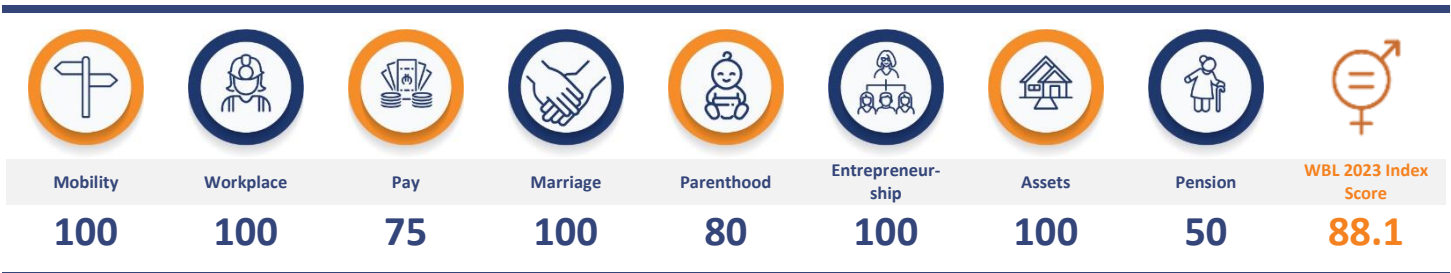


Lao PDR

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 (Vientiane). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Lao PDR scores 88.1 out of 100**. The overall score for Lao PDR is higher than the regional average observed across East Asia and the Pacific (72.6). Within the East Asia and the Pacific region, the maximum score observed is 91.9 (Hong Kong SAR, China).

Lao PDR - Scores for *Women, Business and the Law 2023*



Relative Strengths

When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, laws affecting women's decisions to work, constraints related to marriage, constraints on women starting and running a business, and gender differences in property and inheritance, Lao PDR gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

However, when it comes to laws affecting women's pay, laws affecting women's work after having children, and laws affecting the size of a woman's pension, Lao PDR could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Lao PDR is on the indicator measuring laws affecting the size of a woman's pension (the WBL2023 Pension indicator). To improve on the Pension indicator, Lao PDR may wish to consider equalizing the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits, and accounting for periods of absence from work due to childcare in pension benefits.

Recent Reforms

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



Further data details for Lao PDR are available at:
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreconomies/lao-pdr/2023>



	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 162; Gender Equality Law, Art. 18
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 161-162
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	Passport Application Form; Information for Passport Applicants
	Can a woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 161-162; Law on Gender Equality, Art. 17
Workplace	Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 161-162; Law on Development and Protection of Women of 2004, Art. 15
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Labor Law, Arts. 3 and 141; Gender Equality Law, Art. 14
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 83(4)
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> No applicable provisions could be located <i>Civil:</i> Labor Law, Arts. 83(4) and 90
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?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
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	Civil Code, Arts. 161; Gender Equality Law, Art. 18
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Law on Development and Protection of Women, Ch. 2; Decree on the Implementation of the Law on Development and Protection of Women, Part V; Law on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Children, Art. 25
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 171-182
	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 193
Parenthood	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 98
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 98; Law on Social Security 2018, Arts. 24 and 25
	Is paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 58(4)
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 100
Entrepreneurship	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Penal Code, Art. 177; Gender Equality Law, Art. 10
	Can a woman sign a contract in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 10, 161 and 162; Law on Development and Protection of Women of 2004, Art. 15
	Can a woman register a business in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 10, 161 and 162; Law on Development and Protection of Women of 2004, Art. 15
	Can a woman open a bank account in the same way as man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 161-162; Law on Development and Protection of Women of 2004, Art. 15
Assets	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 169
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 574, 576 and 577; Law on Gender Equality, Art. 18
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 574 and 576
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 169
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 169 and 181
Pension	Is the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits the same?	No	Law on Social Security 2018, Arts. 34 and 58
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women the same?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	No	No applicable provisions could be located