



TAJIKISTAN

“We are in the third year of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its sustainable development goals. The recent High-Level Political Forum has vividly demonstrated that despite certain progress there are early signs that the countries are not on track to reach SDGs by 2030.”

H.E. Mr. Mahmamin MAHMADAMINOV
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Tajikistan to the UN
General Debates of the 73rd UNGA session

Country Background

8.9	million, total population	0.34	GINI coefficient (income inequality)
3,897	GDP per capita, 2011 PPP \$	0.12	D-index (inequality of opportunity)
31.3 %	people in poverty (below the national poverty line)	71	years of life expectancy at birth
4.8 %	people in extreme poverty (below \$1.90 a day)	11.2	expected years of schooling at birth

Source: ESCAP, World Bank Open Data, UNDP

Leaving no one behind by ensuring a level playing field

Inequality of opportunity refers to the unequal access to fundamental rights and services, required for individuals to sustain and improve their livelihoods.¹

In Tajikistan, large gaps exist between the *best-off* and the *furthest behind* groups in access to different opportunities. Full-time employment and access to clean fuels are the most unequally distributed opportunities, with access gaps of at least 50 percentage points between the *best-off* and the *furthest behind* groups. Less than 5 per cent of people in the *furthest behind* group have access to bank accounts or have completed higher education.

Identifying the characteristics of the *best-off* and the *furthest behind* group in access to clean fuels reveals how almost all households in urban areas belonging to the top 60 of the wealth distribution have access to clean fuels. This blue box represents the *best-off* group. The green box shows the *furthest behind* group with the lowest access to clean fuels: households in the bottom 40, where only 44 per cent have access.

Figure 1. How wide are the gaps in access to opportunities?

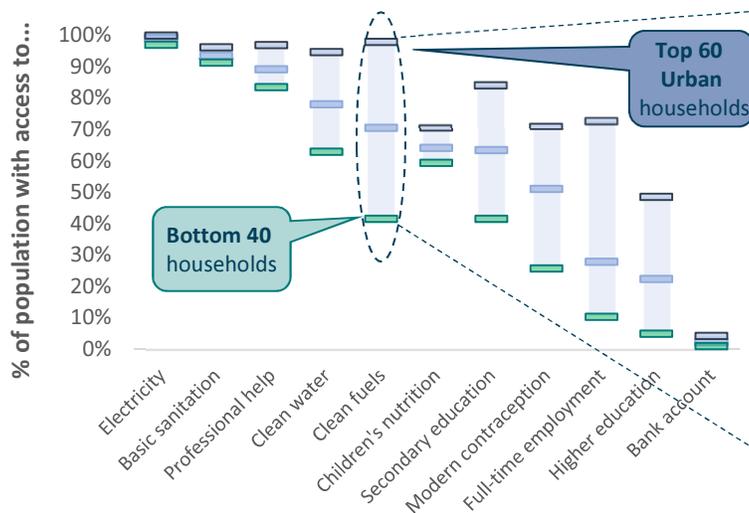
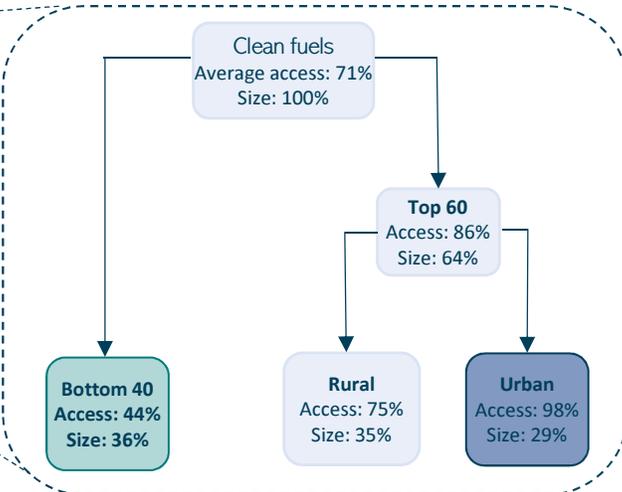


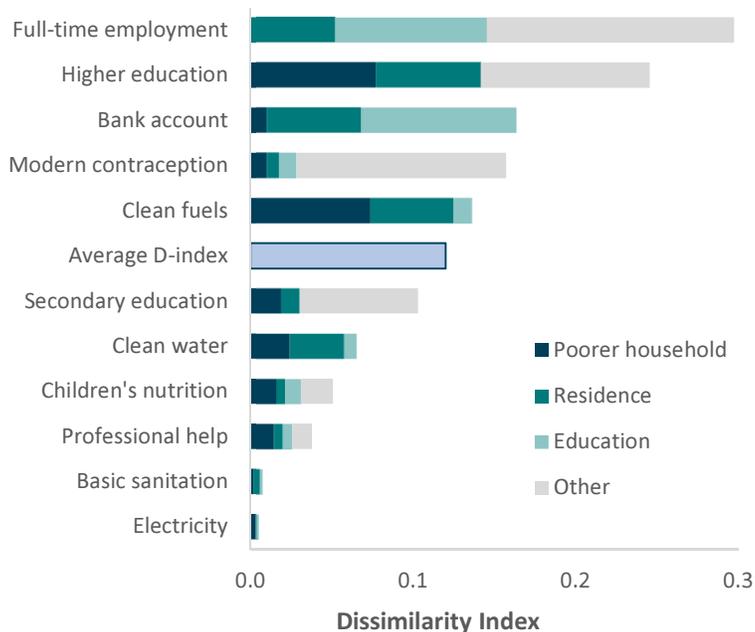
Figure 2. Who are the furthest behind?



— Average access — Average best-off group — Average furthest behind group

Source: ESCAP calculations, using data from DHS 2012 and the Gallup World Poll

Figure 3: Drivers of inequality in access to different opportunities



Household wealth, the place of residence and educational level are behind most of the inequality in access to opportunities.

Other circumstances, however, also appear relevant in explaining unequal access to opportunities.

For example, women, people between the age of 24 and 50, and single Tajiks have limited access to full-time employment. Also, women are less likely to have completed secondary or higher education. A woman's age and the number of children under 5 in the household explains unequal access to modern contraception. Finally, the number of children in the household explains, together with mother's education, inequality in children's nutritional outcomes.

Source: ESCAP calculations, using data from DHS 2012 and the Gallup World Poll
 Note: A Dissimilarity index (D-Index) is used to examine which circumstance contributes most to overall inequality among different population groups.

Key Takeaways

In Tajikistan, the two largest opportunity gaps between the *best-off* and the *furthest behind* group are in full-time employment and in access to clean fuels. While 98 per cent of households in the top 60 of the wealth distribution living in urban areas have access to clean fuels, only 44 per cent of households among the bottom 40 do. Understanding households' circumstances in shaping energy consumption patterns is paramount in addressing clean fuels inequalities.

Less than 5 per cent of Tajiks in the *furthest behind* group have completed higher education. Moreover, less than 1 per cent of people in the *furthest behind* group have access to bank accounts. Financial literacy and national strategies for financial inclusion, along with accompanying action plans and monitoring frameworks, should be prioritized.

Among all groups, inequality of opportunity is explained by distinct circumstances. Age group, gender and the presence of children under the age of 5 in the household appear as the most important circumstances shaping inequality in 5 out of 11 opportunities. Specific policies and programmes that empower young girls, as well as promote women's access to the labor market, are a must in ensuring a level playing field.

¹ The opportunities considered in this country brief are education, women's health, children's nutrition, decent employment, basic water and sanitation, access to clean energy, and financial inclusion.

Cover photo by Daniel Noll

For more information and thematic reports on these data and analysis, please visit: <https://www.unescap.org/our-work/social-development/poverty-and-inequality/resources>

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