

IS THE LAW WITH US OR AGAINST US : The role of law in restricting or strengthening women's economic rights

A panel discussion organized by IDLO, Women, Business and the Law and Knowledge Platform Security and Rule of Law (TBC).
25th September 2018, 10:00 AM – 12:00 NN
IDLO Office, Hofweg 9E, 2511 AA, The Hague

While women have made great strides in bringing about gender-responsive laws, available evidence consistently points to serious gaps in ensuring legal protection for women and girls. Recent figures have shown that inadequate legal protection affect over 2.5 billion women.¹

Discriminatory laws or legal provisions persist in various fields – employment, finance, land and natural resources, agriculture, rural development, among others. Social inequalities, lack of access to resources and opportunities, and the absence of women's voices in many areas of public and political life continue to exacerbate these gender inequalities. Furthermore, unresponsive justice systems impede women from claiming justice where their rights are violated.

There is, however, increasing momentum to address discriminatory laws. The 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, especially Goals 5 (on gender quality and women's empowerment), 10 (on reducing inequalities) and 16 (on peace, justice and strong Institutions) puts center-stage the importance of addressing discriminatory laws and the urgency for creating or strengthening gender-responsive ones.

This panel discussion will peer into the how does law discriminate against women and what can be done to bring about laws that are just, fair and responsive to women's needs and that support their rights as well as their capacities to contribute to development. The panel will focus on the impact of laws on the economic rights of women.

Presentations

The first part of the panel discussions will focus on the main findings of the [Women, Business and Law \(WBL\) 2018](#) report. The WBL dataset provides unique, objective and measurable data on laws and regulations restricting women's opportunities. The report examines where legal gaps are pressing including on violence against women, sexual harassment, legal capacity of women to decide and act on their own, job restrictions and lack of incentives for women workers, property rights, participation of women in high-level decision-making positions, amongst others.

To complement this, the second part of the discussion will be a presentation of two case studies from IDLO, which illustrate in greater detail how legal and justice barriers affect women's economic rights. The first case study is focused on '**Women Entrepreneurs' Access to Justice in Jordan**',

¹ McKinsey Global Institute, The Power of parity: How Advancing Women's Equality Can Add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth (McKinsey and Company, 2015).



research conducted by IDLO in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). This presentation will disseminate the findings, detailing barriers that women entrepreneurs encounter while accessing justice and resolving disputes that affect their businesses.

The second case study provides an overview of the relationship between gender equality, food security, land rights and the rule of law. It will highlight key findings of IDLO's publication on [Women, Food, Land: Exploring Rule of Law Linkages](#), with a focus on intersecting challenges, lessons and recommendations.

Speakers to this event are:

- Tanya Primiani, Senior Investment Policy Officer, Women, Business and the Law, World Bank;
- Pamela Kovacs, Legal and Research Analyst, Department of Research and Learning, IDLO;
- Rea Abada Chiongson, Senior Legal Advisor on Gender, IDLO;
- Moderator (TBC)

Light lunch and refreshments will be served after the panel discussion.

RSVP – Please inform Widya Boerma at TheHague@idlo.int of your participation on or before September 21, 2018.