THE WORLD BANK

January 13th

From Jobs to Careers:

Apparel Exports and Career Paths for Women in Developing Countries

Motivation

- Women's engangement in the labor force reduces poverty and it is critical for economic development.
- Across the world, integrating female-intensive industries, such as apparel, into international trade has helped increase female labor force participation. Yet not all engagement in the labor market is the same.
- The goal of this report is twofold:
  1. shift the debate towards the subtle differences between just jobs to a long-run view of the labor market experience and identity –careers–.
  2. analyze if an apparel-led export strategy is sufficient to induce a shift from jobs to careers?

Exports (particularly apparel) Create Job Opportunities for Women

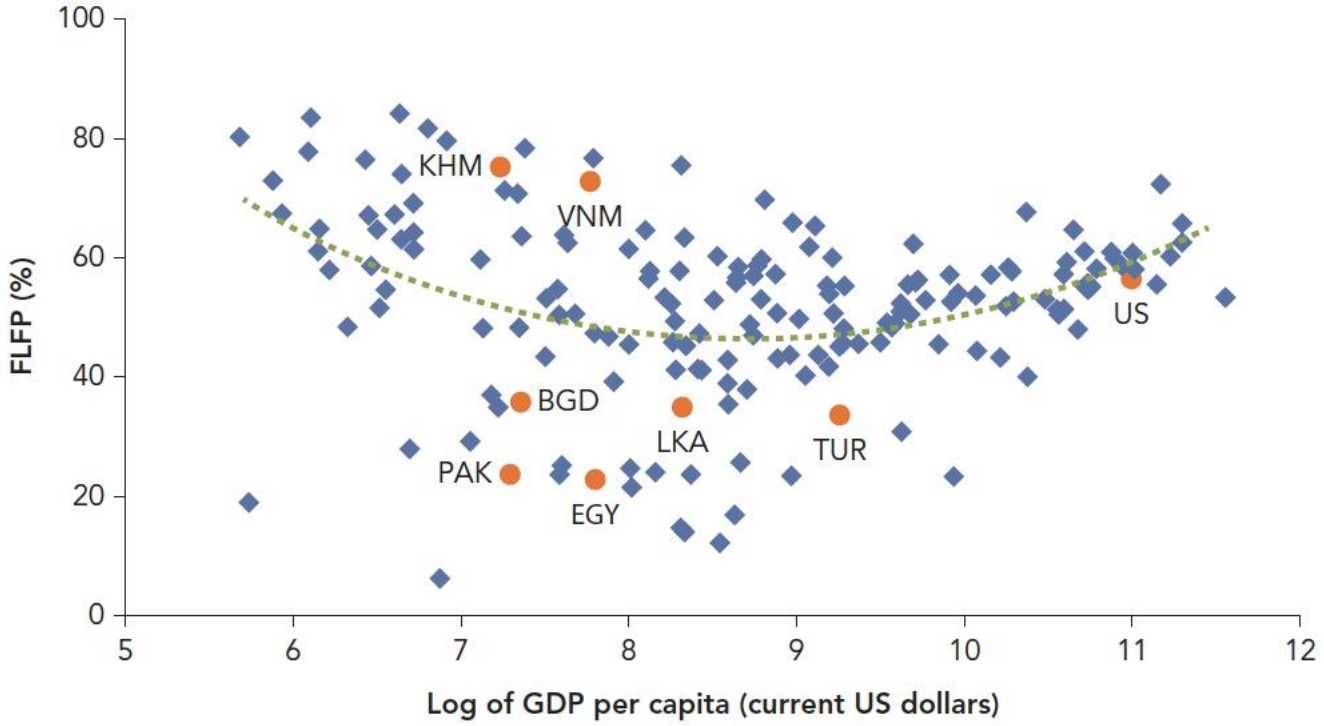
- Well documented that apparel exporting creates jobs[1]…
- …but does it lead to better employment opportunities (i.e., careers), and if so, how?
- Lack of research looking at next steps in female labor market participation after initial GVC, export-oriented production.

[1]UNCTAD. (2004). Trade and Gender, Opportunities and Challenges for Developing Countries.; World Bank. (2012). Sewing Success? Employment, Wages, and Poverty Following the End of the MFA., OECD. (2013). GVCs & Developing Country Employment.; Lopez-Acevedo and Robertson (2016) Stiches to Riches? Apparel Employment, Trade, and Economic Development in South Asia ; ILO. (2017). World Employment Social Outlook & Better Work program reports (ILO & IFC); Barrientos (2019) Gender & Work in GVCs: Capturing the Gains?; World Bank & WTO (2020). Women and Trade: The Role of Trade in Promoting Gender Equality.

What's Next? Facilitating the transition to careers

- Development institutions are ready to take the next step (e.g. ILO and IFC's Better Work Program)
- Key Research Questions:
  - How can we help realize the full potential of women in the economy?
  - What role does apparel exporting play in the transition from jobs to careers?
  - What are relevant metrics to help us understand the transition from jobs to careers?

FIGURE 1.2 Incidence of the U-Shaped Relationship between FLFP and National Income, 2017



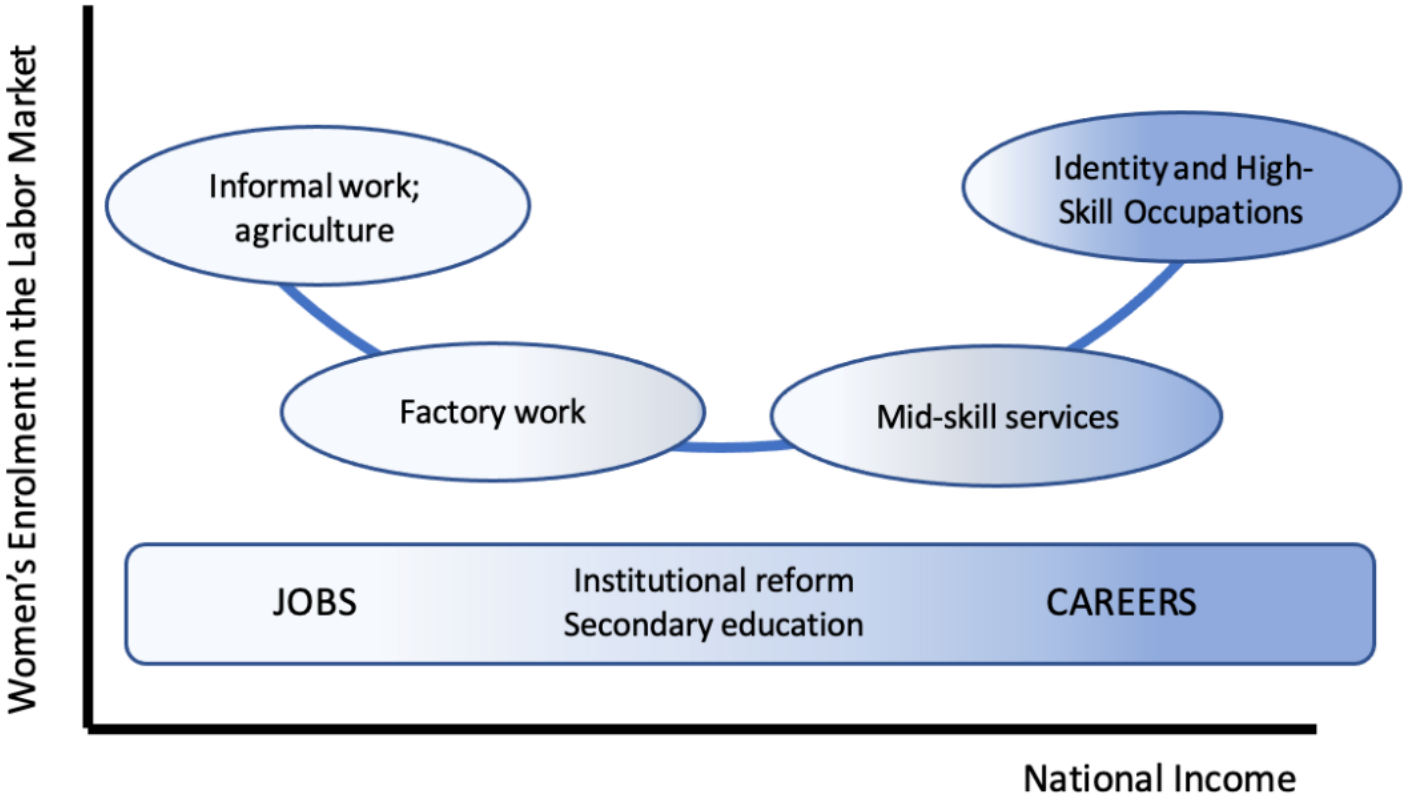
Sources: International Labour Organization model estimates and World Development Indicators data.

Note: The data cover 176 countries across all regions and income groups. The polynomial trend is not the best trend, because of outliers. ISO alpha-3 codes designate the seven case study countries: Bangladesh (BGD), Cambodia (KHM), the Arab Republic of Egypt (EGY), Pakistan (PAK), Sri Lanka (LKA), Turkey (TUR), and Vietnam (VNM). FLFP = female labor force participation; ISO = International Standards Organization.

- Well-known U-shape relationship between female LFP and GDP per capita
- Much heterogeneity across developing countries
- Much heterogeneity across apparel exporters

The Transition from Jobs to Careers

The Path from Jobs to Careers for US Women in the Twentieth Century



Source: World Bank elaboration based roughly on Goldin (1995, 2006).
Note: The shading of the stages

Exploring Jobs to Careers in Apparel Exporting Countries Outline

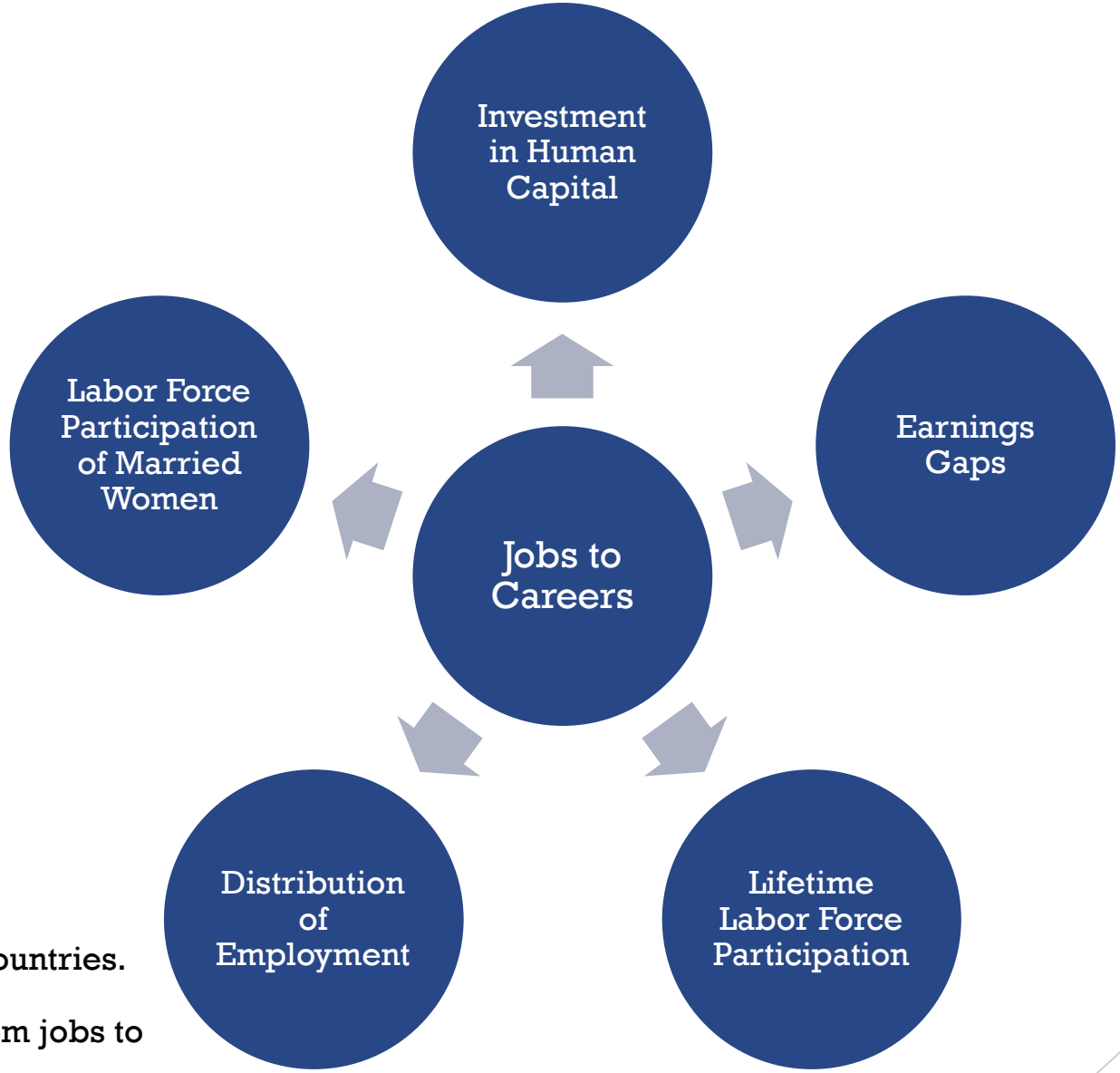
- **Chapter 1:** Why Jobs vs Careers?
- **Chapter 2** Do apparel exports support a "quiet revolution"?
- **Chapter 3:** Three barriers to career development.
- **Chapter 4:** How does an apparel export strategy fit into the jobs-to-careers transition?
- **Chapter 5:** Policy recommendations

Chapter 1: Why Jobs vs Careers?

- Defines "Jobs" and "Careers"
- Reviews the academic literature (where has it taken us?)
- Illustrates the transition from jobs to careers within the canonical intertemporal household labor supply model
- Provides a theoretic foundation for Transition Indicators
- Explore the potential development effects in the economy.

Chapter 2: Do apparel exports support a "quiet revolution"?

- We evaluate each indicator for seven apparel exporting countries.
- Apparel exporters are at different stages of a transition from jobs to careers, leading to different policy recommendations.



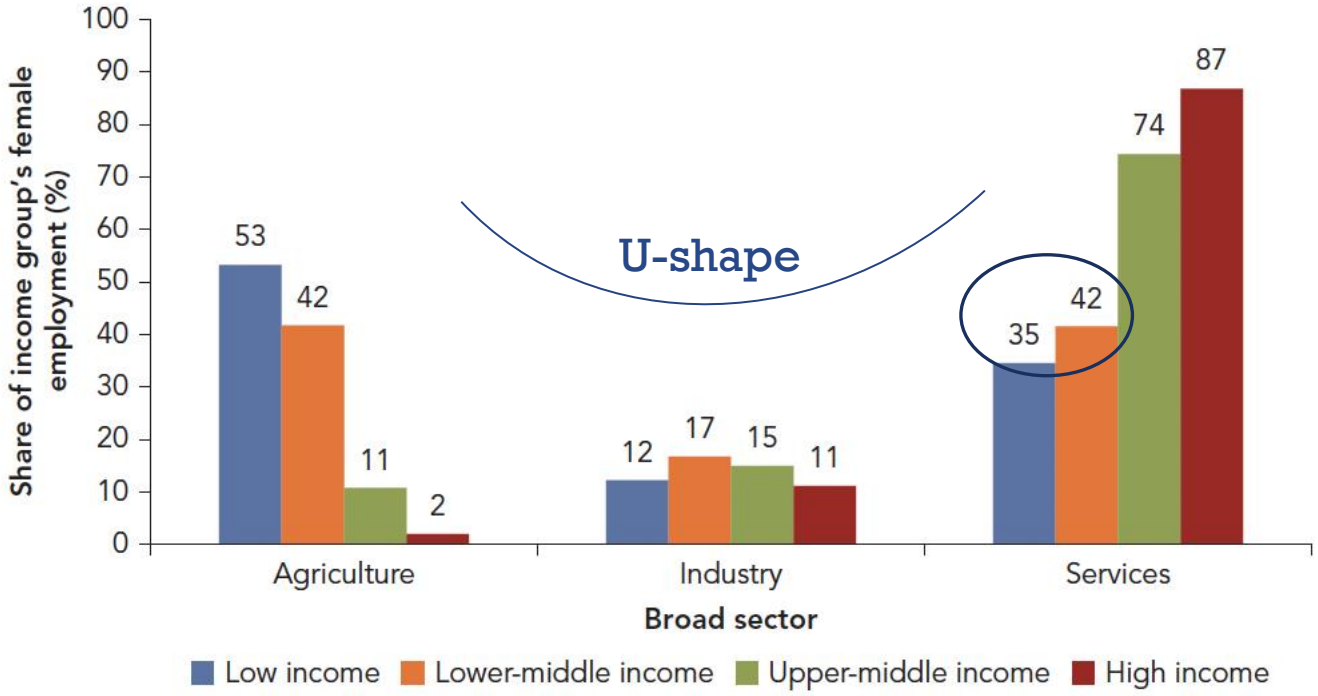
Notes: Authors' elaboration based on Goldin (2006).

Chapter 3: Three barriers to career development

Barrier one

Low demand for services due to insufficient national income

FIGURE 3.1 Sectoral Shares of Total Female Employment, by Country Income Level, 2017



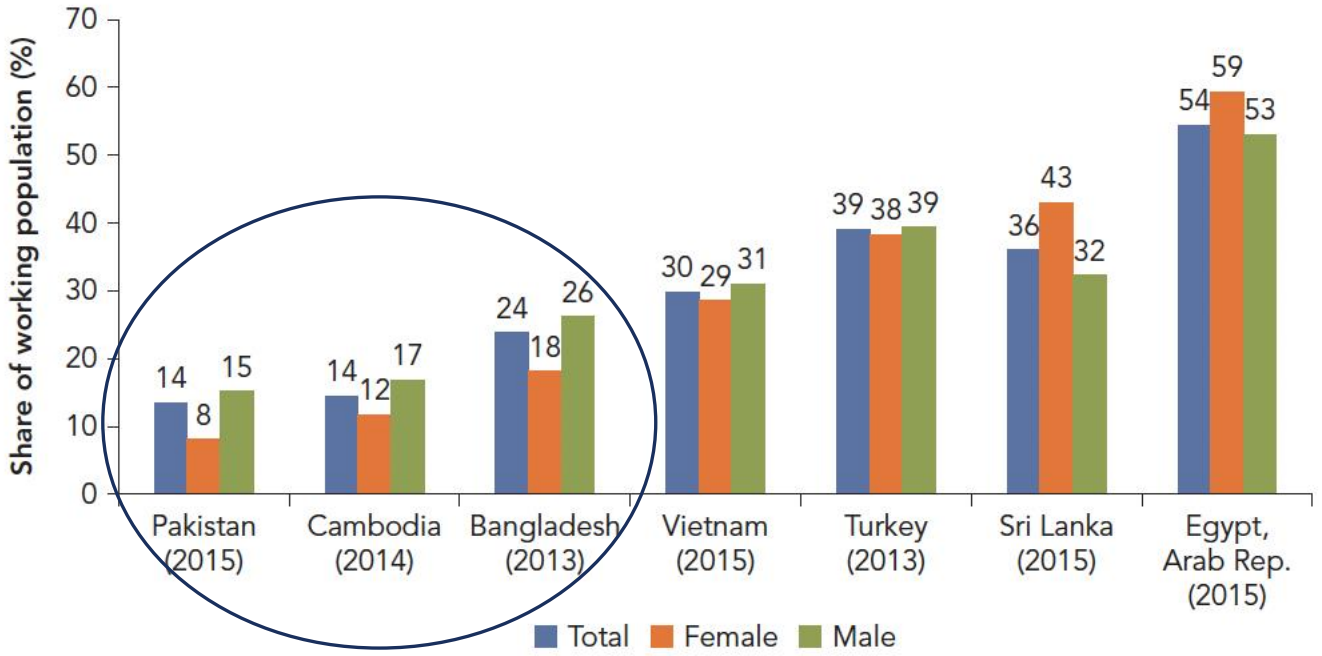
Source: International Labour Organization ILOSTAT data, "Employment by sex and economic activity (thousands), Annual" (1947–2020).

Note: The data cover 118 countries globally across regions. Broad sectors are defined under the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) system, which groups economic activities into agriculture (including forestry, fishing, and mining); manufacturing (here, "industry"); and services. Country income categories are according to World Bank classifications.

Barrier two

Low educational levels

FIGURE 3.5 Share of Workers with at Least Upper-Secondary Education, by Gender, in Sample Middle-Income Countries



Source: Labor force survey data.

Note: Years in parentheses designate the year of country data.

Barrier three

Cultural and societal norms: e.g., occupational segregation, laws, discrimination.

TABLE 3.4 Women, Business, and the Law Index Scores, by Indicator, in Sample Middle-Income Countries and the United States

Country	Mobility	Workplace	Pay	Marriage	Parenthood	Entrepreneurship	Assets	Pension	Overall
Egypt, Arab Rep.	50	75	0	0	20	75	40	100	45.0
Bangladesh	100	50	25	60	20	75	40	25	49.4
Pakistan	75	100	25	60	20	75	40	50	55.6
Sri Lanka[a]	100	75	25	100	20	75	80	50	65.6
Cambodia	100	100	75	80	20	100	100	25	75.0
Vietnam	100	100	75	100	80	100	100	0	81.9
Turkey	100	100	75	80	80	75	100	50	82.5
United States	100	100	75	100	80	100	100	75	91.3

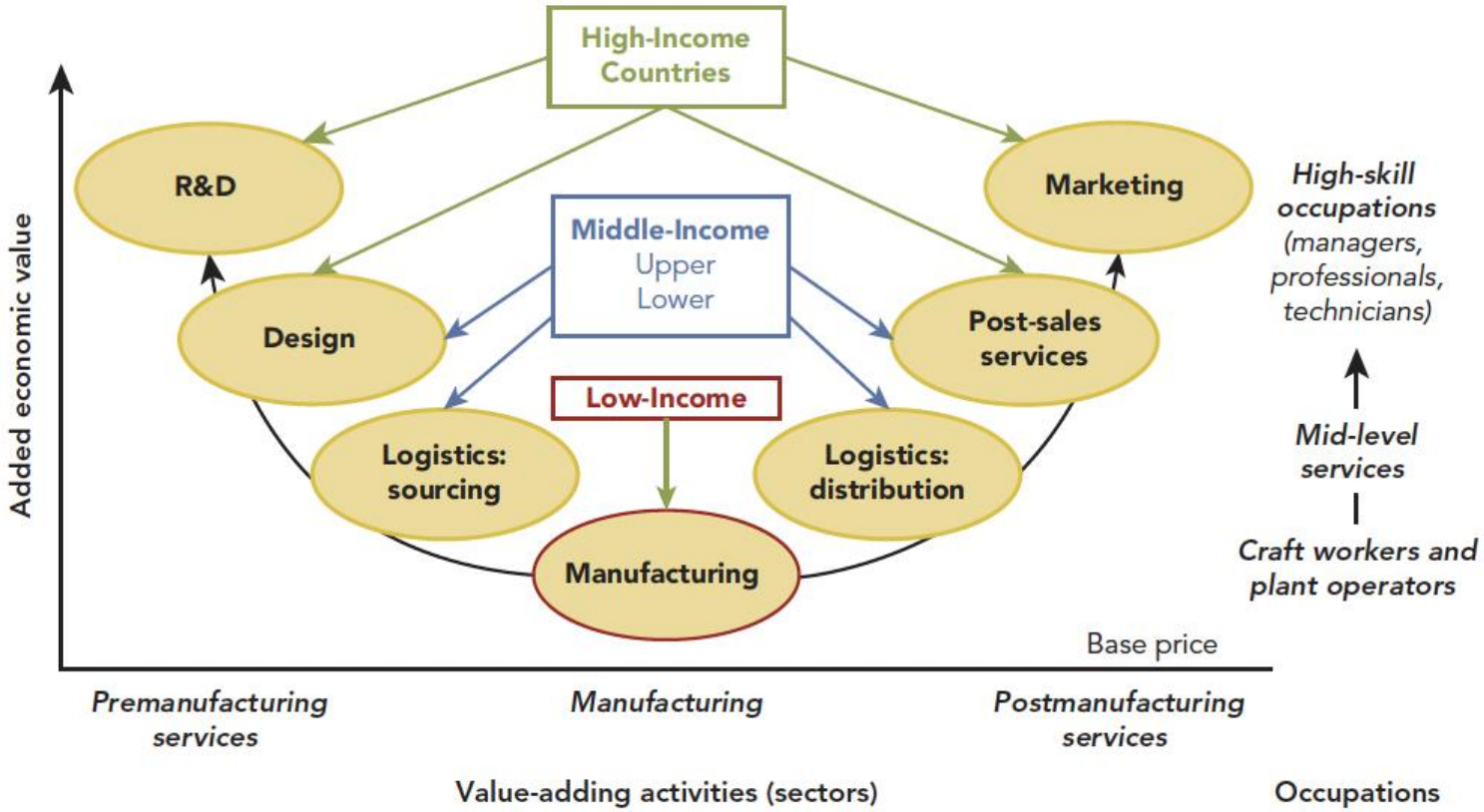
Source: World Bank 2020b; historical data from the Women, Business and the Law database: https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/wbl-data.

Note: Countries are listed in order of lowest to highest overall score. Scores for Bangladesh, Cambodia, Egypt, Sri Lanka, and Turkey have remained the same on the annual index from 2017 to 2021. Scores for Pakistan (entrepreneurship and overall) and Vietnam (pay and overall) improved between 2020 and 2021; however, 2021 values are not shown in the table. The 2020 index indicators are based on data from June 2, 2017, to September 1, 2019.

a. Sri Lanka's scores on the Parenthood indicator differ between the published report (40) and raw data (20). The raw data list 20 in all years and include responses for questions, so that value is used for the Parenthood score and for calculating the overall score.

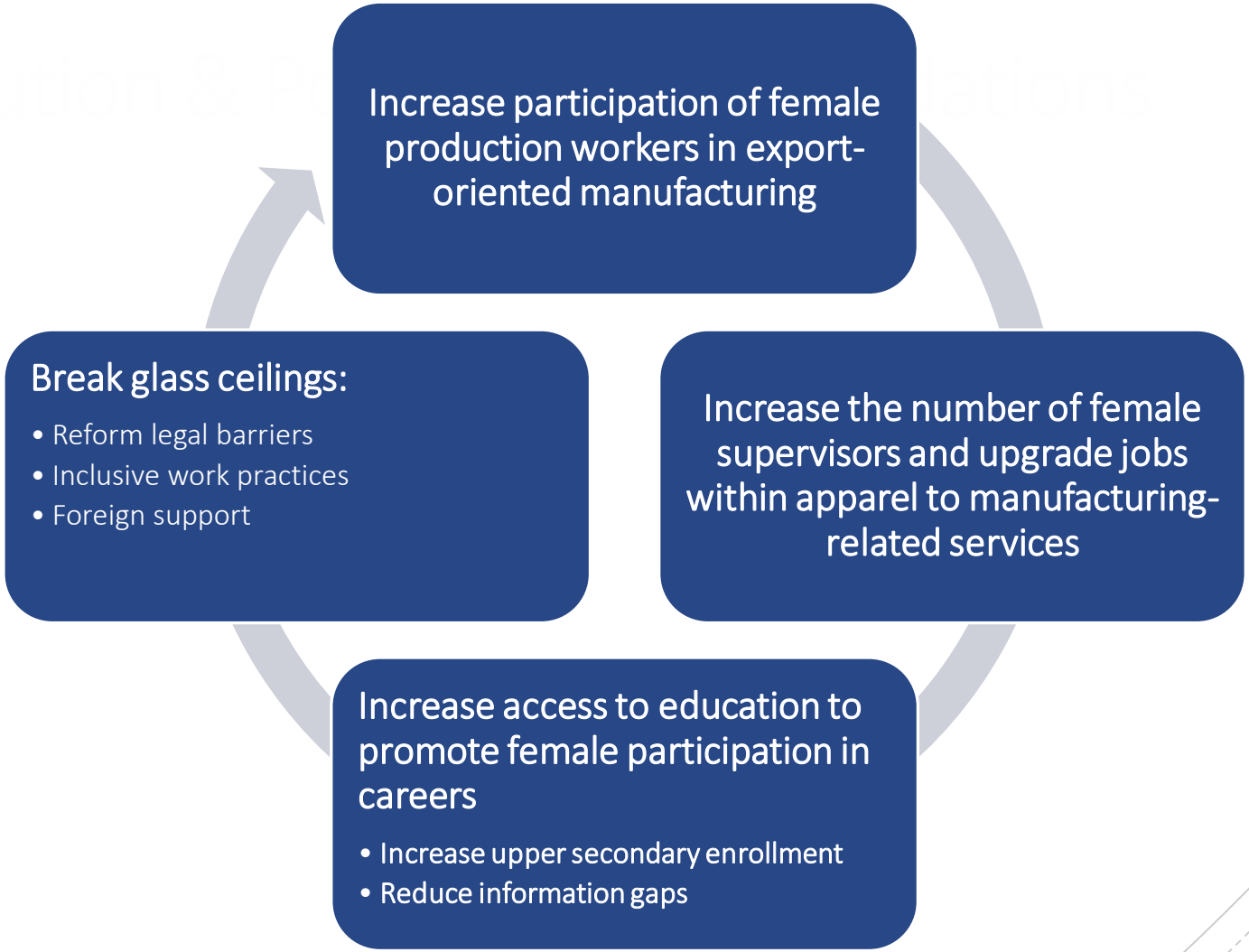
Chapter 4: How does an apparel export growth strategy fit into the jobs to careers transition?

FIGURE 4.1 Relationships of GVC Activities and Country Roles to Occupational Skill and Country Income Levels



Source: Updated from Fernandez-Stark, Frederick, and Gereffi 2011; Frederick 2010. © World Bank.
Note: Yellow circles represent service sector industry and high-skill or sales or service occupations. Red outlines designate manufacturing and craft or production workers. (In some countries, elementary occupations are also used as helpers). GVC = global value chain; R&D = research and development.

Chapter 5: Policy Recommendations



Jobs to Careers

This report's policy recommendations seek to increase the probability that women will enter the labor market and that apparel exporting countries will foster environments that support female career development.

More jobs or careers in an industry will not secure women positions if their human capital is too low or cultural barriers limit their hiring. Nor can educated women increase their labor participation if their skills are not aligned with available occupations or if childcare responsibilities reduce their available working time.

To achieve the goal of having more women in higher-skilled, longer horizon, better paid, and life-fulfilling occupations, national programs should consider their simultaneous implementation. With the help of such evidence-based policies, a "quiet revolution" to transform women's employment in developing countries need not take the 100 years that it took in the United States.

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Link