conduct an assessment on the implementation of current laws and regulations regarding gender-based violence, build capacity to implement newly approved laws to prevent gender-based violence and capacitate legal and crime prevention units and sector councils of the local administration on combatting violence. China aims to improve the effectiveness of legal aid for women and girls through the establishment of a public legal service system for urban and rural residents. By implementing these plans effectively and efficiently, countries in the region will be able to make palpable progress in gender equality.

Normalize women in leadership through raising awareness, providing incentives, fostering partnerships and providing institutional care support

Countries in the sub-region regard women's leadership as one of the key elements for empowering women and girls. Countries have adopted temporary special measures and affirmative actions to increase the presence of women leaders in parliaments and public administration. However, the weight of patriarchy presents an invisible barrier that prevents women from fully realizing their potential as leaders. By normalizing women in leadership, countries can tackle the adverse social norms which prevent women from being leaders in the first place.

Going forward, in the Republic of Korea, the government aims to reach 10 per cent women as high-level public servants and 20 per cent women as executives in public institutions by 2022. In Mongolia, the National Program on Gender Equality (NPGE) aims to define criteria and indicators for proposing, nominating, and running candidates for appointed political seats and public decision-making positions, and implement provisions on the basis of the quotas stipulated in the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality. Measures should be undertaken to address barriers to women's political participation such as the burden of unpaid work, the backlash against women in power due to gender norms and stereotypes, the perception of leadership as being a male domain, and provide leadership, networking, and mentoring programs.

Support women's economic empowerment by promoting women's labour force participation and ensuring adequate infrastructure for carrying out care work.

For women's economic empowerment to be a reality, labour market policies need to respond to the lived realities of women's everyday lives. Discriminatory norms and gender stereotypes hinder the fair economic participation of women in the region, be it in terms of equal pay, pay equity, recruitment, retention, or promotion. The pervasiveness of violence and harassment at workspaces, lack of social

protection, and domestic responsibilities are challenges that have to be addressed to make women's economic empowerment a reality.

Going forward, the Republic of Korea aims to continue to implement affirmative actions to enhance gender equality in employment and aims to add at least 550 childcare centres annually to support working parents. China aims to support women achieve employment or self-employment in emerging industries and accelerate the cultivation of new professional women farmers. The country also plans to continuously improve social security benefits for women, especially for women in rural areas. To tackle the gender wage gap, Mongolia aims to develop a salary payment methodology based on the principle of equal pay for equal work. By implementing these policies in an effective manner, countries will be able to transform the experience of working women and propel their empowerment.

Transform gender norms and stereotypes through laws, policies, action plans and awareness raising

Gender norms and stereotypes are all pervasive. Every action taken to promote gender equality should examine the underlying gender norms and stereotypes that create the problem and devise measures to transform these underlying power machinations. Additionally, it is necessary to build partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including community leaders and religious figures, with whose cooperation, the work on gender equality can progress faster. It is only when these gender norms and stereotypes are transformed that one can see gender equality on the horizon.

Going forward, member States in the sub-region are aiming to continue tackling gender norms and stereotypes that are being circulated by media. To tackle gender discrimination in media, the Republic of Korea plans to open an online forum where citizens can participate and report gender-discriminatory media contents. In addition, media literacy education focusing on gender equality will be provided for youth to help them suggest ideas for improvement on gender stereotypes portrayed in media. Mongolia plans to introduce gender-sensitive content in media-training curricula and conduct training sessions for media personnel. Furthermore, Mongolia plans to mainstream gender in art and cultural sector policy and implementation processes, conduct special programs to change gender stereotypes among male audiences, particularly those aged 18-35 years, and promote progressive elements of tradition and traditional practices through various trainings, campaigns, programs, and projects with the participation of men and boys. In China, the government aims to integrate the Basic State Policy of Gender Equality in all areas of the national education system, training programs for leading cadres in the party and government, and mainstream media. The government will strengthen the supervision of the cultural market and media (especially the online media), establish and improve the gender-responsive supervision mechanism in the media field, resolutely prevent the dissemination of information that disparages women, guide and supervise the media to correctly spread the concept of gender equality, and extensively disseminate the principles, position, regulations, policies, and action plans of the party and the state.