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# **Women's Socially Embedded Capabilities and Development: A Theory-based Empirical Investigation**

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## ABSTRACT

In order to examine the formation of socially embedded capabilities (SEC) in the ASEAN region, we undertake an in-depth comparative dive into the relevant data for selected countries with special emphasis on the Philippines. We consider various dimensions of inclusivity and assess both the achievements so far and the failures in not just gender inclusivity but also ethno-religious and regional inclusivity. Furthermore, data barriers notwithstanding, whenever possible, intersectionality of location, class, gender and ethnicity are also explored through an application of socially embedded intersectional capabilities approach (SEICA)---an extension of the capabilities approach of Sen. The ASEAN identity can be analyzed and constructed further in an ethically desirable direction by using this extended capabilities approach. The data-intensive approach followed in this paper confirms this theoretical hypothesis.

*Keywords:* socially embedded intersectional capabilities (SEIC), women's capabilities, human rights and development; an ontology of difference and moral realism; the ASEAN region; the Philippines; growth and distribution

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

- Details the extension of Sen's capabilities approach to a more intersectional socially grounded framework and its implications for analysis.
- Utilizes the socially embedded capabilities approach (SECA) for an in-depth analysis of gender disparities within ASEAN.
- Uses extensive basic capabilities indicator data in health, education and access to support findings regarding gender disparities within ASEAN.
- Identifies the need for improvements in gender inequality across various ASEAN countries regardless of performances in economic indicators.
- Recognizes the intensive need for policies that address gender inequalities within ecologically sustainable development plans across ASEAN.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ANIS	Augmented National Innovation System
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CAR	Cordillera Administrative Region
DGD	Democratic Governance Deepening
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labor Organization
NCR	National Capital Region
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
NIC	Newly Industries Country
NIS	National Innovation System
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFW	Overseas Filipino Workers
SEC	Socially Embedded Capabilities
SECA	Socially Embedded Capabilities Approach
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

## 1. Introduction:

In Vienna in 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights recognized that women's rights are human rights.<sup>1</sup> However, even today, the foundations of this claim are not always made clear and it is seen as merely a political slogan without social theoretical and/or philosophical foundations. This, however, is a simplistic position far from the truth. Sen has pointed out that the capabilities approach provides at least a partial theoretical foundation for human rights and, we can claim by extension, for women's rights as human rights.<sup>2</sup>

We have attempted in some earlier works to examine specifically this line of thought in providing some theoretical advances for development and women's rights as human rights and more broadly the rights of minorities, children, the elderly and other vulnerable demographic and socio-economic groups as human rights. Such a theory based on intersectionality broadly construed is highly policy-relevant. This theory relies on an explicitly dynamic socially grounded version of the capabilities approach called "*the socially embedded capabilities*" approach. This version of the social capabilities approach extends important aspects of Sen's characterization of development as freedom and recent advances in assessing multidimensional capabilities space particularly in studies of multidimensional poverty.<sup>3</sup> This approach also has the virtue of being firmly anchored with the Deleuzian ontology of difference that respects cultural differences and nuances within a postmodern metaphysical and moral realist framework.<sup>4</sup> An alternative set of

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1. See World Conference on Human Rights, (1993, June); see Also Ishay (2004) (referencing a fairly comprehensive history of human rights including women's rights and modern pioneers such as Mary Astell (1666–1731), Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), and Olympe de Gouge (1748–1793), who are important precursors of the belated recognition in Vienna).

2. See Sen (2005) and Sen (2004). See also Miller (2009).

3. See Sen (1999) for a discussion on how the concept of personal "capabilities" interacts with development and individual freedoms. See also Khan(1998,1999,2003,2004a,2004b,2006,2007 2009, 2010, 2012a,2012b, 2013,2014,2020), Alkire(2005), Alkire and Santos(2014) and Alkire and Foster(2011a and 2011b), Sen (1992).

4. See Lila Abu-Lughod (2013); Stiglitz (2013); Loury, (2002); Boyd, (1988); Holmes and Clapshow [trans.] (2008) of

economic and social policies with an enabling legal-political environment for advancing women's rights and development follow logically from the approach developed here.<sup>5</sup> In this paper political economy, refers to the classical state and civil society—including their 20<sup>th</sup> century extensions—and their interactions.<sup>6</sup> The social economy indicates the underlying social basis of the political economy including the family structure and various overlapping communities in which the family and the individuals are embedded.<sup>7</sup> In this paper, we explore some aspects of women's socially embedded capabilities in one important region, the ASEAN.

According to a key ASEAN document, the vision of ASEAN is to be an inclusive, sustainable, resilient, and dynamic community of nations. As the document expresses the vision:

- A committed, participative and socially-responsible community through an accountable and inclusive mechanism for the benefit of our peoples, upheld by the principles of good governance;
- An inclusive community that promotes high quality of life, equitable access to opportunities for all and promotes and protects human rights of women, children, youth, the elderly/older persons, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, and

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Guattari & Rolnik (1986); Massumi [trans.] (1987) of Deleuze and Guattari (1980); Bass, [trans.] (1981) of Derrida (1972); Patton [trans.] (1994) of Deleuze (1968) ; Kennedy et al. (1997).

See Khan and Kumssa (1996, ed.) U.N. Centre for Reg'l Dev., *Transitional Economies and Regional Economic Development Strategies: Lessons from Five Low-Income Developing Countries*, 19 U.N. Centre Reg'l Dev. Research Report for more details.

5. The book by Lila Abu-Lughod in particular, based on her extensive fieldwork among the Bedouins, illustrates powerfully why a dynamic view of difference accepted with humility is so important for both the social scientist and the policymaker. See Abu-Lughod, *supra* note 4. This is also important with respect to creating applicable democratic theory for Islamic societies. See *id.* Refer to Nader Hashemi's book on the important issues regarding Islam, secularism, and democracy, Hashemi (2009). An ontology of difference would suggest an endogenous generative power regarding democracy in Islamic societies that can be creative in its own way that is different from what happened elsewhere historically.

6. Khan, H.A. (1998), *Technology, Development And Democracy: Limits Of National Innovation Systems In The Age Of Postmodernism*, Ch. 7 [Hereinafter Khan, Technology (1998)]for a discussion on "the classical idea of a polis for a modern polity."

7. Here, we need to be mindful of Gayatri Spivak's insightful remarks on "women's rights as human rights" as a slogan only in Kolkata and the ontology of difference combined with actual involved fieldwork and participation in actual women's movements from below. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Sunil Gangopadhyay Memorial Session - Kolkata Literary Meet 2013* Spivak's remarks on human rights discourse in civil society as a sign of failure of both state and revolution point towards the need for deeper reflection, especially on the politics of the human rights discourse. See *id.* Clearly, one major evasion of mainstream human rights discourse is the suppression of class differences. The differential ontology, based among other things on a radical political and social economy approach of differentiation, brings to light what is buried deep in the political unconscious—to use the term by Jameson—by bourgeois humanism and presents the struggle for human rights of women as a differential struggle on the road to emancipation that cannot ignore the class differential among both men and women. *Id.*; see also Jameson (1981).



vulnerable and marginalised groups;

- A sustainable community that promotes social development and environmental protection through effective mechanisms to meet the current and future needs of our peoples;
- A resilient community with enhanced capacity and capability to adapt and respond to social and economic vulnerabilities, disasters, climate change as well as emerging threats and challenges; and
- A dynamic and harmonious community that is aware and proud of its identity, culture, and heritage with the strengthened ability to innovate and proactively contribute to the global community.

In this paper, we undertake an in-depth dive into one particularly important “high performer”<sup>8</sup> in terms of gender and ethno-religious inclusivity, The Philippines. But whenever possible, we conduct our study comparatively by looking at other relevant ASEAN members as well. We consider various dimensions of inclusivity and assess both the achievements so far and the failures in not just gender inclusivity but also ethno-religious and regional inclusivity. Furthermore, data barriers notwithstanding, whenever possible, intersectionality of location, class, gender and ethnicity are also explored through an application of socially embedded capabilities approach (SECA)---an extension of the capabilities approach of Sen (Khan 2007, 2014, 2020). In previous works We have shown why and how answering the question of the role of socio-economic and political institutions for creating an inclusive identity rigorously requires further extensions of Sen’s concept of freedom as capabilities----in Sen (1992) and Sen (1999) in particular--- in an explicitly social and political direction by paying attention to issues related to

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<sup>8</sup> Appropriate qualifications are introduced in our data-intensive analysis throughout the text.

intersectionality as well. The ASEAN identity can be analyzed and constructed further in an ethically desirable direction by using this extended capabilities approach.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 below summarizes an important extension of Sen's capabilities theory to the socially embedded capabilities (SEC) and SECA. With this conceptual and theoretical apparatus, section 3 moves into a description and analysis of ASEAN in terms of the basic conditions indicating GDP, basic capabilities and inequalities in the Philippines and a few comparator ASEAN Economies. Section 4 takes a deeper data-dive by analyzing more indicators of basic capabilities within the ASEAN Countries/economies--- with emphasis on the gender and region-specific ethnic differences for the Philippines in particular. Conclusions follow.

## **2. Extending Sen's Capabilities Approach through Social and Political Embedding, Progressive Intersectionality and An Enabling Developmental State for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

As stated earlier, it turns out that answering the question of the role of socio-economic and political institutions for creating an inclusive ASEAN identity rigorously requires elaboration of Sen's concept of freedom as capabilities in an explicitly social and political direction by paying attention to issues related to the intersectionality of gender, class, location etc. *within a holistic framework that includes ecology, environment, and sustainable development*. Following insights of Sen, Nussbaum and others Khan (1994, 1998) developed a Hegelian *sittlichkeit* (*ethical community*) based framework by extending Sen's original capabilities approach and Nussbaum's Aristotlean framework in certain ways. Khan's (2020) most recent term that brings out explicitly and clearly this elaboration of capabilities theory in an explicitly social and political direction is *Socially Embedded Capabilities Approach or SECA*. SECA allows us to ask relevant questions regarding the network of institutions in which a particular individual or group is embedded. In particular, the role of political institutions---particularly the (developmental) state can be examined rigorously by using SECA. Among other important questions, we can now ask: How can we characterize an *Enabling Developmental State* for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century both generally and in light of the East Asian and the ASEAN experiences in particular? In what follows, we take a deep dive into the available inclusivity indicators and related data for the Philippines. But we also look---albeit not as intensively as in the Philippines case---at other ASEAN countries like Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam within ASEAN for comparative purposes.

In earlier works on East Asian economies and state specifically, a dynamic picture of the leading role of the enabling state emerges. Over time. The state provides disciplined support for

export-oriented sectors through directed credit and other subsidies. The state also coordinates investment across sectors and within industries. It invests itself in areas where private risk absorption capacity is too low. This is important in building up a national system of innovation in particular. The state also steps in to manage sectoral and macroeconomic crises ensuring a relatively smooth accumulation process to proceed. However, the distributive conflicts were lessened for Japan, Korea and Taiwan through US-imposed land reforms after the war. In China on the other hand, an egalitarian society with a Gini coefficient between .25 and .28 in the 1970s became highly unequal from 1990s onward with Gini index over .45.

Given our capabilities perspective, we need to include among the characteristics of the *Enabling Developmental State for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* its capacity to build an egalitarian intersectional development strategy from the beginning. For this purpose, democracy must be deepened also from the beginning. Khan (1998 2008a,b, 2009, 2010, 2012a,b) has attempted to build a theory where *egalitarian distribution and deepening of democratic institutions* and practices along with the standard industrial, trade, monetary-financial and other developmentalist policy making of the state have theoretical salience. Furthermore, given the deepening ecological crisis, this type of state will have to devise policies for *at least mitigating the ecological crisis*. It is such a state that we can call an *Enabling Developmental State for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Both technically and from a social perspective efficient but egalitarian innovation systems throughout but particularly after the middle income stage become crucial in terms of enhancing people's capabilities rapidly and widely. Khan (2012a) has therefore replaced the idea of a national innovation system (NIS) with that of an augmented national innovation system (ANIS). A thoroughly innovative Enabling Developmental State for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will augment both efficiency and capabilities of people in an egalitarian manner. It is clear that the state of this kind cannot be formed unless popular

forces can launch movements and programs of their own. Is there any hope of this being achieved in the next few decades? Prashad (2014) discusses the complex processes underway in the global South now---particularly in Latin America. Although by no means guaranteed, the achievements of people's movements in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Venezuela and elsewhere give us some room for optimism (Peet, 2007; Peet and Hartwick, 2009). But the project has barely been started. A new theory of an Enabling Developmental State for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that both nurtures and is nurtured by these movements will be of a kind that can play a counterhegemonic role. regional-international political parties and broad-based social movements and new social formations.<sup>9</sup>

We can now ask the empirical question addressed in the rest of our paper: how do we conceive of an initial strategic plan for the ASEAN economies and societies that draws from the best experiences of the East Asian Developmental States and augments these with mainly egalitarian and democratic elements for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century emphasizing in particular women's and minorities' rights?

The SEC approach followed here makes the capabilities explicitly social and asks what concatenation of economic (real and financial) and other (e.g., political, social etc.) institutions

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<sup>9</sup> Thus, without falling into self-refuting relativism, there is a way to accept epistemic limits, resist imperial power-knowledge-discourse schemes and formulate positive pro-people programs that are internationalist but local and regional at the beginning and with time passing, ultimately global in scope. Prashad (2014) presents a good case for the local-regional-global sequence in the current context. Khan along with others have argued to accept the proposition that capitalism will not be able to solve the currently unfolding ecological crisis as well as the other crises endogenous to the WCS. If not the other crises, the ecological crisis itself, left unchecked, will destroy human civilization. Thus capitalism which is a complex exploitative system must be transformed into a more harmonious people and nature oriented system. It has to be understood that capitalism which has created the ecological and other crises, is a *global* system and ultimately can only be defeated by a *democratic global movement*. Thus although Khan has been critical of their insufficient appreciation of the political economy of complex exploitative global capitalism, but accepted much of the post-development school's criticism of development as expressed for example by the work of Escobar, Rahnama and others. In fact, Khan has tried to make many of these cultural and ecological criticisms in addition to the critical political economy analysis of global capital, starting with Khan(1983) and continuing till now, without falling into the epistemological and ethical-political impasse of the post-development school. See Khan (1998,2009) for a sympathetic critique of post-structural and postmodern turns and their application in post-development thought, and an alternative critical positive construction of a dynamic democratic-participatory counterhegemonic development from below that can deepen with time. Richard Peet and Elaine Hartwick (2009) present a very fair summary of the various poststructuralist and post-developmental positions, ending with a thoughtful critique and defense of "critical modernism". It may be that when the new pro-people and deeply democratic dynamic system is more visible than it is now, we could describe the emergent features more fully and find a term which is more adequate than "development". Khan would like to keep that possibility open. On ecological crisis and capitalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, see Li (2008), Khan and Lippit(1993 and 2007) and Khan (1997a,b,1998, 2010).

will allow capabilities in general and of women in particular in the ASEAN to both increase steadily. In effect, as the following discussion makes clear, we are asking how can we increase and equalize real, positive freedom for individuals in specific social contexts?

Taking the SEC theory as the central explanatory framework can help illuminate Foucault's important insights about the societies of discipline and control that form a part of his critique of modernity. From this point of view, such developments are consistent with the reproduction of the value form under the domination of capital. Foucault shows how the discipline of the army served as the model for discipline in the factory.<sup>10</sup> In fact, for Foucault (1977), this disciplinary mode of functioning will permeate virtually every institution with a more subtle and manipulative until a system of control can be developed.

Foucault's concept of bio-power<sup>11</sup> is a particularly powerful way of characterizing how the production and reproduction of life itself can become an object of control under capitalism. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault analyzes in detail how the human body can be objectified.<sup>12</sup> The fundamental goal of the disciplinary power was to create a "docile body". At the same time, this docile body also needed to be a productive body (Foucault, 1975).

In order to assess the critical reach of such a fully social capabilities perspective we need to go further and try to describe more concretely what some of the basic capabilities may be. Khan (1998, 1991, 2007, 2014) proposes a flexible list. Ingrid Robeyns (2001)<sup>13</sup> introduces a flexible list keeping concerns regarding women's capabilities in clear focus. In the empirical sections of

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10. See generally Foucault (1977).

11. See Hurley [trans.] (1978) of Foucault (1978); Foucault (1980); Foucault (1994). Foucault's debt to Nietzsche as far as the exploration of biopower among other things, through a genealogical study is concerned, has been acknowledged by Foucault himself.

12. See Sheridan [trans.] (1997) of Foucault (1975).

<sup>13</sup> See also Robeyns's 2017 book and the review by Richardson, H. S. (2019), Dilli, S., Carmichael, S. G., and Rijpma, A. (2019), Hanmer, L. and Klugman, J. (2016), Perrons, D. (2015), Bose, N., & Das, S. (2017), Casas-Arce, P., & Saiz, A. (2015), Bertrand, M., Kamenica, E. and Pan, J. (2015), Indarti, N., Rostiani, R., Megaw, T. and Willetts, J. (2019), Jakimow, T. (2018), David, C., Albert, J., and Vizmanos, J. (2018), Durano, M. (2014), Andajani-Surjahjo, S., Chirawatkul, S. and Saito, E. (2015), Davies, M. (2017), Valdez, M.G., Padua, R.N. and Comahig, A.G. (2016).

this paper we focus on indicators of three broad sets of SECs.

There is by now compelling recorded evidence of discrimination against women almost everywhere in the world. In developing countries, along with general discrimination, there are also important regional variations. For example, even with great poverty, Sub-Saharan Africa shows less gender discrimination in basic health matters than the wealthy Indian state of the Punjab. This also allows us to illustrate the severity of such discrimination in some Asian countries in particular.

The female-male ratio in Sub-Saharan Africa was found to be 102.2 to 100 (Nussbaum, 1995). The same ratio for many Asian, Latin American, and North African countries is much lower—in fact, the female percentage is less than male percentage (Sen, 1999). In order to dramatize the issue, Sen (1999) has expressed this gap as the absolute number of “missing women.” Following this approach, in the 1990s, the number of missing women in Southeast Asia was 2.4 million; in Latin America it was 4.4 million; in North Africa, 2.4 million; in Iran, 1.4 million; in China 44 million; in India 36.7 million; in West Asia, 4.3 million (Nussbaum, 1995). According to Dreze and Sen (1989), in India there are more girls dying than boys; i.e. mortality rates are higher for the girls. Additionally, the mortality rates are higher for women than men in all age groups until the late thirty. As Chen, Nussbaum and others (1995) have pointed out, income poverty alone cannot explain this tragic fact. Social and political arrangements, including what commonly goes under the names of customs and culture, are also implicated (Nussbaum, 1995). The limits of cultural relativism become apparent in such a defining case as women’s mortality. Increasingly, the women and the poor themselves are speaking out and asking for solutions (Narayan, 2000).

Does this imply that “enlightened” policy makers and foreign aid workers, including the NGOs, have the moral right to impose their policies on the women and minorities in poor

communities? Far from it. What we really need are new institutions inclusive of women, led by them locally and working cooperatively with the other democratic institutions. In other words, promotion of “deep democracy” at the local level with active participation and leadership from local women is a necessary condition.

It is also an implication of this type of policy and institutional approach that a serious attempt must be made to collect and interpret the relevant information regarding the functionings and capabilities of women and other vulnerable groups. Indicators such as life expectancy, females as a percentage of total population, and other demographic data are, needless to say, as relevant as ever. Social indicators for education and rights to participate in social life are also crucial. Additionally, political indicators of democratic rights and democratic participation are of great importance. Only when women have rights and are actually participating at all levels of political organization, and indeed leading many of them, is it possible to claim that positive political freedoms for women are an actuality.

In the end, we must recognize both the ontological basis in differential social history of women for a social capabilities approach to women’s human rights as freedom and its normative and practical policy implications.

These do not cover all of the applicable areas, but are paradigmatic in the sense that the clear and present relevance of the approach logically leads to an agenda for action ranging from income transfers, public and private employment creation to political freedom and activism.

Such freedom, as Sen (1999) points out has both an instrumental value and an ultimate value. Instrumentally, Sen (1999) writes that freedom as social capabilities can lead to a further increase in productivity. Thus, even a hard-nosed, efficiency driven analysis must address this aspect as an empirical issue. But how do we apply such an approach to the ASEAN countries with the



Philippines as a pivotal case? This is the subject of the rest of this paper starting with the next section.

### 3. Basic Conditions Indicating GDP, Basic Capabilities and Inequalities in the Philippines and a Few Comparator ASEAN Economies

**Table 3.1: Data for the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia compared to Global and ASEAN Average (2019)**

	GDP/Capita	Life Expectancy	M MR	Female Mortality	Male Mortality	Infant Mortality	Under-5 Mortality	Water	Sanitation	Safe Water	Undernourishment	Unemployment
<b>Global Avg.</b>		72.20	168.70	139.95	202.76	22.09	29.25	87.44	75.52	81.47	11.25	7.51
<b>ASEAN Avg.</b>		72.74	92.30	110.35	181.24	19.86	24.63	88.84	79.81	58.12	10.26	4.17
<b>Philippines</b>	7599.188	69.09	114.00	135.65	260.57	22.20	28.10	90.50	74.98	not reported	13.70	2.46
<b>Vietnam</b>	6171.884	76.25	54.00	65.70	180.52	16.70	20.90	91.19	78.24	not reported	10.80	2.05
<b>Indonesia</b>	11188.74	69.19	126.00	143.44	203.99	21.40	25.40	89.52	67.89	not reported	7.70	4.35

Source:

We can scrutinize table 3.1 closely. The data in the table above show that despite the higher GDP per capita in Indonesia, the Philippines actually outperforms Indonesia on quite a few significant indicators such as lower female mortality rates, access to sanitation and even unemployment levels. However, it should be noted that the Philippines does see an above ASEAN and global average rate of undernourishment levels.

Vietnam on the other hand outperforms both of these countries in almost all of the indicators shown in table 3.1. Lest we judge them too harshly, we should recognize that when compared to ASEAN and global averages, these three countries see equal to or higher than average outcomes in most of these indicators in tables 3.1 above and 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2: Data for all ASEAN countries compared to ASEAN Average (2019)**

	GDP/Capita	Life Expectancy	MMR	Female Mortality	Male Mortality	Infant Mortality	Under-5 Mortality	Water	Sanitation	Safe Water	Undernourishment
<b>Singapore</b>	85535.38	82.80	10.00	38.60	63.02	2.20	2.80	100.00	100.00	100.00	not reported
<b>Brunei</b>	71809.25	77.20	23.00	72.03	101.59	9.00	10.50	99.51	96.33	not reported	2.60
<b>Malaysia</b>	26824.08	75.30	40.00	83.97	156.53	6.70	7.90	96.43	99.57	92.15	2.90
<b>Thailand</b>	16279.22	75.30	20.00	92.45	201.69	8.20	9.50	98.23	95.01	not reported	9.00
<b>PH</b>	7599.19	69.09	114.00	135.65	260.57	22.20	28.10	90.50	74.98	not reported	13.70
<b>Indonesia</b>	11188.74	69.19	126.00	143.44	203.99	21.40	25.40	89.52	67.89	not reported	7.70
<b>Vietnam</b>	6171.88	76.25	54.00	65.70	180.52	16.70	20.90	91.19	78.24	not reported	10.80
<b>Laos</b>	6397.36	66.68	197.00	169.60	213.84	48.60	63.40	80.45	72.59	not reported	16.60
<b>Myanmar</b>	5611.58	66.61	178.00	163.37	225.39	38.50	48.60	67.54	64.70	not reported	10.50
<b>Cambodia</b>	3651.72	68.98	161.00	138.69	205.32	25.10	29.20	74.97	48.83	24.10	18.50
<b>Average</b>	24106.84	72.74	92.30	110.35	181.24	19.86	24.63	88.84	79.81	58.12	10.26

Source:

The table 3.2 above provides a broader look at some of the key economic and wellness indicators in the ASEAN region. This allows for a closer examination of the disparities that exist within the region and allows the reader to evaluate how access to basic needs and quality of life vary across the countries. Countries like Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia with higher GDPs per capita see higher life expectancies compared to the ASEAN average, while seeing lower mortality rates across the board. These countries also report access to water and sanitation to nearly all of their population while also reporting very low undernourishment levels.

Despite being a lot closer to the Philippines in terms of GDP per capita, Thailand significantly outperforms the former country in most of the indicators. Thailand's performance is similar to the performance of Malaysia in a lot of the indicators except for undernourishment levels and male mortality rates (higher than ASEAN average). As discussed above, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia report numbers comparable to the ASEAN average in most of the indicators, though Vietnam does perform better than the aforementioned two.



	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
<b>Real GDP</b>	120266.1	126794.9	133701.5	145626.4	150809.0	159203.0	173220.8	182925.2	192385.9	203237.3
<b>Capital Stock</b>	344116.1	360281.0	376019.6	392160.5	412930.7	444681.6	484404.1	524031.8	566740.3	615236.1
<b>Population</b>	10.5	11.4	11.9	12.5	12.9	13.2	13.3	13.6	14.7	15.6
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>							28.4	27.5	26.4	24.5

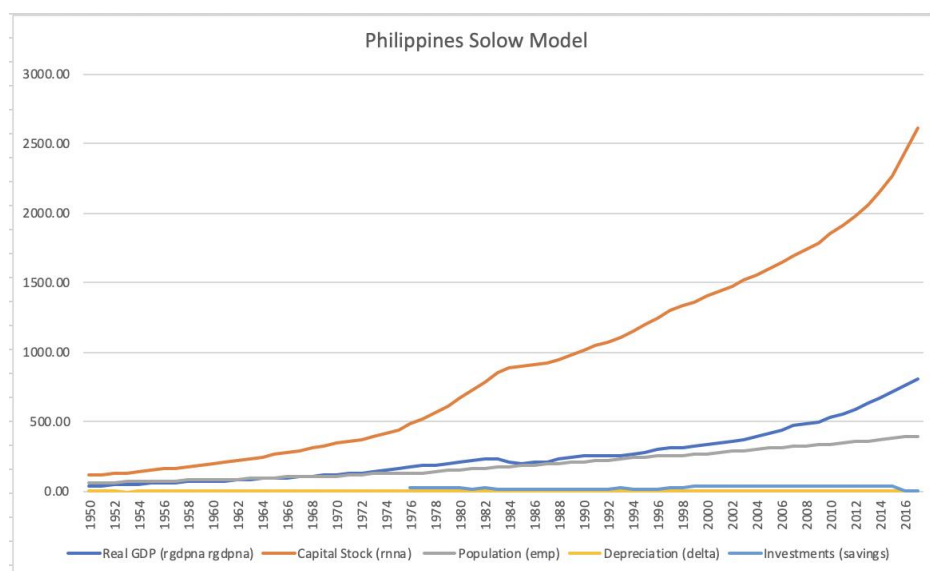
	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
<b>Real GDP</b>	213701.5	221017.1	229016.4	233309.6	216222.7	200424.2	207272.2	216209.0	230808.7	245131.1
<b>Capital Stock</b>	668092.6	728279.3	790085.6	857200.6	890868.5	899166.9	907631.8	920029.6	941289.6	975012.3
<b>Population</b>	15.6	16.4	16.8	17.7	18.1	18.6	19.3	19.7	20.1	20.8
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>	24.4	21.2	22.3	16.6	14.0	17.0	16.6	19.6	18.5	18.6

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
<b>Real GDP</b>	252575.6	251114.9	251962.7	257295.0	268584.1	281150.3	297586.0	313016.9	311211.7	320803.0
<b>Capital Stock</b>	1017621.6	1045191.4	1075684.4	1111467.9	1151564.4	1192897.8	1242735.6	1301547.0	1330409.8	1363675.4
<b>Population</b>	21.1	21.9	22.7	23.4	24.1	24.7	26.2	25.4	25.7	26.7
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>	18.7	18.9	18.2	21.5	18.4	19.1	20.3	25.6	31.5	34.6

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Real GDP</b>	334954.3	344647.8	357213.3	374968.2	400082.1	419196.7	441175.0	470366.1	489899.3	495524.9
<b>Capital Stock</b>	1406424.1	1442709.6	1478991.0	1519548.6	1558886.5	1597737.5	1641676.3	1689737.5	1739044.5	1782870.4
<b>Population</b>	26.5	28.1	28.9	29.5	30.4	31.0	31.2	32.0	32.5	33.3
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>	35.9	36.7	36.9	37.3	38.6	38.1	37.6	36.8	38.4	39.9

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Real GDP</b>	533344.7	552863.8	589816.2	631481.0	670287.4	710950.7	759833.6	810624.8
<b>Capital Stock</b>	1847604.3	1905357.3	1975235.5	2059986.4	2152660.8	2270546.0	2434715.0	2609006.8
<b>Population</b>	34.3	35.4	35.8	36.3	36.8	37.8	39.6	38.9
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
<b>Investment</b>	37.5	35.9	37.1	38.0	36.6	36.4		

Source:



**Figure 3.1: Time Trends of the Main Variables in the Long Run Growth Model for the Philippines from 1950 to 2017**

Source:

The tables accompanying Figure 3.1. for the Philippines show a continuous increase in capital stock over the last 70 years. There has also been a steady rise in real GDP following the trends in the rise in capital stock. The population has also been increasing steadily, however the investment (and savings) levels have stayed relatively the same over the last 40 years.

We can compare the Philippines' performance with that of Vietnam by examining table 3.4 and graph 3.2 below.

**Table 3.4: Data showing Real GDP, Capital Stock, Population, Depreciation & Investment (Savings) for Vietnam from 1970 to 2017**

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
<b>Real GDP</b>	40148.2	41675.8	42493.0	41889.1	42928.7	44210.7	49073.3	55728.7	56714.8	60524.6
<b>Capital Stock</b>	63341.4	65246.5	67291.4	69314.0	71470.3	73765.4	76547.1	79965.7	83421.9	87186.1
<b>Population</b>	18.1	18.6	19.0	19.5	19.9	20.6	20.8	21.6	21.9	22.1
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>										

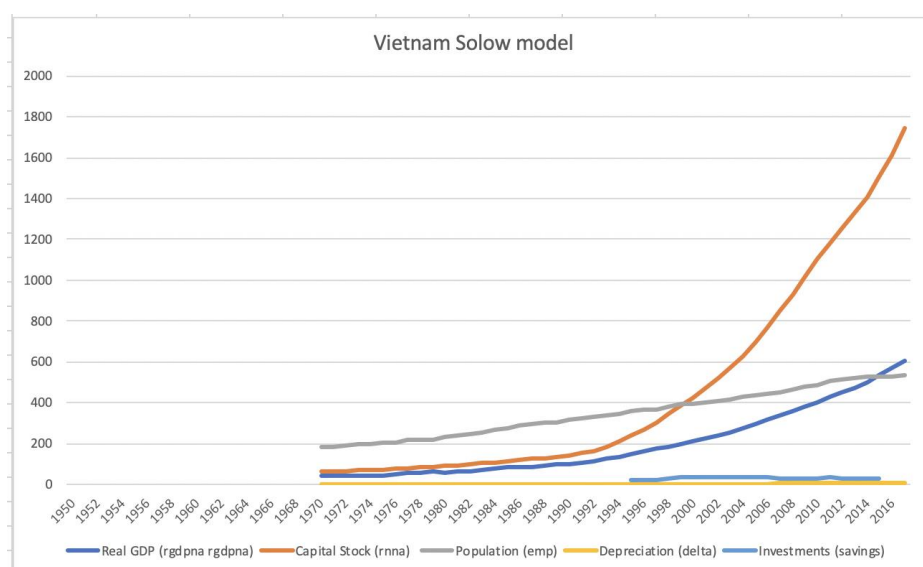
	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
<b>Real GDP</b>	58408.3	61794.3	66830.7	71571.1	77581.1	81940.7	84691.6	86850.3	91279.6	95558.7
<b>Capital Stock</b>	90643.9	94373.9	98518.1	102977.2	108023.2	113315.3	118480.9	124402.6	129994.4	134881.7
<b>Population</b>	22.9	23.9	24.8	25.7	26.7	27.5	29.0	29.7	30.2	30.6
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>										

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
<b>Real GDP</b>	100433.1	106419.8	115620.9	124954.6	135999.3	148974.3	162888.6	176166.7	186321.7	195214.4
<b>Capital Stock</b>	144139.9	151858.5	165227.9	184449.5	209384.0	238015.7	270616.0	306155.6	345603.5	383972.1
<b>Population</b>	31.8	32.5	33.2	34.2	34.9	35.9	36.6	36.8	38.1	39.2
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>						20.7	22.0	24.5	27.9	35.8

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Real GDP</b>	334954.3	344647.8	357213.3	374968.2	400082.1	419196.7	441175.0	470366.1	489899.3	495524.9
<b>Capital Stock</b>	1406424.1	1442709.6	1478991.0	1519548.6	1558886.5	1597737.5	1641676.3	1689737.5	1739044.5	1782870.4
<b>Population</b>	26.5	28.1	28.9	29.5	30.4	31.0	31.2	32.0	32.5	33.3
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>	35.9	36.7	36.9	37.3	38.6	38.1	37.6	36.8	38.4	39.9

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Real GDP</b>	402357.7	427466.2	449896.8	474289.7	502669.5	536244.3	569549.4	608348.4
<b>Capital Stock</b>	1105674.1	1180724.3	1255547.4	1327308.3	1409754.0	1504216.9	1613872.3	1743823.3
<b>Population</b>	48.9	50.5	51.3	52.1	52.7	52.7	53.1	53.4
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
<b>Investment</b>	29.0	33.3	31.4	32.0	28.8	30.2		

Source:



**Figure 3.2: Time Trends of the Main Variables in the Long Run Growth Model for Vietnam from 1970 to 2016**

Source:

The tables accompanying Figure 3.2. for Vietnam show a sharp increase in capital stock over the last 50 years. There has also been a steady rise in real GDP. The population has also increased significantly in this period, nearly tripling during this time. As for investment (savings) levels, they peaked around 1999, but dipped back down again around the 2010s. Thus investment volatility is higher in Vietnam but the extent of investment is also higher.

We have also carried out the same longitudinal macroeconomic analysis for Indonesia using 60 years of time-series observations.



**Table 3.5: Data showing Real GDP, Capital Stock, Population, Depreciation & Investment (Savings) for Indonesia from 1960 to 2017**

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
<b>Real GDP</b>	204729.5	219070.8	239693.9	266796.2	287182.3	301484.1	322225.7	350473.8	377971.2	401596.8
<b>Capital Stock</b>	750472.6	785800.6	830627.7	885056.5	952186.1	1030192.8	1111525.5	1207322.4	1318651.1	1431678.3
<b>Population</b>	36.1	37.2	38.4	40.1	42.0	44.5	47.4	48.5	52.0	51.2
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>										

	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
<b>Real GDP</b>	154533.4	167217.2	166963.2	160509.6	167973.0	169949.2	174691.9	177063.3	189315.5	190501.2
<b>Capital Stock</b>	688320.3	692217.7	695158.2	692044.9	692205.9	693971.8	699278.3	699976.9	709573.3	724374.6
<b>Population</b>	30.0	30.8	31.3	31.9	32.4	33.0	33.6	34.2	34.8	35.5
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>										

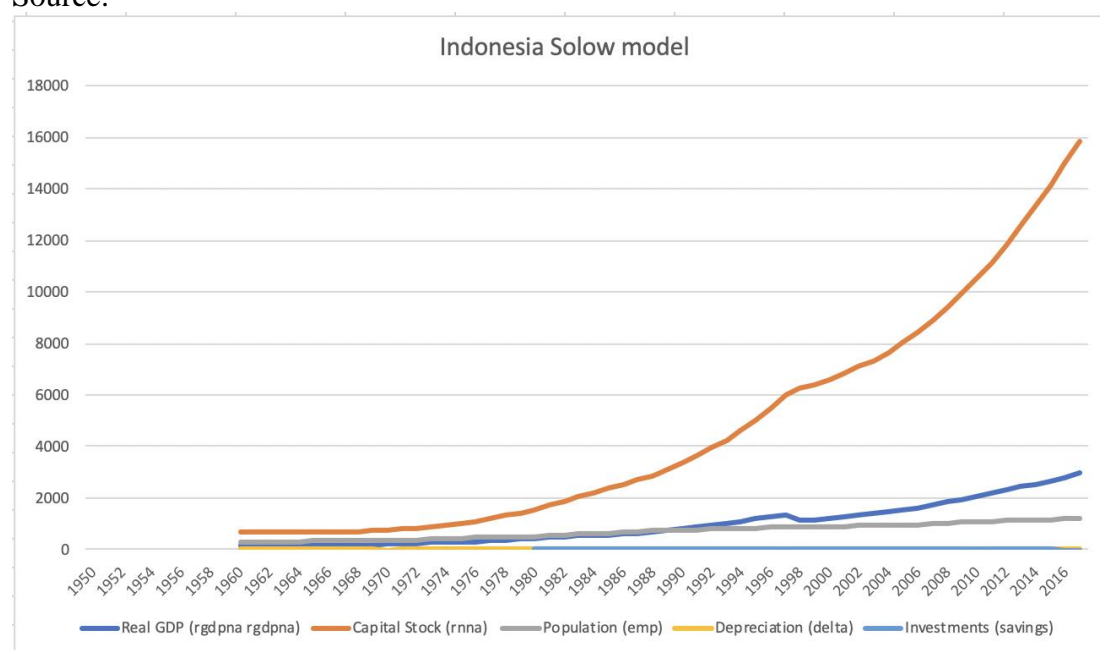
	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
<b>Real GDP</b>	441262.7	476266.6	486933.7	529662.6	566605.2	580559.3	614670.1	644946.1	682223.1	744200.5
<b>Capital Stock</b>	1568396.1	1718918.0	1888637.6	2058726.9	2205361.0	2359604.5	2525967.5	2694885.5	2883094.3	3103041.0
<b>Population</b>	51.8	54.1	58.3	58.8	60.3	63.1	69.2	71.4	73.6	74.6
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>	14.2	9.4	18.3	20.4	18.7	17.7	23.1	24.1	27.9	27.0

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
<b>Real GDP</b>	811194.3	883617.3	947418.9	1016141.3	1092758.0	1182584.3	1275038.9	1334961.1	1159727.1	1168900.1
<b>Capital Stock</b>	3363640.3	3658753.8	3948049.5	4247122.0	4595860.5	5003185.5	5477994.5	5999191.0	6244982.0	6403624.0
<b>Population</b>	77.1	77.7	79.8	80.5	83.3	81.2	86.7	87.9	88.4	89.0
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>	26.1	28.8	23.4	24.0	22.3	21.9	23.2	16.9	7.3	22.2

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Real GDP</b>	1226412.8	1271096.8	1328289.4	1391786.5	1461805.6	1545019.9	1630010.8	1733435.3	1837678.9	1922742.6
<b>Capital Stock</b>	6613553.5	6840541.0	7089346.0	7340324.5	7670794.0	8057648.5	8449666.0	8893906.0	9411333.0	9932837.0
<b>Population</b>	89.9	90.8	91.6	92.8	93.7	94.1	95.7	100.3	103.1	105.6
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>	22.4	19.7	24.4	19.0	20.6	22.4	20.4	20.6	25.6	33.6

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Real GDP</b>	2042411.4	2168423.8	2299180.8	2426952.3	2548461.8	2672733.0	2807259.3	2949522.0
<b>Capital Stock</b>	10508356.0	11143637.0	11846294.0	12578559.0	13337475.0	14133388.0	14961864.0	15846835.0
<b>Population</b>	109.2	110.9	112.3	114.6	116.8	117.5	120.0	122.6
<b>Depreciation</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Investment</b>	34.1	33.2	31.5	32.2	33.0	33.3		

Source:



**Figure 3.3: Time Trends of the Main Variables in the Long Run Growth Model for Indonesia from 1950 to 2016**

Source:

The tables accompanying Figure 3.3. model for Indonesia show a sharp, continuous increase in capital stock over the last 60 years, with a small dip in 1996. There has also been a steady rise in real GDP mimicking this pattern. The population has increased significantly during this period,

quadrupling during this time. Investment (savings) levels have fluctuated overtime, most notably dipping around the early 80's, late 90's and early 2000's.

We now turn to the important issue of socially embedded capabilities as proxied by incomes and income inequality.

**Table 3.6: Income and Population data displaying levels of Income inequality in the Philippines**

Percentage of Income	Cumulative % of Income	% of Population
0	0	0
5.69	5.69	20
9.28	14.97	40
13.48	28.45	60
20.68	49.13	80
50.88	100.01	100

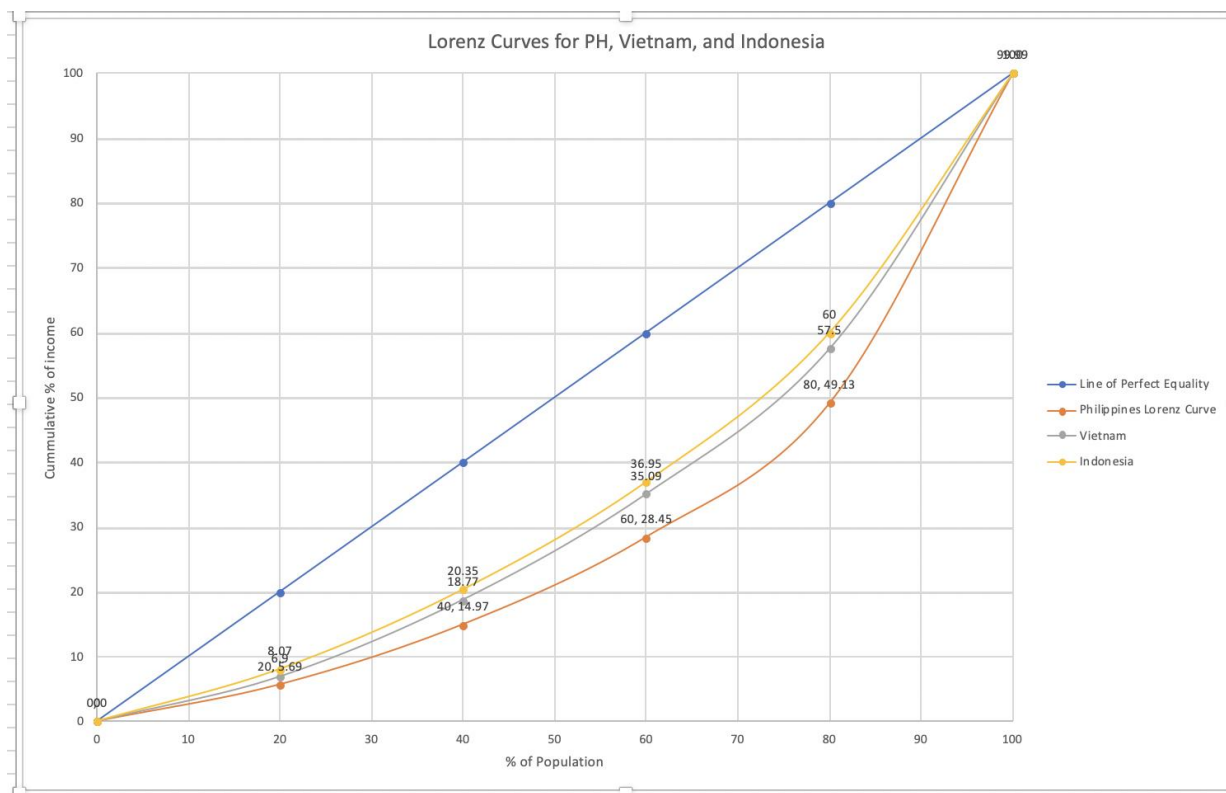
**Table 3.7. Income and Population data displaying levels of Income inequality in Vietnam**

Percentage of Income	Cumulative % of Income	% of Population
0	0	0
6.9	6.9	20
11.87	18.77	40
16.32	35.09	60
22.41	57.5	80
42.5	100	100

**Table 3.8. Income and Population data displaying levels of Income inequality in Indonesia**

Percentage of Income	Cumulative % of Income	% of Population
0	0	0
8.07	8.07	20
12.28	20.35	40
16.6	36.95	60
23.05	60	80
39.99	99.99	100

Sources for Table 3.6-3.9:



**Figure 3.4: Lorenz Curve for the Philippines, Vietnam & Indonesia**

Source:

The Lorenz curve depicts income inequality, where the x-axis shows the cumulative percentage of total population and the y-axis shows the cumulative percentage of total income. The blue line denotes the perfect equality where the same portion of the population controls the same portion of wealth. Looking at the data and the curves, the Philippines sees a lot more inequality than Vietnam and Indonesia comparatively. Though, 20% of the population of Vietnam and Indonesia hold a higher concentration of wealth compared to the Philippines, at the 60% to 80% population mark, both of these countries gain better distributions of wealth comparatively.

However, it is time now to leave the world of aggregates and focus on specific indicators of basic capabilities, and where possible, gender and region-specific ethnic differences.

#### 4. Gender Disparities in ASEAN: An Examination of the Basic Capabilities Indicators in the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam with special emphasis on Education, Health and Access to Resources

**Table 4.1: Mean Years of Completed Schooling, Population Aged 25-29, by Gender**

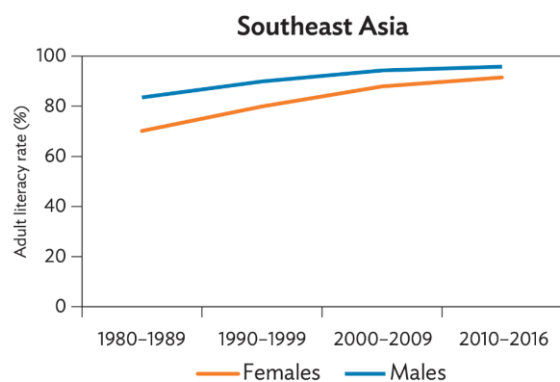
	1960			2010		
	Male	Female	M-F Ratio	Male	Female	M-F Ratio
<b>Southeast Asia</b>	2.7	1.4	1.3	8.9	9.1	(0.2)
<b>Brunei Darussalam</b>	4.4	1.7	2.7	9.4	9.7	(0.2)
<b>Cambodia</b>	2.5	0.5	2.1	6.2	4.5	1.7
<b>Indonesia</b>	2.2	0.8	1.3	9.3	9.2	0.2
<b>Lao PDR</b>	2.5	0.4	2.1	5.8	5.1	0.7
<b>Malaysia</b>	4.3	1.6	2.8	12.1	12.6	(0.5)
<b>Myanmar</b>	1.6	1.0	0.7	5.8	6.9	(1.1)
<b>Philippines</b>	3.4	2.7	0.7	9.0	9.8	(0.8)
<b>Singapore</b>	5.1	2.4	2.7	14.3	14.5	(0.2)
<b>Thailand</b>	3.5	2.8	0.7	10.1	10.9	(0.9)
<b>Viet Nam</b>	3.1	1.4	1.7	8.5	8.4	0.1

Source: Asian Development Bank (2020) Gender and Development. In *Asia's Journey to Prosperity: Policy, Market and Technology over 50 Years*. ADB

The table 4.1 above shows that all across Southeast Asia, the mean years of schooling have increased significantly since the 1960s, with countries like Singapore and Malaysia seeing over 12 years of schooling and countries like Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand seeing over 9 years of schooling. On the other hand, Myanmar, Lao and Cambodia have reported smaller numbers in comparison.

As for the gender disparity in schooling, while the overall gender gap in schooling has fallen, it varies from country to country in the region. Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Lao and Vietnam all significantly reduced the gender gap in schooling. However, in Thailand, Philippines and Myanmar this increased quite a bit since the 1960s. In all three of these countries, women are less likely to have almost a year of education compared to their male counterparts. Cambodia and Myanmar see the worst numbers in terms of gender disparities in schooling, with the former

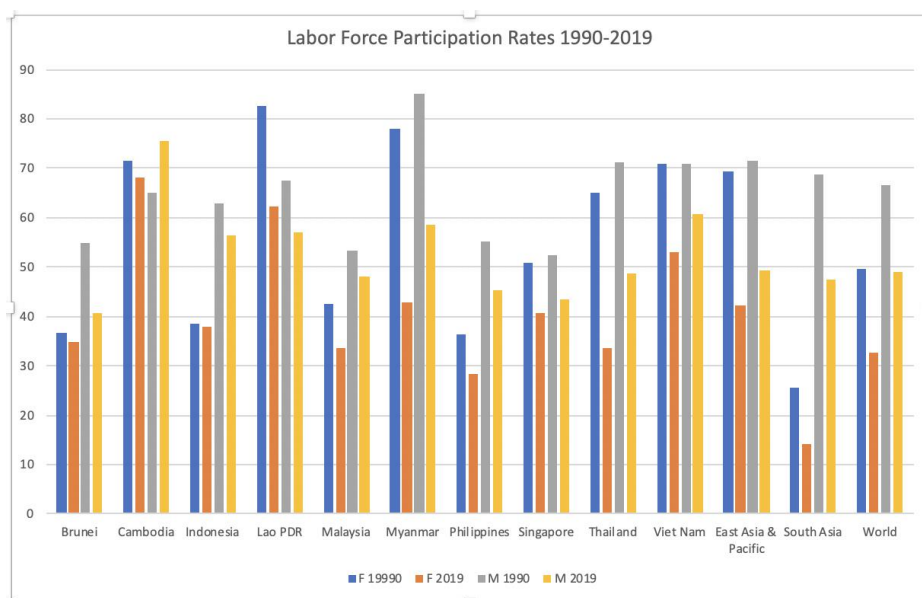
finding women in school for less than 2 years than men. While Cambodia has improved since the 60's, there is still a lot of strides to be made in terms of accessibility to education for women.

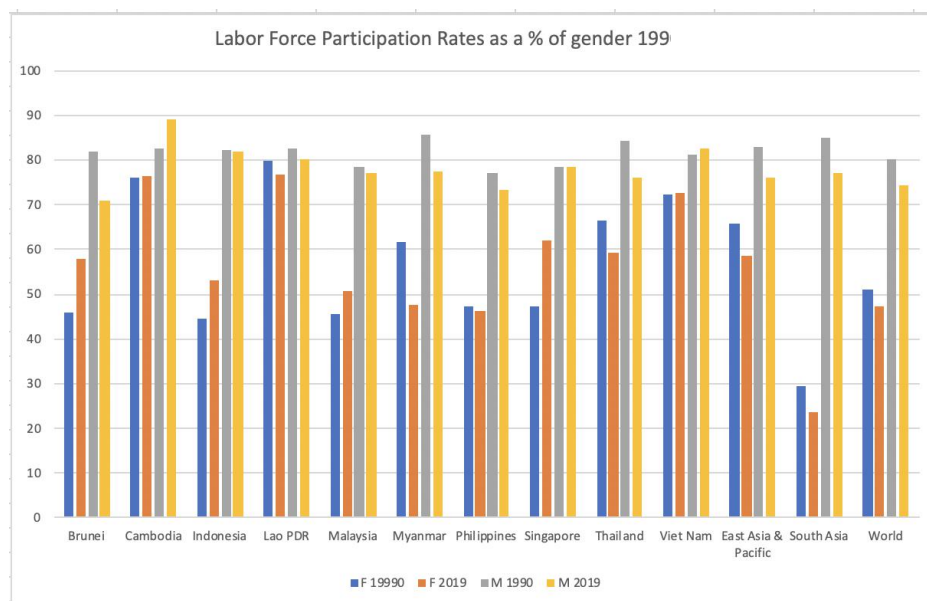


**Figure 4.1. Literacy Rates by Gender**

Source: Asian Development Bank estimates using data from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Institute for Statistics (UIS). UIS Stat Database. <https://data.uis.unesco.org/> (accessed 1 April 2019). Asian Development Bank (2020) Gender and Development. In *Asia's Journey to Prosperity: Policy, Market and Technology over 50 Years*. ADB

This graph shows men having consistently higher literacy rates than women across Southeast Asia, though this gap seems to have been decreasing over the last 20 years indicating a positive trend.





**Figure 4.2: Labor Force Participation in Asia and the Pacific as a part of population and a percentage of gender**

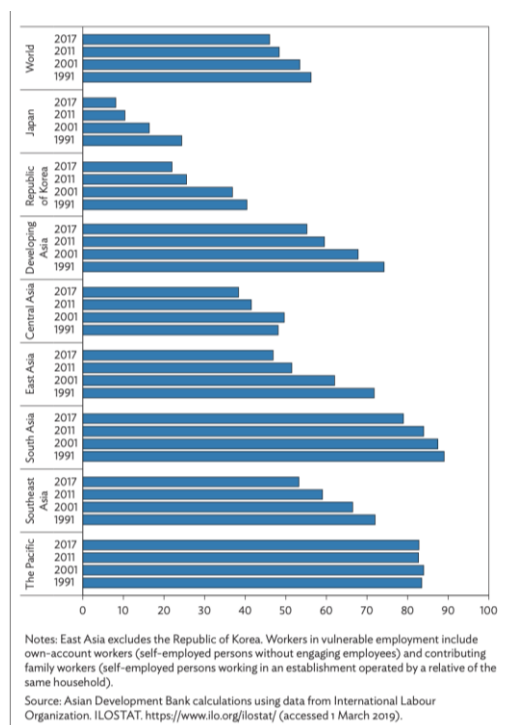
Source: World Bank Open Data, “Labor Force Participation Rates (ILO Estimates)”

<https://databank.worldbank.org/source/gender-statistics/preview/on>

Accessed on June 18, 2020

The first graph depicts male and female labor force participation across South East Asia over the last 30 years. South East Asia has seen a decrease in female labor force participation during this time, though this varies from country to country. Countries like Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia seeing a significantly lower decrease than Lao, Thailand, Myanmar or Singapore. Though on par with the world average, the region has seen lower decreases than East Asia but significantly higher than South Asia (where the labor force participation for women were low to begin with).

The second graph which looks at the female labor force participation as a percentage of the female population sees a small increase in some of the South East Asian countries like Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore but overall it appears to be relatively unchanged across the board.



**Figure 4.3: Share of Vulnerable Employment of Women (% of total female employment)**

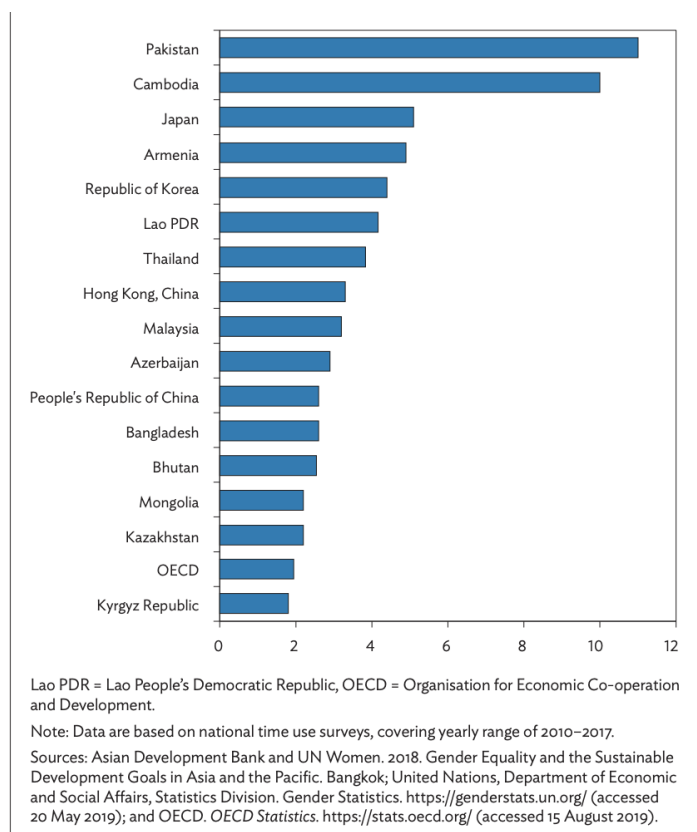
Source: Asian Development Bank calculations using data from International Labour Organization. ILOSTAT.

<https://www.ilo.org/ilostat/> (accessed 1 March 2019)

Asian Development Bank (2020) Gender and Development. In *Asia's Journey to Prosperity: Policy, Market and Technology over 50 Years*. ADB

This graph looked at the percentages of employed women who have been vulnerably employed over the last 30 years all across Asia. South East Asia saw this number decrease from nearly 70% to 50% from the 90's. Though there are still more women in vulnerable employment compared to the world, Central Asian and East Asian average, Southeast Asian employed women are comparatively faring better today than South Asian and Pacific women.



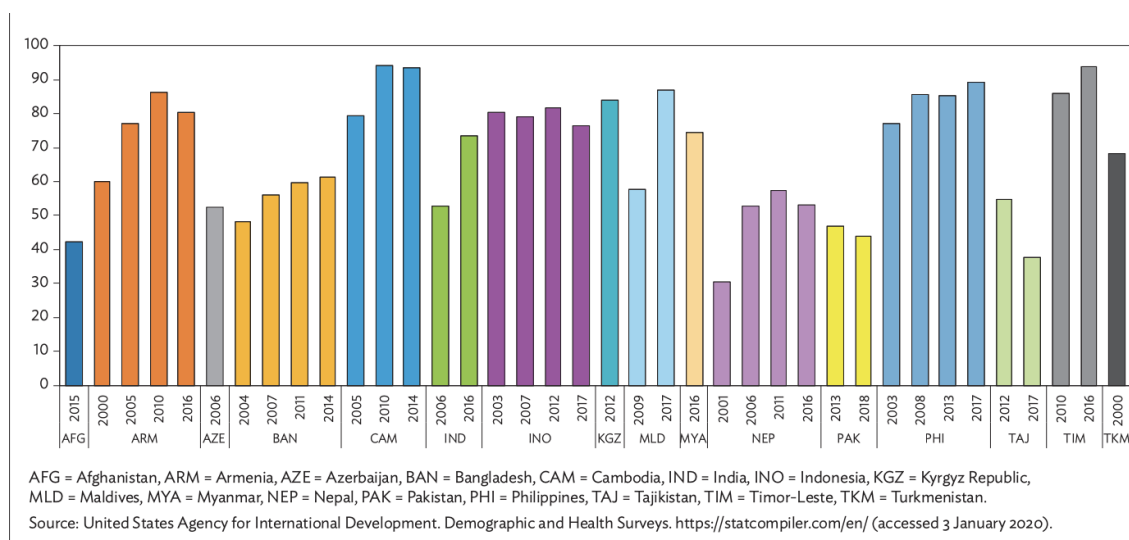


**Figure 4.4: Women's Time Spent on Unpaid Care and Domestic Work , 2010 – 2017 (ratio of men's time)**

Sources: Asian Development Bank and UN Women, 2018. Gender Equality and the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics Division. Gender Statistics. <https://genderstats.un.org/> (accessed 20 May 2019); and OECD. OECD Statistics. <https://stats.oecd.org/> (accessed 15 August 2019)

Asian Development Bank (2020) Gender and Development. In *Asia's Journey to Prosperity: Policy, Market and Technology over 50 Years*. ADB

This graph looked at the amount of time that women in some key developing nations spent on unpaid care and domestic work. When it comes to some of the Southeast Asian countries, the numbers vary as, Cambodian women spend nearly 10 hours whereas Laotian, Thai and Malay people spend nearly 4 hours compared to the 2 hour OECD average.

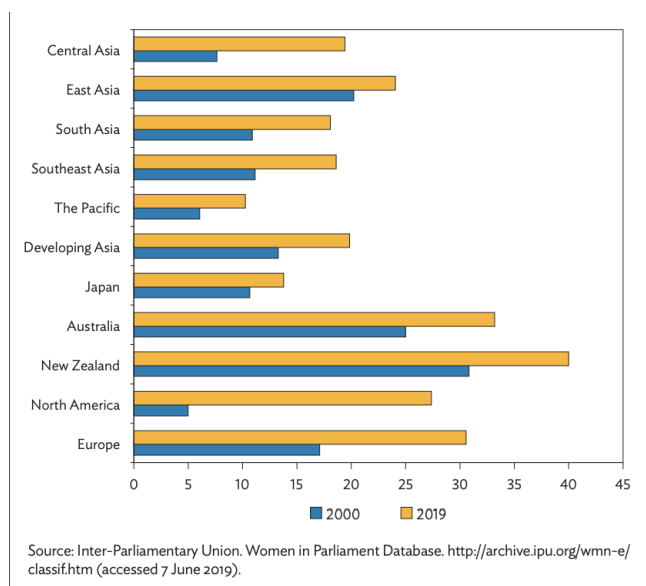


**Figure 4.5: Decisions on Major Household Purchases, Selected Developing Asian Economies (% of women who make decisions on major household purchases by themselves or jointly with husband/partner)**

Source: United States Agency for International Development. Demographic and Health Surveys. <https://statcompiler.com/en/> (accessed 3 January 2020)

Asian Development Bank (2020) Gender and Development. In *Asia's Journey to Prosperity: Policy, Market and Technology over 50 Years*. ADB

This graph depicting women's financial agency within their household across a few key developing nations over the last 20 years shows that Cambodian and Filipino women have increased their decision-making power from 80% to above 90% since the early 2000s. In Indonesia, the women have had consistently had 80% decision making power (with a small dip in 2017). Myanmar reports 70%, making it the lowest of the Southeast Asian countries on this list. Compared to a lot of the other Asian countries, Southeast Asian women display a lot more financial decision-making power in their households. The Philippines performs well here; but for 2017---the latest year for which data are available---Cambodia and East Timor also perform well. In fact they perform better than the Philippines in this important dimension of SEC for women.

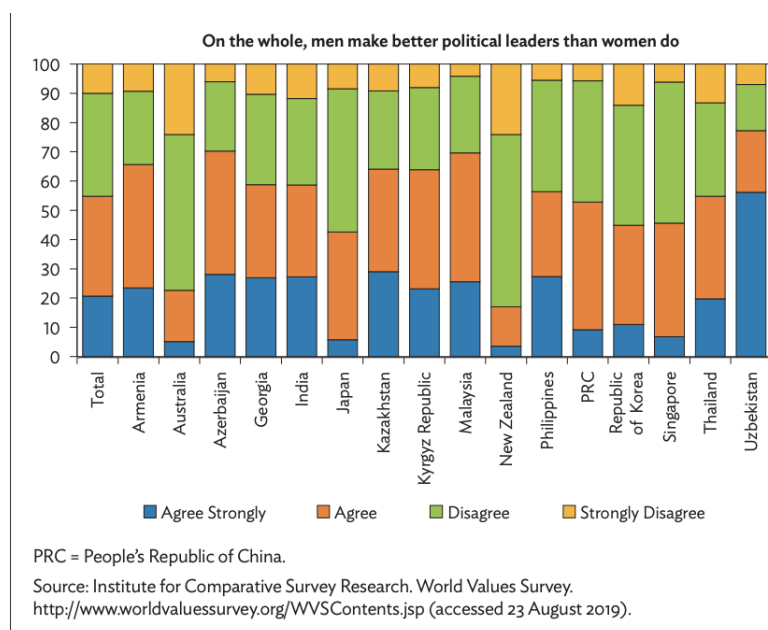


**Figure 4.6: Proportion of Seats Held by Women in National Parliaments (%)**

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union. Women in Parliament Database. <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm> (accessed 7 June 2019)

Asian Development Bank (2020) Gender and Development. In *Asia's Journey to Prosperity: Policy, Market and Technology over 50 Years*. ADB

This table depicting the proportion of elected seats held by women and how it changed over the last 20 years show that within Asia the patterns are mostly similar everywhere. Most places still don't see more than 20% female political representation, though there have been a steady 10% increase in most places including Central, South and Southeast Asia (Joshi and Kingma, 2013).



**Figure 4.7: Attitudes towards Women as Political Leaders, 2010-2014 (%)**

Source: Institute for Comparative Survey Research. World Values Survey.

<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp> (accessed 23 August 2019).

Asian Development Bank (2020) Gender and Development. In *Asia's Journey to Prosperity: Policy, Market and Technology over 50 Years*. ADB

This table shows that overall in Southeast Asian countries attitudes towards female political leaders varied significantly. In Malaysia and the Philippines more people were likely to have a strong opinion on having male leaders, and it appears Malaysia had also disagreed with this statement the least of all the Southeast Asian nations. Singapore appeared to have a more positive attitude towards having female leaders in comparison.

The Tables and Charts below give a fuller picture of women's socio-economic-cultural conditions in health functionings by referring to data that are specific to this important area of SEC for the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia, Vietnam.

**Table 4.2. Ratio of Male to Female, at birth and total (2018)**

	Ratio of Male to Female (at birth)	Ratio of Male to Female (total)
<b>Philippines</b>	1.05	1.01
<b>Indonesia</b>	1.05	1.00
<b>Thailand</b>	1.05	0.96
<b>Malaysia</b>	1.07	1.03
<b>Vietnam</b>	1.09	1.01

Source: Central Intelligence Agency, “World Factbook: Sex Ratio” <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/351.html> Accessed on June 16, 2020

**Table 4.3. Life Expectancy at Birth by Gender (1990 and 2019)**

	Male (1990)	Female (1990)	Male (2018)	Female (2018)
<b>Philippines</b>	63.3	69.6	67.1	75.4
<b>Indonesia</b>	60.3	63.6	69.4	73.7
<b>Thailand</b>	67.2	73.4	73.2	80.7
<b>Malaysia</b>	69.0	72.9	74.1	78.2
<b>Vietnam</b>	66.0	75.1	71.2	79.4

Source: World Bank Open Data. *Life Expectancy at birth*. <https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=SP.DYN.LE00.MA.IN&country=> Accessed on June 16, 2020

While table 4.2. shows Vietnam with a slightly higher male to female ratio at birth, this ratio levels out when it comes to the general population for all of the countries, except Thailand, which sees a higher ratio of female to male. As for life expectancy, table 4.3. shows significant improvements all around, but particularly in countries like Indonesia and Thailand.

**Table 4.4. Adult and Infant Mortality Rates by Gender per 1000 (2018)**

	Adult Male	Adult Female	Ratio (M:F)	Infant Male	Infant Female	Ratio (M:F)
<b>Philippines</b>	235.1	130.9	1.80	25.0	19.8	1.26
<b>Indonesia</b>	177.5	125.7	1.41	23.5	18.6	1.26
<b>Thailand</b>	186.9	78.0	2.39	8.6	6.9	1.24
<b>Malaysia</b>	160.4	84.3	1.91	7.2	6.1	1.20
<b>Vietnam</b>	188.6	76.4	2.47	18.7	14.1	1.32

Source: World bank Open Data. *Adult Mortality Rates per 1000 adults, Infant mortality Rates.*  
<https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=SP.DYN.LE00.MA.IN&country=>  
 Accessed on June 16, 2020

**Table 4.5. Measures of Fertility**

	Adolescent fertility rate per 1000 women	Fertility rates (births per woman)	Wanted Fertility Rate (births per woman)
<b>Philippines</b>	54.8	2.60	2.0
<b>Indonesia</b>	46.9	2.30	2.1
<b>Thailand</b>	44.7	1.50	
<b>Malaysia</b>	13.5	2.00	
<b>Vietnam</b>	29.2	2.00	

Source: Worldbank Open Data. *Adolescent Fertility Rates, Fertility Rates, Wanted Fertility Rates*  
<https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=SP.DYN.LE00.MA.IN&country=>  
 Accessed on June 16, 2020

Table 4.4. highlights the differences in mortality rates for both infants and adults, with countries like the Philippines and Indonesia seeing some higher numbers compared to the ASEAN average. It should also be noted that both Thailand and Vietnam, despite faring well in terms of adult female mortality rates lags behind when it comes to adult male mortality rates proportionally.

It is important to examine fertility measures just to have a greater context around the choices that women face around childbirth and the impact it has on their lives after. Table 4.5. broadly examines and shows how the adolescent birth rates (children born to mothers aged 15-19) are still higher than the world average of 42 in the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand, but is considerably lower in Malaysia. This has significant implications for infant and maternal health and poses questions regarding access to women’s education and agency in family planning in these areas. Another important datapoint here highlighted how women in the Philippines were more likely to have unwanted births than in Indonesia, which is another important fertility indicator that is indicative of lack of agency and gendered well-being.

**Table 4.6. Maternal Health Data**

	<b>Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 births (2011)</b>	<b>Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death % (2017)</b>	<b>Percentage of Women aged 15-49 attending antenatal pregnancy care at least 4 times</b>	<b>Births Attended by Skilled Health Staff (2013)</b>	<b>Access to Reproductive Rights</b>
<b>Philippines</b>	220.0	0.3	86.5% [2017]	72.8	Prohibited Altogether
<b>Indonesia</b>	313.0	0.4	77.4% [2013]	87.4	Accepted for maternal/fetal health and in cases of rape
<b>Thailand</b>		0.1	90.8% [2016]	99.6	Accepted to preserve health (incl. mental health)
<b>Malaysia</b>	26.2	0.1		98.8	Accepted to preserve health (incl. mental health)
<b>Vietnam</b>	67.0	0.1	73.7% [2014]	93.8	Available on request

Source: Center of Reproductive Rights, “The World’s Abortion Laws”

<https://reproductiverights.org/worldabortionlaws>

Source: Worldbank Open Data. *Maternal Mortality Rates, Birth Attended by Skilled Staff, Lifetime Risk of Maternal Death* <https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=SP.DYN.LE00.MA.IN&country=>

Accessed on June 16, 2020

Source: UNICEF DATA, “Antenatal Care,” <https://data.unicef.org/topic/maternal-health/antenatal-care/>, October, 2019. Accessed, June 16, 2020.

Table 4.7. provides more data on women’s reproductive health and rights. The world average maternal mortality ratio stands at 211, which makes Indonesia’s outcomes significantly worse compared to the other countries evaluated, they also lag behind when it comes to women having access to antenatal pregnancy care and having skilled health staff present during childbirth. The Though slightly better than Indonesia, the Philippines does poorly as well in all of these indicators. Vietnam on the other hand, sees surprisingly lower maternal mortality rates despite women having access to less antenatal pregnancy care than the Philippines.

Reproductive rights are also an important marker of how much a country values and ensures a woman’s agency over her own body and health. While Vietnam is fairly liberal with their reproductive rights, the Philippines has completely prohibited such choices.

**Table 4.7. Vaccination and Nutrition Data by Gender**

	Likelihood of outcome ‘access’ (not being vaccinated) between girls and boys	Female Malnutrition prevalence, height for age (% of children under 5)	Male Malnutrition prevalence, height for age (% of children under 5)
<b>Philippines</b>	0.92	32.1 [2015]	33.9 [2015]
<b>Indonesia</b>	1.01		
<b>Thailand</b>		9.4 [2016]	11.5 [2016]
<b>Malaysia</b>			
<b>Vietnam</b>	0.66	21.6 [2010]	23.7 [2010]

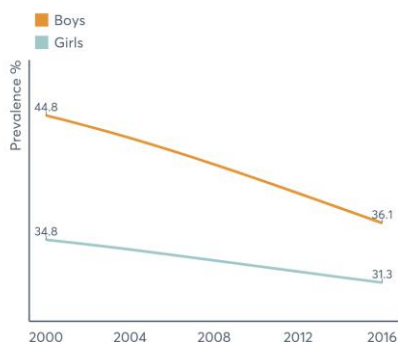
Source: Swiss Centre for International Health in partnership with WHO, (2010, Nov.) Gender and Immunisation – Summary Report for SAGE, [https://www.who.int/immunization/sage/1\\_immunization\\_gender\\_reports\\_without\\_graphics.pdf](https://www.who.int/immunization/sage/1_immunization_gender_reports_without_graphics.pdf), November, 2010. Accessed, June 16, 2020.

Vaccinations, Female to Male Ratio

Source: Worldbank Open Data. *Malnutrition Prevalance, height for age, female (% of children under 5)* <https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=2&series=SP.DYN.LE00.MA.IN&country=>



Accessed on June 16, 2020

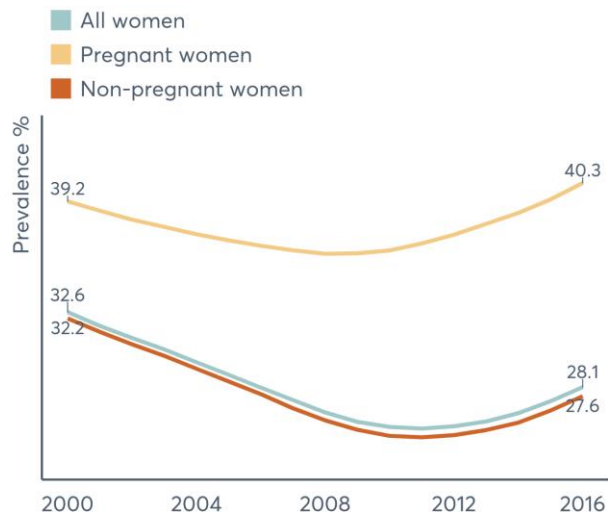


Sources: NCD Risk Factor  
Collaboration.

**Figure 4.8. Child and Adolescent Nutrition Status, Underweight by Gender (South East Asia)**

Source: Global Nutrition Report (2020) *South Eastern Asia Nutrition Profile*. Retrieved June 16, 2020.  
<https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/south-eastern-asia/#profile>

Table 4.7. and Figure 4.8. shows that there are significant gender discrepancies when it comes to vaccination and nutrition in children. In Vietnam, younger girls are significantly more likely to be vaccinated than younger boys, while not as much this trend persists in the Philippines. Male children (under-5) are also slightly more likely to face malnutrition than their female counterparts, in a height for weight measure. This trend continues onto adolescence years as shown by Figure 4.8. but this discrepancy has been decreasing over the last 16 years.



Source: WHO Global Health Observatory.

#### Figure 4.9. Anemia in Women of Reproductive Age in South East Asia

Source: Global Nutrition Report (2020) *South Eastern Asia Nutrition Profile*. Retrieved June 16, 2020.  
<https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/south-eastern-asia/#profile>

Anemia can occur from a variety of nutritional deficiencies and other complex medical causes but is often prevalent in women of reproductive ages and with certain genotypes prevalent in South and Southeast Asia (Jammok et al., 2020). This makes it a particularly important gendered marker of nutrition to keep note of in this region, due to its implications regarding women's health, access to nutrition and productivity (Bharati et al., 2008). There was a significant drop in anemia during the mid-2010s in Southeast Asea, but the numbers have been on the rise since with anemia amongst pregnant women rising higher than before.

The Tables and Charts below give a fuller picture of women's socio-economic-cultural conditions in educational functionings by referring to data that are specific to this area of SEC for the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia, Vietnam.

**Table 4.8. Female to Male in Gross Secondary Enrollment and Lower Secondary Completion Rates as a percentage of relevant age group**

	Female Gross Secondary School Enrollment Rate (2017)	Male Gross Secondary School Enrollment Rate (2017)	Female to Male Ratio	Female L.S. School Completion Rate (%) (2015)	Male Gross L.S. School Completion Rate (%) (2015)
<b>Philippines</b>	90.6	82.0	1.10	87.9%	78.0%
<b>Indonesia</b>	88.2	86.0	1.02	96.0%	87.4%
<b>Thailand</b>	114.4	119.0	0.96	79.7%	77.8%
<b>Malaysia</b>	88.0	83.1	1.05	90.2%	82.5%
<b>Vietnam</b>				100.2%	100.4%

Source: World bank Open Data. *Gross Secondary School Enrollment Rates, Lower Secondary School Completion Rate* <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/gender-statistics/Type/TABLE/preview/on>  
Accessed on June 16, 2020

**Table 4.9. Youth and Adult Literacy Rates**

	Youth Female Literacy Rate (15 -24) (2018)	Youth Male Literacy Rate (15 -24) (2018)	Female to Male Ratio	Adult Female Literacy Rate (25+) (2018)	Adult Male Literacy Rate (25+) (2018)	Female to Male Ratio
<b>Philippines</b>	99.3% (2015)	98.9% (2015)	1.00	98.2%(2015)	98.1%(2015)	1.00
<b>Indonesia</b>	99.7%	99.7%	1.00	94.0%	97.3%	0.96
<b>Thailand</b>	98.6%	97.7%	1.00	92.4%	95.2%	0.97
<b>Malaysia</b>	97.0%	96.7%	1.00	93.5%	96.1%	0.97
<b>Vietnam</b>	98.4%	98.5%	0.99	93.6%	96.5%	0.96

Source: World bank Open Data. *Youth Literacy Rates, Adult Literacy Rates* <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/gender-statistics/Type/TABLE/preview/on>  
Accessed on June 16, 2020

Table 4.8. shows that most of the countries aside from Thailand see a slightly higher enrollment rate for female children than male children, this trend continues into lower secondary school completion rates where female students are more likely to complete education at that level compared to their male counterparts. This discrepancy is particularly distinct for Indonesia, the

Philippines and Malaysia. Though Thailand reports lower completion rates overall, there is less disparities at that level of education.

Table 4.9. looks into the literacy rates and finds that the pattern continues into the youth literacy rates. However, when it comes to adult literacy rates, adult female literacy rates are generally 3% lower than their male counterparts (everywhere except the Philippines) across all the other countries.

**Table 4.10. Educational Attainment by Gender (2016)**

	Female, at least primary (2016)	Male, at least primary (2016)	Female, at least upper-secondary (2016)	Male, at least upper-secondary (2016)	Female, at least post-secondary (2010)	Male, at least post-secondary (2010)	Female, at least Bachelor's (2016)	Male, at least Bachelor's (2016)	Female at least Master's (2016)	Male, at least Master's (2016)
Philippines	85.8%	82.3%			32.2%	30.3%	18.8%	13.2%	0.5%	0.2%
Indonesia	76.6%	84.0%	29.8%	37.8%			8.5%	9.1%	0.4%	0.7%
Thailand	62.1%	69.7%	31.8%	33.5%	13.4%	12.3%	16.3%	13.2%	2.3%	1.9%
Malaysia	91.9%	95.9%	58.6%	58.1%	15.7%	17.0%	12.3%	10.4%	1.6%	1.6%
Vietnam										

Source: World bank Open Data. *Educational Attainment*

<https://databank.worldbank.org/source/gender-statistics/Type/TABLE/preview/on>

Accessed on June 16, 2020

Table 4.10. provides a more detailed look at the disparities at different education levels. The Philippines is the only country where female students consistently have a slightly higher educational attainment than their male counterparts at every level. The Philippines also has higher educational attainment numbers compared to the other countries on the table. Though Malaysia sees significantly higher primary completion rates, the numbers taper off towards secondary level but the gender disparities are relatively lower compared to Indonesia or Thailand. It appears that for Thailand and Malaysia there are more female students getting the ability to complete their education at the upper levels compared to male students.

The Tables and Charts below give a fuller picture of women's socio-economic-cultural conditions by referring to data that are specific to access to resources for the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia, Vietnam.

**Table 4.11. Data on Female Share of the Labor Force compared to the Male Share of Labor Force at different education levels**

	F. Labor Force Participation Rate (2018)	M. Labor Force Participation Rate (2018)	Ratio of Female to Male LFPR %	F. Labor Force Participation Rate as % of F. pop (2018)	M. Labor Force Participation Rate as % of M. pop (2018)	F. Labor Force Participation Rate w/ basic education (2016)	M. Labor Force Participation Rate w/ basic education (2016)	F. Labor Force Participation Rate w/ advanced education (2016)	M. Labor Force Participation Rate w/ advanced education (2016)
<b>Philippines</b>	27.2%	43.7%	62.6%	45.4%	72.5%	45.5%	79.1%	56.7%	71.5%
<b>Indonesia</b>	38.1%	56.7%	64.7%	53.2%	82.2%	44.9%	77.6%	79.9%	91.7%
<b>Thailand</b>	34.1%	49.1%	78.0%	59.7%	76.5%	60.9%	78.2%	83.0%	85.9%
<b>Malaysia</b>	35.9%	51.0%	68.7%	55.2%	80.4%	47.5%	86.4%	65.9%	72.9%
<b>Vietnam</b>	53.6%	59.2%	87.4%	71.2%	81.5%	75.2%	83.1%	52.9%	87.8%

Source: World bank Open Data. Labor Force Participation Rates  
<https://databank.worldbank.org/source/gender-statistics/preview/on>  
 Accessed on June 16, 2020

**Table 4.12. Share of Unemployment by Gender (2018)**

	Female Unemployment as a % of F. Labor Force	Male Unemployment as a % of M. Labor Force	Ratio of Female to Male Unemployment
<b>Philippines</b>	2.7%	2.1%	1.20
<b>Indonesia</b>	4.2%	4.5%	0.93
<b>Thailand</b>	0.7%	0.8%	0.88
<b>Malaysia</b>	3.6%	3.1%	1.16
<b>Vietnam</b>	2.1%	1.9%	1.10

Source: World bank Open Data. *Unemployment Rates*.  
<https://databank.worldbank.org/source/gender-statistics/preview/on>  
 Accessed on June 16, 2020

Table 4.11 shows that for the general population, the labor force participation rate and ratio of female to male participation for those numbers are generally close to 90% and 80% for Vietnam and Thailand respectively, but ranges in mid-60% for the other countries indicating a comparatively lower female labor force participation in those countries. While labor force participation in itself is not a marker of well-being but the ability to work when they choose to and have opportunities available when they want to is indicative of agency and well-being. It could thus be insightful to see how the discrepancies vary particularly for labor force participation for those with advanced education as an investment in higher education could be indicative of a desire to work or to be in that field, but the lower female participation rates compared to the male participation rates in these figures could indicate the lack of opportunities or systematic obstacles for women trying to find higher-paying jobs that require advanced education, most notably in the Philippines, Malaysia and Vietnam. Additionally, Table 4.12. shows that other than Indonesia and Thailand, women tend to face higher unemployment prospects than men.

**Table 4.13. Data on Women’s Decision-Making Power**

	<b>% of women participating in own healthcare decisions</b>	<b>% of women participating in household purchases decisions</b>	<b>% of women participating in healthcare, household purchases, visiting family decisions</b>
<b>Philippines</b>	95.8%	89.1%	85.0%
<b>Indonesia</b>	88.3%	76.3%	68.2%

Source: World bank Open Data. *Unemployment Rates*.  
<https://databank.worldbank.org/source/gender-statistics/preview/on>  
 Accessed on June 16, 2020

**Table 4.14. Data on Women in business and the private sector**

Country	Firms with female participation in ownership (%)		Firms with a female top manager (%)		Female permanent full-time workers (%)		Female permanent full-time production workers (%)		Female permanent full-time non-production workers (%)	
	Manufacturing	Services	Manufacturing	Services	Manufacturing	Services	Manufacturing	Services	Manufacturing	Services
Brunei Darussalam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cambodia	-	-	-	-	32.4	46.4	27.3	-	35.0	-
Indonesia	43.4	39.9	31.7	28.5	34.4	30.6	35.8	-	21.5	-
Lao PDR	32.1	47.1	24.4	36.6	11.8	42.6	-	-	40.6	-
Malaysia	13.1	-	8.7	-	28.4	-	29.3	-	56.8	-
Myanmar	24.0	28.7	27.8	30.2	32.1	34.2	29.9	-	37.9	-
Philippines	66.2	70.5	29.0	33.9	39.9	39.0	32.8	-	53.9	-
Singapore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Thailand	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Viet Nam	55.7	61.4	27.2	25.9	35.2	36.5	28.4	-	50.7	-

Source: World Bank enterprise survey.

Source: ASEAN Secretariat of Jakarta (2012) Projected Gender Impact of the ASEAN Economic Community <https://asean.org/storage/2012/05/Projected-Gender-Impact-of-ASEAN-Economic-Community.pdf>. Accessed, June 17, 2020.

**Table 4.15. Women's Access to finance in ASEAN Member States**

Country	Account at a financial institution, female (% age 15+)	Borrowed from a financial institution, female (% age 15+)	Saved at a financial institution, female (% age 15+)
Brunei Darussalam	-	-	-
Cambodia	10.68	29.36	4.84
Indonesia	37.24	11.17	26.36
Lao PDR	35.0	17.0	-
Malaysia	78.09	16.58	35.12
Myanmar	17.08	11.80	15.38
Philippines	33.88	13.60	13.63
Singapore	96.07	14.32	45.71
Thailand	75.44	13.67	43.69
Viet Nam	31.86	21.33	15.59

Source: World Bank enterprise survey; Data from Lao PDR is from a recent (unpublished) UNCDF survey.

Source: ASEAN Secretariat of Jakarta (2012) Projected Gender Impact of the ASEAN Economic Community <https://asean.org/storage/2012/05/Projected-Gender-Impact-of-ASEAN-Economic-Community.pdf>. Accessed, June 17, 2020.

Table 4.14. gives a general snapshot of women's participation in business and private sector enterprises, and it is important to look at the proportion of women owners, managers and workers to get a general idea of what type of opportunities are available to the women in these countries. While Vietnam and the Philippines sees significant numbers of women in firm owners and managers, Malaysia lags behind considerably. However, Malaysia does see a high number of female non-production manufacturing workers, along with Vietnam and the Philippines, but without the same level of opportunities at higher paying or entrepreneurial positions. However, when it comes to access to financial institutions, table 4.15. shows that while women in Malaysia, Thailand are more likely to have access to bank accounts than women in Vietnam, Indonesia and the Philippines, they are likely to utilize them relatively the same amount as these other countries.

**Table 4.16. Women's Equality and Access to Institutions**

Country	Can a married woman choose where to live in the same way as a married man?	Can a married woman be "head of household" or "head of family" in the same way as a married man?	Can a married woman confer citizenship to a non-national spouse in the same way as a man?	Are married women required by law to obey their husbands?	Do married couples jointly share legal responsibility for financially maintaining the family's expenses?	Does the law recognize customary courts?	Does the law recognize personal law courts?	Does a woman's testimony carry the same evidentiary weight in court as a man's?
Brunei Darussalam	No	N/A	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Cambodia	Yes	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Indonesia	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Lao PDR	Yes	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Malaysia	No	N/A	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Myanmar	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Philippines	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Singapore	Yes	N/A	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Thailand	Yes	N/A	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Viet Nam	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes

Source: *Women, Business and Law data, the World Bank (2015).*

Source: ASEAN Secretariat of Jakarta (2012) Projected Gender Impact of the ASEAN Economic Community <https://asean.org/storage/2012/05/Projected-Gender-Impact-of-ASEAN-Economic-Community.pdf>. Accessed, June 17, 2020.



## 6. Conclusions

In this paper, we have argued that women's rights as human rights can be given a foundation by using the theory of socially embedded capabilities of women. We have built on previous work by giving extensive data-based evidence from the Philippines and some other ASEAN economies. One broad area of practical policy application with regards to SEC enhancement in the ASEAN countries is to reduce inequalities. Social dimensions are clearly of importance here. The status of SECs of vulnerable groups such as women, children, and the poor do not often figure explicitly in the growth and development programs. This needs to change and improving the SEC of vulnerable groups needs to become the strategic centerpiece. From the arguments presented in this paper, it seems that in order to design a socially embedded capability-enhancing development strategy for various ASEAN countries/economies, with necessary economy-specific variations, the following elements must figure prominently:

1. A clear recognition of the status of the different socio-economic groups in the ASEAN developing countries---and even in Singapore and Hong Kong---- in terms of their economic and overall level of well-being.
2. A list of priorities in terms of economic and social goals must be prepared. In the case of incompatibilities of some of these goals, the question of trade-offs must be raised and resolved explicitly rather than implicitly through the logic of the market.
3. In particular, issues of fair inter-regional allocation of resources or opportunities must be addressed explicitly.
4. Human development indicators based on the SEC framework must become an integral part of building ASEAN identity substantively.

5. As our discussion in the previous section shows, the record of ASEAN---even for high performers--- concerning gender disparities is not flattering. Therefore, gender-justice must become a central part of ASEAN identity building—not a peripheral issue to be ignored or to be resolved later after enough growth has taken place.
6. As alluded to in the brief discussion of ecology, environment, and sustainable development, with ecological effects of climate change must become a part of strategic discussions among the ASEAN partners.
7. It follows then that an ASEAN identity building strategy must explicitly address ecological and distributional issues related to women and minority groups in particular. This implies that there will be a need for careful inter-disciplinary studies on probable impacts of a policy package before its implementation. It also implies the need for follow-up studies in order to assess the after-effects. The crucial aspect here from the perspective of development as freedom is to ascertain which substantive freedoms are enhanced or diminished and then to assess their overall significance.

Looking further beyond the current economic problems, we might ask if the freedom-centered perspective of women's and minority groups' rights and development will survive. For not only is the world divided between the rich and the poor, there are also dark and destructive political and cultural forces ranging from arms race and a new cold war to global terrorism. Indeed, it will be naïve to pretend that recognition of what is good will automatically lead to that good. Here again, the argument cannot stop at simply establishing the validity of the women's and minorities' rights in ASEAN as demands for enhancing the social capabilities as freedom approach, but it must furnish grounds for thinking that there is a fighting chance of getting there.

The emphasis here on both achieving constitutional guarantees of freedom in the individual ASEAN partners and on the need for an ever vigilant politically aware and active mass democratic movement will, we hope, focus attention on the crucial political and cultural aspects of equalizing social capabilities for women and minorities. Without a vigorous, self-aware, and self-critical democratic movement that genuinely respects social individuality and its all around development, the approach discussed here can only be just another academic discourse. The substantive approach to social capabilities underlined in this paper should give some hope that combining a critical theory with all around social practice and movement from below will make the appropriate SECs as human rights an achievable project in our lifetime. However, the history of real movements from below needs to be grasped from a radical perspective to build a movement for emancipation in ASEAN context.

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