



WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW

FAQ – WBL 2025

Methodology Workshops

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

1. Could you please explain what gender-responsive procurement means, and how it differs from gender-sensitive procurement?

Gender-responsive procurement is a strategic approach that actively leverages purchasing and sourcing decisions to promote gender equality and create meaningful economic opportunities. Unlike gender-sensitive procurement, which acknowledges gender disparities, gender-responsive procurement embeds equity into practice. This involves conducting due diligence to identify and mitigate gender-related risks and seeking opportunities to advance gender mainstreaming across the supply chain. It includes engaging with women-owned businesses, women entrepreneurs, and gender-responsive suppliers. Despite women owning one-third of businesses globally, they receive only about 1 percent of procurement spending. This approach addresses systemic gaps while unlocking new avenues for job creation, innovation, and inclusive economic growth.

2. Can you please explain why 40% is considered the threshold for achieving the full score on the question about gender quotas for corporate boards?

Women, Business and the Law uses a 40 percent threshold as the benchmark for achieving the full score because it is reflected in international standards such as the EU Women in Boards Directive (Directive (EU) 2022/2381). Specifically, this Directive mandates that at least 40 percent of non-executive board positions in listed companies be held by the underrepresented gender, a major policy milestone in advancing gender balance at the top levels of corporate leadership. This benchmark is also supported by private sector data and thought leadership, such as [MSCI's](#) reporting, which recognizes 40 percent board representation as the new frontier for meaningful gender diversity. Adopting such quota has the potential of boosting women's representation, thereby enhancing gender diversity, which in turn can improve corporate performance and generate economic growth. Boardroom diversity can improve firm-level outcomes, help normalize women's leadership, expand role models, and build the confidence and networks needed for women to pursue entrepreneurial and executive roles.

3. Could you provide some examples of government-led programs that support female entrepreneurs with training or business development?

The Entrepreneurship indicator captures whether governments are actively implementing programs to support women entrepreneurs through training, coaching, or business development services. Across economies, *Women, Business and the Law* observes a wide variety of programs administered by governments. Some programs are comprehensive in scope, covering the entire entrepreneurial journey, from ideation and business planning to formalization, scaling, and access to finance. Others are more targeted, focusing on specific barriers that women face. These may include technical and soft skills training, mentorship and coaching to strengthen confidence and leadership, business development services such as market linkages and strategic planning, and incubation or advisory support to help women formalize and grow their ventures. Many of these programs are tailored to meet the needs of different groups of women. By addressing gender-specific constraints, government-led initiatives help women gain essential skills, build networks,

and access markets. In doing so, they play a vital role in promoting inclusive economic growth and expanding women's opportunities in entrepreneurship.

4. Do you have an indicator for the number of small businesses owned by women in a given country?

While *Women, Business and the Law* does not provide and measure the exact number of women-owned small businesses, it includes an indicator that tracks whether sex-disaggregated data is collected and regularly published on women-owned or women-led businesses. This question falls under the Supportive Frameworks pillar and reflects the importance of data availability for evidence-based policymaking. The presence of such data is a critical first step toward understanding and addressing gender gaps in entrepreneurship at the national level. In the economy snapshots, WBL lists the source that publishes data on women-owned or women-led businesses.

5. Do you have information on entrepreneurship in Africa?

Women, Business and the Law provides detailed information on economies across Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa. The *Women, Business and the Law* website provides economy-specific [snapshots](#) that outline each economy's legal and policy scores as well as regional factsheets for [Eastern and South Africa](#) and [Western and Central Africa](#). These offer a concise overview of the legal environment for women's economic participation. This allows for easy comparison across economies and within regions, and helps highlight areas of progress and reform opportunities.