

The Growing FemTech Landscape in Japan and South Korea

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FemTech is a term that encompasses technology and services which focus on improving women's healthcare and wellness, including (but not limited to) menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause. As women's participation in the workforce increases, women's wellness has become an important issue to consider not only for women as individuals, but also as a critical part of society and the business world.

The FemTech market is led by North America, particularly the United States, with a 51.9% market share, followed by Europe (23.5%) and Asia (13.9%). Although the Asian market currently boasts a relatively minor share of the global market, it is projected to have continuous and steady growth due to the size of the Asian population (approximately eight times larger than the North American population) and the increase in governmental and corporate support for women and FemTech. Moreover, there is a rise in interest from both incubators and accelerators in femtech as a primary investment opportunity. While both Japan and South Korea are still in early stages of femtech investment, momentum is clearly building, especially in women's health adjacent sectors and clinical innovations.

Government Initiatives - Japan

Women's Version of the Basic Policy 2024 (女性版骨太の方針2024 / Joseiban Honebuto no Hoshin 2024)

- Japan's Cabinet Office released a special women-focused version of its main government policy plan for 2024. This version includes new support for Femtech—technologies and services that support women's health (like menstrual care apps, menopause tools, fertility tracking, etc.).

Diet Members Caucus for the Promotion of Femtech (LDP Femtech Shinko Giin Renmei / フェムテック振興議員連盟)

- Cross-party group of legislators actively championing the advancement of FemTech in Japan.

METI's "FemTech Demonstration Project Subsidies"

- Funds demonstration projects using FemTech solutions—such as e-learning tools, telehealth services, or wellness programs—to support working women across life events like menstruation, fertility, pregnancy, and menopause.

Comprehensive Center for Women's Health (MHLW Initiative)

- In March 2023, MHLW established a National Center for Women's Health, aimed at conducting research, education, and public awareness around women's health issues (from menstrual health to menopause)

Nadeshiko Brand evaluation framework (a joint initiative by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Tokyo Stock Exchange)

- Established in 2012, recognizes publicly-listed Japanese companies that excel in promoting women's empowerment in the workplace. This recognition helps to position them as attractive investments for long-term, value-oriented investors.

Government Initiatives - South Korea

Women's Venture Fostering Project (Ministry of SMEs & Startups / MSS)

- Launched in 2023, this initiative identifies women-led ventures (under 7 years old) and provides targeted support through selected startup planners.

Ministry of Gender Equality & Family – Fourth Basic Plan (2025–2029)

- Focuses on expanding economic participation of women across life stages with emphasis on young female participation in tech and policy measures to prevent career interruption. Includes expanded commercialization support and visibility for women-led innovation, including health-related ventures.

K-Startup Grand Challenge

- Korea's flagship soft-landing program for global startups, offers equity-free funding (up to ₩950 million), pilot programs with major conglomerates, investor access, and corporate partnerships. FemTech startups accepted here can gain exposure to Korean markets and global scaling.

Market Summary & Emerging Trends

1. Lifecycle FemTech Demand

Both Japan and South Korea grapple with low fertility rates and aging populations, creating robust demand for FemTech solutions that serve women across all life stages—from menstrual health to menopause and aging care.

- In Japan, national initiatives like the *Femtech Promotion Federation, Women's Basic Policy 2024*, and local government programs (e.g. Shizuoka Prefecture's wellness project) are emphasizing lifecycle-focused FemTech innovation.
- In South Korea, government action in 2025 is expanding support for infertility treatments, parental leave, and financial incentives—signaling more systemic backing for family and lifecycle health services

2. FemTech Japan Project & Domestic Focus

- The *Femtech Japan Project*, launched in October 2021, has grown steadily. The 7th event (Dec 2024) featured nearly 900 visitors and 50 exhibitors, highlighting beauty, wellness, and promoting local business—with domestic materials and local innovation at the core.
- Expanded into Fem+ 2024 (Tokyo Big Sight, Oct 17–19), with 9,293 visitors and 141 exhibitors, and dedicated areas like Menstruation, Pregnancy/Postnatal, Menopause, plus the new FemNext startup zone focused on early-stage innovation

3. South Korea: Menstrual Care & Health Consultation Focus

- South Korean FemTech continues to be driven by period-tracking apps, feminine hygiene innovations, and online health consultation platforms.
- Advanced lifecycle solutions—like menopausal support—are emerging more slowly but show growth potential through startup-led innovation and international expansion, especially into Southeast Asia and the U.S.

4. Digital & Wearable Health Tech Adoption

- While high-tech FemTech remains nascent, both markets show strong movement toward digital health and wearable-enabled wellness. In Japan, initiatives like AI-powered Cho Note (gut-health app), TeleMe (online mental health), and CBT-based women's wellness apps were showcased at Fem+ 2024
- Digitalization is expected to enhance customer convenience and offer more accessible healthcare support. For instance, wearable devices can be used to monitor basal body temperature, a key indicator for ovulation.

Japan	Luna Luna	<p>-It began as a menstrual cycle tracking application but has evolved into a more comprehensible platform which supports general health, diet, beauty, pregnancy, and parenting.</p> <p>-Users can enter menstruation date and basal body temperature. The service accordingly provides predictive information on menstruation and ovulation date.</p> <p>-It offers medical record management and telemedicine service.</p>
	Yorisol	<p>-It uses an AI chatbot to record daily symptoms and emotional states during menopause.</p> <p>-It helps solve problems which may arise due to lack of knowledge on women's health. For example, its function to share menopause symptoms between couples can enable couples to understand menopause and female-specific bodily features better.</p>
South Korea	Mommytalk	<p>-It allows users to share ultrasound images, track pregnancy and parenting milestones.</p> <p>-It has a dedicated community and e-commerce platform.</p>
	Monthlything	<p>-It is a menstrual cycle tracking application which predicts the menstrual cycle and manages detailed symptoms, recommends suitable products, and delivers them to the users according to user's health condition and cycle.</p>

Challenges and Opportunities for Global Collaboration

- 1. Low-Tech Dominance in FemTech Portfolios** - including menstrual tracking applications or consumer goods like organic sanitary pads and supplements
- 2. Inward-Looking Market Focus** - Focus on the domestic market, particularly in Japan: This can limit innovation, competition, and global growth.
- 3. FemTech Gaps in Age Inclusivity** - Under-addressed needs for age-inclusive FemTech portfolios and elder care services
- 4. Lack of Clear Exit Strategies and Late-Stage Investment** – While FemTech businesses are growing, they seem to lack late-stage funding or cases which can validate exit paths for investors. Without exits or scaled success cases, FemTech industry and products can remain unattractive to many major investors. In fact, FemTech is often considered a specialised sector, focusing on specific female needs, rather than a mainstream sector with high profitability.

Ethical issues

FemTech provides essential and impactful technologies for women's health, but it also requires robust security measures due to the sensitive nature of personal health data involved. Mishandling of such data can lead to serious privacy issues or even social stigma.

However, in both Japan and South Korea, institutional regulation remains relatively fragmented, compared to regions like the EU, where the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requires strict protection of sensitive data. Japan's Act on the Protection of Personal Information (APPI) does not classify FemTech under specific medical or health-tech legislation. South Korea's Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) has a similar issue. It mandates consent for data use but lacks explicit regulation for health data collected by non-clinical mobile applications, including those used for tracking menstrual cycles or fertility.

Data privacy and institutional gaps become even more important issues to address, particularly considering the potential for foreign collaboration and entry into global markets. Therefore, stronger data governance frameworks seem crucial to supporting the growth of the FemTech industry in both Japan and South Korea.

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