POLICYMAKERS AND GENDER EQUALITY: WHAT THEY KNOW AND HOW THEY KNOW IT

INITIAL FINDINGS
WHO IS EQUAL MEASURES 2030?

Equal Measures 2030 is a civil society and private sector led partnership that aims to connect data and evidence with advocacy and action, helping to fuel progress towards gender equality. That means making sure girls’ and women’s movements, advocates and decision makers have easy-to-use data and evidence to guide efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.
Equal Measures 2030 was formed first, because our range of cross-sector partners agree that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contain transformational promises for girls and women, and it is up to us – all of us – to ensure those promises are met. And second, because we believe that girls’ and women’s movements, advocates, and decision makers need easy-to-use data and evidence to guide their efforts to reach the SDGs by 2030 and to leave no one behind.

Millions of girls and women are currently “invisible”, preventing them from fully participating in their communities, as well as restricting their access to rights and opportunities. Their invisibility is exacerbated by incomplete, missing, or underutilized data about the barriers that girls and women face, their potential to transform societies, and about what works to improve their well-being.

The gender policy landscape is complex - it cuts across all of the 17 SDGs and impacts all aspects of a girl or a woman’s life. Policymakers face daily decisions in all areas of policy - whether health, education, justice or public finance - that have a direct implication on the rights and opportunities of girls and women and that require effective coordination across multiple ministries. In many countries, ministries devoted to gender equality issues tend to be under-resourced and marginalized from government decision-making. Globally, less than a quarter of parliamentarians are women,¹ which demonstrates the scale of the challenge.

The fact remains that, if the SDGs are to be achieved, it will be because policymakers (in the 193 countries that signed up to the goals) put in place the laws, policies and funding necessary to implement the goals on the ground.

Understanding the perspectives of policymakers on gender equality – as well as the extent to which these perspectives are grounded in data and evidence – is a crucial part of understanding where change needs to happen in order to keep us on track to reach the SDGs for girls and women by 2030.

By surveying policymakers in five countries (Colombia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, and Senegal), this research seeks to shed light on the following questions:

- How do policymakers perceive progress on gender equality in their countries?
- What most needs to change in order to improve gender equality?
- What data and evidence do they rely on to make their decisions?
- How confident are they in their understanding of the major challenges affecting girls and women in their countries?

We spoke to policymakers at many levels of government, and also to those that have an influence on policy (non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and multilateral institutions). We worked with Ipsos on the research, which was carried out by telephone and face-to-face interviews, among 109 policymakers in five Equal Measures 2030 focus countries. For more details about the approach and description of the survey samples in each country, see Annex A.

With the emerging findings of this study we aim to contribute to a better understanding of the policy space for gender equality (and the role of data and evidence within that). The interim findings from this research will contribute to debates about data-driven decision making on gender equality, and highlight the need for policymakers to have (and to use) accessible, reliable and relevant data and evidence in order to reach the SDGs by 2030.

In many ways, the findings of the research are positive: Nearly eight in ten policymakers (78%) reported knowing ‘a great deal’ or ‘a fair amount’ about the SDGs, which is a good starting point in building awareness about the ambitious targets for gender equality contained in the SDGs.

**PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

The majority of policymakers (66%) believe that their country is more equal in terms of gender now, compared to five years ago. Most of the policymakers surveyed were also able to offer concrete suggestions on what they believed were the major gender equality challenges in their country. Education was mentioned frequently, while social norms, discrimination, political representation, employment, and violence were also high on the list.

Despite a large portion of policymakers reporting progress on gender equality, there were significant differences between the men and women surveyed: while nearly eight in ten men believe that men and women in their country are more equal now than five years ago, only 55% of women agreed this was the case. More than twice the number of women than men felt the situation had not changed or had worsened (44% of women compared with 19% of men).

**PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCALE OF KEY CHALLENGES IMPACTING GIRLS AND WOMEN**

In spite of the fairly positive perceptions of progress on gender equality (particularly among men), policymakers were not at all confident in their immediate knowledge of the scale of key problems facing girls and women in their country (although they often thought they knew where to find the information).

For those policymakers who were willing to make estimates of the scale of the problem for the four issues we asked about, their estimates were wide of the mark. Across the five countries we found that:

- When asked to estimate the rate of maternal deaths in their country (the number of women dying from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth), only 6% of policymakers came within 20% of the most recently available figure.

- On the rates of early marriage for girls, just a quarter of policymakers came within 20% of the most recently available figure

The following examples from the five countries demonstrates the wide range of estimates that were received:

- Colombian policymakers’ estimates of the percentage of girls married before the age of 18 ranged from 4% to 80% (the most recently available data says 23%).

- In Kenya, when asked to estimate what percentage of parliamentary seats are held by women, the policymakers’ estimates ranged from 6% to 90% (the most recently available data says 21%).

- Indian policymakers’ estimates of the percentage of women in the labour force ranged from 20% to 70% (the most recently available data says 27%).

The wide variation in responses raises questions about whether policymakers are aware, have access to or are sufficiently guided by the relevant, current data needed to assess progress for girls and women towards the SDGs.

**PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER EQUALITY IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF POLICYMAKING**

Half of the policymakers felt that gender equality gets too little attention in policymaking in their country, with considerable variation in the views of the men and women surveyed (67% of women stated this, compared with 33% of men). One in five men felt there was too much attention to gender equality in policymaking.

Gender equality concerns are seen to be given much more importance in some policy areas than others. For example, four fifths of policymakers thought that gender equality concerns were given a “high” or “very high” priority when setting policy on education, whereas just 38% thought gender was given a “high” or “very high” priority when making decisions about public finance.
PERCEPTIONS OF DATA AND EVIDENCE ON GENDER EQUALITY IN POLICYMAKING

Policymakers surveyed said they often use government data (79%), international data, such as from the United Nations (47%) and academic or research institution data (41%). Just under half of policymakers rated government data sources as “very useful” (47%).

We hope the emerging findings from this research will contribute to debates about how we can ensure our policymakers – as well as advocates, business leaders, journalists and the general public – are equipped to engage with and better understand the facts about the lives and rights of all girls and women.

“Caring for children should also be a priority for the government, not a private problem of women.”

Policymaker in Colombia
PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY

We asked policymakers about their awareness of the SDGs – which contain ambitious commitments to achieve gender equality by 2030, including a specific gender equality goal (Goal 5) and references to gender equality throughout the SDG framework (13 out of 17 goals). Their reported awareness of the SDGs was quite high - nearly eight in ten policymakers either knew “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about the SDGs (see Figure 1), though it varied by country (see Figure 2).

Given that policymakers surveyed across all of the countries were engaged in policy at national and sub-national level (for example, state, county or district level) (see Annex A), this suggests that messages about the SDGs are reaching a range of audiences.

In Kenya, 65% of policymakers reported knowing “a great deal” about the SDGs, compared to 29% in Senegal, India (27%) and Colombia (20%).

The highest proportion of policymakers with not much or no knowledge of the SDGs was found in India (38%).

"There is [a] need for more policies to empower women and to increase their standards of living, [and] hence grow the economy."

Policymaker in Kenya

---

**PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

We asked policymakers about their awareness of the SDGs – which contain ambitious commitments to achieve gender equality by 2030, including a specific gender equality goal (Goal 5) and references to gender equality throughout the SDG framework (13 out of 17 goals). Their reported awareness of the SDGs was quite high - nearly eight in ten policymakers either knew “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about the SDGs (see Figure 1), though it varied by country (see Figure 2).

Given that policymakers surveyed across all of the countries were engaged in policy at national and sub-national level (for example, state, county or district level) (see Annex A), this suggests that messages about the SDGs are reaching a range of audiences.

In Kenya, 65% of policymakers reported knowing “a great deal” about the SDGs, compared to 29% in Senegal, India (27%) and Colombia (20%).

The highest proportion of policymakers with not much or no knowledge of the SDGs was found in India (38%).

"There is [a] need for more policies to empower women and to increase their standards of living, [and] hence grow the economy."

Policymaker in Kenya

---

**PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

We asked policymakers about their awareness of the SDGs – which contain ambitious commitments to achieve gender equality by 2030, including a specific gender equality goal (Goal 5) and references to gender equality throughout the SDG framework (13 out of 17 goals). Their reported awareness of the SDGs was quite high - nearly eight in ten policymakers either knew “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about the SDGs (see Figure 1), though it varied by country (see Figure 2).

Given that policymakers surveyed across all of the countries were engaged in policy at national and sub-national level (for example, state, county or district level) (see Annex A), this suggests that messages about the SDGs are reaching a range of audiences.

In Kenya, 65% of policymakers reported knowing “a great deal” about the SDGs, compared to 29% in Senegal, India (27%) and Colombia (20%).

The highest proportion of policymakers with not much or no knowledge of the SDGs was found in India (38%).

"There is [a] need for more policies to empower women and to increase their standards of living, [and] hence grow the economy."

Policymaker in Kenya

---

**PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

We asked policymakers about their awareness of the SDGs – which contain ambitious commitments to achieve gender equality by 2030, including a specific gender equality goal (Goal 5) and references to gender equality throughout the SDG framework (13 out of 17 goals). Their reported awareness of the SDGs was quite high - nearly eight in ten policymakers either knew “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about the SDGs (see Figure 1), though it varied by country (see Figure 2).

Given that policymakers surveyed across all of the countries were engaged in policy at national and sub-national level (for example, state, county or district level) (see Annex A), this suggests that messages about the SDGs are reaching a range of audiences.

In Kenya, 65% of policymakers reported knowing “a great deal” about the SDGs, compared to 29% in Senegal, India (27%) and Colombia (20%).

The highest proportion of policymakers with not much or no knowledge of the SDGs was found in India (38%).

"There is [a] need for more policies to empower women and to increase their standards of living, [and] hence grow the economy."

Policymaker in Kenya

---

**PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

We asked policymakers about their awareness of the SDGs – which contain ambitious commitments to achieve gender equality by 2030, including a specific gender equality goal (Goal 5) and references to gender equality throughout the SDG framework (13 out of 17 goals). Their reported awareness of the SDGs was quite high - nearly eight in ten policymakers either knew “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about the SDGs (see Figure 1), though it varied by country (see Figure 2).

Given that policymakers surveyed across all of the countries were engaged in policy at national and sub-national level (for example, state, county or district level) (see Annex A), this suggests that messages about the SDGs are reaching a range of audiences.

In Kenya, 65% of policymakers reported knowing “a great deal” about the SDGs, compared to 29% in Senegal, India (27%) and Colombia (20%).

The highest proportion of policymakers with not much or no knowledge of the SDGs was found in India (38%).

"There is [a] need for more policies to empower women and to increase their standards of living, [and] hence grow the economy."

Policymaker in Kenya

---

**PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

We asked policymakers about their awareness of the SDGs – which contain ambitious commitments to achieve gender equality by 2030, including a specific gender equality goal (Goal 5) and references to gender equality throughout the SDG framework (13 out of 17 goals). Their reported awareness of the SDGs was quite high - nearly eight in ten policymakers either knew “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about the SDGs (see Figure 1), though it varied by country (see Figure 2).

Given that policymakers surveyed across all of the countries were engaged in policy at national and sub-national level (for example, state, county or district level) (see Annex A), this suggests that messages about the SDGs are reaching a range of audiences.

In Kenya, 65% of policymakers reported knowing “a great deal” about the SDGs, compared to 29% in Senegal, India (27%) and Colombia (20%).

The highest proportion of policymakers with not much or no knowledge of the SDGs was found in India (38%).

"There is [a] need for more policies to empower women and to increase their standards of living, [and] hence grow the economy."

Policymaker in Kenya

---

**PERCEPTIONS OF PROGRESS ON GENDER EQUALITY**

We asked policymakers about their awareness of the SDGs – which contain ambitious commitments to achieve gender equality by 2030, including a specific gender equality goal (Goal 5) and references to gender equality throughout the SDG framework (13 out of 17 goals). Their reported awareness of the SDGs was quite high - nearly eight in ten policymakers either knew “a great deal” or “a fair amount” about the SDGs (see Figure 1), though it varied by country (see Figure 2).

Given that policymakers surveyed across all of the countries were engaged in policy at national and sub-national level (for example, state, county or district level) (see Annex A), this suggests that messages about the SDGs are reaching a range of audiences.

In Kenya, 65% of policymakers reported knowing “a great deal” about the SDGs, compared to 29% in Senegal, India (27%) and Colombia (20%).

The highest proportion of policymakers with not much or no knowledge of the SDGs was found in India (38%).

"There is [a] need for more policies to empower women and to increase their standards of living, [and] hence grow the economy."

Policymaker in Kenya
When asked about their perceptions of progress on gender equality, the policymakers we spoke to were fairly positive. 66% of policymakers believed that men and women in their country were more equal than five years ago (see Figure 3).

But the answers to this question varied widely by sex: While nearly eight in ten men thought that progress had been made on gender equality in the past five years, only 55% of women agreed this was the case. More than twice the number of women than men felt the situation had not changed or worsened (44% of women compared with 19% of men). (see Figure 4).

Policymakers speak out on gender equality priorities

Policymakers were also asked about what needs to be prioritized in their country in order to improve gender equality – they could answer anything, and were not constrained by multiple choice answers.

The most commonly cited priorities in relation to gender equality are summarised in Figure 5. Education was mentioned frequently, while social norms, discrimination, political representation, employment, and violence were also high on the list.

Without further analysis, it is impossible to say whether policymakers’ perceptions of the most pressing issues reflect the reality in the countries studied.

One possible explanation for the large number of references to education may relate to the central focus that education had in relation to gender equality in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (2000–2015). In the MDGs, gender equality was measured explicitly by gender parity in education (whether more boys than girls were participating in various levels of education, or vice versa).

While it is positive that policymakers were willing to offer concrete suggestions about gender equality priorities in their country, it became clear from other questions in the survey that, when it comes to estimating the scale of key gender equality challenges in their country, policymakers are largely not confident in their knowledge of the facts. We will explore this further in the next section.

This raises questions about whether policymakers are equipped with (and sufficiently use) the data and evidence they need to assess and prioritize issues relevant to the rights of girls and women.
Policymakers were also asked about what most needed to change in their country to improve gender equality – they could answer anything, and were not constrained by multiple choice questions. A sample of quotes received are as follows, and also throughout the report:

**Q**

What needs to change in order to improve gender equality?

“Create equal opportunities on education, equal opportunities for girls and boys at all grade levels”

Policymaker in Senegal

“Women need to be given a place at the table. Be it corporate, county level or whatever avenue.”

Policymaker in Kenya

“Inequality often comes up in remuneration; the men and women [don’t] earn the same salary, the women take much more responsibility [and] high risk, but what she earns is the same as the man.”

Policymaker in Indonesia

“Objectifying women – we [have to] address [this] first”

Policymaker in India

We also asked policymakers about their knowledge of key gender equality facts in their country, in part as a way to assess their awareness of the issue, to determine whether they had accurate and accessible data available to them, and to gauge how confident they were in making educated estimates about some of the major challenges facing girls and women in their country.

We asked policymakers about four key gender equality challenges in their country:

- The maternal mortality rate (the number of women dying from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth)\(^2\)
- The early marriage rate (percentage of women aged 20 – 24 who were married before 18 years of age)\(^3\)
- The percentage of women in the labour force \(^4\)
- The percentage of women represented in parliament \(^5\)

The criteria on which these four issues were selected include:

- Data were available in all countries
- The indicators are commonly used in the media and public debate
- The issues are relevant
- The issues cut across the SDGs and are all part of the global SDG measurement framework approved by United Nations Member States
- The issues cut across the life cycle of girls and women

For each of these four areas, policymakers were asked whether they: a) knew the “correct” answer (based on most recent available data) to the question; b) could not recall the answer but knew where to find the information; or c) did not know the answer and did not know where to find the information.

The levels of awareness or knowledge varied widely by issue area and by country (see Figure 6).

---

\(^2\) UNICEF global databases, 2017, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

\(^3\) UNICEF global databases, 2016, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

\(^4\) ILOSTAT database, 2016

\(^5\) Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2017
While the majority of policymakers said they would know where to access data on key issues should they need to, fewer than three in ten policymakers thought they knew the relevant figures on maternal mortality or the percentage of women that are in the labour force. And just 1 in 8 thought they knew the proportion of girls married before the age of 18. Over half of policymakers were so unsure on the issue of early marriage, they weren’t even willing to guess as to what the early marriage rates in their country might be.

“So far, education in Indonesia has not yet given equal opportunities, especially in the family. The government already supports gender equality, but in fact in the family, they still put men as priority to get higher education. Women are encouraged to achieve only till high school education or bachelor degree at the highest. On the other side, men are encouraged to go until masters or doctoral degree. Family should give the same rights for men and women.”

Policymaker in Indonesia
Policymakers were then asked to provide an estimate of the scale of each of the four gender equality challenges in their country. Some policymakers declined to make estimates on some or all of the questions.

For those policymakers who were willing to make estimates of the scale of the problem for the four gender equality challenges, their responses were often wide of the mark. The findings across the five countries were as follows:

- **Maternal mortality rate**: When asked to estimate the rate of maternal deaths in their country, only 6% of policymakers came within 20% of the most recently available figure.

- **Early marriage rate**: On the rates of early marriage for girls, just a quarter of policymakers came within 20% of the most recently available figure.

- **Share of women in the labour force**: When estimating the share of women in the labour force, 31% of policymakers came within 20% of the most recently available figure.

- **Women holding seats in parliament**: When estimating the percentage of women holding seats in parliament – the issue on which estimates were closest – half (50%) of policymakers came within 20% of the most recently available figure.

*Figure 7* shows the accuracy of estimates within 20% of the most recently available figure and estimates which are off by more than 20%.
When we move from multi-country findings to examining responses for each individual country, it is clear how widely the policymakers’ estimates varied from one another and from the “correct” answer, represented by most recently available data. Illustrative examples from four of the five countries were as follows (see also Figure 8):

- **Maternal mortality rate**: Indonesian policymakers’ estimates of the maternal mortality rate ranged from 1 to 60, when, according to the most recent data, 126 women out of 100,000 die of causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.

- **Early marriage rate**: Colombian policymakers’ estimates of the percentage of girls married before the age of 18 ranged from 4% to 80% (most recent data says 23%).

- **Share of women in the labour force**: Indian policymakers’ estimates of the percentage of women in the labour force ranged from 20% to 70% (most recent data says 27%).

- **Parliamentary seats held by women**: In Kenya, when asked to estimate what percentage of parliamentary seats are held by women, the policymakers’ estimates ranged from 6% to 90% (most recent data says 21%).

“With regards to nominating and electing, men and women [should] be on equal grounds”

Policymaker in Senegal
We asked policymakers to assess how important they thought gender issues were in policymaking in their country, both overall and within different areas of policy.

Half of the policymakers reported that gender equality is given “too little” attention in policy (see Figure 9), while 28% felt it received the “right amount” of attention and a not insubstantial 17% felt that gender equality received “too much” attention in policymaking.

Notably, we found considerable differences in the responses given by women and men (see Figure 10): Two in three women supported the statement that there is “too little attention” to gender issues in policymaking, whereas just one in three men felt the same way.

On the other hand, men (41%) were most likely to say that the policy attention given to gender issues is “about the right amount”. Men (22%) were also twice as likely as women (11%) to say that gender issues get “too much attention”.

It is clear from our research that gender equality concerns are considered much more important in some policy areas than others. For example, over eight in ten policymakers thought that gender equality concerns were a “high” or “very high” priority when setting policy on education, whereas just 38% thought gender was a “high” or “very high” priority when making decisions about public finance or public budgets. When combining response categories “high” and “very high” priority (see Figure 12) – education and health stand out as being most-often cited as priorities (81% and 67% respectively).
Turning to the data and evidence used and valued by policymakers, the research shows that policymakers were avid users of different sources of data. 97% of those interviewed used data and evidence relating to gender equality in their work.

We gave these users a list of the following types of data sources and asked how often they used data from each source:

- Government sources (local, regional or national data sources, parliamentary research, special advisers)
- Independent or academic research organizations
- Multilateral/international organizations, such as the United Nations
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) or other civil society
- The private sector/business
- Media

Policymakers said they often use government data (79%), international data, such as from the UN (47%) and academic or research institution data (41%) relating to gender equality (see Figure 13).

As well as providing an assessment of how often they used various sources of data, policymakers also reported on the usefulness of data related to gender equality. While policymakers reported using government data more often than other sources, fewer than half rated government data sources relating to gender equality as “very useful” (47%) (see Figures 14 and 15).

It appears that private sector sources of data were not used widely by the policymakers interviewed. Less than one in ten policymakers said they often use data from private sector sources.

**FIGURE 13.**
The percentage of policymakers who used a data source “often” (in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intl. orgs (e.g. UN)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ind. or Research/academic</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Equal Measures 2030  | Base = 106  | July to September 2017

**FIGURE 14.**
The percentage of policymakers rating data sources for usefulness (in percentages)

Source: Equal Measures 2030  | Base = 106  | July to September 2017
To further understand policymakers’ assessments of data and evidence relating to gender equality in their country, we asked them to evaluate different aspects of “quality” of the data: availability, timeliness, relevance, reliability, and disaggregation. Relevance and reliability received the highest scores: relevance of data was reported as “very good” by nearly a quarter of policymakers (21%) and reliability as “very good” by 17% (see Figure 16).
CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The research results presented here are emerging findings from a larger body of research, which Equal Measures 2030 will continue to analyse and interrogate. Moving forward, we will ask more questions, explore trends and commonalities, and comb through the information provided by the open-ended questions and extended interviews that were conducted with policymakers in each country. This analysis will be important for Equal Measures 2030, as our young initiative continues to evolve its model and approach. We will share the results of our analysis and findings to further the role that data and evidence can play in accelerating progress on gender equality in pursuit of the SDGs.

We hope that the emerging findings of this research will help spark conversations about progress on gender equality in the five focus countries studied, and beyond:

- Are nearly two-thirds of policymakers right in their assessment that men and women have become more equal in the past five years? If not, why not?
- Should policymakers be able to more accurately estimate the scale of key gender equality challenges in their countries?
- Could any of us get closer to the right answers? Why is it so hard to do so? Is it because of a lack of data or a limited use of the data that already exists?
- Or is it due to a limited understanding about the real challenges facing girls and women today?

It is often said that we measure what matters, and what matters gets measured. For example, national Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) worldwide consider the reproductive age to start at 15. How are we meant to understand the prevalence and consequences of pregnancy for girls under 15 if they are not being counted in national data? Perhaps policymakers would be better equipped to understand the severity and prevalence of maternal mortality in their country if they knew how many women and girls were giving birth in early adolescence every year.

Women do 2.5 times more unpaid household and care work than men. What does it say to girls and women that this work is not reflected in GDP (Gross Domestic Product) calculations, the standard indicator of a country’s economic “worth”? What does it say to girls and women that most countries have no idea how tax or public spending decisions will affect them? Or is it due to a limited understanding about the real challenges that stand in the way of achieving gender equality – whether it be structural discrimination, social norm change, gaps in educational opportunities, barriers such as gender-based violence, or cross-cutting issues like lack of legal protections or insufficient government budget allocations.

It is by building on the positive momentum behind these sentiments – and by doing it in a way that is data-driven and reflective of the lived realities of girls and women – that we will help to advance progress and ensure that the promises laid out in the SDGs result in real changes for girls and women by 2030.

We should be asking ourselves: what role should data and evidence play in helping policymakers make the right decisions to reach the SDGs for girls and women? What is preventing this from happening now, and what can we do to address it?

If, on average across the world, more than 75% of parliamentarians are men, and men (at least in the countries studied) are far more likely to think that gender equality concerns already receive too much attention in policymaking, will there be sufficient political will to drive forward transformative change for women and girls? If policymakers have little to no shared understanding of the scale of key gender equality challenges in their country, will the right issues rise to the top of the agenda?

If some areas of policymaking – especially those, like public finance, which will determine whether there are resources available to tackle any gender equality challenges – are far more gender blind than others, will the necessary investments be made to meet gender equality goals?

Despite these concerns, there are also seeds of hope contained in the research. High awareness of the SDGs provides a foundation on which to build. The quotes gathered from policymakers in response to the question, “What most needs to change for gender equality to be achieved in your country?” showed an awareness and understanding about the challenges that stand in the way of achieving gender equality – whether it be structural discrimination, social norm change, gaps in educational opportunities, barriers such as gender-based violence, or cross-cutting issues like lack of legal protections or insufficient government budget allocations.

We will share the results of our analysis and findings from a larger body of research, which Equal Measures 2030 will continue to analyse and interrogate. Moving forward, we will ask more questions, explore trends and commonalities, and comb through the information provided by the open-ended questions and extended interviews that were conducted with policymakers in each country. This analysis will be important for Equal Measures 2030, as our young initiative continues to evolve its model and approach. We will share the results of our analysis and findings to further the role that data and evidence can play in accelerating progress on gender equality in pursuit of the SDGs.

We hope that the emerging findings of this research will help spark conversations about progress on gender equality in the five focus countries studied, and beyond:

- Are nearly two-thirds of policymakers right in their assessment that men and women have become more equal in the past five years? If not, why not?
- Should policymakers be able to more accurately estimate the scale of key gender equality challenges in their countries?
- Could any of us get closer to the right answers? Why is it so hard to do so? Is it because of a lack of data or a limited use of the data that already exists?
- Or is it due to a limited understanding about the real challenges facing girls and women today?

It is often said that we measure what matters, and what matters gets measured. For example, national Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) worldwide consider the reproductive age to start at 15. How are we meant to understand the prevalence and consequences of pregnancy for girls under 15 if they are not being counted in national data? Perhaps policymakers would be better equipped to understand the severity and prevalence of maternal mortality in their country if they knew how many women and girls were giving birth in early adolescence every year.

Women do 2.5 times more unpaid household and care work than men. What does it say to girls and women that this work is not reflected in GDP (Gross Domestic Product) calculations, the standard indicator of a country’s economic “worth”? What does it say to girls and women that most countries have no idea how tax or public spending decisions will affect them? Or that it’s difficult to measure how power and resources are divided within households or that only 13% of countries dedicate a budget towards gender statistics? We should be asking ourselves: what role should data and evidence play in helping policymakers make the right decisions to reach the SDGs for girls and women? What is preventing this from happening now, and what can we do to address it?

If, on average across the world, more than 75% of parliamentarians are men, and men (at least in the countries studied) are far more likely to think that gender equality concerns already receive too much attention in policymaking, will there be sufficient political will to drive forward transformative change for women and girls? If policymakers have little to no shared understanding of the scale of key gender equality challenges in their country, will the right issues rise to the top of the agenda?

If some areas of policymaking – especially those, like public finance, which will determine whether there are resources available to tackle any gender equality challenges – are far more gender blind than others, will the necessary investments be made to meet gender equality goals?

Despite these concerns, there are also seeds of hope contained in the research. High awareness of the SDGs provides a foundation on which to build. The quotes gathered from policymakers in response to the question, “What most needs to change for gender equality to be achieved in your country?” showed an awareness and understanding about the challenges that stand in the way of achieving gender equality – whether it be structural discrimination, social norm change, gaps in educational opportunities, barriers such as gender-based violence, or cross-cutting issues like lack of legal protections or insufficient government budget allocations.

It is by building on the positive momentum behind these sentiments – and by doing it in a way that is data-driven and reflective of the lived realities of girls and women – that we will help to advance progress and ensure that the promises laid out in the SDGs result in real changes for girls and women by 2030.
COUNTRY PROFILE: COLOMBIA

**FIGURE A.**
Policymakers, assessment of progress on gender equality in the last five years (in percentages)

- More equal: 55
- Less equal: 10
- The same: 35
- Don't know/no answer: 0

Source: Equal Measures 2030  
Base = 20  
July to September 2017

**FIGURE B.**
Perceptions of policymakers on attention given to gender equality in policy (in percentages)

- Too much attention: 0
- Too little attention: 90
- About the right amount: 5
- Don't know/no answer: 5

Source: Equal Measures 2030  
Base = 20  
July to September 2017

**FIGURE C.**
Range of estimates on early marriage

Source: Equal Measures 2030  
Base = 14  
July to September 2017

**FIGURE D.**
Frequency of use and assessment of usefulness by data source (%)

- Government: 95
- Research: 80
- International: 85
- NGO: 40
- Private: 5

Source: Equal Measures 2030  
Base = 20  
July to September 2017
COUNTRY PROFILE: INDIA

FIGURE A. Policymakers, assessment of progress on gender equality in the last five years (in percentages)

- More equal: 65%
- Less equal: 4%
- The same: 31%
- Don’t know/no answer: 0%

Source: Equal Measures 2030
Base = 26
July to September 2017

FIGURE B. Perceptions of policymakers on attention given to gender equality in policy (in percentages)

- Too much attention: 12%
- Too little attention: 46%
- About the right amount: 35%
- Don’t know/no answer: 8%

Source: Equal Measures 2030
Base = 26
July to September 2017

FIGURE C. Range of estimates on share of women in the labour force

Actual value = 28%

Source: Equal Measures 2030
Base = 21
July to September 2017

FIGURE D. Frequency of use and assessment of usefulness by data source (%)

- Government: 80% (Very useful)
- Research: 54% (Very useful)
- International: 31% (Very useful)
- NGO: 31% (Very useful)
- Private: 15% (Most recent available data)
- Media: 20% (Most recent available data)

Source: Equal Measures 2030
Base = 26
July to September 2017
COUNTRY PROFILE: INDONESIA

FIGURE A. Policymakers, assessment of progress on gender equality in the last five years (in percentages)

Source: Equal Measures 2030
Base = 22
July to September 2017

FIGURE B. Perceptions of policymakers on attention given to gender equality in policy (in percentages)

Source: Equal Measures 2030
Base = 22
July to September 2017

FIGURE C. Range of estimates on maternal mortality rate

Source: Equal Measures 2030 | Base = 9 | July to September 2017

FIGURE D. Frequency of use and assessment of usefulness by data source (%)

Source: Equal Measures 2030 | Base = 22 | July to September 2017
COUNTRY PROFILE: KENYA

**FIGURE A.**
Policymakers, assessment of progress on gender equality in the last five years (in percentages)

- More equal: 80%
- Less equal: 5%
- The same: 15%

Source: Equal Measures 2030
Base = 20
July to September 2017

**FIGURE B.**
Perceptions of policymakers on attention given to gender equality in policy (in percentages)

- Too much attention: 10%
- Too little attention: 70%
- About the right amount: 20%

Source: Equal Measures 2030
Base = 20
July to September 2017

**FIGURE C.**
Range of estimates on share of women in parliament

- Actual value = 21%

Source: Equal Measures 2030 | Base = 13 | July to September 2017

**FIGURE D.**
Frequency of use and assessment of usefulness by data source (%)

- Government: 76%
- Research: 80%
- International: 65%
- NGO: 75%
- Private: 5%
- Media: 25%

Source: Equal Measures 2030 | Base = 20 | July to September 2017

Answers within +/- 20%  Most recent available data

Very useful

Often used
COUNTRY PROFILE: SENEGAL

FIGURE A.
Policymakers, assessment of progress on gender equality in the last five years (in percentages)

- More equal: 81
- Less equal: 10
- The same: 10

Source: Equal Measures 2030  
Base = 21  
July to September 2017

FIGURE B.
Perceptions of policymakers on attention given to gender equality in policy (in percentages)

- Too much attention: 48
- Too little attention: 19
- About the right amount: 33

Source: Equal Measures 2030  
Base = 21  
July to September 2017

FIGURE C.
Frequency of use and assessment of usefulness by data source (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Often used</th>
<th>Very useful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>na</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Equal Measures 2030 | Base = 21 | July to September 2017
ANNEX A. METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

For the purposes of this study, policymakers were defined as individuals who, by virtue of their institutional role, are in a position to directly influence the policymaking process.

**These include:**
- Members of central government
- Members of parliament
- Representatives of local- or state-level administration and representative bodies
- Senior civil servants — i.e., assistant director and above in ministries (or corresponding institution);
- ‘Key influencers’ — i.e., individuals who are, as a result of their institutional role or prestige, in a position to shape policy (e.g., executives of independent statutory bodies, such as human rights commissions, heads of business associations, media associations, trade unions)

Ipsos country-based staff and partners conducted the survey between 21 July 2017 and 6 September 2017 through telephone and face-to-face interviews. This period coincided with parliamentary elections in both Kenya and Senegal, which was not felt to have implications on the outcomes of the survey.

### Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Colombia</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Senegal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Which of the following age groups do you belong to?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Colombia</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Senegal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 50 years</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+ years</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What is your professional affiliation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Colombia</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Senegal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-government</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Which of the following best describes the geographical focus of your work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Colombia</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Senegal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2017, Equal Measures 2030 - an independent civil society and private sector-led partnership - was established in order to connect data and evidence with advocacy and action as a means to drive gender equality and reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

Equal Measures 2030 envisions a world where no girl or woman is invisible. We work collaboratively and innovatively with a wide range of stakeholders who are committed to achieving the deep transformation needed for gender equality. We are independent, transparent, participatory, inclusive and agile.

**OUR VISION:**
A world where gender equality is achieved, and every girl and woman counts and is counted.

**OUR MISSION:**
We fuel progress towards gender equality by making sure girls’ and women’s movements, advocates and decision makers have easy-to-use data and evidence to guide efforts to reach the SDGs by 2030 and leave no one behind.

**OBJECTIVES:**
**DATA AND ANALYSIS:** Ensuring relevant, timely, and disaggregated data and evidence that measures progress towards the SDGs for girls and women (and reflects their lived realities) is available, accessible and used

**NATIONAL-LEVEL INFLUENCING:** Supporting girls’ and women’s movements and advocates to undertake coordinated, data-driven advocacy to influencing their governments to achieve the SDGs

**GLOBAL AND REGIONAL INFLUENCING:** Harnessing global and regional actors across sectors to utilise gender data to build political will and influence the policy agendas of national governments to achieve the SDGs for girls and women
Asia-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW), a regional non-profit women’s organization based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, strives to enable women to be equal citizens in all aspects of their life by ensuring their sexual and reproductive health and rights are achieved.

Data2X is a collaborative technical and advocacy platform, housed at the United Nations Foundation and dedicated to improving the quality, availability and use of gender data in order to make a practical difference in the lives of women and girls. Data2X works to close gender data gaps, promote expanded and unbiased gender data collection, and use gender data to improve policies, strategies and decision-making in support of gender equality.

The African Women’s Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) is a regional, membership-based NGO set up in 1988 to share information, experiences, ideas and strategies among African women’s NGOs to strengthen the capacity of women to participate effectively in the development of our continent. This is done through advocacy, capacity building, communication and networking.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is committed to removing barriers so women and girls can thrive and to working with partners toward a world where every person has the opportunity to live a healthy, productive life. The work of Equal Measures 2030 is supported in part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Foundation staff also participate in the partnership, where appropriate.

International Women’s Health Coalition (IWHC) advances the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and young people, particularly adolescent girls, in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. IWHC furthers this agenda by supporting and strengthening leaders and organizations working at the community, national, regional and global levels, and by advocating for international and U.S. policies, programs and funding.

KPMG International brings extensive cross-industry expertise in responding to today’s challenges and delivering bold solutions to meet the Global Goals. KPMG has a deep appreciation for the transformative impact of empowering women and girls. The company is engaged across the public and private sector in implementing solutions and working in partnerships that seek to create a more prosperous, resilient and inclusive world.

ONE Campaign is an organization of more than 7 million people around the world taking action to end extreme poverty and preventable disease, and tackle gender inequality. ONE’s ‘Poverty is Sexist’ campaign aims to influence leaders to adopt the key policies and decisions that place girls and women at the heart of the global development agenda.

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organization that advances children’s rights and equality for girls. Striving for a just world, the organization works together with children, young people, supporters and partners to deliver significant change for girls and boys, putting a special emphasis on gender equality.

Women Deliver believes that when the world invests in girls and women, everybody wins. As a leading global advocate for girls’ and women’s health, rights and well-being, Women Deliver brings together diverse voices and interests to drive progress, particularly in maternal, sexual and reproductive health and rights. It builds capacity, shares solutions and forges partnerships, together creating coalitions, communication and action that spark political commitment and investment in girls and women.