

Agenda

Parliamentary Dialogue Series: Accelerating legal equality for women's economic inclusion Wednesday, March 23, 2022, 9:00 – 10:00 AM EDT Virtual meeting streaming to public platform

Background

The Parliamentary Dialogue Series is an initiative of the Parliamentary Network organized in cooperation with the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund to discuss the most pressing and pertinent development issues, on a quarterly basis. The series provides parliamentarians from around the world with opportunities to dialogue with technical experts on critical developmental challenges and strategies to address them. It is also an occasion for legislators to hear from their peers about solutions that could be replicated in other countries.

Objectives

- Highlight challenges that disproportionately affect women and raise awareness of Bank and IMF initiatives on Gender, including the 2022 *Women, Business, and the Law* (WBL) report, the World Bank's [Accelerate Equality](#) Initiative, the recent [IMF working paper](#) on legal barriers to economic empowerment, and the newly proposed IMF gender mainstreaming strategy.
- Strengthen parliamentarians' understanding of their collaborative role in establishing policy settings and legal frameworks that support women's economic empowerment.
- Provide parliamentarians with access to Bank and IMF spokespersons for an open Q&A session to boost parliamentary engagement and respond to their concerns.
- Provide a space for parliamentarians to share local experiences and ideas on gender inequality with representatives from the World Bank and IMF.

Expected Outcomes

- Increase parliamentarians' familiarity with key Bank and IMF gender initiatives.
- Strengthen parliamentarians' resolve to remove gender discriminatory laws and promote women's economic empowerment.
- Identify ways of supporting parliamentarians to remove gender discriminatory laws and incentivize women's economic empowerment in their countries.
- Increase transparency in dialogues between the World Bank/IMF and parliamentarians.

Accelerating legal equality for women's economic inclusion

A decade after it published its landmark [2012 World Development Report on Gender Equality and Development](#), the World Bank Group has launched [#AccelerateEquality](#), a year-long initiative which explores the progress made and lessons learned over the last 10 years—assessing gains, identifying barriers old and new, and promoting new strategies—in closing gender gaps and promoting girl's and women's empowerment, and drives for transformative change in the future.

Amid ongoing development challenges that disproportionately affect women, [Women, Business, and the Law](#) (WBL) identifies barriers to women's economic participation and encourages the reform of discriminatory laws. This year, the study also includes preliminary findings and analysis of pilot data collected on the provision of childcare, and on the implementation of the law. The WBL indicators build evidence of the critical relationship between gender equality under the law and women's employment and entrepreneurship. By examining the economic decisions that women make throughout their working lives as well as progress made toward gender equality over the last 50 years,

WBL makes an important contribution to research and policy discussions about the state of women's economic empowerment.

Similarly, a recently published IMF Working Paper ([WP/22/37 Tackling Legal Impediments to Women's Economic Empowerment](#)) examines legal impediments to women's economic empowerment and suggests ways in which the law can be used as a tool to create behavioral changes and shifts in perceptions of women in the economy by incentivizing gender equality. The paper also discusses the role the IMF can play, when carrying out its functions of surveillance, financing to members and capacity development, in assisting members in this area. In particular, the paper discusses that, given the importance of introducing legal reforms aimed to remove barriers to, and incentivize, women's economic empowerment to improve macroeconomic or financial outcomes, this is an area also relevant to the IMF's work.

Parliamentarians are indispensable to these efforts as they provide the legal frameworks to boost women's participation in economic recovery, and advocate for public policies aimed at mitigating the gendered consequences of COVID-19. They also pass budgets, and in many countries, have been active proponents of gender budgeting.

This second Parliamentary Dialogue Series event will bring World Bank and IMF experts together with parliamentarians to discuss gender equality (and women's economic inclusion). This will be also an opportunity to discuss issues highlighted in the WBL and the IMF Staff working paper, and how parliamentarians everywhere can help nurture economic recovery and to accelerate action towards gender equality – #AccelerateEquality.

Agenda

Wednesday, March 23, 2022 9:00AM – 10:00AM EST	
09:00 – 09:03	Welcome and introductory remarks by the moderator Hon. Cornelius Mweetwa MP, National Assembly of Zambia
09:03 – 09:08	Presentation of WBL findings and Accelerate Equality by Hana Brix , Global Director for Gender, World Bank .
09:08 – 09:13	Presentation on the proposed Strategy for Mainstreaming Gender at the IMF, with a focus on IMF's recent work on <i>Tackling Legal Impediments to Women's Economic Empowerment</i> by Ratna Sahay , Senior Advisor on Gender, IMF .
09:13 – 09:28	<i>Intervention by MPs on how legislators can work hand in hand with IFIs to ensure women's economic inclusion in the context of COVID-19 recovery.</i> Discussants: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hon. Maria Eugenia Hernández Pérez, Mexico• Hon. Shandana Gulzar Khan MP, Head of Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, Pakistan• Hon. Marvi Memon, Former MP and Minister, Pakistan
09:28 – 09:55	Q&A with parliamentarians Hana Brix , Global Director for Gender, World Bank .

	Ratna Sahay, Senior Advisor on Gender, IMF. Katharine Christopherson, Assistant General Counsel, IMF
09:55 – 10:00	Closing remarks by The Rt Hon. Liam Byrne MP, UK, Chair of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank & IMF