

WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW 2023

Gendered Laws and Women's Economic Empowerment

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AGENDA

1. Background
2. WBL 2023 Key Global and Regional Findings
3. 53 Years of Women's Rights
4. What's Next



LEGAL EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



The eight *Women, Business and the Law* indicators

Mobility

Examines constraints on freedom of movement



Workplace

Analyzes laws affecting women's decisions to work

Pay

Measures laws and regulations affecting women's pay



Marriage

Assesses legal constraints related to marriage

Parenthood

Examines laws affecting women's work after having children



Entrepreneurship

Analyzes constraints on women's starting and running businesses

Assets

Considers gender differences in property and inheritance



Pension

Assesses laws affecting the size of a woman's pension

GREATER EQUALITY HAS TANGIBLE BENEFITS



**GENDER
EQUALITY**



More women working



Higher wages

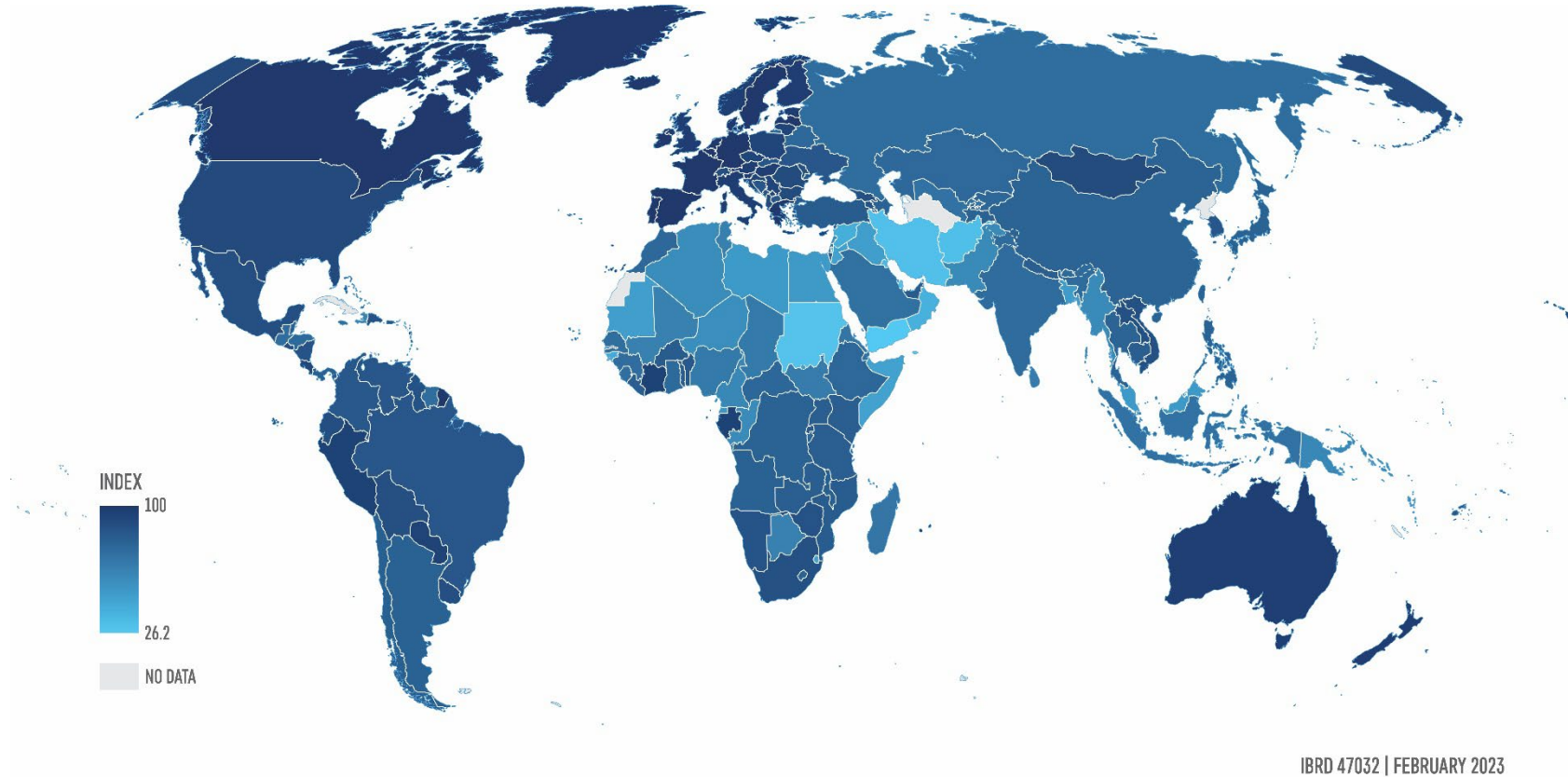


More business



Stronger economy

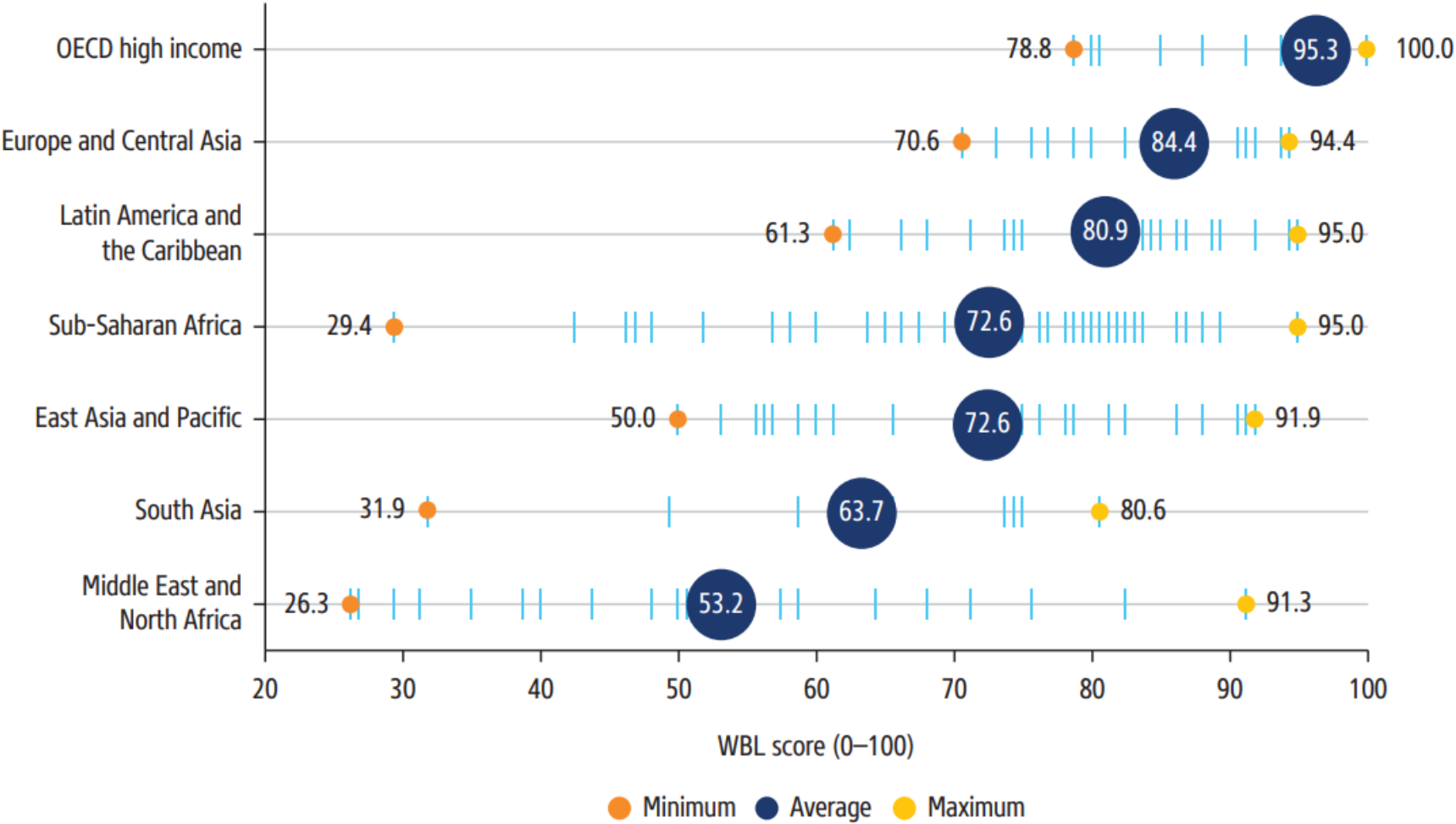
Globally, women have just 3/4 of the legal rights afforded to men



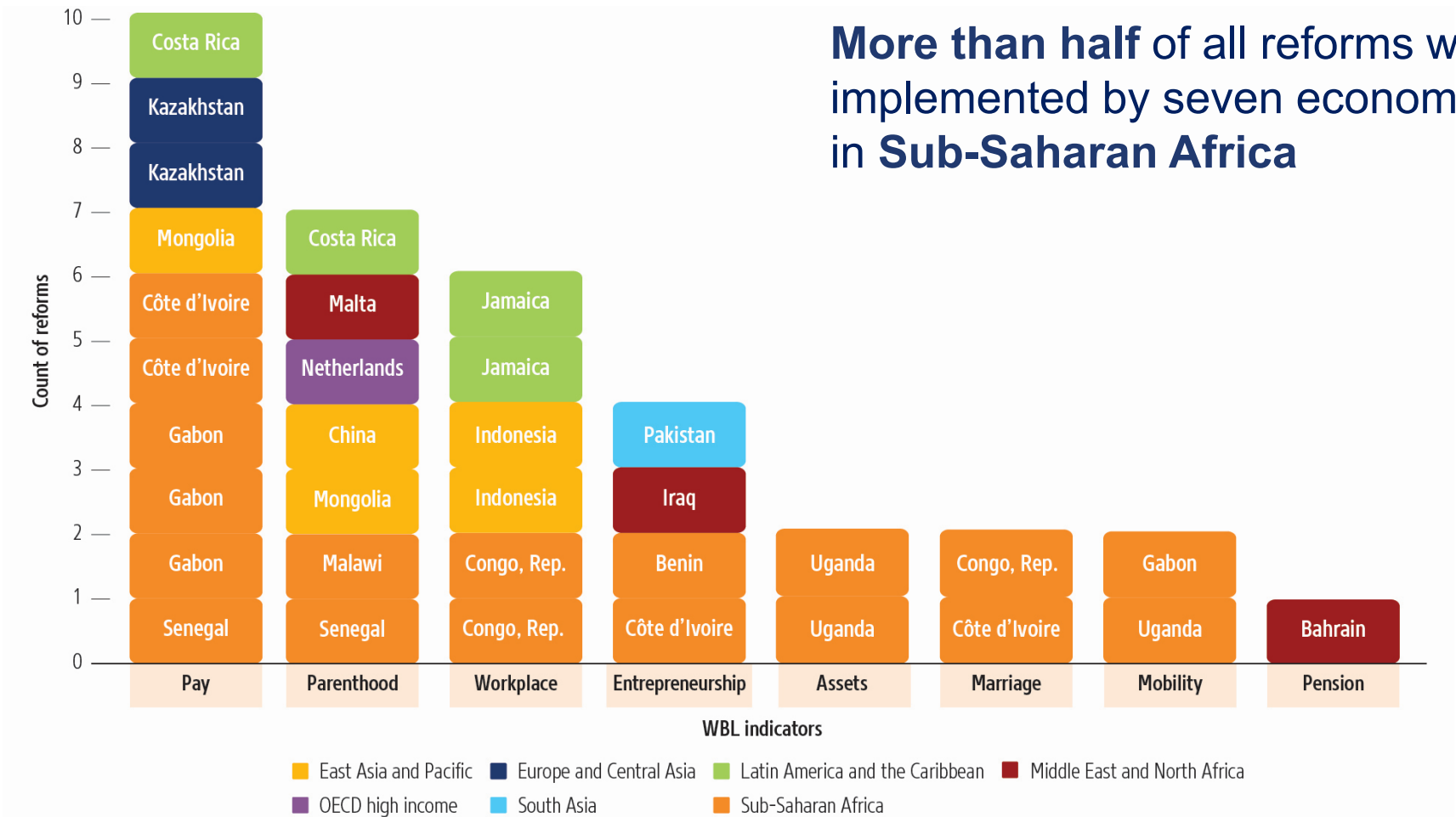
The global average score is **77.1 out of 100**

Nearly **2.4 billion women** of working age still do not have the same legal rights as men

LARGE VARIATION PERSISTS WITHIN AND ACROSS REGIONS



18 COUNTRIES ENACTED 34 REFORMS – THE LOWEST NUMBER OF REFORMS IN 20 YEARS





Mobility: measuring restrictions to women's freedom of movement



Removing restrictions on women's mobility enables more women to join the labor force and open their own businesses.

Source: Women, Business and the Law



34 countries

prevent women from choosing where to live in the same way as men

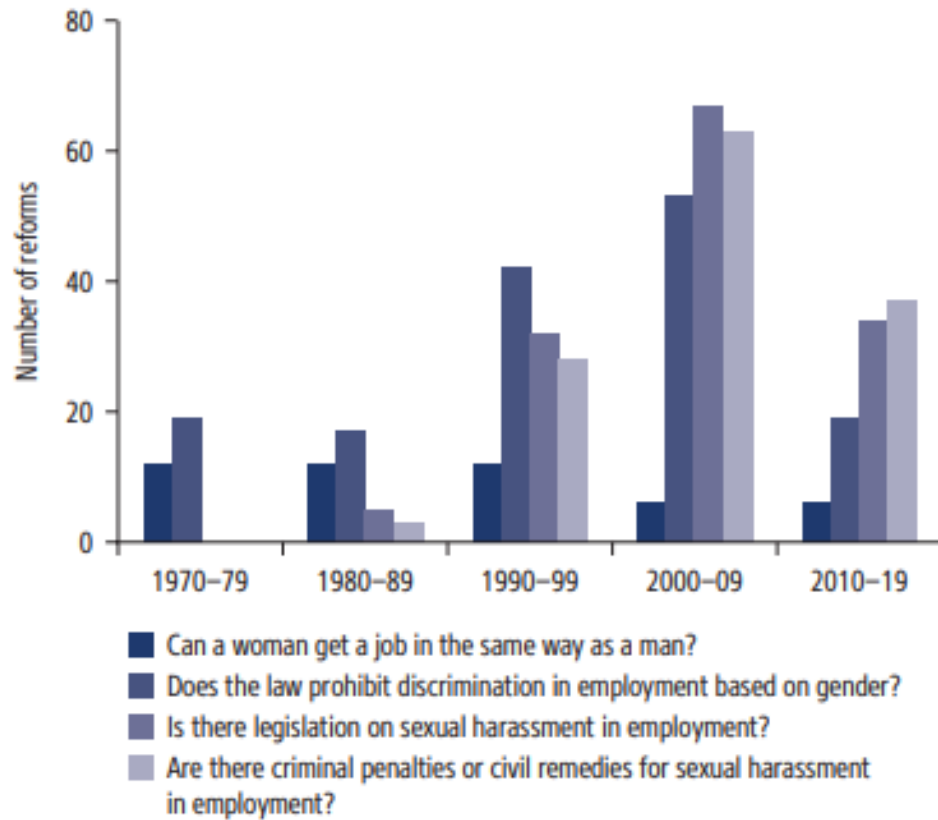




Workplace: measuring laws affecting women's decision to work



Workplace reforms spiked in the 2000s



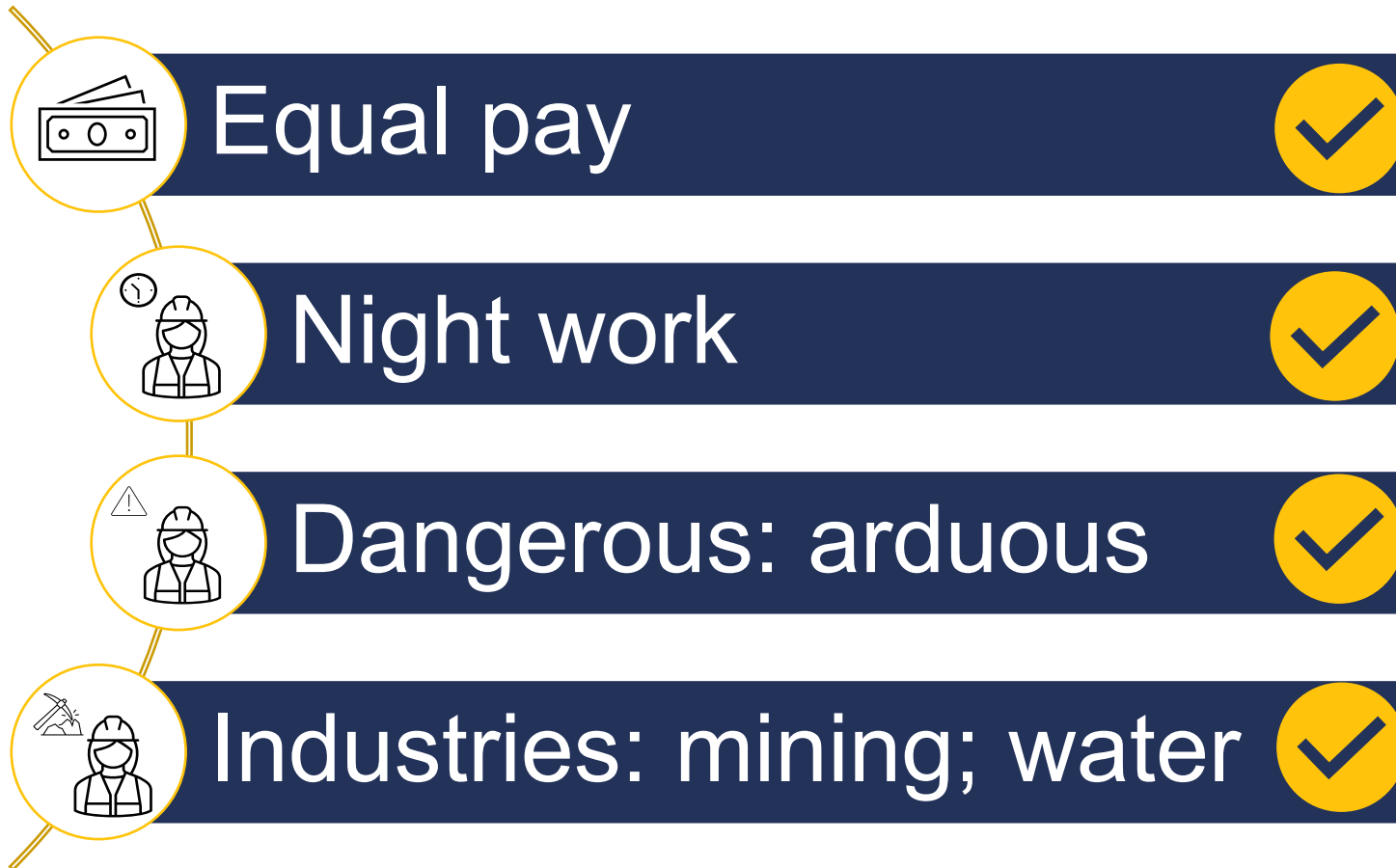
43
countries

still do not have
legislation on sexual
harassment in employment





Pay: measuring laws and regulations affecting women's pay

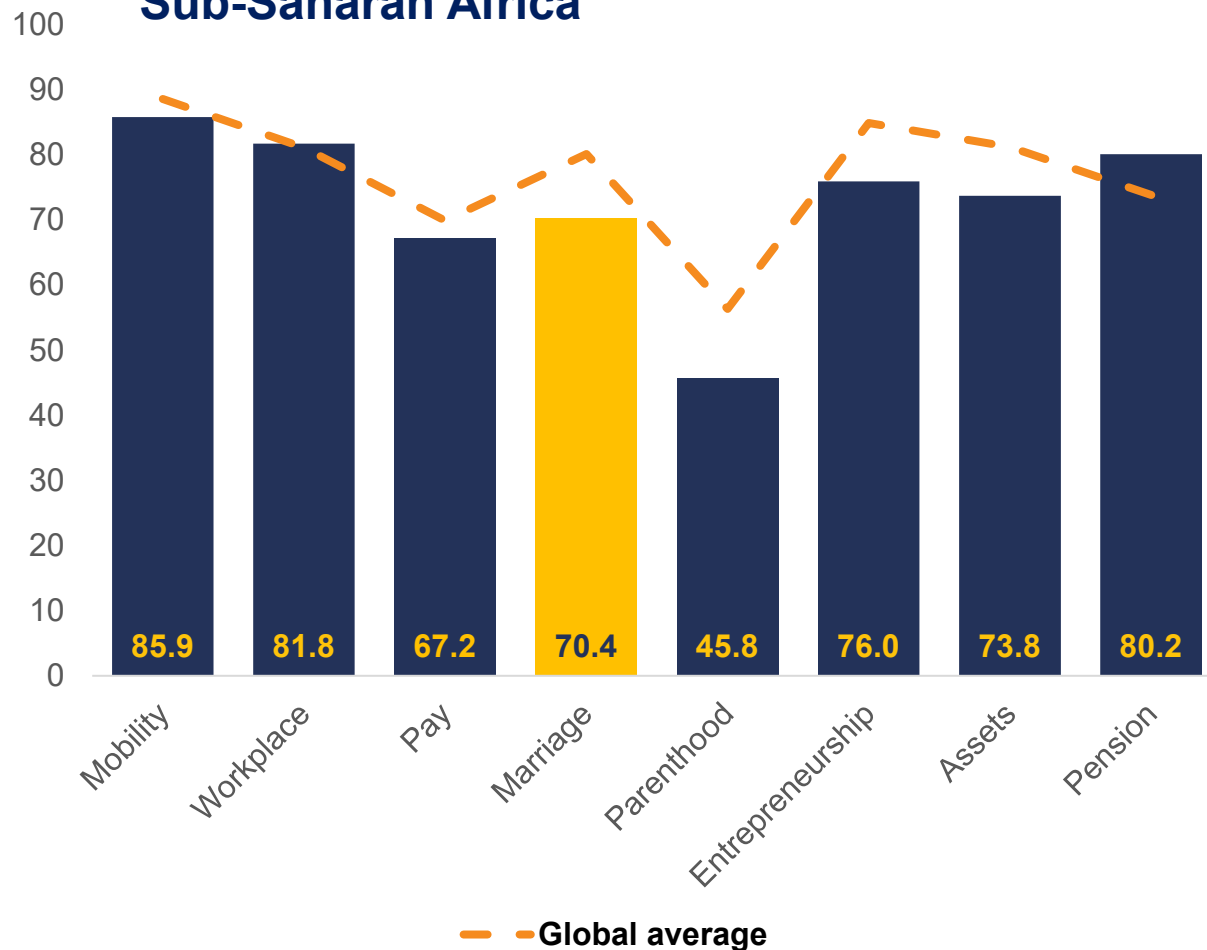




Marriage: measuring legal constraints related to marriage and divorce



Sub-Saharan Africa



Out of 48 economies in the region:



In 11 economies a woman cannot obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man



In 14 economies there is no legislation specifically addressing domestic violence



16 economies limit women to become head of household



Parenthood: measuring laws affecting parents' ability to take time off work



Worldwide,
118 countries grant 14
weeks of maternity leave

Six economies
introduced reforms on
family leave policies
since October 2022





Entrepreneurship: examining constraints on women starting and running a business



Laws that prohibit discrimination in access to credit create opportunities for initiatives to promote women's entrepreneurship



101
countries
still allow gender-based
discrimination in access
to credit





Assets: examining gender differences in property and inheritance law



76 out of 190 countries worldwide limit women's property rights

43 countries do not provide male and female surviving spouses with equal rights to inherit assets.

Recent Reform on Assets



THE SUCCESSION (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2022.

Source: Women, Business and the Law database.





Pension: measuring laws affecting women's retirement age and benefits



Differences in the working lives of men and women stemming from career interruptions for care- or household-related responsibilities significantly affect the size of their pensions.



83
countries

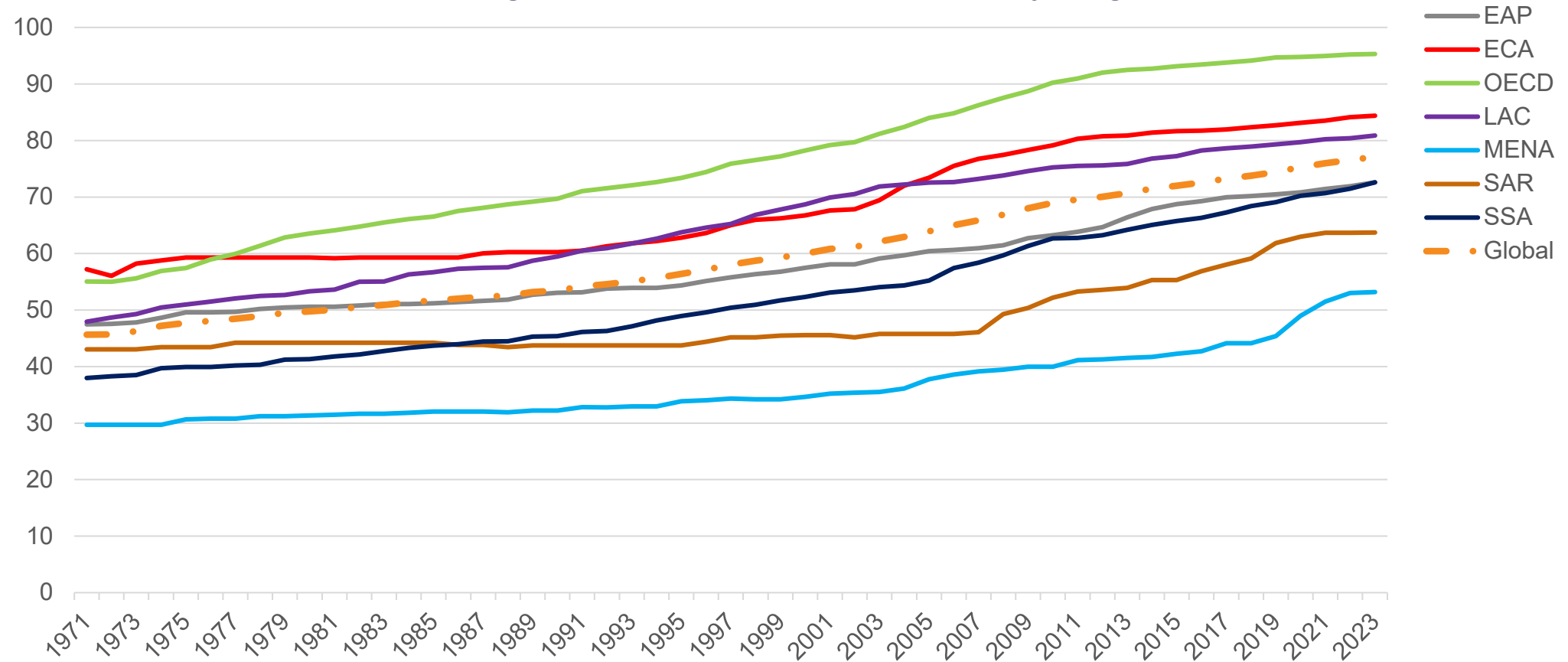
do not account for periods of absence due to childcare in pension benefits



EACH REGION HAS MADE PROGRESS OVER THE PAST 53 YEARS



Average WBL score over time, by region



GLOBAL REFORM EFFORTS SINCE 1970



Women, Business and the Law score has improved by about two-thirds as a result of more than 2,000 reforms expanding women's legal rights.



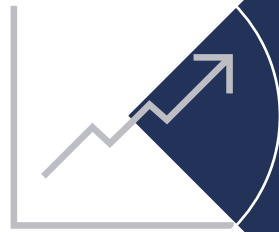
Only 14 economies have reached legal gender parity in 2022.
Progress has been uneven across regions and over time.



Progress across the areas measured has been uneven, with most reforms in Workplace and Parenthood.



GLOBAL REFORM EFFORTS SINCE 1970

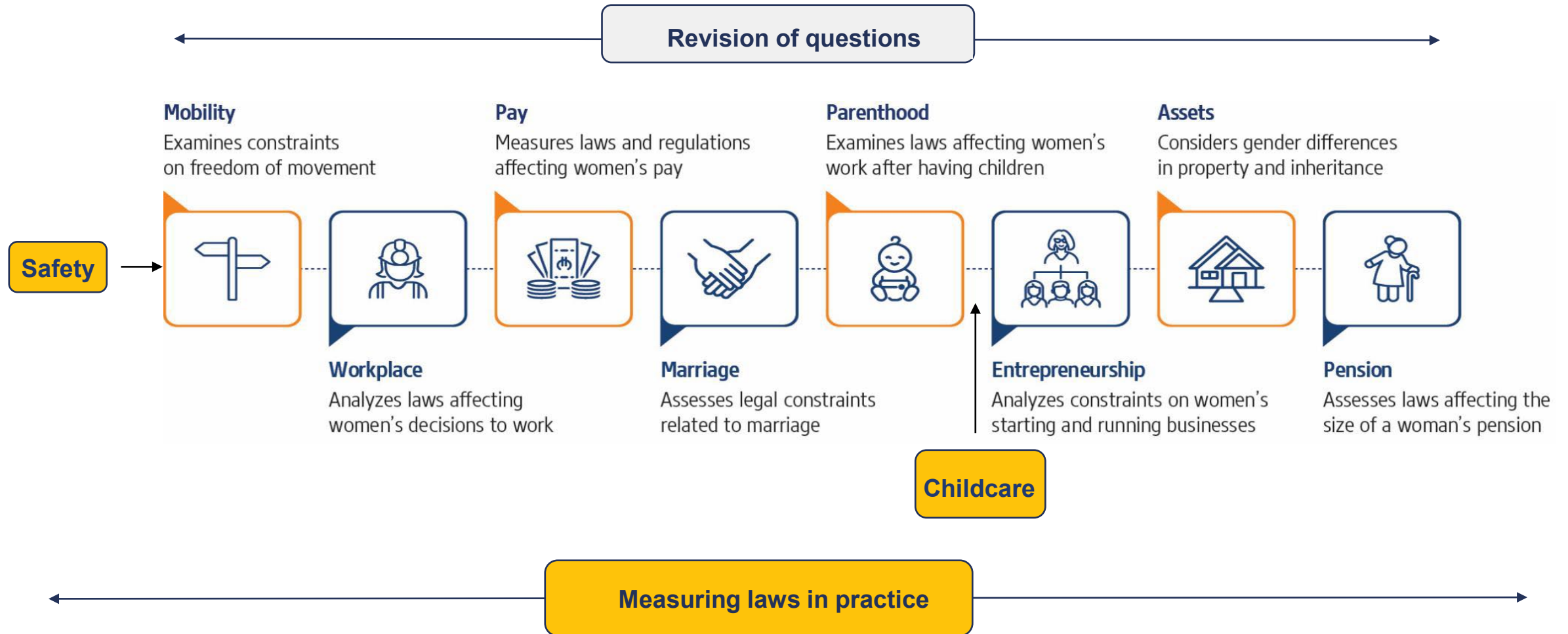


Economies with historically larger legal gender gaps are catching up, especially since 2000.



The catch-up effect has been happening across indicators, but the pace of progress has been uneven.

WHAT'S NEXT: REVIEW OF INDEX, NEW INDICATORS AND *DE FACTO* DATA

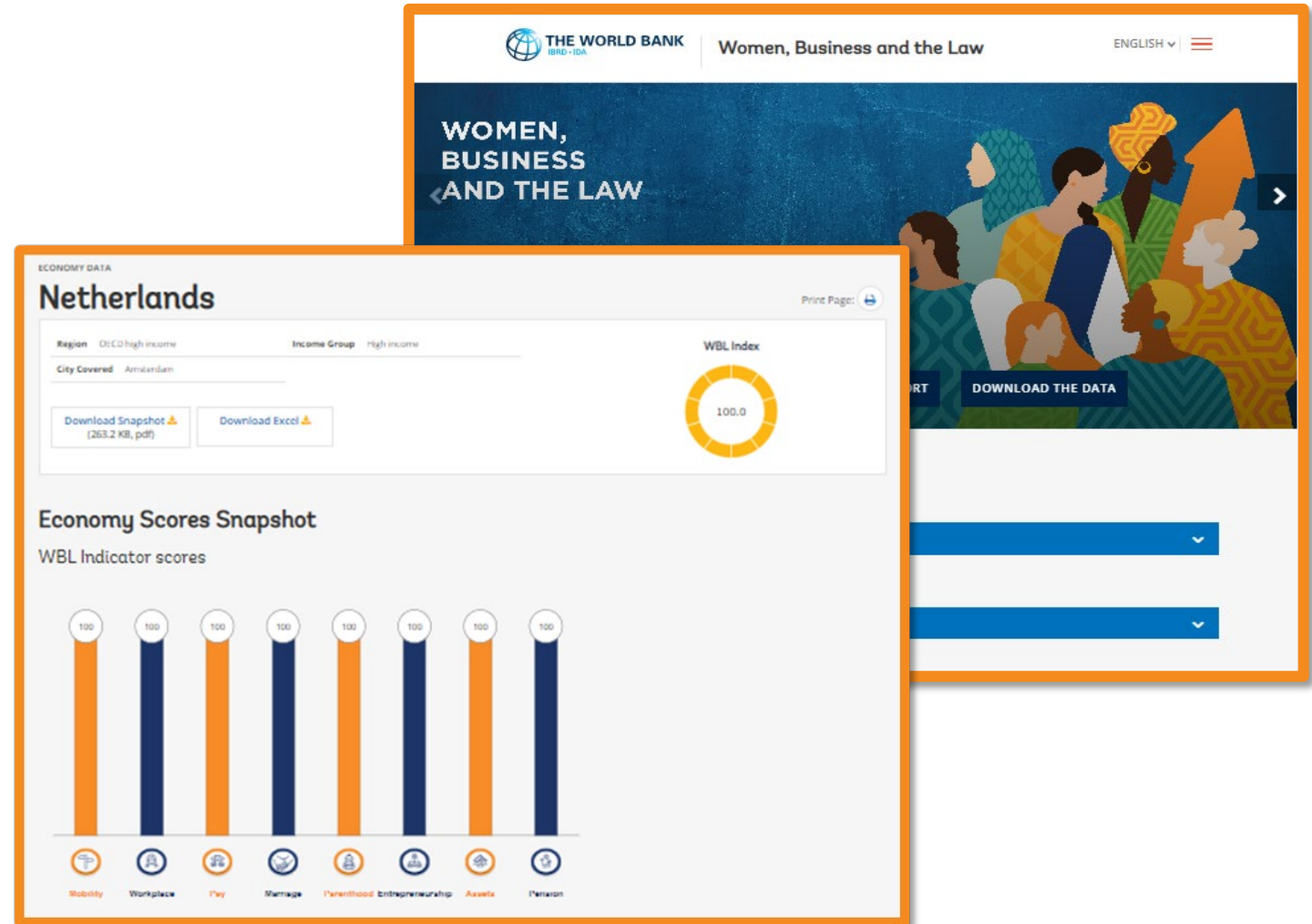


KEY RESOURCES FOR POLICYMAKERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS



Visit wbl.worldbank.org to access:

- Economy snapshots
- Regional profiles
- Reforms database
- Historic overview: 1971 - 2023





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