

Bangladesh

Women, Business and the Law 2023 (WBL2023) presents an index covering 190 economies and structured around the life cycle of a working woman. In total, 35 questions are scored across eight indicators. Overall scores are then calculated by taking the average of each indicator, with 100 representing the highest possible score. Data refer to the laws and regulations that are applicable to the main business city (Dhaka). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Bangladesh scores 49.4 out of 100**. The overall score for Bangladesh is lower than the regional average observed across South Asia (63.7). Within the South Asia region, the maximum score observed is 80.6 (Nepal).

Bangladesh - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2023



Relative Strengths

When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, Bangladesh gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

However, when it comes to laws affecting women's decisions to work, laws affecting women's pay, constraints related to marriage, 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, Bangladesh could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Bangladesh is on the indicator measuring laws affecting women's work after having children (the WBL2023 Parenthood indicator). To improve on the Parenthood indicator, Bangladesh may wish to consider making the government administer 100% of maternity leave benefits, making paid leave available to fathers, making paid parental leave available, and prohibiting the dismissal of pregnant workers.

Recent Reforms

No reforms were observed during the past year (October 2nd, 2021 – October 1st, 2022).



Further data details for Bangladesh are available at:
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreconomies/bangladesh/2023>



	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	President's Order No. 9, Bangladesh Passport Order of 1973, Arts. 5 and 6; Passport Application Form
	Can a woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Workplace	Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Supreme Court of Bangladesh, BNWLA v. Government of Bangladesh, 14 May 2009, Petition No. 5916 of 2008
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	No	<i>Criminal:</i> No applicable provisions could be located <i>Civil:</i> No applicable provisions could be located
Pay	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Can a woman work at night in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman work in a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	No	Labor Act 2006, Sec. 79
	Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	No	Labor Act 2006, Secs. 39, 40, 42 and 87
Marriage	Is the law free of legal provisions that require a married woman to obey her husband?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	Can a woman be head of household in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	No	Muslim Family Law Ordinance, Arts. 7 and 8
	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Muslim Family Law Ordinance, Arts. 6 and 7(5); Family Courts Ordinance, Art. 23
Parenthood	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Labor Act 2006, Sec. 46
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	Labor Act 2006, Sec. 47 (4)
	Is paid leave available to fathers?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Entrepreneurship	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Can a woman sign a contract in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman register a business in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman open a bank account in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Assets	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Muslim Personal Law (Sharia) Application Act, Art. 2
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	No	Muslim Personal Law (Sharia) Application Act, Art. 2
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	No	Muslim Personal Law (Sharia) Application Act, Art. 2
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Muslim Personal Law (Sharia) Application Act, Art. 2
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	Muslim Personal Law (Sharia) Application Act, Art. 2
Pension	Is the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits the same?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women the same?	Yes	Labor Act 2006, Sec. 28
	Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	No	No applicable provisions could be located