











Belize

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score	WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score	WBL 2.0 expert opinions score
62.5	62.5	58.1

Women, Business and the Law 2024 (WBL 2024) identifies barriers for women’s economic empowerment in three areas: women’s legal rights, policy instruments designed to support the implementation of these rights, and how these rights are realized in practice. For that purpose, three new *Women, Business and the Law 2.0* indexes are presented for ten indicators: (1) legal frameworks, (2) supportive frameworks, and (3) expert opinions. For the WBL 2.0 legal frameworks index, 40 questions are scored across the ten indicators for 190 economies. For the WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks index, 30 questions are scored across the ten indicators for 190 economies. Overall economy level legal and supportive frameworks scores are then calculated by taking the average of each indicator, with 100 representing the highest possible score. The WBL 2.0 expert opinions index is created for a total of 164 economies. Expert opinion scores are not available for 26 economies due to an insufficient number of responses received from those economies during data collection. Individual responses at the economy level for 15 expert opinions questions across the ten indicators are scored by taking the median value of all responses per question. The economy level expert opinions index is equal to the simple unweighted average of the ten indicator scores.

For Belize, data refer to the legal frameworks, supportive frameworks, and expert opinions that are applicable to the main business city (Belize City). The scores for Belize are shown in the table below.

Women, Business and the Law 2024 2.0 indicator scores

										
WBL 2.0	Safety	Mobility	Workplace	Pay	Marriage	Parenthood	Childcare	Entrepreneurship	Assets	Pension
Legal frameworks score	25.0	100.0	25.0	50.0	100.0	75.0	25.0	25.0	100.0	100.0
Supportive frameworks score	50.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	33.3	25.0	100.0	66.7	50.0
Expert opinions score	12.5	100.0	25.0	37.5	75.0	56.3	12.5	87.5	100.0	75.0

In summary, the **WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score** for Belize (62.5 out of 100.0) is lower than the global average (64.2) and lower than the Latin America & Caribbean regional average (69.1). When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, constraints related to marriage, laws affecting women’s property and inheritance and laws affecting the size of a woman’s pension, Belize obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example, one of the lowest scores for Belize is on the indicator measuring laws affecting women’s safety. To improve on the Safety indicator, Belize may wish to consider putting in place legislation on domestic violence, introducing legislation on femicide and introducing legislation on child marriage.

The **WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score** for Belize (62.5 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (39.5) and higher than the Latin America & Caribbean regional average (38.6). When it comes to supportive frameworks affecting freedom of movement, supportive frameworks affecting women’s pay, supportive frameworks related to marriage and supportive frameworks related to women starting and running a business, Belize obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0).

As an example, one of the lowest scores for Belize is on the indicator measuring supportive frameworks affecting women's decisions to work. To improve on the Workplace indicator, Belize may wish to consider publishing guidelines on non-discrimination based on gender in recruitment, publishing guidelines on flexible work arrangements and establishing a specialized body that receives complaints about gender discrimination in employment.

The **WBL 2.0 expert opinions score** for Belize (58.1 out of 100.0) is lower than the global average (65.7) and lower than the Latin America & Caribbean regional average (61.8). When it comes to expert opinions on freedom of movement and expert opinions on women's property and inheritance, Belize obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example, one of the lowest scores for Belize is on the indicator measuring expert opinions on women's safety.

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks data

QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Safety		
Is there legislation on domestic violence?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is there legislation on femicide?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is there comprehensive legislation on sexual harassment?	Yes	Protection Against Sexual Harassment Act, Secs. 2, 3, 7-8, and 16(2)(e)(3)(4); Labour Act 2011, Secs. 42(1)(h) and (3), and 205(1)(c); Cybercrime Act, 2020, Secs. 15 and 32
Is there legislation on child marriage?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Mobility		
Can a woman travel internationally in the same way as a man?	Yes	Passport Act, Sec. 2; Passports Regulations 2022, Sec. 6(1)
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
Do women and men have equal rights to confer citizenship to their spouses and their children?	Yes	Constitution, Arts. 24, 25 and 26(1); Belizean Nationality Act, Secs. 4(3), 5(2) and 11; Belizean Nationality (Amendment) Act 2022, Sec. 2
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
Does the law prohibit discrimination in recruitment based on marital status, parental status, and age?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law allow employees to request flexible work?	No	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 an industrial job in the same way as a man?	No	Labor Act, Secs. 2 and 161
Can a woman work in a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Marriage		
Can a woman be "head of household" or "head of family" in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
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 obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	Supreme Court of Judicature Act, Art. 129A(1); Married Persons (Protection) (Amendment) Act 2022, Sec. 3
Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	Supreme Court of Judicature Act, Art. 139(1)
Parenthood		
Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Social Security Act, Sec. 11; Labour Act, Sec. 177

Are leave benefits for mothers paid solely by the government?	Yes	Social Security Act, Sec. 9; Social Security (Benefit) Regulations, Secs. 9 and 11
Is there paid leave available to fathers?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Labor Amendment Act 2011, Sec. 42(1)(g)
Childcare		
Does the law establish provision of childcare services in center-based settings?	Yes	Social Service Agencies Regulations of 1998, Art. 2
Does the law establish any form of support to families for childcare services?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law establish any form of support to non-state childcare providers?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law establish quality standards for the provision of childcare services in center-based settings?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Entrepreneurship		
Can a woman undertake entrepreneurial activities in the same way as a man?	Yes	Married Women's Property Act, Arts. 3 and 11; Business Names Act, Arts. 3 and 5
Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law prescribe a gender quota on corporate boards?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law include gender-sensitive procurement provisions for public procurement processes?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Assets		
Do men and women have equal administrative power and ownership rights to immovable property, including land?	Yes	Law of Property Act of 1954, Arts. 12 and 39; Married Women's Property Act, Arts. 3 and 4; Registered Land Act, Art. 34(1)
Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Administration of Estates Act, Art. 54
Do male and female surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Administration of Estates Act, Art. 54
Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	Yes	Supreme Court of Judicature Act, Art. 148(A)(5)(b)
Pension		
Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	Yes	Social Security Act, Art. 25
Are the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits equal?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women equal?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Social Security Act, Art. 61

WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks data

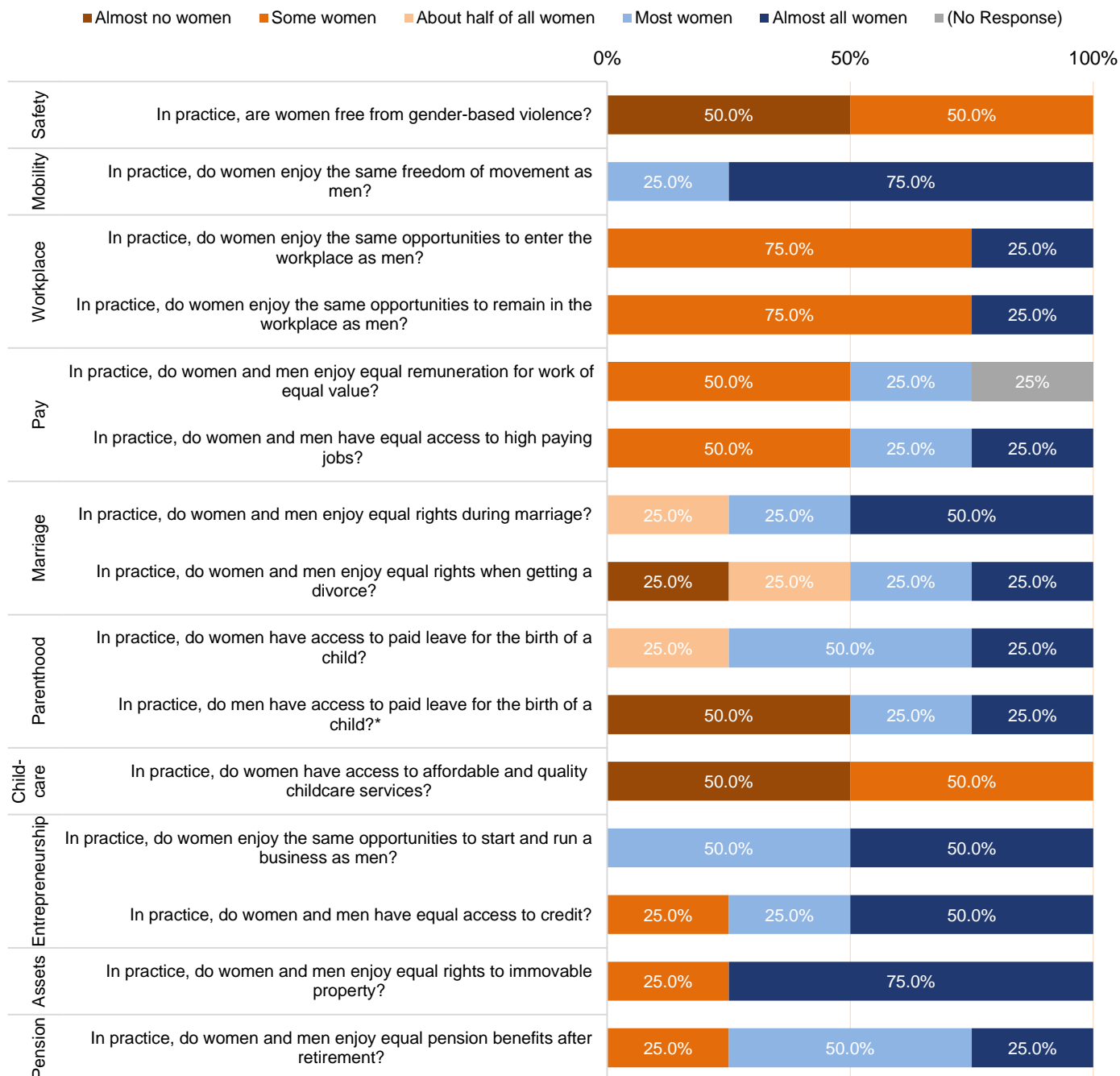
QUESTION	ANSWER	SOURCE
Safety		
Has the government developed comprehensive mechanisms to address violence against women?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Are there special procedures for cases of sexual harassment?	Yes	Protection against Sexual Harassment Act, Part III; Cybercrime Act, 2020, Part III
Is there a government entity responsible for the monitoring and implementation of national services, plans and programmes addressing violence against women?	Yes	Women and Family Support Department of the Ministry of Human Development, Families and Indigenous People's Affairs; National Women's Commission of Belize
Is there an annual budgetary allocation towards violence against women risk mitigation, prevention and response programs?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Mobility		

Are passport application processes the same for women and men?	Yes	Passport application form; Passport application procedures
Are the application processes for official identity documents the same for women and men?	Yes	Social security registration; voter registration
Is there a current policy or plan that explicitly considers the specific mobility needs of women in public transportation?	Yes	Comprehensive National Transportation Master Plan
Workplace		
Has the government published guidelines on non-discrimination based on gender in recruitment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has the government published guidelines on flexible work arrangements?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a specialized body that receives complaints about gender discrimination in employment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Pay		
Are there pay transparency measures or enforcement mechanisms to address the gender pay gap?	Yes	Equal Pay Act, Secs. 8 and 9
Is sex-disaggregated data on employment in different industries or sectors published at least on an annual basis?	Yes	Statistical Institute of Belize: Labor Force Survey of the
Marriage		
Is there a fast-track process or procedure for family law disputes?	Yes	Supreme Court of Judicature Act, Secs. 129, 152(3) and 153(1); Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Act 2018, Sec. 2
Are there specialized family courts?	Yes	Family Court
Is legal aid available for family law disputes?	Yes	Legal Advice and Service Center
Parenthood		
Is it possible to apply for maternity benefits through a single government application process?	Yes	Social Security Board: Salaries Record Form Maternity Benefit
Are incentives in place to encourage fathers to take paternity leave on the birth of a child?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has sex-disaggregated data on unpaid care work been published?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Childcare		
Is there a publicly available registry or database of childcare providers?	Yes	Official Website of the Ministry of Human Development, Families and Indigenous People's Affairs
Is there a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by parents?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by non-state childcare providers?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has the government published any reports on quality of childcare services within the last 3 years?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Entrepreneurship		
Is sex-disaggregated data on business activities, entrepreneurship, or women-owned businesses published on a regular basis?	Yes	Statistical Institute of Belize
Are there government-led programs that provide support to female entrepreneurs such as access to finance or regarding agency and empowerment?	Yes	Recovery of MSMEs and Women's Empowerment in Belize; Women Economic Empowerment in the Adjacency Zone of Belize Project
Is there a current national government plan or strategy with a focus on women's access to financial services?	Yes	National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2019-2022
Assets		
Are there mechanisms or incentives to encourage women to register immovable property?	Yes	Law of Property Act, Art. 39; Married Women's Property Act, Art. 7(1); Registered Land Act, Arts. 102-107
Are there awareness measures in place to improve women's access to information about marital and inheritance rights?	Yes	Women's Rights Handbook
Is anonymized sex-disaggregated data on property ownership published on a regular basis?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Pension		



Are there incentives in place to increase women's retirement benefits?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a procedure in place for pension beneficiaries to challenge the decisions of the competent authority regarding their benefits?	Yes	Social Security Appeal Tribunal

WBL 2.0 distribution of expert opinion responses



*Note: The response options for the second Parenthood question above are formatted as almost no men, some men, about half of all men, most men, almost all men.