

Date of Session: February 19, 2019

Title of Session: Mixed Signals in Gender Indices

Session Description: *This session will provide a review of the ever-increasing array of gender indices, focusing on defining their boundaries, their value for cross-country analysis, and the limitation they present for understanding the systemic barriers women face towards fuller economic participation. Through a facilitated case exercise, participants will explore the nuances of using indices to understand context and impact.*

Speakers:

- Anna Rose Miller, Mastercard Foundation

Session Objectives:

The objective of this session is to provide a review of the many gender indices available presently and give the audience tools to navigate these many options using a gender lens.

Lead Discussants' Remarks:

In their work, Mastercard Foundation realized that all of their country teams were using different gender indices, so started taking these and mapping them out.

Gender indices are single numbers used to represent gender equality in a given country. Some measure status of women, whereas others measure inequality between men and women. Most use many proxy measures, especially for empowerment/agency. Indices often rely on the same datasets but use different indicators and weightings.

There are at least 18 different country-level gender indices, though many of these are one-off and are not repeated. Five common indices: GDI, GII, SIGI, GGGI, WWI (see "Resources" section for full names). Each index includes different mix of indicators from different domains (e.g. health, income, education, legal rights, etc). There are some significant differences in the rankings of certain countries (such as Mexico and Rwanda) depending on which index you use

Proposed best practices in using indices:

- Use more than one index
- Try using a comparison country across indices
- Make sure you understand the underlying indicators used to calculate each index
- Don't overestimate the usefulness of the ranking alone, and compare regional rankings as well as global
- The narrower the scope of the index, the more useful it will be
- Look for qualitative data to round out your understanding of a country's index score

Q&A Overview:

- What is the value of country-level indices, rather than project-level?
 - Provides useful information for targeting when working across countries. Helps determine where to use resources around different topics.
- How do we use project-level and country-level data together?
 - Can use the country-level for benchmarking, or creating threshold standards for a portfolio
- What would be useful?
 - A portal for comparing the indices, as presented here, would be quite useful
 - Also include a compilation of different gender lens investing measurement tools
- Could projects contribute to indices by supplying more/better data into an index?
 - Mastercard is talking with statistics ministries in the countries where they work. Want to strengthen statistics capacities within countries.
 - Perhaps we could have organizations represent one another when they are working with statistical offices more directly.
- Indices need to be more dynamic to measure what they want to measure. Things like PPI change their metrics every few years to be sure they are measuring properly
- Also need indices that operate at the subnational level
- JPAL has a guide of 130 evaluations and standard indicators for each, so that may be helpful for more specific measurement
- Indices can provide incentives for governments to improve
- Could use these as part of the push for governments to do more against Gender Equality SDG
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Key Takeaways:

1. Use more than one index
2. Try using a comparison country across indices
3. Make sure you understand the underlying indicators used to calculate each index
4. Don't overestimate the usefulness of the ranking alone, and compare regional rankings as well as global
5. The narrower the scope of the index, the more useful it will be
6. Look for qualitative data to round out your understanding of a country's index scores

Links/Resources mentioned or discussed during session:

- [GDI \(Gender Related Development Index\), UNDP](#)
- [GII \(Gender Inequality Index\), UNDP](#)
- [SIGI \(Social Institutions and Gender Index\), OECD](#)

- [GGGI \(Global Gender Gap Index\), World Economic Forum](#)
- [WWEI \(Women's Workplace Equality Index\), CFR](#)