

WOMEN'S HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS: ASIA AND THE UNITED STATES

(Women's indicators in percent, except for life expectancy)

	Country	Female Literacy	Male Literacy	Female Life Expectancy (years)	Working Women*	Women Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers	Women in Cabinet**
East Asia	Brunei	93.1	96.5	79.6	44.1	35	7
	Cambodia	67.7	85.8	62.3	74.4	14	7
	China	90.0	96.5	74.7	68.8	17	9
	Hong Kong (China)	91.4	97.3	85.1	53.7	30	N/A
	Indonesia	88.8	95.2	72.5	51	14	11
	Japan	99.0	99.0	86.2	48.3	9	12
	Laos	63.2	82.5	65.9	54.0	N/A	11
	Malaysia	89.6	94.2	76.6	46.5	23	9
	Mongolia	97.7	96.8	69.6	53.9	48	20
	Myanmar (Burma)	86.4	93.9	63.4	68.2	N/A	0
	North Korea	N/A	N/A	69.1	N/A	N/A	0
	Philippines	93.7	93.1	73.9	54.7	57	9
	South Korea	99.0	99.0	82.4	50.2	9	5
	Singapore	91.6	97.3	82.6	50.6	31	0
	Thailand	92.6	95.9	72.1	65.6	30	10
Timor Leste (East Timor)	N/A	N/A	61.5	54.3	N/A	25	
Viet Nam	86.9	93.9	76.1	72.2	22	4	
South Asia	Afghanistan	12.6	43.1	43.5	N/A	N/A	4
	Bangladesh	48.0	58.7	66.7	52.7	10	8
	Bhutan	38.7	65.0	67.6	46.7	N/A	0
	India	54.5	76.9	64.9	34	N/A	10
	Maldives	97.1	97.0	72.7	48.5	14	14
	Nepal	43.6	70.3	66.9	49.9	14	20
	Pakistan	39.6	67.7	66.5	32.7	3	4
	Sri Lanka	89.1	92.7	77.9	34.9	24	6
	United States	99.0	99.0	81.3	59.6	43	24

*female economic activity rate, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2007/2008*, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_20072008_EN_Complete.pdf

**women in government at ministerial level

Source: UNDP, *Human Development Report 2009*, http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2009_EN_Complete.pdf.

N/A = not available.

Note: data on Macau and Taiwan not available.

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Discussion Questions

Examine the data on Page 1 of the worksheet and answer the following questions.

1. What is the status of women's literacy in Asia? Which three countries have the lowest literacy rates and what might be the reasons?
2. In which countries do women have life expectancies over 80 years? What characteristics do these countries share that might contribute to life expectancy?
3. Is there any correlation between literacy and life expectancy?
4. In countries such as India and Pakistan, fewer women work. Relatively few women work in Japan and Singapore, but for very different reasons. What might these reasons be? Two of the countries with the highest percentage of working women are Vietnam and China. What might explain these figures?
5. Look at the next two categories: *Women Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers*, and *Women in Cabinet*. What conclusions can you draw about the status of women in these areas?
6. Why is it difficult to make generalizations about women's development in Asia?