

CATALYZING WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**Regional Forum
on Women's
Entrepreneurship**

MAY 2024





WELCOMING

Kal Joffres

CEO
Tandemic





Agenda

Opening Remarks

Presentation of IF results

Panel Discussion

Presentation on gender finance
report

Fireside chat



OPENING REMARKS

Rupa Chanda

Director of Trade
Investment and Innovation
ESCAP





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PRESENTATION ON IF RESULTS

Elena Mayer-Besting

Programme Manager
Trade, Investment, and Innovation
ESCAP



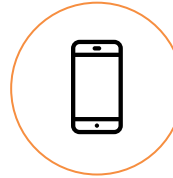
CATALYZING WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME .

6-year programme (2018-2024) that aims to advance women's entrepreneurship in the Asia-Pacific region through three interconnected pillars of influence:



POLICY & GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT

Creating an enabling ecosystem for women



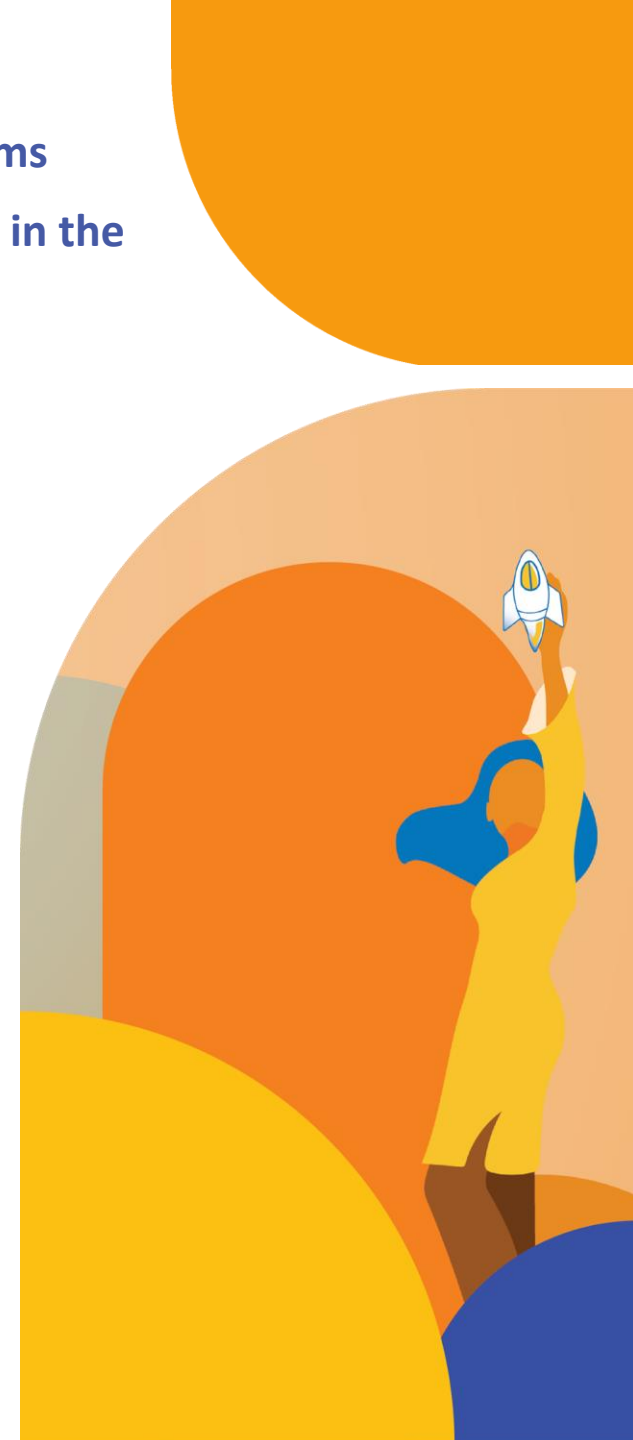
INNOVATIVE FINANCING

Enhancing access & use of financial services



ICT & BUSINESS SKILLS

Strengthening use of ICT & digital solutions





INNOVATIVE FINANCING IMPACT AT A GLANCE.

179,125+

WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

have directly benefitted from the programme through innovative financing mechanisms exceeding the programme outreach target by double.

**USD 90.3
MILLION**

Unlocked in additional capital to women entrepreneurs.





Innovative Financing Mechanisms

These results have been made possible through the following innovative financing mechanisms

Women's Livelihood Bond

The bonds supported by ESCAP unlocked access to finance for **19,600 women entrepreneurs**.

Building on the ESCAP support, the bonds were able to be scaled up and expanded without requiring further support from ESCAP.

Impact Investment Fund

Supported the establishment, expansion & outreach of the **first women-run and purely women-focused equity investment firm** in South-East Asia and direct support to the first **two investments of 15M in total** into **two women-led Vietnamese businesses**.

Guarantee Fund

Enabled 35 entrepreneurs to access USD 1,318,823 in loans to date and supported **mainstreaming of gender equality and inclusiveness in operations of financial service providers**.

Regional Challenge Funds

01

Through the Women MSME FinTech Innovation Fund

Supported companies have serviced **20,023 women entrepreneurs** (465% of the beneficiary targets). **6,555 women MSMEs** received more than **USD 15.6 million** in financing for their businesses through these initiatives.

02

The Women Enterprise Recovery Fund

reached 138,090 women, supporting the development and expansion of digital business models in South and South-East Asia. **2,156 women-led MSMEs** received more than **\$ 6.6 million** in financing for their businesses through these



Innovations at the intersection of finance and technology .



Crowdfunding platform linking smallholder women farmers with financing.



Solution for setting-up online stores, incl. logistics facility and payment gateway.



On-demand platform for women entrepreneurs in the beauty industry



Inventory management and loan app for micro-entrepreneurs



Online marketplace and payments gateway



Online delivery and payments platform for restaurants and food delivery



Business Management Platform, finance processing solution and digital record-keeping tool



Digital marketplace payment platform solution to support the women MSME ecosystem



Digital tokens-powered green energy mobility platform



Block-chain enabled e-commerce platform for women smallholder farmers



Chatbot-powered digital loan platform



Agent-based microinsurance platform for rural areas



Mobile financial bookkeeping tool for women MSMEs



Financial services facilitation platform for women MSMEs



E-commerce platform with business management and bankability focus



Innovative Financing Mechanisms.

These results have been made possible through the following innovative financing mechanisms

Regional Tech Competition

Supported regional startup competitions, mentorship programme, bootcamp, and direct matchmaking between entrepreneurs and investors. More than **200M dollars of capital unlocked to participating startups** with the support of ESCAP in 2023.

Climate Reverse Accelerator

Reverse Accelerator programme for **12 women-led ClimateTech & Sustainability startups** in the region equipping them with the skills and knowledge that investors seek, focusing on areas like pitching and business plan development.

GP Sprint

Accelerator for **9 emerging gender-smart fund managers** supporting them to aim of accelerating their reaching their first close. It is expected that each fund will invest approx. USD 20 million in 5-10 women-owned/ -led companies.

Gender-Responsive Foreign Direct Investment

ESCAP worked with **Investment Promotion Agencies** to design and implement concrete initiatives to encourage foreign investors to support gender equality in their countries and matched women entrepreneurs with investors at investment roadshows.

Catalytic Capital

ESCAP partnered with grass-roots feminist, women, and entrepreneurship organizations to **unlock financing for small-scale women entrepreneurs** in the context of the climate crisis & the care economy, and to address over-indebtedness.



Grassroots partnerships.



Supporting to establish sustainable and successful child day care ventures and contribute to development of early childhood education



Increasing access to finance, reducing risk and growing resilience of 12 Fijian women entrepreneurs in tourism business



Empowering Nofotane women who are current or aspiring entrepreneurs from remote or rural areas of Samoa



Building MSMEs climate resilience and improving women entrepreneurs access to finance



Supporting over-indebted women entrepreneurs and their families and improve the economic empowerment of women through savings and entrepreneurship



Empowering local commune authorities and vulnerable women led households to negotiate better loan and adopt effective debt management practices



Supporting in the establishment of women's debt support group and provide grants to indebted women entrepreneurs to unblock their cash flow and allow them to invest in their businesses



Improving women entrepreneurs' access to finance for climate related projects and fostering partnerships with BFI, MSEs, industry expert and stakeholders relevant to climate finance resources



Publications.

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE, INCLUSION, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Is Asia and the Pacific close to
gender parity?

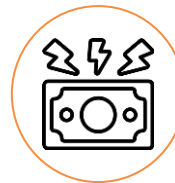


Launch Date: 13 March 2024, during
CSW68 side event in New York

Key Findings



Across the 35 Member States and Associate Members included in the study, we find that in **most women have lower levels of bank account ownership, access to credit and access to pensions.**



Women also experience **higher levels of stress related to their financial situation** and women-owned MSMEs **lack adequate access to financial services.**



Upcoming Publications.

IMPACT
HUB

Launch Date: End of May

"Toward Inclusive Access: Navigating Gender and Disability Barriers in Entrepreneurship Support and Financing"

Key finding indicate that WEDs from Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Nepal primarily opt for entrepreneurship and self-employment out of necessity after facing exclusion from employment due to their disabilities.

FEMTECH
ASSOCIATION
ASIA

Launch Date: End of June

"Unveiling the FemTech Landscape in South-East Asia: Empowering Innovation and Catalyzing Capital for Women"

This study provides a comprehensive overview of the state of the FemTech (women's health technology) industry in South-East Asia with a focus on Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam.



Launch Date: End of May

"Equality Lens Toolkit for Venture Capital Investors: Mitigate unconscious gender bias and discover opportunities through your investment process"

The Equity Lens Toolkit (ELT) is a practical resource including tools and framework to guide and equip Venture Capital firms (or 'VCs') and early-stage investors



Launch Date: End of June

"Access to Climate Finance for Women Entrepreneurs in the Coffee and Pashmina Value Chains in Nepal"

The study examines the impact of climate change on women entrepreneurs within coffee and pashmina value chains in Nepal. It identifies financial and policy-based solutions to reduce the negative implications on women's livelihoods.



Building momentum.



Feminist Finance Forum 2023 - Key Highlights

The Forum convened **over 200 participants** including policymakers, women entrepreneurs, investors, financial service providers, academics, civil society and women's grassroots organisations, and development partners to strategize on collaborative efforts to alleviate the constraints faced by women entrepreneurs across the region.

A **partnership agreement between ESCAP and 2X Global was signed** ahead of the launch of two introductory and acceleration training programmes for female led or gender balanced fund managers from across Asia and the Pacific.



Feminist Finance Forum 2024 – Key Highlights

The Forum convened **more than 350 key players** in the regional financial ecosystem facilitated a space for stakeholders to come together to strategize on how to create the required long-term solutions for feminist finance to become a reality.

Investment promotion agencies (IPAs) from around the world came together to **sign a landmark gender equity pledge** promoted by ESCAP and FDI Center to harness the potential of gender-responsive foreign direct investment as a catalyst for women's empowerment.

Voices of Women Entrepreneurs







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Access to finance & financial inclusion for small-scale women led enterprises



Fiona Uagunu

Coordinator

Women Entrepreneurs Business Council



Wati Seeto

Financial Inclusion Manager

Reserve Bank of Fiji



Archi Ananya

Impact and Partnership Manager

iFarmer

Q&A

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**PRESENTATION ON
GENDER FINANCE GAP REPORT**

Darshni Nagaria

Development Economist & Research Lead
Trade, Investment and Innovation
ESCAP



Question

In what percentage of ESCAP Member States and Associate Members are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?

A. 14%

B. 38%

C. 57%

D. 79%

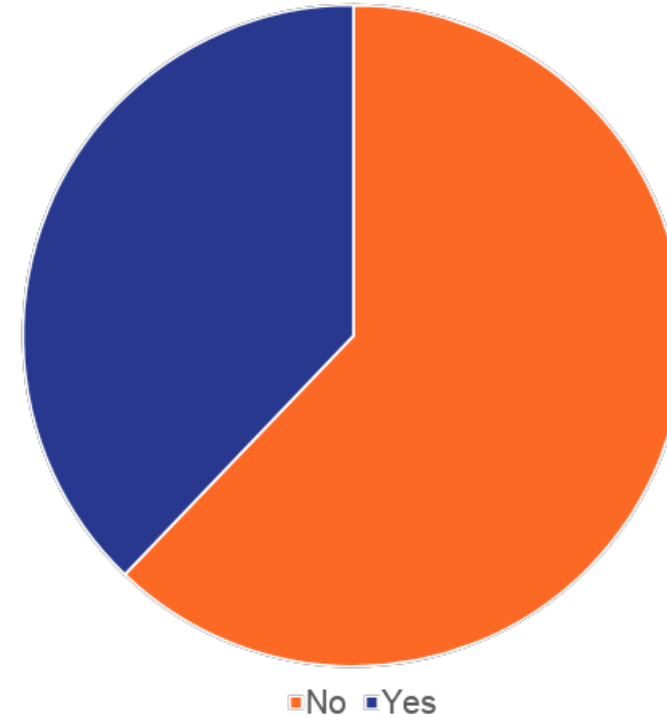
Answer 1

B. 38%

In 14 of the 37* member states and associate members are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits

**where data is available*

Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?





Question 2

In what percentage of ESCAP member states and associate members do women face discrimination regarding the ownership or use of non-land assets?

A. 17%

B. 32%

C. 53%

D. 85%

Answer 2

C. 53%

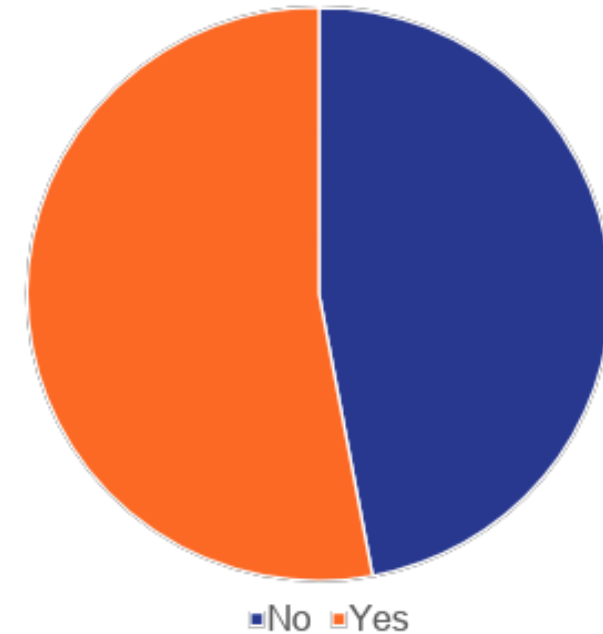
Only in 16 of the 34* member states and associate members do all women and men have the same rights to own and use non-land assets.

In over half, women face restrictions based on legal and informal laws** which create different rights or abilities regarding the ownership or use of non-land assets

**where data is available*

*** customary, traditional or religious laws/rules*

Do women face discrimination regarding the ownership or use of non-land assets?



Source – OECD SIGI, 2023

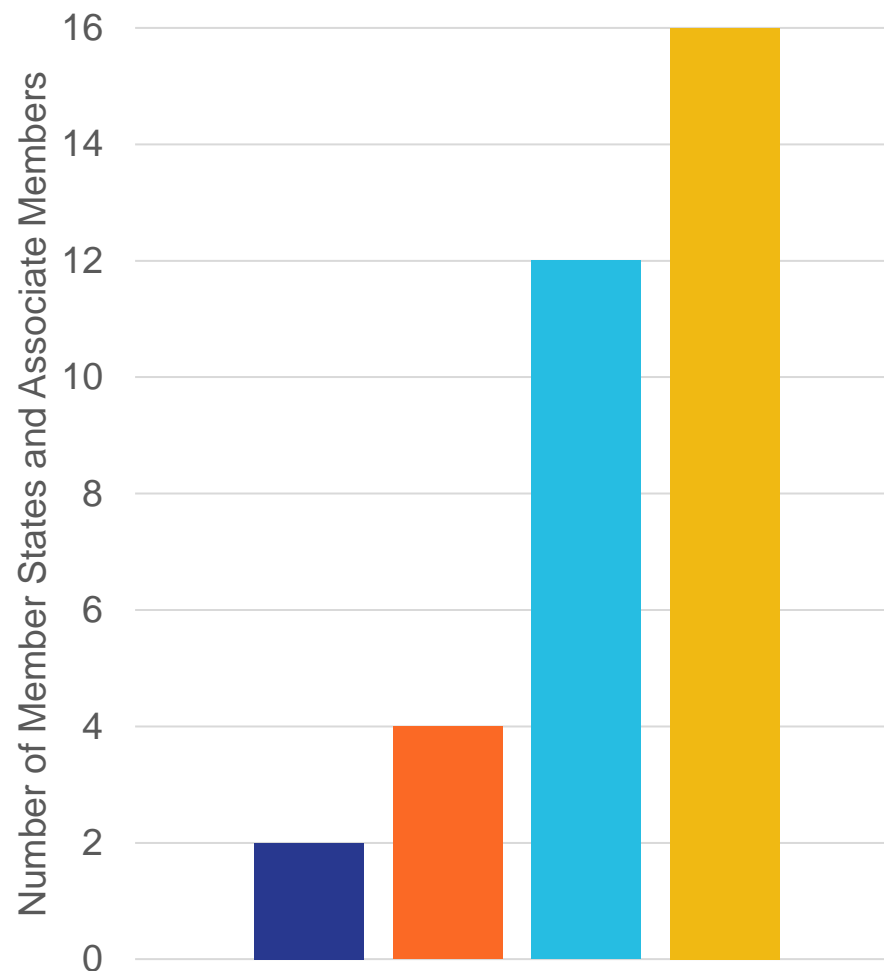
Answer 2

C. 53%

In over half, women face restrictions based on legal and informal laws* which create different rights or abilities regarding the ownership or use of non-land assets

**customary, traditional or religious laws/rules*

Discrimination regarding the ownership or use of non-land assets



■ All women and men have the same legal rights to own non-land assets. However, women do not have the same legal rights as men to use and/or make decisions over non-land assets.

■ Women have the same legal rights as men to own and use non-land assets. However, legal exceptions exist for some groups of women.

Source – OECD SIGI, 2023



Question 3

In what percentage of member states and associate members is there gender parity in ownership of a financial institution account?

A. 12%

B. 35%

C. 44%

D. 72%

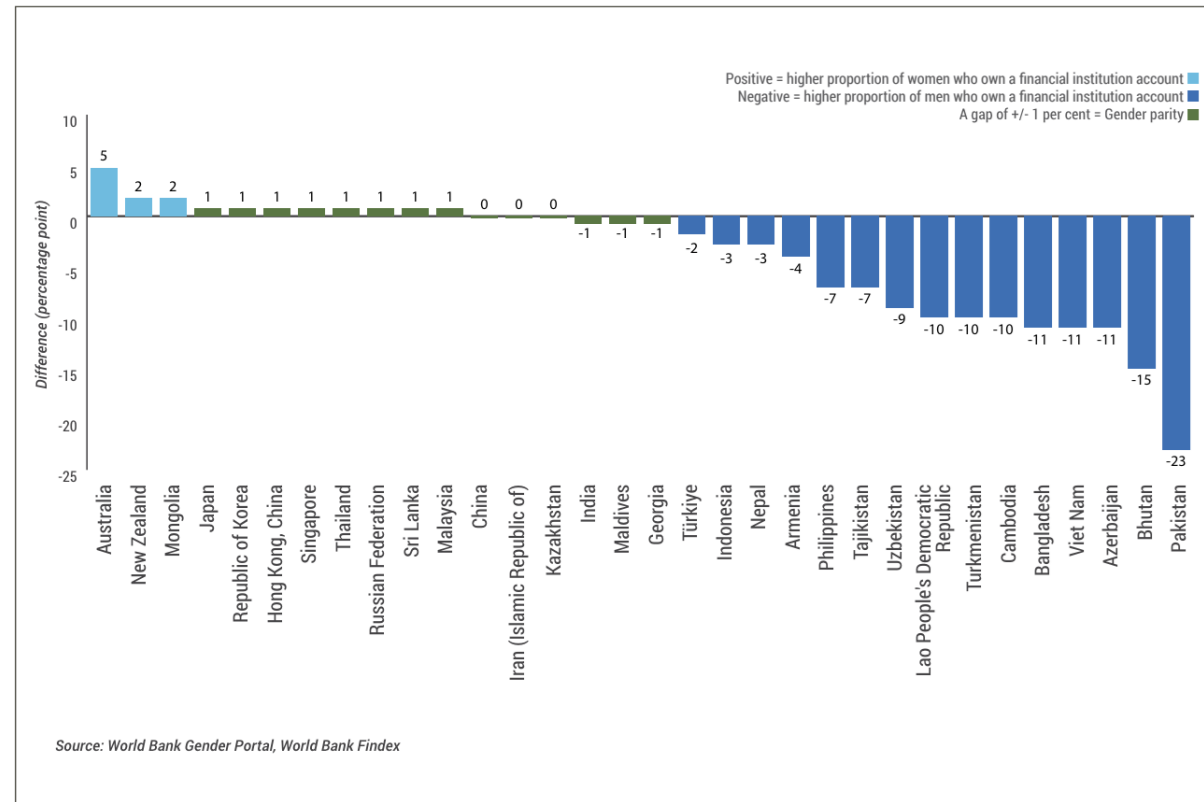
Answer 3

C. 44%

14 of the 32 Member States and Associate Members do not observe a gender gap in financial institution account ownership

More men than women have an account in 15 member states and only in 3 member states do more women have an account

Gender difference in financial institution account ownership



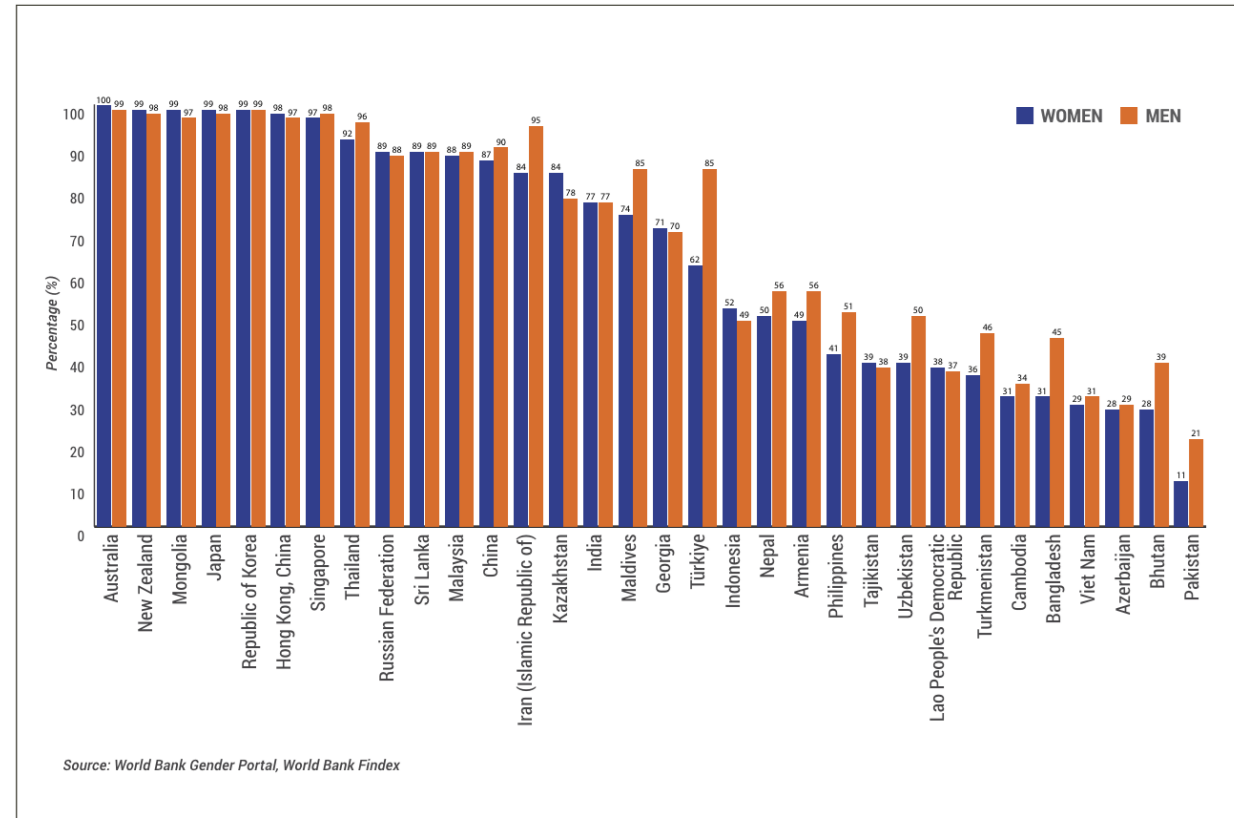
Source – World Bank 2022

Answer 3

C. 44%

Data measuring gender differences does not indicate what proportion of the population is financially included

Percentage of adult population with a financial institution account



Source – World Bank 2022

FINANCIAL RESILIENCE, INCLUSION, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP





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Elena Mayer-Besting

Programme Manager
Trade, Investment, and Innovation
ESCAP



Joy Anderson

Founder and President
Criterion

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Feminist Finance Forum Highlights



FEMINIST FINANCE FORUM



DRIVING ACTION FOR A FEMINIST FINANCIAL ECOSYSTEM IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

7–8 May 2024 ♦ Bangkok, Thailand





Closing Remarks

Jonathan Wong

Chief of Innovation Enterprise and Investment
ESCAP

