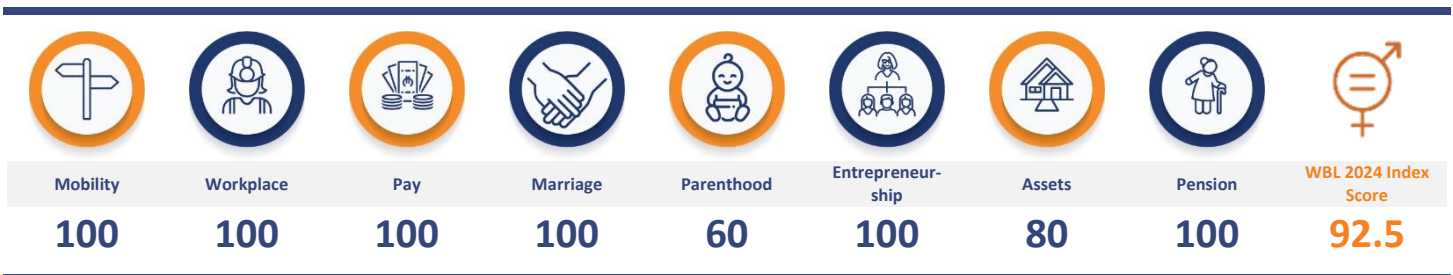


Sierra Leone

Women, Business and the Law 2024 (WBL2024) presents an index covering 190 economies and structured around the life cycle of a working woman. In total, 35 questions are scored across eight indicators. Overall scores are then calculated by taking the average of each indicator, with 100 representing the highest possible score. Data refer to the laws and regulations that are applicable to the main business city (Freetown). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Sierra Leone scores 92.5 out of 100.0**. The overall score for Sierra Leone is higher than the regional average observed across Sub-Saharan Africa (74.0). Within the Sub-Saharan Africa region, the maximum score observed is 97.5 (Togo).

Sierra Leone - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2024



Relative Strengths

When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, laws affecting women's decisions to work, laws affecting women's pay, constraints related to marriage, constraints on women starting and running a business, and laws affecting the size of a woman's pension, Sierra Leone gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

When it comes to laws affecting women's work after having children, and gender differences in property and inheritance, Sierra Leone could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Sierra Leone is on the indicator measuring laws affecting women's work after having children (the WBL2024 Parenthood indicator). To improve on the Parenthood indicator, Sierra Leone may wish to consider making the government administer 100% of maternity leave benefits, and making paid parental leave available.

Recent Reforms

During the past year (October 2nd, 2022 to October 1st, 2023), Sierra Leone prohibited gender-based discrimination in employment. Sierra Leone mandated equal remuneration for work of equal value and removed restrictions on a woman's employment in industrial jobs. Sierra Leone increased paid maternity leave from 84 days to 98 days, introduced 14 calendar days of paid paternity leave, and prohibited the dismissal of pregnant workers. Sierra Leone enacted legislation accounting for periods of absence due to childcare in the calculation of a woman's pension benefits.



Further data details for Sierra Leone are available at:
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreeconomies/sierra-leone/2024>



	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	Passport Act; Passport Application Procedures
	Can a woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Workplace	Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	Yes	Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, Sec. 18
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Employment Act 2023, Secs. 1 and 17(1)
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, 2019, Sec. 3; Employment Act, 2023, Secs. 1 and 15
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, 2019, Sec. 3 <i>Civil:</i> The Sexual Offences Act, 2012, Sec. 37
Pay	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Employment Act 2023, Secs. 1 and 18(1)
	Can a woman work at night in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman work in a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Marriage	Is the law free of legal provisions that require a married woman to obey her husband?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	Can a woman be head of household in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Domestic Violence Act of 2007
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	Matrimonial Causes Act, Art. 5
	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	Matrimonial Causes Act, Art. 13
Parenthood	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Employment Act 2023, Sec. 72(1)
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	Employment Act 2023, Sec. 72(1)
	Is paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Employment Act 2023, Sec. 77
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Act 2022, Sec. 4(3)
Entrepreneurship	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Gender Empowerment Act, Sec. 7
	Can a woman sign a contract in the same way as a man?	Yes	Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, Sec. 18
	Can a woman register a business in the same way as a man?	Yes	Companies Act, Sec. 15; Companies Regulations, Sec. 9
	Can a woman open a bank account in the same way as a man?	Yes	Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, Sec. 18
Assets	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, Sec. 18; Customary Land Rights Act, Secs. 5 and 10(2)
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Devolution of Estates Act, Secs. 7 and 8; Customary Land Rights Act, Sec. 5
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Devolution of Estates Act, Sec. 6; Customary Land Rights Act, Secs. 5 and 6(2b)
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, Sec. 18
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Pension	Is the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits the same?	Yes	National Social Security and Insurance Trust Act, Art. 39
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	National Social Security and Insurance Trust Act, Art. 40
	Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women the same?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Employment Act 2023, Sec. 72(2)