











# Lao PDR

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score	WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score	WBL 2.0 expert opinions score
<b>72.5</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>90.0</b>

*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 Lao PDR, data refer to the legal frameworks, supportive frameworks, and expert opinions that are applicable to the main business city (Vientiane). The scores for Lao PDR 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	50.0	100.0	75.0	75.0	100.0	75.0	25.0	50.0	100.0	75.0
Supportive frameworks score	75.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	66.7	33.3	25.0	66.7	33.3	50.0
Expert opinions score	75.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	50.0	75.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

In summary, the **WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score** for Lao PDR (72.5 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (64.2) and higher than the East Asia & Pacific regional average (57.8). When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, constraints related to marriage and laws affecting women’s property and inheritance, Lao PDR obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example, one of the lowest scores for Lao PDR is on the indicator measuring laws affecting childcare. To improve on the Childcare indicator, Lao PDR may wish to consider introducing legislation on any form of support to families for childcare services, putting in place legislation on any form of support to non-state childcare providers and adopting legislation on quality standards for the provision of childcare services in center-based settings.

The **WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score** for Lao PDR (41.7 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (39.5) and higher than the East Asia & Pacific regional average (33.9). Lao PDR does not attain a perfect score on any of the WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks indicators. There is room for improvement across all ten indicators. As an example, one of the lowest scores for Lao PDR is on the indicator measuring supportive frameworks affecting women’s decisions to work. To improve

on the Workplace indicator, Lao PDR 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 Lao PDR (90.0 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (65.7) and higher than the East Asia & Pacific regional average (64.8). When it comes to expert opinions on freedom of movement, expert opinions on women's decisions to work, expert opinions on women's pay, expert opinions on marriage, expert opinions on women starting and running a business, expert opinions on women's property and inheritance and expert opinions on women's pensions, Lao PDR obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example, one of the lowest scores for Lao PDR is on the indicator measuring expert opinions on women's work after having children.

## WBL 2.0 legal frameworks data

QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
<b>Safety</b>		
Is there legislation on domestic violence?	Yes	Law on Development and Protection of Women, Arts. 29-32 and 50; Law on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Children, Arts. 10, 42-44, 68, and 79
Is there legislation on femicide?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is there comprehensive legislation on sexual harassment?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is there legislation on child marriage?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 150(1) and 158(1); Penal Law, Art. 269
<b>Mobility</b>		
Can a woman travel internationally in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 161 and 162; Law on Gender Equality, Art. 17
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
Do women and men have equal rights to confer citizenship to their spouses and their children?	Yes	Law on Lao Nationality, Arts. 9, 11 and 14
<b>Workplace</b>		
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
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?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 33(1)
<b>Pay</b>		
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?	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
<b>Marriage</b>		
Can a woman be "head of household" or "head of family" in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 161; Gender Equality Law, Art. 18
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	Civil Code, Arts. 171-182
Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 193
<b>Parenthood</b>		

Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 98
Are leave benefits for mothers paid solely by the government?	No	Labor Law, Art. 98; Law on Social Security 2018, Arts. 49 and 72
Is there paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 58(4)
Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 100
<b>Childcare</b>		
Does the law establish provision of childcare services in center-based settings?	Yes	Law on Education 2015, Arts. 10, 12 and 29-31
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
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>		
Can a woman undertake entrepreneurial activities 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
Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Penal Code, Art. 177; Gender Equality Law, Art. 10
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
<b>Assets</b>		
Do men and women have equal administrative power and ownership rights to immovable property, including land?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 169; Land Law, Art. 3; Law on Gender Equality, Arts. 3(3) and 10
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 male and female surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 574 and 576
Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts.169 and 181
<b>Pension</b>		
Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	No	Law on Social Security 2018, Arts. 34 and 58
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	Law on Social Security 2018, Art. 59; Decree on Social Security System for Enterprise Employees, Art. 79

## WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks data

QUESTION	ANSWER	SOURCE
<b>Safety</b>		
Has the government developed comprehensive mechanisms to address violence against women?	Yes	National Plan of Action for Child Protection System Strengthening (2022 – 2026); The second Five-Year National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children (2021-2025); The Fourth-Five Year National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2025); Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children; One-Stop Service Unit for Women and Children
Are there special procedures for cases of sexual harassment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a government entity responsible for the monitoring and implementation of national services, plans and programmes addressing violence against women?	Yes	National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers, and Children (NCAWMC)

Is there an annual budgetary allocation towards violence against women risk mitigation, prevention and response programs?	Yes	Lao Women's Union
<b>Mobility</b>		
Are passport application processes the same for women and men?	Yes	Passport application form
Are the application processes for official identity documents the same for women and men?	Yes	ID application procedures
Is there a current policy or plan that explicitly considers the specific mobility needs of women in public transportation?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Workplace</b>		
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
<b>Pay</b>		
Are there pay transparency measures or enforcement mechanisms to address the gender pay gap?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is sex-disaggregated data on employment in different industries or sectors published at least on an annual basis?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Marriage</b>		
Is there a fast-track process or procedure for family law disputes?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Are there specialized family courts?	Yes	Civil Procedure Law (Amended), Arts. 44 - 50
Is legal aid available for family law disputes?	Yes	Ministry of Justice
<b>Parenthood</b>		
Is it possible to apply for maternity benefits through a single government application process?	Yes	Website of Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
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
<b>Childcare</b>		
Is there a publicly available registry or database of childcare providers?	No	Insufficient evidence located
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?	Yes	Ministry of Education and Sports Education and Sports Sector Performance Annual Report 2020-2021, p. 14-18
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>		
Is sex-disaggregated data on business activities, entrepreneurship, or women-owned businesses published on a regular basis?	Yes	Lao Statistics Bureau
Are there government-led programs that provide support to female entrepreneurs such as access to finance or regarding agency and empowerment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a current national government plan or strategy with a focus on women's access to financial services?	Yes	Financial Inclusion Roadmap (2018 - 2025)
<b>Assets</b>		
Are there mechanisms or incentives to encourage women to register immovable property?	Yes	Decision on Determination of Land Register and Land Title, Art. 7 (4.2)

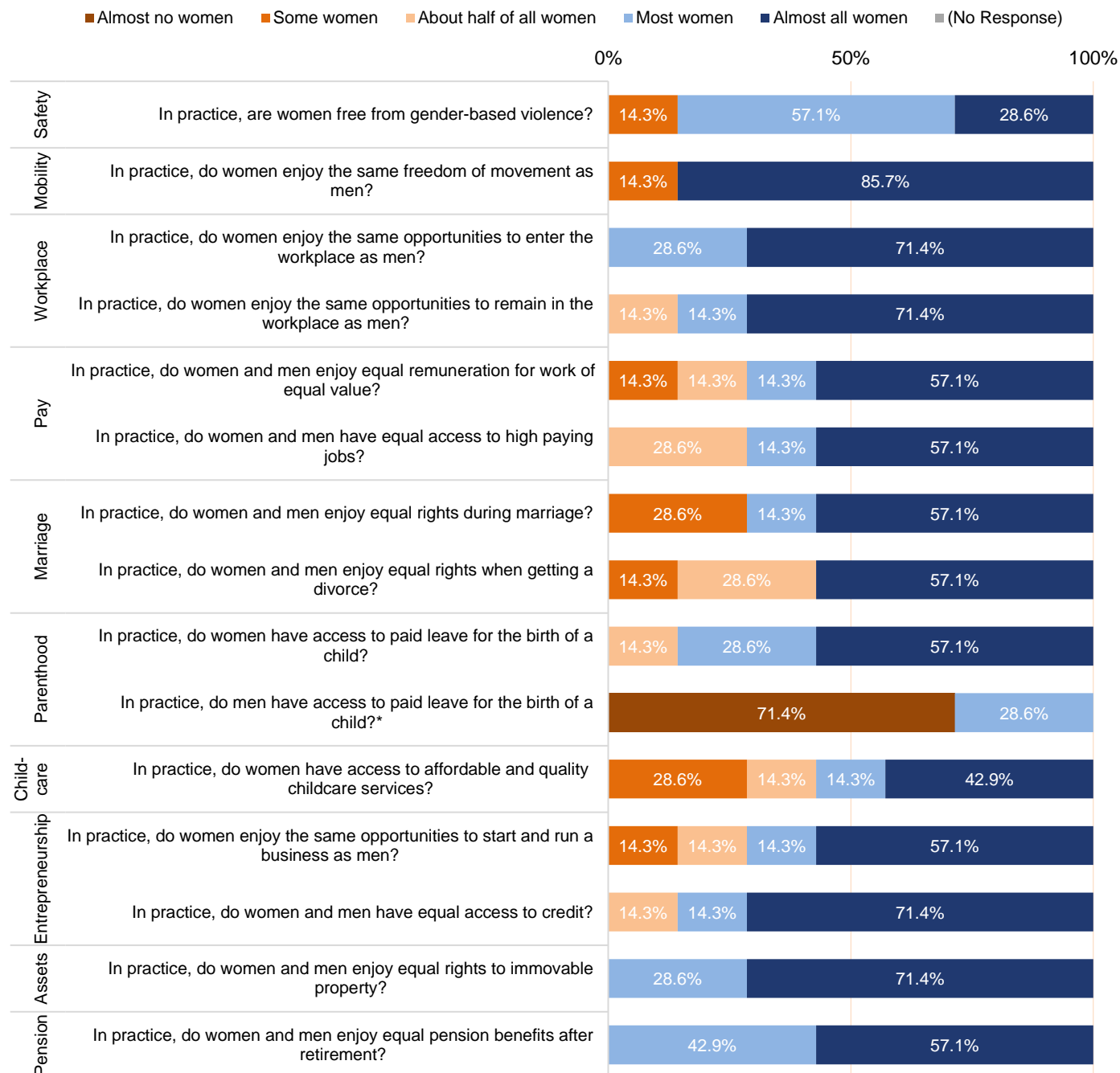


Are there awareness measures in place to improve women's access to information about marital and inheritance rights?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is anonymized sex-disaggregated data on property ownership published on a regular basis?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Pension</b>		
Are there incentives 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	Law on Social Security 2018, Arts. 99-104

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## 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.