

# Barriers for women to join and stay in the workforce

Samantha Hung

Chief of Gender Equality Thematic Group

Asian Development Bank

*The views expressed in this presentation are the views of the author/s and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Asian Development Bank, or its Board of Governors, or the governments they represent. ADB does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this presentation and accepts no responsibility for any consequence of their use. The countries listed in this presentation do not imply any view on ADB's part as to sovereignty or independent status or necessarily conform to ADB's terminology.*

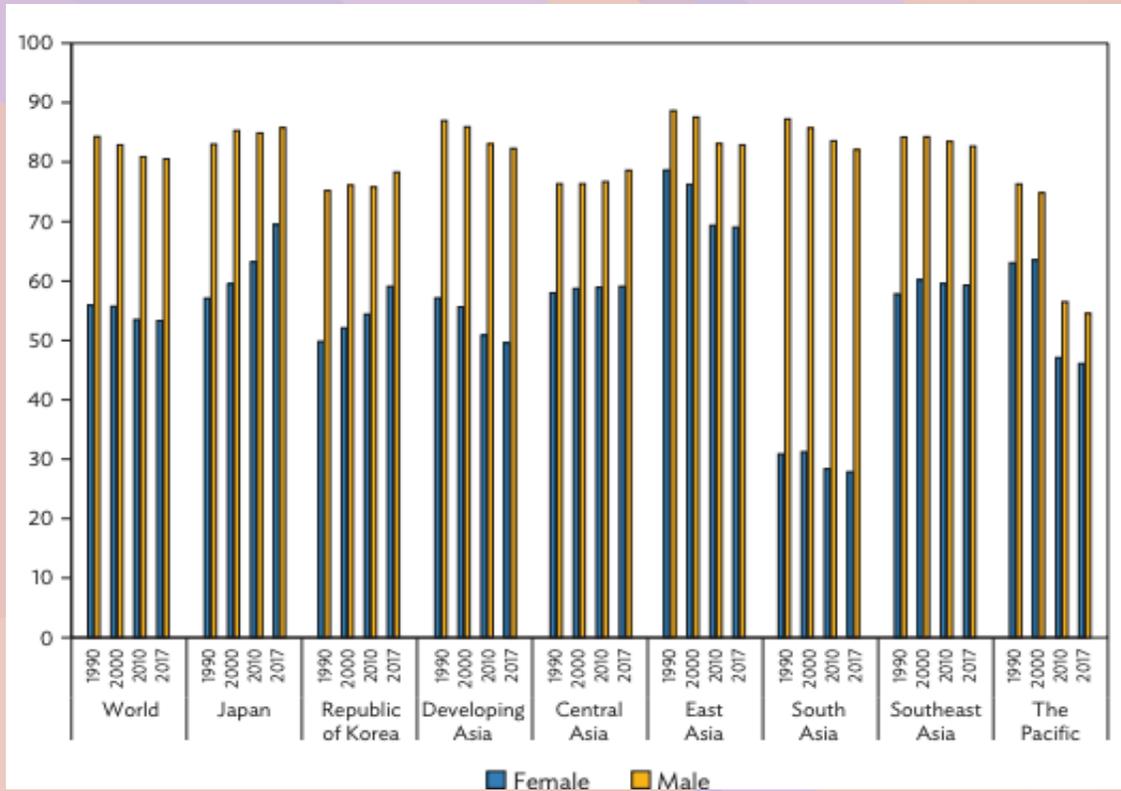


# Presentation Outline

- Overview of women in the labor market in Asia and the Pacific
- Key barriers to labor market participation
- Making workplaces work for women
- How ADB supports more women to join and stay in the workforce

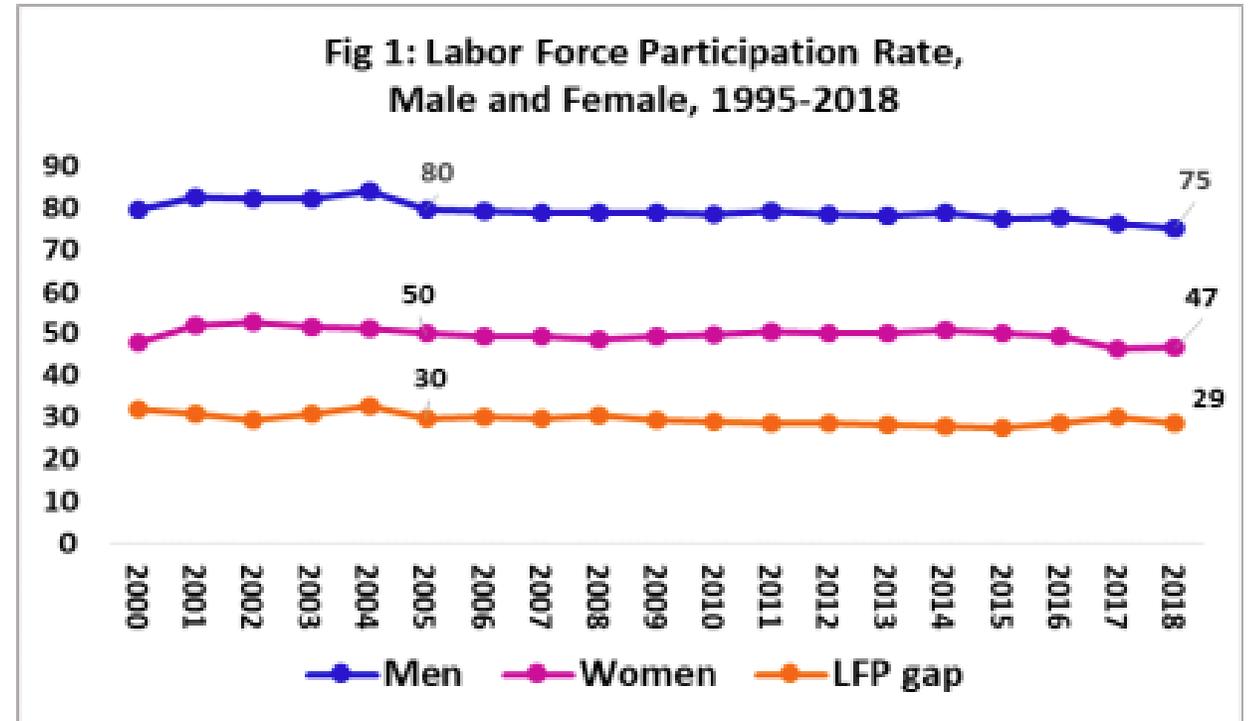
# Female labor force participation: stagnating with widening gender gaps

Developing Asia, 1990-2017



Source: ADB, 2020. Journey to Prosperity. ADB calculations based on ILO data.

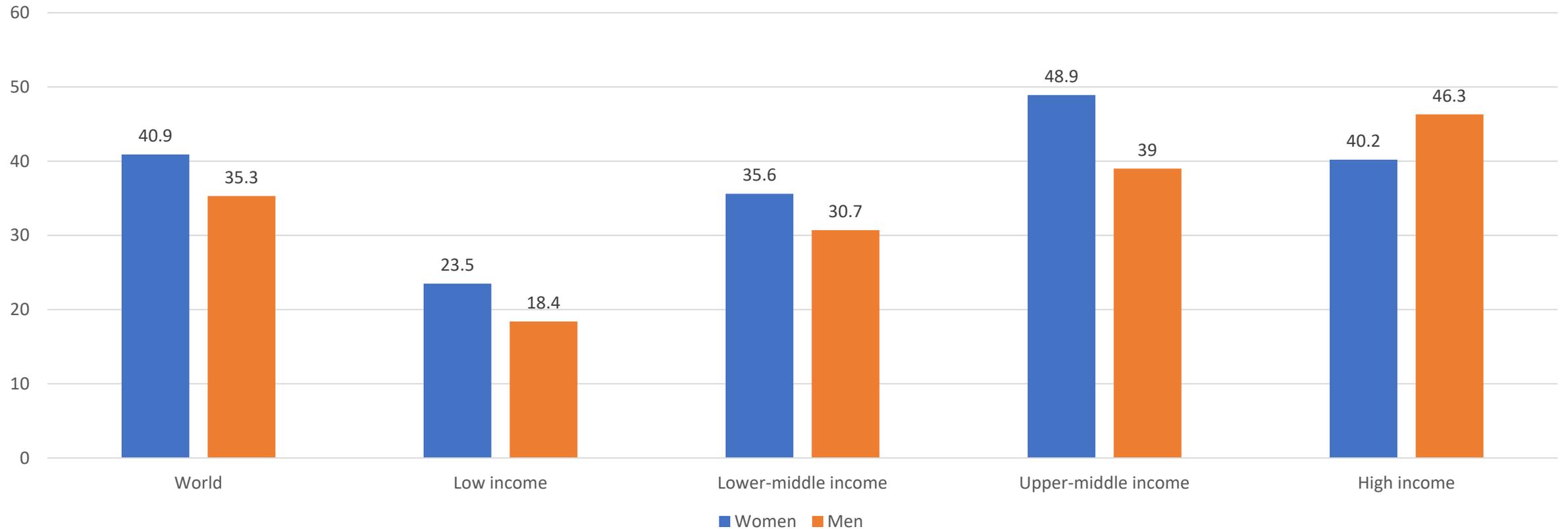
Philippines, 1995-2018



Source: NEDA. 2018. Determinants of female labor force participation

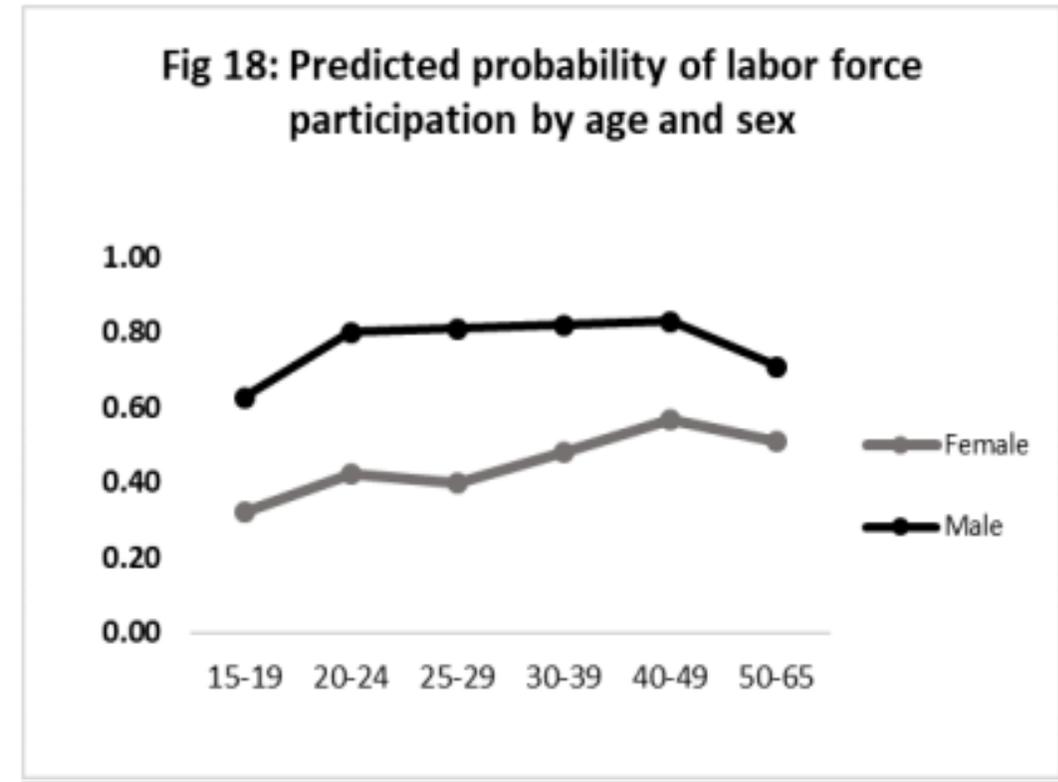
# COVID-19 has worsened women's labor market access

Share of employment currently at high risk\* of reduction in working hours, cuts to wages and layoffs, by sex - 2020



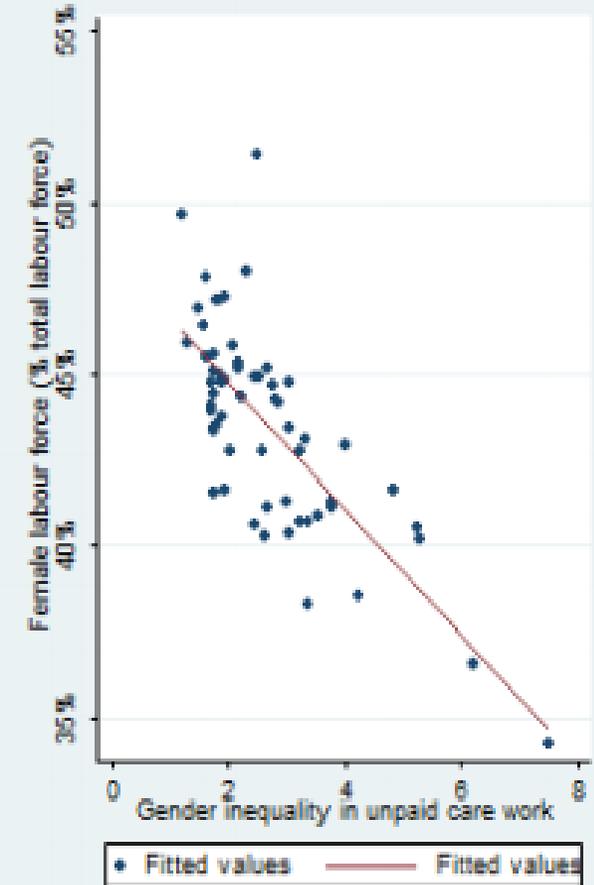
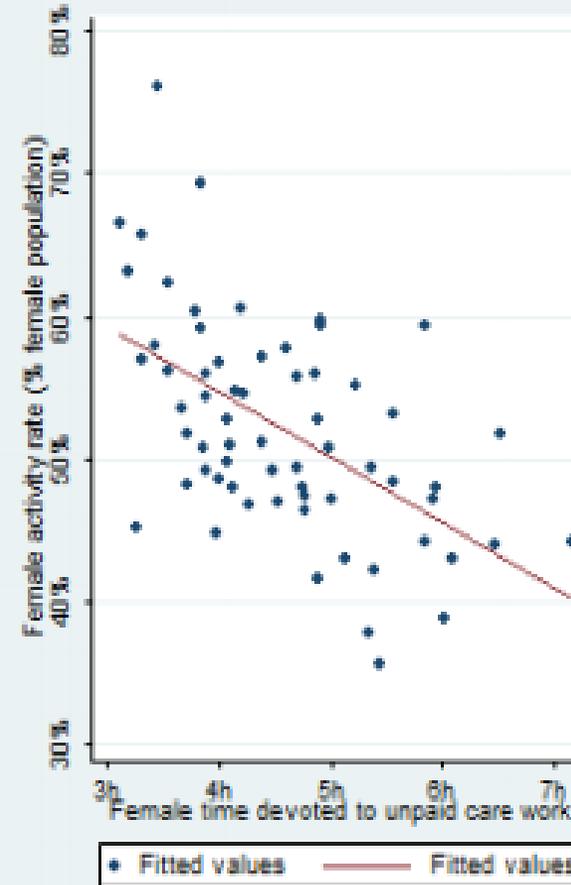
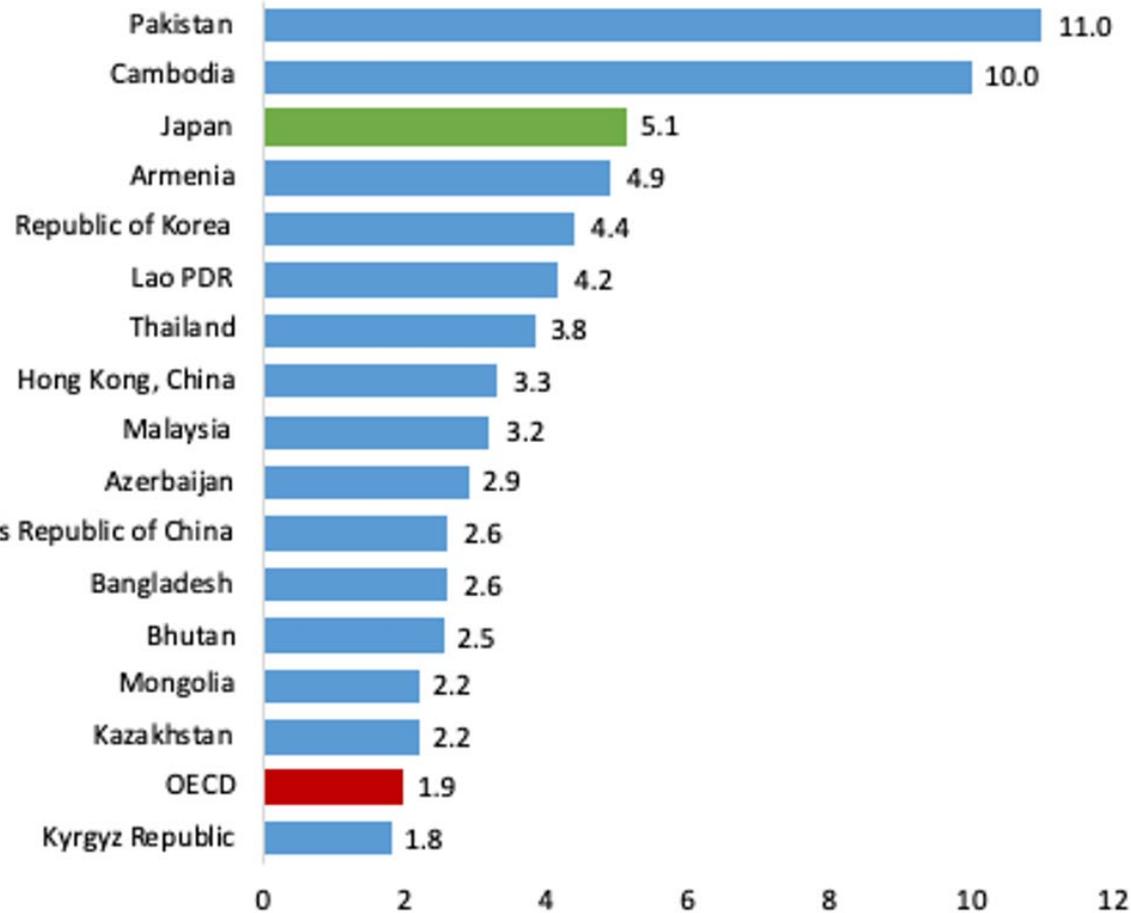
# Key barriers for women in the workforce

- Job segregation - “feminized” jobs typically less valued
- Sticky floors: low-skilled and low-paid jobs with limited opportunities for career progression
- Glass ceilings: few women CEOs, corporate boards, senior management
- Gender pay gap: 16% for PH
- Workplace culture: prevalence of sexual harassment, lack of family-friendly policies to support women’s ‘double shift’



Source: NEDA 2018.

# Unpaid care work is an important barrier to FLFP

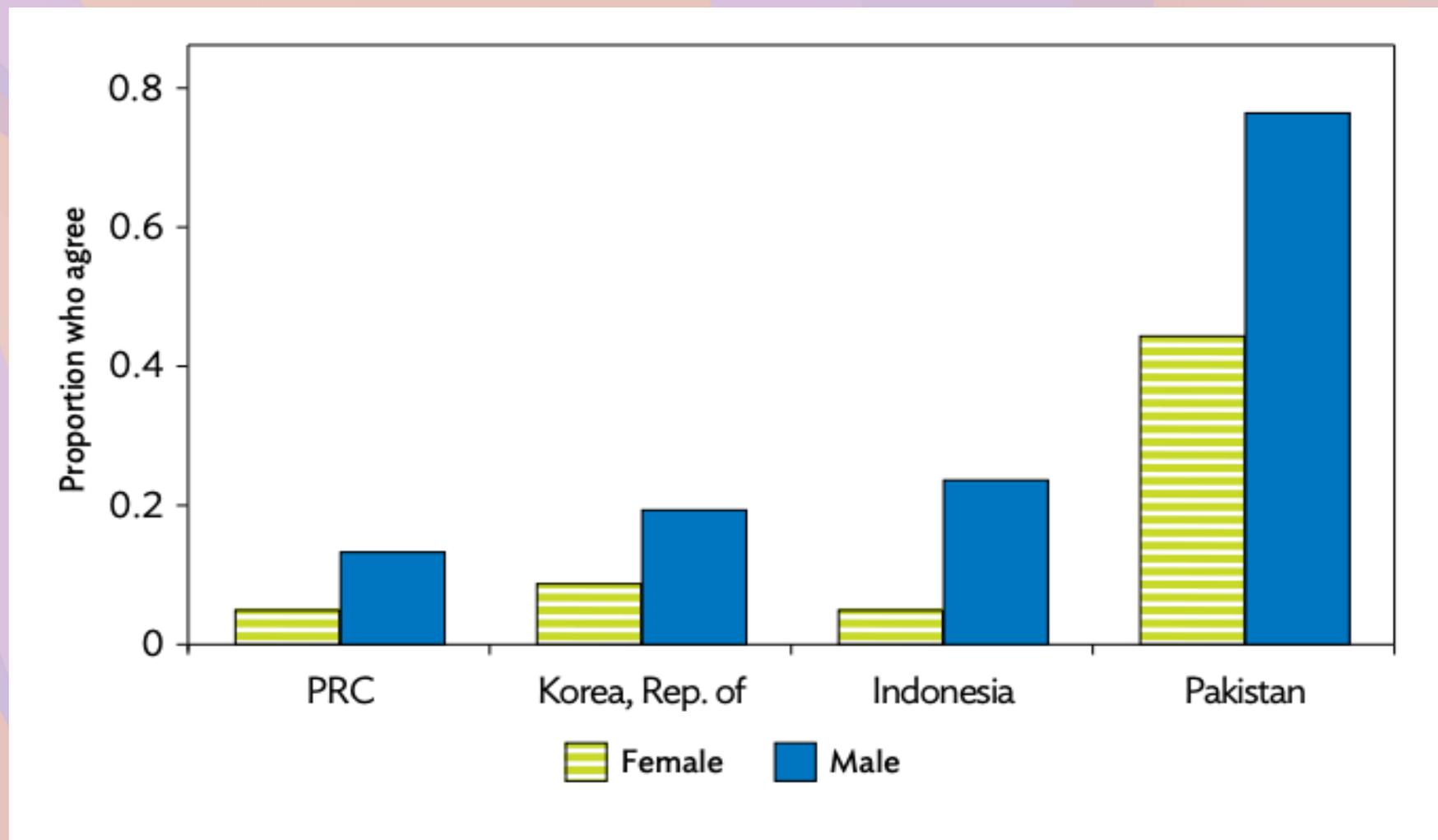




# Social norms shape perceptions of women at work

*Do men make better business executives than women?*

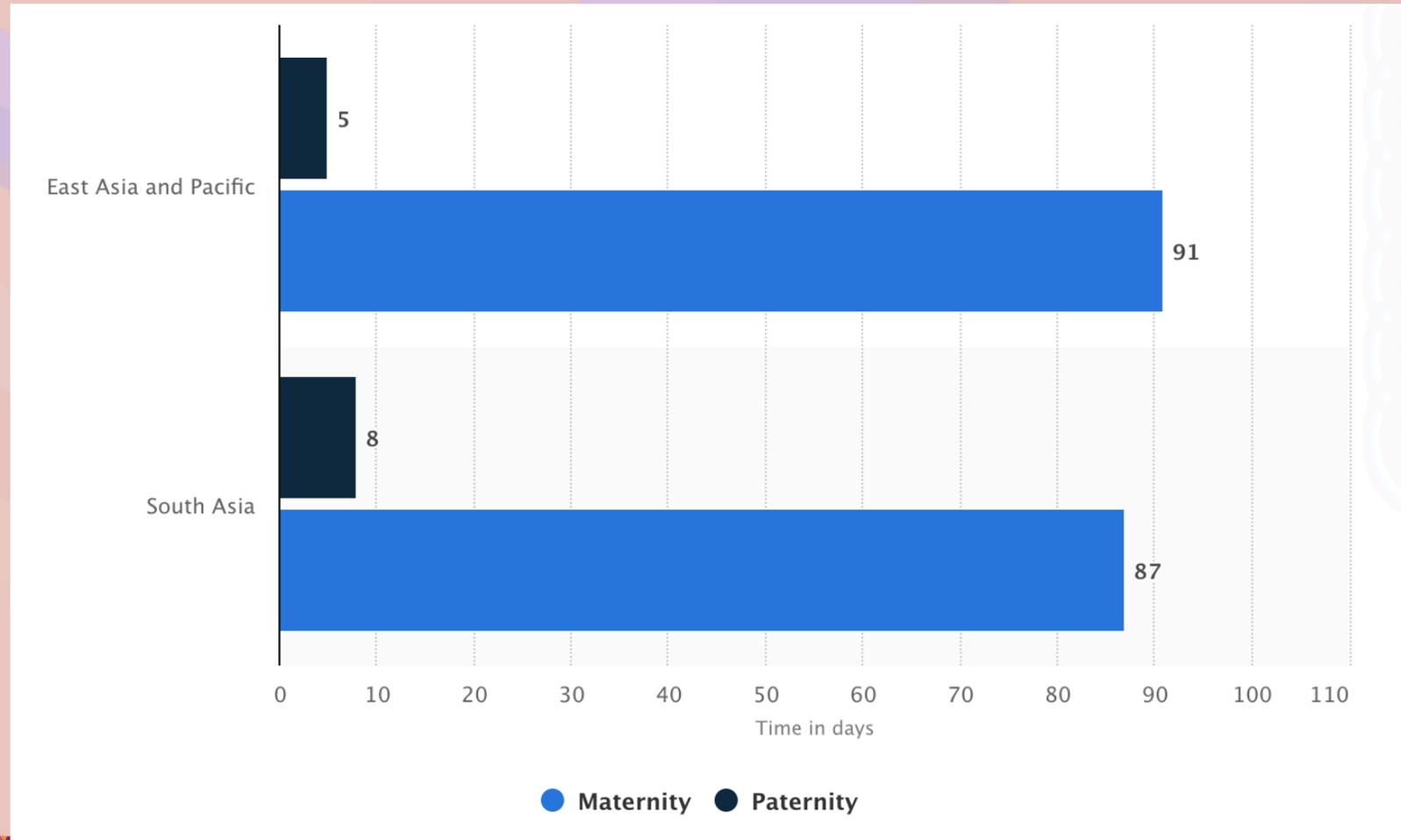
Source: ADB 2016 based on WVS survey data



# Making workplaces work for women: policies

- ✓ Maternity leave
- ✓ Paternity/parental leave
- ✓ Flexible work
- ✓ Childcare
- ✓ Zero tolerance on sexual harassment
- ✓ Mentorship/career development programs
- ✓ Targets

## Maternity and paternity leave provisions in AP





## Operational Priority 2 Accelerating Progress in Gender Equality

- Build on good practices on gender in operations
- Go beyond gender mainstreaming in country partnership strategy
- Develop stronger gender pipeline
- Improve quality of project gender designs and target setting
- Continue to improve gender equality results in projects
- Conduct pilots and technical assistance (TA) on innovative and transformative approaches
- Enhance gender knowledge products, events, and partnerships
- Update and strengthen business processes and tools
- Combine ordinary capital resources with TA and concessional resources
- Build knowledge and expertise in emerging areas

### Strategic Operational Priorities

**1** Women's economic empowerment increased

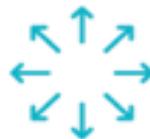
**2** Gender equality in human development enhanced

**3** Gender equality in decision making and leadership enhanced

**4** Women's time poverty and drudgery reduced

**5** Women's resilience to external shocks strengthened

### Operational Approaches



Scale up gender mainstreaming in operations across sectors and themes



Integrate Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5's "transformative" gender agenda, e.g., economic assets and resources for women, unpaid care and domestic work, digital technology/ ICT, and gender-based violence



Expand gender mainstreaming in nonsovereign operations



Tackle multiple gender inequalities through integrated solutions, e.g., livable cities program



Develop capacity of developing member countries and clients in tracking and achieving gender-related SDGs

### Sub-pillars

- Women's access to job skills improved
- Women's financial inclusion increased
- Women's entrepreneurship supported
- Women's access to infrastructure and services improved

- Women's and girls' participation in nontraditional education and training increased
- Quality and access to women's and girls' health services improved
- Protection from gender-based violence strengthened

- Women's leadership capacity improved
- Regulatory, legal, and institutional environment for gender equality improved

- Provision of time-saving or gender-responsive infrastructure improved
- Quality and access to child and elderly care services improved

- Resilience-building community-based initiatives for women and girls implemented
- Provision of climate and disaster-resilient infrastructure for women and girls improved
- Financial protection systems for women strengthened
- Dedicated crisis-responding social assistance systems for women and girls strengthened



# ADB's support to female-friendly workplaces

- ✓ Equal pay for equal work
- ✓ Targets for skilled jobs for women
- ✓ Invests in women-owned businesses
- ✓ Mentorship and upskilling programs
- ✓ Targets for women on boards, senior management
- ✓ Works with clients to adopt sexual harassment policies
- ✓ Promotes more women in non-traditional sectors
- ✓ Tackles discriminatory social norms



**THANK YOU!**

[www.adb.org/gender](http://www.adb.org/gender)

