

South Africa, Rwanda & Namibia lead Africa in gender equality

The African Development Bank's (AfDB's) recently launched African Gender Equality Index measures gender equality in economic opportunities, human development and in laws and institutions on a scale of 0 (Low) to 100 (High). South Africa (75%), Rwanda (74%) and Namibia (73%) provide Africa's best gender equality. South Africa is 3rd on the human development sub-index (scoring 92%) and Rwanda is 2nd on the Laws & Institutions sub-index with 68%. Excluding North Africa, the impact of women on African economic development is high with female labour participation rates reaching 85% to 90% in countries such as Burundi, Tanzania and Rwanda.

On gender equality in human development (access to education, health services etc.), Mauritius, Tunisia and South Africa are in the lead with scores of 98%, 94% and 92% respectively. Overall, gender quality in education has grown significantly in Africa since 2005 with the ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary school reaching 91% in 2012 and growing. Women representation in African cabinets has exceeded Europe with the overall proportion of women cabinet ministers in Africa reaching 20%, with South Africa (45%), Cape Verde (36%) and Lesotho (32%) in the forefront. Overall, each country in Africa has at least one woman in a ministerial position.

