

world development report

2012



GENDER EQUALITY *AND* DEVELOPMENT



Main messages
December, 2011



THE WORLD BANK

EQUAL?

Equal?

In the last 20 years, university enrollments for women grew 7-fold ... and in 2009 women are 51% of college students...

.... and yet 35 million girls are still out of school

Equal?

In the last 30 years, 552 million joined the labor force and today, 4 out of 10 workers globally are women

Equal?

In the last 30 years, 552 million joined the labor force and today, 4 out of 10 workers globally are women

... And yet, on average, for every dollar a man makes, a woman earns 80 cents

Equal?

All but 6 countries have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

... but only 19% of all parliamentarians in the world are women.

What does the WDR do?

The Report asks 3 questions:

(1) Do these inequalities matter?

(2) Why do they persist?

(3) What do we do to eliminate them?



(1) Why should we care?

Is the right thing to do...

... is the smart thing to do

Inequality has a cost

- **economic costs**

... equalizing access to inputs such as land and fertilizers would increase agricultural output by **2-4%**

... eliminating employment segregation would increase labor productivity by as much as **3-25%**



Inequality has a cost

- **shortchanges the next generation**

... women's control of household earnings changes spending in favor of children

... educated women invest more in children

... witnesses of violence tend to become abusers



Inequality has a cost

- **and leads to suboptimal institutions and policies**

... In India, women in political office increased public investments in water

... In the US, voting rights from women reduced infant mortality by **8-15%**



...and the cost is growing

... these problems **do not go away with growth**

... and **costs will grow bigger in a globalized world**



(2) Why do gaps persist?

Underlying causes of gender inequality

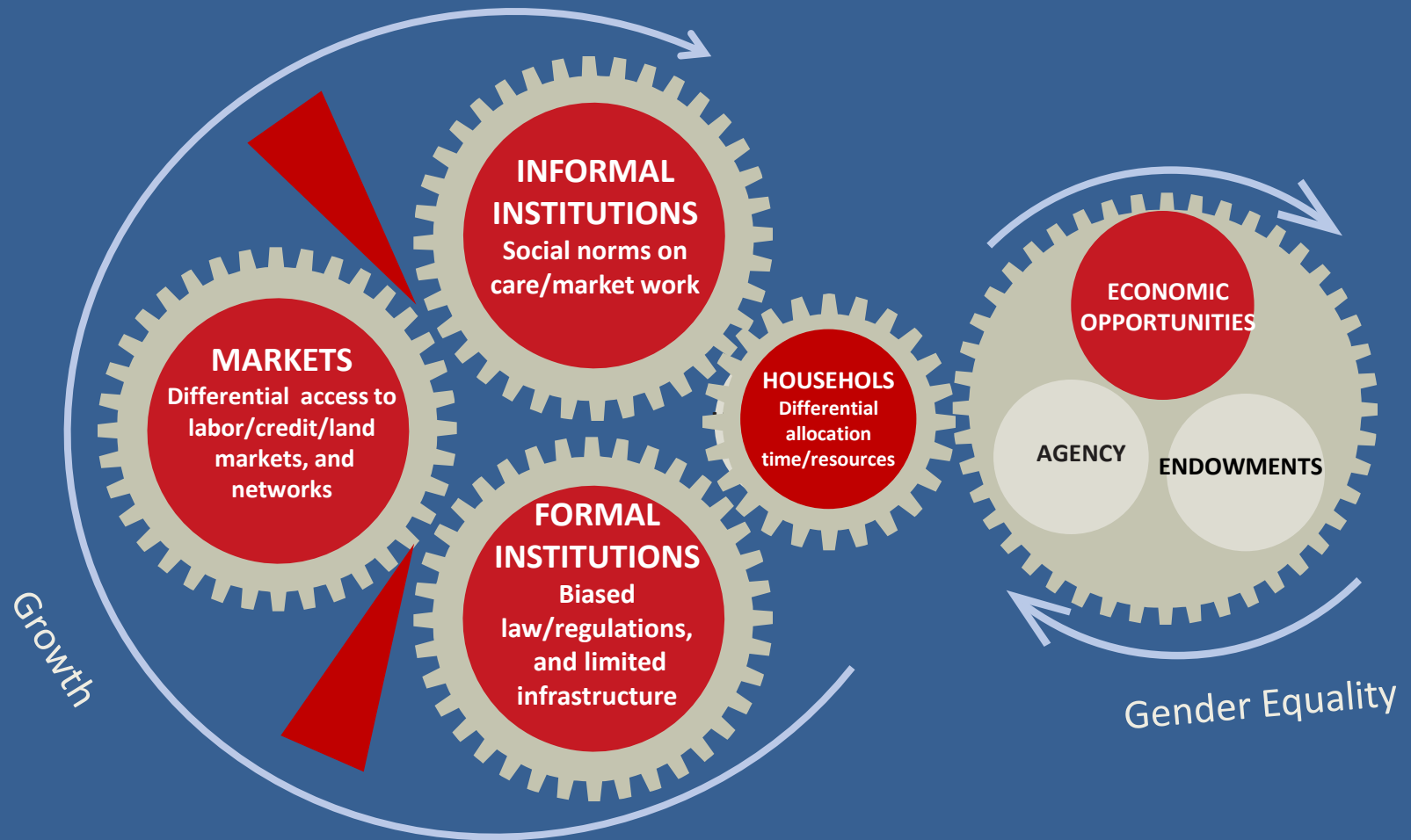
Gender outcomes as product of interaction between households, markets and institutions (formal and informal)

Where there has been progress, such as education, it is because growth, markets and institutions have all worked to close gender gaps

But...markets and institutions can sometimes work against gender equality, stalling progress-in ways that are often mutually reinforcing

- Single constrain: Maternal health
- Multiple constrains: Access to economic opportunities

No Progress: Economic Opportunities



(3) What do we do to eliminate these gaps?



- ✓ Focus on gaps that do not disappear with growth
 - Gender gaps in human endowments
 - Earnings and productivity gaps
 - Gender differences in voice and agency
 - The reproduction of gender inequality over time
- ✓ Target determinants of gender inequality

Expanding access to economic opportunities (I)

Alleviating time constraints requires:

- **Infrastructure** improvements (water, electricity, transport) and new (ICT) technology
- Affordable **child care** (subsidies, public provision)

Expanding access to economic opportunities (II)

Increasing access to land and credit requires:

- Legal reforms where women's property rights are restricted
- Expansion of access to formal credit (beyond microfinance), combined with training



Expanding access to economic opportunities (III)

Addressing market failures and institutional constraints:

- Reducing discrimination/poor information
- Correcting gender biases in service delivery
- Reforming labor laws that treat men/women differently



Shrinking gender gaps in voice and agency (I)

Increasing social and political participation requires:

- Increasing education, training and skill development
- Changing beliefs about leadership
- Strengthening social movements – and other ways of exercising (social) voice



How to effectively enable sustainable gender reform?

Reforms are most likely to succeed if interests of influential groups can be aligned

- Essential to build coalitions that mobilize around the reforms
- Women's groups can be a powerful part of these coalitions
- But also need to involve men

How to effectively enable sustainable gender reform?

- **Private sector** –big and small- can help build a compelling case for gender equality
 - Attracting and retaining talent
 - Diversity for better decision making
 - Women as customers and employees
 - Gender equality as good for corporate image and bottom line
- Shocks and exogenous change can open “**windows of opportunity**”
- There are **multiple paths** to reform
 - Incremental vs. transformative

Some final thoughts

- **Political will** at domestic level key to reform
 - Complementary role of international development community (financing, experimentation and learning, partnerships)
- Need for **better data and knowledge**
 - More and better data (especially about intrahousehold dynamics)
 - More experimentation and evaluation of policies (what works and what does not)
- **Economic and social policy** as element of change
 - But more structural **social change** also needed

A woman with dark hair and a bindi on her forehead, wearing a blue top, holds a large, rectangular sign made of cardboard. The sign has the word "EQUAL!" written on it in large, bold, black, hand-drawn capital letters. She is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a busy outdoor area, possibly a market or a public square, with several people walking around. There are cars parked or moving in the background, including a light blue car. A large umbrella is visible on the right side of the frame. The overall scene suggests a public demonstration or protest for equality.

EQUAL!