



WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW 2026

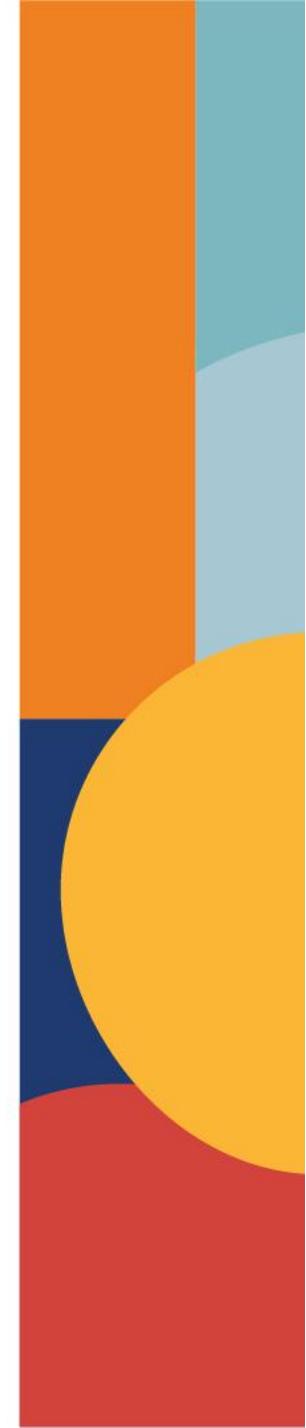
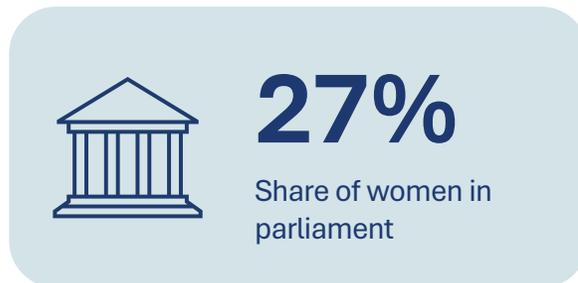
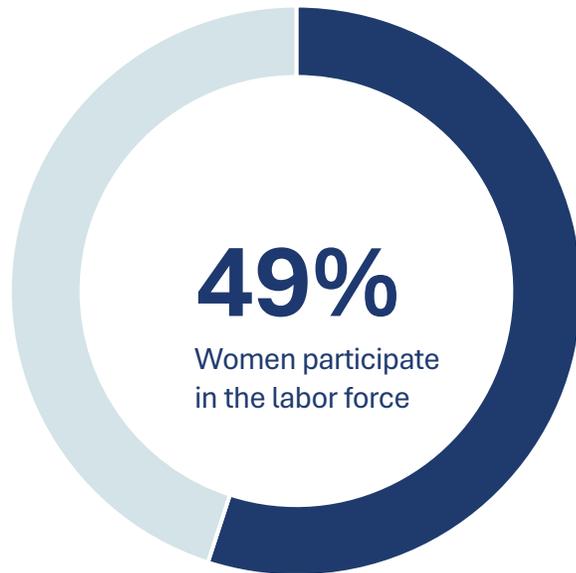
Benchmarking Laws for Jobs
and Inclusive Growth



Where are the women?



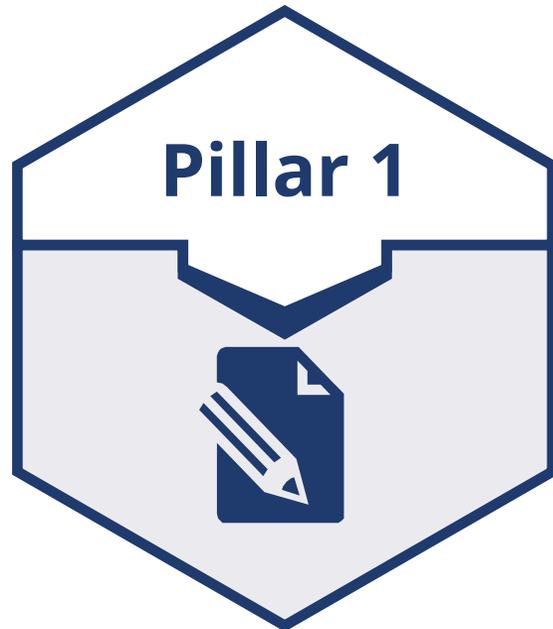
The scale of the challenge



If 3.9 billion women had equal access to jobs, global GDP could increase by 20 percent.

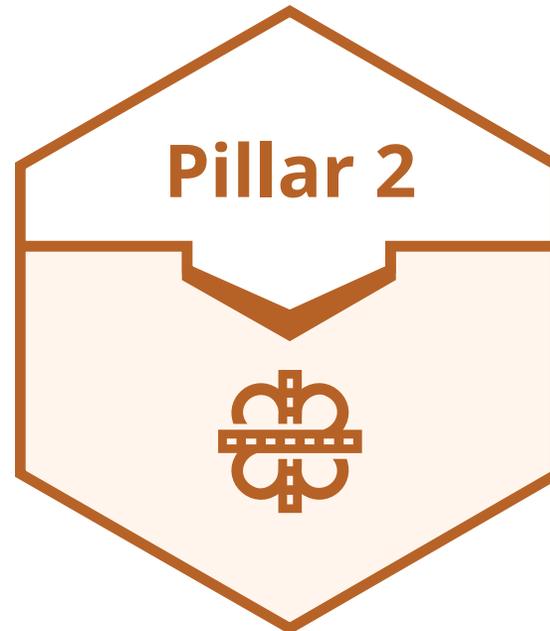


From laws on the books to implementation in practice



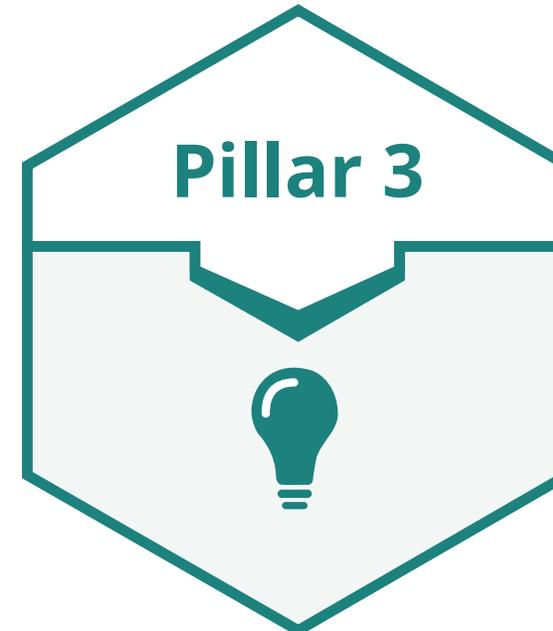
Legal frameworks

Laws and regulations



Supportive frameworks

Institutions, policies and programs



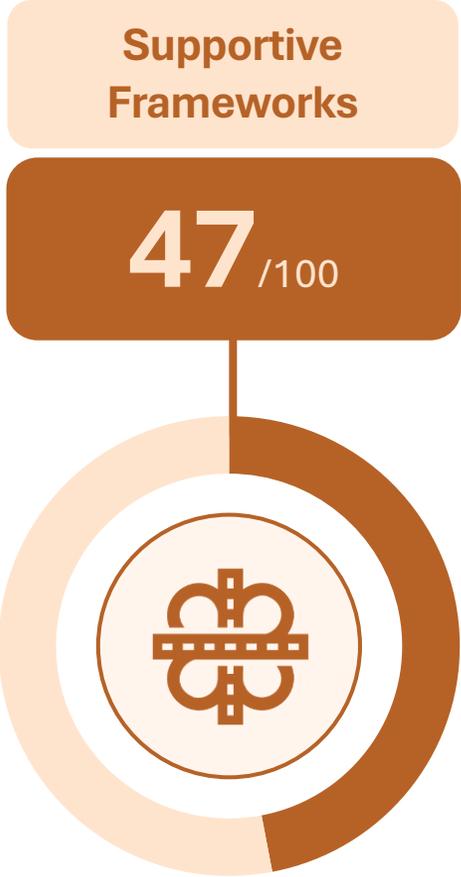
Enforcement perceptions

Legal experts' views on the extent of enforcement of the law

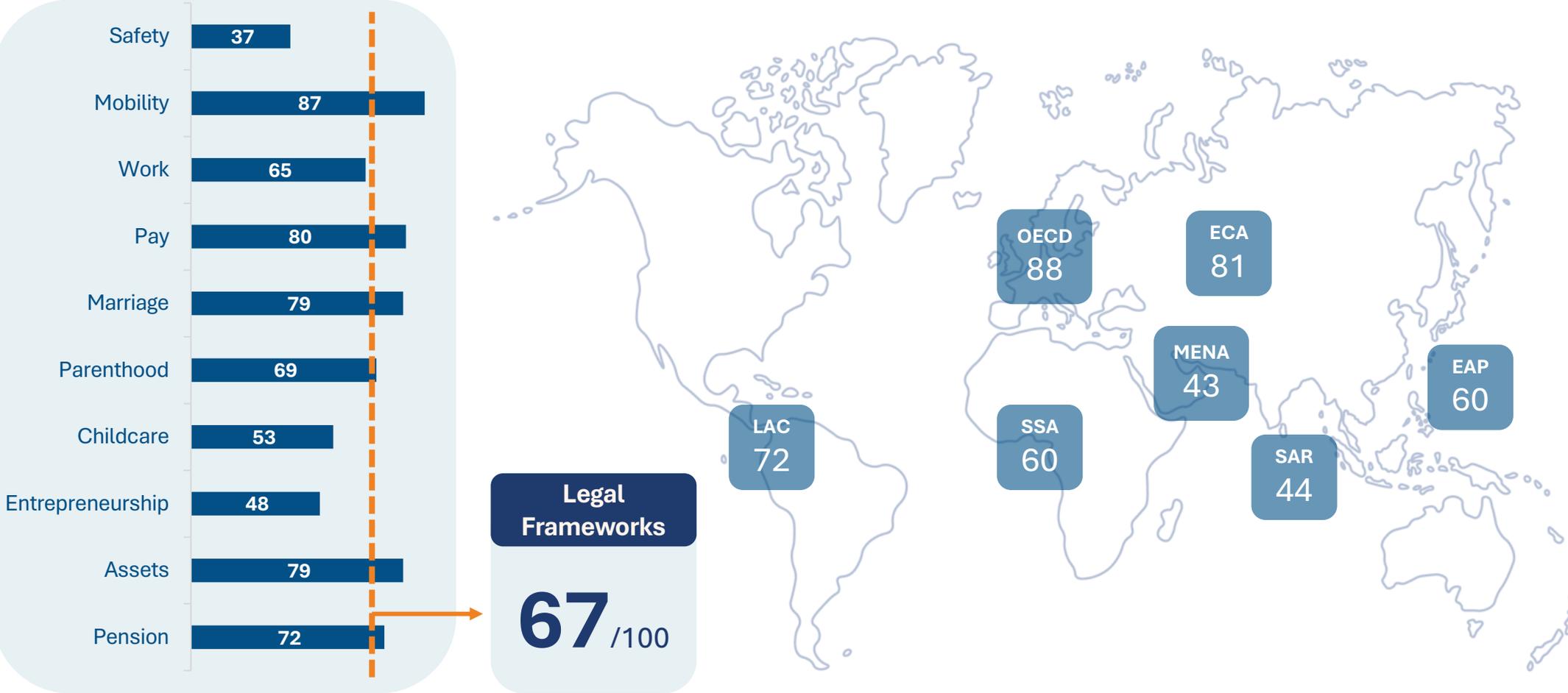
Measuring equal opportunity in every walk of life



Women's economic participation remain incomplete in law and in practice



Legal equality remains elusive everywhere



Only 4% of women live in countries that offer near full legal equality

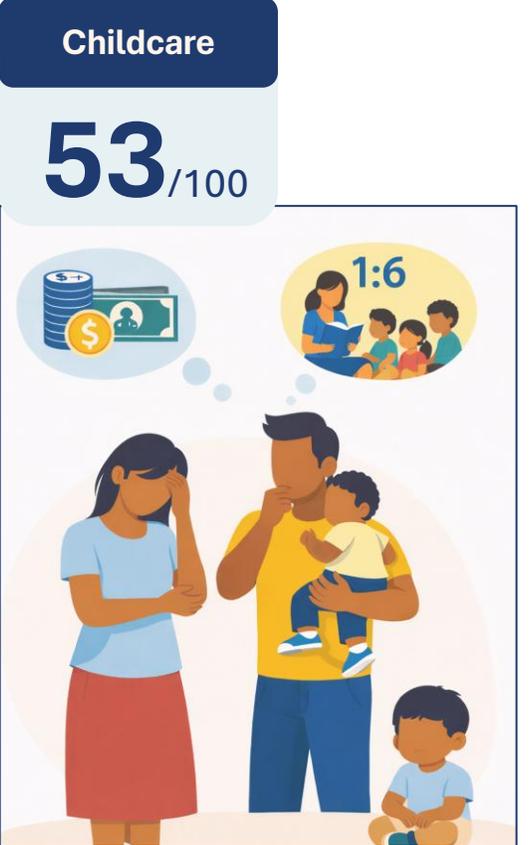
Legal rights are weakest in three key areas



Women enjoy barely a third of the legal protections from violence, including safeguards against sexual harassment.

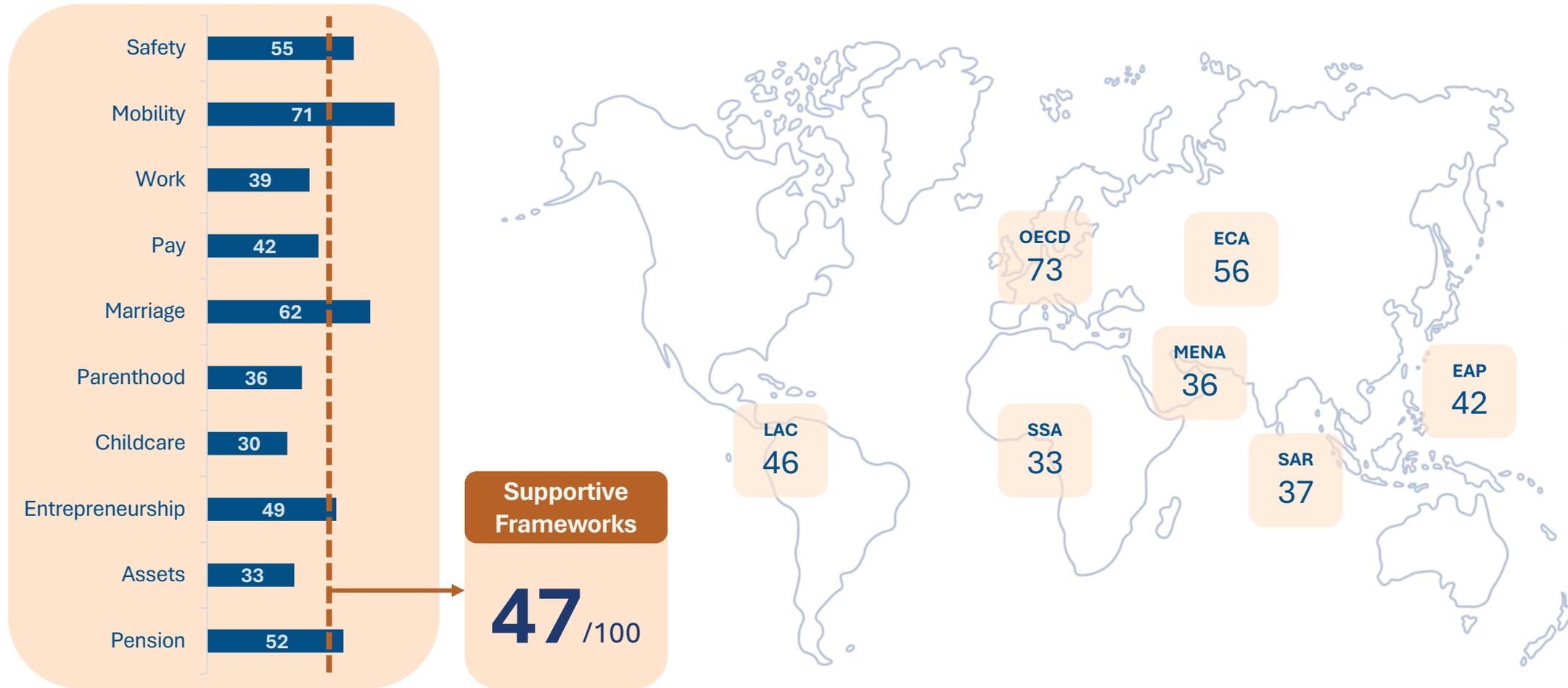


Discrimination in access to credit limits women's ability to open, grow, and scale firms.



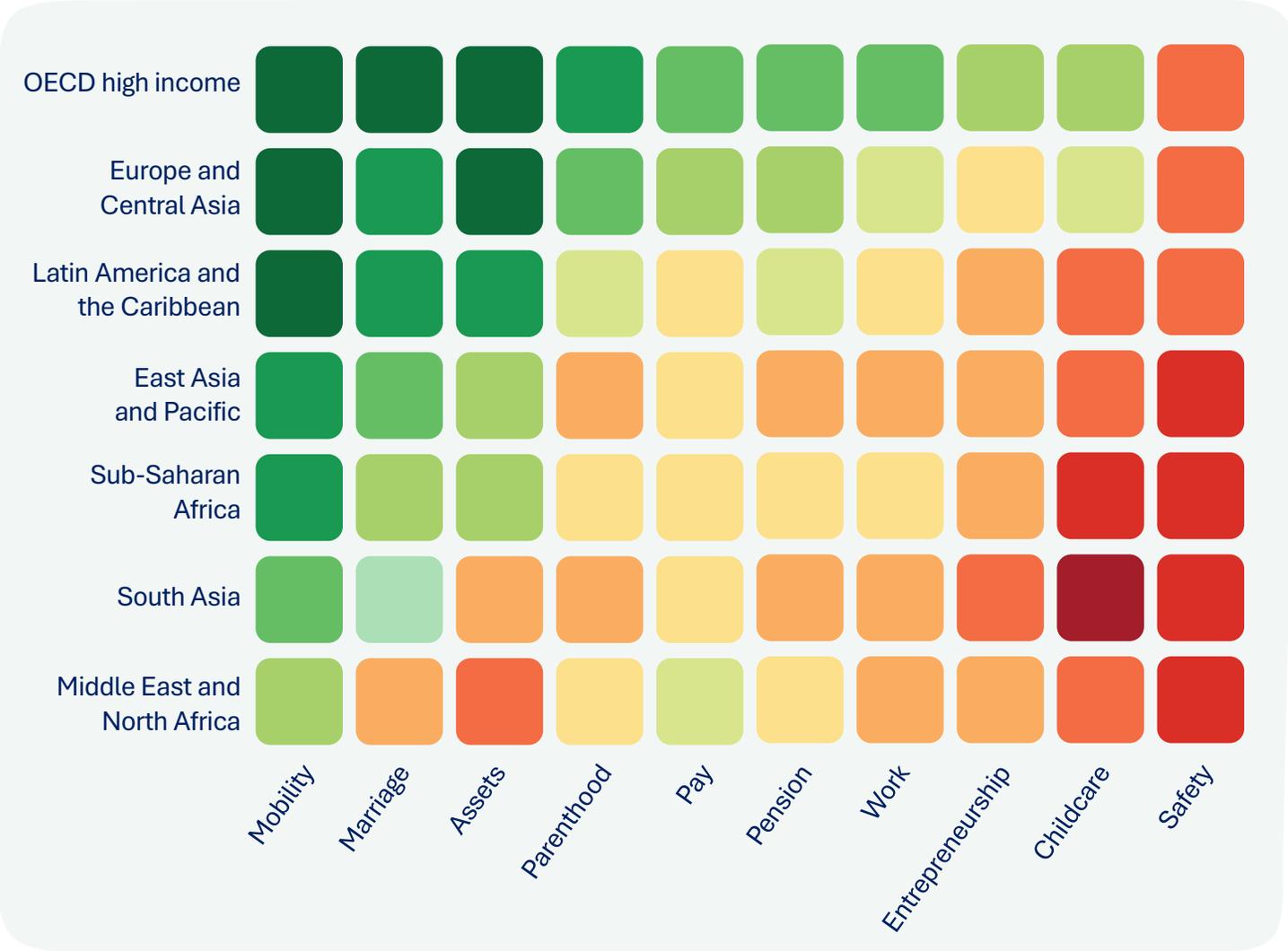
Financial support and quality safeguards for childcare is the exception, not the norm.

Only half of the supportive frameworks are in place



Improving institutional support is key to improving women's economic opportunity

Laws are only half enforced around the world



Enforcement Perceptions

53 /100

Weak enforcement in the areas of **Safety** and **Childcare** drive uneven performance **across all regions.**

Reforms are gaining momentum where they are most needed

113 reforms across 68 economies



Safety

22 economies | 24 reforms

Cyber harassment protections now cover women in 90 economies



Entrepreneurship

19 economies | 21 reforms

Most reforms strengthened women's representation in **corporate boards**



Parenthood

13 economies | 16 reforms

Most reforms introduced or increased the duration of **paid leave** for fathers

Top Reforming Economies

- Egypt
- Madagascar
- Somalia, Fed. Rep.
- Oman
- Jordan
- Kyrgyz Republic

The action agenda for women's economic opportunity

ADOPT

equal opportunity laws



INVEST

in implementation and enforcement



CREATE

jobs, growth, and shared prosperity



Ensure

equal opportunities at every age and every stage through coordinated, cross-sector action

Turn

legal rights into lived realities by strengthening enforcement and investing in implementation systems

Use

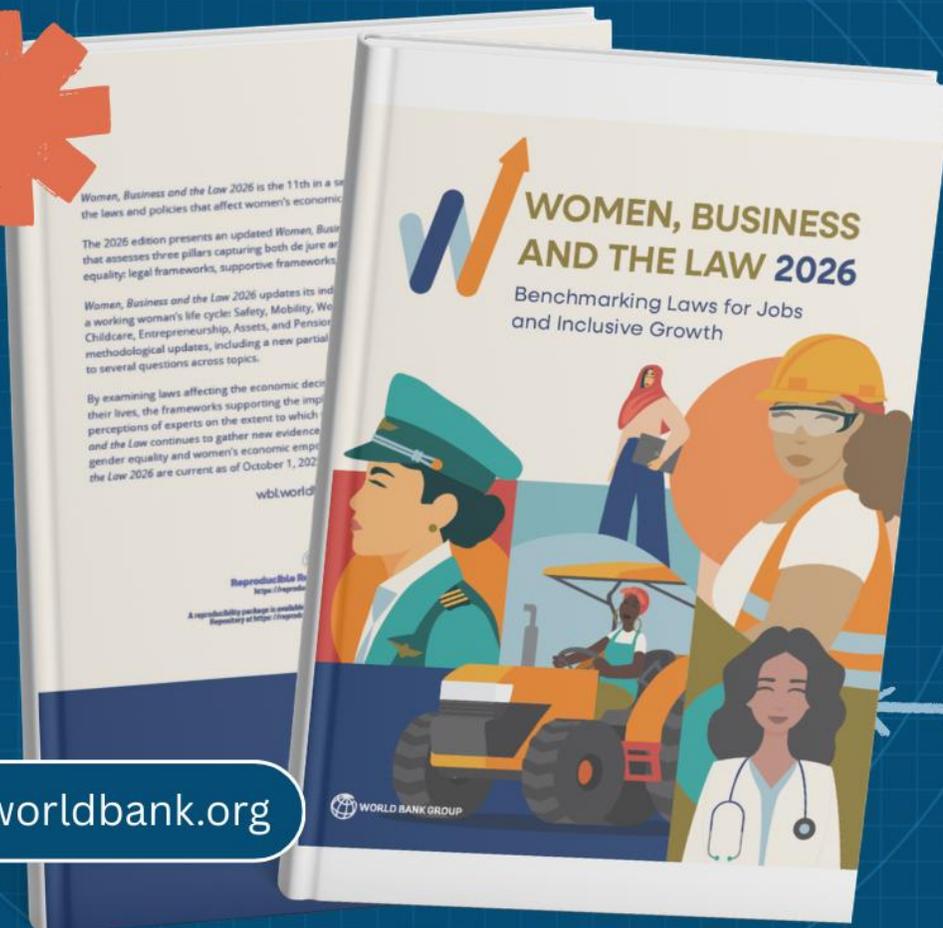
the data and share the evidence to design reforms, track progress, and hold institutions accountable



Scan to read the 2026 report



Find the full analysis in the new *Women, Business and the Law*



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Thank you!



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