



ENHANCING WOMEN'S  
ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL  
PARTICIPATION, GLOBALLY AND  
IN THE ARAB WORLD

Brussels,  
December  
2013



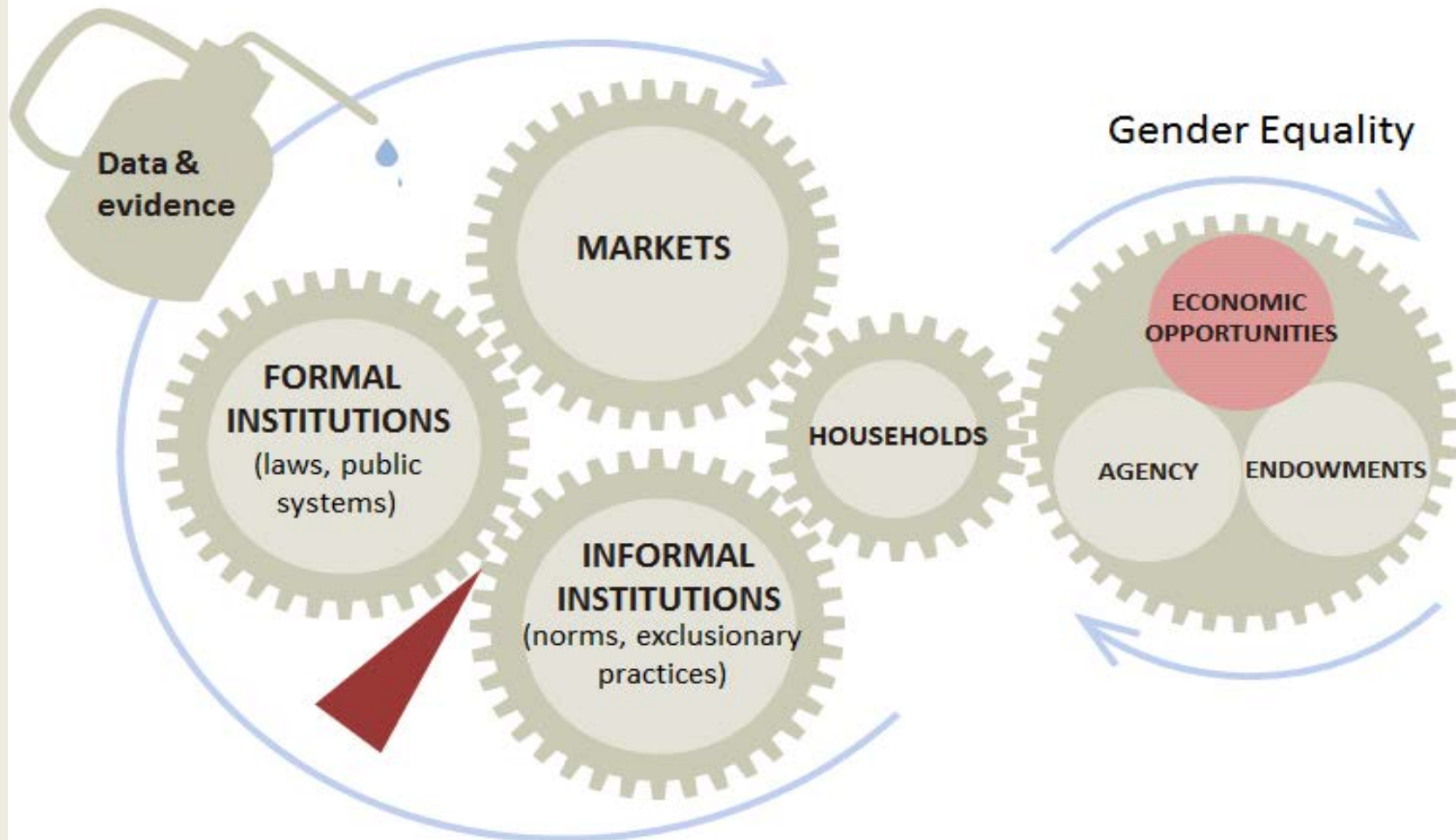
# 3 STATEMENTS ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT (WDR 12)

- Gender equality has intrinsic value for development
  - It belongs to the definition of development, as expanding opportunity (Sen)
- Development fuels gender:
  - As development opens up opportunities, women seize them
- Gender equality is an instrument of development:
  - Societies where women are represented in politics and institutions invest in goods that better reflect the preferences of men and women and achieve better policy outcomes

# GENDER EQUALITY IS AN INSTRUMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

- For the nation:
  - Tapping into the skills and talents of women, who make up half the population, can increase productivity and expand the development potential of the nation
- For the next generation:
  - Women with education, who are economically empowered, and can make decisions, invest more and better in their children
    - *“we gain knowledge and knowledge is light”*
    - *“we read (get an education) and we teach our children in the future”*  
--Young women, Kharef, Yemen
- For society:
  - Societies where women are represented in politics and institutions invest in goods that better reflect the preferences of men and women and achieve better policy outcomes

# A BROAD VIEW OF EQUALITY AND CONSTRAINTS



# EQUAL?

**In the last 30 years, 552 million joined the labor force  
and today, 4 out of 10 workers globally are women**

**... And yet, on average, for every dollar a man makes, a woman  
earns 80 cents**

**.. 73 cents in Brazil**

**.. 62 cents in Germany**

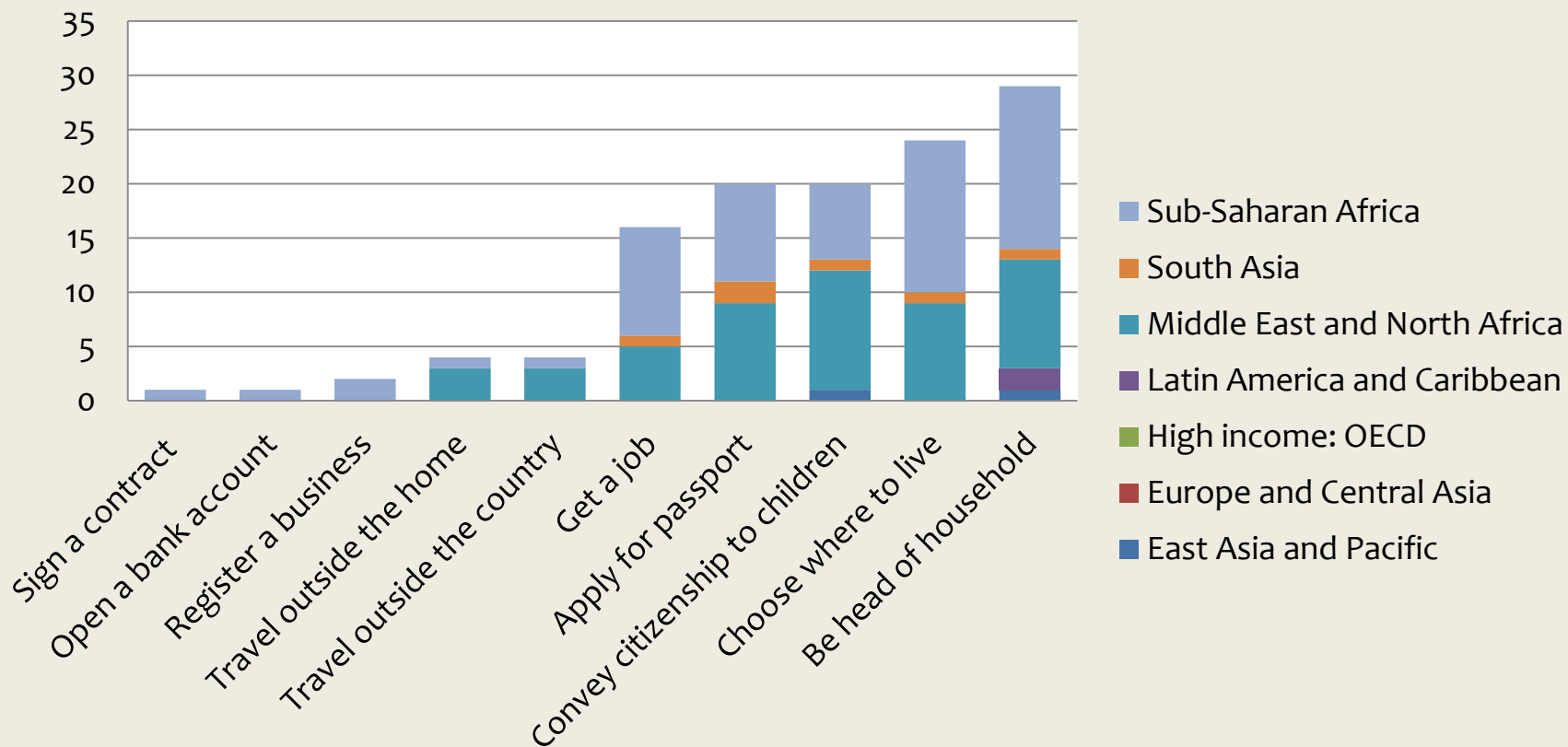
**.. 78 cents in Egypt**

**All but 6 countries have ratified the Convention on  
the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against  
Women**

**...but only 19% of all parliamentarians in the world are women.**

# FORMAL CONSTRAINTS ARE PERVASIVE

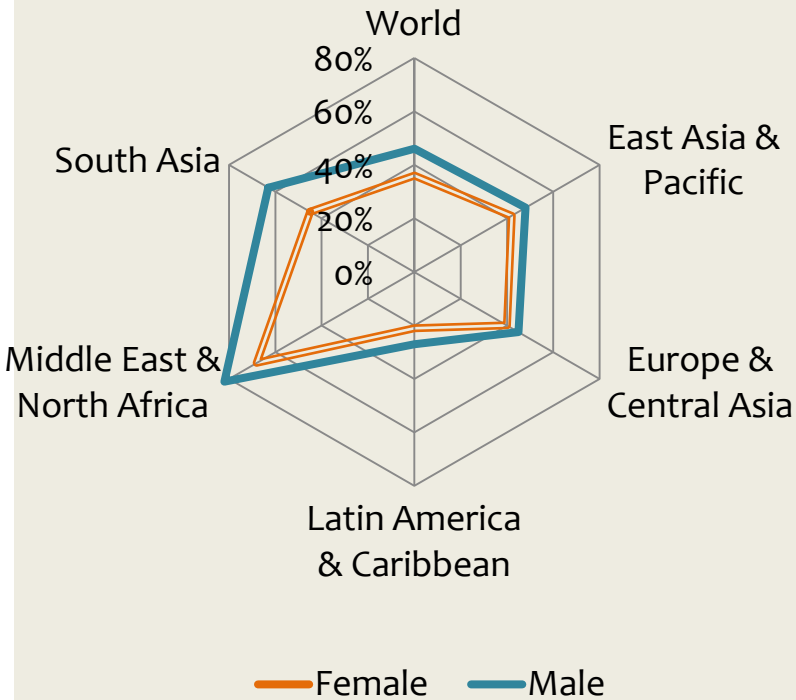
Most common restrictions for married women



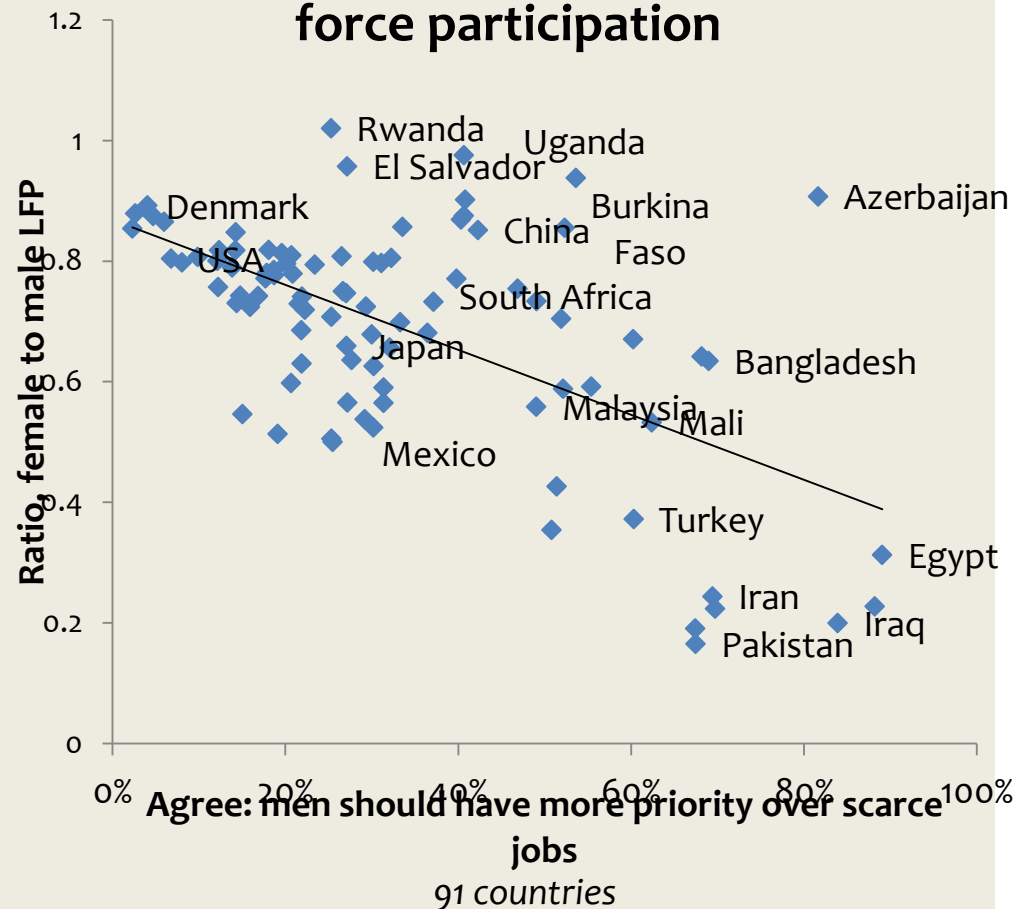
Source: Women, Business and the Law 2014

# SOCIAL NORMS UNDERLIE DEPRIVATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

**Agree that men should have priority over scarce jobs**



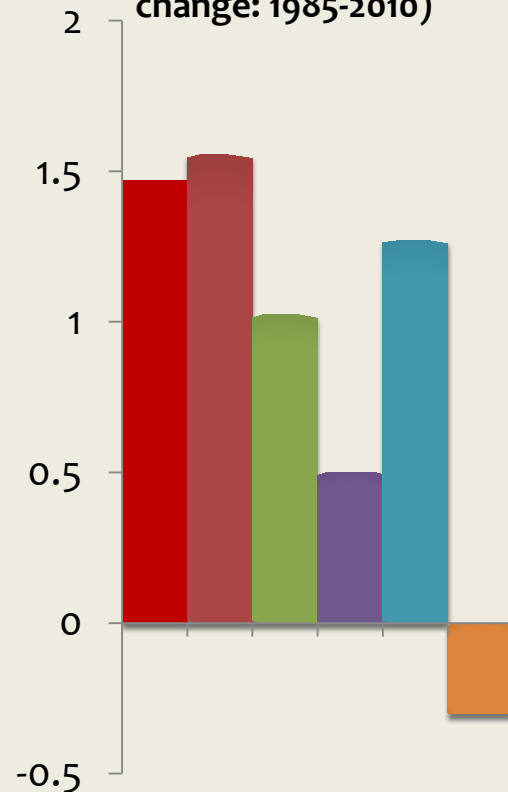
**Relationship between perceived jobs equality and gaps in labor force participation**



Source: World Values Surveys data

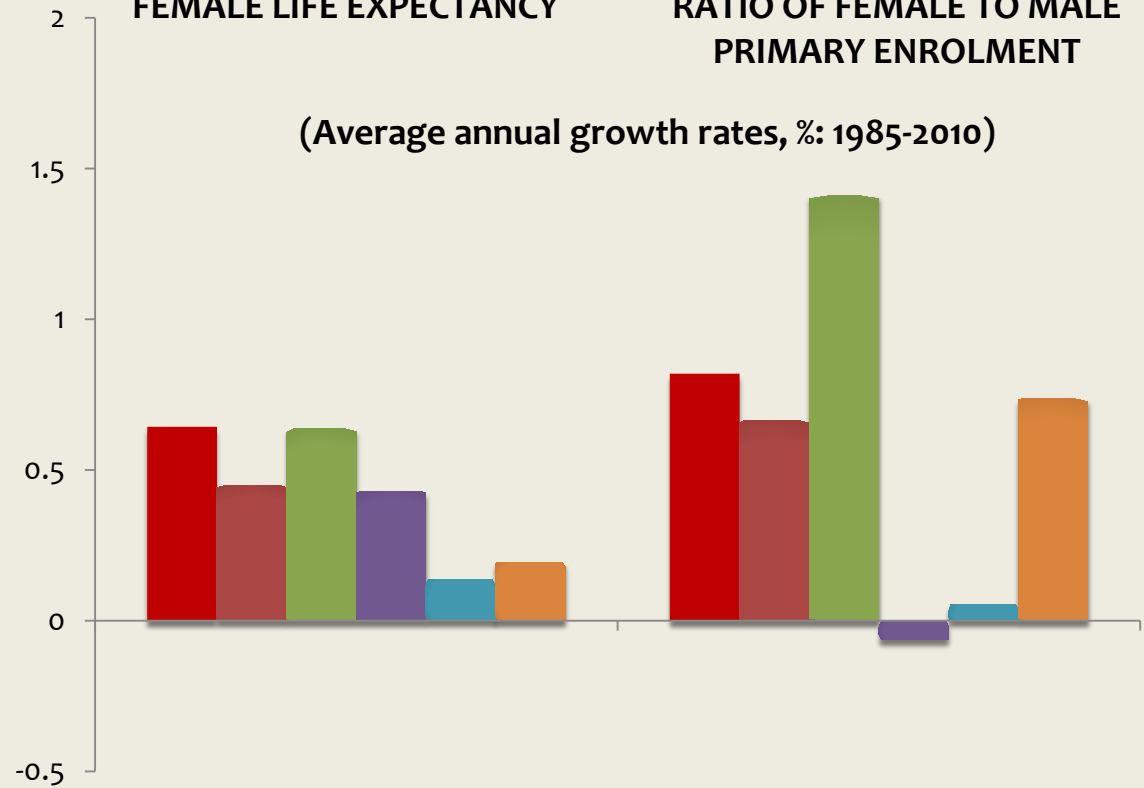
# SINCE 1970, COUNTRIES IN THE MENA REGION HAVE RECORDED THE FASTEST PROGRESS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD.

**FEMALE LITERACY RATES**  
(Annual percentage point change: 1985-2010)

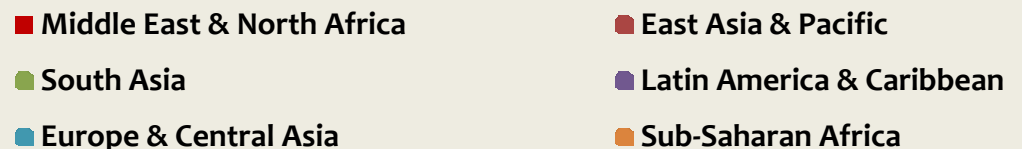


**FEMALE LIFE EXPECTANCY**

(Average annual growth rates, %: 1985-2010)



**RATIO OF FEMALE TO MALE PRIMARY ENROLMENT**

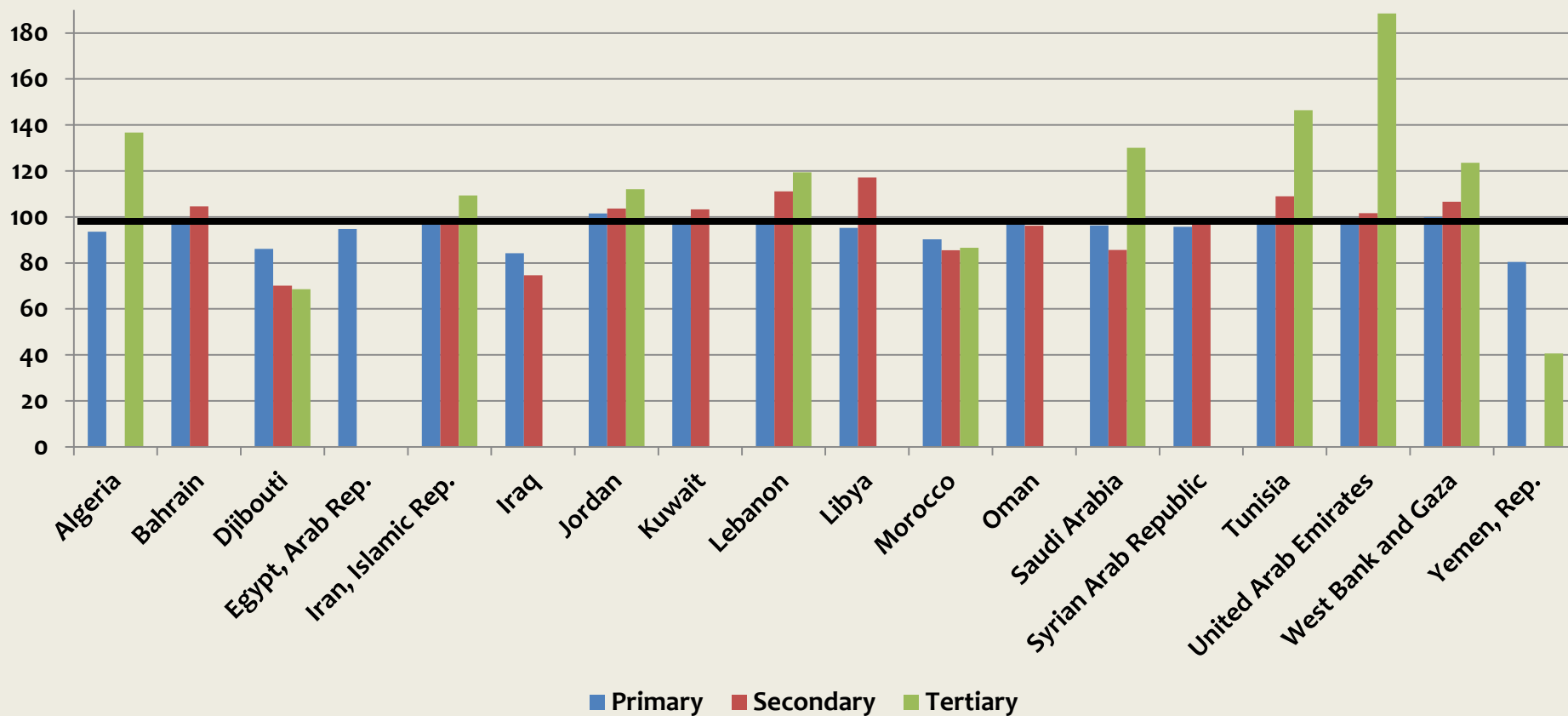


Source: Staff calculations based on World Development Indicators, 2011.



# PROGRESS IN EDUCATION HAS BEEN MADE ACROSS THE REGION

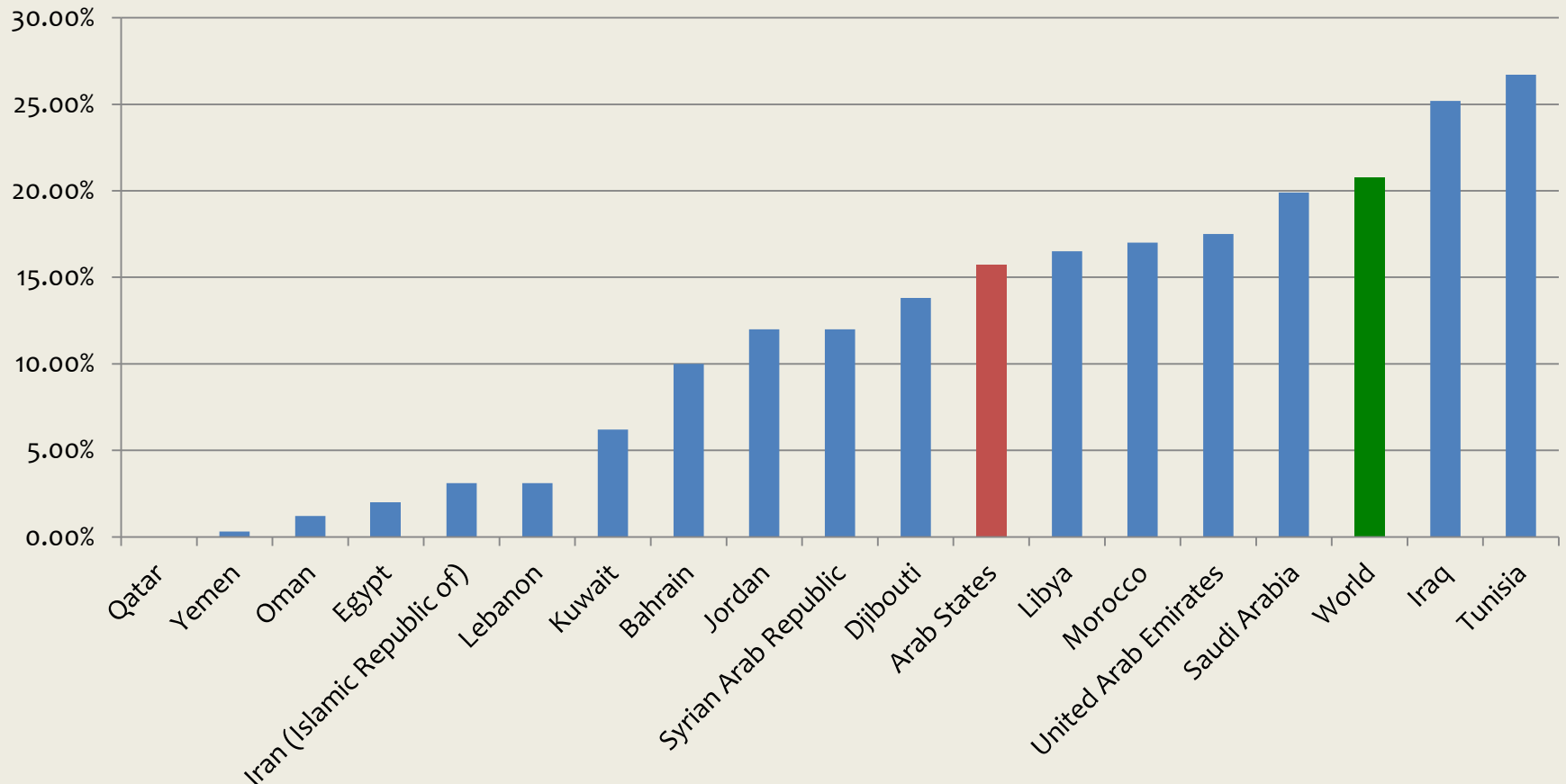
Female to Male Ratio of Enrolment Rates



Source: World Development Indicators (2011)

# BUT FEW WOMEN ARE REPRESENTED IN POLITICAL BODIES

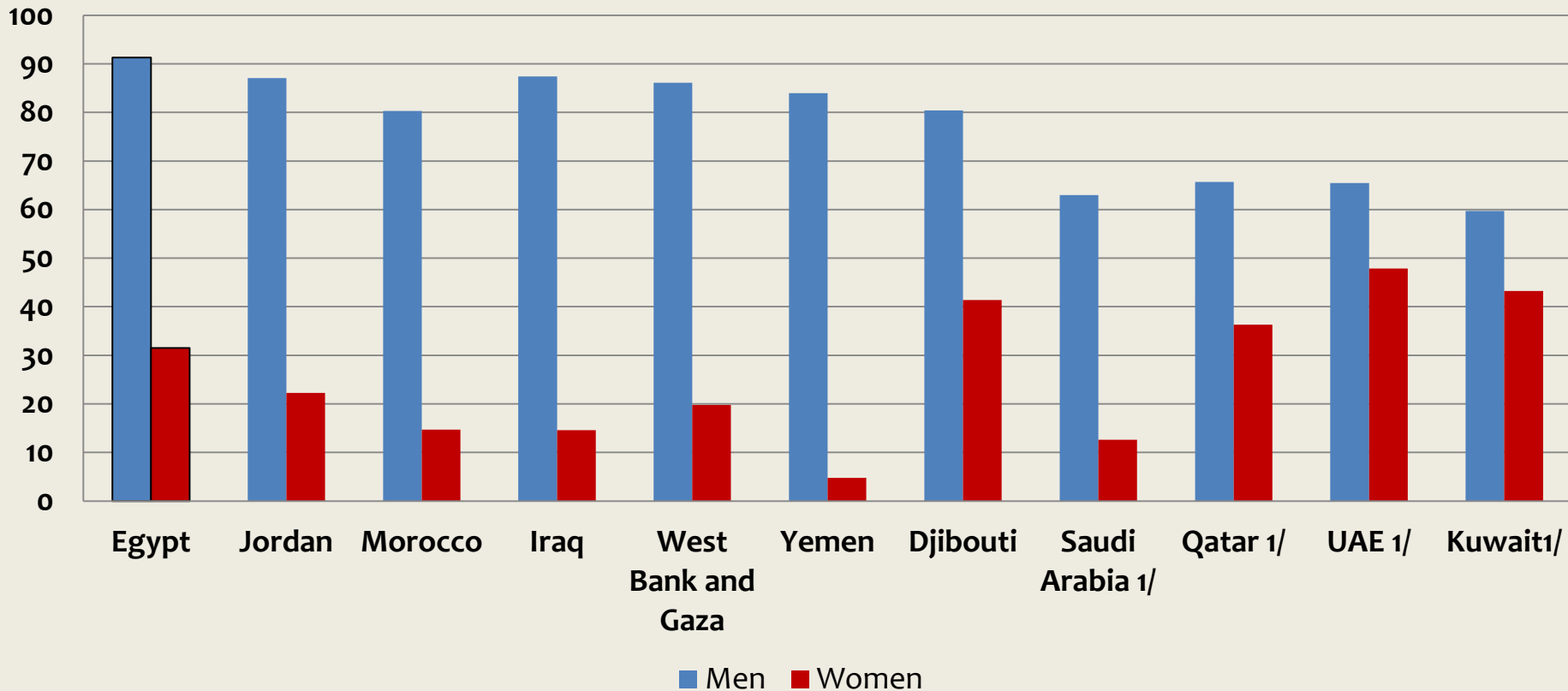
**% Women in lower or single house**



**Source: International Parliamentary Union, Women in National Parliaments, as of 1/3/13.**

# AND ONLY ONE IN FOUR WOMEN PARTICIPATE IN THE LABOR FORCE

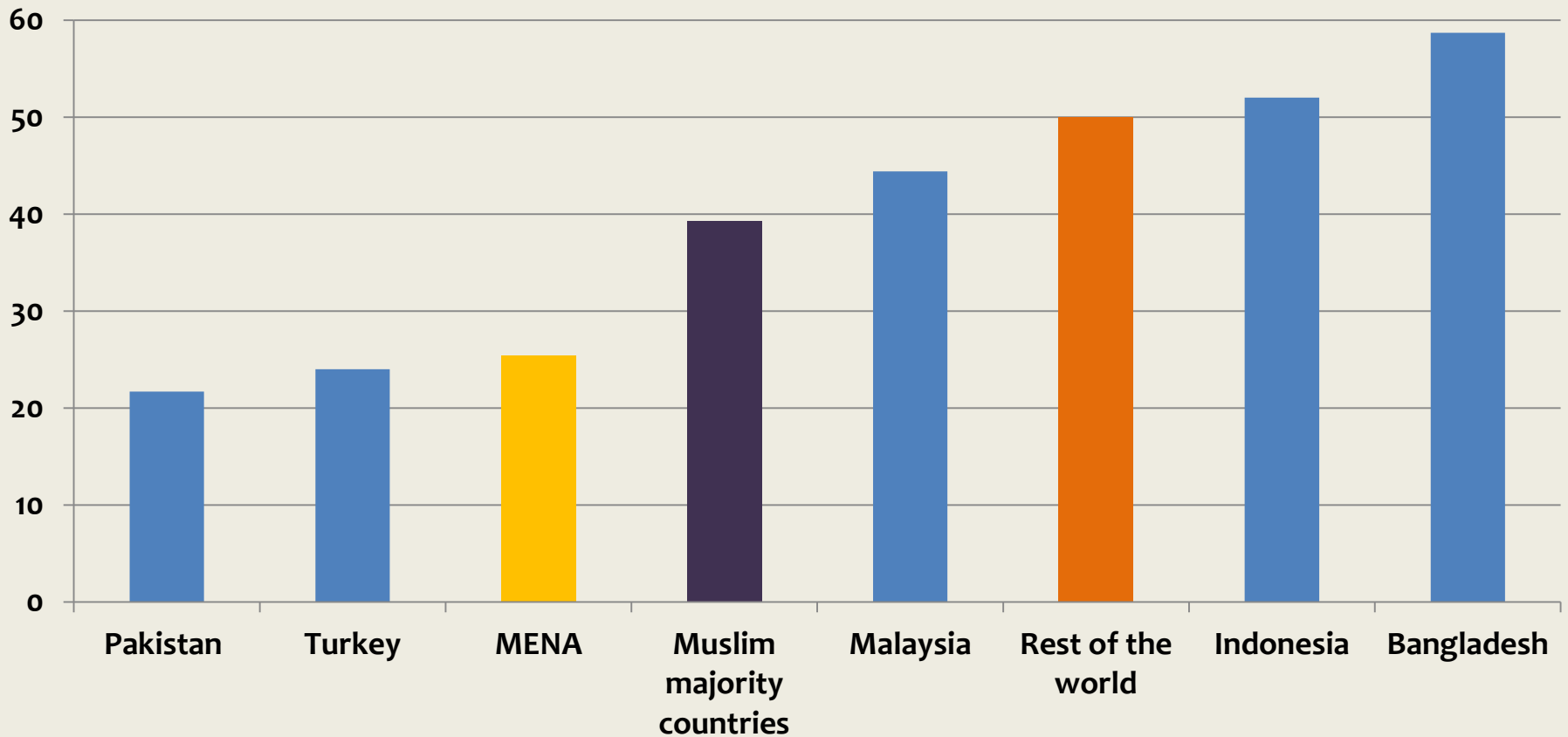
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION (%)



**Source:** National household Surveys; 1/ Official estimates for national non-immigrant population.

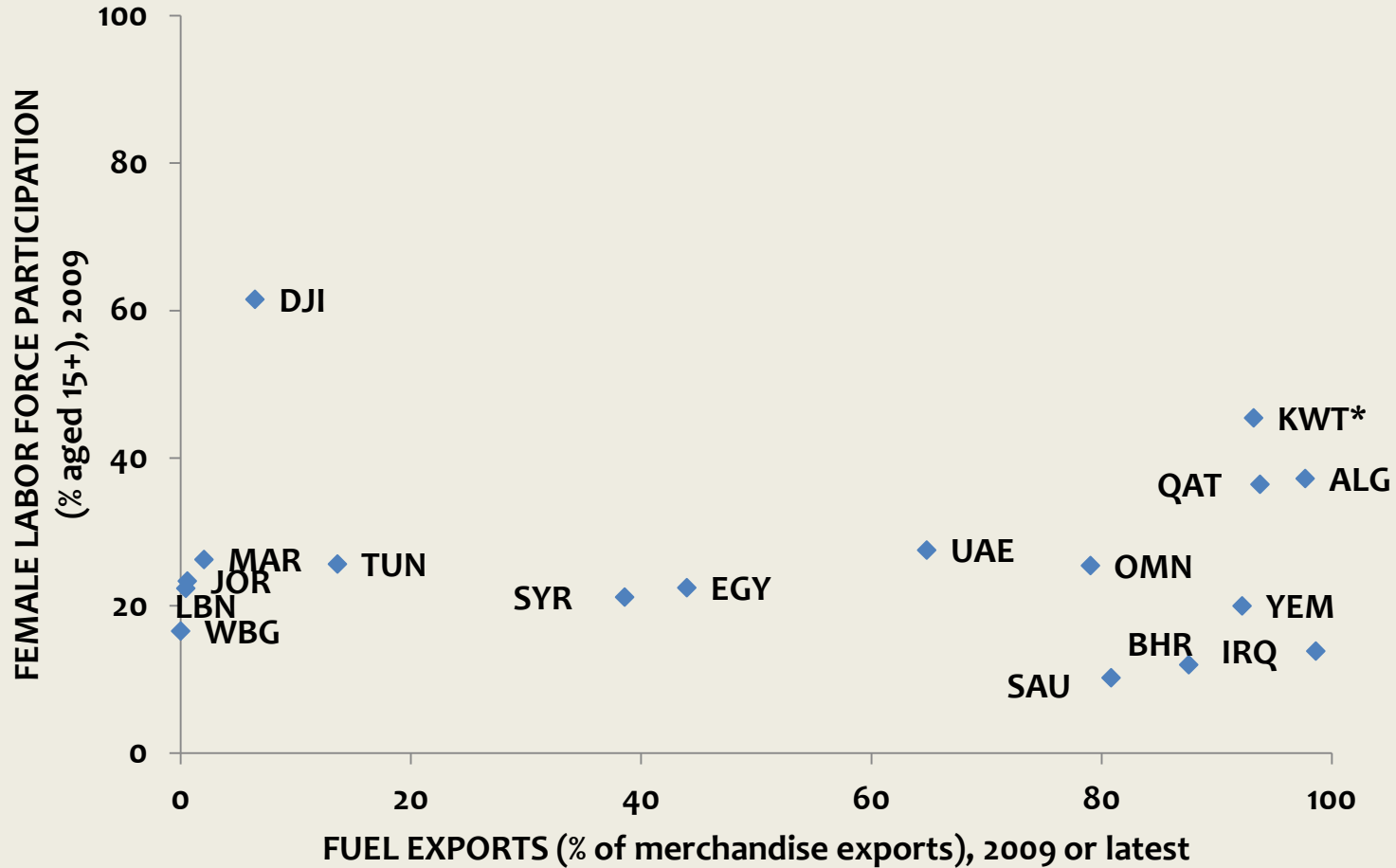
# RELIGION?

## FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION (%)



Source: World Development Indicators (2011)

# OIL?



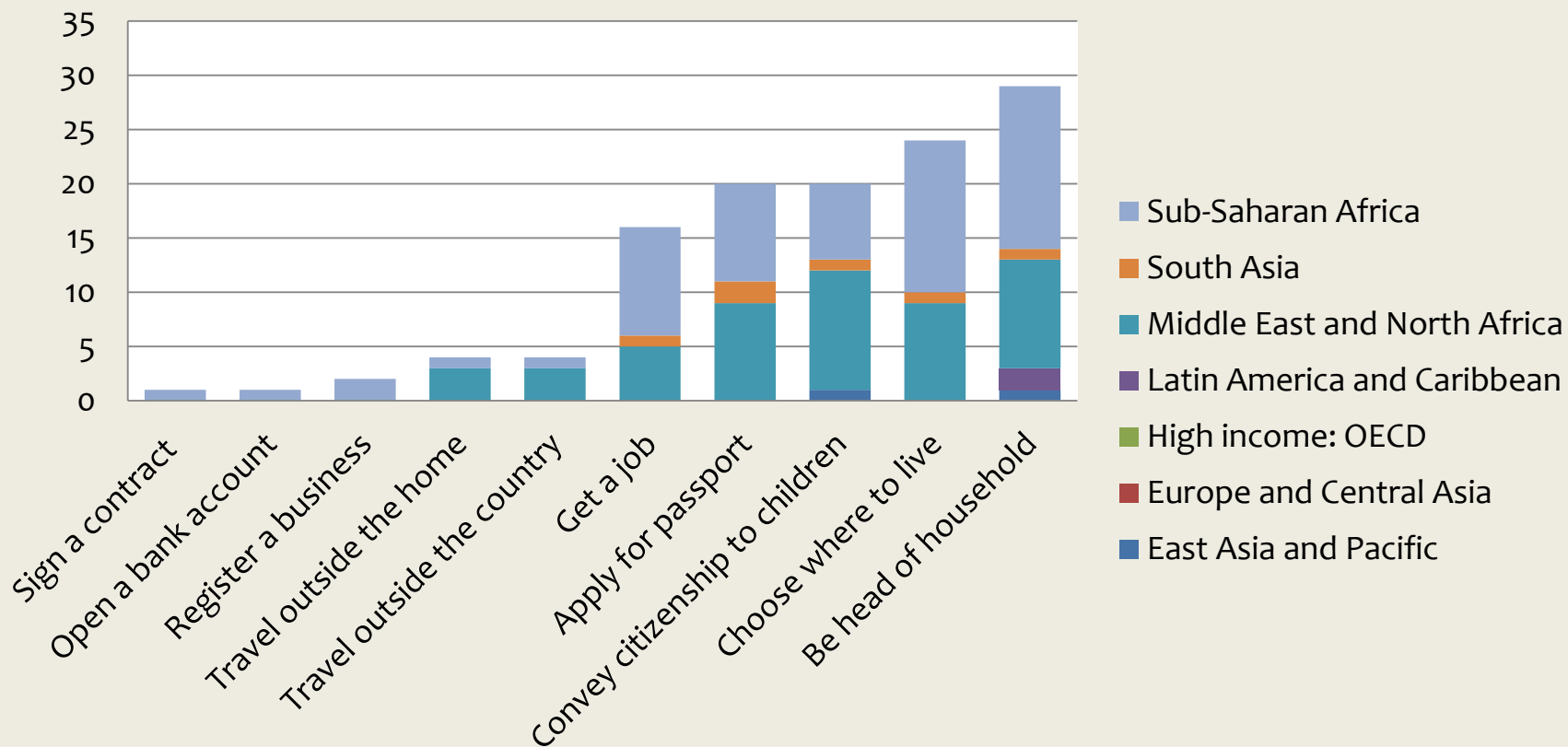
Source: World Development Indicators, 2011; \*includes non-nationals

# FORMAL NORMS CONTINUE TO CONSTRAIN WOMEN'S MOBILITY AND DECISION MAKING

- **Gender norms are reflected in laws that implicitly or explicitly circumscribe women's agency. These in turn can reinforce societal norms.**
  - **Family codes may limit decision-making:** head of household laws, permission to work, selecting matrimonial residence, unilateral divorce laws etc.
  - **Low or no legal minimum Age of Marriage Laws for girls** may limit decision-making power within the household, with respect to education, work.
  - **Labor laws may limit opportunities:** restrictions on industry and hours worked; maternity leave and childcare; legislation that discourages or does not recognize part-time work.

# FORMAL CONSTRAINTS ARE PERVASIVE

Most common restrictions for married women



Source: Women, Business and the Law 2014

# MENA SPECIFIC CONSTRAINTS LIMIT FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

- Traditional gender norms further reinforce each other to restrict women's mobility and choice
- Limited employability for young people, especially women (tracking)
- Queuing for public sector jobs
- Limited opportunities in the private sector and for entrepreneurship (stereotypes, harassment, safety, control of assets)

*“Boys move however they want, wherever they want”*

*“They sit in the coffee shops, waiting...”*

*After their studies, “they stay at home, go apply for companies, get depressed and say why did I waste my time..”*

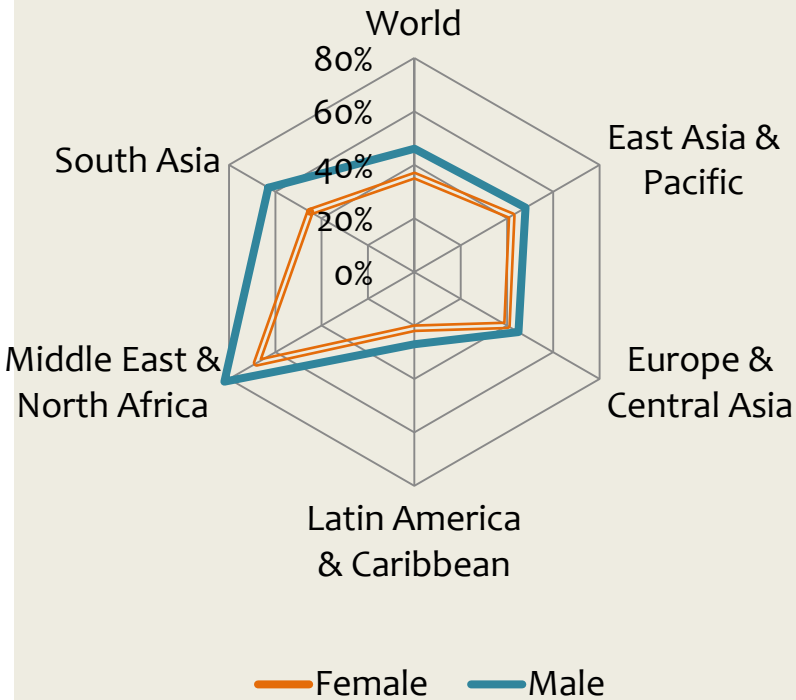
*“jobs here are only for those who have connections, whoever doesn't have connections stays at home and doesn't work.”*

*Source: West Bank and Gaza and Yemen Qualitative Assessments, 2012*

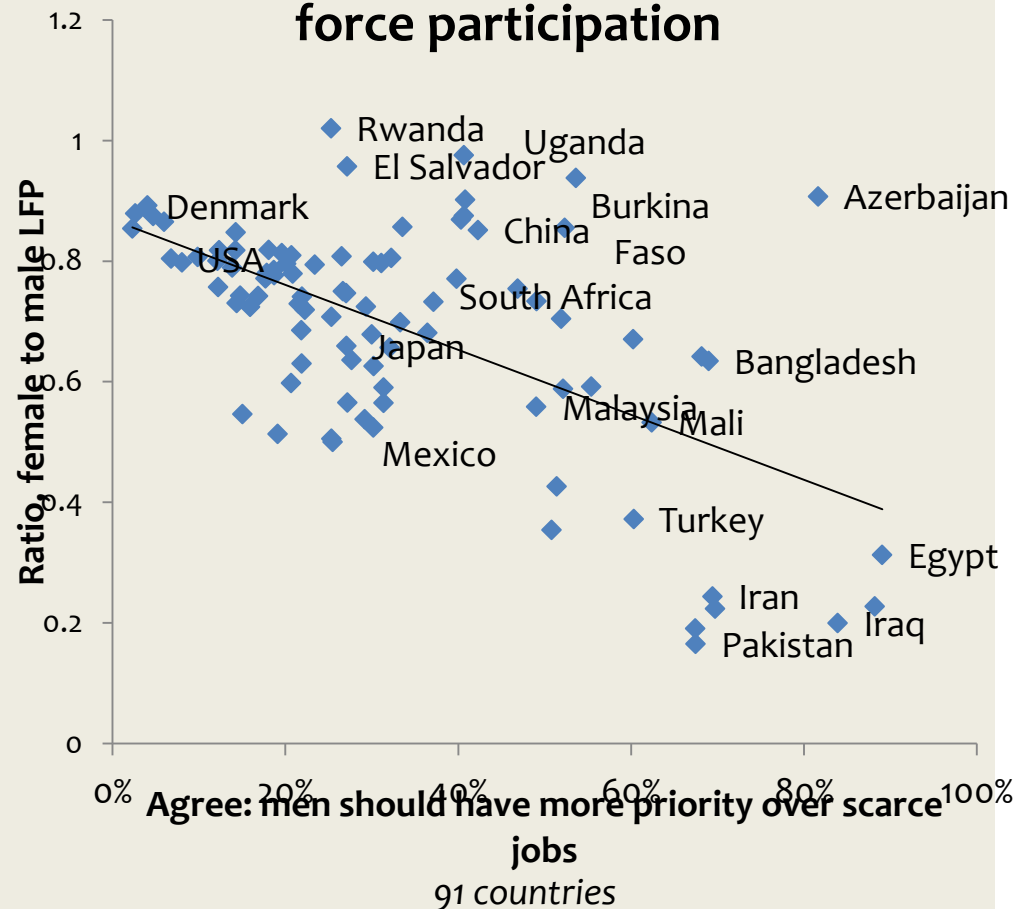


# SOCIAL NORMS UNDERLIE DEPRIVATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

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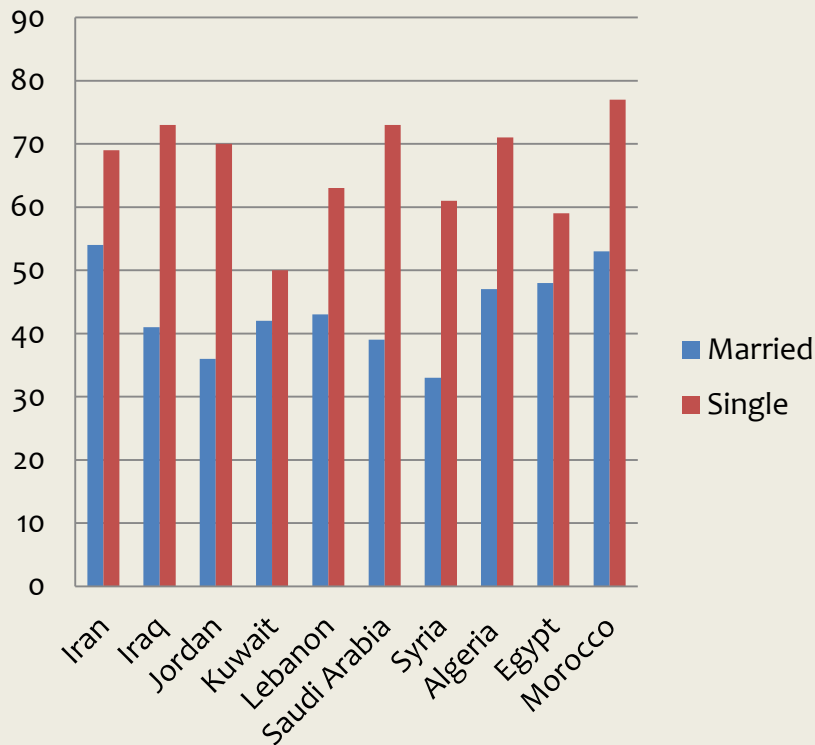
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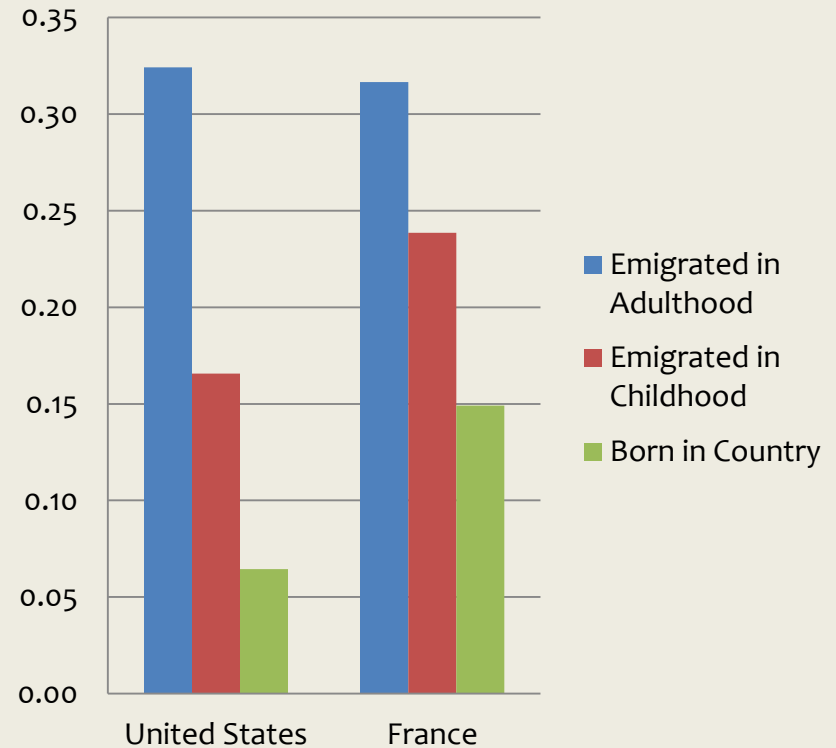
Source: World Values Surveys data

# SOCIAL NORMS HOWEVER ARE NOT DESTINY

## LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF FEMALE IMMIGRANTS FROM MENA TO US (%)



## MARITAL GAP IN FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF EMIGRANTS FROM MENA (%)



# GENDER EQUALITY IS INTEGRAL TO THE WORLD BANK

- To the World Bank Group's twin goals of ending extreme poverty and shared prosperity
- Gender was a special theme in IDA16 and IDA17: Progress on gender mainstreaming in lending is tracked and reported
  - 9 core indicators on gender mainstreaming monitored in IDA16
  - 8 indicators monitored in the corporate scorecard (IDA and IBRD)
- All country strategies draw on findings from stand-alone or integrated gender assessments
  - Country programs involve financing for gender-related lending and analytical work

# PRIORITIES IN MENA

## Bolster job creation for all, led by the private sector

Enhancing women's agency and legal reforms to put women on an equal footing

Bridge the remaining gender gaps in health, education and basic services

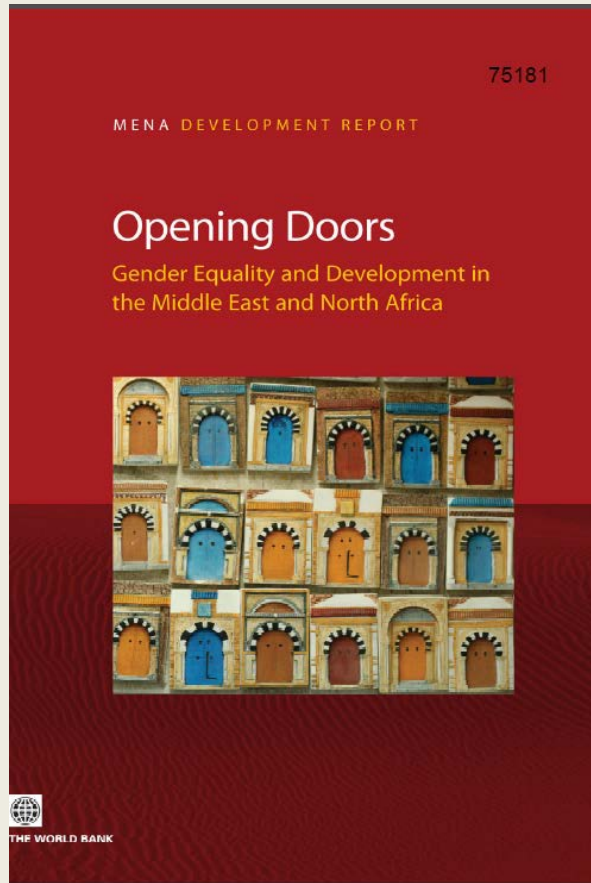
Remove constraints to participation and entry into the formal labor market, especially in the private sector

Nurture female-owned and managed businesses through expanded access to finance and business skills

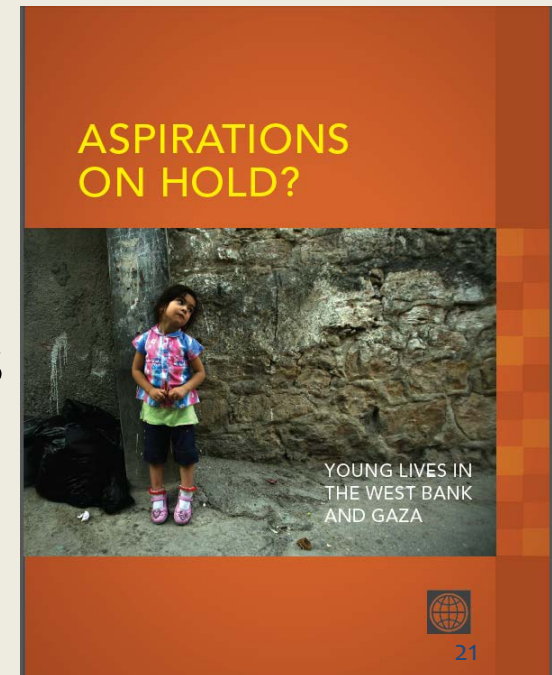
Evidence-based policy making through experiments, pilots, and greater public access to gender-disaggregated data

# SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT WE ARE DOING

## ANALYTICAL WORK



1. Regional report: “Opening Doors: Gender Equality in the Middle East and North Africa”
2. Palestine: “Aspirations on Hold? Young Lives in the West Bank and Gaza”



# JORDAN NEW WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN (NOW) PILOT: LEARNING WHAT WORKS

- 1400 young female community college graduates participated in a pilot:
  - 3 week soft skills and employability skills training
  - Short term incentive for firms to hire young women (6 month job voucher)
- Objective: To increase labor force participation and employability of female graduates
- Short term: job vouchers induced a 39% rise in female employment.
- Long term: the majority of the jobs did not translate into permanent employment, but labor force participation was higher by 10 percentage points.

# THINK EQUAL!



# READ

- **Gender Equality and Development**  
(World Development Report 2012)
- **Opening Doors: Gender Equality and Development in the Middle East and North Africa**

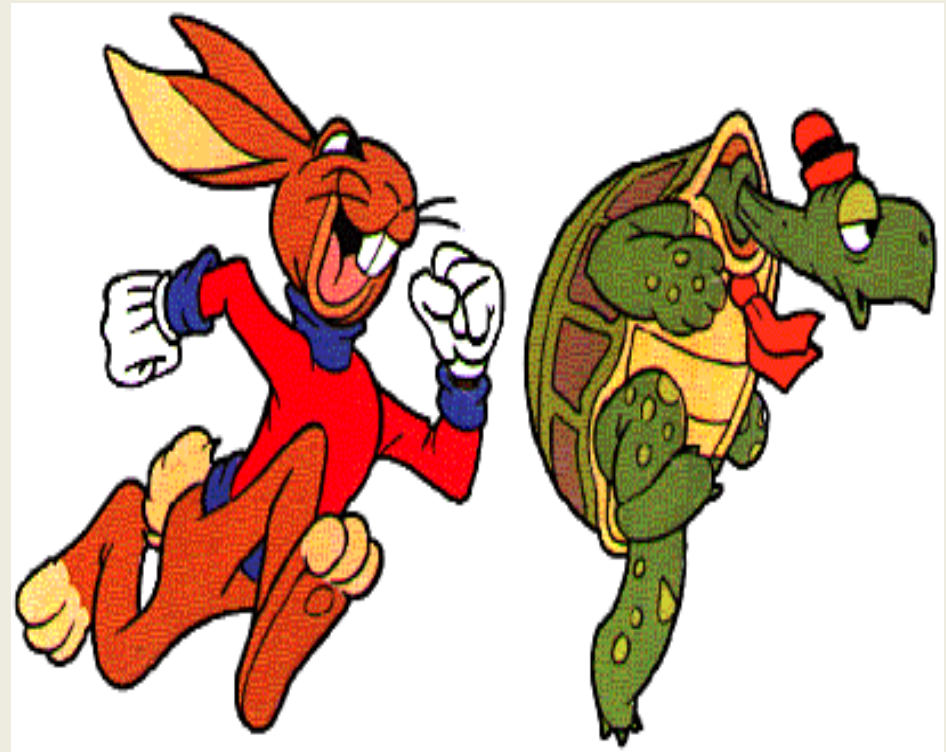
Available (as well as many other resources) at  
<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/gender>



# BACKUP SLIDES

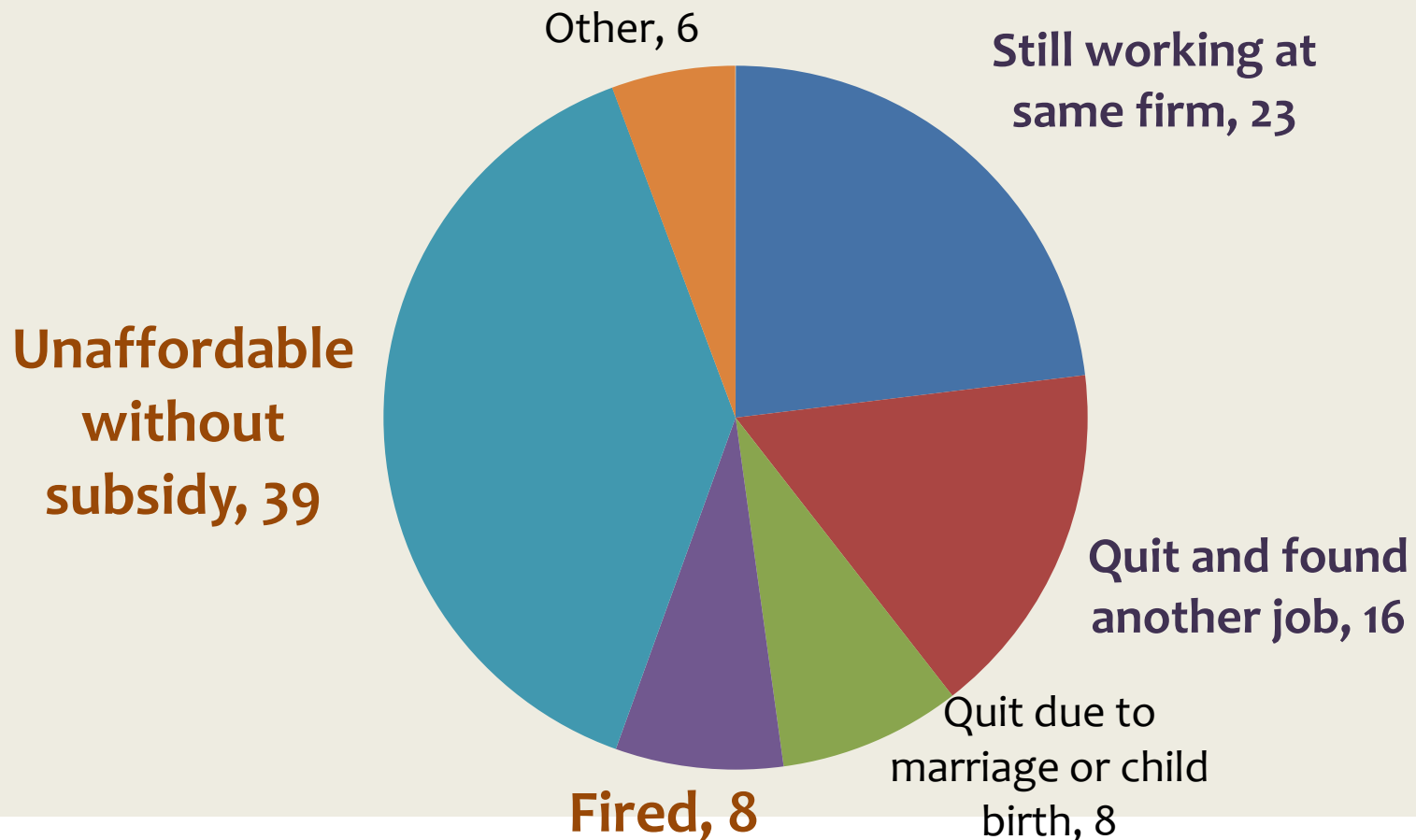
# IS THIS A CASE OF THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE?

- Vouchers helped women find jobs quicker than they otherwise would have
- In the end, the control group caught up to the voucher group in terms of employment



# WHY DIDN'T THE HARE WIN?

## ■ After the vouchers expired...



# FIRMS DO NOT FIND IT WORTHWHILE TO FORMALIZE EMPLOYMENT OR TO PAY MINIMUM WAGES..

- Had firms registered these workers as formally employed, employers would have to pay social security taxes and payroll taxes , adding 20 percent to the cost of employing a worker → an unaffordable financial burden?
- Where the minimum wage was not made a precondition for employment (for the training and control groups), more than 25% of those employed earned less than 150JD throughout our entire pilot
- And the overwhelming reason that firms terminated employment after the vouchers ended was that the employees were “unaffordable without the subsidy”

# INFORMING POLICY AND SUPPORTING THE TRANSITION IN YEMEN

- New policy note highlights stark gender disparities and priority areas for action

Establish peace and security; reconstruction and humanitarian assistance

Establish a legal minimum age of marriage for girls; and birth and marriage registration	Girls schools and female teachers, especially in rural areas + Expanding % of attended births	Create conditions for diversified economic growth and private sector led job creation	Microfinance to SMEs and home-based businesses run by women
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- National Dialogue considering a minimum age of marriage and a quota for women in political bodies
  - Supporting the implementation of the recommendations of the National Dialogue

# UNMET ASPIRATIONS: Low rates of workforce participation, high rates of unemployment

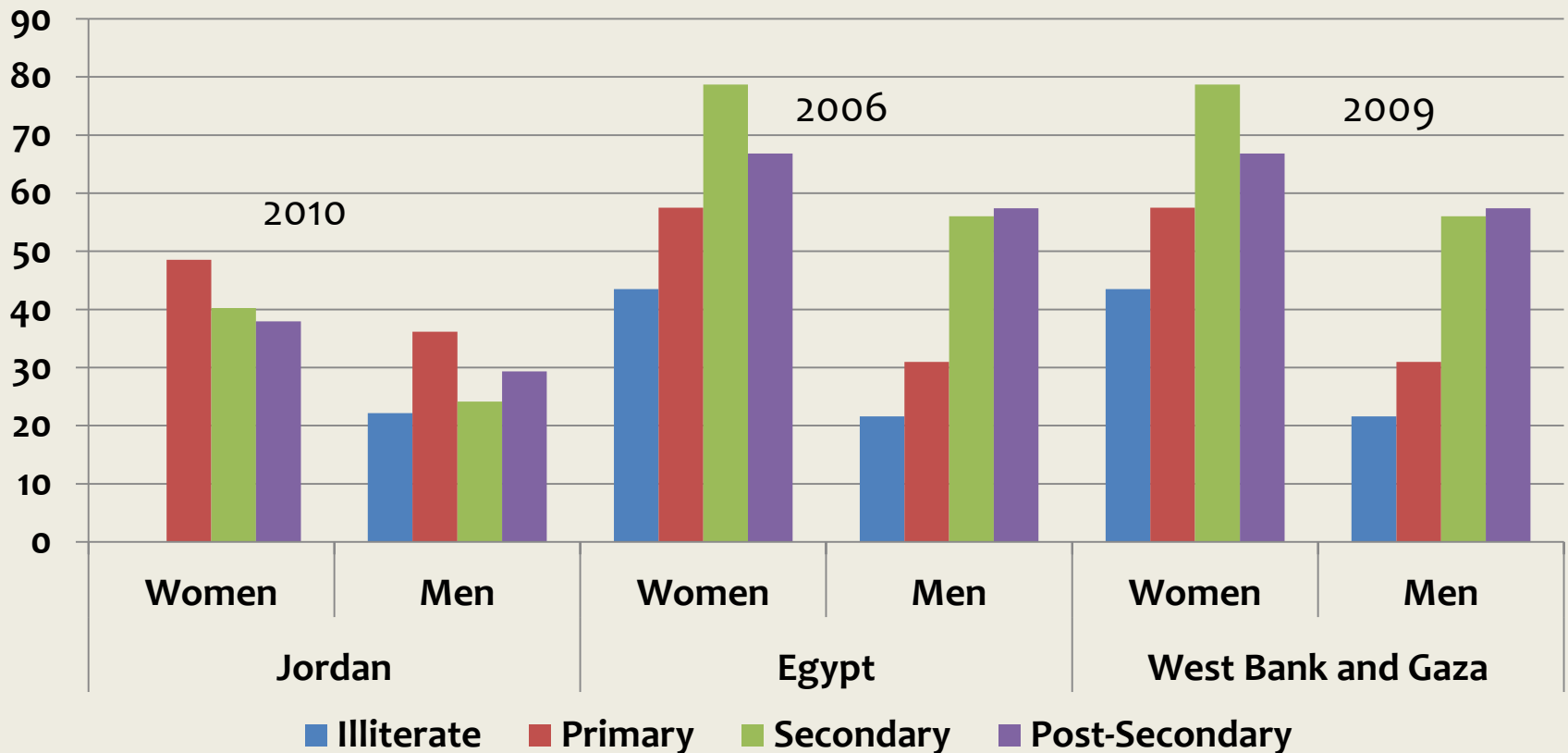
YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (%)



Source: World Development Indicators (2011)

# AND WOMEN STAY UNEMPLOYED LONGER, ESPECIALLY MORE EDUCATED WOMEN

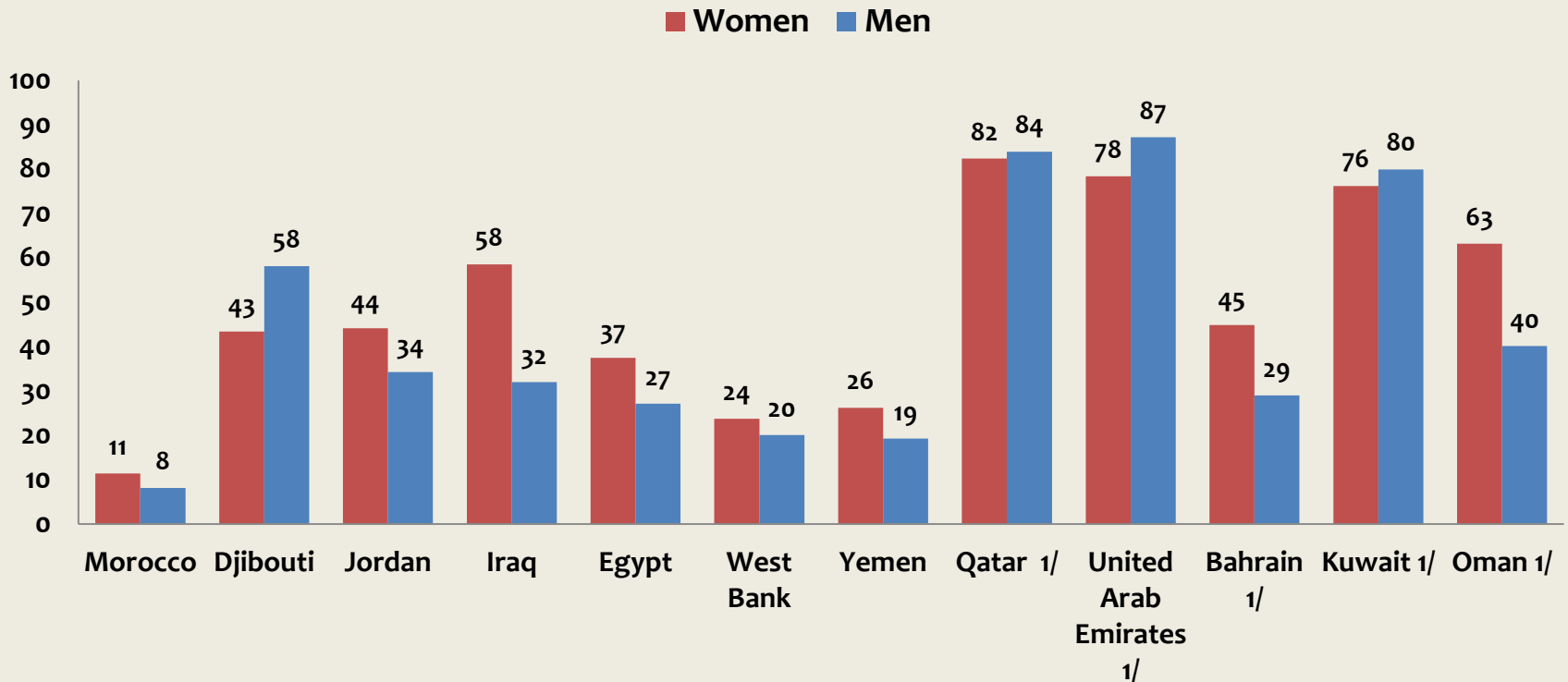
**% OF UNEMPLOYED WOMEN AND MEN WHO HAVE BEEN UNEMPLOYED FOR MORE THAN ONE YEAR**



Source: National household surveys

# PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT IS A DOMINANT SOURCE OF EMPLOYMENT, ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN

SHARE OF EMPLOYED WORKERS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR (%)



**Source:** National household Surveys; 1/ Official estimates for national non-immigrant population.

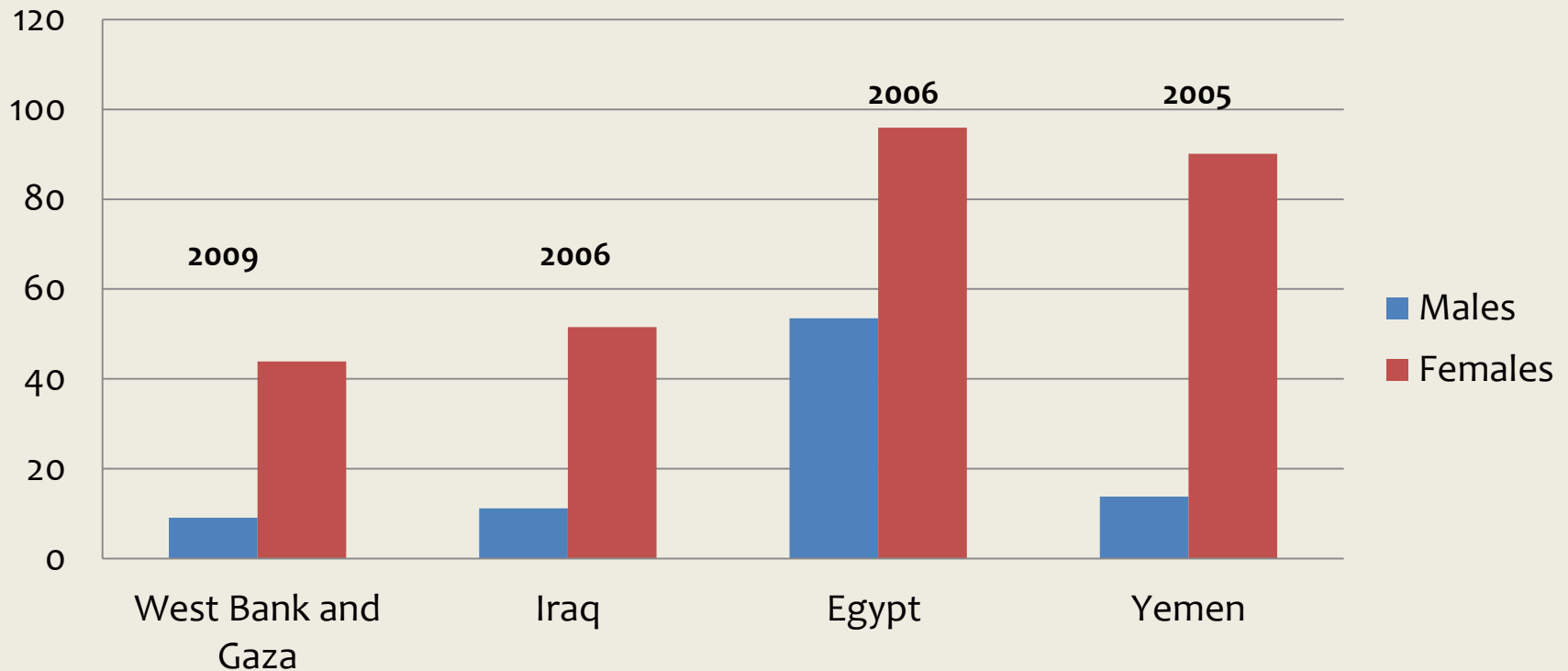
**Latent participation:** When Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Education opened up a new batch of positions in 2011, applications from women were 4 to 5 times the number of vacancies



# IN MANY COUNTRIES, THE PUBLIC SECTOR ALSO PAYS BETTER, ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN

## PUBLIC SECTOR WAGE GAP

(Difference in Average Hourly Earnings in the Public and Private Sectors, %)



Source: National household Surveys

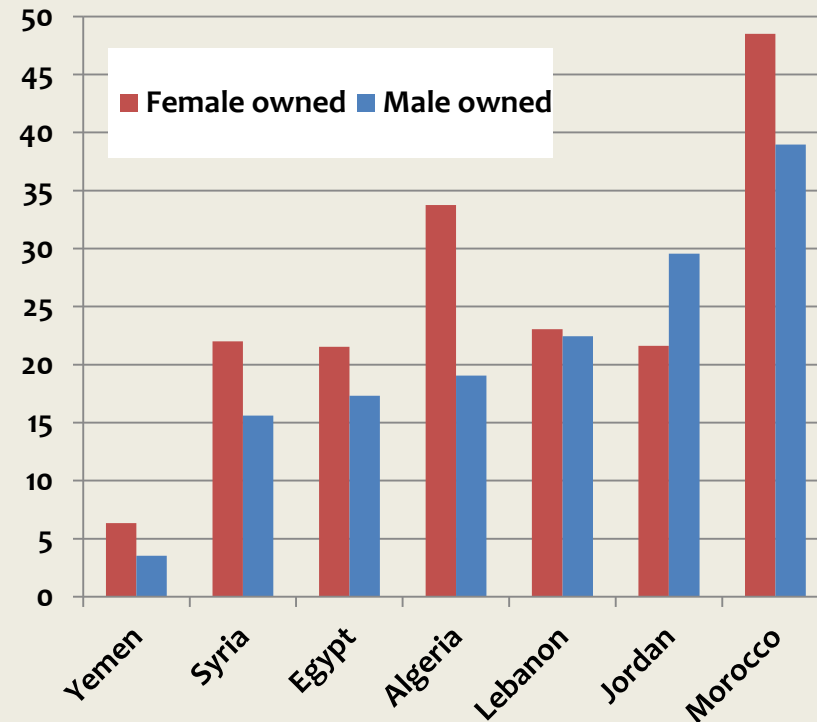
# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR ARE LIMITED, ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN

- Educational segregation influences occupational segregation
- Skills mismatches
- Gender stereotypes of employers and misperceptions about the private sector
- Limited access to networks and lack of labor market information

# FEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENTREPRENEURS, OR THE SKILLS TO SET UP AND RUN A BUSINESS

- Only 15% of businesses in the region are owned by women.
  - Out of 12789 households in rural villages in the governorate of Menya in Egypt, there were only 200 female business owners. That's less than 2%!
  - Only 14% of these female business owners currently have loans
- In many countries, female owned firms hire more women than male owned firms. Thus, constraints to female entrepreneurship can also potentially limit opportunities for female employment

SHARE OF FEMALE WORKERS BY GENDER OF OWNER (%)

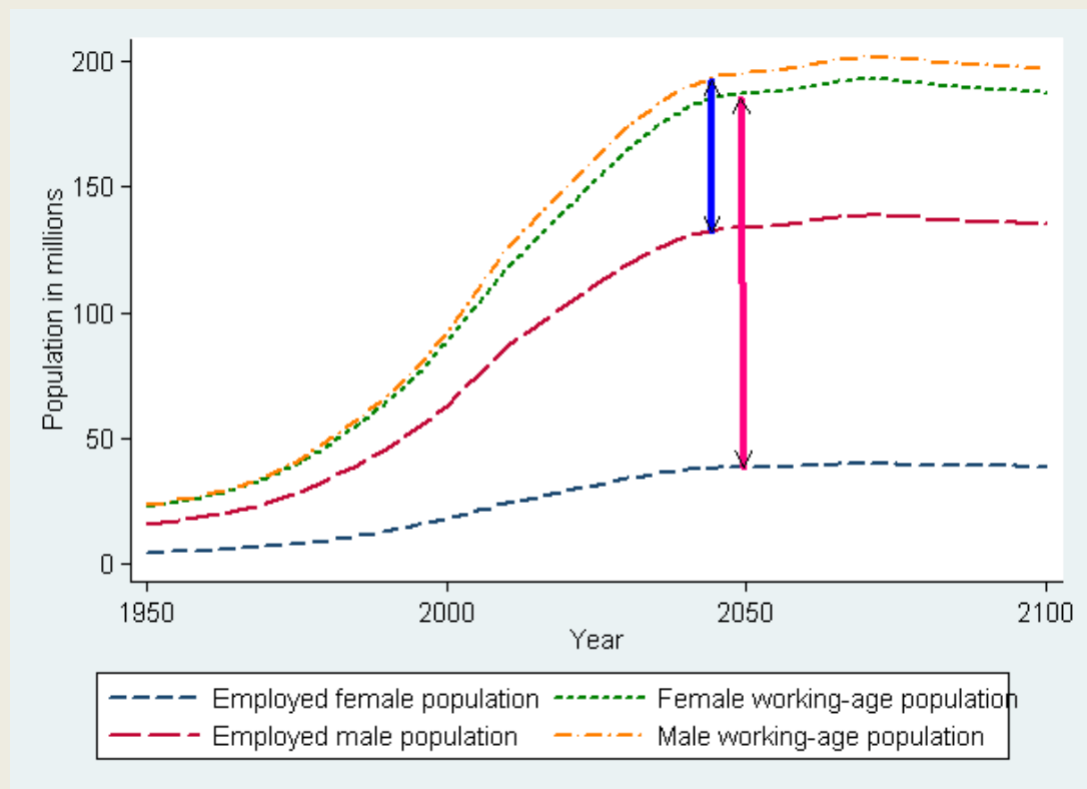


Source: World Bank, Investment Climate Surveys

# THE TIME FOR REFORM IS NOW

***If all those in the working age population look for work, the number of jobs needed in MENA will increase exponentially—200 million jobs by 2050, three-quarters of them for women***

## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA



**Source:** United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Population Estimates and Projections Section, 2010-2050, World Development Indicators, 2011.