SETTING A GENDERED RESEARCH AGENDA FOR IORA

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Outline

- Overview of Research Theme

- Power, spatiality and transformation

- Global policy, development and gender

- IORA's approach to gendered approach

- Baseline Analysis of Gender and Development in IORA

- Recommendations

Overview of Research Theme: Background and Context

■ Gender equality is high on the global agenda

– *Former Millennium Development Goals*

– *Sustainable Development Goals*

– *Various instruments and declarations where states commit to pursue gender equality*

■ Sustainable Development Goal 5

– *Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls*

Overview of Research Theme: Background and Context

- 143 countries globally are committed to advancing gender equality
  - *Economic exclusion and marginalization*
  - *Violence*
  - *Gender discrimination*
- Gender equality is seen as an essential building block for sustainable human development
- Women and girls constitute half of the global population
- Gender equality is a fundamental human right

Power, Space and Transformation

- Transformation for a gender equal society is a highly political project

- Involves changing the nature and shape of power relations in a variety of spaces

- Enhancing economic power, increasing political power, and the power of potential women hold for sustainable development and economic growth.

- Transformation in relation to gender equality entails reshaping those spaces in relation to social categories

- Political imaginary is important

- What would a gender equal IORA look like?

Power, Space and Transformation

- Social change and sustainable development entails all-encompassing change

- Move towards shifting power relations, access, representation, voice, and changing values

- To pursue a holistic agenda geared towards transforming society to a more gender equal state of being for sustainable development requires us to bring "...the feminine into masculine spaces..." (Robinson, 2002).

- Some research that focus on

– *Gender ideology and social transformation*

– *Power and Sustainable Development Goals*

– *Mainstreaming gender in public policy*

– *Quality of Gender Equality Policies*

Global policy, gender and development

- General consensus
  - *Role of women in development has an overall positive impact on GDP and sustainable development*
  - *See increased gender mainstreaming in global governance and public policy*
- Gender mainstreaming contrasts anti-discriminatory laws in that it seeks to move beyond removing institutional barriers to gender quality
- Recognition that gender differences shape policy processes and outcomes
  - *All highlight a normative commitment to a more gender equal world*
- Mainstreaming initiatives balance the goal of gender equality with the need to recognise gender difference to bring about transformation in a masculine-as-the-norm institutional practice in state and global governance (True, 2003).

Global policy, gender and development

- Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead (2007) highlight
  - *Development dominated by agendas of poverty reduction and economic growth is too narrow*
  - *"Because women are positioned in their societies in many different ways, different classes, ethnicities and so on, you can't ignore the individual needs and interests within this group. Gender and development therefore becomes a very complex and sometimes conflicting topic to deal with"*
- Intersectionality matters in global gender policy
- So too do content and process of public policy making advancing gender equality

IORA's Approach to Gender

- IORA states reaffirmed their commitment to gender equality in 2016
  - *Prioritise efforts to promote equal opportunity in employment and non-discrimination in formal and informal sectors through laws, policies, and practices*
  - *Prioritise efforts towards the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls*
  - *Promote an enabling environment in which women and children can reach their full economic potential through increasing social awareness and providing economic opportunities.*

IORA's Approach to Gender

■ Review and address barriers which limit women's economic participation

■ Invest in education of women and girls, including technical training and skills development

■ Support and expand opportunities for women business leaders, women entrepreneurs, and women-owned businesses in supply chains

■ Encourage businesses working in IORA member states to adopt relevant intentionally-seeking gender equality standards into their business policies and practices.
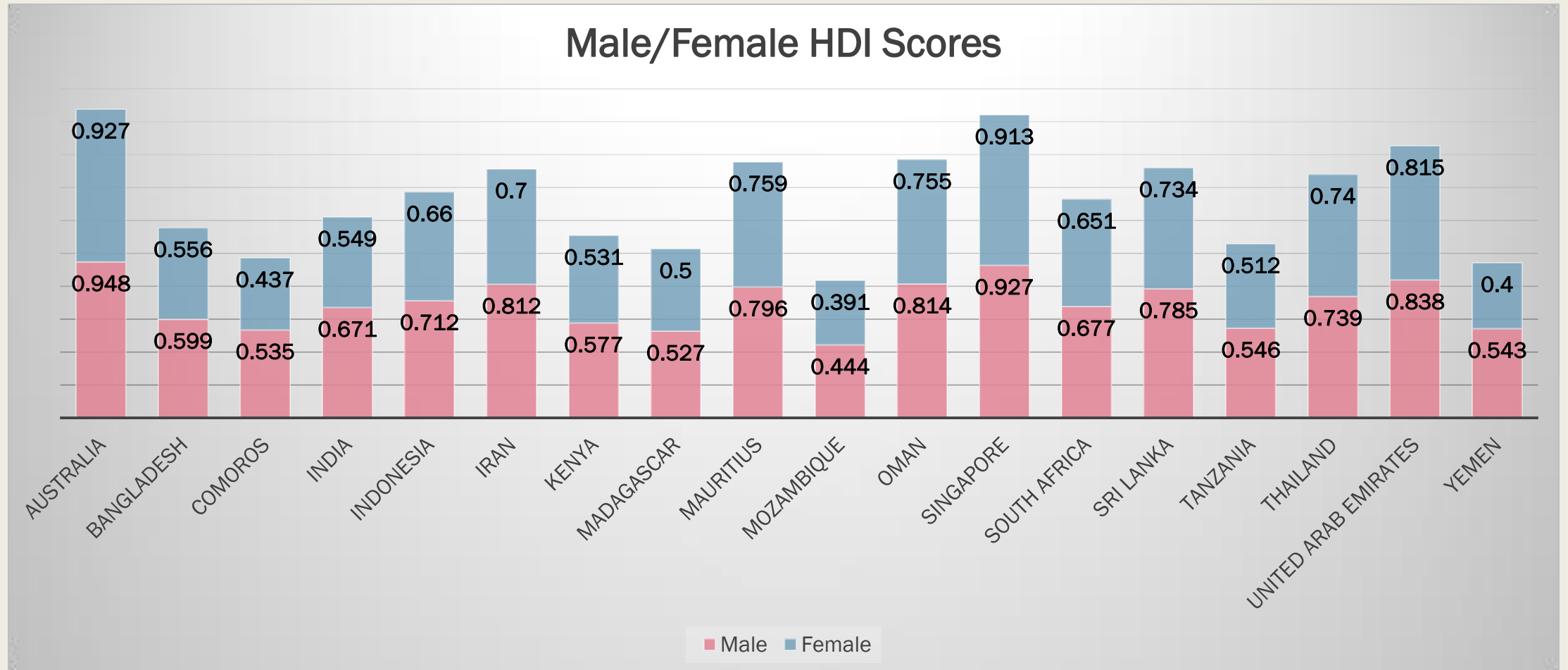
IORA's Approach to Gender

- Strong focus on economic empowerment and economic equality

- Interdisciplinarity is an essential component of the Academic Working Group on Gender and Transformation

- Research that unpacks social, policy, political, economic, cultural, public, and private spaces and their dynamics that (re)shape our ideas on gender

- Need to move beyond the "convenience" of economic policy and redress

- Empowerment entails change - not only economic change, but also change in the political and the social.

# Baseline Analysis of the State of Gender in IORA – HDI Score 2011 - 2016

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Australia	0.930	0.933	0.936	0.937	0.939	0.939
Bangladesh	0.557	0.565	0.570	0.575	0.579	0.579
Comoros	0.484	0.490	0.497	0.498	0.497	0.497
India	0.590	0.599	0.607	0.615	0.624	0.624
Indonesia	0.669	0.677	0.682	0.686	0.689	0.689
Iran	0.755	0.769	0.770	0.774	0.774	0.774
Kenya	0.536	0.541	0.546	0.550	0.555	0.555
Madagascar	0.506	0.508	0.509	0.511	0.512	0.512
Malaysia	0.776	0.779	0.783	0.787	0.789	0.789
Mauritius	0.756	0.765	0.769	0.779	0.781	0.781
Mozambique	0.400	0.405	0.409	0.414	0.418	0.418
Oman	0.797	0.796	0.796	0.795	0.796	0.796
Seychelles	0.755	0.762	0.766	0.781	0.782	0.782
Singapore	0.917	0.920	0.922	0.924	0.925	0.925
Somalia	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
South Africa	0.644	0.652	0.660	0.665	0.666	0.666
Sri Lanka	0.752	0.757	0.760	0.764	0.766	0.766
Tanzania	0.504	0.513	0.512	0.519	0.531	0.531
Thailand	0.729	0.733	0.737	0.738	0.740	0.740
United Arab Emirates	0.826	0.829	0.832	0.836	0.840	0.840
Yemen	0.494	0.498	0.500	0.499	0.482	0.482

Baseline Analysis of the State of Gender in IORA

Male/Female HDI Scores

| Country	Female	Male
AUSTRALIA	0.927	0.948
BANGLADESH	0.556	0.599
COMOROS	0.437	0.535
INDIA	0.549	0.671
INDONESIA	0.66	0.712
IRAN	0.7	0.812
KENYA	0.531	0.577
MADAGASCAR	0.5	0.527
MAURITIUS	0.759	0.796
MOZAMBIQUE	0.391	0.444
OMAN	0.755	0.814
SINGAPORE	0.913	0.927
SOUTH AFRICA	0.651	0.677
SRI LANKA	0.734	0.785
TANZANIA	0.512	0.546
THAILAND	0.74	0.739
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	0.815	0.838
YEMEN	0.4	0.543

Male   Female

Baseline Analysis of the State of Gender in IORA

Expected and Mean Years of Schooling: Male and Female
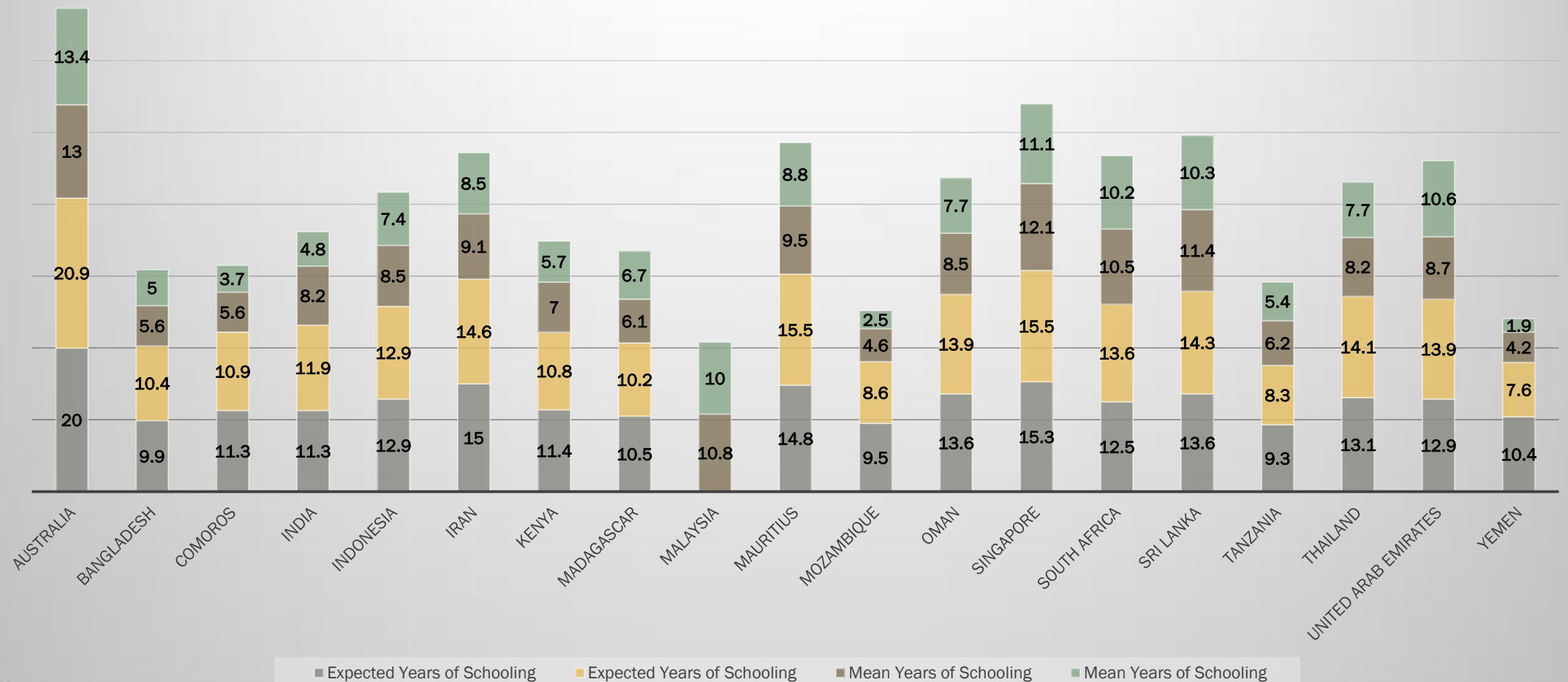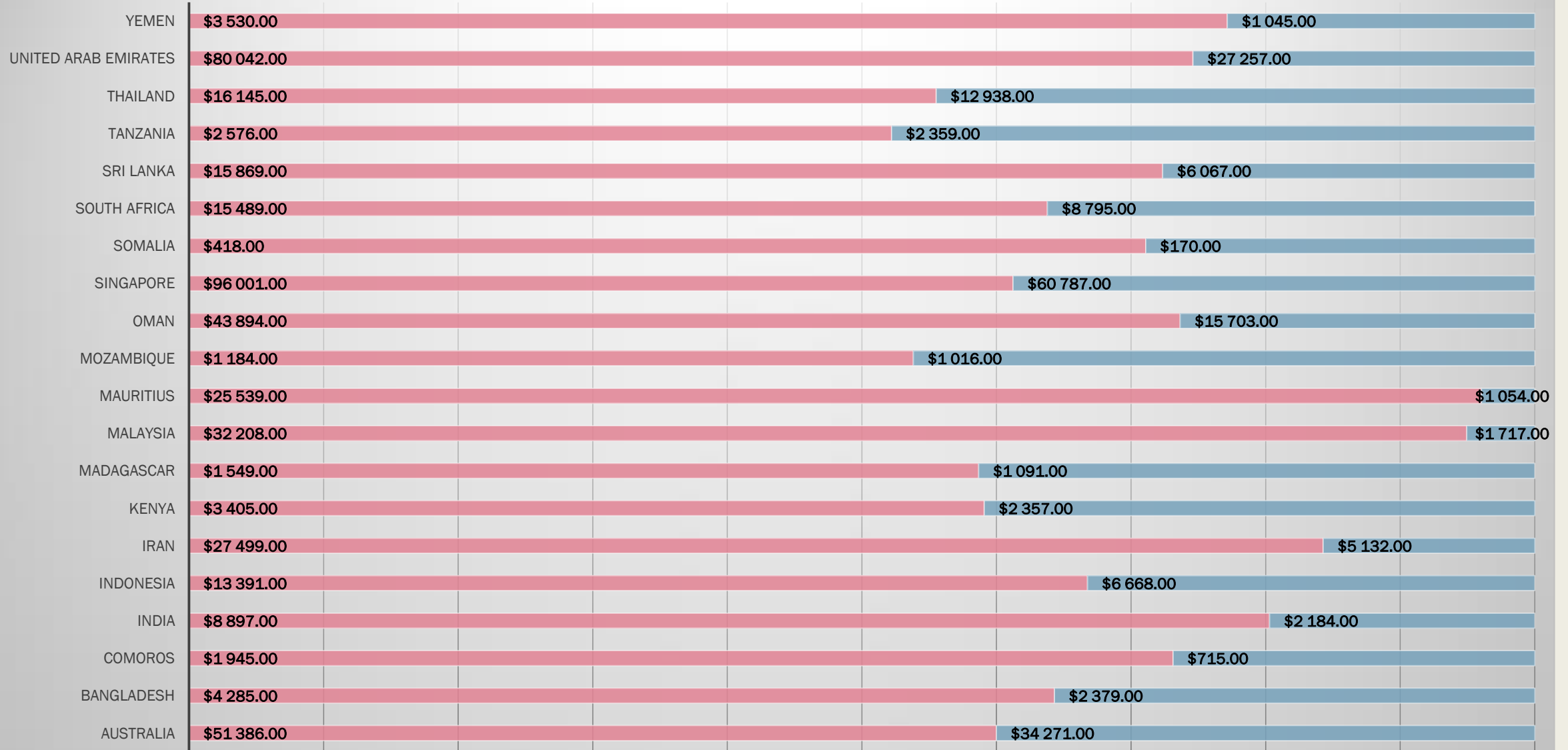
Share of seats in Parliament (% held by women)
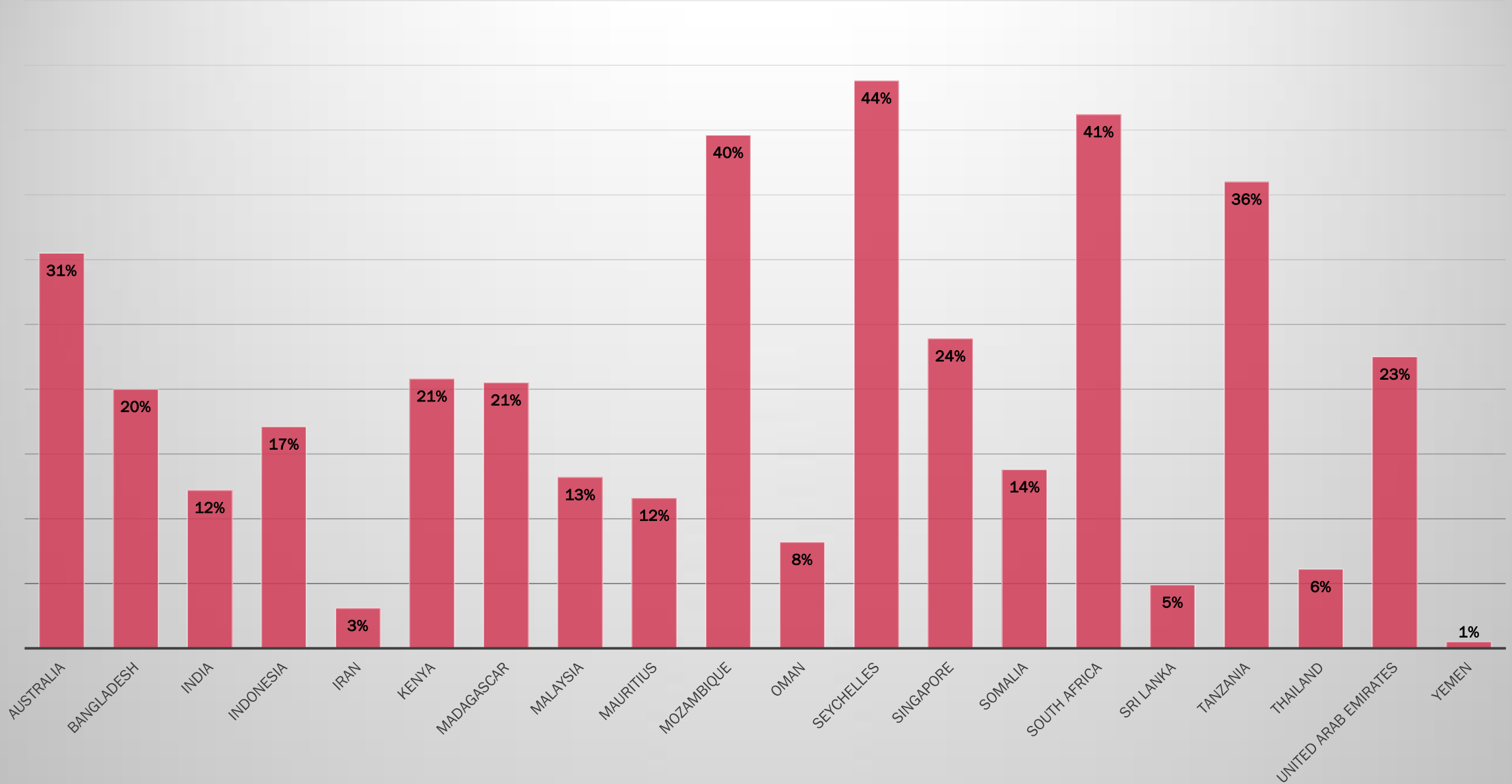
Country	Is discrimination in access to credit prohibited based on:		Do sons and daughters have equal inheritance rights?	Is there domestic violence legislation?
	Marital Status	Gender		
Australia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
The People's Republic of Bangladesh	No	No	No	Yes
Union of the Comoros	-	-	-	-
The Republic of India	No	No	Yes	Yes
The Republic of Indonesia	No	No	No	Yes
The Islamic Republic of Iran	No	No	No	No
The Republic of Kenya	No	No	Yes	No
The Republic of Madagascar	No	No	Yes	Yes
Malaysia	No	No	No	Yes
The Republic of Mauritius	No	No	Yes	Yes
The Republic of Mozambique	No	No	Yes	Yes
The Sultanate of Oman	No	No	No	No
The Republic of Seychelles	No	No	Yes	Yes
The Republic of Singapore	No	No	Yes	Yes
Federal Republic of Somalia	-	-	-	-
The Republic of South Africa	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka	No	No	Yes	Yes
The United Republic of Tanzania	No	No	No	No
The Kingdom of Thailand	No	No	Yes	Yes
The United Arab Emirates	No	No	No	No
The Republic of Yemen	No	No	No	No

Academic Studies on Gender in IORA

- Seems limited to the Journal of Indian Ocean Region

- Special issue on Women's Economic Empowerment in IORA

- Report on the Status of Women in the Indian Ocean Rim (2014)
  - *Need for improved education for women*
  - *Rights at work*
  - *Need for access to finance and greater financial independence (Doyle, 2017)*

Academic Studies in Gender in IORA

■ Two articles engage gender, equality, and transformation in IORA

– *Harris-Rimmer's **The future of women's economic empowerment in the Indian Ocean region: Governance challenges and opportunities***

– *Chacko's **Women's economic empowerment in the Indian Ocean region through gender equality in work: Building a common agenda***

■ Both focus on women's labour force participation and issues

■ The policy dialogue with a focus on women's economic empowerment needs to shift to a dialogue of changing structural and cultural power relations to shape gender policy mainstreaming

– *Policy spatiality of transformation*

– *Political representation does not guarantee gender mainstreaming in the realm of policy*

Recommendations

- Women in IORA Conference
  - *Focus on economic redress and economic empowerment*
  - *Need to move beyond to unpack and engage on the structural barriers to achieving a gender equal IORA*
  - *Need a collaborative approach with NGOs involved in advancing women's issues and equality*
  - *Need to create the policy narratives to advance gender mainstreaming and inclusivity*
  - *Political will*