

Annex A:
**Individual Economy
Reports**

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AEPR 2020: Structural Reform and Women’s Empowerment

INDIVIDUAL ECONOMY REPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

This year’s AEPR aims to build capability in APEC economies to identify and implement structural reforms and supporting policies that empower women to engage in economic activity. The AEPR will provide an opportunity for APEC economies to: take stock of women’s contribution to, and representation in, the region’s economy; share information and compare experiences and policy approaches to promoting women’s economic participation now and into the future; and inform the Economic Committee’s work to advance women’s empowerment issues.

Through the Questionnaire, we are seeking to paint a picture of the collective structural reform policy environment, as it relates to women’s economic empowerment, in the APEC region; and drill down on the factors behind the declining rate of women’s labour force participation. The Questionnaire seeks to gather economy-level responses on: the nature of the barriers and challenges that stand in the way of women’s full and equal participation in the economy; the key structural reforms that have enabled women’s economic participation, and any gaps in structural and legislative frameworks; the information on the policies and programs that promote women’s economic empowerment and security; the approaches to data collection, and monitoring and evaluation of structural policies; and APEC’s role in promoting women’s economic empowerment in our economies.

For the purposes of the questionnaire, the definition and scope of structural reform policy will reflect the Economic Committee’s areas of work, namely: Competition Policy and Law; Corporate Law and Governance; Regulatory Reform; Public Sector Governance; Strengthening Economic and Legal Infrastructure; and Ease of Doing Business.

We encourage economies to include links to online material, where referenced in their responses.

Questionnaire

<p>1. <u>Barriers and challenges:</u> What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women’s participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?</p>
<p>2. <u>Structural reform needs:</u> What are your economy’s main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women’s economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.</p> <p>If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women’s equal economic participation??</p>
<p>3. <u>(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:</u> Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.</p>
<p>4. <u>Leading practices:</u> Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?</p>
<p>5. <u>Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):</u> How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women’s economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?</p>
<p>6. <u>Regional cooperation:</u> What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?</p>

AUSTRALIA

1. **Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Economic opportunity and the security that it affords lies at the heart of the Australian Government's vision for a vibrant, safe and cohesive Australia. Since the early 1980s, economic security for women in Australia has improved considerably. Women's workforce participation is at record high levels – it stands at 61.3 per cent (ages 15 plus) as of February 2020.²

Despite this progress, there remains an economic gap between men and women. Barriers to women's workforce participation persist, including access to affordable childcare, access to flexible working arrangements, and the disproportionate amount of unpaid care and domestic work undertaken by women. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) found that the main, perceived barrier for women wanting to work more, or to start work, is looking after children (23.9 per cent), with the cost and availability of childcare a common challenge.³

Women experiencing multiple disadvantages are more vulnerable to economic insecurity. The workforce participation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, culturally and linguistically diverse women, women in rural and regional areas, and women with disability, are below the domestic average. It is important that efforts to improve women's economic security recognize that women are a diverse group with different needs, aspirations and challenges.

2. **Structural reform needs:** What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

Flexibility in the Paid Parental Leave system. Australian women still take on the majority of unpaid care and work in the home, and because of this, spend more time out of the workforce than men do. This reduces women's earning potential, and contributes to a gender gap in salary and retirement income.

Through the Parental Leave Pay system (PLP), the Australian Government provides financial support for working parents to take time away from work to care for their child, and encourages carers to maintain their attachment to the workforce. PLP can be transferred from the primary carer to their partner to promote greater flexibility and equality in how parents choose to balance work and caring responsibilities, provided both parents meet the work, income and Australian residency tests.

² ABS cat. no. 6202.0, Labour Force, Australia, February 2020, seasonally adjusted

³ ABS cat no. 6239.0 Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, July 2016 to June 2017

The Australian Government's Women's Economic Security Statement, delivered in November 2018, included a variety of measures to make the PLP system more flexible. The Government is investing AU\$54.7 million over five years on these measures (2018 to 2023). Each year, over 2,000 people access only a portion of their PLP before returning to work, which means they lose the unused portion. The Government is providing women with more choice by enabling families to split their PLP blocks of leave over a two-year period, with periods of work in between. This measure will particularly support self-employed women who cannot afford to leave their businesses for 18 consecutive weeks. The changes are currently pending passage of legislation.

The Government also amended the PLP work test, expanding access to women who have irregular work, such as teachers on casual contracts, and women in hazardous jobs who have to leave their job early in their pregnancy, such as in mining and construction. This new measure commenced on 1 January 2020.

Access and affordability of childcare. For Australian women, the main, perceived barrier to workforce participation is looking after children (23.9 per cent), with the cost and availability of childcare found to be a common challenge.⁴ The Government's recent childcare reforms are a significant step towards addressing the accessibility and affordability of childcare.

On 2 July 2018, the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) replaced the previous Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate. This new childcare package is the most significant reform to the early education and care system in Australia in recent decades. The CCS is the main way the Government assists families with their childcare fees. The Government pays the CCS directly to childcare providers, who pass this on to families as a fee reduction. Families make a co-contribution to their childcare fees, paying the provider the difference between the fee charged and the subsidy amount. The CCS is simpler than the previous, multi-payment system, and is better targeted to provide more assistance to low and middle income families. A family's level of CCS is determined by the combined family income, the activity level of both parents and the type of childcare service. Supporting the CCS is the Child Care Safety Net, which provides additional fee assistance for vulnerable families.

From 2019-20 to 2022-23, the Government is investing AU\$37 billion in childcare support. Consumer Price Index data shows that the Government's reforms have delivered real savings to families by reducing out-of-pocket costs (on average, across the economy) by 4.2 per cent since July 2018. In the September Quarter 2019, out-of-pocket costs were less than AU\$5 per hour, per child for the parents of 72.4 per cent of children in childcare center day care.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

Women's Economic Security Statement. In 2018, the Australian Government introduced, for the first time, an AU\$158.3 million Women's Economic Security Statement (the Statement). The initiatives and funding in the Statement target key areas that promote greater choice for Australian women, by boosting their skills and employability; encouraging their return to work; helping them to establish their own businesses; and improving their economic recovery

⁴ ABS cat no. 6239.0 Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, July 2016 to June 2017

following critical life events, such as family and domestic violence and separation. Other key measures in the Statement include:

- AU\$18 million in grants through a women’s start-up fund, Boosting Female Founders, to increase entrepreneurship opportunities for women;
- AU\$3.6 million for the Future Female Entrepreneurs program for around 55,000 girls and young women, focused on encouraging entrepreneurialism and self-employment;
- AU\$1.8 million to 2022-23 to extend the Curious Minds program, which aims to get more girls studying Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM);
- increasing flexibility in the Paid Parental Leave system;
- supporting regional employers through the AU\$1.5 million Career Revive initiative to support business to attract and retain women returning to work after a career break; and
- providing scholarships for women in economics and finance through the Women’s Leadership and Development Program.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). One approach the Australian Government takes to reduce the gender pay gap and support women’s economic participation is through the activities of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA). The WGEA is a statutory agency that was established under the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012, and is charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces. The WGEA collects data from over 4,800 employers, capturing more than four million workers (40 per cent of Australian employees), to provide one of the world’s most comprehensive sources of gender equality data. WGEA also undertakes awareness raising activities about the gender pay gap and works with a wide range of stakeholders to promote and improve gender equality. WGEA collaborates with employers, business, industry and professional associations, academics and researchers and community organisation to provide a range of practical tools and advice.

Improvements to the child care system. As stated above, Australian women report that caring for children is the main barrier for those wanting to work more, or to start work.⁵ Accessible and affordable childcare is therefore critical to supporting women’s economic participation. As detailed above, in 2018 the Australian Government introduced significant reforms to deliver a simpler, more affordable, more flexible and more accessible childcare system. These reforms involve an AU\$37 billion investment over four years, and are yielding positive results: 86 per cent of child care service charge fees at or below the Government’s hourly fee cap; for 72.4 per cent of families, out-of-pocket costs are less than AU\$5 per hour per child; and child care participation has increased.

5. **Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women’s economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

⁵ ABS cat no. 6239.0 Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, July 2016 to June 2017

WGEA data. The WGEA collects data that provides vital insights into Australia’s progress on gender equality in the workplace. The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 requires non-public sector employers with 100 or more employees to submit an annual report to WGEA, in order to participate in government procurement processes. Employers must report on indicators such as gender composition of the workforce and governing bodies, equal remuneration between men and women, availability of flexible working arrangements, and prevention of sex-based harassment and discrimination. This reporting framework aims to encourage measures that improve gender equality outcomes. WGEA uses the reporting data to develop educational Competitor Analysis Benchmark Reports based on six gender equality indicators. The reports can be customised by industry and organisation size, and enable employers to identify areas for focus, develop informed strategies and measure performance against peers over time.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data. The ABS is Australia’s statistical agency. It carries out a Monthly Population Survey that produces the economy’s employment and unemployment figures. The ABS monthly and quarterly labour force publications include gender disaggregated data, which policy makers use to measure women’s economic participation.

Since 2011, the ABS also publishes an annual Gender Indicators, a resource that provides a summary of gender disaggregated data in six domains: economic security; education; health; work and family balance; safety and justice; and democracy, governance and citizenship. The Gender Indicators is a central access point for gender-specific data to explore differences in situation between women and men in Australia.

The 2018 Women’s Economic Security Statement included AU\$12.5 million to reinstate the Time Use Survey, which the ABS last conducted in 2006. Scheduled to commence again in 2020-21, the Time Use Survey will collect comprehensive information about how Australians use their time – including at work, at home, in unpaid care, travelling, job seeking, physical activity and volunteering. It will provide insights into the economic value of unpaid care and work, which is a major contributor to the workforce participation gap between women and men.

6. **Regional cooperation:** What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

As a vehicle for regional economic integration, facilitator of a multi-sectoral capacity building program and an incubator of innovative policy initiatives, APEC is well-positioned to provide leadership on women’s economic empowerment issues, including by sharing data and best practice policy approaches between member economies, and developing regional responses to target common gaps and barriers.

The development of the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth in 2019 has provided APEC economies with strategic guidance on key areas for collective and coordinated attention and investment in the region, including: increasing the collection and analysis of gender data to inform policy development; addressing enduring and systemic barriers to women’s economic opportunity, such as equal access to credit and assets; encouraging women and girls into STEM studies and onwards to higher wage careers; and advocating for a greater representation of women in leadership positions.

There are also opportunities for APEC to engage international partners, in order to leverage existing work and contribute to global efforts and initiatives in this space. In addition to its support for APEC’s women’s economic empowerment agenda, Australia is investing in a number of global and regional initiatives and organisations focused on strengthening women’s economic security and inclusion. These include:

- Women’s World Banking (WWB). This is a leading global organization on women’s financial inclusion, giving low-income women increased access to financial tools and resources. Australia has contributed to WWB programs in Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia and Viet Nam. WWB generally works with financial service providers, but in Indonesia, is partnering with the Indonesian Government to update and implement the economy’s financial inclusion strategy and ensure women are not left behind.
- Investing in Women (IW). Australia has invested in IW to expand women’s economic participation through new public and private sector partnerships in South East Asia – Indonesia, the Philippines, Viet Nam and Myanmar. IW has initiated work with the private sector and other stakeholders to advance public policy reforms that remove barriers to workplace gender equality. In 2017, IW supported the passage of the Viet Nam Labor Code Policy Reforms, through providing a gender analysis of the existing Code and Gender Impact Assessment of proposed policy reforms.
- Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi). This global initiative provides financial and technical assistance for women-led small and medium enterprises and support for policy and regulatory reform to remove barriers to women’s economic participation.

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Brunei Darussalam acknowledges that the role of women is vital in caring for the family, as well as contributing to the socio-economic development of the economy. Even though Brunei Darussalam continues to undertake several measures to achieve a work-life harmony and balance, it remains a challenge to ease the burden of dual responsibilities of women who work full time and carrying out the responsibilities as mother and spouse.

In terms of educational attainment at the tertiary level, many women graduates perform well in all kinds of disciplines and professions. Following this trend, milestones have been achieved including the increasing numbers of women going into traditionally male-dominated jobs such as pilots, engineers, and technicians. Positive trends can be seen recently whereby the number of women going into professional jobs are higher than men at 56% women and 44% men. The challenge is to ensure that this trend will continuously be positive.

On the other hand, the high trend in educational attainments does not reflect the number of women in senior positions i.e. decision-making positions both in the public and private sectors. According to the 2019 Brunei Darussalam Labor Force Survey (LFS), the number of women holding Managerial and Senior Officials positions is lower than men at 33% women and 67% men. Additionally, at the tertiary level of education, there are more unemployed women than unemployed men, at 61% and 39% respectively.

Although, Brunei Darussalam has made progress in ensuring that women will continuously have access to opportunities such as the promotion of more women in senior government positions such as Deputy Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, and Deputy Permanent Secretaries and more women have been appointed in the recent Legislative Council term, the challenge remains in formulating ways and policies that can ensure equitable opportunities for women, particularly in creating a pipeline of successors for higher decision making and executive positions as well as to lead businesses and institutions.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

There are no immediate identifiable structural reform needs to enabling women's economic participation because all government policies and programs are implemented without gender discrimination. Nonetheless, Brunei Darussalam remains open to learning the best practices of other economies and continuously review and improve current policies, where necessary, to support women's economic empowerment. On this note, a study on the development of women is in the pipeline to study the current state of play of women for the formulation of a Plan of Action for women in the economy.

3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives: Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic

empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

In tackling unemployment, the Manpower Planning and Employment Council⁶ (MPEC) introduced a number of programs as follows:

- a. The i-Ready program is an 18 months' apprenticeship program introduced in April 2017. The objective of the program is to increase the employability and marketability of local jobseekers from TVET, HND, and Bachelor's Degree qualification levels through on-the-job training as well as work experiential learning. As of March 2020, the program has enrolled 2,497 graduates (61% are women), where 56% of 946 that have already secured full-time employment are women.
- b. The Upskilling and Reskilling Program which encourages the workforce to continue in developing themselves in various fields of courses including Hospitality and Tourism, ICT, Data Science and Research, Human Resources, and Employability Skills. This is an opportunity for job seekers and employees in the private sector to be continuously skilled and reskilled. Under this program, the training cost of participants including professional courses cost will be borne by the Government.
- c. A youth entrepreneurship program that includes single mothers as one of its target audience group was endorsed recently. The program aims to generate successful business owners. A follow-up support system after the program ends will be in place to realize this goal and it is set to be completed and launched within the year 2020.

The Community Development Department, under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports introduced the Self-Reliance Scheme since June 2006 and started the implementation of a few other programs in 2016 with similar objectives. The programs are BKB 100 (*Bantuan Kebajikan Bulanan* 100 or Monthly Welfare Assistance 100), Employment Plan, Small Business from Home, and also Innovation Visionary Youth Programme. One of the objectives of the programs is to empower women and to help alleviate their financial burden and change the crutch-mentality of welfare recipients by reducing their dependence on welfare benefits to support their livelihood and by stimulating a culture of self-reliance and self-sustenance. The targeted group consists of the poor and needy with inadequate income; the unemployed and those with limited income-generating skills as well as entrepreneurial willpower.

The TEKAD (*Teguhkan Ekonomi Keluarga Asas Berdikari* or Strengthen the Foundation of Family Economic Self-Reliance) program has also been implemented. The program aims to empower “able-bodied and able to work” welfare recipients (25-30 years old) through collaborations with private companies. As of now, 100 welfare recipients have joined the program, in which half of them are women and 14 people have secured employment.

Promoting women's involvement in the 'Local Government' through *Majlis Perundingan Kampung* (Village Consultative Council) and *Majlis Perundingan Mukim* (Sub-District Consultative Council) activities with the establishment of women's bureau under the

⁶ An economy-wide manpower council established on 18th November 2019 comprising of several ministers and deputy ministers whose mission is to ensure effective manpower planning with alignment to employability and employment.

councils. Whereby the roles of the Councils are to strengthen the effectiveness of the Head of *Mukim* (Sub-District) and Village leaders as the core of grassroots leadership; to promote good citizenship, and; to plan and implement plans for the well-being of the people and residents.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Support for Mothers. The Maternity Leave Regulation⁷ was introduced in January 2011 and resulted in the extension of 105 days of maternity leave as opposed to 56 days pre-2011. The Regulation also states that employers may not terminate the employment of women employees while they are on maternity leave. This ensures women on maternity leave are guaranteed employment upon their return to work and also given sufficient time to recover. Thus, the Regulation provides better postnatal and family care which enables women's full and equal participation in the economy post-delivery. It is also an opportunity for working mothers to have a work-life balance.

To further support mothers, in 2017, a new scheme was introduced by the Ministry of Health to provide free diapers for new-born and breast pumps for new mothers. On 1st November 2018, the Authority of Building Control and Construction Industry, under the Ministry of Development introduced guidelines which accommodates women's childcare requirement in new building design approval such as the provision of breastfeeding room. This is also in support of the Ministry of Health target in achieving 6 months of exclusively breastfeeding by 2025.

Compulsory Education Act⁸ and Free Education for All Citizens of Brunei Darussalam.

Every child above the age of 6 is obligated to attend school under the Compulsory Education Act Revised Edition 2011. A policy of providing a minimum of 12 years of free education under the Ministry of Education supplements the aforementioned act. This, in turn, has shown only a slight difference in the proportion of female and male students with primary education and below, and secondary education. In terms of educational attainment, the percentage of women with tertiary and technical & vocational education background (TVET) is higher than men by 9% for tertiary education and 1% for technical & vocational. Free education for all is a key component for Brunei Darussalam's successful and continuous development.

5. **Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

Brunei Darussalam's labor market data is measured through the Labor Force Survey (LFS) conducted by the Department of Economic Planning and Statistics (DEPS), Ministry of Finance and Economy. The LFS was initially conducted every 5 years, however starting 2017, the LFS has been improvised and reported on a yearly basis. The LFS summary report includes the labor force participation rate, educational attainment, number of employed and unemployed persons,

⁷ The Regulation can be downloaded at <http://www.pmo.gov.bn/lists/2010%20pmo%20news/allitems.aspx>

⁸ The Order can be downloaded at http://www.agc.gov.bn/AGC%20Images/LAWS/ACT_PDF/cap211.pdf

youth unemployment, employed population by occupation and type of economic activity. The data can also be broken down according to gender for comprehensive analysis.

Other forms of monitoring include censuses conducted by DEPS such as the Economic Census (every 5 years), and the more up-to-date Annual Census of Enterprises (ACE) which look at employment of women and share of economic activities⁹.

However, there has yet to be an official reporting on working mothers and active women entrepreneurs across the economy in order to have a deep insight into the overall women's economic participation. Thus, the lack of comprehensive sex-disaggregated data in Brunei Darussalam can pose a challenge towards identifying much-needed policy interventions, especially in relation to women's participation and contribution towards economic activities in Brunei Darussalam. On this note, the Plan of Action for Women, mentioned in the answer to Question 2, will look into the collection of comprehensive data on women in the economy.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

APEC has an important role to play, not only as a platform that brings together the shared best practices of 21 member economies spanning across the globe but also in providing valuable expertise and resources through its Policy Support Unit to support women's empowerment. One way to do so is by developing an assessment tool (survey) to assess the gap in the different areas from social, financial, and technological empowerment to recommend improvements. Additionally, APEC could also serve as a platform to gain accessibility and increase opportunities for employment such as Professional Qualification Standards and Mutual Recognition Agreement for selected sectors such as IT, Data Sciences, and Finance.

APEC should continue to provide a platform for women networks, and awards and recognition while ensuring women-participation. The annual APEC CEO Summit, considered as one of the most influential meetings of business and government leaders in the Asia Pacific, can be a significant platform to help push the agenda of women's economic empowerment further. Brunei Darussalam has experienced the value of the APEC platform when co-hosting the APEC SME Online-to-Offline Forum in 2018 which provided exposure and networks for startups and investors and sharing of best practices on digital transformation through expert panels, including our own women entrepreneurs. Brunei Darussalam has also witnessed women entrepreneurs breaking the glass ceiling with the likes of an e-commerce boutique NAFORRÉR recognized as a role model Born Global SME in an APEC study whilst tech provider Tyne Solutions being awarded the Special Prize at the 2016 APEC BEST Awards in Peru for its Travel ASEAN presentation.

In relation to e-commerce development, APEC's ongoing work on the digital economy should be placed at enhancing access to the digital platform to reach domestic, regional, and international markets for MSMEs, including those fronted by women. In this regard, APEC should actively promote the utilization of APEC led online platforms such as MondeB2B¹⁰ and MSME Marketplace.

⁹ The data, including the LFS, can be downloaded at <http://www.deps.gov.bn/SitePages/National%20Statistics.aspx>

¹⁰ APEC Business Advisory Council of Brunei Darussalam has co-championed with Chile on an APEC collaboration for the launch of a B2B online transaction platform, MondeB2B, to provide a breakthrough solution for Brunei Darussalam and regional MSMEs to export.

CANADA

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

A main driving force of women's economic prosperity and growth has been the increased participation of women in the labor market. In 2019, women represented 48 percent of the Canadian labor force. They have made inroads into some well-paid professions such as medicine and law, and gained ground in their representation at the highest levels of economic and political life, thanks, in large part, to the best educational attainment record among women in OECD members. However, despite these advances, significant systemic and structural barriers remain to women's full and equal participation in the Canadian economy. Several factors can contribute to gender inequality in the workplace (which are exacerbated for women in non-traditional industries) such as: social norms related to the roles of women within the family and the workplace, discrimination and gender bias, availability, affordability and quality of childcare services; caregiving responsibilities; workplace culture and corporate policies; and violence and harassment in the workplace.

In this context, there remain labor-market gaps with men, both in terms of employment rates and wages, and the need for a better gender balance across occupations (including in STEM professions).

The Government of Canada has been taking steps to address the root causes of women's economic vulnerability through various initiatives to support increased women's participation in the workforce. Efforts have also focused on reducing barriers and increase the participation of women in entrepreneurship since fewer than 16 percent of small and medium sized businesses in Canada are majority women-owned.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

Despite achievements related to Canada's ambitious feminist agenda, significant challenges remain in addressing the socio-economic gaps experienced by diverse groups of people, such as marginalized women, Indigenous Peoples, and LGBTQ2 peoples. These challenges include barriers to full economic participation of marginalized communities. The challenges become more acute as other identity factors such as race, class, age, education, ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity and expression are taken into consideration. Over the next five years, it is expected that the federal government will continue the work set out in the Gender Results Framework to bridge gender disparities.

Education and Skills Development: Everyone should have the opportunity to make choices about their education based on their interests, aptitudes, and economic goals without being constrained by gender-related expectations or prejudices. The Government of Canada will continue to focus on skills development policies and programs that allow women, among other groups, to realize these choices and enhance their prospects of economic inclusion. For a

complete list of Canada’s key education and skills development initiatives, please follow this link: <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/grf-crrg/education-en.html>

Economic Participation and Prosperity: Increasing the labour force participation rates of women, and marginalized people more generally, requires an understanding of the different needs and barriers faced by more vulnerable groups, such as single parents, older women, women living with disabilities, newcomer women, racialized women, Indigenous women, and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions. Moving forward, the federal government will continue to provide support to improve women’s economic participation and gender equality. For a complete list of Canada’s economic participation and prosperity initiatives, please follow this link: <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/grf-crrg/economic-economique-en.html>

Leadership and Democratic Participation: Women make up 48 per cent of the Canadian workforce but hold approximately 23 per cent of the board seats in Canada’s Financial Post 500 companies. Gender equality and diversity in positions of leadership is associated with better management and decision-making, increased availability of skilled employees, stronger employee engagement, and higher productivity. The federal government is committed to improving diversity in leadership and democratic participation and will continue to work on improving gender equality in leadership roles and democratic participation. For a complete list of Canada’s initiatives in this area, please follow this link: <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/grf-crrg/leadership-en.html>.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

In recent years, the Government has made historic investments in the Women’s Program , including \$100M over five years to support capacity-building of women’s organizations and Indigenous organizations working for Indigenous women’s equality, and \$160M over five years to tackle systemic barriers impeding women’s economic participation, while recognizing and addressing the diverse experiences of gender inequality across Canada.

Early Learning and Child Care: To facilitate parents’ return to work, the Government of Canada is supporting the creation of affordable, high-quality child care spaces for low and modest income families. The Federal Government has also committed to providing more accessible and affordable childcare, including the creation of a secretariat that will lay the groundwork for a pan-Canadian childcare system.

Skills Trades: The Government of Canada makes significant investments in apprenticeships through the Red Seal program and a variety of supports for apprentices. These include grants, loans, tax credits and Employment Insurance benefits during in-school training. The new Apprenticeship Incentive Grant for Women was announced on December 11, 2018, with an investment of approximately \$20 million over five years, to support women to enter, progress, and complete their apprenticeship training in Red Seal trades where they are underrepresented.

Women in STEM: Through the Student Work Placement Program which launched in 2017, the Government of Canada is investing \$73 million over four years, to support the creation of up to 10,000 paid student work placements, in high-demand fields for students enrolled in STEM and business programs.

Women Entrepreneurship Strategy (WES): Launched in 2018, WES is a \$2 billion investment that aims to double the number of women-owned businesses by 2025 which aims to increase women-owned businesses' access to the financing, talent, networks and expertise they need to start up, scale up and access new markets. It is designed to boost economic growth, and create jobs by improving women's access to financing, talent, networks, and expertise.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

To promote women's economic participation and prosperity, the Government introduced the Pay Equity Act, which will establish a proactive pay equity regime for the federally regulated private and public sectors. The Pay Equity Act received Royal Assent in December 2018 and will come into force once necessary regulations are in place. The Pay Equity Act will apply to all federally regulated employers with 10 or more employees, including the federally regulated private sector, the federal public service, as well as the offices of Canada's highest authorities. See: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-4.2/page-1.html>

In Budget 2018, the Government of Canada also announced funding to implement pay transparency for federally regulated employers. This will require federally regulated private-sector employers covered by the Employment Equity Act to report any existing wage-gaps within their companies for women, Indigenous Peoples, persons living with disabilities, and racialized persons. The federal government is working to amend the Employment Equity Act and its regulations to refine the way salary information is calculated and reported by federally regulated private-sector employers. The online application that collects and publishes employer data will also be updated to ensure the information is posted in a more user-friendly format.

In addition, the Government of Canada amended the Canada Labor Code (Code) to give employees in the federally regulated private sector the right to request flexible work arrangements from their employer, such as flexible start and finish times and the ability to work from home. Recent amendments to Part III of the Code enhanced labor standards protections for these and other federally regulated private sector employees in order to ensure that they have a robust and modern set of federal labor standards. See: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2018/10/backgrounder-modernizing-labour-standards.html>

5. **Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

Introduced in Budget 2018, the Gender Results Framework represents the Government of Canada's vision for gender equality, highlighting the key issues. It is a whole-of government tool designed to: 1) Track how Canada is currently performing on its commitment to advance gender equality through investments in key programs; 2) Define what is needed to achieve greater equality and 3) Determine how progress will be measured going forward <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/grf-crrg/index-en.html>.

While the Government of Canada has bolstered the systematic use of Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) for evidence-based federal policies and initiatives, some gaps in data related to gender, race, sexual orientation, and other intersecting identities exist. To address these data gaps, the federal government continues to modernize its approach to collecting and producing statistics by, for example, increasingly acquiring, integrating, and making use of existing data from a variety of administrative sources, adding relevant questions to existing surveys, developing new surveys, and supporting community-driven approaches to collecting data (e.g., with Indigenous Peoples). As filling data gaps related to gender involves both data collection and its accessibility, Canada has improved access to existing data and analysis through the creation of centralized online tool and the publication of numerous gender-related reports. This includes the launch of the Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics Hub in September 2018. <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/topics-start/gender-diversity-and-inclusion>

In Budget 2019, the federal government also announced funding to the Treasury Board Secretariat and Employment and Social Development Canada to help bolster capacity to better collect administrative data and measure, monitor and address gender disparity.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

Continue to: 1) be a forum for the exchange of information and best practices to promote women’s economic empowerment in the region as this supports the economic growth and prosperity of each Economy; 2) work cooperatively with other international bodies supporting women’s empowerment such as the UN Commission on the Status of Women and; 3) support the production and analysis of high-quality evidence on the impact of social and economic reforms on women’s economic participation and well-being, using robust research-based approaches such as cross-economy impact assessments, longitudinal analyses, cases studies, etc.

CHILE

1. **Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Domestic responsibilities. Women spend, on average, three hours per day on unpaid domestic duties, while men spend only an hour and a half. Differences between men and women are one of the main barriers to increasing female labour participation and generating income. In addition, the limited access to high-quality public childcare and other forms of care for the elderly and people with disabilities is also a barrier.

Legal barriers. The existence of art. 203 of the Chilean Labour Code requiring firms with 20 or more female employees to provide childcare services to all children aged two years or younger. Chile continues to have legal frameworks that discriminate women in the workplace. For example, the existence of art. 203 of the Chilean Labour Code creates an adverse incentive for companies to cap the number of women employees at under 20. There is currently a bill being discussed in Congress to provide universal day-care services for women, and thus eliminate one of the barriers to hiring women.

Limited access to flexible work arrangements.

Immigrant women are a subpopulation that faces additional barriers. During the last decade, Chile has seen a sustained increase of migrant arrivals, peaking in 2018. Because migration increased regularization suddenly may be a slow process for some of those migrant women, making them face difficulties such as lack of access to public services, which exposes them to greater vulnerability and increased difficulties in accessing the labour market.

Notes:

- CNP (2017). Mujeres en el Mundo Laboral: Más Oportunidades, Crecimiento y Bienestar. Recomendaciones de la Comisión Nacional de Productividad para aumentar la Participación Laboral Femenina en Chile. Septiembre 2017.
- Comunidad Mujer. (2016). Executive Summary. GET Report, Gender, Education and Labor: A Persistent Gap. First research on gender inequality throughout women life cycle. A review of the last 25 years. Chile.
- OECD (2018). Economic Survey Chile, February.

2. **Structural reform needs:** What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

In recent decades, Chile has reduced gender gaps in many areas, including educational achievement and health outcomes. However, significant gender gaps persist, especially in labour force participation and income disparity.

To address gender gaps and mainstream change across public entities, in 2016, Chile creates the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity in replace of the National Women’s Agency (SERNAM). This new Institutionality provides the tools to strengthen state policies dedicated to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.

Chile’s main (top 2-3) structural reform needs or policy gaps:

1. Access to childcare to working parents (mothers and fathers).
2. Promotion of co-responsibility in childcare and conciliation of it with a working career.
 - Legislation preventing universal day care access for all employed women. Chile’s labour code only forces employers to finance access to day care services for women when 20 or more women are employed at any given company. A bill is being discussed in Congress to provide universal day care services for women with children up to two years old.
3. Increase women's access to financial services¹.
 - Some studies show gaps women face in comparison to men in terms of access to financial products and credit conditions in the Chilean banking sector. Non-discrimination, based on gender or marital status, is part of Chile's challenges if we want to close the gender gap.

Currently, the government has presented to the Congress the following initiatives to address the structural reform needs previously mentioned:

- Universal childcare provision bill².
- Bill that modifies the Labour Code to introduce flexible work arrangements³.
- Bill that amends the Labour Code to promote the conciliation of work and family life and social inclusion⁴.

Notes:

(1) 2016 Report “Gender in the Financial System”, Superintendency of Banks and Financial Institutions of Chile (SBIF).

(2) Proyecto de ley que crea el beneficio social de educación en el nivel de sala cuna, financiado por un Fondo Solidario, Boletín N°12.026-13.

(3) Proyecto de ley que modifica el Código del Trabajo en material de trabajo a distancia, Boletín N°12.008-13.

(4) Proyecto de ley sobre modernización laboral para la conciliación, familia e inclusión, Boletín N°12.618-13.

- CNP (2017). Mujeres en el Mundo Laboral: Más Oportunidades, Crecimiento y Bienestar. Recomendaciones de la Comisión Nacional de Productividad para aumentar la Participación Laboral Femenina en Chile. Septiembre 2017.
- Comunidad Mujer. (2016). Executive Summary. GET Report, Gender, Education and Labor: A Persistent Gap. First research on gender inequality throughout women life cycle. A review of the last 25 years. Chile.
- OECD (2018). Economic Survey Chile, February.

3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives: Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

In order to enhance the participation of women in leadership positions and contribute to close the wage gender gap, in 2018 the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity, launched the *Registro*

de Mujeres para Directorios, an online platform designed to make visible women who are willing to hold top-level management positions and meet certain criteria. This information will also be available for companies and head-hunters who are in a recruiting process.¹

To promote the labour participation of women from the most vulnerable families, in 2012 *Bono al Trabajo de la Mujer*² was created, a government-funded subsidy for hiring women. According to this, the employer receives one-third of the grant for 24 months, while female employees, who meet certain eligibility requirements (including age and socioeconomic status), receive the other two-thirds of the benefit for four consecutive years. The amount of the benefit varies according to the worker's wage.³

In order to eliminate gender gaps in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, in 2019, SAGA⁴ was implemented in Chile, a UNESCO global project that contributes to the promotion of women and girls in STEM by supporting key stakeholders in the design and implementation of STI policies for gender equality.

ProChile is an institution of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of promoting the exportable supply of Chilean goods and services. The institution has various programs. One of them is MUJEREXPORTA, which aims to promote, develop and strengthen the work of export companies led by women through different actions aimed at incorporating them into international trade, thus improving equality levels of gender.

Notes:

(1) For more information about this initiative, please visit the following link (in Spanish):

– https://minmujeryeg.gob.cl/?page_id=30263

(2) and (3) For more information about this initiative, please visit the following links (in Spanish):

– <https://sence.gob.cl/subsidio/bono-al-trabajo-de-la-mujer>

– <https://www.chileatiende.gob.cl/fichas/12725-bono-al-trabajo-de-la-mujer>

– Law N° 20.595, creating a conditional cash transference program (Ingreso Ético Familiar). In Spanish: *Ley N°20.595, que crea el Ingreso Ético Familiar que establece bonos y transferencias condicionadas para las familias de pobreza extrema y crea el Subsidio al Empleo de la Mujer.* <https://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=1040157>

(4) For more information about SAGA project in Chile, please visit: <https://en.unesco.org/saga>

4. Leading practices: Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Among the structural reforms regarding women's economic participation that Chile has implemented over the period 2010-2020, we consider the following as the most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy:

The Maternal Leave Reform, which in 2011 extended the paid maternal leave to 24 weeks, giving the possibility of transferring part of this entitlement to fathers depending on the work scheme chosen by the mother: 6 weeks if mothers use the 12 weeks on a full-time job basis or 12 weeks if mothers use 18 weeks on a part-time job basis.¹

The Ingreso Ético Familiar, a program of conditional cash transfers targeted to low-income groups, that in 2012 created the *Bono al Trabajo de la Mujer* consisting in a government-funded subsidy for hiring women of low-income groups (for more details see item 3).²

These reforms are important since they had granted incentives to promote the active participation of women in the labour market. In the case of the extension of maternal leave, it is targeted to increase the number of women who benefit from maternity protection, facilitate the reconciliation of work and family for both men and women, and promote the participation of both parents in the upbringing and care of children. In the case of the *Bono al Trabajo de la Mujer* it is intended to foster the employability of women from the most vulnerable groups.

Notes:

(1) For more information about this initiative, please visit the following link (in Spanish):

- Law N° 20.545, reforming the maternal leave system. In Spanish: *Ley N° 20.545, Modifica las normas sobre protección a la maternidad e incorpora el permiso postnatal parental*
<https://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=1030936>

(2) For more information about this initiative, please visit the following links (in Spanish):

- <https://sence.gob.cl/subsidio/bono-al-trabajo-de-la-mujer>
- <https://www.chileatiende.gob.cl/fichas/12725-bono-al-trabajo-de-la-mujer>
- Law N° 20.595, creating a conditional cash transference program (Ingreso Ético Familiar). In Spanish: *Ley N°20.595, que crea el Ingreso Ético Familiar que establece bonos y transferencias condicionadas para las familias de pobreza extrema y crea el Subsidio al Empleo de la Mujer.*
- <https://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=1040157>

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

Chile currently aggregates data on gender through the Subcommittee on Gender Statistics, coordinated by the National Statistics Institute and the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality, in order to make available to citizens a set of prioritized gender indicators that are produced in the different ministries. The measurement of these indicators seeks to support the formulation processes of public policies with a gender perspective and for gender equality.

A separate policy that has helped measure gender data is the program for management improvement. This tool is designed to help improve outcomes within the public sector by setting goals and targets associated with economic incentives. Since 2014, this system has reached 194 institutions and impacts 87 thousand public sector employees. When ministries achieve 90% or more of their goals within a year, employees see about an 8% increase in their salaries. One of the mandatory indicators within the program is the incorporation of a gender approach within each unit's programs and policies. This management system has allowed us to identify gender gaps and needs across all public institutions, and fostered the production of gendered data and reports, as ministries and agencies are required to monitor their commitments and are held accountable for fulfilling them. The Ministry of Women serves as the technical counterpart, carrying out the monitoring and evaluation, along with the National Budget Office, that relies heavily on the system for the design, assignment and evaluation of gender-related budgets.

The following data sources can be used to measure women's economic participation:

- National Employment Survey (*Encuesta Nacional de Empleo*): provide estimates of employment, unemployment and, participation rates, by sex, age, occupation, and other

- categories; economy-wide level representation, monthly frequency. Source: <https://www.ine.cl/estadisticas/sociales/mercado-laboral/ocupacion-y-desocupacion>
- Complementary Income Survey (*Encuesta Suplementaria de Ingresos*): provides estimates of monthly earnings by sex, age, occupational group and other categories; yearly frequency. Source: <https://www.ine.cl/estadisticas/sociales/ingresos-y-gastos/encuesta-suplementaria-de-ingresos>
 - Unemployment Insurance Database (*Base del Seguro de Cesantía*): provides information on monthly earnings for formal workers affiliated to the Unemployment Insurance since October 2002 to the present, monthly frequency.
 - List of women in top-level management positions (*Registro de Mujeres para Directorios*), Ministry of Women and Gender Equity: https://minmujeryeg.gob.cl/?page_id=30233
 - *Ranking de Mujeres en la Alta Dirección*, elaborated by Comunidad Mujer since 2016. <http://www.comunidadmujer.cl/estudios/ranking-mujeres-alta-direccion/>

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

APEC plays an important role in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region. This issue has gained significant momentum over the last few years, as economies have placed particular emphasis on women's economic situation. Chile was a pioneer in naming 'Women, SMEs and Inclusive Growth' as one of its priorities for its host year in 2019. This resulted in a high number of instances where different groups could interact and discuss how their initiatives impacted women's access to the economy.

These efforts gained momentum with the endorsement of the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive growth. This unprecedented initiative encourages bold and sustained collective action to increase the participation of women in the economy and further gender equality within APEC. With a 2030 timeframe, the Roadmap offers economies to actively promote and lead initiatives that address existing barriers such as improving access to capital, markets, and leadership positions; and supporting women's education, while emphasizing data collection and analysis.

Also, APEC economies' social and cultural diversity proves useful when learning about initiatives and programs that have helped improve women's economic empowerment in the region. The multiple and diverse challenges that each economy faces are beneficial knowledge for others, as an economy will gain insight from another's experience. APEC's focus on the capacity building allows for knowledge transfers that would enable economies to build on other's expertise when implementing and designing new programs and initiatives.

CHINA

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women’s participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

China always upholds the concept that “women are indispensable builders of the economy” and attaches importance to promoting and supporting women’s participation in economic activities. Currently, China has enacted laws such as the Labour Law, the Employment Promotion Law, the Labour Contract Law and the Rural Land Contract Law to ensure equal pay to men and women for equal work and eliminate gender discrimination in employment, which provides legal guarantee for women’s economic rights and interests, especially equal rights to employment. Statistics show that the proportion of female employees in China’s total was 43.7% in 2018, 0.2 percent points higher over the previous year. This is a relatively high proportion globally, reflecting higher engagement of Chinese women in economic activities.

However, it should be noted that women still face barriers and challenges to their economic participation. These barriers and challenges are the results of two factors: firstly, women, in some areas, especially in rural regions, are expected in the traditional culture to play a greater role in family; secondly, quite a few women face challenges such as delayed promotion and employment discrimination due to childbearing.

In addition, some special groups of women face other challenges. For example, in the process of economic restructuring, the shutdown of apparel and commodities markets as a result of the transformation of low-end services will have some impacts on less-skilled women; and women at childbearing age tend to face implicit employment discrimination.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy’s main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women’s economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women’s equal economic participation??

China still needs to strengthen structural reforms to promote women’s economic participation. Firstly, China needs to strengthen social security system to cope with the challenge on women brought by ending of one-child policy. Secondly, systematic training and support for women’s employment should also be improved. Employment training and support for women should be more systematic and targeted. Short-term or staged training in a specific area should be integrated into career training in order to achieve the normalization and institutionalization of training.

To address these problems, the Chinese government has successively unveiled corresponding measures in recent years, which facilitate women’s economic participation. For example, China allows later retirement for women and extension of maternity, parental and paternity leaves. In 2019, the State Council released relevant documents which proposed to develop care services for infants aged 0-3 years, promote inclusive pre-school education, and subsidize private educational institutions while restricting overcharge, to ensure that more needy families can enjoy relevant preferential policies. The All-China Women’s Federation (ACWF) has launched

special support programs such as *She Start-ups* and *Mom Handworks*, and organized special actions guiding and promoting mutual assistance and sharing of community childcare services.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

Microloans and interest subsidies have been introduced to assist women in starting businesses and finding jobs. China experimented microloans first in rural Shanxi in the 1980s. The experiment was rolled out across China in the mid-1990s and was gradually used to help urban laid-off and unemployed women to start businesses and get employed. In order to further increase the line of credit, extend the term of the loan to arouse the enthusiasm of rural women and urban laid-off and unemployed women for employment and entrepreneurship, the Chinese government issued the policy of improving microloans and granting interest subsidies in 2009, which clearly proposed to raise the ceiling of microloans for women, expand the coverage of microloans from the urban unemployed and people with difficulty in finding jobs to rural women. And women's federations have been engaged into the working system of microloans since then, with special working funding from the government.

The microloans and interest subsidies policy achieved positive results in promoting women's entrepreneurship and employment and increasing women's economic gains. As of December 2018, guaranteed loans of 383,773 million yuan had been granted to 6.56 million women across China, together with interest subsidies of 40,895 million yuan. By combining microloans for women with the development of agriculture, local governments guided women to increase gains, facilitated local industrial restructuring, and improvements in rural living environment. Beyond this, these policies also improved the status of rural women in family and society and alleviated social problems like the well-being of left-behind women and children.

China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) has introduced special policies supporting "Internet plus social services" innovation and entrepreneurship. Social services are one of the priorities of women's employment and community services, in particular, are a main part of re-employment of urban unemployed women. In recent years, with the introduction of the universal two-child policy and the evolution of population aging, social services like home care, health care and housekeeping services present strong labour demand. A large number of women enter these sectors, which create jobs for women migrant workers and urban women. Currently, "Internet plus social services" has become a new model of social services. In order to further promote the development of the new model and provide the working population including women with wider access to the new economy, NDRC issued policy documents on promoting the development of "Internet plus social services" in collaboration with other relevant departments in December 2019. The documents allow the public fund to be used as seed fund in the areas where the market mechanism cannot fully play the role. In addition, the government will encourage venture capital funds and angel investments to increase investment in "Internet plus social services", support qualified "Internet plus social services" enterprises to raise fund in bond market. In April 2020, NDRC further issued relevant documents that encourage local governments to implement demonstration projects which focus on new business models in "Internet plus social services". These projects will offer strong support to the development of social services like housekeeping, elderly and child care, and rural tourism, etc.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have

been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Poverty-reduction program tailored for women. China pays great importance to poverty reduction for women, especially women's economic participation and protection of women's rights and interests. Documents such as the *Outline for Development-oriented Poverty Reduction for China's Rural Areas (2011-2020)* and the *Outline of Development of Chinese Women (2011-2020)* list alleviating poverty of women as priorities, guarantee the supply of resources to poor women and support poverty reduction projects among poor women. Public welfare programs such as *Treating Poor Mothers with Breast and Cervical Cancers*, *Affordable Housing for Mothers* and *Mothers' Health Express* have been carried out to help diseased poor women and poor single mothers improve conditions for subsistence and development. China has organized domestic poverty reduction through labour matching for housekeeping services in many cities and villages to assist registered poor women in rural areas with employment. Women's federations have vigorously implemented the targeted *Poverty Reduction Actions for Women*. According to the current rural poverty standard, China's rural poor population decreased from 98.99 million in 2012 to 16.60 million at the end of 2018 and the poverty incidence from 10.2% to 1.7%, and about half of the reduced poor population were women.

Promoting female employment. China has intensified labour protection and expanded areas of women's employment since 2010, constantly improving women's competence in employment and entrepreneurship. It has successively promulgated *The Special Provisions on Labour Protection of Female Employees* and *The Guidelines for Promoting Gender Equality in the Workplace* to drive more and more enterprises to value labour protection of female employees. In 2017, enterprises with measures in this regard accounted for 71.2%, an increase of 35.2 percentage points over 2002. China pursues the *employment first* strategy and energetically promotes equal employment for men and women. In 2019, China issued a regulation that bans six kinds of gender discrimination in employment and strengthen the enforcement by improved supervision. Currently, women account for more than 50% of Internet entrepreneurs in China. Promoting women's employment and relieving women's poverty are important aspects of women's economic empowerment and key parts of the people-centered development concept. The Chinese government has committed to eliminating poverty under the current standard by 2020.

5. **Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

The Chinese government ensures the monitoring, evaluation and enforcement of the relevant policies in institutional, planning and monitoring aspects. Regarding the institutional aspect, the National Working Committee on Children and Women under State Council performs its functions and organizes, coordinates, guides and urges relevant departments to protect women's rights and interests and promote gender equality and women development. Lots of local governments have set up corresponding agencies and formed a well-connected and coordinated organizational system.

With regard to the planning aspect, promoting women engagement and employment has been put high on the agenda of the overall plans for domestic economic and social development and special plans for different sectors. The 12th and 13th *Five-Year Plans for National Economic*

and Social Development of the People's Republic of China contain special chapters on arrangements for promoting comprehensive development of women. *China's National Human Rights Action Plan* clearly defines the goals and tasks in connection with protecting women's rights and interests. China has promulgated *The Outlines for Women Development* for three consecutive periods since 1995, which brings forward the goals and tasks of women's career development in different stages. In 2019, it launched the drafting of an outline for a new period.

With regard to the monitoring aspect, China has established a sound gender statistics system. China's National Bureau of Statistics has released the *Report on the Statistical Monitoring of the Outline of Development of Chinese Women*, organized regular surveys on *The Social Status of Chinese Women* and published the *Women and Men in China: Facts and Figures*, and *The Statistics on Women and Children in China*, etc.

The Report on the Statistical Monitoring of the Outline of Development of Chinese Women reflects the general situation of Chinese women's economic participation. Main indicators in the report include the proportion of female employees, number of rural poor women, proportion of female directors in the board of directors, proportion of female supervisors in the board of supervisors, proportion of insured women in the insured and number of women covered by unemployment insurance and employment injury insurance. Relevant indicators are published once a year.

There is still room for improvements in the setting and renewal frequency of indicators for statistics of Chinese women's economic participation. For example, some researchers suggest more indicators included, such as women's employment rate or women's labor participation rate, number of statutory parental leave days, number of actual leave days and proportion of enterprises with female directors.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

Women's empowerment is an important area of cooperation for APEC which plays a key role in deepening women's economic empowerment and ensuring comprehensive development of women in the region. APEC can launch cooperation in poverty reduction for women, employment and entrepreneurship, facilitate the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and implement *the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth* in a balanced manner through policy dialogue and information exchange. More capacity building activities should be tailored to the special needs of developing economies, so that women in these economies can benefit from APEC cooperation and economic growth. For example, APEC may consider launching programs supporting female entrepreneurship in partnership with relevant international organizations and private institutions under relevant mechanisms.

HONG KONG, CHINA

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women’s participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

In HKC, while the labour force participation rate of female has increased from 48.6% in 2002 to 54.5% in the fourth quarter of 2019, the participation rate is still some 12.5 percentage points lower than that of male. According to the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), “Engagement in household duties” is still one of the major reasons for economically inactive females aged 15 or above for being economically inactive. A research led by the Women’s Commission (WoC) in 2015 indicated that women in HKC on average spent more time than men on homemaking and home care work, voluntary work and unpaid activities for relatives and friends living apart.

Meanwhile, about 400 000 foreign domestic helpers are currently working in HKC, assisting local families in performing household chores and taking care of their children and elderly members, thereby unleashing the potential of our local labour force and contributing significantly to HKC’s economic development. However, the burden of family obligations remains particularly heavy for women in lower income households.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy’s main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women’s economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women’s equal economic participation??

The Government is committed to facilitating women to pursue employment and careers of their choice. One of the relevant initiatives is to extend the statutory maternity leave (ML) and statutory paternity leave (PL). The number of statutory PL has increased from 3 days to 5 days since 2019. Meanwhile, the HKC Government has proposed to increase the statutory ML from the current 10 weeks to 14 weeks. To avoid jeopardising the employment opportunities of women, the HKC Government has committed that the additional four weeks’ ML pay would be funded by the HKC Government through reimbursement. The proposal is currently undergoing legislative process.

3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives: Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

Strengthening training services. Enhancing women employability to join or rejoin the employment market fosters women’s economic participation. The Employees Retraining Board (ERB), an independent statutory body of HKC, offers a wide range of training and retraining programmes and services to meet the market’s changing needs. Currently, more than 80% of the trainees enrolled in around 700 ERB courses are women. In considering the specific needs of female trainees with family commitments, ERB has provided flexibility for trainees to enrol in specified half-day or evening courses to attain qualifications equivalent to designated full-time courses.

Enhancing childcare support. For childcare services, the HKC Government currently provides about 7,500 places at some 250 aided childcare centres (CCCs) (including standalone CCCs and kindergarten-cum-CCCs). For the long-term development of childcare services, the HKC Government commissioned a Consultancy Study on the Long-Term Development of Childcare Services in December 2016. Making reference to the final report of the Study, the HKC Government proposed a series of measures to strengthen the planning and long-term development of childcare services.

The HKC Government has also introduced the kindergarten (KG) education scheme since the 2017/18 school year to provide direct subsidies to KGs. In principle, the government subsidies should be sufficient for KGs joining the scheme to provide quality half day services. Additional subsidy is provided for participating KGs offering whole-day services so as to enable parents to join the workforce.

WoC Launched a Funding Scheme for Women’s Development. A funding scheme is set up under WoC to provide funding support of HK\$4 million every year to women’s groups and NGOs, helping them organise programmes and activities conducive to women’s development. One of the funding scheme’s themes, "Women's Employment", complements the HKC Government’s work in motivating more women to join the labour force. To date, it has funded more than 110 organisations and 400 projects amounting to HK\$23 million.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Implemented Gender Mainstreaming. The HKC Government has been implementing gender mainstreaming since 2002. In 2015, the then Chief Executive accepted WoC’s recommendations that, starting from 2015-16, all government bureaux and departments are required to refer to the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist and apply gender mainstreaming in formulating major government policies and initiatives. In the following year, the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist was promoted to NGOs at welfare sector in their formulation of policies and programmes.

In an effort to further promote the concept of gender mainstreaming and raise the awareness of gender-related issues in the business community, WoC has assisted the HKC Government in establishing Gender Focal Point (GFP) networks at various sectors such as NGOs in the social welfare sector and listed companies. The GFP, who is usually a managerial staff in an organisation, is responsible for promoting the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist and the gender mainstreaming concept, and serves as the contact point between the organisation and government on gender-related issues. In addition, WoC has organised a variety of activities to enhance corporate understanding of gender issues and promote the importance of creating an enabling environment for women to unleash their potential in the business community. An example is the lunch-time talk for GFPs among listed companies in 2019 on “Promoting Gender Diversity in Business Setting”.

Implemented Family-friendly Employment Policies and Practices. Family-friendly employment policies and practices (FEPP) refer to policies and practices provided by employers to help employees manage their family responsibilities and cope with the changing circumstances and needs at different stages of their lives by offering flexible and varied work arrangements as well as other forms of support to employees.

To promote FEPP, the HKC Government has been actively encouraging employers to adopt “employee-oriented” good human resource management measures, including family-friendly employment practices to help employees balance their roles and responsibilities in work and family. Examples include flexible work arrangement, granting of leave and provision of support to cater for the family needs of employees, etc. The introduction and extension of paternity leave as a statutory benefit in recent years has enabled eligible male employees to better meet their responsibilities as fathers and eased the burden of mothers. The HKC Government believes that it is vital for women and men to share family responsibilities whilst achieving a better balance between work, family and life.

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women’s economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

With the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women extended to HKC since 1996, HKC submits regular reports to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women as part of China’s periodic reports. The report helps the HKC Government to benchmark the work on advancing women’s status and protecting women’s right against international standard.

Separately, the C&SD regularly publishes various statistics on female in HKC, which are useful for analysing and monitoring the well-being of female in HKC.

(For details, please visit - <https://www.women.gov.hk/en/publications/statistics.html>)

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

APEC provides a platform for knowledge sharing and cooperation that is conducive to promoting women’s economic empowerment. Through this platform, economies can learn from the experiences of each other and formulate policy initiatives to overcome the many policy gaps, barriers and challenges in their respective contexts.

INDONESIA

- 1. Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women’s participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

In general, women tend to face greater demands on their time than men vis-à-vis running a business. Women more often than men, have childcare and household responsibilities that limit the time that they can spend running their business.

Patriarchal culture which often lead to discrimination in various ways that affect women’s capacity to manage and expand businesses. These include investment-ready businesses, on both supply and the demand side of finance asserted that, it will contribute greatly to “have a man in the room” to be seriously considered when engaging with future investors¹¹.

- 2. Structural reform needs:** What are your economy’s main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women’s economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women’s equal economic participation??

Improving Access to Finance. Improve access for women start-up entrepreneurs to financial services (loans and savings); financial literacy; business advisory services; and improved technology and markets and training and support so they can move from informal to formal sources of finance.

Policy Response:

In 2017 Indonesia launched a social assistance program targeting micro businesses which cannot be facilitated by banks through the People's Business Credit (KUR) program. The Ultra-Micro Financing (UMi) while is not specifically targeting women, however 90% of customers are women entrepreneurs. UMi (umi.id) provides a maximum loan of IDR 10 million (USD 700) per customer and is financed by 3 Non-Banking Financial Institutions. In August 2019, over IDR 2.7 Trillion has been distributed to its 977 thousand customers. Government also provides hands on managerial and financial training.

PT Permodalan Nasional Madani (PNM) – has also initiated the establishment of Mekaar Program, a state-owned financing product targeting the pre-prosperous micro business sector since 2016. Mekaar is considered as the nearest to the poor, since the program is targeted poor productive women with a credit amount of only IDR 2 million or IDR 3 million (US\$150-220) per person for 54 weeks. Beneficiaries of Mekaar reached more than 4 million in 2018¹².

National Strategy on Improving Financial Literacy & Inclusion. In 2016, the government initiated the National Strategy on Financial Inclusion to improve access to financial services, to foster inclusive economic growth and to reduce inequalities between individuals and

¹¹ UNDP 2017, Women’s Entrepreneurship and Access to Finance: Challenges and Opportunities of Women-led Social Enterprise in Indonesia

¹² PNM Annual Report 2018

between regions. The economy-wide survey conducted in 2019, reveals that the program successfully reach its targets to increase financial literacy from 29.7% in 2016 to 38.03% in 2019 and from 67.8% in 2016 to 76.19% in 2019 on Financial Inclusion. The survey was also gender disaggregated. It shows that women are more financially literate and inclusive in 2019 by 36.3% and 75.15%, respectively, compared to 25.5% and 67.8% in 2016.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

Indonesia is continuing efforts to encourage women to work on STEM with the assistance from local community groups. These groups, such as STEM with Her (Jakarta), Femme in STEM (Bandung, West Java), Jakarta Society of Women Engineers (Jakarta SWE) and West Nusa Tenggara Society of Women Engineers (NTB SWE) have been conducting a wide variety of programs such as a female role showcase, workshops, or hands-on experience with the aim to encourage active participation and stimulates analytical thinking.

In 2016, the government launched the 3 Ends Program: (i) End Violence Against Women and Children; (ii) End Human Trafficking; and (iii) End Barriers to Economic Justice. Which then translated into several focus areas, among others: central government provides technical assistance in developing gender responsive for budget/activities/programs for regional governments; and to implement a mandatory obligation for government to conduct training/technical assistance to women entrepreneur.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Peace Village Initiative. The Peace Village initiative aims to tackle the threat of radicalism by empowering communities, through promoting social cohesion, community resilience, as well as promoting societal equality and respect for diversity.

This initiative puts Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) strategic vision into very concrete action. It employs a well-crafted approach combining three vital components in building enduring resilience in the community: economic improvement, peace building social mechanism and women empowerment.

Peace Village purposefully places women as the main actors in building peace in the family, community and local governance. Women are engaged to foster their abilities to become economically independent, to be actively participate in communal decision making and to creatively develop peace narratives.

Leveraging digital technology for microfinancing and managing business. Since 2018, Government in cooperation with 3 e-money platforms (GoPay, T-Cash, T-Money) and 1 marketplace platform (Bukalapak), has begun to implement cashless payment and e-money. This program is also a strategic step to accelerate financial inclusion, by providing infrastructure that supports financial inclusion and financial literacy for the community. In addition, the technology will record transactions electronically, so that the Government may be able to assess and evaluate spending patterns and transactions.

Mobile application-based management. Aruna and Eragano, to name a few, are mobile-based applications that support farmers and fisheries workers in providing an end-to-end e-commerce for farms and fisheries products. Through information technology, they seek to improve price information for fairer trade, improve livelihoods for farmers and fisheries workers. Aruna has helped to form fishing groups and cooperatives West Java, Aceh, South Sulawesi, East Kalimantan, and several other areas. They then work directly with the groups to help them use their platform for: i) market intelligence; and ii) improved access to markets. Eragano facilitates market access for agricultural producers, cutting out the middleman and streamlining their connection to buyers. As with Aruna, Eragano addresses market information gaps providing intelligence to producers so that they will have a sense of both what to pay for inputs and the fair market value of their products.

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? I.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

Data collected and measured, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Some of indicators are, among others: (i) Gender empowerment index; (ii) Gender Development Index; and (iii) Number of participation from professional institutions, business, media, and religious organizations, community and academics and research institutions in women's empowerment and child protection. These indicators needs to meet targeted objectives set by ministries/agencies and reported annually.

Regular survey conducted by ministries/agencies to evaluate specific data required. For instance, Financial Services Authorities conducted a periodical survey to measure improvement of financial literacy and inclusion.

Lack of gender-disaggregated data. As reported by IFC¹³, banks and financial institutions rarely collected gender-disaggregated data in which may limit the ability to design and promote women-focused financial services and monitor uptake and impact.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

APEC is an ideal forum to share best practices and conduct studies in cooperation with other related international fora on women empowerment, vocational training, and women participation in the economy, especially how to measure, support/facilitate, and regulate gender responsive policy in economic development.

APEC need to underlines different approach, perspectives, progress and variety of cultural backgrounds in addressing women empowerment among economies.

¹³ International Finance Corporation, Women-Owned SMEs in Indonesia: A Golden Opportunity for Local Financial Institutions, (Washington DC, International Finance Corporation, 2016)

JAPAN

1. **Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

The challenges women face include the fixed gender stereotypes developed through the high economic growth era that lead to women shouldering disproportionate burden of household chores, child-rearing and caregiving, as well as the men-oriented working practices, including long working hours, that make it difficult to balance work with family responsibilities while fulfilling their full potential. Women in poverty, with disabilities and/or the elderly women face greater challenges.

2. **Structural reform needs:** What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

Women represent half of Japan's population and account for more than 40% of the total labor force, playing an important role in sectors including politics, economy and society. Promoting women's participation is important for Japan's continuous development, and advancement of women in leadership enhances corporate competitiveness. However, Japan's employment rate for women in child-rearing, and the portion of women in management positions had long remained low. In 2015, the government implemented the **Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace** (hereinafter referred to as the **Act on the Promotion of Female Participation**), with the aim of promoting women's participation in the workforce, and realizing a wealthy and vibrant society. This Act obliges employers, including companies and local authorities, to develop action plans on women's participation and advancement, and make them public. The initiatives, in accordance with the Act, also include the central government and independent administrative agencies providing preferential treatment (i.e. increased opportunities) in the process of public procurements to corporations that excel in promoting a work-life balance.

Furthermore, the **Act on the Arrangement of Related Acts to Promote Work Style Reform** – a comprehensive work-style reform package that bundles together amendments to eight labor laws, one of which sets punitive cap on overtime hours – was enacted in 2018 to reform Japan's work practices premising long working hours.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

The Cabinet Office has brought together support organizations, including companies, universities, academic societies and other institutions that promote initiatives to develop female scientists and engineers and has organized a support network for female science and technology students that consists of organizations that are proactively taking measures. Information on events hosted by such organizations and messages from female scientists are provided on a

dedicated website. In addition, women who are active in science and engineering have been appointed as “STEM Girls Ambassadors.” In FY2019, the Ambassadors delivered lectures in 10 cities across Japan, with cooperation from relevant local governments. As the initiative also aims to support employment in local communities, additional measures have been taken, such as sharing case studies of women’s participation and advancement in local companies.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Adoption of the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace. To facilitate women’s participation and advancement in the workplace, the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace was enacted in 2015 and enforced from in April 2016. Under the Act, the central and local governments and private enterprises with 301 or more permanent employees are required to develop and announce an action plan based on their understanding of the situation concerning the status of their female employees and an analysis of problems as well as to publish information concerning the promotion of women.

As of December 31, 2019, all central government authorities, prefectures and municipalities had an action plan in place, while 98.6% of private enterprises with a permanent workforce of 301 or more had prepared an action plan as of September 30, 2019.

Given that almost all the employers required to prepare an action plan had fulfilled this requirement, the Act on the Promotion of Female Participation and Career Advancement in the Workplace was revised in 2019 to further accelerate the efforts to facilitate the promotion of women in the workplace. The revised Act has (i) expanded the scope of the employers required to prepare an action plan and publish information (to include private enterprises with 101 or more permanent employees from those with 301 or more permanent employees) and (ii) expanded and strengthened the scope of the employers required to publish information on the promotion of women. (The revised Act came into effect on 1 June, 2020, and the expansion of scope of private enterprises will take effect on 1 April, 2022.)

Support for life-work balance through several revisions on the “Childcare and Family Care Leave law”, as well as development of childcare facilities. Harmonizing work with other aspects of life through diverse and flexible work-styles tailored to life events and men’s participation in parenting and the caring for people who need nursing care as partners are urgent issues to be addressed to enable women to remain in the workforce if they so wish without being forced to choose between either work or parenting/caregiving responsibilities, and to make meaningful contributions.

Under the seniority-based compensation system that tends to place emphasis on the length of employment, there still remain working style that presuppose work-styles mainly tailored to men, who are expected as a matter of course to accept long working hours and job transfers requiring relocations. These are preventing both men and women who wish to continue to work and make a meaningful contribution while fulfilling other responsibilities such as parenting and caring for people who need nursing care from doing so. Furthermore, the burden women shoulder has grown as men have not traditionally played significant roles in activities such as housework, parenting, caring for people who need nursing care and so on. Arguably, this has often made it difficult for women to utilize their skills and abilities in settings outside the home. Moreover, there are unresolved issues such as being unable to use childcare facilities even after

application which results in the problem of wait-listed children and people leaving work to care for people who need nursing care.

In June 2018, the Japanese parliament passed the Act on Arrangement of Related Acts to Promote Work Style Reform. The legislation limits overtime work to 45 hours a month or 360 hours a year in principle, and to 720 hours a year, less than 100 hours a month (including work on holidays) and an average 80 hours a month for continuous period of several months (including work on holidays) in the event of special circumstances. It also requires companies to ensure that their employees take a minimum of five days of annual leave each year. In addition, it promotes the introduction of a work-interval system. With these initiatives, the government is promoting measures to reduce long working hours.

To achieve zero waiting-listed children for places at childcare facilities, the Japanese government, based on the Plan for Raising Children in a Peaceful Environment which was announced in June 2017, aims to build childcare facilities to accommodate 320,000 children by the end of FY2020 in order to provide enough capacity, even when the employment rate of Japanese women hits 80%.

In addition, to reduce parents' financial costs related to preschool education and care, the Child and Child Care Support Act was revised in May 2019, allowing children aged three to five, and children aged birth to two in households exempt from paying residential tax, to attend kindergarten, childcare facilities, certified childcare facilities (nintei kodomo-en) and other similar facilities free of charge.

The Japanese government has also promoted the organization of an employment environment that provides both men and women with the freedom to choose their lifestyles. For instance, the 2017 revision to the Childcare and Family Care Leave Law enabled workers to extend their parental leave until their child turns 24 months old from the previous 18 months old if, for instance, a family is unable to obtain an offer of placement for the child in a childcare facility.

With respect to the issue of people leaving work to care for people who need nursing care, the Japanese government has promoted the organization of an employment environment that enables people to continue working while providing such care. For instance, the March 2016 revision to the Childcare and Family Care Leave Law has allowed workers to split their long-term caregiver leave entitlements over multiple instances as well as to take short-term caregiver leave by half-day. In addition, it has introduced a system to exempt workers caring for people who need nursing care from overtime work.

As a result of these various measures, the number of female employment increased by more than 3.3 million, and employment rate of women in child-raising period between the ages of 25 and 44 increased by 10% from 67.7% to 77.7% in the eight years from 2012 to 2019. These are contributing improving the “M-shaped curve” in the labor force participation rate by female age group. Steady results have also been achieved, including an increase in the number of years of service of women as well as the ratio of women in management positions and so on.

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need

to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

In a Cabinet meeting in December 2015, the government approved the Fourth Basic Plan for Gender Equality (hereinafter referred to as “Fourth Basic Plan”; covering the period from FY2016 to FY2020) based on the Basic Act.

To clarify policy purposes and promote the plan effectively, the Fourth Basic Plan established four policy areas (“I. Women’s participation and advancement in all fields of society,” “II. Safety and security of life,” “III. Infrastructure improvement on the realization of a gender-equal society,” and “IV. Implementation of the plan”) and set “objectives on policy regions,” which are to be monitored and evaluated in a focused way. Twelve individual subareas were established under policy areas I to III, and with respect to these 12 subareas and “Implementation of the Plan,” basic directions, specific measures and targets are set for measures to be implemented before the end of FY2020. The progress of these objectives is compiled and published on the government website twice a year.

In August 2019, Japan compiled and published data on 125 global indicators (117 when repeated indicators are excluded) out of a total of 244 global indicators (232 when repeated indicators are excluded) that were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in July 2017.

With regard to the indicators related to Goal 5 of the SDGs, eight global indicators out of 14 have been set, with no assignment of priority, in a manner consistent with the achievement targets contained in the Fourth Basic Plan. The government will continue to collect data related to these achievement targets on a regular basis and publish them.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

Japan has been actively participating in PPWE’s discussions on women’s economic empowerment to date. The adoption of “La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019-2020)” last year is a significant outcome. Through concrete actions and assessment against the Roadmap, APEC could play an important role in driving greater empowerment of women in the Asia-Pacific region.

KOREA

- 1. Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Korea's key barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity are lack of childcare services, relatively low quality of jobs for women, and gender-discriminatory organizational culture. The gap in the economic participation rate between men and women remains at over 20%, with mainly women in the 30s and 40s experiencing career interruption.

- 2. Structural reform needs:** What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

Korea's main structural reform needs are equivalent to the key barriers and challenges listed above. To address these needs, Korea is striving to create a workplace environment that enables work-life balance and foster a gender-equal culture in the workplace and labor market. To this end, it is continuously working to enhance a childcare leave system, in particular paternity leave to encourage men to take the leave. To address gender discrimination in recruitment, the government has strengthened the institutional foundation, including by revising the Fair Hiring Procedure Act, which prescribes a blind-hiring standard. In its continuous efforts to expand women's overall social participation, the government provides consulting programs for businesses to improve corporate culture and has also launched a voluntary pact campaign that encourages businesses to set their own gender-balance targets and achieve them.

- 3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

To support career-interrupted women who find it difficult to enter the labour force and find work, the government has operated the Women's Re-employment Centres (158 centres across Korea as of the end of 2019) since 2009 under the Act on Promotion of Economic Activities of Career-Interrupted Women, Etc. (enacted and enforced in 2008). The centres provide career counselling, vocational training, internship opportunities, job placement, follow-up service to help them adapt to the workplace when employed, start-up support, among others.

The government is also working to identify prospective social enterprises dedicated to women and families and provide phased support so as to increase women-friendly jobs in the social economy sector.

Also, it is working with relevant organizations and agencies to nurture female talent for new industrial sectors and industries with a disproportionately low rate of women's participation, while supporting women in entering the public sector by recommending competent women candidates for major positions.

Policies for encouraging women’s participation in STEM include the 4th Basic Plan for fostering and supporting Women in STEM (2019-2023). This policy was initiated to achieve qualitative growth of women in STEM and gender equality in the fields of science and technology by promoting influx and growth of STEM workforce in strategic areas, enhancing innovation and global competencies, facilitating retention and progression through the entire career path and establishing a gendered innovation system.

Other government programs include the “Regional Women Empowerment in STEM with local university” (approximately 1.99 billion Korean won) which encourages local female secondary school students to major in STEM fields, run a capacity-building programme for female students in STEM universities and run a career development and re-entry support programme for women in STEM fields who are unemployed or with career interruptions.

“The Career Re-entry Program” (approximately 10 billion Korean won) for women returners to STEM R&D sectors after career breaks provides grants for research while also providing education and training, skill matching, subsidies and career management support.

4. Leading practices: Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

To increase women’s social participation and break the glass ceiling, the government devised the joint-ministry Plan to Enhance Women’s Representation in the Public Sector. It also set concrete targets of the rate of women in senior positions and took practical measures for the implementation of the plan. As a result, the percentage of women in senior roles in the public section has grown significantly.*

To spread this trend to the private sector, a public-private coordination system will be established, and under the system, joint projects will be implemented to increase women’s decision-making power across society.

* Director or higher in central government agencies (Grade 4 and above): (2017) 14.8% → (2019) 20.8%,
Managers in public organizations: (2017) 18.8% → (2019) 25.1%
Executives in public organizations: (2017) 11.8% → (2019) 21.1%

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women’s economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

To measure women’s economic participation, such as their employment rate and labour force participation rate, Statistics Korea conducts the Economically Active Population Survey every month. In addition, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family has started to take stock of the current state of female executives in listed companies annually and released the first results in 2019.

The Gender Impact Analysis and Assessment has been in place to evaluate the government’s current policies and programs designed to enhance women’s power and increase women’s economic activities, as well as to identify improvements made. The initiative analyzes the impact that government policies established and implemented have on women and men, to

ensure that the policies can contribute to realizing gender equality. The analyses have been carried out since 2012, covering all laws and regulations, both enacted and revised, and economy-wide and local plans and programs that have a significant influence on gender equality. Furthermore, the Specific Gender Impact Analysis and Assessment analyzes policies affecting the real lives of people and major policies with a wide gender gap from the perspective of gender equality. This initiative is intended to make policy improvements and recommendations to relevant agencies.

Every year in September, the government releases a comprehensive report that analyzes the outcomes of the implementation of the aforementioned assessments to monitor their effectiveness and implementation. It also tracks policy improvements of each agency through the Gender Impact Analysis and Assessment on a yearly basis.

Major policies, such as start-up support policies, industrial safety policies, and SMEs labour force policies, have been evaluated from the lens of gender responsiveness, and accordingly, a range of policy improvements were derived, and improvements have been made to increase women's social participation.

* (Key improvements in increasing women's participation in economic activities): Industrial safety and health training programs for labour inspectors contain topics such as maternity protection; and 1:1 coaching and counselling programs are enhanced for aspiring women entrepreneurs by making use of the female business leaders DESK.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

Economic empowerment of women is a cross-cutting issue that applies to all APEC fora. To promote women's economic empowerment across APEC, cooperation among these fora is critical. To this end, it is important to consider engaging in the La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth (2019) by all fora and sub-fora. In addition, a system needs to be created within APEC to routinely evaluate each economy's progress made and provide feedback to promote women's economic empowerment.

Moreover, it is necessary to develop joint policy directions and guidelines that can close the gender gap in the era of digital transformation and technological development. APEC should develop a guideline to include gender-related provisions in technology development. Korea, China and Japan are economies that are going through fast ICT development, but there are gender gaps and little change in sociocultural norms and employment. If problems caused by the wide gender gap compared to the highly developed technology industry remains unaddressed, it is expected that women will be further marginalised.

* Value added in the ICT sector ranking (UNCTAD 2019) : China (2nd), Japan (3rd), Korea (5th) / Global Gender Gap Report: China (106th), Korea (108th), Japan (121 th)

MALAYSIA

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women’s participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

A. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM)

- i. Economic opportunities for Malaysian women will require expanding the availability, quality and affordability of child and elder care. The Malaysian Labor Survey 2018 found that housework is one of the main reasons that women do not participate in the labour force. 60.2% of women who did not participate in the labor force cited housework, including child and elderly care, as the main reason for not seeking work¹⁴. In the absence of child and elderly care options, a large share of women feels obligated to stay home as caregivers and out of the labor market.
- ii. The National Policy on Women and its Action Plan (NPW-POA) is a reflection of the Malaysia’s commitment to ensure the participation of women in achieving their full potential in the economy’s planning and development. Consistent with the goals of the National Policy on Women, efforts have been undertaken to improve and strengthen the domestic machinery for the advancement of women as well as to ensure greater collaboration and coordination in the implementation of activities for women and families as well as chart new directions for the advancement of women.

Among challenges in the implementation of the Plan of Action are lack of awareness on the importance of gender perspective in the planning, policy making and implementation of development programs and projects, lack of data, particularly sex disaggregated data and cultural, prejudicial attitudes and stereotype perceptions of the society on the capability and ability of women and other cultural and traditional bias towards the role of women.¹⁵

Also, there is poor buy-in, lack of prioritisation, competing for attention or resources. Outside the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD), the NPW-POA had very little traction due to poor buy-in. While a handful showed initiative and tried to connect their own work with the policy document, the majority of ministries/agencies talked about being bogged down, and how the NPW-POA’s contents was not part of their “core business”.¹⁶

- iii. The women in the Bottom 40% of Households (B40) group which earn below RM3,860 (USD889) face additional challenges in participating in the economy due to their limited access to economic resources and opportunities. The high cost of living poses a challenge to these women, in particular single mothers who are trying to raise and educate their children, especially if they are young and require care and protection. Women in the B40 group need to be given more attention and society needs to support the Government’s initiatives in empowering this group of women.

¹⁴ Breaking Barriers: Toward better Economic Opportunities for Women in Malaysia, World Bank 2019

¹⁵ <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/Review/responses/MALAYSIA-English.pdf>

¹⁶ Output 1: The Effectiveness of the National Policy on Women and the National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women (10th Malaysia Plan: 2011 – 2015).

B. Ministry of Human Resource (MOHR)

- (a) Lack of work life balance.
 - i. Inflexible working hours at the workplace.
- (b) Families issues
 - i. To raise a family (childcare); and
 - ii. To care a family member (sick, disable).
- (c) Workplace environment
 - i. Lack of support facilities from employer such as childcare is expensive.

C. Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (MEDAC)

There are many barriers/challenges identified to women's participation in economic activity. Among two are access to market and financial/credit facilities.

There is identified sub-population of women who face additional barriers and challenges which comes from single mother (sole owner).

2. **Structural reform needs:** What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

A. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM)

- Expand the availability, quality and affordability of child and elder care to enable more women to stay in the labour market and to work in more productive jobs.
- In 2019, the government had built 66 childcare centres at a cost of RM10 million (USD2.3 million) and in 2020, the government has allocated RM30 million (USD6.9 million) to establish more childcare centres in government buildings, especially in hospitals and schools. In addition, parents who send their children to childcare centers and kindergartens will enjoy individual tax relief of RM2,000 (USD461) per year.
- Private sector employers can benefit from a double tax deduction for costs of providing and maintaining childcare centres at the workplace. At the same time, a 10% Industrial Building Allowance is available for buildings used as childcare centre.
- Registered childcare centres are also offered 20% discount on their electricity bill to lessen the operating cost for childcare operators.
- Increase availability of infrastructure, policies and laws that encourage women to work. Malaysia has introduced several initiatives to encourage women to participate in the economy such as:

- i. introducing the Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) practice flexi-working hours for the government sector, as well as encourage the corporate sector to adopt this practice;
 - ii. have a programme to encourage women to return to work (the Career Comeback Programme); and
 - iii. introducing 30% policy to increase women’s role in leadership and policy-making decisions.
- Malaysia is in the midst of drafting a bill that focuses on women’s empowerment and non-discrimination to achieve gender equality as an investment towards a brighter future followed by another drafting process for a sexual harassment bill. These on-going legislations aim to address issues related to women such as women's involvement as decision makers, women’s economic empowerment either formal or informal sector or areas where predominantly known to men and strengthening existing legal instruments in guaranteeing non-discriminatory treatment based on gender while providing a safe environment for women.
 - The Government is also in the process of making amendments to the Employment Act 1955 to address the challenges and issues faced by women in Malaysia. e.g., the Ministry of Human Resources is refining the amendments to the Employment Act 1955 to address issues faced by women at work such as making amendments to increase the minimum maternity leave from 60 to 90 days in the private sector to further support working mothers and fathers by including allowance for paternity leave. In the public sector, full paid maternity leave is provided up to 360 days throughout service and seven days of paternity leave for male employees.
 - Mainstreaming Gender Equality. Besides the NPW-POA, Malaysia has introduced Gender Focal Points (GFPs) in 2010 as strategy to mainstream gender concerns with the goal of gender equality and women’s empowerment. Initiatives and programmes must be extended across a range of Ministries and agencies, not just confined to the Ministry of Women Family and Community Development. GFPs were appointed in each Ministry and agency where there was a GFP, there would be a person responsible to champion and mainstream gender into the planning, programming and budgeting of their respective organisations.

B. Ministry of Human Resource (MOHR)

Structural reform needs:

- Promote flexible working hours for mothers
One of the significant proposed amendments to the labour laws is to include provisions on flexible working arrangement in the Employment Act 1955. This will allow both fathers and mothers to work flexibly, even at their homes and balance their responsibilities at work and at home better. Flexible working arrangement will also give women time and flexibility to take part in the economy as women will stay in the workforce since she is able to better balance the responsibilities at home.
- Maternity leave will be fixed at 90 days.
The Ministry of Human Resources has proposed to increase the number of maternity leave from 60 to 90 days. It is proposed that employers cannot terminate a pregnant

female employee unless employers are able to prove the termination is not because of pregnancy. The proposal among other aims to ensure the health and safety of female employee, strengthen the bonding between mother and new-born as well as to comply with international instruments.

- Provide incentives to companies that provide support to their female employees.
- Strengthen legal system to promote women’s right to equal pay for the same work, and ensuring transparent job promotional opportunities
- Introduce a budget system based on the concept of Gender Responsive Budgeting.
- Implement policies and programmes to optimise women's capacity and increase their employment rate.
- Establish a systematic micro-credit scheme to provide opportunities for women entrepreneurs
- Establish specific policies and programs to increase women’s ownership of assets, their investment and savings rate.
- Provide incentives to employers to provide childcare facilities either at work or near the workplace.
- Enabling the domestic care-giving sector to grow in order to provide quality care for postnatal mothers, and to address other needs.
- Ensure employers attend regular training so that they are aware of sexual harassment at workplace and how to tackle it.

Current implementation:

i. Maternity protection

Currently, under the Employment Act 1955, there is one part focused on maternity protection that provides all female employees with the right to a minimum amount of paid maternity leave. Under the Act, any attempt by an employer to remove or reduce such maternity benefits will be rendered void.

An employer is also prohibited from terminating the service of a female employee while she is on maternity leave, unless the termination is due to closure of the employer’s business. There are certain conditions that have to be met before a female employee is entitled to paid maternity leave, and they are as follows:

- a. length of service: not less than 90 days (in the aggregate) during the 9 months immediately before confinement; and
- b. status of employment before confinement: being in the employ of the employer at any time in the 4 months immediately before confinement.

Once these conditions are met, a female employee is entitled to not less than 60 consecutive days of paid maternity leave. This entitlement is available unless she has 5 or more surviving children at the time of her confinement. Female employees may commence their maternity leave at any time as long as it is not earlier than 30 days before confinement or later than the day immediately following confinement. Absence from work outside of these periods would not be treated as maternity leave and would not entitle the employee to maternity allowance.

However, female employees may be required to commence their maternity leave earlier (up to 14 days before confinement) than their preferred date if a medical officer determines that they are unable perform their duties satisfactorily as a result of their advanced state of pregnancy.

If a female employee remains absent from work after she has exhausted her maternity leave due to a pregnancy related illness (as certified by a registered medical practitioner), she shall be protected from dismissal for a period of up to 90 days after the expiration of her maternity leave.

ii. Employment of Women: Prohibition of night work

Section 34 of the Employment Act 1955 protects the rights for working women in Malaysia from working at night. Employers are not allowed to require their women workers to work between 10pm to 5am. Neither can an employer require their women workers to commence work for the day without the worker having rest for a period of 11 consecutive hours from such work. However, this prohibition only applies to industrial or agricultural undertaking. Therefore, women can still work at night in sectors such as commerce, hospitality, public health and entertainment.

Employers may apply to the Director General of Labour for an exemption from this restriction, of which the Director General may allow with conditions.

iii. Sexual Harassment

In 2012, the government amended the Employment Act 1955 and came up with a new part dealing with sexual harassment that defines sexual harassment as any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal, visual, gestural or physical, directed at a person which is offensive or humiliating or is a threat to his well-being, arising out of and in the course of his employment.

Under Section 81B of said Act states that employers have a duty to investigate into any sexual harassment complaint within 30 days from when the complaint was made. However, as of now, the Employment Act does not provide a guideline as to how these investigations are to be carried out.

Malaysia 2020 Budget announcement:

- i. The government introduced #Women (Work @ Women) aims to create 33,000 job opportunities a year for women between the ages of 30 and 50 who have stopped working for a year or more. Women who return to work will be given a two-year salary incentive of RM500 a month, while employers will be given an incentive of hiring RM300 a month for the same period. In addition, income tax exemptions for women returning to work will be extended for another four years until 2023; and
- ii. The government will increase its allocation from RM10 million in 2019 to RM30 million by 2020, to provide more TASKA especially in hospitals and schools. In addition, to ease the financial burden of parents who send their children for early childhood education to TASKA and the registered Child Care Park (TADIKA), the individual tax relief for fees paid will be increased from RM1,000 to RM2,000.

C. Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (MEDAC)

Structural reform in term of policies has been carried out by MEDAC through the National Entrepreneurship Policy 2030 (NEP 2030) as below:

Strategic Thrust 1: Fostering an Entrepreneurship Culture across all Segments of Malaysian Society

This strategic thrust aims at making creativity, innovation, risk-taking as well as the ability to act on opportunities arising as the basis to develop an entrepreneurial culture. The two strategies adopted call for:

A1: Building of a critical mass of entrepreneurs

- Intensify entrepreneurship outreach and awareness programmes;
- Raise awareness of entrepreneurship opportunities;
- Leverage on the media to showcase the positive impact of entrepreneurship;
- Give recognition to entrepreneurial role models; and
- Promote entrepreneurship as a career of choice.

A2: Enhancement of entrepreneurship education and skills

- Embed the entrepreneurial culture in the education system;
- Enhance the quality of entrepreneurship training;
- Incorporate an apprenticeship programme in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET);
- Provide structured entrepreneurial training; and
- Strengthen collaboration between industry and academia.

Strategic Thrust 3: Promoting Holistic and Integrated Entrepreneurship Development

Three strategies have been drawn up to increase entrepreneurial opportunities for all levels of Malaysian society in order to enhance the socio-economic status of all concerned, namely:

C1: Support entrepreneurial endeavour of Bumiputera, disadvantaged & special focus groups

- Intensify outreach programme to disadvantaged group including low income households (B40), rural communities, differently-abled people;
- Targeted assistance and intervention programmes to boost entrepreneurial capability and skills of Bumiputera, disadvantaged groups and special focus groups including women, youth, senior citizen and indigenous (orang asal) community; and
- Create ‘incubation space’ in potential rural and economically depressed areas that is available to would-be/aspiring entrepreneurs.

C2: Co-operatives as driver to inclusive socio-economic development

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

A. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM)

Encouraging Women to Return to Work

- Malaysia has introduced a 12-month income tax exemption for women who re-enter the workforce after a break of at least two years as an incentive for women to return to work. This incentive is available for women who return to the workforce between the years of assessment 2018 to 2020.
- The Career Comeback Programme (CCP) was established in 2015 (by Talent Cooperation Malaysia) to facilitate women to return to the workforce after taking a career break. Between 2015 to April 2019, a total of 1,136 women registered for CCP and 820 women were successfully recruited.
- Besides CCP, Work-Life Practices (WLPs) Advisory Services by TalentCorp is one of the initiatives to promote women to join the labor market. TalentCorp works with organizations to implement WLPs at their workplace by providing advisory services, e.g. flexible working arrangements, benefits such as extended maternity leave and paternity leave and facilities such as nursing rooms and childcare centers at the office. Many of these WLPs cater towards women talents, especially mothers with young children. Some of the more progressive Malaysian companies now offer up to six months paid maternity leave, or one month paid paternity leave. Nursing rooms are also increasingly more common amongst large Malaysian firms.

B. Ministry of Human Resource (MOHR)

Malaysia's economy does not impose any restriction to women in any economy activities. Malaysia also introduced certain policies and initiatives to encourage women's participation in the economy:

- i. Introducing policies to ensure at least 30 percent of women are at the decision-making level;
- ii. Upskilling for women who are back in the workforce after stopping work through the Career Comeback Program (CCP) initiative;
- iii. Attracting and retaining women's workforce by encouraging employers to implement the concept of 'Work-Life Practices' (WLPs) towards a better balance between work and life integration and providing a family-friendly, or 'family-friendly' work environment; Announcing that the Government through the Local Authority (PBT) will require all new office buildings to provide childcare centers, starting in Kuala Lumpur. This is to make it easier for parents to work besides improving family relationships;
- iv. Public service maternity leave increased from 60 days to 90 days (option to choose) up to 5th child; and
- v. Allows female civil servants who are five months old or older in their pregnancy, to return 1 hour early. This flexibility is also given to the husband who works the Government and works nearby.

C. Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (MEDAC)

Its' agencies initiatives/programmes relevant to women empowerment include:

SME Corp

- **Women Netpreneur Programme**
The Women Netpreneur programme is organised to ensure women entrepreneurs are continuously kept in the loop regarding the changing business landscapes that emerge from the new world order - key megatrends that will permanently transform businesses around the world. These include Industry 4.0, digitalisation and technological convergence, giving rise to big data analytics, e-commerce and also financial technology (fintech).
- **Dialogues & Information Sharing Sessions with the Presidents of Women Entrepreneurs Associations**
These periodic sessions are aimed at creating greater awareness, soliciting feedback and generate ideas from the associations and chambers, particularly on issues concerning the development of women in business.

SME Bank

- **MySME Lady**
Financing plan to women entrepreneurs focusing on migrating micro entrepreneurs for business expansion and growth which includes asset acquisition and working capital.

Malaysian Global Innovation & Creativity Centre (MAGIC)

- **Organising various workshops and dialogues focusing on women in entrepreneurship.**
E.g. Women in Entrepreneurship – A Paradigm Shift towards the Right Entrepreneurial Mindset on 1 October 2019, Global Startup Weekend Women – KL Chapter on 6 Sept 2019 and Entrepreneurship Mindset For Women Start-Ups on 20 April 2019 to gain insight on the contribution of women entrepreneurs in the entrepreneurship ecosystem, exchange thought and share experiences with fellow entrepreneurs and unlearn and relearn the skills needed to strive in entrepreneurship.

D. Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE)

Higher Education

The Malaysian higher education system has grown from strength to strength over the past few decades. Over the last ten years alone, the system has made significant gains in student enrolment, risen in global recognition on key dimensions such as research publications, patents and institutional quality, as well as become a top destination for international students. These achievements are a testament to the drive and innovation of the Malaysian academic community, the support of the private sector as well as the deep investment the Government has made.

Education in Malaysia is provided for all Malaysians irrespective of gender, ethnicity, locality and social background. MOE ensures that all Malaysians are given equal opportunities and benefits in every aspect of education and training. As for the higher education sector, the initiatives in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education) are aligned to the Sustainable Development Goal 4 strategies and the 11th Malaysia Plan. MOHE has long practised gender equality in education; where students are accepted based on merit regardless of their gender. And as a result, more girls are now studying at the higher institution level. For instance, the students' enrolment in Malaysian public universities for the last three years comprised of 201,839 (37.9%) males and 330,210 (62.1%) females in 2016; 205,067 (38.1%)

males and 333,488 (61.9%) females in 2017 and 213,654 (38.7%) males and 339,048 (61.3%) females in 2018. The male to female student ratios are 1:1.64; 1:1.63 and 1:1.59 respectively.

Career guidance campaigns at higher education level are also done equally for all students. At each polytechnic, a Corporate Industrial Services and Employability Centre is established to provide the information on labor market outcomes and prospects of different study choices. The same role is played by Industrial Liaison Units at community colleges. Hence, students at the polytechnics and community colleges are regularly updated through the various awareness programs carried out at the institutions. Regular dialogues, talks and face-to-face meetings with representatives from the industries help to give students an overview of the current labor market. Graduate Employability (GE) programs, which also include girls/women to fields in which they are underrepresented such as in engineering programmes, are carried out in collaboration with industries to provide extra training specific to job prospects and to give students opportunity to experience real work in the relevant industries.

Women Empowerment through lifelong learning

Ministry of Higher Education through its polytechnics and community colleges offers tertiary education and lifelong learning programs to students who do not pursue university level education. The community colleges provide lifelong learning (LLL) programmes to 6 groups of participants namely the elderly persons, person with disabilities, single mothers, indigenous population, youth and bottom 40% income group (B40).

LLL programmes at community colleges have gained widespread attention among the local community where women outnumbered men in the number of participation. In 2019, a total of 222,675 participated in LLL programmes and women contributed 62% (137,724) of overall participation.

Examples of programmes conducted are culinary, baking, religious studies, languages, handicrafts and basic computer programmes. Participants of LLL are encouraged to earn and increase income from the knowledge gained.

Women LLL participants particularly those from Sabah and Sarawak are encouraged to become entrepreneurs and showcase their traditional handicrafts such as basket weaving, weaved mats, beaded accessories, traditional instruments, snacks and artwork. In doing so, they will not only preserve their ethnic crafts and traditions but will also contribute to the learning of their younger generation.

E. Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI)

Governments are taking step to manage the risks of seize the opportunities resulting from ongoing changes in the world of work to accelerate gender equality and the empowerment of women, including with regard to the impact of new technologies. Taking heed from the initiatives, MOSTI through its agencies has organised a few international training workshops for women in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) to accelerate gender equality and the empowerment of women as follows:

- i. Training workshop on Developing Talents of Women in STI 3-6 August 2015;
- ii. Training workshop on developing talents for women in STI 18-22 July 2016;

- iii. Training Workshop on Technopreneurship for Women in STI 5-9 September 2016 (32 delegates – 15 from Malaysia); and
- iv. Training Workshop on Developing Leadership Talents of Women in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), 17-20 July 2018, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (29 delegates – 15 from Malaysia).

The training workshops on developing talents on women are aimed at engaging women at middle level management on developing their own strengths and talents, enhance their skills, knowledge and attitudes regarding the environment at the workplace and enhance their self-beliefs. The training workshop on technopreneurship was aimed at assisting women researchers on the commercialisation of their research products by taking advantage of new emerging technologies.

In addition, MOSTI through its agencies also organised the following international conferences for Women in STI.

- i. International Science, Technology & Innovation Centre (ISTIC) / Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) / United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Malaysian National Commission International Forum on Harnessing Women’s Talents in Science, Technology and Innovation 25-26 May 2015 (127 participants).

The Forum was aimed at discussing strategies and solutions of the under-representations of women in STI careers and in higher positions. Recommendations were made on how women in STI can be made visible in their organisations and on how their potential can be maximised to benefit both the women and the organisations. The Forum concluded with a declaration.

- i. 3rd ISTIC Biennial International Conference on Women in Science, Technology and Innovation: Innovative Solutions by Women in STI for UN Sustainable Development Goals (115 delegates of which 60 were Malaysians). The Conference concluded with a Declaration.

The international conference highlights the successful innovations in STI by women in solving or minimising problems faced by women and at exchanging and sharing experiences on how to achieve the UN SDG (2016 -2030)

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

A. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM)

- Access to education and health provides an opportunity for women and girls to partake in the economy and Malaysia has continued to make remarkable progress in terms of access to education and health.
- At primary and secondary level, the enrolment ratio of girls is almost equal to boys. For the period 2014 to 2017, there has been a steady increase in the enrolment rate of female students at these levels. As of 2017, it stands at 97.6% for male and 98.2% for female at primary level; 94.6% for male and 88.5% for female at secondary level; and 38.2% for male and 48.3% for female at tertiary level. Literacy rate has increased to 97.3% for male and 96.3% for female, as compared to 96.2% for male and 92.7% for female in 2014.

- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Malaysia attracts more male students. However, the number of full-time female students in Polytechnics and Community Colleges¹⁷ are not far behind from the male counterpart. Female students make up 48% of the total enrolment at Polytechnics, and 44% at Community Colleges. Most of the teaching staff in Polytechnics and Community Colleges are female. There are 59% female teaching staff/lecturers at Polytechnics and 60.8% at Community Colleges. Life-long Learning (LLL) programmes in Community Colleges gives training and learning opportunities to more than 51% female participants.
- In healthcare, the Government is committed to ensure that the services provided are affordable and accessible without compromising the quality of service. Life expectancy for both Malaysian men and women has increased over the years. In 2014, the life expectancy was 72.4 years for men and 77 years for women. In 2017, the life expectancy was 72.3 years for men and had risen to 77.2 years for women. The Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) 2018 had reported that the health and survival rate in Malaysia has almost reached gender parity with the score 0.974 on the index. Maternal mortality ratio has declined from more than 40 per 100,000 live births in 1991 to 29.1 per 100,000 live births in 2016.

B. Ministry of Human Resource (MOHR)

TalentCorp, MOHR has been implementing the Career Comeback Program (CCP) to attract more women to encourage employers to recruit and retain women on career breaks. As of now, since it was established in 2015, there are a total of 820 women have returned to work and 323 employers have recruited career break.

Since 2019, the CCP focus shifted to reskilling and upskilling women on career breaks to ensure they are ready to be integrated into the workforce. The Career Comeback Workshop and Returnship Programme are part of the CCP which aims to reskill or upskill women in soft skills, technical skills, and industry knowledge following a career break.

Apart from that, to encourage more women to participate in the economy activities, the Malaysia 2020 Budget had also listed programmes as follows:

- #Women (Work @ Women) aims to create 33,000 job opportunities a year for women between the ages of 30 and 50 who have stopped working for a year or more;
- Women who return to work will be given a two-year salary incentive of RM500 a month, while employers will be given an incentive of hiring RM300 a month for the same period. In addition, income tax exemptions for women returning to work will be extended for another four years until 2023; and
- This initiative will encourage employers to open up more employment opportunities to Malaysian women than the option to hire foreign workforce.

5. **Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question

¹⁷ Polytechnics and Community colleges are public-funded higher educational institutions that offer technical and vocational courses of study to upper-secondary school leavers, leading to the award of diploma and certificate qualifications.

above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

A. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM)

- The establishments of Women and Family Development Council (MPWK) and Women's Advisor and Consultant Council (MPPW).
- The Statistics on Women Empowerment in Selected Domains, Malaysia presents gender statistics and gender related indicators as a measurement of gender equality annually. These statistics focus on the core set of gender indicators which covers the following 8 main domains - economic structure, participation in productive activities and access to resources; education; health and related activities; public life and decision making; human rights of women and girls; social protection; disaster risk reduction; and peace and security. These data are essential in identifying remaining gaps that need to be addressed and subsequently in developing necessary policies to close these gaps.
- The collection of sex-disaggregated data needs to be ensured and that gender indicators are integrated into monitoring and evaluation with due attention paid to both qualitative and quantitative indicators. Realizing the importance, efforts need to be strengthened with the support from the Department of Statistics to collect data and analyze them to determine baselines, gaps or trends.

B. Ministry of Human Resource (MOHR)

Monitoring:

- Under the Career Comeback Programme, there are few indicators which are used to assess the effectiveness of the programme, such as by monitoring the total of women hired; total number of women attended the workshop/ returnship programme; and the total number of employers conducting the workshops. The data is derived on a monthly basis.
- With the current resources availability, the data collection process is focusing more on the Klang Valley area. Moving forward, TalentCorp is planning to have an advanced system using an artificial intelligence database, which looks at the lifecycle of women who are on career breaks. This could help in preparing the intervention programmes which are more feasible and impactful.

Challenges and Lesson Learned:

- There are many agencies and ministries involved in encouraging more women participation in the economic sector. A centralised data centre could help in optimising the resources and get a more accurate data.
- Another challenge is to identify the needs of supports among women. Each individual has different needs. By having a more collective data could strengthen the women empowerment programme to achieve their objectives.

- To prepare women towards entering the digitalisation era, the government should start to prepare women with the right skills and inculcate gig works and entrepreneurship among women.

C. Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)

- Malaysia acknowledges the importance of measuring women's economic participation. As such, the first attempt undertaken by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) is to produce the publication of Statistics for Women-Owned Establishment based on Economic Census 2016 data. From the SDGs point of view, the goals, targets and indicators for women are comprehensively stated in Goal 1, 2, 3 dan 10. Currently, there is no official manuals or guidelines for measuring women's contribution to the GDP. Hence, the compilation of indicators basically will be focusing on indicators for goals 1, 2, 3 and 10.
- DOSM has also published the Informal Sector Workforce Survey Report which highlights statistics of informal employment in the informal sector. This report provides demographic and socioeconomics characteristics such as status of employment, category of occupation, age group, educational attainment, highest certificate obtained as well as the type of workplace according to strata (urban and rural) and sex.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

A. Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM)

- APEC's capacity building programmes has been a platform for sharing best practices and inspiring economies is taking steps to promote women's economic empowerment. APEC should continue playing this role to raise awareness and increase understanding of the importance of women economic empowerment in the region.

B. Ministry of Human Resource (MOHR)

APEC assistance in promoting women's economic empowerment in Malaysia:

- i. Monetary assistance in research or vocational grant especially in training; and
- ii. Partnership on seminar and short courses on empowerment of women especially on employment and entrepreneurship.

C. Ministry of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (MEDAC)

APEC plays an important role in promoting and highlighting the agenda of gender equality in the global marketplace. APEC can leverage on programmes by other regional and international bodies such as ASEAN, OECD as well as international non-governmental organizations through cross collaborations on existing programmes and policy initiatives. Such collaborations can further promote women's economic development, create effective changes in business culture, build strategic alliances and transform public policy and influence decision-makers.

MEXICO

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Women face limitations to achieve economic autonomy. The sexual division of labor has placed women almost exclusively responsible for the tasks associated with the field of reproduction, such as domestic and care work. As a result, women have historically been relegated from the activities that take place in the sphere of production, which has caused less access to methods of production, well-paid work options, financial services and opportunities for the full development of their economic capabilities.

In the labor market, gender inequality is evident. In Mexico, the differences in opportunities to access or stay in paid work are reflected in a low participation of women compared to men. According to the 2019 National Survey of Occupation and Employment (ENOE), 4.5 out of 10 women participate in the labor market in contrast to almost eight out of 10 men¹⁸, which places Mexico at the top among economies with low rates in terms of women's participation, below the average for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2017)¹⁹.

The factors that limit or condition the access and permanence of women in the labor market are diverse and range from discrimination in hiring, to mobility and promotion practices; unequal remuneration; gender prejudices or stereotypes; inflexible working conditions; unequal distribution of unpaid domestic and care work, which falls mainly on women and is related to an insufficient supply of care services; workplace violence; and sexual harassment.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

Mexico has made important regulatory, structural reforms, and programmatic advances. Over the past decade, Mexico has made great strides in strengthening its dual approach to gender equality through the development of laws, policies, and programs.

Mexico has a solid domestic policy on equality between women and men, sustained in a legal framework conformed by the General Law for Equality between Women and Men (LGIMH) (2006), that establishes the creation of two important instruments for the National Policy of Equality: the National System for Equality between Women and Men, and the National Program for Equality between Women and Men (PROIGUALDAD).

The National System for Equality between Women and Men (SNIMH), is the highest linking mechanism for equality now operating at the ministerial level.

¹⁸ INEGI. Mujeres y hombres en México 2018.

¹⁹ OECD (2017). Building an Inclusive Mexico - Policies and Good Governance for Gender Equality.

In addition, the Federal Planning and Budget and Fiscal Responsibility Laws require the incorporation of a gender perspective, while the National Development Plan (PND) 2019-2024 is the instrument that establishes domestic objectives, strategies and priorities for comprehensive development and sustainable economy. The main objective of the PND is the general well-being of the population, it is integrated from the general axes: Politics and Government, Social Policy and Economy, the vision towards 2024, will also be guided according to 12 guiding principles.

In compliance with this development plan, the National Program for Equality between Women and Men (PROIGUALDAD) 2019-2024 is established, with a clear objective: to leave no one behind, nor anyone outside on equality.

The main objective is to establish the work to be carried out over the next few years, to achieve substantive equality in the public and private spheres, promote the economic autonomy of women, create the conditions to recognize, reduce and redistribute domestic and household work, improve conditions for women, girls and adolescents to access well-being and health without discrimination, combat violence, position the equal participation of women in decision-making in the political, social, community and private spheres and build safe and peaceful environments.

In this sense, the design and execution of actions which contribute to reducing gender inequality gaps at the local level should be promoted, as well as the minimum conditions to implement the domestic policy of equality between women and men in federal entities and municipalities.

We must direct our efforts to combat gender discrimination, as well as dismantling the factors that caused the undervaluation of women's work, also labor segregation, the lack of union representation and the stereotypes and perception of women as economically dependent.

3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives: Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

In 2014, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the National Institute for Women and the National Council to Prevent Discrimination combined efforts, strategies and resources within the framework of inter-institutional cooperation, which was formalized on August 19, 2014 through the signing of a collaboration agreement²⁰, which aims to carry out actions in a coordinated manner aimed to disseminate, and promote labor equality and non-discrimination in workplaces in the public, private and social sectors.

Derived from the collaboration agreement, the Mexican Standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015 on Labor Equality and Non-Discrimination was created, which recovers the experience and learning of similar mechanisms regarding its purpose that the three institutions operated: the Mexican NMX Standard -R-025-SCFI-2012 for Labor Equality between Women and Men of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security; the Gender Equality Model (MEG) of the National Institute for Women and the Action Guide against Discrimination "Institution Committed to Inclusion" (ICI Guide) of the National Institute for Women.

²⁰ Published on September 13, 2014.

Available on: http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5360171&fecha=12/09/2014

The Mexican Standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2012 for Labor Equality between Women and Men, started as a result of improvements to the NMX-R-025-SCFI-2009 that preceded it. The purpose of this standard was to establish the requirements to obtain the certification and the emblem that verified that the labor practices of the organizations respected equality and non-discrimination, social security, an adequate work environment, freedom and accessibility for work among women and men²¹.

For its part, the Gender Equity Model (MEG), operated by the National Institute of Women, was a management system with a gender perspective, which provided tools to companies, public institutions and social organizations to assume a commitment to equality between women and men. Its objective is to develop and promote gender equality in organizations through the institutionalization of policies that promote equal opportunities between women and men in access to employment, working conditions, as well as professional development, training and participation in decision-making processes. The MEG started its application in 2003 and ended in 2015²².

The ICI Guide aimed to support institutions to prevent and eliminate discrimination in order to develop conditions to achieve real equality of opportunity and treatment in institutions, companies or organizations. Also had short and long-term goals²³.

4. Leading practices: Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

The Mexican Standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015 on Labor Equality and Non-Discrimination is a comprehensive instrument, which has contributed to create the conditions that allow addressing the main problems in the Mexican labor market, in terms of gender inequality: low participation of women in employment, occupational segregation, low presence of women in decision-making positions, wage inequality between women and men, lack of co-responsibility between work, family and personal life, workplace violence and discrimination.

In this sense, the Mexican Standard is a roadmap or guide for those who are interested in joining equality and the elimination of discrimination in the labor world, but do not know how to do it. In this way, the Mexican Standard helps to move from commitment to action and allows articulating isolated actions in the workplace and making them viable.

Furthermore, something important to emphasize is that this certification makes visible the key role which workplaces play as indispensable actors in achieving cultural change and a more inclusive society. The implementation of this instrument shows commitment and sends a clear message of respect and recognition of the labor rights of male and female workers.

On the other hand, given this is a world trend, Mexico has a strong instrument compared to other similar practices, it has given concrete and positive results. It is important to highlight the inter-institutional work of the three coordinating agencies for the implementation of the

²¹ Mexican Standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2009 for labor equality between women and men: <http://www.stps.gob.mx/bp/anexos/igualdad%20laboral/2.%20Norma%20mexicana%20para%20la%20Oigualdad%20laboral.pdf>

²² Gender Equity Model 2003-2015: <https://www.gob.mx/inmujeres/acciones-y-programas/modelo-de-equidad-de-genero-2003-2015>

²³ Institution Committed to Inclusion Guide https://www.conapred.org.mx/userfiles/files/Guia_ICI_2011_digital.pdf

Mexican Standard, which due to the sum of efforts has positioned itself as a solid instrument, not only at the domestic, but also at the regional and international level.

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

As mentioned before, the Mexican Standard is coordinated by 3 institutions, which is why it has positioned itself regionally as a solid instrument and internationally it has been recognized as good practice by the EUROsociAL Program.

In May 2020, the National Register of Work Centres certified in the Mexican Standard NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015 in Labor Equality and Non-Discrimination counted 411 organizations with 4,856 sites throughout Mexico. Of this total, 33% are private and 67% are public. In this way, 810,040 people (46% women) receive the benefits of certified work centres.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

Mexico is part of the Community of the Gender Equality Seal, an initiative promoted and coordinated by the Regional Center for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). This community includes different economies in Latin America and the Caribbean which have instruments equivalent to the Mexican Standard.

Some of the achievements of the Seal Community in the last decade are related to the consolidation of Gender Equality Seal Certification Programs in 14 economies in the region, 11 of them are active.

APEC has made great strides and designed projects to ensure the economic empowerment of women continues to be promoted, in this sense, before the health contingency by COVID-19, all the aforementioned mechanisms of the different economies are facing an economic crisis that can prevent their continuity, and even imply a regression, so more than ever, international cooperation and alliances are needed to maintain and improve public policies which address cultural, social and structural barriers that impede participation and access to economic market on equal terms for women.

NEW ZEALAND

1. **Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women’s participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

- Discrimination against women in terms of pay and promotion within the workplace compared to men. For example, 80% of the gender pay gap is “unexplained”, rather than being due to differences in education, number of hours worked, etc. Women are significantly underrepresented in leadership roles in the private sector.
- Historic and ongoing undervaluation of occupations predominantly performed by women resulting in these occupations being paid less than occupations predominantly performed by men, even when the levels of skills and responsibilities required are similar. For example, STEM fields that are primarily women are sometimes not considered “real” STEM, unlike engineering or tech fields.
- Women perform significantly more unpaid work than men. This includes activities such as caring for children and other family members, and volunteering in community activities. This work, although necessary, can also create a barrier to participating in paid work. Furthermore, women experience a “motherhood penalty” reduction in pay upon becoming parents. Men do not experience a “fatherhood penalty”.
- Some groups of women experience the combined and multiplying effects of several forms of discrimination because of their race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. Women are diverse and their lives are not all the same. This means that we need to consider intersectional remedies to discrimination, recognizing the lived experiences of those affected.

2. **Structural reform needs:** What are your economy’s main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women’s economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women’s equal economic participation??

Although the gender pay gap has reduced significantly since measurement began, progress has stalled in the last decade. Further work is needed to continue to make progress for women – this will need to be a multi-pronged approach recognising the various causes of pay gaps. One option we are considering is pay transparency and how this might be implemented. Other initiatives underway are outlined below.

- To address the undervaluation of work predominantly performed by women, we need a system through which women can meaningfully have this undervaluation corrected. Currently the Gender Pay Principles agreed by government, unions and employers are the framework through which government has led the settlement of recent pay equity claims within the public sector. These principles have underpinned the development of the Equal Pay Amendment Bill, currently awaiting its second reading in Parliament.

The Bill brings pay equity discussions from the court to the bargaining table, which should make it easier for employees to raise claims, and enable employees and employers to work together to determine an equitable pay rate.

- To close the gap in the amount of unpaid work women perform, paid parental leave is able to be transferred to a second parent, usually the child’s father. The total available time of parental leave has been extended to 26 weeks, which may make it more feasible for some leave to be transferred. Of course, this does not address all the many other types of unpaid work that women do, apart from childcare.
- Increasing accessibility of flexible working arrangements is important for enabling people of all genders to balance paid work with other responsibilities. Under the Employment Relations Act, all employees have the right to request a flexible working arrangement, and their employer must consider the request in good faith.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

- The public service is working to lead by example to achieve gender balance. In 2018, a group consisting of representatives from the State Services Commission, Ministry for Women, and Public Service Association (union representing public sector employees) worked together to develop a Gender Pay Gap Action Plan. This includes milestones such as eliminating bias from remuneration systems, ensuring that there is gender balance in leadership roles, and making flexible working arrangements available to all staff. This action plan has been very successful, with the public service gender pay gap narrowing significantly since the action plan’s introduction. We intend that this work will show private sector employers that targeted effort is effective for reducing gender gaps.
- The Māori and Pacific Trades Training programme has a focus on recruiting, retaining and ensuring employment outcomes for Māori and Pacific women to achieve in fields that are traditionally male-dominated. Significant differences exist between different cultural and ethnic groups in New Zealand, particularly between the Pākehā dominant European settler population and Māori the indigenous peoples, and too, the Pasifika migrant groups from the Pacific Island economies of Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, Tokelau, Niue, Fiji, Tuvalu and our most recent migrants from Kiribati. In all ethnic groups, women earn less than men. The overall gender pay gap is 9.3%. For Pākehā women, the gender pay gap is about 7.4%, while for Māori women it is 18.5% and for Pacific women it is 19.6%. Many women consider that trades training is not “for” them, but seeing other women succeed in these fields can be very powerful for showing women that their gender should not be a limit on their career choices.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Over the past decade, the government has made significant progress on support for working parents. This includes providing up to 20 hours free early childhood education per week, extending paid parental leave to 26 weeks, and providing all employees with the right to request flexible working conditions (such as a variation to days, hours or location of work). Access to

and the availability of childcare services are acknowledged barriers for women, especially low paid women, to participate in paid work. We consider that providing services to support childcare has been key to increasing women's labour market participation (currently 65.6 % and over 10 % higher than it was in 1990).

The Public Service Gender Pay Gap Action Plan, as outlined in the response to Question 3, has demonstrated the positive outcomes that can be achieved when coordinated and agreed actions are implemented and publicly reported by the most senior sector leaders.

We consider that the introduction of domestic violence leave is symbolically important as it enables victims/survivors of violence to maintain their connection to the labor market. The leave entitlement was recently introduced in April 2019 by the Domestic Violence Victims Protection Act 2018 and it remains too early to determine the policy's economic impact. The workplace is often a relatively safe space for victims/survivors of domestic violence and the ability to be economically independent can be extremely important for long-term safety.

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

A recent 2018 monitoring and evaluation report on the 20 hours free ECE policy focused on the impact of parenthood on labour market outcomes for women and men. Key findings identified that parenthood increases the gender gap in hourly wages. Women's earnings fell dramatically when they become parents while men's monthly incomes continued to increase smoothly. This significantly increased men's average earnings advantage over women and has long-term consequences for the gender retirement gap women experience. A second report focused on the effect of the 20 hours free ECE policy on mothers' earnings and found it had positive labour market effects for only the lowest earning mothers. Enablers and the long-term impact of women's labour market participation continue to drive early childhood research and the need for sex-disaggregated data to inform women's policy.

The State Services Commission (SSC) calculates a gender pay gap for the public service comparing the average salaries of men and women in full and part time work. Since 2000, the SSC has reported the Public Service gender pay gap using average (mean) pay. These statistics are reported on an annual basis. Mean pay better reflects employees with very low or very high pay and the fact that women are overrepresented in the low paid groups and underrepresented in high paid groups.

In the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan, the Government, Public Service chief executives and the Public Service Association agreed a comprehensive set of actions and targets that will help close the pay gap in the Public Service. The Gender Pay Principles provide a framework for creating working environments free of gender-based inequalities, based on collaborative action between agencies, employees and unions. Eliminating gender pay gap is a chief aim of the Principles. Government agencies proactively release their gaps, despite not being legally compelled to do. The four key areas of Public Service Pay Gap Action Plan are:

- equal pay: by the end of 2020 all agencies will have closed any gender pay gaps within the same roles
- flexible work by default: by 2020 all agencies will be flexible-by-default

- bias and discrimination: by the end of 2018 there will be no gaps in starting salaries for the same roles
- gender balanced leadership: by the end of 2019 women will hold at least 50 % of leadership roles in the top three tiers of leadership.

Each agency has been tasked with making their own plans to address these areas and undertake standardized measurement of gender pay gaps so they can be corrected in the next remuneration round. SSC estimates that differences in occupational group, seniority and experience (through age) between men and women explains around 59% of the overall gender pay gap of 10.5%. While data analysis can help to highlight some of the factors that contribute to pay gaps, it does not negate them as factors that need to be addressed in order to reduce the gender pay gap further.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

APEC can provide a framework for identifying and capturing concrete, meaningful targets which could be adopted by other regional bodies. In 2017, ASEAN members adopted the Action Agenda on Mainstreaming Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE). The Action Agenda aims to bolster Women’s Economic Empowerment through innovation, trade and inclusive business, and human capital development by encouraging each ASEAN member to carry out actions in support of the agenda. There are requirements for implementing the Action Agenda that need to be adhered to including: consciousness, capacity and collaboration which will aid in the translation of plans, programmes and policies. With the APEC Economic Committee specifically focused on the five core areas of structural reform, APEC work on women’s economic empowerment in the EC and PPWE and the focus on Women’s economic empowerment through the ‘La Serena Roadmap’ could be utilized as frameworks or tools for the ASEAN Action Agenda on Mainstreaming Women’s Economic Empowerment. Specifically, the La Serena Roadmap includes concrete, meaningful targets and will therefore have a significant, positive impact for women in the region.

APEC’s business arm, the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) could assist with encouraging private sector organizations to proactively address gender equality within their organizations. For example, if organizations in traditionally male-dominated fields work to create a safer and more affirming environment for women, we may see a decrease in occupational segregation, and a consequent reduction in the gender pay gap.

APEC’s mainstreaming of gender and women’s issues can continue to role model inclusive approaches to economic participation. The persistence of APEC to include and mainstream gender issues, continues to have an impact on international and multilateral originations. In 2017 the WTO issued the Buenos Aires Declaration on Women and Trade. Gender provisions are an increasing feature of FTAs. Generally they have been used to reaffirm existing commitments. But increasingly they also create cooperation mechanisms to promote equal opportunity and, in some cases, legal obligations that can reinforce international standards at the domestic level.

APEC’s approach to data collection, monitoring and evaluation could provide a framework, and in time, a model for a standardized approach to collection of data across the region. APEC data indicators, such as the ‘Women in the Economy Dashboard’ are a useful framework and could provide guidance for other international organizations. The standardization of disparate gender disaggregated data across APEC economies is a valuable

tool and allows regional organizations to gauge areas where further investigation and regulatory change is needed in order to advance women's economic empowerment.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

<p>1. <u>Barriers and challenges:</u> What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?</p>
<p>Barriers and challenges to women's economic participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Access to opening bank accounts b) Access to credit c) Language barriers d) Cultural and traditional norms e) Financial Literacy <p>Identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Persons with disabilities b) Rural Informal sectors c) Illiterate groups
<p>2. <u>Structural reform needs:</u> What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.</p> <p>If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??</p>
<p>Structural reform needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Gender inequality b) Violence against women c) Financial capability and basic financial education <p>Initiatives to address gaps in structural reforms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Implementation of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy b) National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2016-2020, addressing financial independence and reaching the unbanked to be banked c) Financial Literacy Rollout programs in the rural areas d) Opening of bank accounts e) Banking services
<p>3. <u>(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:</u> Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.</p>
<p>GESI Policy. This policy sets a framework for promotion of gender equity and social inclusive practices across the all sectors.</p> <p>Social Protection Policy. This policy entails the framework in which all citizens, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and groups, will be provided with the support they require from Government, service providers and the wider civil society to enjoy their rights and to meet their development needs.</p>

<p>4. <u>Leading practices:</u> Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?</p>
<p>The GESI policy came on board after 2015 so the impacts are still in progress. Organizations have adopted this policy are part of their initiative to promote gender equality and social inclusion.</p>
<p>5. <u>Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):</u> How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women’s economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Opening of Bank accounts b) Number of Trainers trained to facilitate the retail trainers c) Number of sim cards that access phone banking services d) Data recorded every quarter sent to Central Bank for variances and made public e) The challenges faced at the sustainability of the data and challenges of chasing after the dormant accounts and the figures that decrease as a result f) There is also a challenge to understand other factors apart from the financial services that may have contributed to the success/failure in empowering women in PNG context. g) Transition of ANZ bank to Kina has affected the client’s accounts and the drop in maintaining and sustaining banks accounts.
<p>6. <u>Regional cooperation:</u> What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?</p>
<p>Work in collaboration with other international institutions like the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI), Foundation for Development Corporation (FDC) to further discuss and develop alter policy interventions to advance work on women’s economic empowerment.</p>

PERU

1. **Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Informality and unpaid care and domestic work. According to the Report on Gender Gaps of the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI), 51.4% of the poor population of Peru is female. This data is significant if we observe the rate of women (over 14 years old) who do not have their own income is almost 2.5 times (29.2%) more than the rate of men (12.4%). This situation is exacerbated in rural areas, where 41.2% of women are under this condition, compared to 12.9% of men. In that line, 37.6% of women are independent or self-employed workers, and 15.3% are under the category of "family workers", situations where they often do not receive remuneration. Furthermore, 64% of women are economically active or looking for a job, compared to 81% of men. In the urban area, the gap between women and men is 16.7% and in the rural area, 15.8%. Also, a relevant fact is that 75.3% of women is engaged in the informal sector, compared to 70.1% of men.

This data must be analyzed along with the size of companies where women work. Thus, 70.9% of women, who had a paid job, worked in micro and small companies, 5.5% in companies with 6 to 10 workers, 6.2% in companies with 11 to 50 workers, and 17.7% in companies with more than 51 workers. In addition, women tend to work in "other services" with a rate of 42.4%, commerce with 25.8%, agriculture with 20.8% and manufacturing with 8.4%.

This situation of female employability must be taken into account when formulating actions framed in economic recovery. Developing gender-neutral responses will only reproduce the previous gender inequalities, exacerbated in the current setting of an economy-wide emergency. In this sense, the objective of this proposal is to incorporate the gender perspective into the containment measures of COVID-19.

Economic violence based on patriarchal cultural behaviours. The National Survey of Social Relations – ENARES 2019 (INEI) analyzes how Peruvian society tolerates violence against women. Economic violence is a phenomenon that includes several manifestations. For example, the 52% women who are currently married or living together with their partner were prohibited from working; and, in the 43.2% of cases, their partner refused to give her the money necessary for a household.

We must take into account that gender relations are power relations, where culturally the one who has more money is the one who exercises more power over the other person. When they are prevented from working in a remunerated job, a type of economic violence is perpetrated according to the definition of Law 30364. Usually, this type of violence can go unnoticed because it does not often involve physical aggression. However, it has an impact on the full development of women's lives and especially on the construction of their autonomy.

Also, ENARES 2019 collects the perceptions of citizens about various situations of gender violence. Concerning economic autonomy and how gender violence directly affects this fundamental right of women, there is a statement: "Women must fulfil the role of mother and wife, and after, they can achieve their dreams". The results show how the traditional role of mother/wife prevails in Peruvian society. Personal achievements (academic and/or professional) take second place once the woman forms a formal couple or has children. These

perceptions of what is adequate / expected of women harm the development of women's autonomy. Therefore, it is imperative to sensitize the population about co-responsibility in the care of domestic and care work, promoting new models of masculinity and fatherhood, as well as recognizing the hard work that women carry out in their homes.

2. **Structural reform needs:** What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

In 2012, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS) was created in order to separate the functions of social development and the fight against poverty from those aimed to achieve gender equality. Since then, the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP) has assumed the stewardship of domestic and sectoral policies across Peru on women's rights and prevention and protection against violence.

In 2012, the Third National Plan for Gender Equality - PLANIG (2012-2017) was issued. The objective of this document is to apply the gender approach in the public policies of the three levels of government (central government, regional governments and local governments). Also, it establishes the strategic objective of ensuring the economic rights of women in conditions of equity and equal opportunities, including the following topics: reconciliation between life family and work, sexual harassment at work, social security for domestic workers, and training and technical assistance for employability.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

Maternity leave for working women:

- a. Law No. 26644 (1999) determines that it is the right of the pregnant worker to enjoy 45 days of prenatal and postnatal rest, indicating that both periods can be accumulated after notifying the employer. Likewise, it was pointed out that the pregnant worker can use her pending vacations from the day after the expiration of postnatal rest.
- b. Law No. 27606 (2001) extends the maternity leave for an additional 30 calendar days in cases of multiple births.
- c. Supreme Decree No. 005-2011-TR (2011) regulates the Law No. 26644 and specifies that the maternity leave allows the mother to enjoy 90 calendar days in total, which can be distributed in periods of 45 days each. Also, it sets that, in case of multiple births, the postnatal rest will be extended for an additional 30 calendar days.

Paternity leave:

Although the paternity leave refers to fathers, the simple fact that men are also granted this right allows not only women to be in charge of the care of new-born children but both parents to take part in it. Furthermore, it especially allows the mother who has just given birth to recover and feel emotionally supported and in this way she rejoins her work with greater ease and animosity.

- a. Law No. 29409 (2009) establishes that workers in public and private activities, as well as those included in the Armed Forces and the National Police of Peru, have the right to receive parental leave when their spouse or cohabiting partner lights up and is granted for 4 consecutive business days. In addition, the law specifies the inalienability of said benefit in favour of family development.
- b. Law No. 30807 (2018) establishes that paternity leave is granted for 10 consecutive calendar days when it is natural or caesarean birth and; if in exceptional cases, the period of leave varies to 20 calendar days for premature births and multiple births; 30 calendar days for birth with a terminal congenital disease or severe disability; and 30 calendar days for severe complications of the mother's health. Similarly, it was established that if the mother dies during childbirth or during her leave, the father will be benefited by said leave. Finally, the father is also allowed to enjoy his pending vacations after his paternity leave expires, after notifying his employer.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Development of capacities for employability and generation of own income. This work is carried out by most public entities, which provide training services, technical assistance and advice for the labour insertion of the general population. Women's access to these public services has increased in the last five years. On average, 40% - 50% of the total number of participants are women, which shows that this intervention is incorporating the focus of gender contributing to the reduction of gender gaps in access to services, the development of employability and generation of own income. Also, there are initiatives to counteract the presence of discriminatory cultural patterns in economic activities that, by tradition, are called "masculine" (construction, agro-industrial, aquaculture technology, footwear, forestry, fisheries, and textile-camelids). To strengthen and consolidate this process, the 17 Ministries and the 26 regional governments have a mechanism for gender equality (commission, committee or working group), whose purpose is to promote policies and institutional management with a gender approach that contribute to reducing gaps between women and men.

National Policy on Gender Equality 2020–2030. This seeks to solve the "structural discrimination against women", identifying as a fundamental cause of the discriminatory sociocultural patterns that reinforce the unequal assignment of roles and that by the action of institutional norms and culture are reproduced and perpetuated, resulting in the violation of several human rights. The policy objective 4 regarding the exercise of women's economic and social rights integrates three policy guidelines: i) implement the economy-wide system of care with a gender approach for people in situation of dependency, ii) increase access and control of the productive and patrimonial resources of women, and iii) labor insertion of women.

5. **Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

During the 2012-2018, when PLANIG was in force, the body that took over the monitoring and evaluation of the intervention in gender equality, including the women's economic

autonomy, was the Multisectoral Commission made up of Deputy Ministers of several sectors of the government.

Each public entity, responsible for the results determined in the PLANIG, reported the progress in the execution of goals on an annual basis. That information was systematized in a Progress Report (in compliance with Law 28983), which is presented to the Plenary Session of the Congress of the Republic.

For the annual progress report, the Directorate for the Promotion and Development of Women's Economic Autonomy of the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP) indicates the fulfilment of goals regarding the activities carried out to improve women's employability and income generation.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

Taking into account the diversity of economies in the region, APEC can be used as a platform for the exchange of experiences and regulations.

THE PHILIPPINES

1. **Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Barriers and challenges:

Providing care work for dependents takes women out of the labor force. In general, the Philippine culture, as reflected in the patriarchal family structure and stereotyped gender roles, expects women to provide care work for dependents such as children, persons with disabilities, and older persons. In this light, women are more likely to withdraw from the labor force in their peak childbearing age of 25 to 29 years old²⁴.

Persistent gender wage gaps in some sectors and occupations. In general, male agricultural workers were paid higher than their female counterparts (USD5.98 per day for males and USD5.52 per day for females).²⁵ Across occupation groups, gender wage gaps in 2017 were reportedly high in craft and related trades workers (25.5%); service and sales workers (24.4%); and elementary occupations (23.5%). These occupation groups showed higher average daily basic pay for men than women²⁶.

Sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges

Poor and rural women are more likely to have more children than their urban counterparts and thus are more likely to be financially dependent on their husbands. Women workers in rural areas are less likely to have social insurance benefits.

Women in the informal economy. Women are largely overrepresented in the informal sector employment, which is characterized by a lack of social protection, low remuneration, and poor working conditions. Data limitations and lack of registry, especially on vulnerable groups such as workers in the informal economy, hinder the effective and timely programming and planning for social protection interventions.

Muslim women are the least likely to be economically active. Muslim women, because of religion, are the least likely to be economically active. Religious beliefs and practices have raised them to subordinate themselves to, and be more dependent, on men. Muslim women are likewise bound to other practices such as the wearing of a hijab and other prohibitions in terms of attire and against certain occupations, e.g., arts and entertainment. These confine them to largely informal sector employment and, to a limited extent, public sector employment even for those who have completed tertiary education.

²⁴ National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA). (2019). *Determinants of female labor force participation in the Philippines*. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/2N7cnJd>

²⁵ Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). (2019). *Trends in agricultural wage rates 2016-2018*. Retrieved from https://psa.gov.ph/sites/default/files/Signed_Trends%20in%20AWRS%202016-2018%2029%20Oct%202019.pdf

²⁶ PSA. (2019). *Decent work in the Philippines: Equal opportunity and treatment in employment*. Retrieved from <http://www.psa.gov.ph/sites/default/files/attachments/ird/specialrelease/LABSTAT%20Updates%20Vol%203%20no%202%20Equal%20Opportunity%20and%20Treatment%20in%20Employment.pdf>

- 2. Structural reform needs:** What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

On unequal distribution of unpaid care work and domestic work. Recognizing, reducing, and/or redistributing unpaid care and domestic work by:

- i. Expanding the coverage of the provision of quality, affordable, and convenient childcare services in both public and private sectors;
- ii. Providing support systems for elderly care;
- iii. Strengthening the implementation of policies (e.g., Telecommuting Act [Republic Act 11165],²⁷ among others) that promote work-life balance through work from home, flexi-time work, and four-day work week arrangements;
- iv. Strengthening the implementation of policies and programs (e.g., 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law [RA 11210],²⁸ among others) that encourage the presence of working men in the home and increasing their involvement in child-rearing.

On persistent gender wage gaps in some sectors and occupations. Reviewing labor practices of both public and private sectors that may contribute to gender biases in the workplace.

On the limited social protection for poor, rural women, and women in the informal economy:

- i. Enhancing the adaptability of the social insurance benefits to new and emerging trends that will make it easier for women to access these services through physical and online platforms, as well as through simple registration and payment processes; and
- ii. Creating a registry of vulnerable groups that ensures effective and timely implementation of social protection policies and programs.

On increasing the number of economically active Muslim women:

- i. Increasing the access to higher education that will strengthen their bargaining power with regard to the use of their time;
- ii. Crafting policies that encourage employers to make accommodations for workers' religious requirements in clothing, unless this presents a public health and security hazard;
- iii. Designing programs and interventions that will promote more inclusivity among diverse religious communities and reduce prejudiced attitudes towards Muslims; and

²⁷ Allows employers to offer staff the choice to work from an alternative workplace.

²⁸ Provides for the female worker to share 7 of the 105 days maternity leave to the father of the child, in addition to the existing seven days paternity leave and provides female solo parents additional 15 days paid maternity leave

- iv. Strengthening the capacity of institutions (i.e., Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao through its Regional Reconciliation and Unification Commission to peacefully solve rido²⁹ conflicts.

The Philippine government undertakes several measures that aim to promote the economic empowerment of women, which include, but are not limited to:

- i. Reviewing existing economic programs for women towards consolidating these programs for greater impact;
- ii. Identifying and reviewing existing key economic programs for women and enhancing women's access to economic resources such as capital, technology, information, market, and training; and
- iii. Addressing the negative impacts of globalization on women³⁰.

The Philippines Social Security System (SSS) has been implementing several innovative programs to expand its coverage among the working population. These programs include the *AlkanSSSy* Program, which helps workers in the informal sector save for their monthly SSS premium contributions and the *KaltaSSS-Collect* Program, which extends SSS membership to job orders or contractual workers in government.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

To reduce limitations that domestic responsibilities place on women that hinder them from entering and staying in the labor market and to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women, the following are recent legislations that have been passed to foster higher participation and retention of women in the workforce:

Telecommuting Act (RA 11165). Enacted in December 2018, the law recognizes alternative workplace arrangements for those working in the private sector through the aid of technology. It seeks to promote workers' well-being and productivity through flexible working arrangements subject to the firms' willingness or as part of collective bargaining agreement. This also reduces the employment barriers for women as it provides them more flexibility and allows them to work while attending to their household duties.

105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law (RA 11210). Enacted in February 2019, the law increases maternity leave benefits of women workers from 60 days to 105 days, with an option to extend for additional 30 days of unpaid leave for public, private sector, and informal economy. It also provides additional 15 days of paid maternity leave to female solo parents and an option to share 7 of the 105 days to the father of the child, in addition to the existing seven days paternity leave benefits or to an alternate caregiver. Acknowledging the vital role of women in the labor force, the law intends to uphold women's welfare by providing maternity and early child-rearing protection while guaranteeing workforce reentry.

²⁹ Clan feuds characterized by a continuing cycle of retaliatory violence, which leads to perennial displacement of families and clans and adversely affecting both education, work, and livelihoods of all the members of the involved clans and even among neighbors.

³⁰ Philippine Commission on Women (PCW). (n.d.). *Philippine initiatives to promote Women's Economic Empowerment*. Retrieved from <https://www.pcw.gov.ph/focus-areas/womens-economic-empowerment/initiatives>

Safe Spaces Act (RA 11313). Enacted in April 2019, the law defines and penalizes gender-based sexual harassment in streets, public spaces, online, workplaces, and educational and training institutions. It expands the scope of the law against sexual harassment, which used to be limited to work and educational and training institutions. It now also includes peer-to-peer sexual harassment.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

The most effective structural reform implemented in the past 10 years that has been enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy are the enactment of laws such as:

An Act Allowing the Employment of Night Workers of 2011 (RA 10151), which expands women's employment or work options by repealing Articles 130 and 131 of the Labor Code of the Philippines that prohibits women from working during night time;

Domestic Workers Act of 2013 (RA 10361) or the *Batas Kasambahay*, which defines the labor rights of domestic household workers, majority of whom are women, increases their minimum wage, and provides regular employment and social protection benefits; and

Magna Carta for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (RA 9501), which supports women's entrepreneurship.

Implementation of the Gender-Responsive Economic Actions for the Transformation of Women (GREAT Women) Project. The implementation of the GREAT Women Project under the guidance of the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and the support of the Canadian Government, led to the convergence of government agencies and private sector partners in creating an enabling environment for women's economic empowerment at the central and local level to support women micro entrepreneurs. The project is also instrumental in teaching government agencies and local government units to apply 'gender mainstreaming' in their policy-making, planning and budgeting, and service delivery that can improve their effectiveness as government agencies and institutions, as their services benefitted women in microenterprises. Further, it highlighted the importance of building the capacity of women as entrepreneurs by assisting them in improving their products to target specific market needs and enhancing the competitiveness of their business. The project likewise intends to promote women's economic leadership and empowerment so that women realize the benefits from entrepreneurship.

5. **Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

The Philippines monitors, evaluates, and guides the enforcement of structural reform for gender equality and women empowerment through legislations, the Philippine Development Plan or the economy's socioeconomic blueprint, the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Plan 2017-2022, and the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security 2017-2022, among others.

The Philippine data on female labour force participation are generated through the Labor Force Survey (LFS), an economy-wide quarterly survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) in the months of January, April, July, and October. Specific data generated from the LFS include percent distribution of population 15 years old and over by employment status, by sex, and by age group; and proportion of women in managerial positions. On the other hand, the Election Records and Statistics Department of the Commission on Election has an administrative data on elected candidates by elective position, by sex both in economy-wide and local elections.

The regular collection of time-use information, either through stand-alone surveys or as rider questions in other economy-wide household-based surveys is needed. This is in view of crafting evidenced-based policies and programs to address unequal distribution of unpaid care work and domestic work, which hinders women from actively engaging in paid employment.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

The APEC can focus on better trade and investment facilitation, and economic and technical cooperation for women's economic empowerment through structural reforms in policy, program, and projects in the region.

RUSSIA

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

The key barriers for women in Russia are:

- stereotypes, especially the fear of a women to launch her own business;
- forced career gaps;
- the gender pay gap (still exists, though any gender-based discrimination is legally prohibited).

There are no specific groups of women in Russia who face additional challenges.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

- Loss of qualifications by women during parental leave
- Gender pay gap
- Deficiency of sex-disaggregated data

3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives: Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

The economy-wide strategy of action in the interest of women for 2017-2022 was adopted by the Decree of the Government of Russia No. 410-p (8 March 2017). The Strategy defines key policies in regard to women and is aimed at implementation of the equal rights and freedoms' principle as well as creation of equal opportunities for women to realize them in line with the Constitution of Russia, universally accepted principles and norms of the international law, international agreements signed by Russia.

The Strategy is implemented in two stages and focused on several dimensions:

- creation of favorable conditions for maintaining women's health at all ages
- improvement of women's economic position, provision of their growing welfare
- conduct of preventive measures to avoid social ill-being and violence targeted at women
- enhancement of women's participation in social and political affairs
- improvement of domestic sex-disaggregated statistics.

According to the Plan of action, in 2018 such measures in regard to women were undertaken as: prevention of non-infectious diseases and reduction of the risk factors for their development, professional education and further vocational education for women on a parental leave (with children aged up to three years), reconsideration of the list of industries, jobs, positions with

dangerous labor conditions, where women's labor is restricted, support for women entrepreneurship, prevention of social ill-being and violence targeted at women as well as human trafficking, implementation of the programs raising awareness of women about potential opportunities for participation in social and political affairs, improvement of domestic sex-disaggregated statistics.

At the moment the new Plan of action for 2019-2022 is being implemented which focuses majorly on creating conditions for maintaining women's health at all ages, women's economic empowerment, development of professional skills and competences of women and girls needed in diverse branches of industry, attraction of women to studying STEM sciences, stimulation of work in knowledge intensive industries and advanced high-tech companies, popularization of women entrepreneurship and advancement of women's success stories, preventive measures to avoid violence targeted at women, including in the framework of the joint project with the Council of Europe, enhancement of women's participation in social and political affairs, development of international cooperation including in the framework of the joint project with the Council of Europe, organizational provision for implementing women-related policies and conduct of the third Eurasian Women's Forum.

The Plan of action also envisages activities promoting international cooperation within the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, APEC, BRICS, and Group of Twenty.

The Coordination Council on implementation of the Strategy has been established under the Government of Russia to foster coordination between all the levels of authorities as well as academia, NGOs and other entities in the Economy.

In order **to increase women's employment**, the Ministry of Labor has issued the Order № 512Н (18 July 2019) reducing the list of heavy jobs and jobs with toxic or dangerous working conditions, where women's labor is restricted. It will come into force since 1 January 2021.

A new list was adopted to replace the previous list that had been endorsed by the Decree of the Government of Russia № 162 (25 February 2000).

The new list is four times less than the previous one: 100 positions instead of 456. Criteria that guided the update of the list were factors, which are dangerous for the reproductive health of women, influencing health of future generations and potentially having negative repercussions. Restrictions were lifted for such professions as: drivers of oversize vehicles and agricultural vehicles (such as truck, tractor, tip-truck) excluding operators of building machinery (bulldozer, excavator, grader); deck crew member (boatswain, skipper, sailor) excluding work in engine-rooms; electric locomotive operator, operators of high-speed trains; climbing works at above 10 meters height.

The list does not cover women's labor in the pharmaceutical industry, healthcare centers, R&D laboratories, organizations providing consumer services. When creating safe working conditions, employers are free to apply to women's labor without restrictions.

4. **Leading practices:** Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Reskilling of women (upgrade in qualifications) on a parental leave (the Federal Project “Facilitation of women’s employment – creation of pre-school education environment for children at the age of up to three years”)

Reduction of the list of physically demanding jobs and jobs with abusive and dangerous working conditions, which are restricted for women’s labor (order of the Ministry of Labor № 512H (18 June 2019) decreases four times the number of prohibited for women jobs).

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women’s economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

The monitoring of the labour market is conducted on such figures as:

- level of female employment
- level of female employment (for women with children of the pre-school age)
- proportion of women in diverse branches of industry, improvement of their professional skills and competencies in the relevant spheres
- proportion of women studying STEM, increase in their awareness rates on the labour-related rights and protection of labour, awards for business- and socially active women
- assessment (including with opinion polls) of needs of women on a parental leave (with a child at the age of up to three years) in professional education and additional vocational education and training.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

APEC may conduct capacity buildings workshops in cooperation with other international organizations and fora aimed at women’s economic empowerment in the Asia-Pacific. Currently we already maintain cooperation in the framework of PPWE and HLPDWE.

We believe that due to the collaboration with international organizations, groupings and fora in capacity buildings and sharing best experiences, we may contribute much to elaborating digital literacy programs for women, including with the use of global digital platforms.

APEC can serve as well as a useful and supportive platform for projects and initiatives aimed at women’s economic empowerment in the Asia Pacific. The good case is APEC BEST AWARD – an annual contest organized by Russia for the best female entrepreneurs’ projects.

SINGAPORE

1. **Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Singapore acknowledges that more needs to be done to support women in balancing work and family responsibilities, as well as to have more women on boards and in senior management positions of companies and organisations in the public and people sectors.

Cultural norms and perspectives on traditional gender roles, particularly in Asia, hamper women's participation in economic activity and will take time and effort to change. The government will continue to work with the private and people sectors to shift mindsets and create an empowering environment for women.

2. **Structural reform needs:** What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

The Singapore government has taken steps to promote work-life harmony and a more balanced share of parental responsibilities, to provide for more and affordable early childhood and eldercare services and to help women remain employable.

Work-Life Harmony. To support women to more effectively balance their career and family aspirations, the government actively promotes the adoption of:

- Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs). Launched in 2017 to encourage employers to allow FWAs for their employees.
- Work-Life Grant (WLG). To incentivise employers to sustain their FWAs with funding support of up to S\$105,000 per company over 2 years from a government budget of S\$100 million.
- Tripartite Standard Unpaid Leave for Unexpected Care Needs. Launched in 2018 to encourage employers to provide additional leave support to employees during unexpected caregiving exigencies.

In 2019, the government convened a Citizens' Panel to find new ways to strengthen Work-Life Harmony (WLH). The tripartite partners (Government, Singapore National Employers Federation and the National Trades Union Congress) supported citizens' recommendations to make FWAs easy to implement; promote FWAs; and change societal mindsets to be more supportive of FWAs and WLH initiatives.

Balanced Share of Parental and Caregiving Responsibilities. Initiatives include progressively enhancing leave provisions for fathers. As at 2019, fathers have two weeks of paid paternity leave and can share up to four weeks of their wife's maternity leave. Including paid childcare leave and unpaid infant care leave provisions, fathers can enjoy a total of up to

about 8 weeks of leave to share the responsibility of caring for their children in the first year of birth.

More and Affordable Early Childhood Services. The Singapore government is committed to improving the quality and accessibility of early childhood services, while keeping fees affordable so that both our women and men can pursue their career and family aspirations.

- Annual government expenditure in the preschool sector will more than doubled over the next few years, from S\$1 billion in 2018.
- Preschool has been made more affordable for the broad majority of low- and middle-income families. Subsidy enhancements were made in 2013, 2015 and 2019. Gross monthly household income ceiling for the subsidies was raised to S\$12,000 in 2019 so it will benefit more middle-income families. Since Jan 2020, low-income families earning S\$3,000 or less per month are receiving more subsidies and pay S\$3 per month at anchor-operators' pre-school.
- More support will also be provided to low-income families with non-working mothers by linking assistance schemes across the preschool, social and housing sectors which will take effect from Aug 2020.
- Fixed points of assessment were also introduced to provide parents with greater certainty on the amount of subsidies they can receive, as they transit between jobs or take on caregiving responsibilities.

More and Affordable Eldercare Services. Likewise, for families with elderly persons to look after. The Ministry of Health (MOH) provides subsidies for a range of eldercare services to address the care needs for eligible seniors, including day care, home care and respite care services, to alleviate the financial and physical burden of caregiving and for both women and men who are carers to have time for their own career commitments.

Helping Women Stay Employable. Initiatives that help Singaporeans, both men and women, stay employable include:

- **Adapt and Grow Package of Schemes.** To provide employment and placement support for workers, both men and women, re-entering the workforce, or transiting to new jobs. One of these schemes is the Career Trial, which provides opportunities for jobseekers and employers to try each other out, over a period of time, and assess job fit. Career Trial includes part-time jobs, especially for caregivers who are keen to balance their family and caregiving responsibilities.
- **SkillsFuture.** To provide Singaporeans with lifelong learning opportunities that will help them stay adaptable to a changing rapidly changing economy. Initiatives include:
 - **SkillsFuture Credit.** Designed to encourage individuals to take ownership of their skills development and learning. Individuals can use the Credit to pay for a wide range of approved skills-related courses to help them upskill and reskill.
 - **SkillsFuture Mid-Career Support Package.** To provide Singaporeans in their 40s and 50s greater support to stay skilled and employable throughout their lives. With this initiative, reskilling programmes such as the Professional Conversion Programmes, Place-and-Train Programmes and Career Transition Programmes will be scaled up to help individuals take advantage of upskilling opportunities.

3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives: Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

The Singapore government also sees the need to work with various stakeholders to promote women economic empowerment.

Women on Boards. The Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) formed a Council for Board Diversity (CBD) to promote having more women representation on boards of Singapore Stock Exchange (SGX) listed companies, as well as on boards of organizations in the people and public sectors. The Council comprised illustrious business leaders and professionals from the people, private and public sectors and has Singapore's top female authority as its Patron.

The CBD engages stakeholders and carries out activities to raise public awareness of the importance of board diversity through having women directors. Through such public awareness programmes, the CBD hopes to change perceptions on women on boards and in leadership.

Working with Community Partners for Cultural Mindset Shifts. To encourage cultural mindset shifts for women to progress in the economy, the Singapore government also works closely with community partners such as Families for Life and Centre for Fathering to encourage fathers to be more involved in caregiving.

4. Leading practices: Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

While we note that more can be done to support women's participation in the economy, measures to support women balancing work and family responsibilities have been effective.

- Our female employment rate for those aged 25 to 64 has risen from 64% in 2009 to 73% in 2019. Singapore is ranked 7th among the 36 OECD members for female full-time employment.
- More women are in Professional, Managers, Executives and Technicians (PMET) jobs, rising from 49% to 57% of females over the decade.
- Women's earnings have also increased, as median income of full-time employed females rose from S\$2,800 in 2009 to S\$4,300 in 2019.
- Paternity leave take-up rate has been increasing from 47.1% in 2016 to 51.9% in 2018.
- In 2018, 9 in 10 employees are in companies that offer at least one form of ad-hoc flexible work arrangements, such as unplanned time-off and ad-hoc teleworking, up from 8 in 10 in 2013.
- Women's representation on the boards of the top 100 primary-listed companies increased from 15.2% in 2018 to 16.2% at end 2019. Representation of women is 25.1% on government statutory boards and 27.8% on the boards of the Top 100 Institutions of Public Character, up from 23.3% and 27.4% in 2018 respectively.

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need

to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

Female employment rate for those aged 25 to 64, as well as the nature of their jobs are tracked yearly. The take-up rate of paternity leave and flexible work arrangements are also tracked yearly to ensure that people are using such benefits. Representation of women on boards in the public and private sectors are tracked every half a year.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

To promote women's economic empowerment in the region, APEC could consider partnering regional/international bodies, such as those in ASEAN, to shift cultural norms and perspectives on traditional gender roles that may hamper women's participation in economic activity. Such shifts include encouraging more balanced share of parental and caregiving responsibilities, as well as promoting flexible work arrangements.

CHINESE TAIPEI

1. **Barriers and challenges:** What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women’s participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Lower labour force participation rate of women aged 30 years and older. The labour force participation rate for female in the 25-29 age group, accounting for 91.8% in year 2018, was the highest among all age groups. However, due to various factors such as marriage, pregnancy, parenting and family caring, the labour force participation rate drops dramatically for women aged 30 years and older. Currently, only 51% of women are participating in the labour market, indicating that substantial women labour force with great quality doesn’t unleash their potential in the society. Also, the female labour force participation rate and wages are lower than those of the male counterparts, thus raising the risk of poverty and threatening economic security for women at old age.

Insufficiency of affordable child care services and caregiving support. Chinese Taipei has continually faced the challenges of low birth rate and aging population. Conventional social values still view women as the main caregivers in families and thus the lack of accessible, affordable and accountable childcare and elderly care services is one of the key barriers. Women are responsible for most of the caregiving duties, ranging from caring for the elderly to raising children, which might cause women to leave the workforce for not being able to balance their work and family life.

Gender gap in decision-making positions. Due to the conventional norms shaped by social and cultural stereotypes, women are often restricted from participating in public and political affairs, leading to fewer opportunities to take the high-level positions in administrative agencies and judicial institutions. Women’s roles and rights of decision-making are therefore overlooked. Research shows that, notable influences could be brought to the political area, while women’s participation rate reaches 30-35%. Taking Chinese Taipei as an example, in 2018, 23.4% of the political appointees in administrative agencies were women and 26.7% of justices were women. In addition, 42.2% of all civil servants were women, but women only account for 34.6% of senior ranking civil servants. Thus, there’s still a gap between men and women in the decision-making level in Chinese Taipei.

2. **Structural reform needs:** What are your economy’s main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women’s economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women’s equal economic participation??

Enacted regulatory reform for gender friendly workplace, career training and services. Chinese Taipei has implemented the “Act of Gender Equality in Employment” since March 2002, and continuously puts full efforts to ensure gender-friendly workplace for women and promote gender equality. This piece of legislation provides enforcing measures such as prohibition of gender discrimination against job applicants or employees, preventing sexual harassment in workplace, and introducing family-friendly leaves such as family care leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, menstruation leave, parental leave without payment, etc.

In 2013, the “Act of Occupational Safety and Health” was revised to provide female labors who are pregnant or still within their first postpartum year with maternal health measures such as work adjustment, reassignment or other protective measures to prevent potential harm at work. To further enhance economic security for the elderly, Chinese Taipei has enacted the “Employment Promotion Act for the Middle-aged and the Elderly” in 2019, supporting female workers’ re-employment after retirement.

Chinese Taipei also provides various vocational training, tailor-made employment service, re-employment service and employment promotion allowances to support women’s participation to the economy.

Formulated policy guidelines and designated cabinet-level department to coordinate gender equality efforts:

- “Gender Equality Policy Guidelines” has been promulgated since 2011 as a guiding principle for gender equality in Chinese Taipei. Furthermore, the “Gender Equality Committee” (GEC), established in 2012 and composed of gender experts, scholars, representatives of NGOs, serves as a nexus that provides top-down instruction and support, and consolidates the implementation of the Guidelines.
- Along with the GEC, the “Department of Gender Equality” (DoGE) had been set up at the cabinet level to support GEC’s work to incorporate gender perspectives into all policies, coordinate cross-ministerial gender equality policies, and supervise the implementation of gender mainstreaming measures. This is deemed as a milestone for assigning official department to continuously promote gender equality policy based on a well-established mechanism.

Providing affordable and friendly child care service and long-term care for the elderly:

- In order to ease women’s burden of caring responsibilities and boost women’s willingness to enter the labor force, Chinese Taipei tackles these issues by building an environment with friendly and affordable public child care service and long-term care for the elderly.
- Chinese Taipei promoted “Countermeasures against Declining Birthrate” in 2018, helping women seek balance between family needs and career development. The program included expanding services of public child care and preschools, subsidizing private child care and preschools, and encouraging employers to establish child care facilities within workplaces.
- Furthermore, in response to the challenges of an aging society, Chinese Taipei continues to implement “Long-term Care 2.0” upgrading program, which provides family caregivers support service and comprehensive care service system in community.

3. **(Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

Encouraging female to establish their own businesses with access to loans and consultation:

- **Friendly startups ecosystems.** The National Development Council (NDC) has formulated the “Action Plan for Enhancing Chinese Taipei’s Startup Ecosystem” in 2018 to create a robust startup ecosystem. To encourage females to start a business, the NDC has implemented measures such as hosting female entrepreneurs’ events, inviting female mentors to share their experiences, and providing young female entrepreneurs with international entrepreneurship courses, etc.
- “Phoenix Micro Start-up Program”. To support female-founded or female-led startups, the Ministry of Labor (MOL) has launched vocational training and the “Phoenix Micro Start-up Program” to offer business loans and interest subsidies to relieve the financial pressure at early stages. “Business Consulting Service Program” was also launched since 2007 with courses free of charge to enable participants to cultivate management skill along with professional consultation services.
- The Women Entrepreneurship Program. “The Women Entrepreneurship Program”, directed by Small and Medium Enterprise Administration, Ministry of Economic Affairs, provides a complete package of consulting mechanism to female entrepreneurs, aimed at supporting women to overcome difficulties and challenges in different stages of growing their businesses, as follows:
 - “Elite Promotion”: to host the annual Women Entrepreneurship Award to promote outstanding female entrepreneurs and make them as the role models.
 - “Environment Creation”: to assist female entrepreneurs to build their entrepreneurship network via connecting with incubation groups and working with incubation institutions and worldwide brands, such as Facebook, to provide training courses for female entrepreneurs.
 - “Growth Encouragement”: having initiated “Accelerator for Women” since 2019, to assist female-owned enterprises to upgrade their competitiveness through providing consulting mentors, customized services and opportunities to various business forums.

Providing opportunities for STEM education and increased representation of women in STEM careers:

- The Ministry of Education has been encouraging female students to study science, engineering or information technology courses. The Ministry of Science and Technology also has formulated key themes such as “Gender and S&T Research Project” to empower women’s economic capacity through providing ICT skills.
- Chinese Taipei continues to promote diverse representation of women in STEM careers, empower women and girls of diverse socio-economic backgrounds with STEM education and training programs, and to address the digital gender gap for a more inclusive gender-friendly environment.

Promoting women’s participation in decision-making:

- Chinese Taipei continues to pursue the principle of one-third gender ratio in the decision-making level such as directors and supervisors in the government or public institutions, including the Cabinet, ministries and commissions, state-owned enterprises, and government-funded organizations.
- Ministries and commissions have been induced to map out medium and long-term individual projects and laws through the gender impact assessment to incorporate gender perspective.
- To advance corporate governance, the rule of gender diversity on company boards has been

4. Leading practices: Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Providing family-care supports and creating a gender-friendly environment

- “Population Policy White Paper” amended in 2013 is of help for creating a comprehensive supporting environment for family care, including providing financial supports to families with children, parental leave allowance, and building an affordable child care system with great quality and convenience. By releasing the burden of parenting and taking care of the elderly, female labor force participation rate has also gradually increased in the past decade.
- As a result, the female labor force participation rate in 2019 was 51.4%, rising from 49.9% in 2010. Female labor force participation rate for the age group 25-29 was 92.7% in 2019, higher than that of Japan, Korea, and the US.

Protecting women’s equality in the workplace and increasing their opportunities in the decision-making positions

- Both the “Act of Gender Equality in Employment” and the “Employment Service Act” have instituted regulations on prohibiting gender discrimination and recourse mechanisms to protect women’s equality in the workplace.
- In addition, the Constitution and the “Civil Servants Election and Recall Act” have established clear mandate to assure women’s rights to participate in the decision-making process. Increasingly, women’s impacts in the sphere of public affairs are more obvious nowadays.
- As a result, women accounted for 38.7% of legislators in 2018, an increase of 8.3% compared to 2008. The percentage of women senior rank civil servants has also increased from 22.8% in 2008 to 34.6% in 2018. Furthermore, Chinese Taipei is led by the first ever female leader Tsai Ing-Wen since year 2016, and she was re-elected in 2020, indicating that women’s leadership is well recognized among the electorate.

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women’s economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How,

and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

The Department of Gender Equality (DoGE), under the guidance of Gender Equality Committee and its 6 subcommittees, conducts the evaluation of policy achievement regularly, and collects and compiles various data and statistics continuously from relevant agencies of Chinese Taipei. The DoGE publishes a gender-equality report annually. The report includes seven main themes, namely "power, decision and influence", "employment, economy and welfare", "population, marriage and family", "education, culture and media", "personal safety and justice", "health, medical and care" and "environment, energy and technology".

To better implement the guideline, each government agency has set up its own performance indicators each year and has been diligently working towards achieving the goal under the overall guidance of the DoGE. Relevant data and statistics are to be collected and reviewed as the evidence for efficacy and compliance of the policies. In terms of women's economic participation, some of the key indicators in each area aforementioned are as follows:

- Power, decision and influence: Proportion of female legislators; status of women's participation in decision-making in the government sector; proportion of women directors at public-listed companies.
- Employment, economy and welfare: women's labour force participation rate (by age group); average gender pay gap; cases of initial approval for payment of parental leave allowance and the ratio of male grantees.
- Environment, energy and technology: gender structure of employment (by type of occupation); women's share in professionals, technicians and associate professionals; non-agriculture employee gender pay gap (by Occupation); women's share in R&D personnel.

Furthermore, Chinese Taipei continues to review the achievement of "Countermeasures against Declining Birthrate" and "Long-term Care 2.0" on a rolling basis, making sure that the measures of providing affordable and friendly family support services can be of help for women at work.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women's economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

Promoting gender equality could effectively unleash women's economic potential. In terms of APEC's role in promoting women's economic empowerment, enhancing female labor force participation rate and implementing the principle of one-third gender ratio in decision-making level can be set as the top policy priorities to reach the goal. APEC economies can then formulate related strategies accordingly to promote female labor force participation rate and gender equality in decision-making level within each economy.

In addition, APEC can act as a policy platform for member economies and regional and international bodies to interact and exchange viewpoints in mainstreaming gender into policies and programs. Furthermore, by recommending women role-models or women leaders and continuously reviewing the efficacy of the various policies within the region, together with the industry-academia-government collaboration, APEC can help raise women's influence in the decision-making level.

Looking forward, APEC is to enhance its collective efforts for promoting women's economic empowerment through reducing digital gender gap. Facing a fast changing digital world, women need to be better equipped with digital literacy and skills to fit into a competitive business environment and thus to seize opportunities in the digital era. APEC can support more affordable and interactive e-learning programs tailored for female, such as training programs for STEM capabilities and ICT skills. Together with the supporting policies implemented by APEC economies, women's economic empowerment can be unleashed and to play an important role in shaping a more gender-equal society and an economy with inclusive growth in the APEC region.

THAILAND

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

The sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges are female workers, single mothers, and older women staying at home with grandchildren.

There are three barriers and challenges for women to engage in an economic system, namely beliefs and attitudes, economic discrimination, and maternity leave.

First, Thai society views that women must fulfil a wife and mother duty. Although there has been a shift in a socio-economic context in which women are encouraged to work, they are still expected to do domestic work as well as look after family members. According to the National Statistics Office, in 2015, female workers spent almost twice as much time on housework (3.42%) as compared to male workers (1.80%). This put women in a disadvantage position, contributing to an unequal career development in comparison to their male counterparts. This challenge can be alleviated by increasing work-life balance policies such as work from home and flexible working hours.

Second, gender discrimination in the economic system is reflected through different wage rates for men and women, the exclusion of women in some occupations, harassment in the workplace, and low rates of women executives.

Third, women are likely to suffer from pregnancy discrimination in which some are treated unfavorably or even forced to resign. While Thailand has no law on paternity leave, it should be noted that childcare facilities cannot fully support mother to re-enter the workforce either.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

Currently, Thailand is drafting Policies and Measures for the Advancement of Women in order to eliminate gender discrimination and inequality, especially in the areas that progress has been unsatisfactory and challenging, such as women's economic participation and violence against women; the issues which are embedded in Thailand's cultural beliefs.

There are two important measures to increase economic empowerment:

- measures to increase economic opportunities for women; and
- measures to resolve direct and indirect burdens as a way to effectively promote women participation in the economy.

Both measures aim at eliminating employment discrimination against women and further enhancing women participation in the economy. An aforementioned target group- female

workers, single mothers, and older women staying at home with grandchildren- will also be directly and timely benefited from these initiatives.

To illustrate, Thailand has built and developed childcare centers in close proximity to business and residential areas. The centers provide affordable, quality, and standard childcare services, thus allowing women to fully focus on their jobs. Also, it is important to create a work-life balance, and encourage fathers to take responsibility for childcare.

- 3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives:** Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women's economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

In order to facilitate women to re-enter the workforce, the government has released the campaigns on maternity leave, paternity leave, and childcare center. First, the extension of the maternity leave for civil servants from 90 to 98 days and an additional leave for 90 days with a half payment are put in place. Aiming to increase father participation in childcare and relieve mother's load, the campaign also allows fathers employed in both the public and private sectors to take a paternity leave of an equal duration as mothers. Moreover, the government has expanded the area coverage of childcare centers for 0-3 year olds with the extension of opening hours. This hopes to reduce barriers for returning mothers after the end of maternity leave.

Regarding laws that promote gender equality in the workplace, the Labor Protection Act no.3 B.E.2551 (2008) has been enforced to ensure equal wages for both women and men in accordance with their skills and capabilities. Moreover, the Skill Development Promotion Act B.E. 2545 (2002) has been executed to ensure that female workers have better access to the skills training by setting a female participation rate at 30%. Moreover, a women entrepreneur network is established to create the sustainable self-reliant business conduct and provide guidance for women entrepreneurs.

- 4. Leading practices:** Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

There are two pieces of legislation that promote women participation. First, the Gender Equality Act B.E. 2558 (2015) aims to protect everybody from gender discrimination and the rights to access economic and social protection, as well as the measure to prevent the sexual harassment in the workplace.

Second, the Labour Protection Act (No.7) B.E. 2562 (2019) requires the employer to pay the same rate of wage to male and female employees where the work performed is of the same nature, quality, and quantity or of equivalent value (equal payment for equal work). The act also covers the extension of maternity leave from 90 to 98 days.

- 5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

At the domestic level, the Committee on the Policy and Strategy for the Advancement of Women plays an important role in policy making concerning women issues and gender

equality. The Committee comprised experts and eminent persons from various sectors, monitors and evaluates strategy/policy implementation, as well as amends existing laws. The Committee launched the Women Development Strategy and the Women Development Action Plan (2017-2021) and the Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) for public sector; implemented Goal 5 of the SDGs; and analysed data, laws and regulations proposed by the Committee on Convention on the Elimination of All Form of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Additionally, in March 2020, the Department of Women’s Affairs and Family Development established the Subcommittee on Driving and Monitoring of the APEC Cooperation on Women and the Economy as a means to promote women empowerment under APEC economic and women cooperation.

At the local level, since 1995, the provincial offices of Ministry of Social Development and Human Security have formulated relevant policies and coordinated with the local authorities. However, Thailand’s data management system is not well-integrated. Survey and data collection methods lack gender segregation which can be difficult to be used and applied for policy design and gender budgeting.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

APEC should support and enhance opportunities for all women (including female labor, indigenous women, and underrepresented female minorities) to participate in the economic activities. In this case, governments of member economies may function as a coordinating body through engaging with different stakeholders (public, private, and people sectors) in order to strengthen a knowledge-sharing network within APEC and beyond. A cross-sectoral body involvement for women economic empowerment should also be encouraged, as it may help foster greater collaboration for women networks with other regional initiatives.

Partnership with ASEAN members allows Thailand to create the network for knowledge, data and information, and expertise exchange. It can be extended to create the collaborative framework to deal with the regional challenges and regional risk reduction. ASEAN Committee on Women is one of a sectorial body to implement, coordinate and monitor progress of the regional priorities related to women issues. Thailand actively engages in this issue and also a current chair of ASEAN Women Entrepreneurship Network (AWEN) since 2020. The main purpose of AWEN is to increase women-run business in the economy.

UNITED STATES

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

In 1960, the workforce participation rate of women in the United States was 37.7 percent. In the 1960s and 1970s, women workers were concentrated in retail trade, health care services, and education. Women had few legal protections against discrimination in employment. Women earned only 62 cents for every dollar earned by a man in 1979.

Current key challenges include pay discrimination; pregnancy discrimination; combatting harassment.

Women's unemployment rates varied considerably by race and ethnicity. In 2018, Asian women had the lowest rate (3.0 percent), followed by White women (3.4 percent). Unemployment rates for Hispanic or Latino women and Black or African American women were much higher, at 5.1 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively.

Labor force participation varies by marital status and differs between women and men. Never-married women had the highest participation rate of all women at 64.5 percent in 2018. Separated and divorced women were more likely to participate in the labour force (62.7 percent and 61.2 percent, respectively) than married women (58.2 percent).

The labour force participation rate of all women with children under 18 years of age was 71.4 percent in March 2018, about unchanged (71.3 percent) from 2017. Among mothers, the labour force participation rate for those with children 6 to 17 years old, at 76.5 percent in March 2018, was higher than for those with younger children. The rate for those with children under 6 years old was 64.7 percent, and the rate for women with children under 3 years old was 62.0 percent. Unmarried mothers are more likely to participate in the labour force than married mothers. In March 2018, 77.3 percent of unmarried mothers were in the labour force, compared with 69.0 percent of married mothers.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

The Equal Pay Act was signed into law on June 10, 1963 and was one of the first federal anti-discrimination laws. The Act made it illegal to pay men and women working in the same place different salaries for work requiring substantially equal skill, effort, and responsibility. The Act also prohibits any retaliation by employers against workers for filing a complaint of discrimination.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, a sweeping landmark civil rights law in the United States, outlaws discrimination in a variety of settings, including employment, voter registration, education, and public accommodations—based on race, color, religion, sex, or origin. Title

VII of that law prohibits employment discrimination on these bases by employers, employment agencies, and labour organizations. Its prohibition against sex discrimination includes sexual harassment and gender-based harassment that has no sexual connotations. Title VII, like the Equal Pay Act, prohibits retaliation against those who have filed employment discrimination charges or who have reasonably opposed workplace discrimination on the relevant protected bases. The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 amended Title VII of the Civil Rights Act to prohibit discrimination against a woman because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a medical condition related to pregnancy or childbirth.

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973 (CETA) consolidated a number of existing federal and federally-assisted job training programs to help unemployed, underemployed, and disadvantaged individuals. Significantly, CETA included a prohibition on sex discrimination in these programs, opening the door for model programs focusing on women in non-traditional jobs, special counselling and referral services, pre-apprenticeship training, and job development. Over the years, CETA has been replaced by successor statutes that have expanded the availability of employment-related training and support programs to a wider range of populations. However, all of those statutes—including the current successor statute, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)—have continued to bar discrimination against women in the economy’s system of employment training and workforce development programs.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave. The Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division is responsible for enforcing the FMLA.

3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives: Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

One of the grants administered by the Women’s Bureau is the Department of Labor’s Women’s Bureau’s Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) grant program. This grant helps recruit, mentor, train, and retain more women in quality pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, and encourages them to pursue non-traditional occupations, where, in many instances, women historically have been significantly underrepresented. The WANTO grant program assists employers, community-based organizations, and labor unions in the recruitment, training, and retention of women in apprenticeship and non-traditional occupations. Since 2017, the Women’s Bureau has had primary oversight for administering the grants and awarded funds to 11 community-based organizations. Preliminary internal data show that approximately 3,258 women have been served by the WANTO grants since 2017 through participation in job related training, including formal pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, safety training, and trade exploratory classes. Since 2017, the Women’s Bureau has awarded \$4.39 million in WANTO grants.

The Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Office of Women’s Business Ownership (OWBO) enables and empowers women entrepreneurs through advocacy, outreach, education and support. Through the management and technical assistance provided by the Women’s Business Centers, entrepreneurs, especially women who are economically or socially

disadvantaged, are offered comprehensive training and counselling on a vast array of topics in many languages to help them start and grow their own businesses.

Since it was established in response to an executive order in 1979, the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Women's Business Ownership has fostered the participation of women entrepreneurs in the economy, especially those who have been historically underserved or excluded. OWBO reaches out to women entrepreneurs through a number of programs that are coordinated through every SBA district office. OWBO's programs provide business training and counselling, access to credit and capital, and marketing opportunities, including federal contracts.

In 1988 the SBA established the Women's Business Center Program to better help women overcome continuing barriers to success. Today there are Women's Business Centers in almost every state.

These centers, along with SBA district offices and other SBA resource partners at thousands of locations economy-wide help women entrepreneurs start and grow successful businesses. Each Women's Business Center tailors its services to the needs of its individual community. Each provides training in finance, management, marketing, and the Internet, as well as offering access to all of the SBA's financial and procurement assistance programs.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) provides management, technical and financial assistance to women and minority-owned businesses so that they can compete more successfully for federal, state, local government and private sector contracts. Additionally, they facilitate access to traditional and alternative sources of capital through an economy-wide network of Business Centers. The agency serves as an advocate for women and minority-owned businesses to enhance economic development and job creation. Certification helps these firms gain a competitive advantage with public and private sector contracting opportunities.

4. Leading practices: Among your economy's structural reforms relating to women's economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women's full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

Under the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009, each discriminatory paycheck resets the 180-day time limit to file a claim of pay discrimination, thereby extending the time employees may challenge unfair pay. This Act overturned a 2007 U.S. Supreme Court decision requiring victims of wage discrimination to file a claim within 180 or 300 (depending on jurisdiction) days of the initial discriminatory paycheck, and it restored the EEOC's longstanding position that each paycheck containing discriminatory compensation is a wrong actionable under federal law, regardless of when the discrimination began. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act importantly recognizes that victims of pay discrimination may not initially be aware that they are being discriminated against by their employers.

The Department of Labor's updated Equal Employment Opportunity in Apprenticeship Regulations (CFR 29 C.F.R. part 30) took effect in January 2017. These regulations are designed to increase workforce participation by women and other underrepresented groups in registered apprenticeship programs, and to protect against unlawful discrimination. Key provisions impacting women are:

- clarifying that sex discrimination includes discrimination on the bases of pregnancy and gender identity;

- requirements for sponsors of apprenticeship to conduct outreach and recruitment of women into apprenticeship programs; and
- requirements for sponsors of apprenticeship programs to provide anti-harassment training.

5. **Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement):** How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women's economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

In response to societal, economic, and cultural changes, including the Civil Rights Movement, the U.S. government passed a number of laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex and pregnancy, among other bases, starting in the early to mid-1960s. To enforce newly-enacted protections against employment discrimination, the U.S. government created two institutions – the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) – the latter of which is part of the Department of Labor.

Laws enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act also created the EEOC. The EEOC has the authority to investigate charges of discrimination filed by individuals, a group, or an EEOC Commissioner. If the EEOC believes that discrimination has occurred, the agency will attempt to conciliate the charge. If a voluntary settlement is not reached, the EEOC may litigate these charges. In any case where the EEOC does not litigate, including all of those where it believes no discrimination occurred, the EEOC provides the charging party with a right to file a lawsuit on her own at the conclusion of its investigation.

In addition, important protections enforced by the EEOC were added after the Civil Rights Movement. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, and it requires employers to provide a reasonable accommodation for an employee with a disability, unless doing so would cause significant difficulty or expense for the employer. While this law does not have explicit protections for women in the workplace, it will include women with disabilities specific to or more prevalent in their gender. In some circumstances, pregnancy complications can qualify for these protections.

Where discrimination is proven under these laws, the charging parties may be entitled to placement in a position, reinstatement, or similar equitable relief; front pay; back pay; attorney's fees; compensatory (monetary) damages; and, if the employer acted with malice or reckless indifference to the employee's rights, punitive damages. Employers additionally are often required to change their workplace practices.

Laws enforced by the Department of Labor:

In 1965, one year after the enactment of the Civil Rights Act, the Executive Order 11246 was signed. The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, or OFCCP, was created to carry out the responsibilities of the Secretary of Labor for administering the Executive Order's non-discrimination and affirmative action provisions. This Executive Order prohibits federal contractors and subcontractors who do over \$10,000 in government business in one year from

discriminating, in all aspects of employment, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and origin. The OFCCP and EEOC work collaboratively on cases that involve violations of both the Executive Order and EEOC-enforced laws.

The Executive Order also requires government contractors to take affirmative action to ensure that equal opportunity is provided in all aspects of their employment. Additionally, Executive Order 11246 prohibits federal contractors and subcontractors from, under certain circumstances, taking adverse employment actions against applicants and employees for asking about, discussing, or sharing information about their pay or the pay of their co-workers.

Working conditions and wage protections of women workers have improved considerably since the establishment of the Women’s Bureau in 1920, a sub-agency within the Department of Labor. Over the course of its history, the Women’s Bureau has evolved to continue to support a broad range of issues related to working women, including paid family leave and child care. In 2020, the Women’s Bureau celebrates its centennial. The work of the Women’s Bureau focuses on researching and promoting policies that work for working women through its grant-making authorities, convening activities, and strategic regional outreach.

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

Through the implementation of La Serena Roadmap and promoting the adoption of the APEC Women in STEM Principles amongst APEC private sector companies, APEC can achieve greater participation of women in APEC economies, especially in the industries of the future. Additionally, the United States proposes addressing the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative’s five priority areas of legal reform -- women’s ability to:

- access to institutions;
- build credit;
- own and manage property;
- travel freely; and
- work in the same jobs and sectors as men.

In a recent landmark report, the White House Council of Economic Advisers found that addressing W-GDP’s five areas of the law globally has the potential to add as much as \$7.7 trillion to global annual GDP, much of this within APEC economies.

APEC could also build on and expanding the momentum created by the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi), which seeks to address the credit gap for women-led SMEs specifically. We-Fi was launched at the G20 Leaders’ Summit in 2017 and is housed at the World Bank, with seven out the fourteen founding members being APEC members as well.

VIET NAM

1. Barriers and challenges: What are the key (e.g. top 2-3) barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activity in your economy? Are there identified sub-populations of women who face additional barriers and challenges?

Vietnamese women arguably face more barriers and challenges than their male counterparts in undertaking economic activities. The 03 key barriers and challenges to women's participation in economic activities in Viet Nam include: (1) socially common perception that women should focus more on taking care of their family and kids; (2) unequal opportunities to access education/schooling and employment; and (3) differences in working conditions and remuneration in favor of men.

Women in minority ethnic groups/regions tend to face additional barriers and challenges to participate in economic activities than the rest of the population. This is often explained by the difficulties in terms of geographical location, underdeveloped infrastructures, more incidences of natural calamities, etc. and smaller pool of human capital among ethnic minority women. According to the Census 2019, the largest gender gap in literacy rates belongs to the Northern Midlands and Mountains, especially Ha Giang, Cao Bang, Bac Kan, Laos. Cai, Dien Bien, Lai Chau, Son La with the minimum difference of 4.5 percentage points (Bac Kan) and the highest of 23.3 percentage points (Lai Chau), compared with the economy-wide average of 2.4 percentage points. These are all provinces with a high concentration of ethnic minorities, with the ratio of ethnic minorities to the total population of the province is at least 66.21% (Lao Cai) and above.

2. Structural reform needs: What are your economy's main (e.g. top 2-3) structural reform needs, or policy gaps, in relation to enabling women's economic participation e.g. access to the labour market, access to credit, access to social protections such as maternity leave and childcare etc? What is your economy doing to address these? Please list these initiatives, including current and going back in time, if applicable.

If your economy determines that there are no outstanding structural reforms to effect, are the existing structural policies adequate to address the identified barriers and gaps to women's equal economic participation??

Viet Nam has improved its legal framework and policies on gender equality by issuing more legal documents in line with the 2006 Law on Gender Equality and UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Viet Nam has implemented a National Strategy on Gender Equality from 2011-2020 to raise awareness, narrow the development gap, and promote women's status. Viet Nam has carried out regional and global initiatives to promote and protect women's rights and fight gender discrimination, including with the commitment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, most specifically the 5th Goal on Gender equality).

Despite efforts to improve the regulations/legal framework on women's economic empowerment, the implementation process still exhibits some limitations and inadequacies. Specifically:

- (1) The implementation process: (i) it takes very long time to prepare concrete guidelines for implementing policies related to women empowerment. For example, up to now there still no guidelines for implementing the Decree No.39/2015/ND-CP on supporting policies for poor women in ethnic when having children, which leads to limited impacts of the Decree; (ii) A

number of policies on promoting gender equality are approved but lack effectiveness. The Law on Gender Equality stipulates that women are “prioritized” in some areas of socio-economic activities. However, it fails to sufficiently empower women in actual socio-economic activities. For instance, in point a, clause 2, Article 12 regulates that the “enterprises which have mainly women worker will get incentive on tax and finance as stipulated by the law”. In fact, it is very hard to get that incentives because of the complicated processing and the tax incentive is not sufficient to cover the costs of hiring women workers; consequently, the enterprises are usually reluctant to seek that incentive. In other words, the economic policies so far somehow fail to sufficiently incentivise enterprises to hire women workers.

(2) Lack of mechanism to ensure the policy implementation: (i) lack of specialized/skilled human resources on gender issues. This leads to poor design of implementation mechanism related to gender and gender equality issues; (ii) the finance for policy implementation.

(3) Viet Nam is still short of detailed gender-related statistics. Despite efforts to improve quality and availability of socio-economic statistics, Viet Nam only concretized the gender-related statistical indicators in 2019, under the Circular 10/2019/TT-BKHDT of the Ministry of Planning and Investment. By mid-2020, only some scattered statistics by gender are publicized by the General Statistics Office, in terms of employment, child malnutrition, income per capita, etc. This prevents the adoption of good regulatory practices, especially in terms of assessing gender impacts of policies (on both ex ante and ex post basis).

Deeply awareness of these challenges, the government of Viet Nam has approved a number of polices/regulations to improve, upgrade and enhance the validation and enforcement of regulations on gender equality. As a result, in 2016-2021 period, the percentage of female in National Assembly deputies is up to 26.8%. Women holds key high-level positions at the National Assembly. Ethnic women work in many sectors including education and healthcare. Since 2019, the government Committee on Ethnic Affairs has been preparing the National Target Program on Ethnic development, which also incorporates measures to improve economic empowerment for ethnic women.

3. (Non-structural) Policies and Initiatives: Describe 2-3 policy initiatives or programs your economy is implementing to support and promote women’s economic empowerment and security i.e. to re-enter the workforce, start a business, encourage women into STEM professions, work in traditionally male-dominated fields, participate in the new economy etc.

(1) The Project on “Promote and Encourage women do start-up in period 2017-2025” approved in 30th June 2017 to support for women operate their own business. Accordingly, a series of polices including finance, education is carried out to support for women to establish their own business. Statistical data show that a number of women has accessed to training course, financial support and consultants on how to establish and operate a business. This Project is assessed that giving a chance for women to close with new business model, new technology and open the floors to get the gender equality in reality.

(2) The Labour Code has a regulation on priority for women who re-enter the workforce after giving birth. Accordingly, the enterprises and employers have to arrange the room for female worker to relax. As a results, when the woman deliver their baby, their husband also has their rights to have paternity leave of 7 days, with full salary. The healthcare system for the female worker is improved gradually. The awaness of gender equality is enhanced in among the employees and employers.

(3) Encourage the women to hold the high position and to access to STEM profession. In 2017, the Directive No.16/CT-TTg on “Improving the capacity to access the Industrial Revolution 4.0” was issued to encourage women to access to STEM profession. The women is priority to access new technologies and encourage to improve the position in society.

4. Leading practices: Among your economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020), which two do you think have been most effective to enabling women’s full and equal participation in the economy, and why?

The most effective economy’s structural reforms relating to women’s economic participation in the past 10 years (2010-2020) to enabling women’s full and equal participation in Viet Nam are:

(1) Constitution 2013: The reform of Constitution 2013 has achieved breakthrough on gender equality, protect women and children rights. Accordingly, the State protects marriage and family, and protects the rights of mothers and children. Women are encouraged to comprehensive development, promoting their role in society. Children are protected, cared for and educated; be involved in children issues, etc.

(2) The Labour Code 2012: In the Labour Code 2012, there are many key issues on the labour rights has amended and supplemented. Almost all regulations are equally applied to both male and female labours. A separate chapter on women labour is also provided under this Code. In addition, there are regulation for increasing the time for women’s maternity leave from 04 months to 06 months and requires enterprises has to follow the gender equality in hiring female workers. The Law enforcement’s monitoring and supervising mechanism have been gradually strengthened to raise the enterprises as well as the worker’s awareness on the labour rights and responsibility. The Labour Code was amended in 2019, with a view to change approach from protecting women labours to empowering them, among others.

5. Monitoring and evaluation (data and enforcement): How does your economy monitor, evaluate and enforce the structural policies you have outlined in the question above? i.e. what data is collected and reported to measure women’s economic participation? What indicators are used to assess effectiveness and compliance? How, and how frequently, are data reported? What data gaps remain and what data is need to address them? What lessons have been learned and what course corrections have been effected?

Currently, Vietnam has regulation of gender development statistic indicators. These indicators are included in monthly, yearly statistic data through report on monthly labour and employment situation and yearly statistical books conducted by GSO and MOLISA. Accordingly, we have information on female worker participation in every economic’s sectors. Every year, the Parliament assesses the results of socio-economic implementation report submitted by Government, in which, the gender equality implementation situation is also mentioned. Therefore, Viet Nam has rather comprehensive monitor and evaluation mechanism for women’s participation in economic activity.

Compared to the new context of development, including new economic models such as sharing economy, digital economy, Viet Nam is short of detailed gender-related statistics. Despite efforts to improve quality and availability of socio-economic statistics, Viet Nam only concretized the gender-related statistical indicators in 2019, under the Circular 10/2019/TT-BKHDT of the Ministry of Planning and Investment. By mid-2020, only some scattered statistics by gender are publicized by the General Statistics Office, in terms of employment, child malnutrition, income per capita, etc. This prevents the adoption of good regulatory

practices, especially in terms of assessing gender impacts of policies (on both ex ante and ex post basis).

6. Regional cooperation: What role can APEC play in promoting women’s economic empowerment in the region, including in partnership with other regional and international bodies?

APEC members recognize that the full potential of women’s contributions to the Asia-Pacific economy remains untapped. As a result, women’s economic empowerment and the greater inclusion of women in the regional economy are high on APEC’s agenda.

From 2011, the Policy Partnership on Women and the Economy (PPWE) was established to advance the economic integration of women in the APEC region for the benefit of all member and to coordinate gender activities across other APEC working groups. PPWE has organized many activities to promote women’s economic empowerment in the region via the indicators on the status of women in APEC’s member economies. The Economic Committee also incorporate aspects of women empowerment in collective and individual structural reform agenda. As an example, a binding requirement for APEC-funded projects is to ensure sufficient impacts on gender equality.

APEC can organize more forums and workshops on the women and economy in the region and international context. Besides, APEC can provide the support for member economies to carry out the project to promote the women’s economic empowerment such as the project to support women to access the information resource, labor market, etc. in the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, project support to women in start-up activities.