

Government Focal Points Overview

For the World Bank’s *Women, Business and the Law* Project

ABOUT *WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW*

Women, Business and the Law (WBL) is a World Bank flagship initiative housed in the Development Economics Vice Presidency. It provides comparable data on laws and policies that shape women’s economic participation and drive global growth across 190 economies.

The latest edition, [Women, Business and the Law 2026](#) report, expands measurement beyond the laws to present a consolidated framework built on three pillars: (i) equal opportunity laws (legal frameworks index), (ii) implementing policies and institutions (supportive frameworks index), and (iii) levels of legal enforcement (enforcement perceptions index) across 190 economies. The 2026 report provides comprehensive data across these pillars and covers 10 key topics that influence women’s access to jobs and entrepreneurship.

For **more than 15 years**, *Women, Business and the Law* data and research have played a pivotal role in informing dialogue on legal and policy reforms to promote growth and productivity. The data helps decision-makers understand where reforms matter most and how they can translate into meaningful change. It also guides private actors in navigating risk and opportunity and supports researchers examining the links how gender-equal laws relate to stronger labor-market participation, greater entrepreneurial activity, and narrower wage gaps.

This evidence base is supported by a rich set of outputs, including a comprehensive [dataset](#), [flagship global reports](#), [detailed economy profiles](#), a [reforms database spanning over 50 years](#) of women’s economic rights from 1970 until today, and [cutting-edge research](#).

HOW WE DO IT

Women, Business and the Law data are based on extensive consultations with gender experts, economists, civil society representatives, World Bank colleagues, and **government focal points**.



The process begins with the distribution of three thematic questionnaires to a large sample of lawyers, academics, and civil society organizations in 190 economies.

Government focal points play a key role in validating the answers received from experts by coordinating the completion of the three questionnaires across the relevant ministries and agencies.

Then, the WBL team reviews questionnaire responses and verifies each answer using the relevant primary legal and policy source.

Finally, the data undergo a rigorous internal review, including feedback from across the World Bank Group before findings are published.

HOW DOES *WOMEN BUSINESS AND THE LAW* ENGAGE WITH GOVERNMENTS?

Women, Business and the Law engages with governments to promote fairness and transparency throughout all stages of the report production cycle. The engagement strategy facilitates:

- **Active dialogue:** Partnering with **government focal points** to validate data and uphold high quality standards. Information provided by government serves as a key reference to confirm data received from expert contributors.
- **Exchange of views:** Providing a forum for governments to share insights and provide reform updates on WBL indicators.
- **Capacity building:** Offering introductory and technical bilateral meetings, and in-depth methodology workshops to deepen understanding of WBL data and its application.

This engagement built on close collaboration with **government focal points** supports reforms that strengthen women's economic opportunities and drive more inclusive growth.

HOW GOVERNMENT FOCAL POINTS ARE NOMINATED?

To streamline data collection from public sector, at the beginning of each WBL cycle, **government focal points** are designated in coordination with the [Boards of Executive Directors](#) of the World Bank Group. They are selected among officials from agencies or ministries handling WBL topics (e.g., violence against women, family law, access to credit, labor law, childcare services).

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT FOCAL POINTS?

Government focal points are instrumental in ensuring WBL data quality by providing the latest information about laws and policies affecting women's economic opportunities in their respective countries.

Government focal points are invited to coordinate with subject-matter experts across relevant ministries and agencies, in preparing and submitting responses to the **three WBL topic questionnaires**:

- **Family law and access to finance:** The questionnaire covers laws and policies related to women's agency and freedom of movement, marriage, property, inheritance, and entrepreneurship.
- **Labor law and childcare services:** The questionnaire covers laws and policies related to workplace protections, remuneration, parental leave, childcare, and pension.
- **Violence against women law:** The questionnaire covers laws and policies related to gender-based violence protection, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, child marriage and femicide.

Since *Women, Business and the Law* collects data in the [main business city](#) of each of the 190 economies to ensure global comparability, **government focal points** are encouraged to coordinate with relevant counterparts to share applicable legal and policy information in this city.

Responses from government representatives are used for data validation purposes only. The contributions of relevant ministries or agencies are acknowledged on the WBL [website](#).

HOW CAN GOVERNMENT FOCAL POINTS ENGAGE WITH WOMEN BUSINESS AND THE LAW?

Government focal points are invited to engage with the *Women, Business and the Law* team through the following established channels:

i) Bilateral meetings: Government focal points may request bilateral meetings with the *Women, Business and the Law* team to discuss recent developments, data and methodology by completing this online [form](#). The team welcomes the opportunities to meet with government representatives during the **IMF/World Bank Annual/Spring Meeting** and throughout the year to:

- Provide governments with an overview of the WBL project, its objectives, methodology, and engagement process (**Introductory Bilateral Meeting**)
- Offer a detailed discussion of the methodology and presentation of economy or region-specific data queries (**Technical Bilateral Meeting**).
- Deliver practical, hands-on guidance on how WBL indicators are constructed, enabling participants to better understand and apply the methodology for future reform initiatives (**In-Depth Methodology Workshop**).

i) Methodology workshops: *Women, Business and the Law* invites government focal points to attend the methodology workshops organized on an annual basis. The workshops are conducted by the *Women, Business and the Law* team to enhance understanding of WBL indicators and improve the ability to apply WBL methodologies and scoring in various contexts. Workshops are held in a hybrid format (in-person at the World Bank Headquarters and virtual). The **2026 edition** is scheduled for **May 2026**. Further information regarding the workshops, including a recording of the 2025 edition, is available on the WBL [website](#).

Additional regional and country-specific workshops may also be organized upon request from governments and WBG colleagues.

ii) WBL outreach activities: *Women, Business and the Law* invites **government focal points** to various events, networking opportunities, workshops, webinars, and potential speaking engagements focusing on how enhancing women's economic opportunities can drive global economic growth and prosperity.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#).
- Documents at the foundation of WBL data quality and transparency: [Concept Note](#), [Methodology Handbook](#) and [Manual and Guide](#).

CONTACT US:

If you have any questions, please contact us at wblengagement@worldbank.org. We invite you to stay connected by signing up for our [newsletter](#) and following us on [LinkedIn](#).