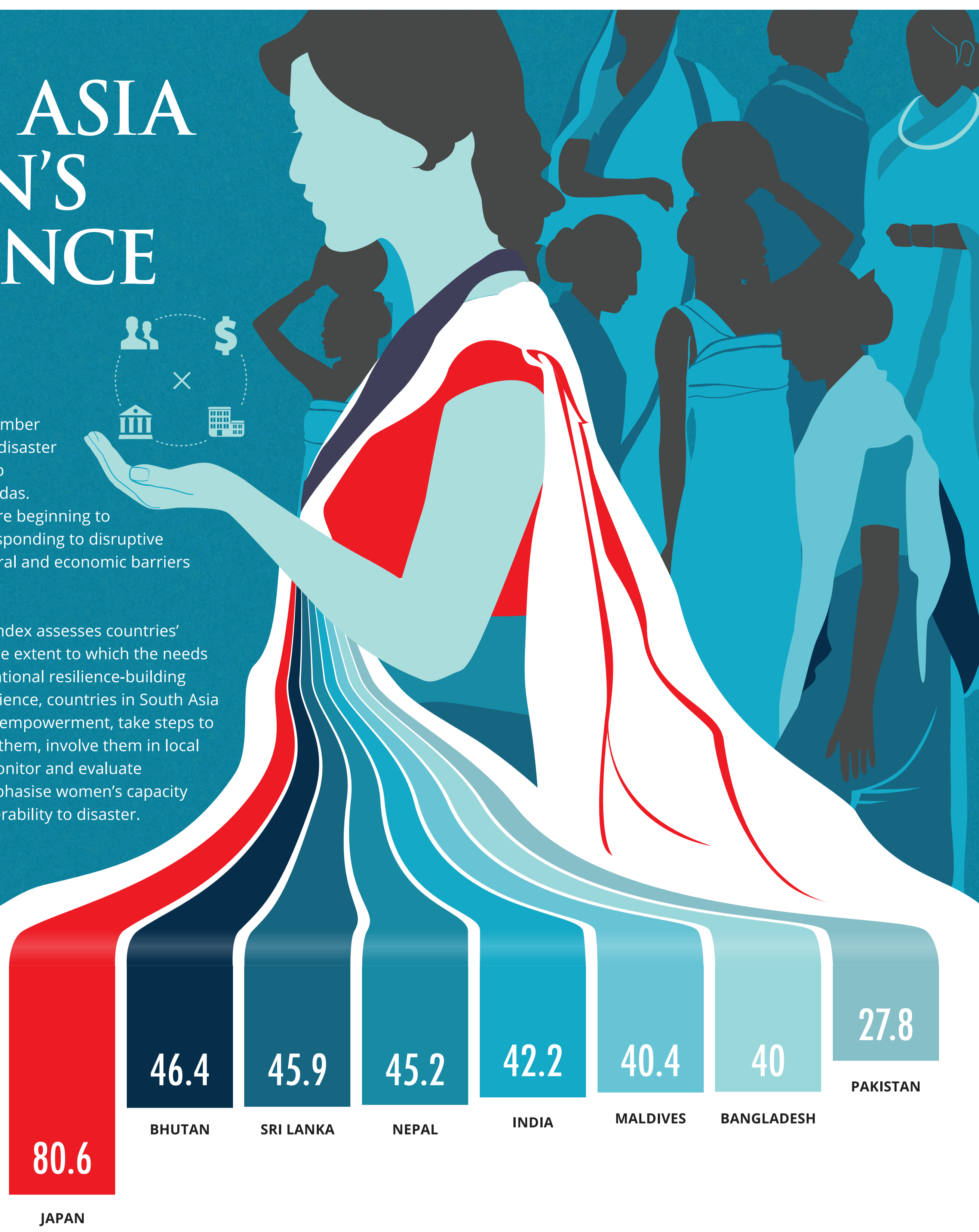


SOUTH ASIA WOMEN'S RESILIENCE INDEX

South Asia has been affected by a number of disasters in recent years, pushing disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience up development and policymaking agendas. Numerous examples show women are beginning to take the lead in preparing for and responding to disruptive events, but in South Asia, socio-cultural and economic barriers often prevent them from doing so.

The South Asia Women's Resilience Index assesses countries' capacity for DRR and recovery and the extent to which the needs of women are being considered in national resilience-building efforts. It finds that to maximise resilience, countries in South Asia need to improve women's economic empowerment, take steps to tackle high levels of violence against them, involve them in local DRR planning as decision-makers, monitor and evaluate gender-specific DRR targets, and emphasise women's capacity for leadership as much as their vulnerability to disaster.



- High-income, industrialised Japan included as benchmark country to contextualise South Asian focus
- Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, the Maldives and Bangladesh achieve an overall score in a relatively narrow band
- Pakistan stands out for its lack of progress but is developing some best-practice policies

KEY: WHAT IS ASSESSED IN THE INDEX?



ECONOMIC
The levels of poverty in a society, the funding made available for disaster management, and women's access to financial instruments and employment



INFRASTRUCTURE
The extensiveness and reliability of a country's core infrastructure, i.e. transport, power and communications; presence of early-warning system; land-use and environmental regulations; water and sanitation



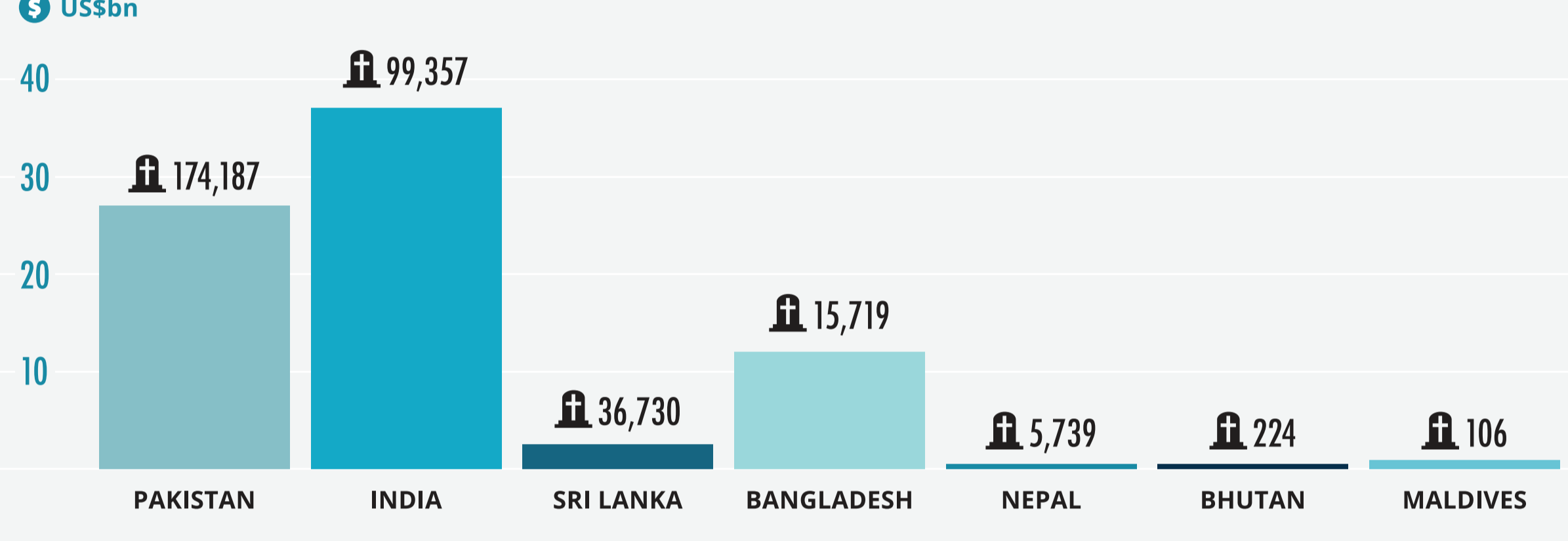
INSTITUTIONAL
The extent of protection for women and vulnerable groups as a basis for disaster planning and response; presence of a culture of safety; DRR policy co-ordination and gender focus; government effectiveness



SOCIAL
How vulnerable the population is in the face of a disaster, how educated it is and whether girls receive the same opportunities as boys; healthcare investments and indicators

DAMAGE AND DEATHS FROM DISASTERS

- Flood-prone Pakistan suffered from highest loss of life
- Cost of disasters also high for India
- Mountainous Bhutan and low-lying island state of the Maldives less susceptible to large-scale losses
- Impact of disasters is often greater on women in both deaths and economic aftereffects



Figures cover 1995-2014 and refer to natural disaster events only

Source: Emergency Events Database

WOMEN'S RESILIENCE INDEX BY INDICATOR

CASE STUDY
Women building resilient communities in South Asia

PAKISTAN

- 23.8
- 31.5
- 34.5
- 21.6

- Women are highly restricted in their access to formal finance
- Large swathes of the population lack everyday access to sanitation facilities and healthcare
- Restrictive social attitudes impede women's mobility and access to education
- 2014 policy guidelines show a commitment to addressing specific needs of women in disaster management planning

NEPAL

- 48.3
- 32.7
- 47.1
- 52.5

- Women are required to be represented on central and local disaster management committees under the 2009 National Strategy on Disaster Risk Management
- Growing recognition of gender issues in design of legislation and policy frameworks
- Women enjoy equal rights in property ownership and inheritance
- Gaps exist in communications between national and community level emergency response, and transport infrastructure is underdeveloped

BHUTAN

- 43
- 37.5
- 49.7
- 55.6

- Growing recognition of importance of gender issues in design of legislation and policy frameworks
- Tradition of matrilineal inheritance means that over 60% of land title deeds are held by women
- More progressive social attitudes improve women's mobility and access to education
- Bhutan lacks a national-level critical infrastructure plan and social safety nets are limited

JAPAN

- 73.2
- 90.1
- 85.5
- 73.7

OVERCOMING WOMEN'S MOBILITY RESTRICTIONS

"DoctHERS"—a scheme being piloted by social enterprise Naya Jeevan ("New Life") in Pakistan uses mobile technology to connect female doctors working from home with female patients whose mobility is also restricted.

EMPOWERING FEMALE SLUM DWELLERS

Lumanti, a Nepalese civil society organisation, established saving schemes for female slum dwellers, who subsequently organised themselves to advocate for settlement rights.

LIVING IN PURDAH AND PREPARING FOR FLOODS

The disaster early warning system in Kamra, Pakistan is managed by the community with information passed on via notice boards and mosque loudspeakers. The women's flood preparedness group mobilised resources to construct a women-only community centre, which serves as a shelter and a health clinic.

DRIVING GRASSROOTS DEMAND FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The Community Resilience Fund provides grants for disaster-prone communities. In Bangladesh, a programme trained 20 female leaders who went on to 'map' risks and vulnerabilities from floods.

WOMEN-LED EMERGENCY RESPONSE IN BANGLADESH

Damage assessment and procurement committees made up entirely of women assessed the damage caused by Cyclone Mahasen in May 2013. They led the budgeting process, selection of labour, item distribution and monitoring of reconstruction efforts.

THE MALDIVES

- 18.2
- 59.6
- 32.4
- 51.5

- Performs well by regional standards on essential infrastructure for resilience (e.g. coverage of communications networks)
- Despite having the highest GDP per capita in South Asia, women have little access to credit or financial instruments
- Few initiatives exist to extend social protection or income-generation opportunities for women
- Scant recognition of importance of gender issues in design of legislation and policy frameworks

INDIA

- 55.9
- 35.3
- 41.1
- 36.4

- Up to 10% of all programmes financed by the public sector can be spent on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation
- A range of personal financing options available to women and has a more progressive labour environment than South Asian counterparts
- Some restrictions on movement and lower school enrolment for girls
- High-profile cases have raised awareness on the issue of violence against women, but it is not referenced either in local or national DRR policy

SRI LANKA

- 51.8
- 58.3
- 29.4
- 43.9

- Communications infrastructure is relatively good by regional standards
- Improved stability after the end of the civil war due to investments in transport infrastructure
- Performs less well on "culture of safety" among institutions; a high degree of centralisation is a challenge in disaster risk management
- Violence against women continues to be a pervasive problem

BANGLADESH

- 48.6
- 22.3
- 45.4
- 43.8

- Government funding for disaster relief (US\$5.3 per person) is the highest of all the South Asian countries in the Index
- National Plan for Disaster Management recognises particular vulnerabilities of women
- Struggles with quality of, and access to power; transportation and sanitation infrastructure, and low technology penetration rates
- Compliance is a pervasive issue, as exemplified by the collapse of a garment factory building in 2013 that led to 1,138 deaths, despite the presence of a mandatory building code

For full country summaries and sources see the accompanying white paper



<http://www.economistsinsights.com/analysis/south-asia-womens-resilience-index>

The WRI was designed and constructed by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) using the latest available data for seven countries in South Asia and including Japan as a benchmark. The analysis of the index results has been conducted by the EIU alone and does not necessarily reflect the views of the sponsors.