



COSTA RICA GENDER SCORECARD

2023



OVERVIEW OF KEY GENDER GAPS



Only **1 in 3** STEM graduates in Costa Rica is a woman.



Boys are **5 percentage points less likely** than girls to complete lower secondary education.



Only **61% of women** have access to a financial account compared to **76% of men**.



Young women are **6 percentage points more likely** than young men to be out of employment, not in education, or in training.



Men are **3 percentage points more likely** than women to have vulnerable jobs.



Women **do about 3 times more** unpaid domestic and care work than men.




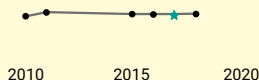

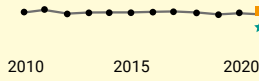
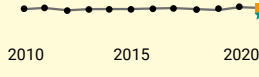
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This scorecard was prepared by Daniela A. Maquera Sardon and Diana Galeano under the guidance of Eliana Rubiano-Matulevich and Paola Buitrago-Hernández as part of the LCR Regional Gender Coordination in the Poverty and Equity Global Practice. For more information, contact LCR_Gender_Coordination@worldbankgroup.org

GENDER EQUALITY IN COSTA RICA COMPARED TO ITS REGIONAL, STRUCTURAL AND ASPIRATIONAL PEERS


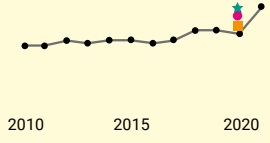

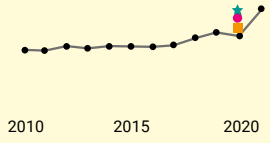


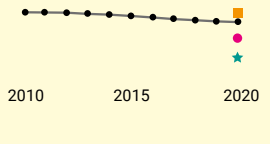



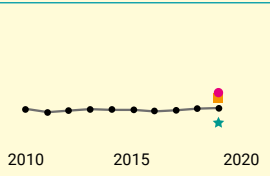

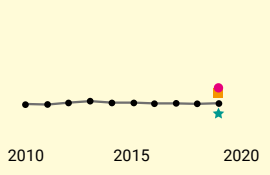

The indicators below align with the priority areas identified by the LAC Region Gender Action Plan (RGAP) FY21-FY25. The table shows comparable data for the most recent year (2015 to 2021)¹ and trends for the available years starting from 2010.


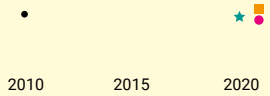
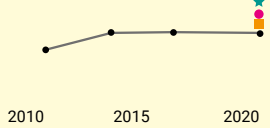

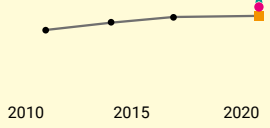
- Costa Rica
- Regional: LAC average using the latest country data point between 2015-2021.
- Structural: country's income-level group average using the latest data point between 2015-2021.
- ★ Aspirational: average of the top-5 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index 2022 (Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden) using the latest country data point between 2015-2021.

Topic	Indicator	Country	Regional	Structural (UMC)	Country trend vs. regional, structural, and aspirational peers	Country performance ²
Women in STEM						
	Female share of graduates from Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs, tertiary (%)	32.2 [2018]	NA	NA		
School-to-work transition						
	Share of youth not in education, employment or training, female (% of female youth population ages 15-24)	22.6 [2021]	27.1	NA		
	Share of youth not in education, employment or training, male (% of male youth population ages 15-24)	16.0 [2021]	15.5	NA		

¹ The [Costa Rica Gender Landscape Brief](#) shows additional indicators in endowments, economic opportunity, and voice and agency; Women, Business, and the Law indicators; and other key measures.

² The scorecard shows the latest country data and compares country performance with its regional and structural peers in the same or similar year. The country's performance is scored relative to the comparison groups using a Traffic Light System: green if the country performs better than the two comparison groups; yellow if the country fares better than one comparison groups; red if both peers perform better than the country. No traffic light means that no comparisons can be made due to incomplete data.

Topic	Indicator	Country	Regional	Structural (UMC)	Country trend vs. regional, structural, and aspirational peers	Country performance ²
School dropout 	Lower secondary completion rate, female (% of relevant age group)	104.2* [2021]	82.9	91.8		
	Lower secondary completion rate, male (% of relevant age group)	99.3 [2021]	77.9	90.4		
Teenage pregnancy 	Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women ages 15-19)	50.6 [2020]	60.3	29.3		
Violence against women and girls 	Proportion of women subjected to physical and/or sexual violence in the last 12 months (% of ever-partnered women ages 15-49)	NA	NA	NA		
More and better jobs 	Vulnerable (contributing family and own-account) employment, female (% of female employment) (modeled ILO estimate)	21.5 [2019]	33.7	38.5		
	Vulnerable (contributing family and own-account) employment, male (% of male employment) (modeled ILO estimate)	24.3 [2019]	33.4	35.6		

Topic	Indicator	Country	Regional	Structural (UMC)	Country trend vs. regional, structural, and aspirational peers	Country performance ²
Women entrepreneurs						
	Firms with female participation in ownership (% of firms)	NA	49.9	35.6		
Ownership and control of productive assets	Account ownership at a financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider, female (% of population ages 15+)	61.1 [2021]	70.1	82.3		
	Account ownership at a financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider, male (% of population ages 15+)	76.3 [2021]	77.0	86.3		
Time spent on unpaid household work	Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, female (% of 24 hour day)	22.1 [2017]	NA	NA		
	Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, male (% of 24 hour day)	8.4 [2017]	NA	NA		

Data points refer to latest data point available. *Regarding completion of secondary school, a number higher than 100 reflects late entrants and overage students.
Sources: World Bank World Development Indicators (WDI) and World Bank Gender Statistics.

LAC average: includes the 42 countries (all income levels) in Latin America and the Caribbean, as classified by The World Bank Group.
For FY23, income groups are defined according to 2022 gross national income (GNI) per capita (in USD), calculated using the [World Bank Atlas method](#):
HIC: high-income group aggregate; economies with a GNI per capita higher than \$13,205.
UMC: upper middle-income group aggregate; economies with a GNI per capita between \$4,256 and \$13,205.
LMC: lower middle-income group aggregate; economies with a GNI per capita between \$1,086 and \$4,255;
LIC: low-income group aggregate; economies with a GNI per capita of \$1,085 or less.
NA refers to cases when the number is not available for the country or peer groups, which impacts the assessment of country performance.

TURNING RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE INTO ACTION

Below are 10 persistent gender gaps³ in LAC and corresponding evidence-based interventions that can help close them.

Women in STEM Fields



Women are **underrepresented** in STEM graduate programs and careers

Evidence-based solutions

- Address [gender biases](#) in teaching and build a 'science identity' for girls.
- Expose young girls to [female mentors](#) and role models in STEM.
- [Fund](#) female students and researchers through scholarships, postdocs, and internships to retain women in STEM careers.

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

School-to-Work Transition



Young women are **more likely** than young men to be out of employment, not in education or training

Evidence-based solutions

- Promote women's participation in non-traditional skills training programs by subsidizing [attendance costs](#).
- Supplement in-classroom training with [on-the-job internships](#).
- Strengthen [labor intermediation](#) with local and private entities for better training and targeting of vulnerable women.

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

Boys' School Dropout



Fewer boys complete lower secondary school than girls

Evidence-based solutions

- Inform boys on [wage returns](#) to secondary education to raise interest to stay in school.
- Offer [financial incentives](#) like CCT or vouchers conditional to school attendance and academic progress.
- Train teachers on how to identify [at-risk students](#) and offer [remedial learning](#) to those falling behind.

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

Teenage Pregnancy



Girls from lower socio-economic status face **higher risk** of teenage pregnancy

Evidence-based solutions

- Offer [peer-to-peer](#) sexual and reproductive health education.
- Include [goal-setting](#) and critical thinking activities in life skills trainings.
- Avoid teen mothers' school dropout through [CCT programs](#).

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

³ There are more gender gaps in LAC beyond the ones presented here. However, this scorecard focuses on the priority areas identified by the Regional Gender Action Plan FY21-FY25.

Violence Against Women and Girls



On average, **1 in 3** women are subjected to violence

Evidence-based solutions

- Supplement economic empowerment programs with activities like [community activism and school-based interventions](#) to prevent dating violence.
- Create and ensure safe spaces in schools and [public transport](#).
- Develop intersectoral response as well as [phone and internet helplines](#) to improve the prevention and detection of gender-based violence.

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

More and Better Jobs



In most LAC countries, the average woman has a **vulnerable job**

Evidence-based solutions

- Offer [certification](#) in non-traditional sectors, combined with on-the-job training.
- Guarantee [parental leave](#) and equal pay for equal work between men and women.
- Adopt workplace strategies that promote the recruitment of women such as quotas in short lists and [gender-inclusive language](#) in job postings.

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

Women Entrepreneurs



Women tend to segregate in **less profitable sectors**

Evidence-based solutions

- Combine business training with increased women's access to [grants](#) and lending assistance.
- Match female entrepreneurs to [male role models](#) and mentors.
- Expand women's credit access using [alternative forms](#) of collateral.

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

Ownership and Control of Productive Assets



Women are **less likely** to own and control assets than men

Evidence-based solutions

- Formalize [joint titling](#) and registration of property rights for female heads of households.
- Simplify procedures for women's access to [housing](#).⁴
- Train land administration staff on [gender-equitable governance](#).

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

4 In countries with low levels of financial inclusion, the inability to own productive assets (e.g., land or housing) worsens the problem of limited access to collateral and, thus, credit, especially for women (Manysheva, 2022).

Time spent on unpaid household work



Women spend **significantly more time** on unpaid domestic and care work than men

Evidence-based solutions

- Expand the [supply](#) of good-quality childcare services that meet families' needs (location, times, ages served).
- Subsidize [childcare services](#) to increase mothers' labor participation and earnings.
- Complement [paternity](#) or [parental leave](#) policies with [parenting guidance](#) for fathers offered via virtual workshops and SMS messages.

Find more solutions and examples of WB-supported operations [here](#).

Gender data gaps



Gender data are limited: often incomplete, methodologically inaccurate, or completely lacking.

Evidence-based solutions

- Mainstream the adoption of [international best practices](#) in the production of gender data.
- Leverage existing engagements with National Statistical Offices [regionally](#).

COUNTRY RESOURCES

Legislative and regulatory framework

- [Costa Rica 2-pager of laws and regulations affecting women's economic opportunities \(2022\)](#)

Gender strategic framework

- [Costa Rica Country Partnership Framework FY16-20 \(2015\)](#)
- [Costa Rica Systematic Country Diagnostic \(2015\)](#)
- [Regional Gender Assessment – Towards Equal? Women in Central America \(2018\)](#)
- [Costa Rica's Gender Action Plan for the National REDD + Strategy \(2019\)](#)

Country-specific data and analysis

- [Opportunities for Reducing Poverty and Inequality in Costa Rica : World Bank Poverty and Inequality Assessment \(2022\)](#)
- [Global Gender Gap Report 2022 – Global Economic Forum](#)
- [Costa Rica's Women, Children and Adolescents Survey \(2018\)](#)
- [Costa Rica's Time-Use survey \(2017\)](#)
- [Employment Survey – National Institute of Statistics and Censuses Costa Rica](#)
- [Costa Rica Country Profile – Gender Equality Observatory, ECLAC](#)
- [Costa Rica Fact Sheet – UN WOMEN](#)