

World Bank's Women, Business and the Law report 2023

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In news– The World Bank has recently released report titled *Women, Business and the Law* on life cycle of working women.

About the report-

- It is the ninth in a series of annual studies measuring the laws that affect women's economic opportunity in 190 economies.
- **It presents eight indicators structured around women's interactions with the law** as they progress through their lives and careers: Mobility, Workplace, Pay, Marriage, Parenthood, Entrepreneurship, Assets, and Pension.
- **The index is divided into three categories:**
 1. Starting a job.
 2. During employment.
 3. After employment.
- It identifies barriers to women's economic participation and encourages the reform of discriminatory laws.
- In 2023, the study also includes new research, a literature review, and analysis of 53 years of reforms for women's right.
- It also provides the first comprehensive assessment of annual data gathered over more than five decades—from 1970 through 2022.

Key highlights-

- A score of 100 on the Index means that women are on an equal standing with men on all the eight indicators being measured.
- Out of the 190 economies covered in the Index, only 14 scored a perfect 100: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France,

Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

- Globally, on average, women enjoy only 77 percent of the legal rights that men do; and nearly 2.4 billion women of working age around the world live in economies that do not grant them the same rights as men.
- Moreover, in 2022, the global pace of reforms toward equal treatment of women under the law has slumped to a 20-year low.

FIGURE ES.1 | EIGHT WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW INDICATORS MEASURE LEGAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THEIR WORKING LIFE



India's performance-

- **India scored 74.4 out of a possible 100 in the World Bank index** on life cycle of working women.
- **India scored higher than the 63.7 average for the South Asian region**, though lower than Nepal which had the region's highest score of 80.6.
- For India, the Index used data on the laws and regulations applicable in Mumbai, viewed as the country's main business city.
- However, India lags behind when it comes to laws affecting women's pay, laws affecting women's work after having children, constraints on women starting and running a business, gender differences in property and inheritance, and laws affecting the size of a woman's pension.
- Recommending that India consider reforms to improve legal equality for women, the report noted that one of the lowest scores for India comes from the indicator assessing laws affecting women's pay.