

**ATTITUDES TO EQUALITY:**

**Understanding social norms,  
perceptions and practices  
around gender in Indonesia,  
the Philippines and Vietnam**

# About Investing in Women

Investing in Women, an initiative of the Australian Government, catalyses inclusive economic growth through women's economic empowerment in South East Asia.

Investing in Women tackles one of the most critical social and economic issues of our time: gender inequality. It defines women's economic empowerment as both the ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions. Women's economic empowerment is not only a fundamental aspect of promoting gender equality; it is vital to enhancing business competitiveness, fuelling inclusive economic growth and building equitable societies.

Women's economic empowerment has considerable benefits on families and communities. In the private sector, greater gender equality enhances productivity and competitiveness, makes businesses more representative and boosts the morale and loyalty of employees.

Achieving women's economic empowerment requires concerted efforts from all sectors of society, including the government, private businesses, communities and families.

At the government and business level, more formal commitment is necessary to implement measures that promote women's economic empowerment. At the community and family level, gender stereotypes that restrict opportunities for women need to be challenged.

Investing in Women works with partners in South East Asia who are shifting attitudes towards women at work and in society, normalising men's roles at home and identifying changes to social norms, formal and informal rules and policies—particularly in workplaces and businesses—that are needed to achieve women's economic empowerment.



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# Executive summary

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Working towards women's economic empowerment in South East Asia is about creating professional, economic and social opportunities for women, as well as eliminating barriers in the workplace and at home that prevent women from accessing opportunities. This requires changes to both discriminatory institutional practices and limiting social norms.

To gain a deeper understanding of women's and men's perceptions of gender equality, Investing in Women conducted a survey on women's and men's roles at work and at home to explore the social norms that may hinder economic growth, as well as the attitudes and practices that underpin these social norms. The study included survey results from 6,000 respondents, composed of both women and men, in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

## KEY FINDINGS

While gender norms across South East Asia continue to present barriers to women's economic empowerment both in the workplace and at home, the survey results suggest that institutional and societal change have begun among urban millennials.



### **INSIGHT 1: Women's professional ambitions are similar to men's.**

The survey results demonstrate that the majority of urban millennial women in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam are highly motivated in their careers, wanting to be promoted and attain senior management positions.



### **INSIGHT 2: Women work mainly to become economically independent or to contribute to their family's income, but many are also motivated to work for professional development or personal fulfilment.**

Women's motivations to work were primarily about earning income for themselves and their families. The desire to provide, either as a primary or secondary income earner, is a key motivation of women with families. However, for women who are not living with a partner, economic independence is most important.

In the Philippines, women (72%) are more likely than men (63%) to see their salary as a contribution to the family income. However, more men (36%) than women (23%) claim to be the main income earner.

Contributing to the family income is rated higher (36%) by married and partnered Indonesian women than economic independence (26%) as a key motivation to work. In Vietnam, married and partnered women rated economic independence higher (40%) than contributing to the family income (25%).

In general, a good salary is of primary importance to respondents looking for a new job. Young, single respondents value having a positive work environment the most, whereas respondents in Indonesia and the Philippines who have families tend to put more value than other groups on the ability to work from home.



**INSIGHT 3:** While there is a broad recognition of gender equality in workplaces, women continue to encounter discriminatory attitudes and practices.

Survey results show that the majority of women and men in each country believe they are treated equally and have the same opportunities in the workplace, irrespective of gender.

The survey results present a complex picture of workplace attitudes and practices, identifying several challenges faced by women—relating to capabilities, sexual harassment and retirement age—which could hold women back at work. These attitudes and practices vary between countries. Women are perceived to be more likely to experience harassment from bosses and peers than men. Over 40% of women and men respondents think women should retire before men. This was especially the case in Vietnam with over 85% of women and men holding this opinion.

The fact that most women and men surveyed perceive women to be treated equally in the workforce and to have equal opportunity for promotion is a positive sign that there exists a degree of gender-equal attitudes among millennial urban women and men in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

However, recurring perceptions of the improbability of women and men performing the same kinds of jobs, as well as women's perceptions of the higher probability of workplace harassment, are indicative of social norms that may restrain women's equal participation in the workplace. Views that women should retire earlier than men could impact women's progression in the workforce and when this is enforced in law as has been the case in Vietnam, it has the effect of limiting women's career paths and economic opportunities over their life course.



**INSIGHT 4:** While women and men have different perceptions of who has responsibility for specific domestic duties, both women and men are sharing domestic and care work in the home.

There is a significant disconnect between how much women and men thought the other was contributing to domestic duties. Women in all three countries believe they bear most of the household responsibility, including housework, childcare and elder care, regardless of whether they are employed full-time, part-time or not working. Most men, on the other hand, believe that household responsibilities are shared equally.

On average, men think their contribution to unpaid domestic work is more than double of what women perceive men's contribution to be. The largest perception gap is in Vietnam, where men's perceptions of their contribution to domestic work are up to three times greater than women's perceptions of the men's contribution.

Despite the perception gap, men—to varying degrees—share unpaid care work and are keen to claim responsibility for domestic duties. In terms of the kind of domestic duties men perform, both women and men perceive that men contribute mostly to housework, less to childcare and to elder care the least.

Many women want their partners to take on more responsibility at home, particularly with caring for children and elders. In general, women are more dissatisfied with the amount of caring work their partners do than with the amount of housework.

Gendered beliefs prevail on whether domestic tasks are performed better by men or women. Across all three countries, an average two-thirds of respondents believe that men are the best at household maintenance and women at most other household tasks and caring responsibilities. One-third of respondents thought that women and men are equally capable of domestic and caring roles.

Although women and men's perceptions of domestic duties differ, the majority of women want men to help more with family care and that the majority of men consider they are already contributing significantly to the housework, indicating that both women and men are increasingly comfortable with attitudes that reflect gender equality at home.



**INSIGHT 5:** While there is strong support for parental leave for both mothers and fathers, there is a limited take-up of parental leave, particularly by fathers.

Women and men in all three countries are overwhelmingly supportive of parental leave for both fathers and mothers. However, this support for parental leave is not reflected in the level of take-up of parental leave, especially by men.

Across all three countries, 30 to 40% of fathers who have access to parental leave either do not take it or avail of it only partially. In Indonesia, where the two-day paternity leave provision was extended in 2017 to up to 30 days for civil servants, over one-third of respondents said they did not take any paternity leave.

While provision of parental leave exists under legislation, social norms tend to hold women and men back from taking up these opportunities, with some respondents under the impression that women and men are criticised when they choose to take parental leave. Respondents also fear losing their jobs or jeopardising their career as a result of taking parental leave, and this affects whether or not they decide to use leave provisions. Despite the available institutional framework, gendered social norms and workplace practices can prevent uptake of paternity leave among men and result in women taking on greater caring responsibilities.

While respondents cited criticism and possible negative impacts on their career as areas of concern, these were not the only reasons men cited for not taking paternity leave. Some choose not to go on leave because their partner or another family member looks after their child, while others work for organisations that do not offer paternity leave.

## UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL NORMS CAN BETTER INFORM STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

While it is evident that governments and businesses have been instigating institutional changes necessary for women to thrive in the workplace, gender inequality persists, partly due to limiting social norms around traditional gender roles that position domestic duties like housework and caring for children and elders as a woman's domain.

Achieving women's economic empowerment therefore requires changing the narratives for men from childhood to employment, normalising men's roles at home in the same manner that women's economic roles should be normalised throughout their life course. This includes eliminating the stigma of men and boys performing domestic tasks and taking parental leave from work to help care for their family. Only when they share responsibilities at home can both women and men have equal access to economic opportunities.



# Introduction

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Building a strong case for women's economic empowerment in South East Asia involves creating professional, economic and social opportunities for women, as well as eliminating barriers that keep women from accessing such opportunities. These barriers exist both in the workplace and at home in the form of discriminatory institutional practices and limiting social norms.

Eliminating these barriers requires both institutional and societal changes. Institutional changes are necessary to create the frameworks that provide equal opportunities for women's economic empowerment, while societal changes are needed to ensure both women and men are able to take advantage of available opportunities. These two elements complement each other in working towards gender equality, with institutional frameworks shaping social norms, and shifting social norms driving institutional changes.

In order to promote these institutional and societal changes and work towards women's economic empowerment, it is necessary to understand the social norms that can prevent change, or enable change, as well as the attitudes and practices that underpin these social norms.

In 2018, Investing in Women conducted an online survey of 1,000 urban women and 1,000 urban men aged 18 to 40 years old in each of the three countries: Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. Respondents answered questions about the roles of women and men, at work and at home.

Through a greater understanding of women's and men's views on gender equality, the insights can be used to better inform strategies that will deliver women's economic empowerment.

## THE SOCIAL NORMS, ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES SURVEY (SNAPS)

From May to June 2018, Investing in Women commissioned the Social Norms, Attitudes and Practices Survey (SNAPS) in the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam. One thousand women and the same number of men living in urban areas, between the ages of 18 and 40 years, were surveyed in each country.



### OBJECTIVE

The survey sought to explore and understand the social attitudes and practices affecting women's and men's economic participation at home and in the workplace. The survey asked respondents to answer questions on the social norms, attitudes, perceptions and practices in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam to reveal how gender inequality manifested in the workplace and at home.

This report also provides an overview of existing laws, institutions and social or community initiatives that facilitate the improvement of gender policies in the workplace and gender perceptions in society.



### METHODOLOGY

The online survey targeted adults between 18 and 40 years old, residing in urban areas in the three countries. It was conducted from May 17 to June 4, 2018 and involved 2,000 respondents in each country (1,000 women and 1,000 men), with a total of 6,000 respondents (3,000 women and 3,000 men). The survey took approximately 10 minutes for each respondent to complete and included questions on respondent demographics.



### TOPICS COVERED

Respondents reacted to statements and questions on household structure; care work (division of labour in the home); and employment (experiences in the workforce, reasons for working, factors in choosing a paid job, career goals and ambitions, promotion, parental leave, retirement and experiences of harassment in the workplace).





## LIMITATIONS

- The questions in the survey focus on personal attitudes, observations and self-reported behaviour. The questions did not attempt to systematically explore the social rules that may influence behaviour.
- The survey did not ask respondents to identify the gender of their partners, so survey questions related to partners assume that where the respondent has identified as female that their partner is male and vice versa.
- The sample for the survey was drawn from panels maintained by the social research company undertaking the study. This is likely to have biased the sample towards a relatively educated, middle income group.
- While the survey was taken anonymously, it is expected that some respondents may have had a social desirability bias from which they overstated some of their self-reported behaviour, for example on the amount of housework and childcare they performed.
- This report is focused purely on quantitative survey data and does not explain the reasons behind differences observed across countries or genders. For example, while we can see that both women and men in the Philippines report higher levels of workplace harassment compared to Indonesia and Vietnam, further qualitative research would be needed to understand why there was a difference in these responses.



# Key Findings



## INSIGHT 1: Women’s professional ambitions are similar to men’s.

Women and men in each of the three countries have similar career ambitions. They are keen on being promoted and aspire for senior management positions.

- The majority of both women and men respondents in all three countries hope to be promoted within the next 24 months, with the highest levels seen in Vietnam, followed by Indonesia and then the Philippines.

### Are you hoping to get promoted in the next 24 months?

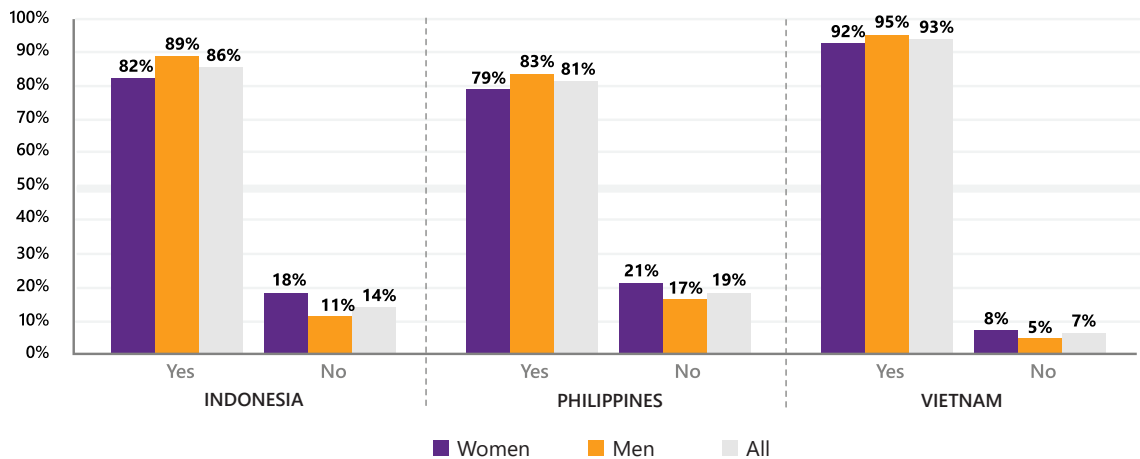


Figure 1. 87% of the total respondents, both women and men, aspire to be promoted within 24 months.

- The majority of women and men want to move into a senior management position. The data again shows the highest level of ambition is in Vietnam, where women and men are equally keen for these promotions. In Indonesia and the Philippines, men are slightly more ambitious than women.

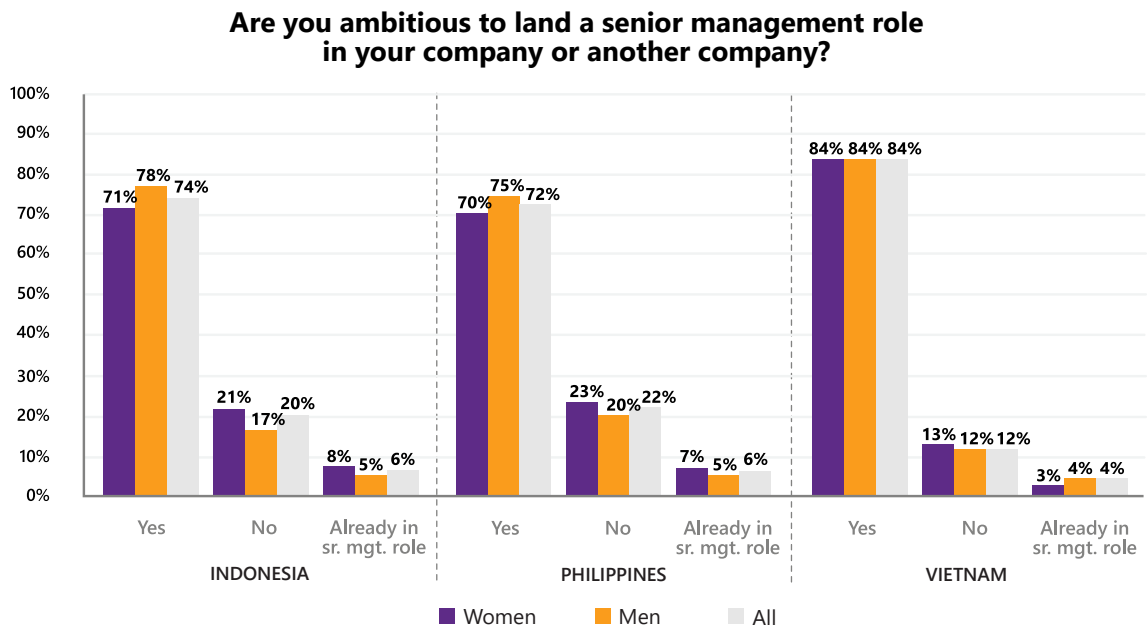


Figure 2. On average, only 6% of women respondents are already in senior management positions, while 75% have ambitions of landing a senior management role.



**INSIGHT 2:** Women work mainly to be economically independent or to contribute to their family’s income, but many are also motivated to work for professional development or personal fulfilment.

Women are motivated to work primarily because they want to earn personal income as well as income for their families. Their motivations vary by country, and many are highly motivated to work to achieve economic independence.

For women with families, the desire to provide for their families, either as a secondary income earner or as the main income earner, is the key motivation to work. Women without partners, on the other hand, see economic independence as their key motivation for working.

- The majority (74%) of women in Vietnam are motivated to work because they want to be economically independent, same as the women in Indonesia (67%). Most women in the Philippines (72%) are motivated to work because they want to contribute to the family income.
- In the Philippines, women (72%) are more likely than men (63%) to see their salary contributing to the family income; while 36% of men and 23% of women claim to be the main income earners.

### What are the main reasons for you to work?

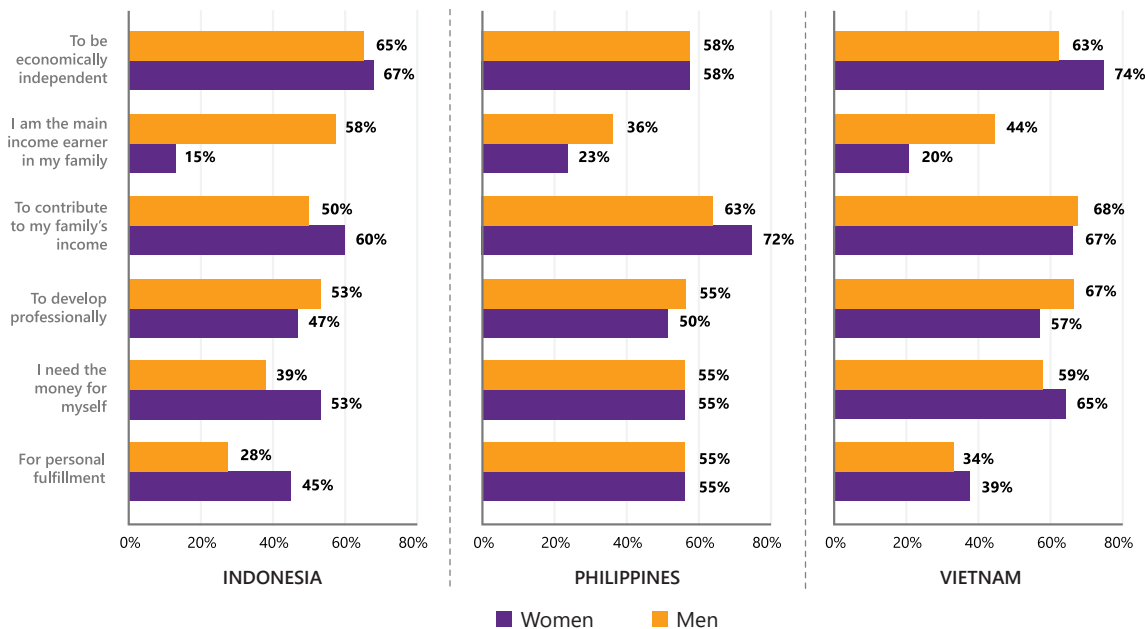


Figure 3. On average, two-thirds of women respondents in each country cite economic independence and contributing to the family's income as main reasons to work.

- In Vietnam, the primary motivation of economic independence remains high for women, regardless of being married or partnered, 25% of this cohort's most important reason to work is to contribute to family income as compared to non-married or partnered women at 11% (refer to "Annex A" on page 30).
- In the Philippines, contributing to the family income is cited as the primary reason of women for working, regardless if they are married, partnered or otherwise, but this was significant particularly for married and partnered respondents, increasing from 28% (refer to "Annex A" on page 30) to 53%.

### What is the most important reason for you to work?

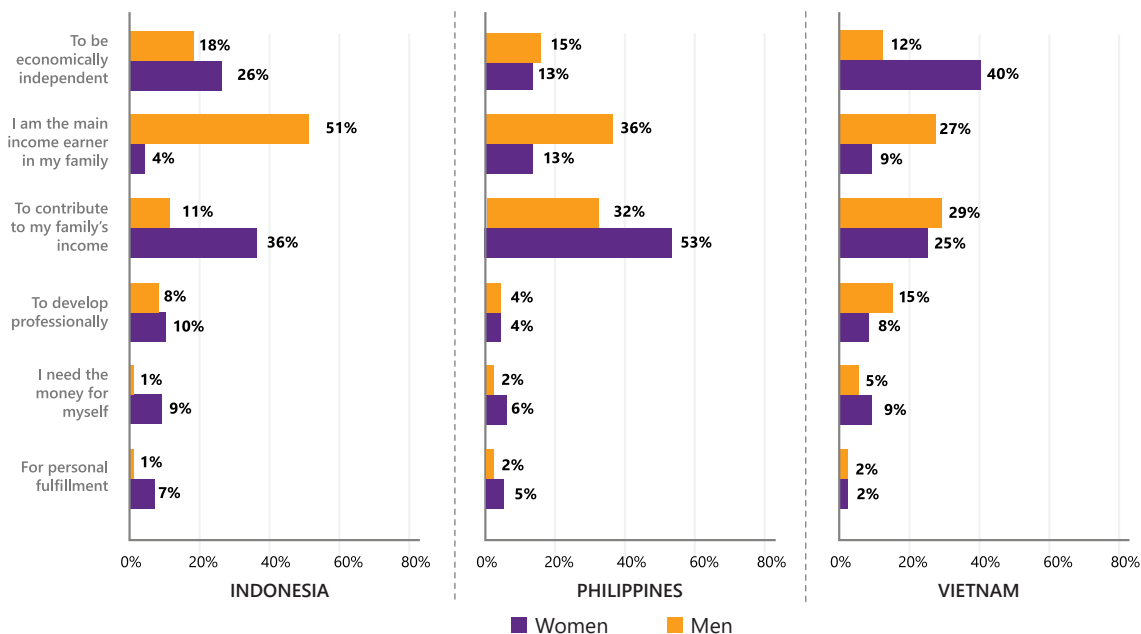


Figure 4. Overall, economic independence and contributing to family income are the most important reasons for married and partnered women to work.

Generally, a good salary is of primary importance to all population segments when seeking new employment. Young, single respondents in Indonesia tend to value a positive work environment more than others (refer to “Annex B” on page 31), while respondents with families in Indonesia and the Philippines value the option to work from home more than the other respondents (refer to “Annex C” on page 32).

**What are the main factors you consider when choosing a new paid job?**

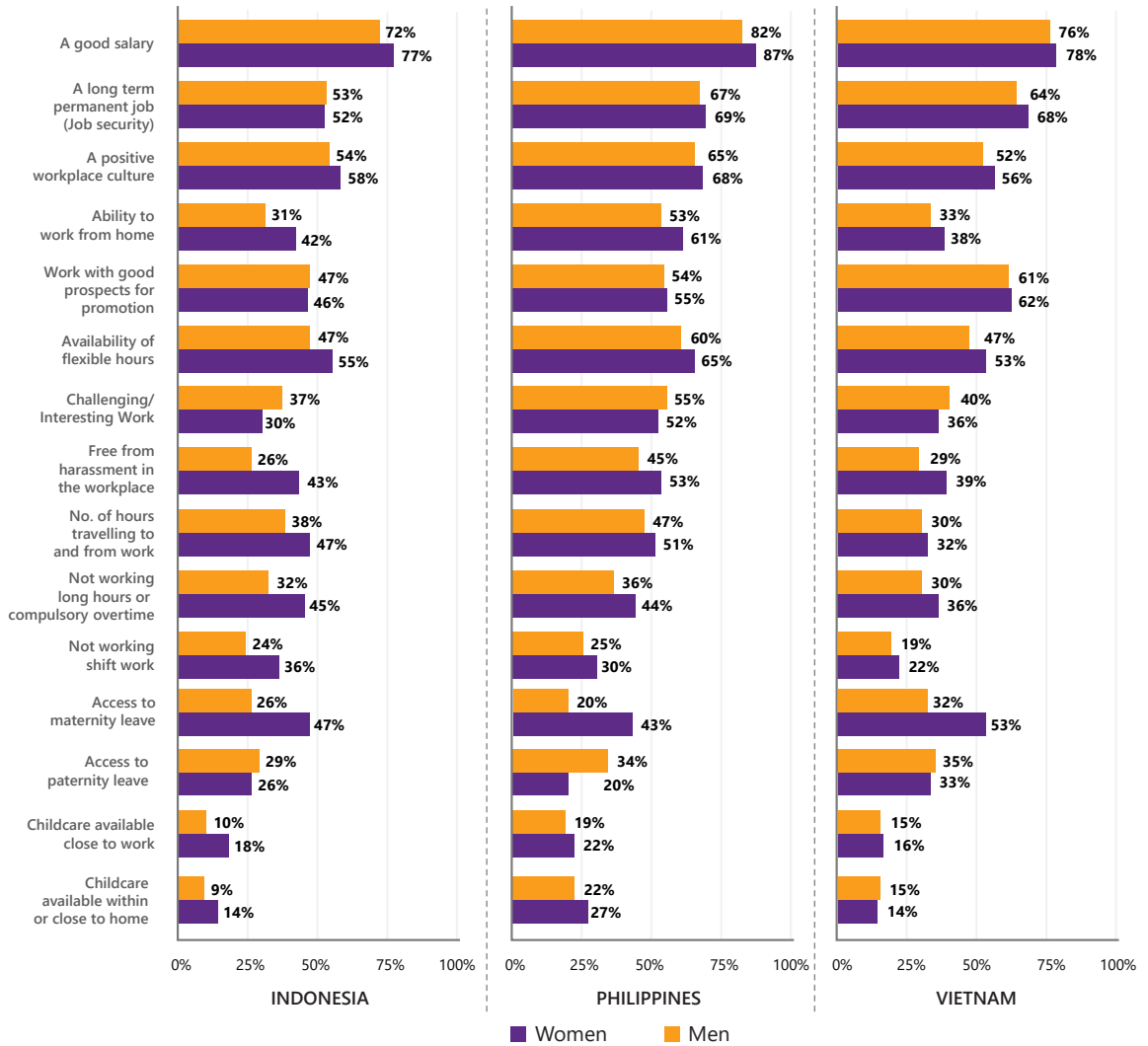


Figure 5. Overall, a good salary is important when looking for a new job, according to 79% of survey respondents.

The survey results demonstrate that urban millennial women in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam are highly motivated, and aim to get promoted and reach senior management positions. Women’s motivations to work are different to men’s, with women primarily seeking income for economic independence and to contribute to their families.

However, evidence from international studies show that women in Asia and from other parts of the world do not have equal representation at senior levels in the workforce<sup>5, 6, 7</sup>, indicating a disconnect between women’s ambitions and motivations on the one hand; and the kinds of opportunities available to women and women’s ability to take advantage of these opportunities, on the other. The reasons for this disconnect can be seen both in the workplace and at home, as institutional and societal factors continue to hold women back from achieving economic empowerment.



**INSIGHT 3: While there is a broad recognition of gender equality in workplaces, women continue to encounter discriminatory attitudes and practices.**

The survey findings show that, in each country, the majority of both women and men respondents believe there is equal treatment and opportunity in the workplace.

- Women and men in Vietnam have similar perceptions of the equal treatment and equal promotional opportunities for women in the workforce. Over 80% of all respondents perceive that women and men are treated as equals in the workforce, with only slightly more women than men perceiving there to be inequality.
- In the Philippines, fewer women than men (64% vs 71%) perceive that women are treated equally in the workplace.

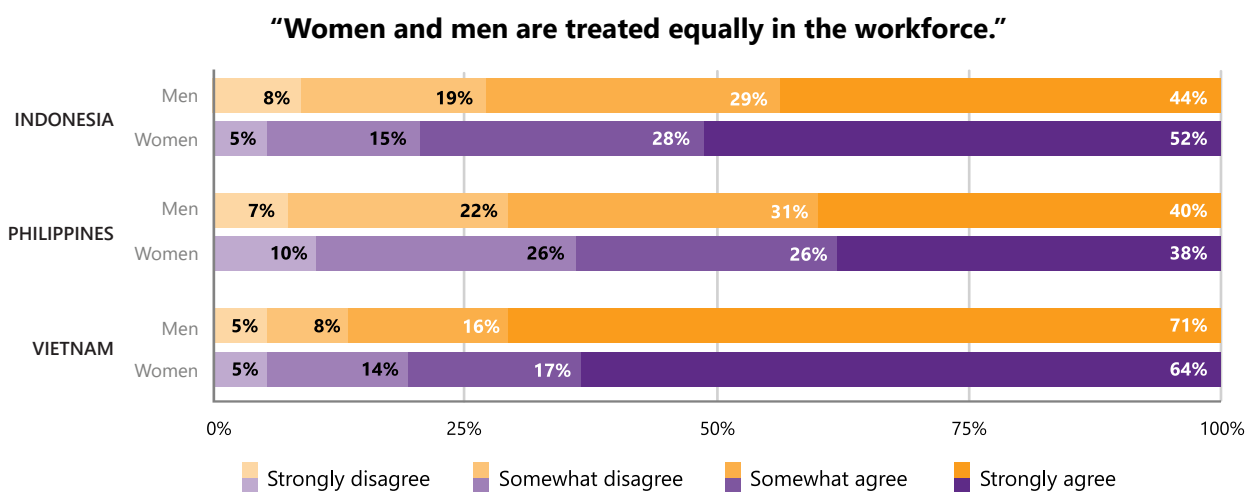


Figure 6. Most women and men in all three countries feel a sense of equality of treatment and opportunity in the workplace.

- Nine in ten (94%) women respondents from Indonesia agree that women have the same chance for promotion as men, which is on average more than 10% higher than the perceptions of women in Vietnam and the Philippines.

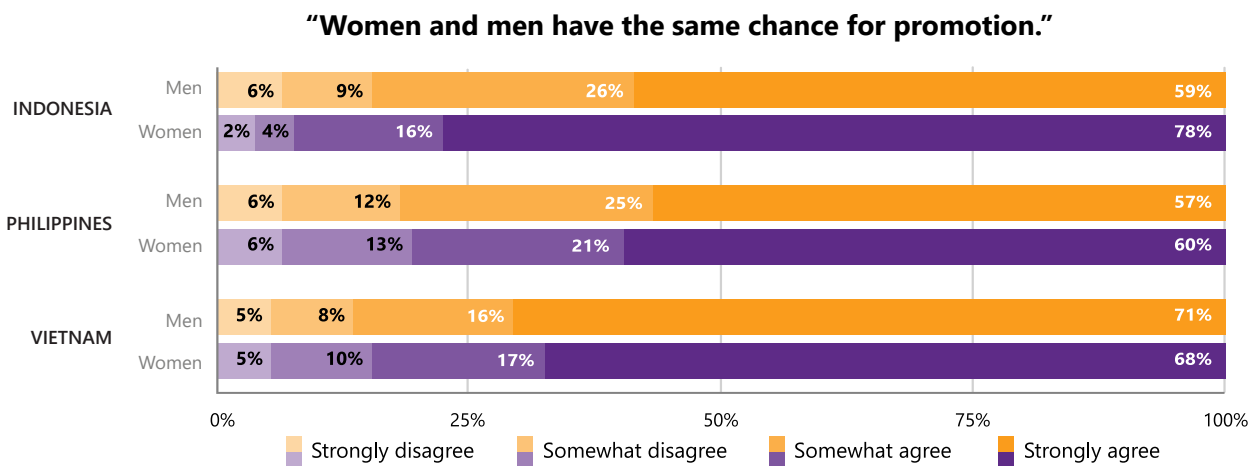


Figure 7. Most women and men in all three countries perceive that they have the same chance for promotion.

The fact that most women and men respondents in all three countries believe women are treated equally in the workforce and have equal opportunity for promotion, is a positive indicator of gender-equal attitudes among young urban women and men in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam and their workplaces.

However, the survey results also present a complex picture of specific workplace attitudes and practices. Challenges that potentially hold women back include perceptions of capabilities, sexual harassment and the retirement age. These attitudes and practices vary across countries.

- While the majority of respondents in all three countries agree that women and men can do exactly the same jobs, significantly more men than women disagree with this statement.
- In Indonesia, there is a clear difference in the perceptions of women’s capabilities—71% of women believe that women and men could perform exactly the same jobs, whereas only 58% of men believe this is true.
- Two-thirds of respondents from Vietnam believe that both women and men can do exactly the same jobs.
- Compared to women in Indonesia and Vietnam, Filipino women are the most likely to agree that women and men can do exactly the same jobs (83%). And yet, they are also the most likely to disagree that women and men are treated equally in the workforce (37%). Responses from Filipino men are similar, though less pronounced.

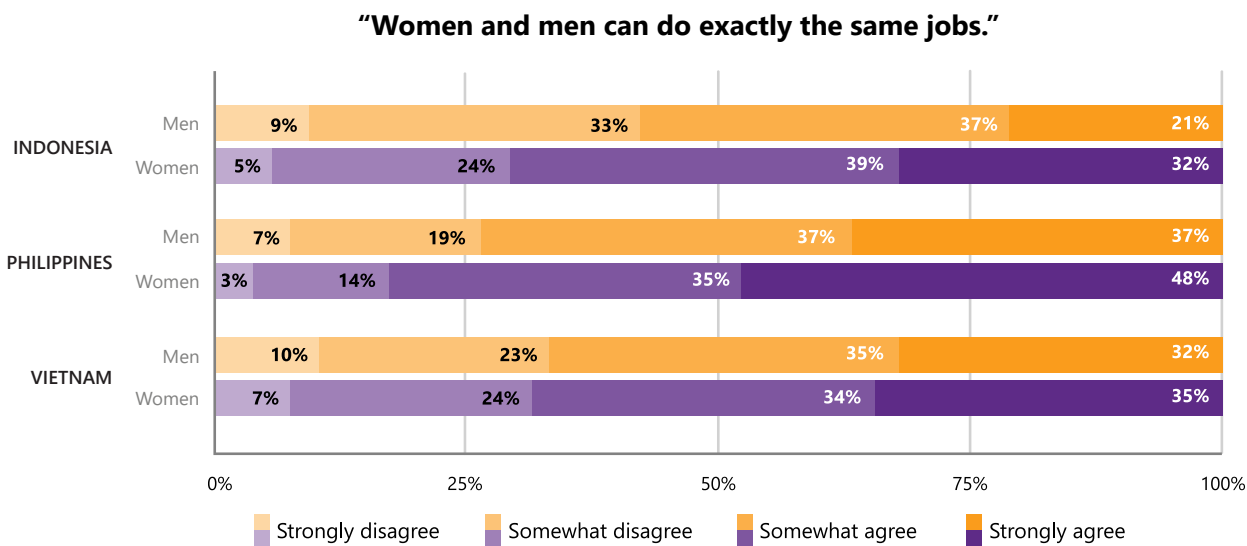


Figure 8. Most women and men in all three countries believe that they can perform exactly the same jobs.

- The Philippines stands out for having the most respondents concerned about harassment. Seven in ten women and men perceive that women face harassment from bosses and peers and nearly half of the respondents perceive that Filipino men are also likely to face harassment.
- In contrast, the perception levels in Vietnam and Indonesia are much lower. In the Philippines, 75% of women say that women face harassment at work, which is three times the level reported in Indonesia.

**“Men experience harassment at work from bosses or peers.”**

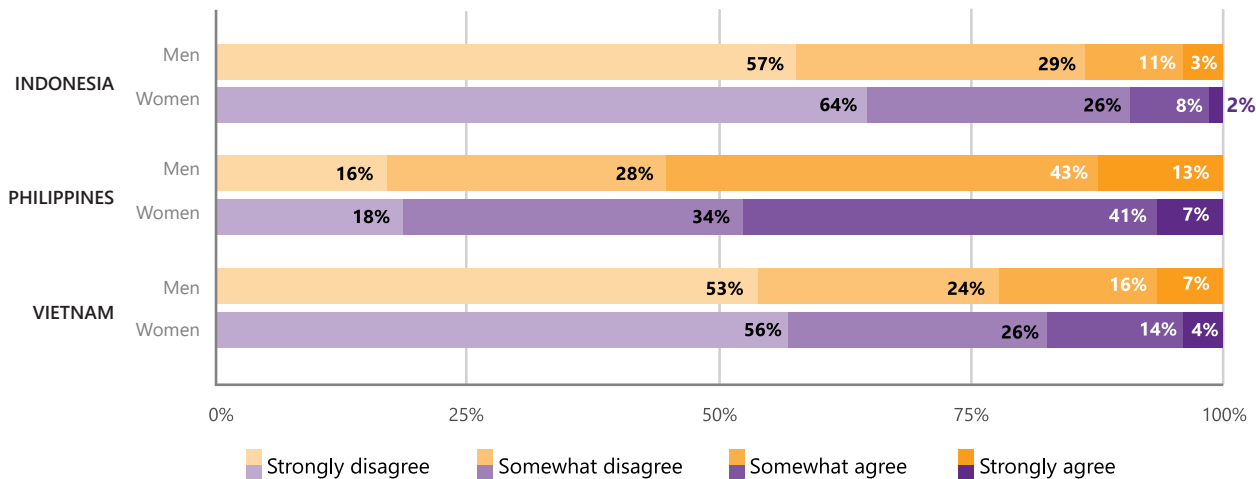


Figure 9. More Filipino men perceive themselves to be more likely to experience harassment in the workplace than men from Indonesia and Vietnam.

**“Women experience harassment at work from bosses or peers.”**

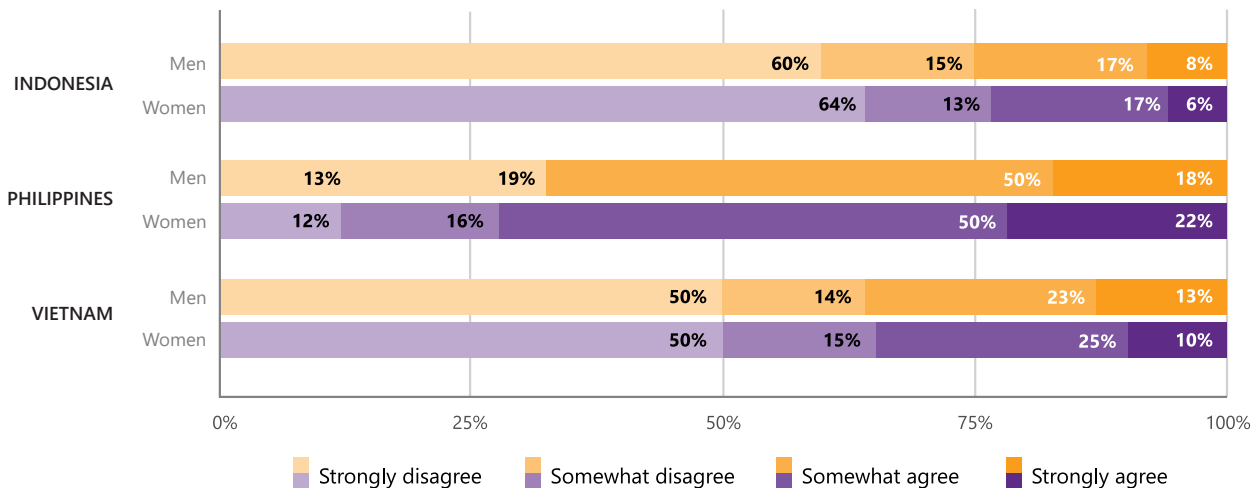


Figure 10. Women are perceived to be more likely to experience workplace harassment than men.



- Women and men have differing ideas regarding the ideal retirement age at which women and men should retire. Respondents from all the surveyed countries believe that women should retire earlier than men. In Indonesia and the Philippines, this view is stronger amongst men than amongst women.

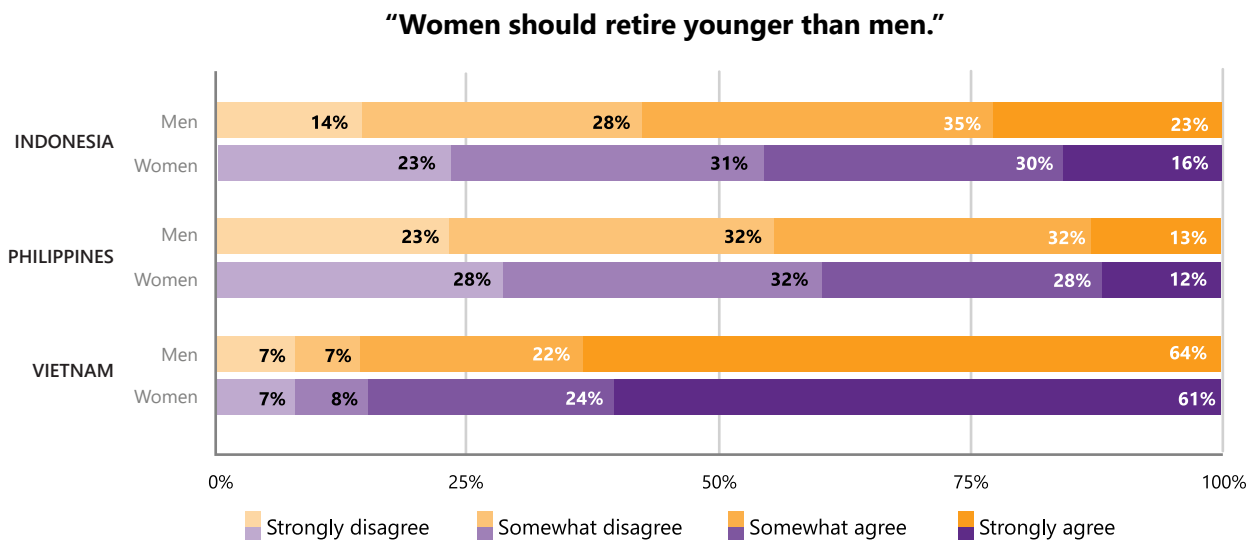
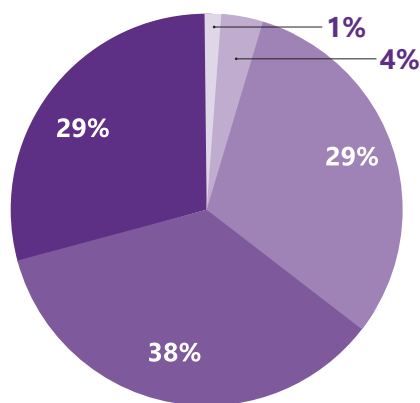


Figure 11. The majority of respondents in Vietnam believe that women should retire younger than men.

- In Vietnam, more than 80% of both women and men respondents believe women should retire earlier. This is in line with Vietnamese labour laws that have historically required women to retire at 55, and men at 60. However, almost one-third of Vietnamese women respondents welcome the opportunity to formally retire later, in line with proposed labour reforms, which propose to increase the retirement age to 62 years old for men and 60 years old for women.<sup>8</sup>

**What age do you believe women should retire at?**

**Vietnamese women’s perceptions**



**Vietnamese men’s perceptions**

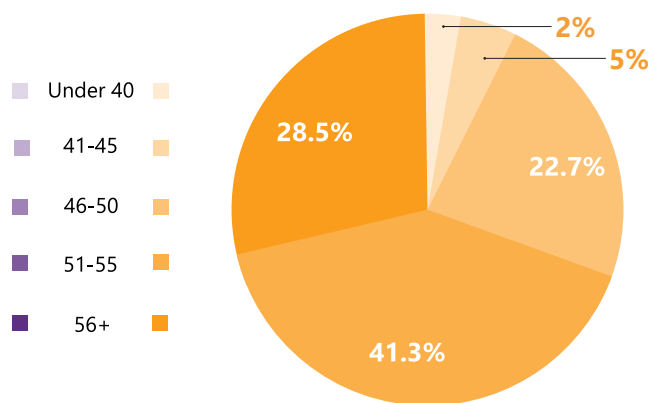


Figure 12. Most Vietnamese women and men believe women should retire between 51 to 55 years old.

Ongoing perceptions of the ability of women and men to perform the same kinds of jobs, as well as women’s perceptions of higher levels of workplace harassment, are indicative of gender-discriminatory social norms that may continue to hold women back from equal participation in the workplace. Ideas that women should retire earlier than men could impact women’s progression in the workforce and when this is enforced in law, such as in Vietnam, it can limit women’s career paths and economic opportunities over their life course.



**INSIGHT 4: While women and men have different perceptions of who has responsibility for specific domestic duties, both women and men are sharing domestic and care work in the home.**

There is a significant disconnect between how much women and men think the other is contributing to domestic duties. Women in all three countries believe they bear most of the household responsibility, including housework, childcare and elder care—regardless of whether they are employed full-time, part-time or not working. Most men, on the other hand, believe household responsibilities are shared equally between them and their spouse, other family members or paid staff.

- While one-third of respondents believe housework and unpaid care is done equally by women and men (refer to “Annex D” on page 33), the study reveals that women and men respondents have different perceptions of the amount of housework and unpaid care men do.
- On average, men think their contribution to unpaid domestic work is more than double what women perceive men’s contribution to be. The largest perception gap is in Vietnam, where men’s perceptions of their contribution to domestic work are significantly greater than women’s perception of the men’s contribution.
- This perception gap is also present in reverse, with 61% of women in Vietnam saying they take responsibility for most of the housework. Only 9% of men believe their spouse takes most of the responsibility. This is reflected to a lesser degree in both Indonesia and the Philippines.

**Which statement is true with regard to housework responsibilities (such as cleaning, washing and cooking) within your household?**

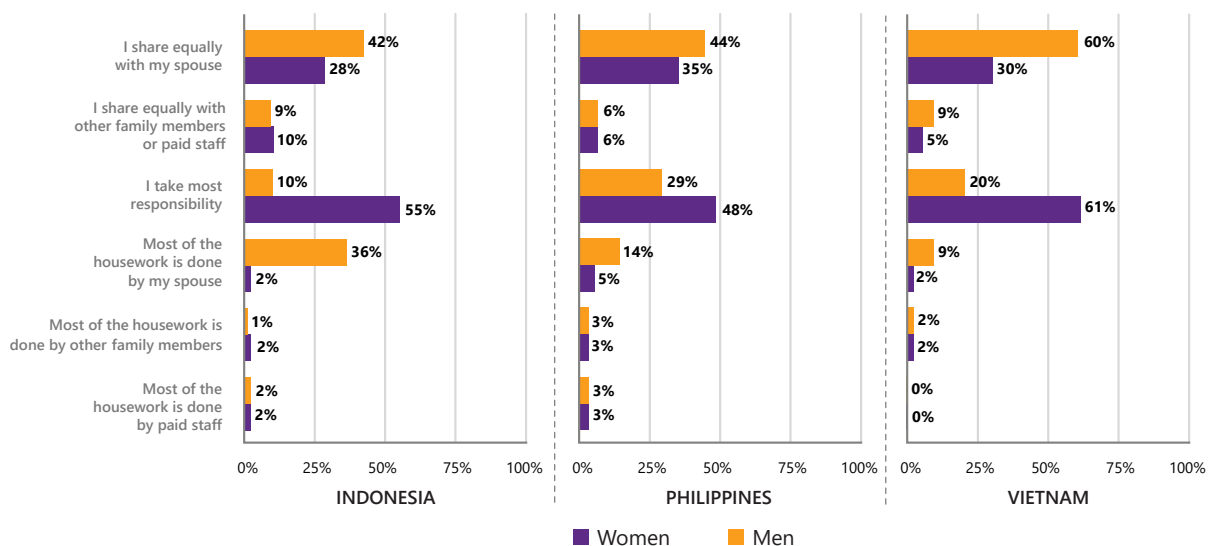


Figure 13. Majority of women respondents claim to take most of the responsibility for housework.

### Which statement is true with regard to childcare responsibilities within your household?

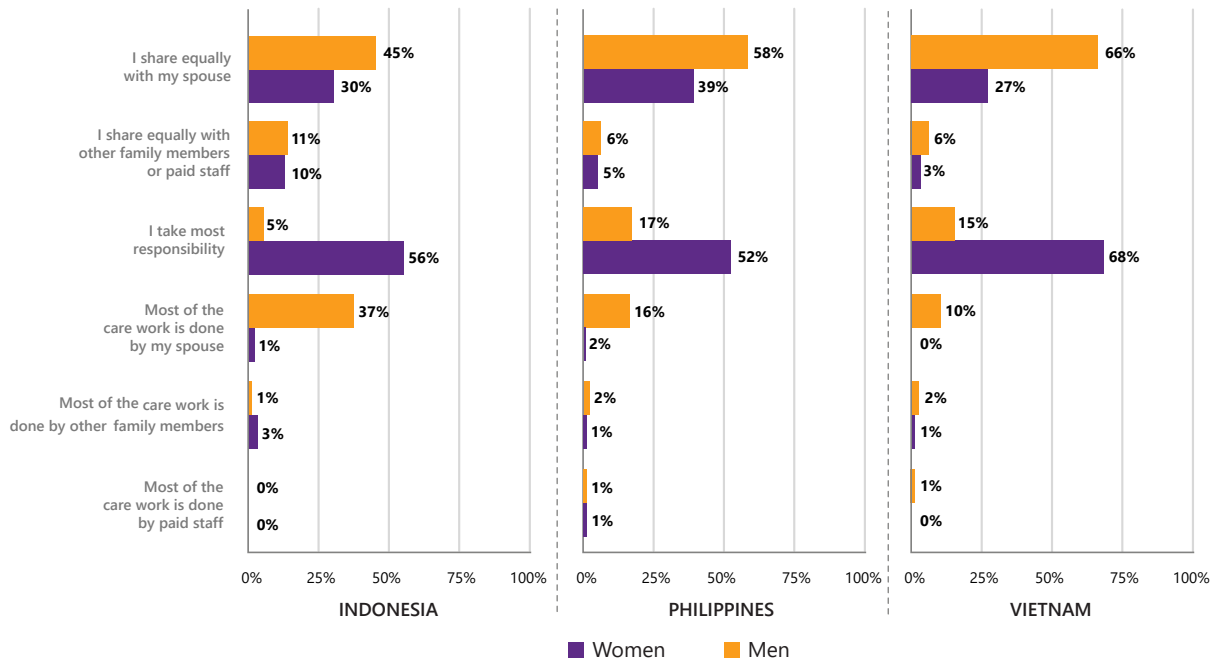


Figure 14. Majority of women respondents claim they take most of the childcare responsibility.

### Which statement is true with regard to caring for adults within your household?

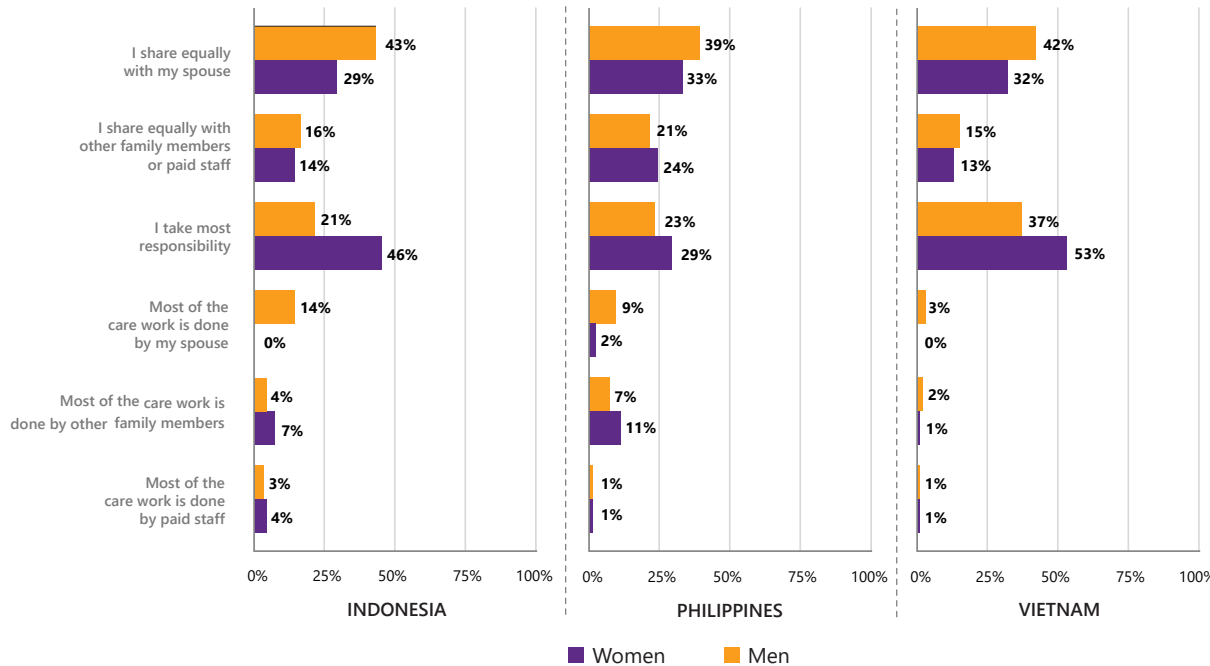


Figure 15. Overall, more women respondents take most of the responsibility of caring for the elderly at home.

- While over a third of women and men respondents in Indonesia believe certain tasks, such as cooking, cleaning, shopping and washing are best done by women, one quarter to a half of the survey respondents also think these jobs can be done equally as efficiently by women and men.
- In the Philippines, women are more likely to describe grocery shopping and household maintenance as tasks that both genders do equally well. Overall, respondents still believe that women are best at performing home and care tasks.
- In Vietnam, women are more likely to say that cooking and paying household bills can be done equally well by both women and men, while a higher number of respondents perceive women to be better than men at grocery shopping and looking after young children.
- Both women and men believe that men contribute mostly to housework, less to childcare and to elder care the least.

**Do you believe the following tasks are done equally well by women and men?**

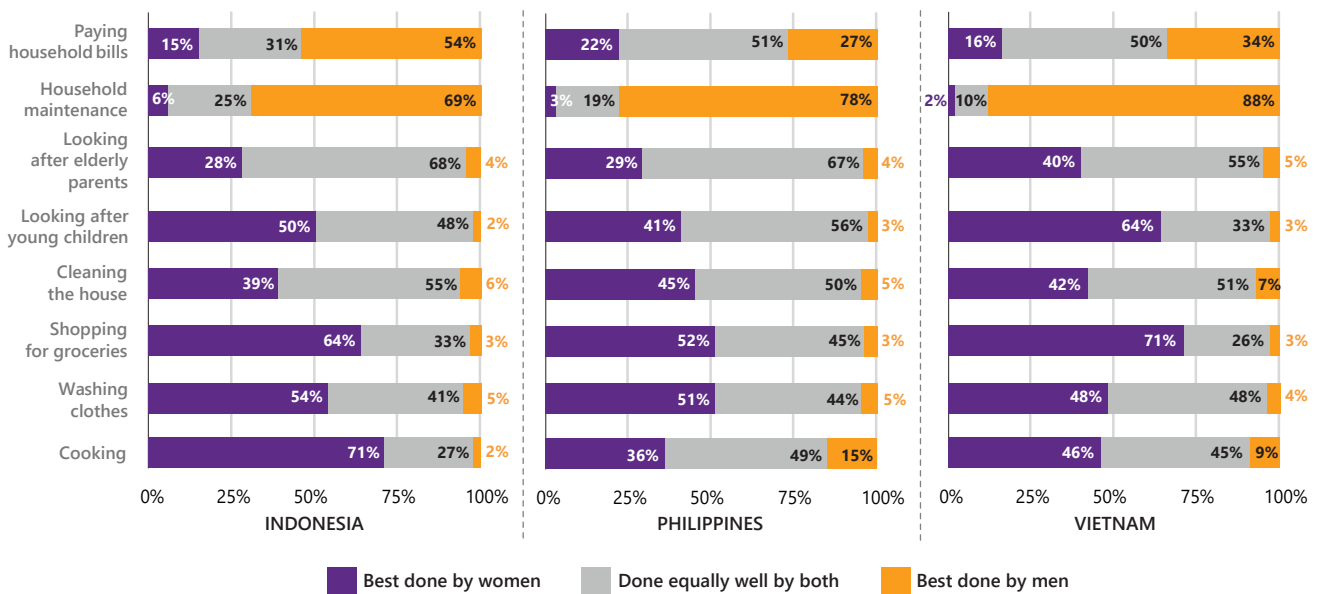


Figure 16. Majority of both married/partnered women and men still believe household maintenance and repairs are better performed by men, and that women are better at grocery shopping. The data is not disaggregated by gender of respondent because there was very little difference between women and men.

- In terms of actual and ideal division of household responsibilities, half of the women in Indonesia who take most responsibility for household tasks are content with this arrangement, while 35% of women in the Philippines, and 60% in Vietnam, want their spouse or partner to take more responsibility.
- One third of the men in Indonesia and the Philippines that report their partner as primarily responsible for household duties claim that they want their partner to do less housework.
- A small but significant number of men (19% in Vietnam) would like their partner to do more housework.

### Would you like your spouse/partner to handle more or less household responsibilities?

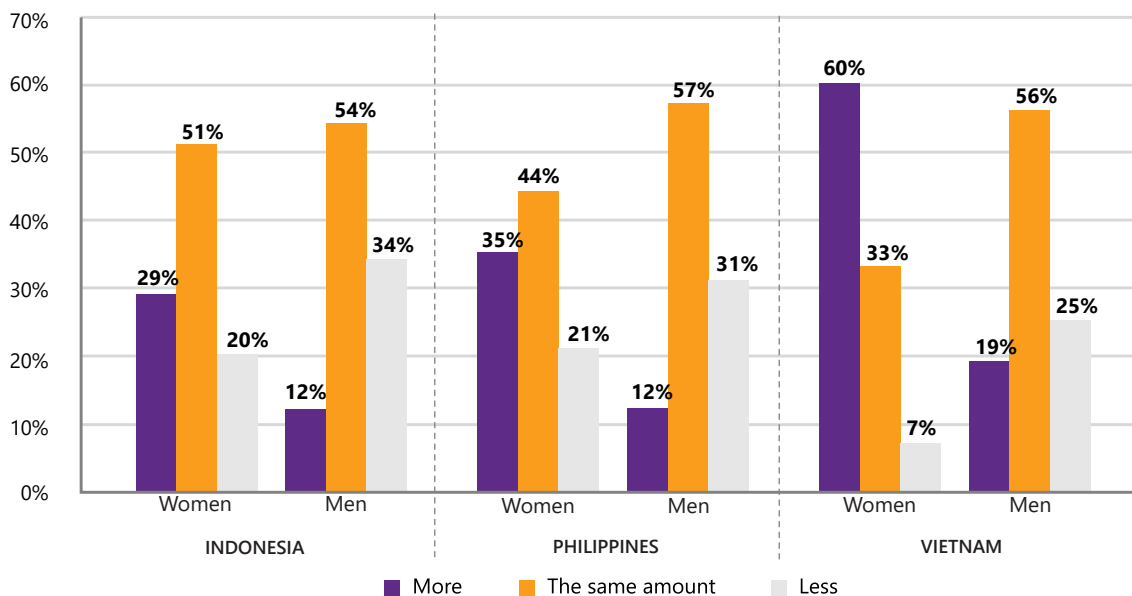


Figure 17. Ideal division of household labour between self and partner in homes where women are reported to be primarily responsible for housework.

- Looking specifically at women in full-time paid employment, Vietnamese women who do most of the housework and who are in full-time employment are the most dissatisfied, with nearly two-thirds of them (63%) wanting their partners to do more housework, compared to 41% of Indonesian women and 48% of women in the Philippines.
- However, 59% of Indonesian women and 52% of Filipino women in full-time paid employment and who are doing most of the housework, do not necessarily wish for their partners to do more work in the household.

### Would you like your spouse/partner to handle more or less household responsibilities?

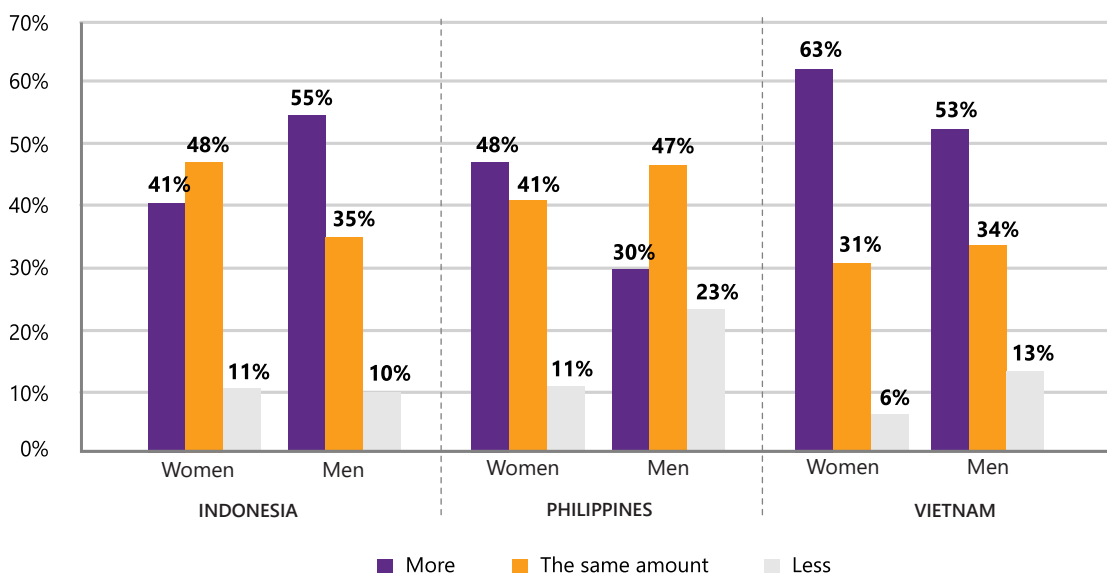


Figure 18. Ideal division of household labour between self and partner in homes where women are reported to be in full-time employment and primarily responsible for housework.

Many women want their spouses to take on more responsibility at home, particularly in caring for children and elders.

- More than half of the women in Indonesia (56%) and the Philippines (53%) who are primary caregivers for their children are content with this arrangement, whereas the majority of women in Vietnam (69%) want their spouse to do more childcare.
- In general, women are more dissatisfied with the amount of care work their spouses do than with the amount of housework.

**Would you like your spouse/partner to handle more or less childcare responsibilities?**

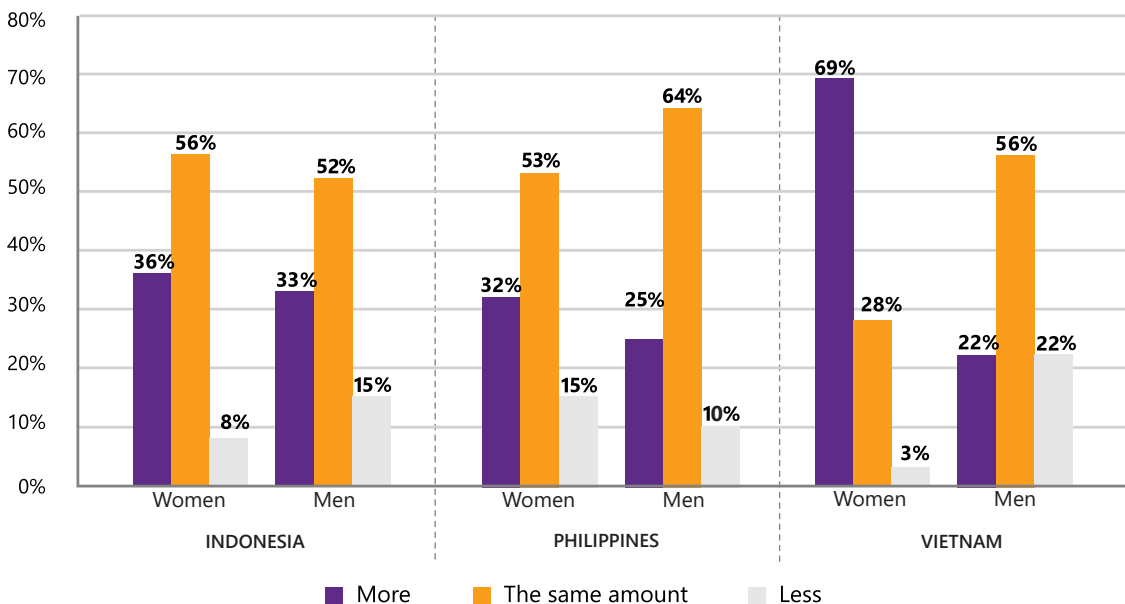


Figure 18. Vietnam is the only country where majority of women want their partners to share more childcare responsibilities in homes where women are reported to be primarily responsible for childcare.

Although women and men’s perceptions of domestic duties differ, at least one third of women in Indonesia and the Philippines and nearly 70% of women in Vietnam want men to help out more with family care while the majority of men perceive themselves to be doing some or all of the housework. Such observations indicate that both women and men are increasingly comfortable upholding and expressing attitudes that reflect gender equality in the home.



**INSIGHT 5:** While there is strong support for parental leave for both mothers and fathers, there is limited take-up of parental leave, particularly by fathers.

Women and men in all three countries are overwhelmingly supportive of parental leave provisions for both mothers and fathers.

- The majority of respondents in Indonesia and the Philippines believe that women should be offered 12 weeks or more of maternity leave, with 39% of respondents in favour of allocating more than 18 weeks paid leave for women.
- In Vietnam, the desired amount of maternity leave is even higher, with 84% of respondents saying women should be offered 6 months or more.
- There is strong support for longer paternity leave in the Philippines, where there is currently a limited paternity leave allocation for fathers of newborn children. The majority of respondents think men should be offered at least 8 weeks or more, with over 90% believing the length of paternity leave should be more than what is currently provided for in legislation.
- The majority of respondents in Indonesia believe men should be offered no more than 8 weeks paternity leave; and in Vietnam, no more than four weeks. Half of the respondents in Indonesia and 90% of respondents in Vietnam believe levels of paternity leave should be higher than what is provided for in current legislation.

However, this support for parental leave is not reflected in the level of take-up of parental leave, especially by men.

**Respondents' opinion on the amount of parental leave that should be offered to women and men.**

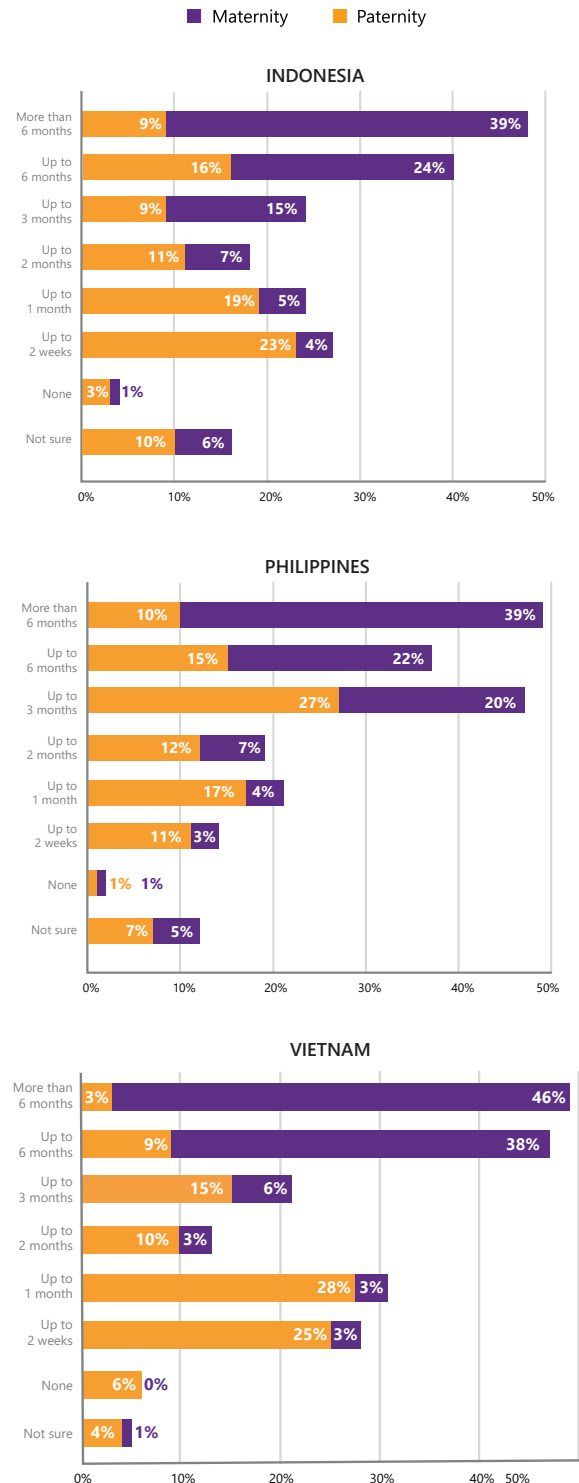


Figure 19. Most respondents think there should be more paternity leave than what is offered under the current legislation.

At a country level, respondents in Vietnam with children, who are working and have parental leave options, are most likely to take advantage of their leave provisions, followed by Indonesian respondents. Fewer respondents in the Philippines take parental leave, even when it is available.

- In Indonesia, where the two-day paternity leave provision for civil servants was extended to up to 30 days in 2017, over one-third of respondents said they have not taken paternity leave.
- At the time of the survey, men in the Philippines were entitled to seven days paternity leave, yet, over one-third of Filipino men have never used their leave provisions, with some only taking a minimal amount. (Note: the recently-passed extended maternity leave law—which was approved after the survey period—allows for seven days additional leave to be transferred from the mother to the father.)

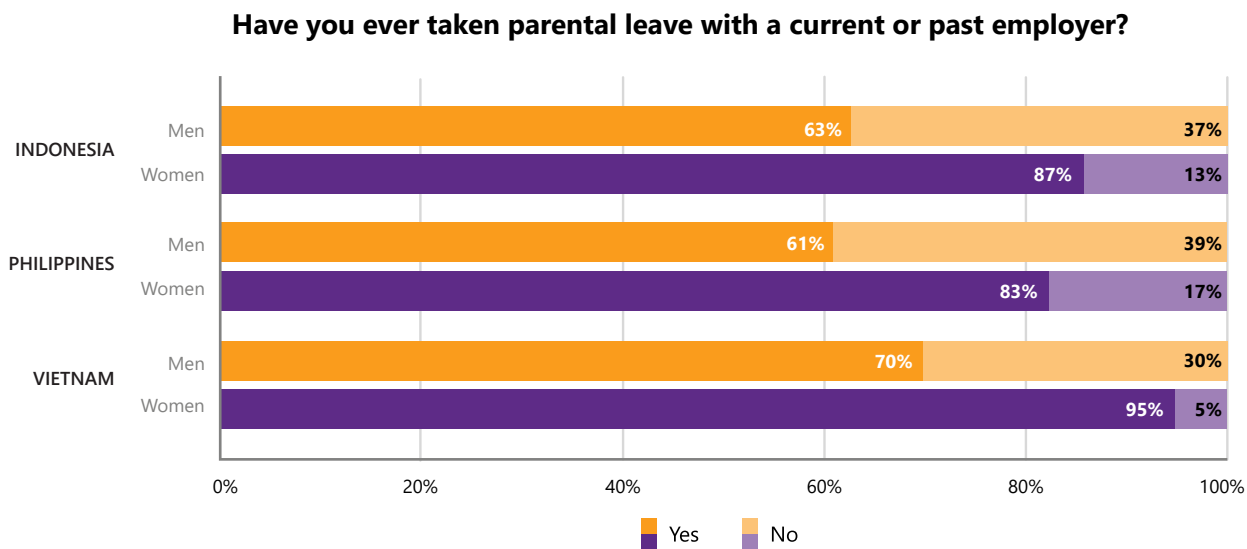


Figure 20. The majority of women who have been employed and had a baby in all three countries have taken parental leave.

Even where offers for parental leave exist under legislation, social norms tend to hold women and men back from taking up these leave benefits.

- Overall, both women and men respondents believe men are more likely to be criticised for taking parental leave than women. One in five women in each country think men who take paternity leave face criticism. Among men, this perception of criticism is even higher, with 25% of men in Indonesia, 34% in Vietnam and 43% in the Philippines believing that men are likely to be criticised for taking paternity leave.
- The perception that women could be criticised for taking maternity leave is much lower—only 13% of respondents in Vietnam and 9% in Indonesia subscribe to this belief. In the Philippines, however, perceived criticism is nearly double, with 1 in 4 women and men perceiving that women are criticised for taking maternity leave.
- From a country perspective, a higher number of respondents from the Philippines feel that both women and men are criticised for taking parental leave. Indonesia shows the lowest number of respondents with the perception that criticism takes place.



- These perceptions are somewhat aligned with the regulatory context of each country, as Indonesia has the largest amount of paternity leave offered: 30 days for men in the public sector. In comparison, the Philippines, with the 2019 amendments offers up to 14 days, and Vietnam offers men only five days.
- Indonesia offers women 90 days of maternity leave and while Vietnam offers women 180 days; both countries report low perceptions of criticism. In the Philippines, however, where perceptions of criticism are higher, women were only offered 60 days maternity leave at the time of the survey in 2018, which has since been extended to 105 days in 2019.

**“Women are criticised if they take maternity leave.”**

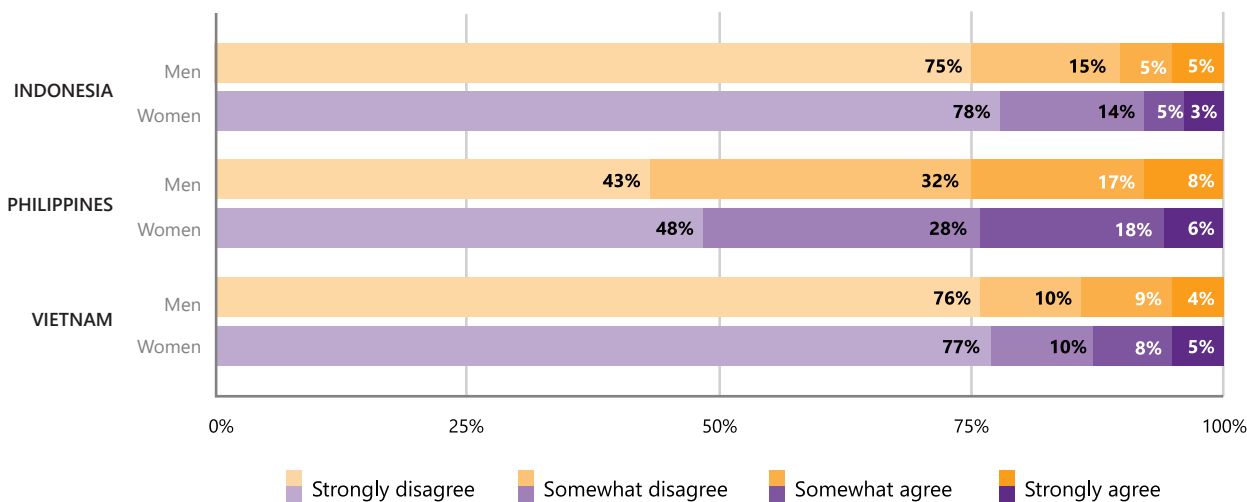


Figure 21. Most respondents don't think women are criticised for taking maternity leave.

**“Men are criticised if they take paternity leave.”**

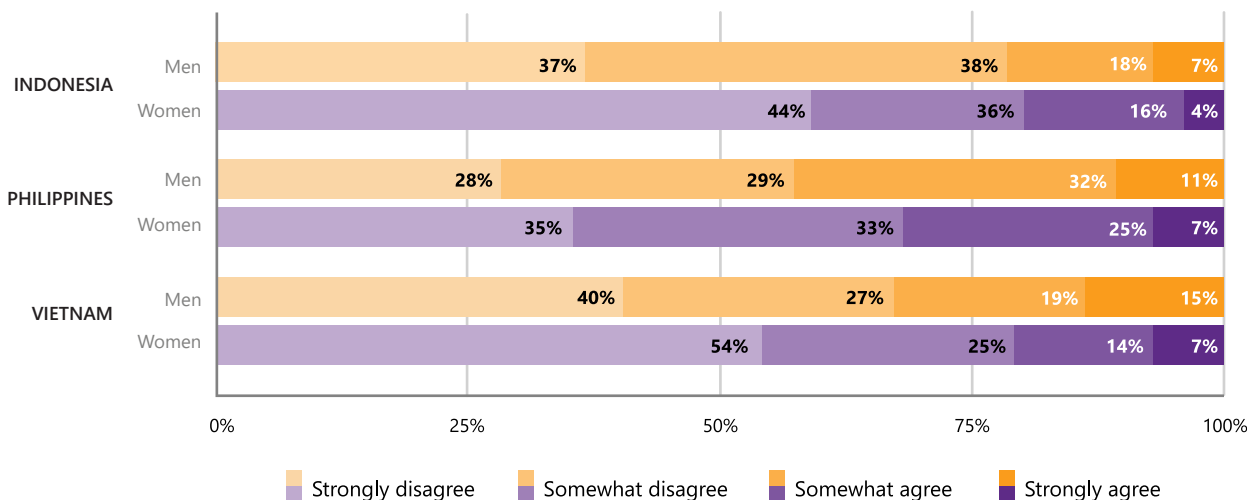


Figure 22. Most respondents don't think men are criticised for taking paternity leave.

Despite the available institutional framework, gendered social norms and workplace practices can also prevent uptake of paternity leave among men and result in women taking greater caring responsibilities. Aside from perceptions of criticism, women and men also have other concerns when deciding whether or not to avail of parental leave benefits.

- Other reasons men don't take paternity leave is that the child is cared for by their partner or another family member (40%), or that their organisation does not offer such leave (16%).
- In the Philippines, more men than women—are concerned about losing their jobs or jeopardising their career as a result of taking parental leave. More men also believe their organisations are less supportive of them taking leave.
- However, most women and men claim they went back to work to the same position after parental leave; although 19% of women and men say they resumed working but in a lower role or missed out on promotion opportunities (refer to "Annex E" on page 34).

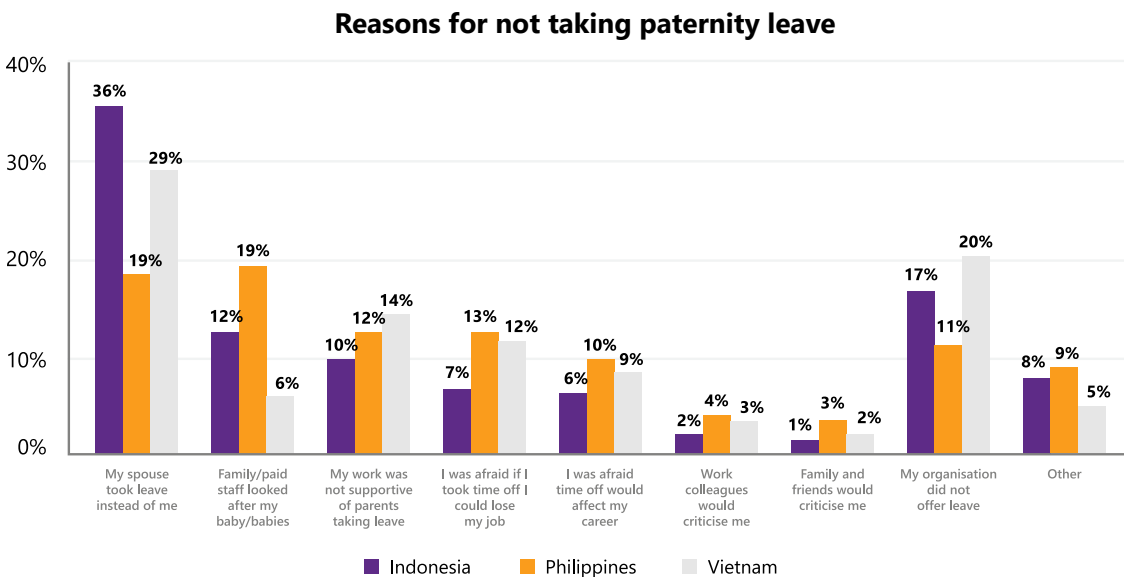


Figure 23. Some men don't take paternity leave primarily because their spouses already take parental leave

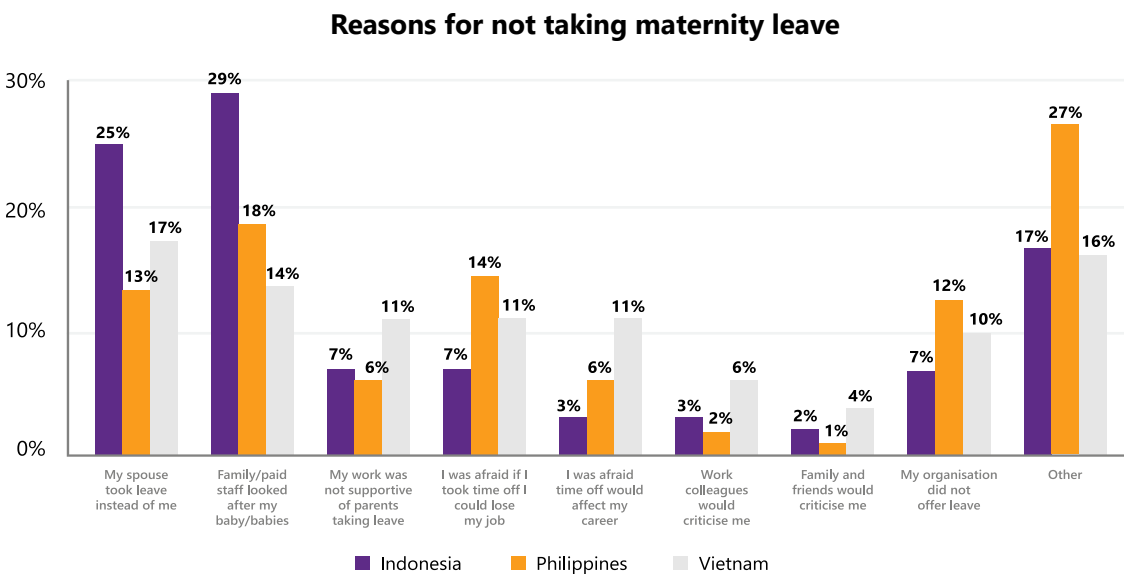


Figure 24. Some women don't take maternity leave primarily because a family member or paid staff looks after their babies.



# Conclusion

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## UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL NORMS CAN BETTER INFORM STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

There are positive signs that governments and businesses are putting in place the institutional changes that are necessary for women to thrive in the workplace and in business<sup>9, 10</sup>. And yet, gender inequality persists; partly due to the limiting social norms around traditional gender roles that present domestic duties like housework and caring for children and elders as a woman's domain, preventing women from fully taking advantage of available economic opportunities<sup>11, 12</sup>. Domestic and care responsibilities can be better shared between women and men by normalising men's role in the home.

Achieving women's economic empowerment therefore requires an enabling and supportive home environment that changes the narratives for men starting from childhood until employment, in the same manner that women's economic roles should be normalised throughout their life course. This includes eliminating the stigma of performing domestic tasks traditionally assigned to women for young boys and men, and of taking parental leave from work to spend more time with their family. Other research shows that parental leave is also good for business and can lead to higher productivity, better employee morale and net cost savings for companies in the long run<sup>13</sup>, as well as attracting and retaining quality staff.

The social norms and behaviours operating both in the home and in workplaces can be positively shifted through:



Promoting awareness of parental leave policies among staff and building positive attitudes around taking parental leave.



Setting up workplace policies and practices to prevent harassment, as well as supporting women and men facing harassment.



Influencers encouraging women and men to speak up in favour of gender equality at home and at work to start a positive public conversation and break down misconceptions.



Amplifying stories of men embracing their roles as fathers, carers and equal partners in household duties to normalise men's roles at home.



Amplifying stories of women at work and in business and normalising women's economic role over their life course.



Encouraging women and men to have conversations about sharing housework and caring duties in the household.



Encouraging parents to raise children that are free from limiting gender stereotypes.

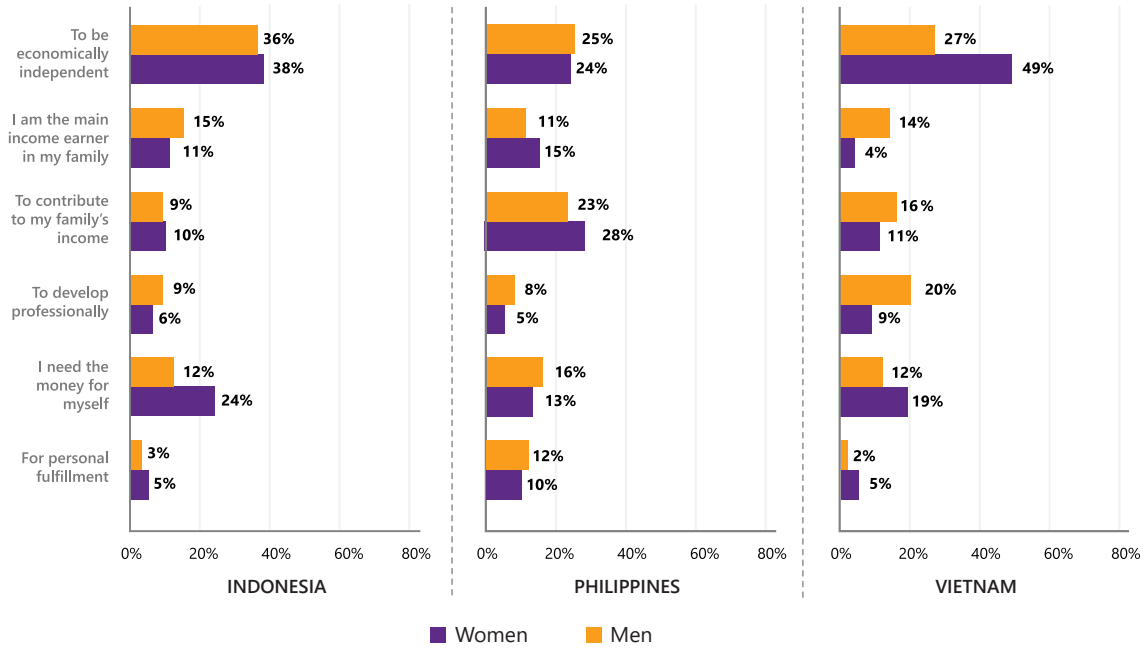
Only when they share responsibilities at home can both women and men have equal access to economic opportunities. Sharing domestic responsibilities benefits not only women; it is also beneficial to men, families, businesses and society.

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- <sup>4</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2017). *Strengthening Women's Entrepreneurship in ASEAN Towards increasing women's participation in economic activity*. Available at: [https://www.oecd.org/southeast-asia/regional-programme/Strengthening\\_Womens\\_Entrepreneurship\\_ASEAN.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/southeast-asia/regional-programme/Strengthening_Womens_Entrepreneurship_ASEAN.pdf)
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- <sup>9</sup> Op. cit., McKinsey & Company (2018).
- <sup>10</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2014). *Social Institutions & Gender Index 2014 Synthesis Report*. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/BrochureSIGI2015-web.pdf>
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- <sup>12</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2017). *Strengthening Women's Entrepreneurship in ASEAN Towards increasing women's participation in economic activity*. Available at: [https://www.oecd.org/southeast-asia/regional-programme/Strengthening\\_Womens\\_Entrepreneurship\\_ASEAN.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/southeast-asia/regional-programme/Strengthening_Womens_Entrepreneurship_ASEAN.pdf)
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# Annex A

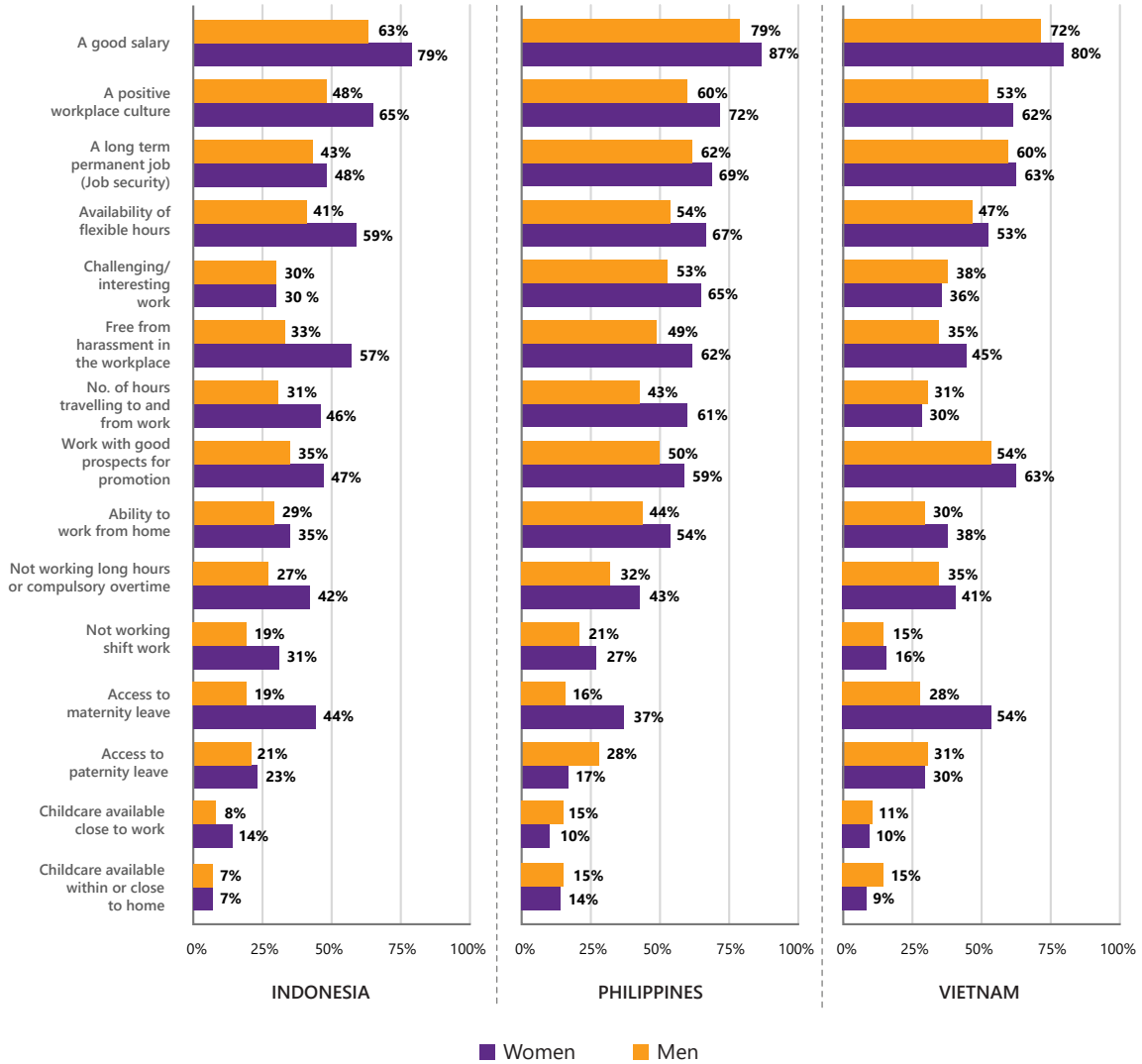
## What are the main reasons for you to work?



*Annex A. Overall, economic independence is the most important reason for single, separated, divorced and widowed women to work.*

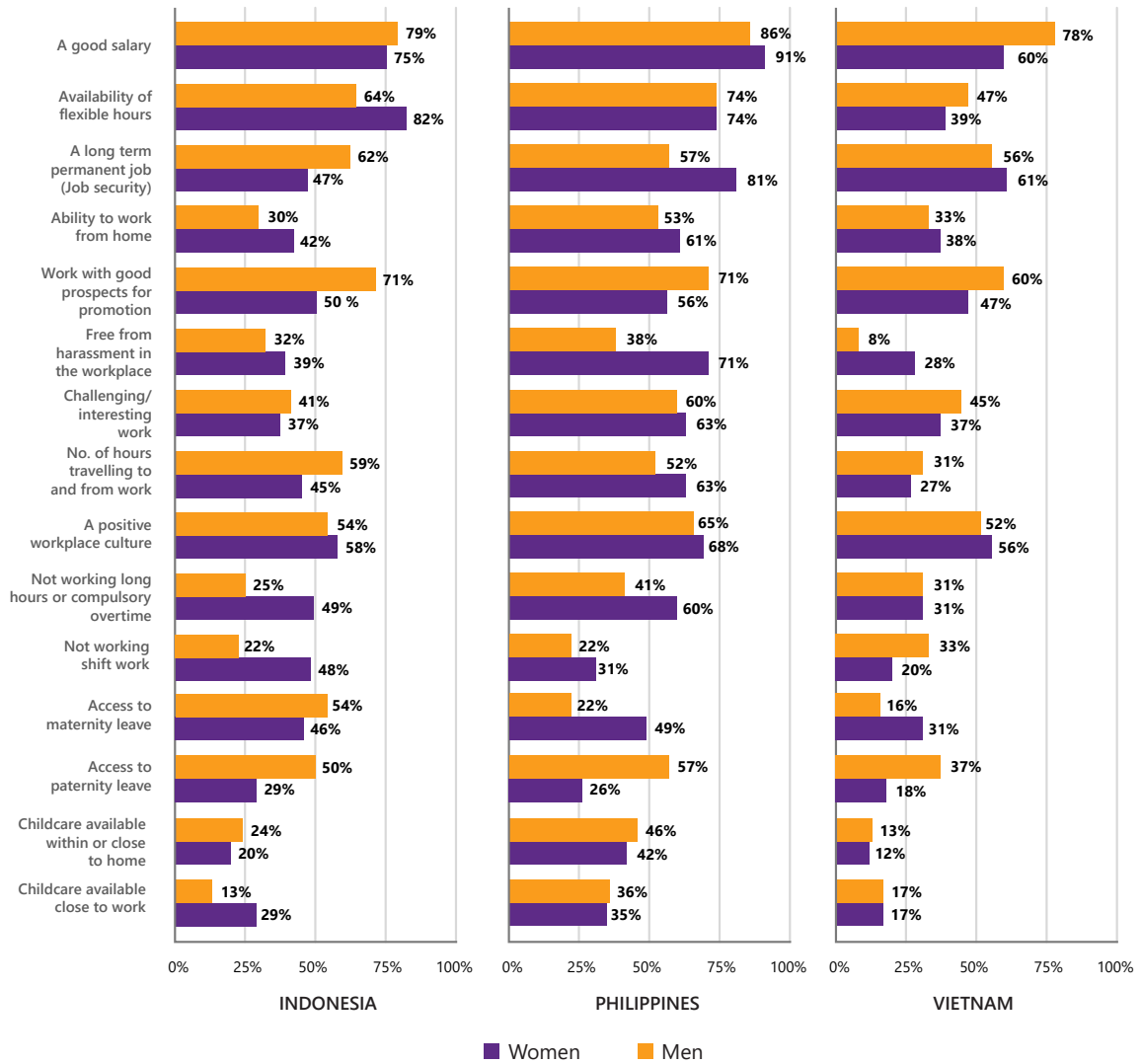
# Annex B

## What are the main factors you consider when choosing a new paid job?



Annex B. Overall, 60% of single respondents ages 18 to 24 years old value positive workplace culture.

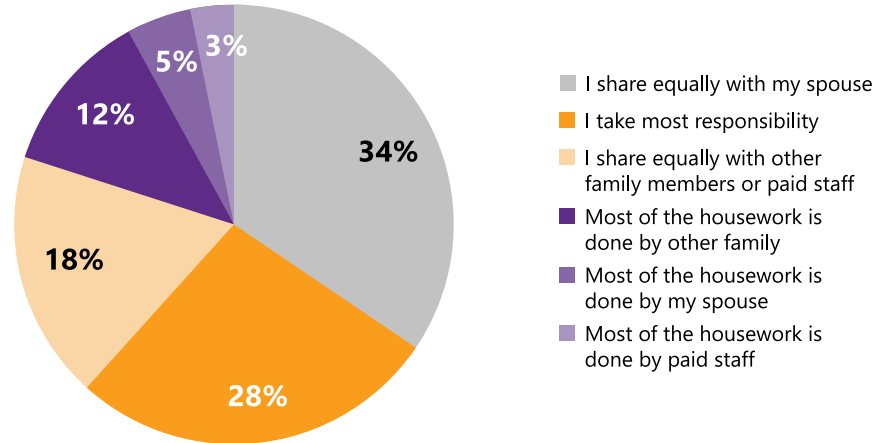
## What are the main factors you consider when choosing a new paid job?



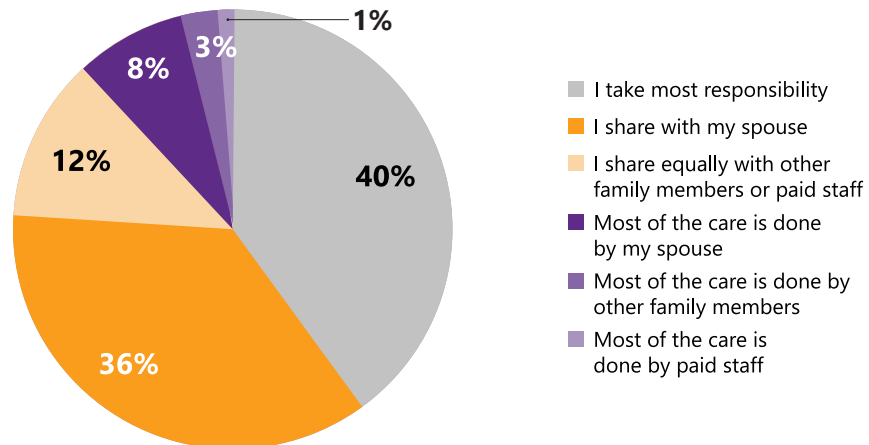
Annex C. A good salary and flexible work hours rank as the most important reasons to take a new job for parents in all three countries



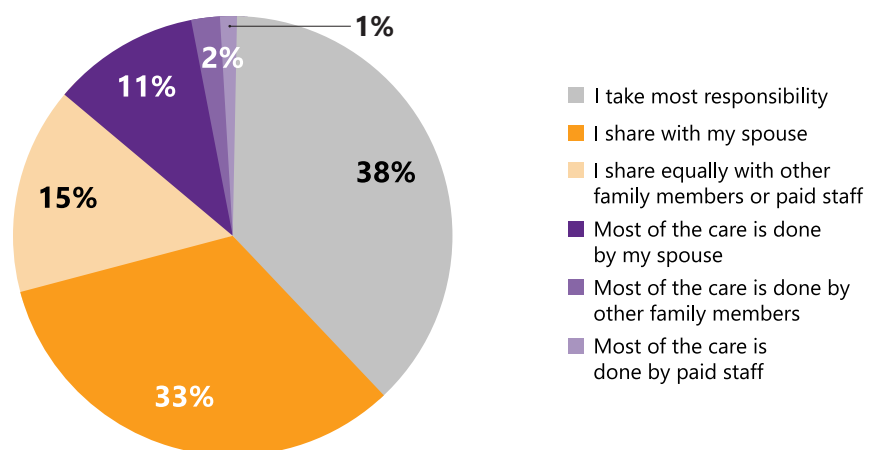
## Which statement is true with regard to housework responsibilities (such as cleaning, washing and cooking) within your household?



## Which statement is true with regard to childcare responsibilities within your household?



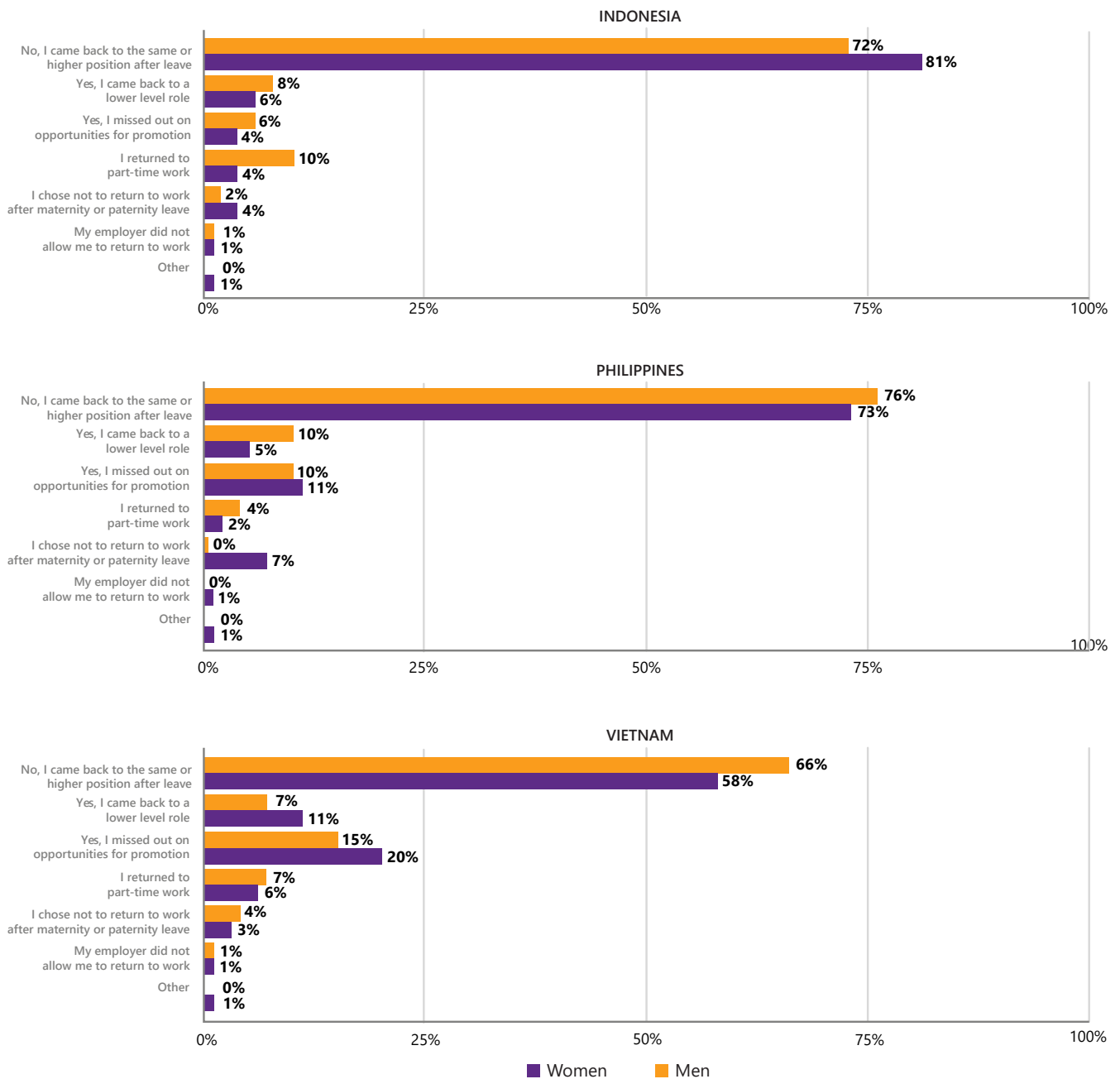
## Which statement is true with regard to caring for adults within your household?



Annex D. Women and men respondents have different perceptions of the amount of housework and unpaid care men do.

# Annex E

## Effect of parental leave on work



*Annex E. Most respondents who took parental leave came back to the same or higher position after their leave.*

We surveyed 6,000 urban millennials in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam and here's what they said...

Across all countries, approximately **one-third** of respondents believe that tasks are done **equally well** by women and men.



The other **two-thirds** had more traditional gender beliefs saying:



They believe women are better at household tasks and care.



and that men are better at house maintenance.

**Men are sharing** the **housework** in varying degrees, and to a lesser extent, **childcare**.



Still, perceptions of housework and care **differ** between women and men.

Most men claim they equally share housework and care responsibilities.



The majority of women said they take most responsibility.



Women in full-time employment would love to see men be more active at home.



**63%** of Vietnamese women,



**41%** of Indonesian women, and



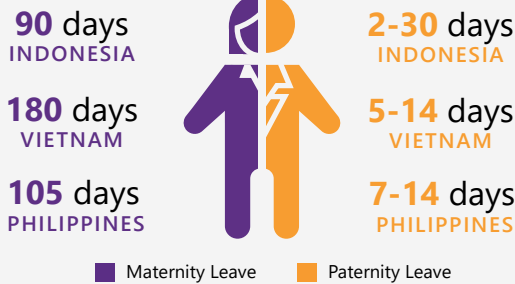
**48%** of Filipinas


said they would like their partners to do more housework.

**We surveyed 6,000 urban millennials in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam and here's what they said...**

**Women and men would like dads to have more time with their children.**

**There is a gap between the amount of parental leave offered to men and women.**



 **Over 90%** of people in **Vietnam** and the **Philippines** would like more paternity leave than legislation offers.

 **50%** of **Indonesians** would like more paternity leave than legislation offers.

**Across the three countries, more mothers than fathers have taken parental leave.**

**Over 80% of mothers** have taken maternity leave

**Over 60% of fathers** have taken paternity leave



**Vietnamese parents** are most likely to take parental leave.

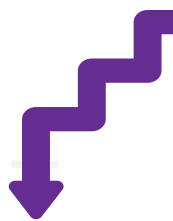


**Reasons why men chose not to take paternity leave were:**

**Men worry they might be criticised for choosing to take paternity leave.**



**Fear of criticism**



**Negative impact on career**



**Another family member provided care**



**Lack of workplace policy**

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