

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Rwanda: Unfinished Business?

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1. Introduction

This Chapter contributes to an understanding of the potential for post-conflict reconstruction policy and practice to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. It does so by discussing the progress that Rwanda has made towards achieving SDG 5: *Gender equality and the empowerment of women*.

In 1994 Rwanda was devastated by the Genocide Against the Tutsis when, in the space of 100 days, at least 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu were murdered. However, today Rwanda is not just regarded as a success story in post-conflict reconstruction, but also as having made significant progress in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. It has experienced political stability, strong economic growth and socially inclusive development under a strong central government. It has been praised for its post-conflict reconstruction and socio-economic development on the one hand¹ but criticised for authoritarianism, creating a veneer of development and papering over conflict on the other.²

Rwanda is seen as a 'beacon of hope' for gender equality in Sub-Saharan Africa and as a world leader in promoting women's political participation.³ Women played an important role in post-conflict in peacebuilding and reconstruction and played an important role in advocating for legal reforms to the inheritance and land laws to give women equal rights with men and gender-based violence legislation.⁴

¹ eg Paul Collier, *Wars, Guns and Votes* (London: Vintage books, 2010); Patricia Crisafulli and Andrea Redmond, *Rwanda Inc* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Francois Soudan, *Kagame* (New York: Enigma Books and Nouveau Monde Editions, 2015); David Booth and Frederick Golooba-Mutebi, 'Developmental Patrimonialism? The Case of Rwanda', *African Affairs*, 111.444 (2012), 379–403 Mutebi and David Booth, 'Bilateral Cooperation and Local Power Dynamics: The Case of Rwanda' (London: Overseas Development Institute, 2013); Stephan Kinzer, *A Thousand Hills: Rwanda's Rebirth and the Man Who Dreamed It* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2008).

² Elizabeth King, *From Classroom to Conflict in Rwanda* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Susan Thomson, *Whispering Truth to Power: Everyday Resistance to Reconciliation in Postgenocide Rwanda* (Wisconsin and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013); Scott Straus and Lars Waldorf, *Remaking Rwanda: State Building and Human Rights after Mass Violence* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011); Maddalena Campioni and Patrick Noack, *Rwanda Fast Forward: Social, Economic, Military and Reconciliation Prospects* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

³ Jennie E Burnet, 'Gender Balance and the Meanings of Women in Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *African Affairs*, 1007.428 (2008), 361–386; Sarah Jane Cooper-Knock, 'Rwanda: Liberation by Numbers?', *Democracy in Africa*, 2016; Thomson, *Whispering Truth to Power: Everyday Resistance to Reconciliation in Postgenocide Rwanda*; Laure Redifer and others, 'The Development Path Less Traveled' (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund, 2020)

⁴ Karolina Svobodova, 'Impact of Gender Policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Security in Rwanda', *African Security Review*, 28.2 (2019), 124–38.

Rwanda was the first country in the world to have more than 50% women parliamentarians and has a progressive legal, and policy framework. In the World Economic Forum's 2020 Gender Gap Index it was rank ninth in the world.⁵

While Rwanda has undoubtedly made more progress than other developing countries in closing the gender gap between men and women⁶, progress against targets has been uneven. It has been criticised for its instrumental view of women and for objectifying women and girls by focusing on achieving the MDG and SDG targets rather than focusing on gender transformation, the goal of SDG 5.⁷ It has also been criticised for taking a technocratic approach to development and to economising and commodifying women by focusing on activating women so that they become active in the labour market.⁸ Women it is argued, have become trapped in a situation where they have to navigate between claiming equality and conforming to traditional social norms with many women as well as men continuing to believe that women should be submissive and defer to men.⁹ There are political constraints on fighting on gender issues and a gulf between educated women living in urban areas and the majority of rural women who are engaged mainly in subsistence farming. Top-down rights-based empowerment efforts have failed to dismantle the social structures that produce and reproduce gender inequality and the subordination of women and more generally ensure that no one is left behind. It is necessary to go beyond impressive statistics and to look at the life chances and choices of Rwandan women and ask to what extent gender relations have been transformed.

2. Context and Background

2.1. International

The SDGs and especially SDG 5 are an integral part of an international Gender Regime that has evolved over the last 70 years.¹⁰ In 1948 the Universal Declaration

⁵ Roberto Crotti and others, *Global Gender Gap Report 2020* (Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2020).

⁶ Theresa Moyo and Rogers Dhlwayo, 'Achieving Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons from the Experience of Selected Countries', *Journal of Developing Societies*, 35.2 (2019), 256–81.

⁷ Pamela Abbott and Dickson Malunda, 'The Promise and the Reality: Women's Rights in Rwanda', *The African Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 24.4 (2016), 561–81; Petre Debusser and An Ansoms, 'Gender Equality in Rwanda: Public Relations or Role Transformations', *Development and Change*, 44.5 (2013), 1111–34.

⁸ Abbott and Malunda, 'The Promise and the Reality: Women's Rights in Rwanda'; Jennie E Burnet, 'Rwanda: Women's Political Representation and Its Consequences', in *The Palgrave Handbook of Women's Political Rights*, ed. by Susan Franceschet, Mona Lena Krook, and Netina Tan (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019); Debusser and Ansoms; Eric Stern, Lori Heise, and Lyndsay McLean, 'The Doing and Undoing of Male Household Decision-Making and Economic Authority in Rwanda and Its Implications for Gender Transformative Programming', *Culture, Health and Sexuality*, 20.9 (2018), 976–91; Niamh Gaynor, 'Beneath the Veneer: Decentralisation and Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Rwanda', *Third World Thematics: A Twq Journal*, 1.6 (2016).

⁹ Justine Uvuza, 'Hidden Inequalities : Rwandan Female Politicians' Experiences of Balancing Family and Political Responsibilities' (University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2014).

¹⁰ Nuket Kardam, 'The Emerging Global Gender Regime from Neoliberal and Constructivist Perspectives in International Relations', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 6.1 (2004), 85–109.

of Human Rights mandated equal rights for men and women and in 1996 the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights both mandated that men and women had equal rights to the provisions of the laws. Since the 1980s international law and agreements have set out in detail the rights of women to be equal with men; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 1979, United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women 1993, the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo 1994, the Beijing Platform for Action 1995 and the MDGs 2000, SDGs 2015. In the case of Africa, there is also the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights Regarding Rights of Women in Africa, 2003. Official Development Partners, as part of aid conditionality, also expect countries that receive aid to make progress on gender equality.¹¹ The SDGs are the *defacto* global instrument for measuring development progress, including equal rights for women with men. In addition to the standalone SDG 5 that measures progress to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, gender is mainstreamed across the SDGs; recognising that for women to achieve SDG 5 they need to achieve equality in development more broadly.

The SDGs represent the global commitment to inclusive socio-economic development, development that reduces inequalities between the Global North and South and within nations and ensuring that no one is left behind. However, they are informed by and prioritise neoliberal economic policies that privileges capital and the 'productive' economy, with household and informal spaces of reproduction, are rendered invisible. However, it is in these latter spaces where a growing range of activities that sustain human life are carried out, essentially absorbing the costs of reproducing labour for the 'productive' economy. This work is mainly the invisible work of women and girls.¹²

The language of women's rights has changed over the last 60 years from seeing women's rights as enabling women to become the same as men to recognising that that for women to be able to claim and exercise their rights that there has to be a transformation in gender relationships. However, while development agencies and practitioners say they are committed to gender mainstreaming in practice, women in development approaches remained dominant, the emphasis remains on changing women rather than gender relationship.¹³ There is a failure to locate women's subordination in gendered structures of power with the emphasis remaining on making women more like men. Gender equality is seen as a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development with economic empowerment seen as the magic bullet; women are commodified and instrumentalised with Globally dominant

¹¹ Andrea Teti and others, *Democratisation Against Democracy: How EU Foreign Policy Fails the Middle East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

¹² Colleen O'Manique and Pieter Fourie, 'Affirming Our World: Gender Justice, Social Reproduction, and the Sustainable Development Goals', *Development*, 59 (2016), 121–26 (p. 124) <<https://ideas>.

¹³ Teti and others; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "'Under Western Eyes' Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28.2 (2003), 499–535.

development institutions promoting ‘smart economics’ arguing that women’s employment is key to development in the Global South.

*Rwanda has been proactive with initiatives that substantially reduce gender gaps, emerging as a global leader in gender equality. Harnessing this potential has created visible gains for growth and in meeting development goals, has the potential to do even more for the Rwandan economy-----.*¹⁴

This taps into ideas of individual freedom and responsibility while failing to recognise the structural and normative constraints that prevent women claiming and exercising their rights.¹⁵ Women’s activation benefits economic growth, men and children but leaves gender relations untouched. Rather than empowering women and lifting constraints on their agency women’s work is intensified as they are expected to do unpaid care, domestic work and cultivating as well as earn an income. Women’s unwaged labour is seen as a private, family matter - men and boys not doing their share of domestic labour. At the same time attention is directed away from the substantive drivers of poverty and debt, including structural adjustment, tax evasion and avoidance, labour exploitation, and global financial crisis.¹⁶

Progress towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women is measured globally by indexes and a dashboard of the SDGs. Both methods for measuring progress have advantages and weaknesses and face similar difficulties. One of the problems is the availability of data to measure progress, there are frequent data gaps and gender equality, and the empowerment of women is a paradigmatic example of a wicked problem, it is systemic, ambiguous, complex, conflicted, and lacks an inherent logic of when it is solved. Furthermore, the way the problem is defined determines possible solutions, verifiable indicators are observable ways of measuring an underlying construct. However, there is no agreement as to what indicators do measure the underlying construct and if, in combination, the indicators selected comprehensively measure it. Measuring inequality once indicators are agreed is relatively unproblematic. However, measuring empowerment, women’s capacity for self-determination is more complex, it is multidimensional, there are a wide range of definitions, and it is not easy to quantify.¹⁷ Equalising opportunities for men and women is unlikely to enhance women’s capacity for self-determination, which requires a transformation in gender relations, although doing so is essential for gender equity and social justice. Furthermore, numerical indicators take no account of women’s own experiences of

¹⁴ Redifer and others, p. 69.

¹⁵ Pamela Abbott, Lillian Mutesi, and Emma Norris, ‘Gender Analysis for Sustainable Livelihoods and Participatory Governance in Rwanda’ (Kigali: Oxfam International - Rwanda, 2011; Jason Hickel, ‘The “Girl Effect”: Liberalism, Empowerment and the Contradictions of Development’, *Third World Quarterly*, 35.8 (2014).

¹⁶ Jason Hickel, *The Divide: A Brief Guide to Global Inequality and Its Solutions* (London: Windmill Books, 2017).

¹⁷ Naila Kabeer, ‘The Conditions and Consequences of Choice: Reflections on the Measurement of Women’s Empowerment’ (Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 1999).

the everyday reality of their lives. For this, we need qualitative research that enables the voices of women to be heard.

Composite indexes provide simple, singular, and eye-catching numbers that can be easily understood. However, they fail to show the multidimensionality of women's empowerment, they often combine relative and absolute achievements, do not show the impact that various dimensions of gender equality have on women from different backgrounds and they do not reflect women's lived experience. These measures are deceptively simple to understand and make measurement over time and comparison between countries easy. However, they are problematic because they average out the different aspects, combine input and output measures and, depending on what the index aims to measure and the indicators used, provide very different scores for at least some countries. Rwanda, for example, scores very well on the WEF Gender Gap Index¹⁸ being ranked ninth in the world but is ranked 91st on the 2030 Gender Index¹⁹ and 157th on the UN Gender Inequality Index.²⁰

Progress towards achieving the SDGs is measured through a dashboard of goals, indicators, and targets, 17 goals, 169 targets and 231 indicators, with 14 of the 17 goals having a total of 51 gender indicators. For SDG 5 there are nine indicators and 14 targets for measuring progress (Table 1), but the gender indicators in other targets measure dimensions of women's lives that are integral to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment. The SDGs advantage over composite indexes is that progress is measured against targets and indicators, but it retains the assumption that progress against the indicators is reducing gender inequality and the disempowerment of women.

Table 1. SDG 5: Achieve Gender Equality and the Empower of All Women and Girls Indicators and 2030 Targets

Indicator	Targets
End discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	Legal framework for gender equality and non-discrimination
Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls	% of ever-partnered women 15 years and older subjected to violence from intimate partner in the previous 12 months
	% of women 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months.
Eliminate child, early and forced marriage and genital mutilation	% of women married before 15 or 18 years
	% women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation

¹⁸ Crotti and others.

¹⁹ Equal Measures 2030 Partnership, 'The SDG Gender Index', *Gender Advocates Data Hub*, 2019 <<https://data.em2030.org/2019-sdg-gender-index/explore-the-2019-index-data/>> [accessed 28 August 2020].

²⁰ UNDP, 'Human Development Data (1990-2018)', *Human Development Reports*, 2020 <<http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>> [accessed 21 August 2020].

Value unpaid care and domestic work and promote shared responsibilities within the household and family	% of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age, and location
Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life	% of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments
	% of women in managerial positions
Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights	% of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use, and reproductive health care
	Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education
Give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property.	% of the agricultural population with ownership of secure land rights, by sex; and share of women among owners
	% of countries with legal framework guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control
Enabling technology to promote the empowerment of women	% of Individuals who own a mobile phone, by sex
Policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality	% of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment.

While the dashboard approach is more informative than single indexes in addition to the reliance numerical indicators there, remain technical problems and problems of interpretation. Working to achieve the SDGs tends to become a technocratic exercise with making progress to achieving targets focused on and the goals lost sight of. Uneven progress in meeting targets can make it difficult to measure overall progress and, in some cases, it is debatable if the indicators are the most appropriate ones. While donors argue that they are supporting countries in the Global South to achieve their own goals, they are in practice enmeshed in liberal relations of power, what Foucault called governmentality.²¹ The relations of power operate through consent and self-regulation, but the monitoring of SDGs directs the conduct of countries through these assumptions of freedom.²² Furthermore,

²¹ Michel Foucault, 'Governmentality', in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. by Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, Rabinow, P (London: Harvester, 1991).

²² Helle Malmvig, 'Free Us from Power: Governmentality, Counter-Conduct, and Simulation in European Democracy and Reform Promotion in the Arab World', *International Political Sociology*, 8 (2014), 293–310.

countries can concentrate on ‘easy’ targets’ while selectively resisting or even subverting progress to the goals.²³

2.2. National Context

Rwanda is one of the poorest countries in the world, has few natural resources, a shortage of land, degraded soil and poor farming techniques, low productivity and high underemployment.²⁴ Its vision is to create a socially inclusive, market-oriented country with private sector-led growth, a liberalised economy, and conducive to foreign investments. It is struggling to transform being ranked 110/149 on the Social Progress Index 2019.²⁵ Over 70% of the population is dependent on low productivity subsistence farming, and most farms are too small to sustain a household. Rwanda remains highly aid-dependent with three-quarters of external funding for development coming from Official Development Assistance, which makes up about 15 per cent of GNI.²⁶ Its development is fragile; poverty remains high, and the growth in decent non-farm employment slow. In recent years poverty reduction has weakened, inequalities remained high, human capital development faltered, foreign investment remaining low and non-farm employment not growing at a sufficient rate to absorb those leaving education let alone provide employment for those that are underemployed.²⁷

The Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 destroyed not only the physical infrastructure but the social fabric of the society; it divided the population and undermined interpersonal and communal trust destroying the norms and values that underlie cooperation and collective action for the common. However, it was a tipping point for gender equality. Women played an essential role in post-conflict reconstruction. They had been influential in the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) when it was in exile in Uganda.²⁸ They fought in the Civil War that preceded the Genocide and formed part of the RPF army that invaded to stop the Genocide. Women held influential positions in the transitional government and were able to advocate for women in the consultations that led to the development of the long-term development strategy adopted in 2000 and the 2003 Constitution.²⁹

Systematic rape was used as a weapon of Genocide; Tutsi women were targeted by Hutu men and raped and deliberately given HIV. It is estimated that between 250,000-500,000 women were raped with more than half contracting HIV and up to

²³ Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population. Lectures at the College de France 1977-1978*, ed. by Michel Senellart (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007).

²⁴ World Bank, ‘Rwanda: Systematic Country Diagnostic’ (Washington DC: World Bank, 2019); National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, ‘Labour Force Survey Annual Report 2018’ (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, 2018).

²⁵ Social Progress Imperative, ‘2019 Social Progress Index’, 2018
<<https://www.socialprogress.org/index/global>> [accessed 22 August 2020].

²⁶ World Bank, ‘World Development Indicators’, *Data Bank* (Washington DC: World Bank, 2020)
<<https://tinyurl.com/y28dlzng>> [accessed 3 February 2020].

²⁷ World Bank, ‘Rwanda: Systematic Country Diagnostic’.

²⁸ Swanee Hunt, *Rwandan Women Rising* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

²⁹ Elizabeth Powley, ‘Strengthening Governance: The Role of Women in Rwanda’s Transition’ (Washington, DC: Hunt Alternatives).

200,000 children born as a result of rape.³⁰ In the immediate aftermath of the Genocide, women had to take on non-traditional roles and were central to economic and social reconstruction work. In addition to women being widowed, many women were *defacto* heads of households because their husbands were in prison for committing genocide crimes, in the army or had fled to the Congo.³¹ This gave women a strong voice when discussions were held to inform the country's development vision, and Constitution and, in particular, enabled them to argue for women's inheritance rights for women's representation in decisions making positions and family-friendly policies.³² Gender equality and women's empowerment was recognised as a cross-cutting issue in the development strategy a move strongly supported by a majority of development partners.³³

Rwanda's post-conflict reconstruction has been built on a committed to prioritising unity over liberty, building unity across social divides, a nation-building project where there is only one 'truth'. Its developmental neopatrimonialism is designed to prevent another genocide by policies for inclusive socio-economic development with suppression of opposition and mechanisms to ensure that citizens remain obedient to the regime,³⁴ with the promotion of gender equality being part of this strategy.³⁵ Building social cohesion through dialogue and consensus permeates all levels of society from the national to the smallest administrative unit, the village, and includes the private and non-governmental sectors as well as the government.³⁶ However, the closing of space for civil society organisation means that there are not grassroots groups advocating for gender equality and the empowerment of women.³⁷

³⁰ Beverly Dawn Metcalfe, 'Feminism, Gender and the Role of Women's NGOs in Peacebuilding and Reconstruction', in *Post-Conflict Reconstruction*, ed. by Neil Ferguson (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010); Myriam Denov, Laura Ermian, and Meaghan C Shevell, "'You Feel Like You Belong Nowhere': Conflict -Related Sexual Violence and Social Identity in Post-Genocide Rwanda', *Genocide Studies and Prevention*, 14.1 (2020), 40–59.

³¹ Hunt; Cameron Macauley, 'Women After the Rwandan Genocide: Making the Most of Survival', *Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction*, 17.1 (2013), 1–4; Abbott and Malunda, 'The Promise and the Reality: Women's Rights in Rwanda'.

³² Jennie E Burnet, 'Establishing a Strong Political Commitment to Gender Equity: The Politics of Rwanda's Law on the Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence (2008)', in *Negotiating Gender Equity in the Global South The Politics of Domestic Violence Policy*, ed. by Sohela Nazneen, Sam Hickey, and Eleni Sifaki (Abingdon and New York: Routledge); Jennie E Burnet, 'Women's Empowerment and Cultural Change in Rwanda', in *The Impact of Gender Quotas*, ed. by Susan Franceschet, Mona Lena Krook, and Jennifer M. Piscopo (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Powley.

³³ Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 'Vision 2020' (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, 2000).

³⁴ Laura Mann and Marie E Berry, 'Understanding the Political Motivations That Shape Rwanda's Emergent Developmental State', *New Political Economy*, 21.1 (2016), 119–44; Booth and Golooba-Mutebi; Pamela Abbott, Roger Mugisha, and Guy Lodge, 'The Constant Search for Solutions through Dialogue and Consensus' (Kigali: IPAR- Rwanda, 2014).

³⁵ Marie E Berry, 'When "Bright Futures" Fade: Paradoxes of Women's Empowerment in Rwanda', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 41.11 (2015), 1–26; Burnet, 'Gender Balance and the Meanings of Women in Governance in Post-Genocide Rwanda'; An Ansoms and D Rostagno, 'Rwanda's Vision 2020 Halfway Through: What the Eye Does Not See', *African Review of Political Economy*, 39.133 (2012), 427–50.

³⁶ Pamela Abbott, Roger Mugisha, and Guy Lodge, 'The Constant Quest for Solutions through Dialogue and Consensus in Rwanda' (Kigali: Senate, Republic of Rwanda, 2014).

³⁷ Pedro Conceição and others, 'Tackling Social Norms: A Game Changer for Gender Equality' (New York, NY: UNDP, 2020).

Rwanda has deliberately set out to create ‘good citizens’ and to exercise hegemony by manufacturing social cohesion and loyalty.³⁸ Consensus is ‘manufactured’ by a range of institutions including schools, the church, mass mobilisation movements including the Women’s National Council, registered political parties, development partners and the media. Political (coercive) measures include the mandating in the Constitution of Dialogue and Consensus for resolving all differences from political decisions to disputes among members of the same household and legislation that restrict the potential for civil society advocacy and opposition political parties.³⁹ The use of these practices is supported by an appeal to historic traditions- homemade solutions based on practices that can support the rebuilding of Rwanda and its socio-economic development. In this framework, the new ‘good woman’⁴⁰ is one that has paid employment and is politically active as well as being a good wife and mother - women are expected to do it all.

3. Rwanda and SDG progress: Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

Rwanda has undoubtedly made progress in promoting gender equality: internationally agreed targets are included in Rwanda’s development strategy; discriminatory laws replaced by ones that give men and women equal rights; and an institutional structure for overseeing implementation put in place. Evaluation of the MDGs showed that Rwanda had achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education, hit its targets for improving women’s health and the number of women elected to the national parliament.⁴¹ The UN Gender Inequality Index improved between 1995 and 2015 with Rwanda scoring better than average for Sub-Saharan

³⁸ Abbott, Mugisha, and Lodge, ‘The Constant Search for Solutions through Dialogue and Consensus’; Pamela Abbott and Roger Sapsford, ‘Rwanda: Planned Reconstruction for Social Quality’, in *Handbook of Quality of Life and Sustainability*, ed. by Javier Martinez and Rhonda Phillips (Cham: Springer, 2020); Andrea Purdeková, ‘Civic Education and Social Transformation in Post-Genocide Rwanda: Forging the Perfect Development Subject’, in *Rwanda Fast Forward: Social, Economic, Military and Reconciliation Prospects*, ed. by Maddalena Campioni and Patrick Noack (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012); Thomson, *Whispering Truth to Power: Everyday Resistance to Reconciliation in Postgenocide Rwanda*; An Ansoms and Giuseppe D Cioffo, ‘The Exemplary Citizen on the Exemplary Hill: The Production of Political Subjects in Contemporary Rural Rwanda’, *Development and Change*, 47.4 (2016); King.

³⁹ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, ‘Concluding Observations on the Combined Seventh to Ninth Periodic Reports of Rwanda’ (New York, NY: United Nations, 2017).

⁴⁰ Susan Thomson, *Rwanda: From Genocide to Precarious Peace* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018); Uvuza; Burnet, ‘Rwanda: Women’s Political Representation and Its Consequences’; Baguma Abdallah, ‘Women Parliamentarians in Rwanda: Women Representatives or Representative Women? A Study of the Chamber of Deputies, the Lower House of the Rwandan Parliament’ (University of Aberdeen, 2012); Abbott and Malunda, ‘The Promise and the Reality: Women’s Rights in Rwanda’.

⁴¹ Pamela Abbott, Amie Tsinda, and others, ‘A Critical Evaluation of Rwanda’s Potential to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals for Clean Water and Sanitation’, *Journal of Water Sanitation and Hygiene for Development*, 5.1 (2015), 136–42; Pamela Abbott, Roger Sapsford, and Agnes Binagwaho, ‘Learning from Success: How Rwanda Achieved the Millennium Development Goals for Health’, *World Development*, 92 (2016), 103–16; Pamela Abbott, Roger Sapsford, and John Rwirahira, ‘Overcoming Poverty and Inequality: Rwanda’s Progress towards the MDGs’, *Development in Practice*, 25.7 (2015); Pamela Abbott, Roger Sapsford, and John Rwirahira, ‘Rwanda’s Potential to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals for Education’, *International Journal of Educational Development*, 40 (2015), 117–25.

African countries.⁴² On the World Economic Forum Gender Gap Index, it was ranked ninth in the world in 2019⁴³ and on the OECD Social Institutions and Gender Index which measures discrimination in the family, physical integrity, access to productive and financial assets, and civil liberties it is in the low discrimination category and ranks third highest in Sub-Saharan Africa.⁴⁴ On the UN Women's Empowerment Dashboard it is ranked 4th out of 36 low human development countries, but this still leaves it ranked 157th in the world. Less progress has been made in women's economic empowerment and changing discriminatory values and patriarchal ideology than in other indicators.⁴⁵

To achieve the 2030 targets for demonstrating progress towards MDG 5 is challenging for Rwanda. The SDGs are linked to the Pillars and Priorities of the National Strategy for Transformation 2017-2024.⁴⁶ Like most neoliberal development plans, it is focused on economic growth with a strong emphasis on exploiting the demographic dividend. Gender is mentioned as a cross-cutting issue but is tied to the family. There are five specific priorities for gender equality: (i) to strengthen and promote gender equality; (ii) supporting women to create business through entrepreneurship and access to finance; (iii) mainstreaming gender in employment; (iv) supporting women to make a greater contribution to district planning and prioritisation; and (v) to strengthening the prevention of and response to fighting gender-based violence (GBV). Women are expected to contribute to the economic development of Rwanda, but no account is taken of the contribution of women in the domestic sphere. The emphasis is on gender equality, making women more like men than on transforming gender relations and empowering women.

There are divided views on the progress that Rwanda has made to achieving the SDGs. The SDG progress tracker ⁴⁷ supports Rwanda's claim that gender equality 'is one of the areas in which Rwanda is globally recognised for outstanding progress'⁴⁸ with a number of the 2030 targets for SDG 5 having already been met. However, the 2020 MDG Progress Report argues that Rwanda faces significant challenges in meeting the 2030 targets for MDG 5.⁴⁹ The report on the periodic review by the CEDAW Committee raised many concerns about progress including the lack of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law, discriminatory attitudes and practices, and the plight of women in informal unions.⁵⁰

⁴² UNDP.

⁴³ Crotti and others.

⁴⁴ OECD, 'Social Institutions and Gender Index' (Paris: Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation, 2019).

⁴⁵ Conceição and others.

⁴⁶ Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, '7 Years Government Programme: National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) 2017–2024' (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, 2017).

⁴⁷ Roser Ritchie and Mispy Ortiz-Ospina, 'Gender Equality', *Measuring Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals*, 2018 <<https://sdg-tracker.org/gender-equality>> [accessed 22 August 2020].

⁴⁸ Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, '2019 Rwanda Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report' (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, 2019), p. 60.

⁴⁹ Jeffrey D Sachs and others, 'The Sustainable Development Goals and COVID-19. Sustainable Development Report 2020' (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2020).

⁵⁰ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

The targets for 2030 can be grouped into legal and policy reform, economic empowerment, political empowerment, and bodily integrity (see Table 1 above). There is no data for the target for the enhancing the use of technology to promote the empowerment of women; ownership of mobile phones as there is no gender-disaggregated data. Qualitative research suggests that women are less likely than men to have control over the use of a 'household-owned' mobile phone; it is generally seen as belonging to the male head of household. Child marriages are extremely rare, and only 0.2% of 15-19-year olds were living in an informal union in 2014⁵¹; genital mutilation is not practised.

The two legal/policy targets for 2030 are ending all discrimination against women and girls and adopting and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality. The two indicators are a legal framework for gender equality and non-discrimination and a system to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment. Over the last 20 years, Rwanda has put in place a legal framework for gender equality. The 2003 Constitution⁵² enshrines the principle of gender equality and legislation gives men and women the same inheritance rights⁵³, the same rights to own land⁵⁴, the same rights in the family⁵⁵ and there are laws prohibiting discrimination in education⁵⁶ and political parties.⁵⁷ Gender-based budgeting has been implemented since 2011.⁵⁸ However, there is no comprehensive anti-discrimination law, and some discriminatory provision still exists, for example, a lower punishment for marital rape than 'stranger' rape, and the customary practice of bride price, which commodifies women, is permitted by the Constitution.⁵⁹ Women lack knowledge of their legal rights and of access to justice with women in rural areas facing discriminatory customs, patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes and fearing to claim their rights.⁶⁰ This is compounded by poverty and poor literacy skills.

The economic empowerment target is to give women equal rights to economic resources as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property. The two indicators are secure ownership of land and a legal framework that

⁵¹ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, Ministry of Health, and ICF International, 'Demographic and Health Survey 2014/2015 - Final Report' (Rockville, Maryland: NISR, MOH, and ICF International, 2016).

⁵² Republic of Rwanda, 'Rwanda's Constitution of 2003 with Amendments through 2015' (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, 2015).

⁵³ Republic of Rwanda, *Governing Matrimonial Regimes, Donations and Successions* (Rwanda: Official Gazette no 31 of 01/08/2016, 2016).

⁵⁴ Republic of Rwanda, *Governing Land in Rwanda* (Rwanda: Official Gazette no Special of 16/06/2013, 2013).

⁵⁵ Republic of Rwanda, *Governing Persons and Families* (Rwanda: Official Gazette No 37 of 12/09/2016, 2016).

⁵⁶ Republic of Rwanda, *Organic Law Governing Organisation of Education* (Rwanda: Official Gazette n° 34 of 22/08/2011, 2011).

⁵⁷ Republic of Rwanda, *Organic Law Governing Political Organizations and Politicians* (Rwanda: Official Gazette n° Special of 12/07/2013, 2013).

⁵⁸ Republic of Rwanda, *Organic Law on State Finances and Property* (Rwandan: Official Gazette, 2013).

⁵⁹ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

⁶⁰ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

guarantees women's equal rights to ownership/control of land. This is an important indicator in Rwanda as around 70% of the population are dependent/mainly dependent on subsistence agriculture for their livelihood with women doing much of the cultivating.

The inheritance law in 1999 (amended 2016⁶¹) gives women the same rights to own and inherit property as men, and the land law in 2006 (amended 2013⁶²) gave women the same rights to own and inherit land, and for couples married under civil law to have joint ownership of the land, either party brings to the union. The land tenure regularisation process⁶³ has been completed, and men and women now have securer ownership of land. Around three-quarters of men and women own land⁶⁴ but women and men see land as 'really belonging to men' with men generally controlling what is grown and men selling any surplus produce.⁶⁵ This reinforces men's dominant position in the household and the community with women having lower bargaining power in the household, little control over household resources and not fully involved in decision making.⁶⁶

The 2030 target for political empowerment is to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic, and public life. The two indicators are percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments and local government and percentage of women in managerial positions.

Rwanda is seen as a world leader in women's role in politics being the first country in the world to have more than 50% women parliamentarians. Fifty-six per cent of parliamentarians are women with 61% of deputies and 39% of senators being women. The proportion of women deputies is what would be expected from the combination of reserved seats and party-list quotas, and there has never been a woman prime minister.⁶⁷ The proportion of women elected to district councils is lower but still relatively high, with 44% of seats held by women, although only just over a quarter of mayors are women.⁶⁸ In the public sector, only 24% of central government managerial positions are held by women⁶⁹. The private sector is reputed

⁶¹ Republic of Rwanda, *Governing Matrimonial Regimes, Donations and Successions*.

⁶² Republic of Rwanda, *Governing Land in Rwanda*.

⁶³ Ministry of Lands Environment Forests and Mines, 'National Land Policy' (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, 2004).

⁶⁴ Pamela Abbott, Roger Mugisha, and Roger Sapsford, 'Women, Land and Empowerment in Rwanda', *Journal of International Development*, 30.6 (2018).

⁶⁵ Abbott and Malunda, 'The Promise and the Reality: Women's Rights in Rwanda'.

⁶⁶ Pamela Abbott, Dickson Malunda, and others, 'Women's Economic Empowerment in Rwanda: A Situational Analysis' (Kigali: Institute for Policy Analysis and Research-IPAR, 2012); Abbott, Mutesi, and Norris.

⁶⁷ Republic of Rwanda, 'Rwanda's Constitution of 2003 with Amendments through 2015'; Republic of Rwanda, *Law Relating to Elections as Modified and Completed to Date* (Rwanda: Official Gazette, 2010); Republic of Rwanda, *Organic Law Governing Political Organizations and Politicians*.

⁶⁸ Gender Monitoring Office, 'The State of Gender Equality in Rwanda' (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, 2019).

⁶⁹ Gender Monitoring Office, 'The State of Gender Equality in Rwanda' (Kigali: Republic of Rwanda, 2019).

to have a low proportion of female managers, although no accurate statistical data is available.⁷⁰

However, there is a difference between being at the table and representing the interests of women. Focusing on descriptive representation tells us nothing about the impact that having a high proportion of women in parliament has on government policy or the extent to which women MPs act as role models for other women. In Rwanda most of the gender progressive legislation was passed before there was a majority of women in parliament, the only law that has originated in parliament was the gender-based violence law, and women MPs are generally loyal to their party rather than to women.⁷¹

The two remaining targets for measuring personal integrity are (1) universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights; and (2) eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls. The indicators for access to sexual and reproductive health are the proportion of women 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraception use and reproductive health care and the number of countries with laws that guarantee full and equal access to women and men 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education. The proportion of women that make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraception and reproductive health is increasing, but 31% of women do not have control and 22% of women aged 15-49 years have experienced sexual violence.⁷² Although Rwanda legalised abortion in 2012 in the case of rape, forced marriage, incest or risk to the health of the mother or foetus legal barriers and cultural and religious stigma make it nearly impossible for women to get a safe, legal abortion⁷³, and nearly half of all pregnancies are unplanned.⁷⁴ There is no law in Rwanda that guarantees full and equal access to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education. The age of consent is 18 years, and those under 18 years do not have access to contraceptives, and most young people do not have access to sexual and reproductive health education.⁷⁵

The two indicators for violence against women are percentage of ever partnered women subject to violence from an intimate partner in the previous 12 months and the percentage of women 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence other than by an intimate partner. Just over a quarter of partnered women report having been subject to violence and eight per cent of women to sexual violence in the previous 12

⁷⁰ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

⁷¹ Andrea Guariso, Bert Ingelaere, and Marijke Verpoorten, 'When Ethnicity Beats Gender: Quotas and Political Representation in Rwanda and Burundi', *Development and Change*, 49.6 (2018), 1361–91; Abdallah; Burnet, 'Rwanda: Women's Political Representation and Its Consequences'.

⁷² National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, Ministry of Health, and ICF International.

⁷³ Gillian Kane, 'When Abortion Is a Crime: Rwanda' (Chapel Hill, NC: Ipas, 2015).

⁷⁴ P Basinga and others, 'Abortion Incidence and Post Abortion Care in Rwanda', *Studies in Family Planning*, 43 (2012), 11–20.

⁷⁵ Pamela Abbott and others, 'Reproductive and Sexual Health in Rwanda: A Review of the Literature, Legal and Policy Framework' (Kigali: Institute for Policy Analysis and Research Rwanda, 2014).

months in the 2014 Rwanda Demographic and Health survey.⁷⁶ However, gender-based violence is widely underreported because of ‘victims’ fear of stigma, retaliation and women’s economic dependence on the perpetrator, as well women’s lack of awareness of their rights and how to claim them.⁷⁷ There is a common perception that the traditional patriarchal system is “under threat” and even young men think that wife-beating is acceptable. Gender-based violence and harassment are common in schools, workplaces and public space, and husbands commonly use controlling behaviour.⁷⁸

The final 2030 MDG5 target is to value unpaid care work and promote shared responsibilities within the household. In Rwanda, women do most of the subsistence cultivating⁷⁹ and provide the bulk of care and domestic work. On average women spend 20 hours more a week working than men combining productive and reproductive work.⁸⁰ Women feel under pressure to take on additional paid work from their husbands and the government, which harms their wellbeing.⁸¹ In total women, spend on average 31 hours a week on subsistence cultivating, domestic work including collecting wood and water and child care while men spend only 13 hours.⁸² Women in rural areas and married women spend even longer hours on unpaid work than single women and those living in urban areas. Little support is provided for working mothers; there is virtually no nursery or pre-nursery school provision and what there is provided by the private sector and located in urban areas.⁸³ Married women and mothers from better-off households usually employ a maid to do much of the housework and look after children. Even then greater equality in the public sphere may not impact on power relations in the private sphere. Justine Uvuza, for example, in her research, found that women parliamentarians were expected to defer to their husbands and their needs at home.⁸⁴

The unpaid work that women do in the domestic sphere is unrecognised, it does not count as part of GDP and is dismissed as women’s work while men’s work that earns a cash income is seen as ‘real’ work.⁸⁵ The positive outcomes from removing legal barriers to gender equality do not then, in themselves, necessarily equate to

⁷⁶ National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, Ministry of Health, and ICF International.

⁷⁷ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

⁷⁸ Pamela Abbott, John Rwirahira, and others, ‘Lifestyle and Sexual and Reproductive Health in Rwanda: Findings from a Purposive Qualitative Study’ (Kigali: Population Media Centre, 2014); Abbott and others; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

⁷⁹ In 2013 the definition of productive work was changed so that subsistence agriculture was no longer included. International Labour Office, ‘Resolution Concerning Statistics of Work, Employment and Labour Underutilization’, (Geneva: 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, 2013).

⁸⁰ Kati Schindler, ‘Who Does What in a Household after Genocide? – Evidence from Rwanda.’ (Berlin: Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, 2010).

⁸¹ Abbott, Mutesi, and Norris; Pamela Abbott and Dickson Malunda, ‘Analysis of Three Rwanda Strategic Agricultural Policies and Programmes (Vision 2020, EDPRS, PSTA) with a Critical Gender Informed Review of Their Implementation and Financing’ (Kigali: Action Aid, 2014).

⁸² Authors own calculation of the 2018 Rwanda Labour Force Survey

⁸³ Abbott and D’Ambruoso.

⁸⁴ Uvuza.

⁸⁵ Villia Jefremovas, ‘Loose Women, Virtuous Wives, and Timid Virgins: Gender and the Control of Resources in Rwanda’, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 41.5 (1991), 378–95.

empowerment unless the constraints that unpaid domestic labour places on women's ability to engage fully in economic activities are addressed. Cultural values and ideologies about appropriate behaviour for women and men are part of taken-for-granted everyday practices, subordinating women, denying them social and economic opportunities and limiting their bargaining power in the household, their agency and their autonomy.⁸⁶ Women may now be co-owners of land with their husband and may have paid employment, but they are still expected to defer to their husbands and behave in what is considered gender-appropriate ways.⁸⁷ Women's participation in local political roles is limited by gender ideology of appropriate behaviour for women, the burden of their traditional role, husbands not being supportive of their wives involvement in politics⁸⁸ and a general lack of acceptance of women in decision making positions and a reluctance to implement decisions made by women.⁸⁹

Furthermore, analysis of the WVS rounds 5 (2007) and 6 (2013) suggest that there has been a backlash against gender equality with a decline in the share of men and women that do not have at least one gender social norm bias.⁹⁰ In 2013 100% of Rwandans had at least one gender bias, and 90% two, three-quarters of men and women were biased against women having physical integrity and two-thirds against women in politics. Men were more likely than women to be biased against women having equal rights to employment, 71% of men compared to 61% of women.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

There is no doubt that Rwanda has made significant progress in closing the gender gap and that this was integral to the aims of its post-conflict reconstruction strategy.⁹¹ However, the focus on the inclusion of women rather than the transformation of gender relations has increased gender equality without empowering women.⁹² While in the late 1990s demands for gender equality and the empowerment of women was advocated for by elite women often supported by development partners since the early 2000s it has primarily been a top-down government policy with little evidence of strong grassroots support.⁹³ The government is more concerned about benefitting from the gender dividend that comes from increasing the ratio of workers to dependents than empowering women by tackling the root causes of gender inequality and the disempowerment of women, turning gender mainstreaming into a

⁸⁶ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women; Conceição and others.

⁸⁷ Abbott and Malunda, 'The Promise and the Reality: Women's Rights in Rwanda'.

⁸⁸ Patrick Gatsinzi, 'Women's Participation in Politics at the Grassroots in Kigali Sector in Rwanda' (University of Buffalo, State University of New York, 2018).

⁸⁹ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

⁹⁰ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women; Conceição and others.

⁹¹ Redifer and others.

⁹² Debussier and Ansoms; Abbott and Malunda, 'The Promise and the Reality: Women's Rights in Rwanda'.

⁹³ Nadine Mumporeze and Dominique Nduhura, 'Is Women's Political Inclusion an End in Itself in Rwanda? A Meta-Synthesis of Qualitative and Quantitative Evidence', *People: An International Journal of Social Sciences*, 5.3 (2019), 357–73.

technocratic tick box exercise, selectively focusing on some targets and indicators and losing sight of the overall goal.

Rwanda has passed legislation and introduced policies to reduce the material, and structural disadvantages women experience in education, employment, ownership of land and property and access to finance. However, cultural and behavioural barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment remain deeply embedded and are part of routine taken-for-granted practices with women constructed as inferior to men and discriminated against based on their gender. Psycho-social factors which are the outcome of women's subordinated structural position in society continue to limit women's ability to act and take control of their lives.

Rwanda has brought into the neoliberal argument that gender equality is essential for economic development, commodifying women⁹⁴, and mistakenly assuming that women's economic empowerment will transform gender relations. However, the top-down right-based approach does not tackle or facilitate the dismantling of deep routed traditional gender norms and socio-political structures that produce, reproduce, and maintain gender inequality and are incompatible with gender equality. There is a limit to the extent that legal changes can change social norms. Women are now included in development policy, but the policy is problematic and aims at creating the new 'good woman'.⁹⁵ In a new neoliberal framework, women are expected to be good citizens as well as good wives and mothers - to do it all. Women are re-embedded in within familial relations as the family becomes a key site for neoliberal governmentality; the good mother and wife has paid employment because it improves the health and wellbeing of their children and drives economic development.⁹⁶ The aim is the self-optimisation of individual women and the statistical control of the female population. The incorporation of women into market society requires that women become entrepreneurs of self, that they become more productive while at the same time that they control their fertility linking family size, the low participation of women in the labour market and economic development. However, this vision of women's empowerment which is mainstreamed in the SDGs and North-South relations more generally is based on the average western 'normal' woman presented as a universal 'truth', as what 'good' women should be, what is best practice for reforming societies and individuals. Countries in the 'South' are

⁹⁴ Cecile Fruman, 'Why Gender Equality in Doing Business Makes Good Economic Sense', *World Bank Blogs*, 2017 <<https://blogs.worldbank.org/psd/why-gender-equality-doing-business-makes-good-economic-sense>> [accessed 15 August 2020]; Quentin Wodon and Benedicte De La Briere, 'Unrealised Potential: The High Cost of Gender Inequality in Earnings' (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2018); Quentin Wodon and others, 'How Large Is the Gender Dividend? Measuring Selected Impacts and Costs of Gender Inequality. The Cost of Gender Inequality Notes Series.' (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2020); DfID, 'Gender Equality at the Heart of Development' (London: Department for International Development, 2007); Teti and others; Redifer and others.

⁹⁵ Thomson, *Rwanda: From Genocide to Precarious Peace*; Uvuza; Burnet, 'Rwanda: Women's Political Representation and Its Consequences'; Abdallah; Abbott and Malunda, 'The Promise and the Reality: Women's Rights in Rwanda'.

⁹⁶ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the College de France 1978-1979*, ed. by Michel Senellert and Translated by Graham Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008).

seen as the ‘Other’⁹⁷ whose women must come to be like those in Western societies. However, this takes no account of the reality of the everyday lives of women (and men) in Rwanda where women are struggling to provide for their families, cultivating as well as being responsible for domestic and care work. Gender equality and women’s empowerment adds to women’s burden and pushes them into precarious employment.

Rwanda’s approach to gender equality and the empowerment of women like the SDGs by focusing on a capability approach obscures relations of inequality and leaves unquestioned the more powerful domination of the North and the geopolitical order that continues to produce underdevelopment. It seeks to enhance women’s control over their own lives while ignoring the destabilising effects of structural adjustment, trade liberalisation, labour market flexibility, austerity policies, debt, climate change and financial crisis. Not only does it fail to challenge the taken for granted of everyday social practices that women should be subservient to men, but it leaves women (and men) expected to take on responsibility for lifting themselves out of poverty. It is perhaps no wonder that women (and men) are among the least stratified with their lives across the globe being a 150th in the world with only women(and men) in Zimbabwe, South Sudan and Afghanistan being less satisfied.⁹⁸

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⁹⁷ Edward W Said, *Orientalism*, Anniversar (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

⁹⁸ John F Helliwell, Richard Layard and others, *The World Happiness Report* (New York: Sustainable Development solutions Network, 2020)

