Future She Deserves Event on “Women, Business, and the Law”

The IOE attended the recent launch in Geneva of the World Bank Group’s 2016 report “Women, Business, and the Law” which offers the latest data on legal and regulatory barriers to women’s entrepreneurship and employment in 173 countries.

The Report’s quantitative indicators aim to inform policy discussions on how to remove legal restrictions on women and promote research on how to improve women’s economic inclusion.

Mr Augusto Lopez-Claros, Director of Global Indicators Group at the World Bank Group since 2011, introduced the Report, focusing on the key findings:

* Legal gender differences are widespread: 155 of the 173 economies covered have at least one law impeding women’s economic opportunities
* The total number of legal gender differences across 173 economies is 943
* In 100 economies, women face gender-based job restrictions
* 46 of the economies covered have no laws specifically protecting women from domestic violence
* In 18 economies, husbands can legally prevent their wives from working
* Lower legal gender equality is associated with fewer girls attending secondary school relative to boys, fewer women working or running businesses and a wider gender wage gap

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* Over the past two years, 65 economies carried out 94 reforms increasing women’s economic opportunities

“Such examples point to a large unfinished agenda of reforms that will not only benefit women, but their families and communities as well,” added Mr Lopez-Claros.

The Report thus offers the necessary evidence-based analysis to encourage creating an enabling environment for women to access the same opportunities as men in today’s society. While laws cannot guarantee equal treatment for women, they are the first steps towards creating an even playing field in which women have the opportunity to thrive.

During the Salon, an appeal was made to all participants to reach out within their respective networks to advocate with business, NGOs and international institutions to take decisions also through the lens of gender equality.

*For further information on the IOE’s work on Gender, Diversity and Women’s Economic Empowerment, please contact Ms Thannaletchimy Thanagopal via the link in the side panel.*