

Conclusion

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CHAPTER 22

Conclusion

Maty Konte and Nyasha Tirivayi

The journey towards gender equality and the empowerment of women is a centrepiece of the human development agenda in Africa and the global development agenda. This is reflected by both the commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls directly espoused by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 and indirectly by many other SDG targets. Likewise, the African Union's Agenda 2063 emphasises equal gender access to resources and opportunities across its seven aspirations. Research on gender equality and women empowerment is therefore crucial for informing gender-responsive policymaking and for monitoring the attainment of the SDGs. It is in this spirit that the book's chapters have contributed to the research agenda, which is to investigate some of the pertinent issues related to the empowerment of women and girls in Africa. The book's contributors have addressed a number of issues targeted in the new global development agenda, including climate change and gender, women's land ownership and agricultural productivity, maternal health and education, discrimination in the labour market and informal work, bargaining power and decision-making, and women's political empowerment. Cross-cutting issues pertaining to harmful practices that

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may hinder the progress towards gender equality and women empowerment were addressed across these topics.

I SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO SDG 5

Part II on climate change and gender contained three chapters on the relationship between climate and gender. First, Archibong explored the effects of climate-induced diseases on the gender gap in human capital investment and especially child marriage, which has been identified as a harmful practice by Target 5.3. The author found that income effects from the 1986 meningitis outbreak (due to climate change) in Niger resulted in the early marriage of girls in exchange for a bride price. Second, Mbaye analysed the relationship between weather shocks and women empowerment. The study discussed weather-induced income shocks to domestic violence, early marriage, and fertility decisions. These issues are addressed by Targets 5.3 and 5.6, respectively. In the last chapter, Schwerhoff and Konte reviewed the literature on women's vulnerability to climate change. They found that gender differences in vulnerability to climate change can be explained by women's limited access to resources and several types of cultural restrictions that limit women's capacity to react to environmental change. This chapter is directly linked to Targets 5.1, 5.A, and 5.C, which respectively seek to tackle gender discrimination, create reforms that give women access to natural resources, and ensure the adoption of sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of women empowerment.

Part III investigated the relationship between land entitlement rights and agriculture. Chapter 5 by Mwesigye, Guloba, and Barungi examined the effects of inequalities in access to land ownership on productivity in Uganda, whereas Chap. 6 by Melesse and Awel focused on this issue in Ethiopia and Tanzania. The former chapter found that, in Uganda, granting female land rights enhances productivity, but ownership rights are more critical than use rights. The latter chapter showed that land tenure significantly and positively affects female-headed households. These two chapters provide insights on Target 5.A, which promotes reforms that give women equal rights to economic and natural resources, particularly access to ownership and control over land. While these chapters contained studies conducted in East Africa, the relationship between land ownership and women empowerment affects many African countries. Hence, it is important to further investigate this relationship in other African countries.

Part IV contained four chapters on maternal health and education. In Chap. 7, Sidze, Mutua, and Donfouet found that a significant number of poor pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries with high maternal mortality still lack access to quality maternal health services because of poor financing strategies. This finding is relevant to Target 3.8, which promotes universal health coverage and financial risk protection and access to quality essential healthcare services. The importance of reproductive health rights is demonstrated by the manner in which Target 5.6 intersects with Targets 5.3 and 3.7. Tirivayi's study of barriers and facilitators of contraceptive use in countries in SSA in Chap. 8 exemplifies this intersection with findings that own and partner education, visits to health facilities, urban area living, and media outlets are facilitators of modern contraceptive use among married adolescent girls. In Chap. 9, Koissy-Kpein conducted a literature review on gender inequalities in education. The chapter points to Target 5.3 because the latter states that damaging traditions and practices that are faced by women and girls, such as female genital mutilation and child marriage, continue to affect girls' education. The findings in this chapter are also related to Target 5.1, which aims for the end of all forms of gender discrimination; Target 5.2, which aims to combat violence against women; Target 5.3, which aims to eliminate child marriage; and Target 5.3, which aims to end female genital mutilation/cutting. In Chap. 10, Daffé and Diallo analysed gender disparities in information and communication technology (ICT) in Senegal. They found that illiteracy, computer illiteracy, language barriers, and poverty contributed to women's inability to use ICT equipment, even when it was available in the household. The findings in this chapter uniquely identify with SDG 5.B, which aims to enhance the use of ICT to empower women.

In Part V, the authors discussed gender inequality in labour market participation and in unpaid care work in Africa. In Chap. 11, Ntuli and Kwenda critically reviewed the literature on gender gaps in employment in SSA. Evidence from the literature showed that patterns and correlates of gender wage gaps in SSA are similar across countries. Additionally, they found that women in Southern Africa and East Africa suffer more gender wage discrimination. Next, in Chap. 12, Fotso, Somefun, and Odimegwu investigated the effect of child illness or disability on adult employment in South Africa. They found that a child's serious illness or disability increases the odds of the father working and reduces the odds of the mother working. In Chap. 13, Baldé used empirical evidence to analyse the determinants of unpaid care work inequality faced by women in Senegal. The

results indicated that women involved in unpaid activities are less likely to be formally employed. Last, in Chap. 14, Pickbourn used a field study from Ghana to explore the links between rural–urban informal employment and women empowerment. The chapter emphasised that the relationship between rural-urban migration and women empowerment is complex. That is, neoliberal economic policies in Africa have failed to address employment issues in rural areas; as a result, African women are increasingly participating in migration flows. Although nonagricultural economic activities have provided women with higher earnings, permanent migration does not offer upward mobility for many of these women. These four studies provide insights on Targets 5.1 and 5.4, which respectively aim to reduce gender discrimination and time spent on unpaid domestic care work.

Part VI consisted of three empirical chapters that analysed the relationship between different measures of women empowerment and household well-being. Chapter 15 by Chisadza, Yitbarek, and Nicholls investigated the relationship between women empowerment and child obesity in Comoros, Malawi, and Mozambique. The study did not find a significant relationship in Malawi. However, it did find that mothers with no education were less likely to have obese children in Comoros, whereas illiterate women in Mozambique were likely to have obese children. In Chap. 16, Nanziri examined the financial inclusion of women in Zambia and found that fewer women use formal financial services compared to men. The study also showed that financially included female-headed households significantly enjoy a better quality of life. In Chap. 17, Kponou complemented the above studies by empirically analysing the issue of women’s bargaining power using nationally representative household data from Benin, Mali, and Togo. The results point to an increase in household well-being when women have decision-making power in household expenses. In sum, the evidence in this part provides insights on Target 5.1, which promotes the ending of discrimination against women and girls, and Target 5.4, which promotes shared responsibility within households, thus allowing women the opportunity to seek employment.

Part VII contributed to the literature on women in politics and societies. In Chap. 18, Konte conducted a multicountry analysis to show that political empowerment of women enhances girls’ educational attainment, reduces fertility rates and child and infant mortality rates, and decreases the incidence of early marriage. This study is linked to Target 5.5, which promotes women’s participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, public, and economic spheres. It also provides

insights on Targets 5.3 (early marriage) and 5.6 (access to sexual and reproductive rights). Chapter 19 by Maloiy adopted a feminist methodology to explore 18 Kenyan female political leaders' experiences. Results from the study showed that family background and personal traits were enabling factors of female political leadership. In Chap. 20, Merkle and Wong investigated the issue of gender and corruption and found strong indications that patriarchal structures and acceptance of female political leadership can be linked to acceptance of corruption. Both Chaps. 19 and 20 contributed insights to Target 5.5, which seeks to ensure women's full and effective participation in all levels of political, economic, and public life. Finally, Moreno Ruiz in Chap. 21 adopted an intersectional gender perspective to identify trends that depoliticise and technocratise gender narratives in the wake of identity politics and religious interpretations of gender injustices. The chapter shows how these ideologies have an impact on women's reproductive rights, economic and education empowerment, early marriage, female genital mutilation, employment, and gender-based violence, among other things. These issues are universally congruent with Targets 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6. Although the SDGs provide a specific direction to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (SDG 5), achieving this goal requires the attainment of the other SDGs. Therefore, some of the findings in this book may have implications for the other SDGs.

2 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OTHER SDGs

SDG 1 can be linked to findings in Chaps. 4, 5, 15, and 17. More specifically, Target 1.4 seeks to ensure that all men and women, and in particular, the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology, and financial services, including microfinance. Findings in the first two chapters on land ownership among women and agriculture productivity and, in Chap. 16, on women's financial inclusion and quality of life have policy implications that relate to this target. Moreover, Target 1.B aims to create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional, and international levels based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies to promote accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions. Chapter 18 has shown that women political empowerment may help in reaching this target.

Policymakers interested in achieving SDG 2 may find some recommendations in the findings of Part III on female land ownership and agriculture and of Chap. 15 in Part VI on women empowerment and obese children. Part III has direct implications for Target 2.3, which seeks to double agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale farmers to alleviate poverty. Target 2.2, which intends to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030, can be associated with the findings in Chap. 15, which show a negative relationship between mother empowerment and obesity in Comoros, Malawi, and Mozambique.

This book has also provided some lessons for people who are interested in SDG 3. Chapter 7 in Part IV has implications for several targets, including Target 3.1, which seeks to reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births; Target 3.2, which aims to end preventable deaths of newborns; and finally, Target 3.8, which aims to achieve universal health coverage. Furthermore, Chap. 8 in Part IV on barriers to and facilitators of contraception use among married adolescent girls provided some lessons for Target 3.7 on universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including family planning.

Part IV of the book also includes chapters on education and ICT that are relevant for SDG 4 on equality of education and for its different targets that emphasise the fundamentality of equal access to education for everyone at all levels. For instance, Chap. 9 by Koissy-Kpein aligns with Targets 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, and 4.B, while Chap. 10 by Daffe and Diallo calls for women's policies in the implementation of Target 4.4 (and Indicator 4.4.1), which promotes the acquisition of technical skills such as ICT skills, and Targets 4.B and 9.C (SDG 9), which emphasise the importance of ICT.

The research in Part V addressed the challenges and barriers faced by women in the labour market and the issue of unpaid care work. Therefore, it provided information that can be used by scholars and policymakers who are interested in further research and/or in the implementation of policies related to SDG 8. For instance, Chaps. 11 and 13 concluded with policy recommendations aligned with Target 8.5 that aims for the achievement of full and productive employment and decent work regardless of gender, age, and physical condition, and equal pay for work. These chapters focused on the labour market of women in Africa and tackled the gender dimension in Target 8.5. Furthermore, Chap. 14 focused on the employment and working conditions of rural-urban migrant women and made some recommendations that can be linked to Target 8.8, which

seeks to protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including women migrants. More relevant policy information for SDG 8 can be found in Chap. 16 in Part VI on women's financial inclusion and quality of life and can be linked to Target 8.10, which highlights the importance of strengthening the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance, and financial services for all.

SDG 10 includes a number of targets, for which some of the findings in this book may serve as policy guidance. Target 10.2 promotes the empowerment and economic, social, and political inclusion of all the segments of the population regardless of characteristics such as gender. In Part VI, Chap. 16, Nanziri noted that financially included female-headed households enjoy a significantly better quality of life than their financially excluded female counterparts. There are obstacles to women's full participation in African society, and the results and conclusions across the chapters call for women's economic, social, and political empowerment in Africa. Further, Target 10.4 advances some solutions for inclusion by seeking the adoption of policies, especially fiscal, wage, and social protection policies. The findings in Part IV provide some recommendations that are related to these solutions.

Part II of the book includes chapters on climate change addressing questions that have major implications for SDG 13 on climate action. In line with Target 13.1 (strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters), Chap. 3 posits that understanding whether adverse shocks have gender-differentiated effects is crucial for building women's resilience. Chapter 4 recommends ways in which women can be positive agents of change in climate change adaptation strategies. This is in line with a number of targets in SDG 13, including Target 13.B, which seeks to promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in the least developed countries and in Small Island Developing States by focusing on women, youths, local and marginalised communities, and so on.

Target 16.7 of SDG 16 seeks to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels. The findings in Chaps. 18 and 19 in Part VII underscore the rationale behind Target 16.7. Although Maloiy reported in Chap. 19 that family background is a major obstacle to achieving full empowerment and participation, empowering women and promoting their full participation in decision-making, as indicated by Konte in Chap. 18, has a multiplier effect on economic

development, women's and children's health, education, and so on. This can further lead to a reduction in corruption, which is a major obstacle to economic development and is deeply rooted in patriarchal structures (see Chap. 20).

Overall, the book's findings also confirm the cross-cutting nature of SDG 5. The twin aims of achieving gender equality and empowering women have a multiplier effect based on their links to several other goals in the SDGs. There is a dimension of gender to every development endeavour. Achieving SDG 5 is therefore a precondition and, in some cases, a contributing factor to attaining Target 1.B of Goal 1; Targets 2.2 and 2.3 of Goal 2; Targets 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.7, and 3.8 of Goal 3; and Targets 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.7, and 4.B of Goal 4. Other targets include Targets 8.5 and 8.7 of Goal 8; Targets 10.2 and 10.4 of Goal 10; Target 12.2 of Goal 12; Targets 13.1 and 13.B of Goal 13, and Targets 16.5 and 16.7 of Goal 16.

3 MOVING FORWARD

This book's findings acknowledge that women play an important role in Africa's development. Although this conclusion is in line with evidence in the previous literature, it is interesting that the findings across the chapters have been linked to various targets among the 17 goals of the global development agenda. Because gender is a cross-cutting issue, the findings demonstrate the need for effective policies that go beyond SDG 5 to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

New research should provide more guidance on how governments can finance the global development agenda without neglecting the gender cross-cutting dimension. Research must ascertain how African governments can incorporate effective and gender-responsive budgeting in their fiscal policies that aligns with all the gender-sensitive SGD targets. Gender budgeting needs to be implemented not only across different sectors in the economy but also across subnational levels to ensure an inclusive gender budgeting policy in which nobody is left behind. Achieving successful gender budgeting strategies requires political leaders and policymakers who understand the needs of women and girls. They should also recognise the medium- and long-term development benefits that can be gained by increasing girls' and women's well-being.

Uganda and Rwanda are among the few African countries that have achieved successful gender budgeting policy implementation at the central

and local government levels (Stotsky et al. 2016). Although these countries may serve as examples for comparable African countries that seek to undertake successful practices, accurate and gender-disaggregated data need to be made consistently and constantly available across sectors and localities to track the living conditions of the most vulnerable women and girls. This data stream may help in the choice and implementation of gender budgeting and gender-responsive policies in response to SDG targets. Efforts to obtain good and representative individual and household data should be included in gender equality and women empowerment policies.

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