

Gender Country Profile



Bangladesh

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General

Total male population under 15 (2014) (CIA, 2015): 27,268,560

Total female population under 15 (2014) (CIA, 2015): 26,468,883

Total male population over 15 (2014) (CIA, 2015): 54,419,317

Total female population over 15 (2014) (CIA, 2015): 59,005,538

Health

Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births (2010) (CIA, 2015): 240

Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births (2014) (CIA, 2015): 45.67

Under-five mortality rate for males per 1,000 live births (2012) (United Nations Gender Statistics, 2015): 43.7

Under-five mortality rate for females per 1,000 live births (2012) (United Nations Gender Statistics, 2015): 37.9

Births attended by a skilled health professional (2011) (WHO, 2014b): 31.1%

Prevalence of HIV among males aged 15–49 (World Economic Forum, 2013): 0.1%

Prevalence of HIV among females aged 15–49 (World Economic Forum, 2013): 0.1%

Life expectancy for men (2012) (WHO, 2014a): 71

Life expectancy for women (2012) (WHO, 2014a): 69

Education

Male youth literacy rate, ages 15–24 (2012) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 78.01%

Female youth literacy rate, ages 15–24 (2012) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 81.91%

Male adult literacy rate, ages 15+ (2012) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 62.5%

Female adult literacy rate, ages 15+ (2012) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 55.04%

Male adjusted net enrolment rate in primary education (2010) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 94.03%

Female adjusted net enrolment rate in primary education (2010) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 98.43%

Male gross enrolment ratio in secondary education (2012) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 50.25%

Female gross enrolment ratio in secondary education (2012) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 57.19%

Male gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education (2011) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 15.54%

Female gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education (2011) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 10.73%

Graduates from tertiary education who are female (2003) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 32.7%

Students in engineering, construction and manufacturing tertiary education programs who are female (2011) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 18.4%

Teachers in primary education who are female (2011) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 53.7%

Teachers in secondary education who are female (2011) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 20.8%

Teachers in tertiary education who are female (2011) (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015): 17.1%

Economic Activity

Males over 15 who are active in the labour force (United Nations Statistical Commission, 2010): 64%

Females over 15 who are active in the labour force (United Nations Statistical Commission, 2010): 58%

Men who have an account in a formal financial institution (World Economic Forum, 2013): 44%

Women who have an account in a formal financial institution (World Economic Forum, 2013): 35%

Decision-Making

Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (World Bank, 2014): 20%

Human Rights

Girls married before 15 (2013) (Girls Not Brides, 2015): 29%

Females married between 15 and 19 (World Economic Forum, 2013): 48%

Women subjected to physical/sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime (UN Women, 2012): 53.3%

Women subjected to physical/sexual violence by an intimate partner or a non-partner during their lifetime: NA%

Gender Gaps

Health

Bangladeshi women may have limited agency in making decisions about their own bodies and health. According to a 2012 report by UN Women, 48% of women in Bangladesh say that their husbands exclusively make decisions about their health.

Malnutrition and lack of access to adequate healthcare puts women at an increased risk of maternal mortality (UNICEF, 2010, p. 1).

Education

According to UNICEF (2010), “Bangladesh’s socio-cultural environment contains pervasive gender discrimination, so girls and women face many obstacles to their development. Girls are often considered to be financial burdens on their family, and from the time of birth, they receive less investment in their health, care and education.”

Early marriage and motherhood interrupt girls’ studies. UNICEF (2010) notes that one-third of girls in Bangladesh begin bearing children before they reach age 20 (p. 3).

In tertiary education, there are only seven women enrolled for every ten men (World Economic Forum, 2013, p. 130).

Economic

A 2013 report by the UNDP states that Bangladesh has “tens of thousands of women who find themselves abandoned by their partners every year”. Spousal desertion is often due to the wife’s perceived failure to produce a son. Abandoned women are extremely vulnerable to dire poverty in both rural and urban areas.

According to the World Economic Forum’s *Global Gender Gap Report 2013*, women in Bangladesh earn, on average, 53% of the wages that men earn for similar work (p. 130).

Decision-Making

Between 1990 and 2011, women’s representation in the national parliament doubled, from 10% to 20% (International Labour Organization, 2014).

The International Labour Organization (2014) also finds that “[w]omen’s growing presence in the political sphere has had important implications on the family structure. . . . Studies show that the growing independence of women is one of the major causes of a decline in the ‘missing women’ phenomenon—gender-based infanticide—in Bangladesh.”

Human Rights

In a 2007 research study (NIPORT, 2009), more than one-third of women and men in Bangladesh reported that a man is justified in beating his wife in some circumstances: “if she goes out without telling him, if she neglects the children, if she argues with him, if she does not obey elders, and if she refuses to have sexual intercourse with him”.

Suicide is a national concern among girls aged 14–17. Out of 2,200 children who committed suicide in 2004, 1,500 were female, according to the Bangladesh Health and Injury Survey (UNICEF, 2010).

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