



Working in MENA: A rather conservative region with a lot of variation across countries

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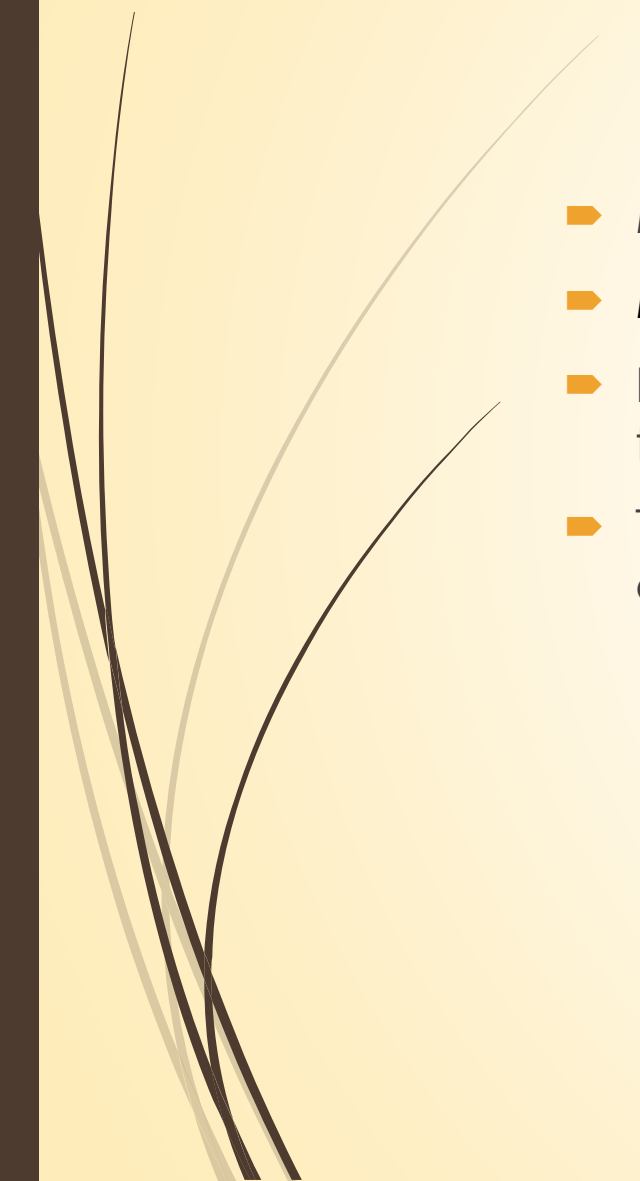
2017 Global Summit of Women

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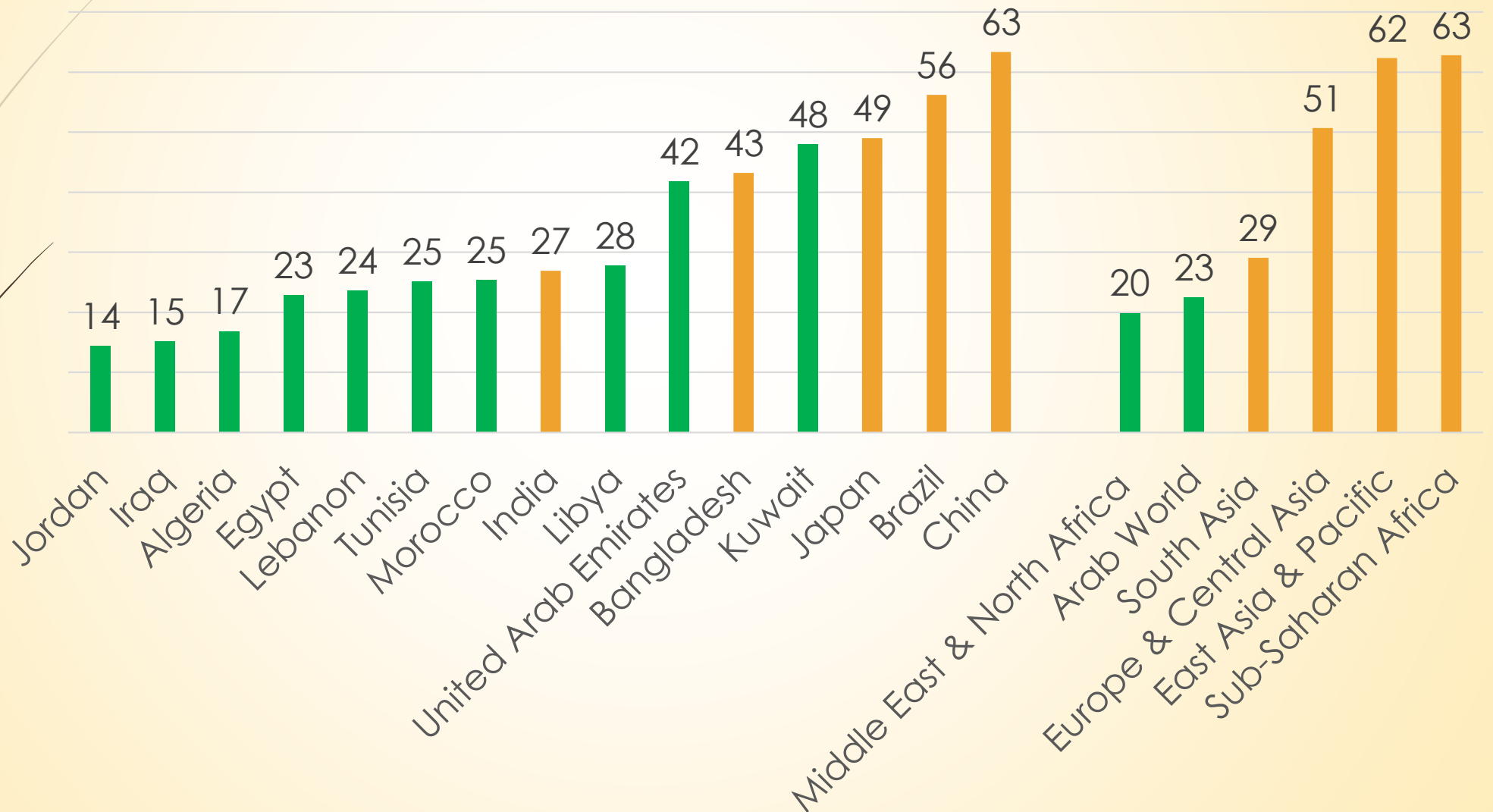


Globally conservative region... 😊

- ▶ Male dominated and patriarchal societies with differences across countries
 - ▶ Marriage remains an integral institution in Arab societies
 - ▶ Parents and husbands want women to have a stable job in traditional and flexible fields
 - ▶ The challenge of the work life balance: support system; Rural versus urban cities; travel and working hours
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Low female labor participation...

Female labor force participation, 2016





Youth and Women are driving changes

- ▶ The region is moving towards more socially open values in recent years; especially, the support for gender equality has increased, and civic involvement has expanded.
 - ▶ Youth bulge—half of MENA youth are under 25
 - ▶ Female entrepreneurship is still lower in MENA than other parts of the developing world but is thriving in some countries...
 - ▶ Expect to meet like minded women: business leaders, ministers, doctors, pilots, engineers, activists, young entrepreneurs, politicians
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MENA is multi-faceted

▶ **Private sector led economies**

- ▶ Morocco
- ▶ Tunisia
- ▶ Jordan
- ▶ Egypt
- ▶ Lebanon

▶ **Oil rich countries**

- ▶ Saudi Arabia
- ▶ Qatar
- ▶ UAE
- ▶ Kuwait
- ▶ Algeria

▶ **Fragile countries**

- ▶ Iraq
- ▶ Yemen
- ▶ Syria
- ▶ Libya
- ▶ Palestine

“West and East” MENA

Couscous



Rice





Some tips...

- ▶ Beware of social norms and stereotypes that vary across countries
 - ▶ Dress code (before packing your suitcase 😊)
 - ▶ Working hours
 - ▶ Alcohol
- ▶ Business environment
 - ▶ “non-direct” conversations
 - ▶ Local connections are important
 - ▶ Men-women business and networking meetings
 - ▶ Be prepared - work with men colleagues and partners



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