BUSINESS READY (B-READY) Manual and Guide

October 2024





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GLOSSARY

Analyst: A Team member working in a Topic Team, other than the Topic Team Leader. An Analyst may be any staff described in Staff Rule 4.01, Section 2.01, including temporaries and consultants.

Assurance Review: A review conducted by Group Internal Audit (GIA) focusing on the governance, risk management, and internal controls of a particular process.

B-READY Team: The staff working on the B-READY project, including temporaries and consultants working on the B-READY report, as described in Staff Rule 4.01, Section 2.01.

B-READY Management Team: The Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager and the Topic Supervisors.

B-READY Data Team: The B-READY Team members in charge of the B-READY project-level data production, analysis, and review.

B-READY Communication Team: The B-READY Team members in charge of the dissemination strategy of the B-READY report.

B-READY-EBC focal points: Contacts between the B-READY Team and the World Bank Group Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC) Department who advise on ways to protect the B-READY project from undue influence from internal and external Stakeholders and develop awareness on the resources available to the B-READY Team on matters of ethics and integrity. The B-READY Team has an Ethics and Compliance Function Team with two EBC staff.

Bank-wide Review (BWR): The stage when the B-READY data are closed, and the draft B-READY report is circulated internally within the World Bank Group (WBG) for feedback.

BWR Function Team: The B-READY Team members in charge of the BWR process.

Chapter Leader: The B-READY Team member who drafted a section/chapter in this B-READY M&G.

Computational files: The collective of programming scripts and other documentation used to construct topic indicators and compute topic scores and aggregate scores (if applicable) for each economy covered by the B-READY project.

Concept Note: The document establishing the objectives, scope, and approach of the B-READY project.

Contributor Manager: The person managing the Expert Contributors contributing to the B-READY data.

CRM (Contributor Relationship Management) system: The Microsoft Dynamics system used by the B-READY Team to maintain a comprehensive database of thousands of Expert Contributors.

Cross-cutting theme: The three cross-cutting themes examined by the B-READY project: digital adoption, environmental sustainability, and gender.

DECBE Manager: The Manager of the B-READY Team.

DECIG (Global Indicators Group): The Global Indicators Group of the Development Economics Vice Presidency of the World Bank Group.

DECIG Director: The Director in charge of DECIG.

DECIG Management:

DECSN Manager: The Manager of the B-READY Subnational Team.

DECSN TL: A Topic Leader of a B-READY subnational project.

External and Corporate Relations (ECR): The Vice Presidency that works with World Bank Group (WBG) leadership to secure financial and political support for the WBG, enable the achievement of country outcomes, and strengthen its role as a global thought leader in development.

Ethics and Business Conduct Department (EBC): The WBG department within the Ethics and Internal Justice Services VPU that advises staff on issues and questions regarding the Principles of Staff Employment, Staff Rules, Code of Conduct, and other Bank Group policies and procedures, including those related to anti-harassment (and anti-sexual harassment), and misconduct. It includes advisory services, training, promotion of the Core Values and Code of Ethics, and investigations. Two EBC staff serve on the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team.

Ethics and Compliance Function Team: The B-READY Function Team responsible for matters of ethics and compliance. Two EBC staff provide support to the B-READY Team on a continuous basis.

Ethics and Internal Justice (EIJ) Vice Presidential Unit: The unit that deals with EBC Advisory, EBC investigations, peer reviews, mediation, ombuds services, a respectful workplace (including through Respectful Workplace Advisers) anti-harassment, and race equity (including through a Race Equity Officer).

Executive Directors (EDs): The Executive Directors who make up the Board of Directors of the World Bank Group. Includes alternates to Executive Directors who have full power to act in the absence of their respective Executive Directors.

Expert Contributors: People sharing their knowledge or skill by contributing to the B-READY data and completing one or more B-READY topic questionnaires.

Expert Contributors consultations: The process of collecting data from professionals who regularly deal with the relevant legal arrangements, as well as public services and institutions providing those services.

Global Contributors Function Leader: The person managing and coordinating the Global Contributors function.

Group Internal Audit (GIA): The unit within the WBG that provides an independent view on whether processes for managing and controlling risks to achieve the WBG's goals, and overall governance of these processes, are adequately designed and functioning effectively. GIA works across all WBG institutions, covering all operational corporate functions as well as information technology (IT) systems and processes.

Information and Technology Solutions (ITS): The department that provides transformative information and technology resources to WBG staff.

Internal Justice Services (IJS): The department offering WBG staff support ranging from counselling to formal review of concerns to preserve fairness in the workspace.

Legal Vice Presidency (LEG): The Vice Presidency that assists the design of operations, as well as the drafting and negotiation of legal agreements for those operations, and assistance in processing their approval by the Board; and facilitates responsive action to changing circumstances during implementation of operations.

Methodology Handbook/Manual and Guide (MH/MG) Function: The B-READY Team members in charge of the production of the B-READY Methodology Handbook and Manual and Guide every year.

Methodology Handbook/Manual and Guide (MH/MG) Function Leader: The person leading the Methodology Handbook and Manual and Guide function.

Multitopic Function Leader: The person managing and coordinating the Multitopic function.

Operations Policy and Country Services (OPCS): The department supporting WBG operations from its unique position at the interface of the Board, Senior Management, and the operations complex.

Pillar: One of the three pillars (Regulatory Framework, Public Services, and Operational Efficiency) that are examined in each of the ten B-READY topics.

Production Function Team: The B-READY Team members in charge of the production of the B-READY report.

Production Function Leader: The person leading the Production Function team.

Raw data: A set of individual responses from Expert Contributor(s) directly downloaded from the survey software.

SECPO (Policy and Operations Department of the Corporate Secretariat): The Policy and Operations Unit of the World Bank Group that facilitates corporate governance, supports Board and Committee meetings, develops strategic engagements with the Board to build consensus on the corporate agenda.

SharePoint: The official WBG records management system.

Stakeholders: Representatives of economies that are covered by the B-READY report and may be composed of one or more of the following: (1) civil society and private sector organizations, which include nongovernmental organizations, chambers of commerce, labor and business unions, think tanks, trade associations, and professional associations, among others; (2) governments, which include the WBG Board of Executive Directors and/or their advisors, and relevant technical governmental agencies at the national and local level, including government reform committees; and (3) WBG colleagues (definition below).

Topic: One of the ten topics analyzed by the B-READY report following the life cycle of a firm and its participation in the market: Business Entry, Business Location, Utility Services, Labor, Financial Services, International Trade, Taxation, Dispute Resolution, Market Competition, and Business Insolvency.

Topic Supervisor: The GG grade-level staff responsible for supervising the work of a specific Topic Team. Every Topic Supervisor may supervise multiple Topic Teams.

Topic Team: The Team working on a specific topic.

Topic Team Leader (TTL): The person managing the Topic Team.

Verticals: The units within the World Bank Group envisioned to be vertical pillars of technical expertise on their respective subject.

Vice President of DEC: Chief Economist of the World Bank Group and Senior Vice President for Development Economics.

World Bank Enterprise Surveys (WBES): The firm-level surveys collecting data on firm characteristics and firm performance, and on a broad range of B-READY topics, including access to finance, corruption, infrastructure, crime, regulations, and competition.

WBES Manager: The Manager of the WBES team.

WBG colleagues: Staff within the World Bank Group, including all five global institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD); the International Development Association (IDA); the International Finance Corporation (IFC); the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA); and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) as well as country offices.

Women, Business and the Law (WBL): The project that analyzes laws and regulations affecting women's economic inclusion in economies.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACS Administrative and Client Support
ADM Accountability and Decision-Making
AHC Anti-Harassment Coordinator

AHC Anti-Harassment Coord B-READY Business Ready

B-READY M&G Business Ready Manual and Guide

BTOR Back to the Office Report
BWR Bank-wide Review
CMU Country Management Unit

CRM Microsoft Dynamics Contributor Relationship Management system

DEC Development Economics

DECBE Development Economics Business Ready
DECIG Development Economics Global Indicators
DECSN B-READY Subnational Business Team

DECSN TL

B-READY Subnational Business Team Leader
EBC

Ethics and Business Conducts Department

ECR External and Corporate Relations

ED Executive Director

EIJ Ethics and Internal Justice
EOI Expression of Interest
ES Enterprise Survey

ETC Extended Term Consultant

FY Fiscal year

GIA Group Internal Audit
HR Human Resources
IJS Internal Justice Services
ITR Internal Trip Report

ITS Information and Technology Solutions

LEG Legal Vice Presidency
OKR Open Knowledge Repository

OPCS Operations Policy and Country Services

OTI Opportunity to Improve

PMR Performance Management Review

Q&A Question and Answer RFP Request for Proposal

SECPO Policy and Operations Department of the Corporate Secretariat

SMO Statement of Mission Objectives

STC Short Term Consultant

TF Travel Form

TTL Topic Team Leader
TTS Travel Team Supervisor
VPU Vice Presidential Unit

WBES World Bank Enterprise Survey

WBG World Bank Group

WBL Women, Business and the Law WTO World Trade Organization

Chapter 1–INTRODUCTION

1.1 About the Business Ready Project

Business Ready (B-READY) is the World Bank Group's new corporate flagship report being implemented in the Development Economics Global Indicators Group. B-READY provides a quantitative assessment of the business environment with an annual frequency and worldwide coverage. The objective of the assessment is to improve the private sector, not only from the perspective of individual firms but also by considering the interests of workers, consumers, potential new enterprises, and the natural environment.

B-READY aims to achieve this objective through a threefold strategy:

- 1. Reform Advocacy: B-READY advocates for policy reform through the effective communication of international benchmarking, opening the door for knowledge sharing and policy dialogue for governments, the private sector, the World Bank Group, and other development institutions.
- 2. Policy Guidance: B-READY guides specific policy change through comprehensive and relevant data and information, showing how and by how much each economy lags international good practice.
- 3. Analysis and Research: B-READY provides granular data for research and analysis, shedding light on the drivers and mechanisms of private sector development.

B-READY assesses an economy's business environment by focusing on the regulatory framework and the provision of related public services directed at firms and markets, as well as the efficiency with which firms can comply with regulations and access public services. Consequently, all B-READY topics are structured into three pillars: (1) Regulatory Framework, (2) Public Services, and (3) Operational Efficiency. Furthermore, the assessment addresses not only the ability to conduct business for individual firms (firm flexibility), but also the inclusive and sustainable aspects of private sector development (social benefits).

B-READY is organized according to ten topics that correspond to various stages of the life cycle of a firm and its participation in the market while opening, operating (or expanding), and closing (or reorganizing) a business. The ten topics are Business Entry, Business Location, Utility Services, Labor, Financial Services, International Trade, Taxation, Dispute Resolution, Market Competition, and Business Insolvency. Within each topic, considerations relevant to the business environment regarding aspects of the adoption of digital technology, environmental sustainability, and gender are captured.

B-READY collects both de jure information and de facto measures. While de jure data is collected from expert consultations, de facto data is collected from both expert consultations and firm surveys. Data collection and reporting processes are governed by the highest possible standards of integrity, including sound data gathering processes, robust data safeguards, clear approval protocols, transparency and public availability of granular data, and replicability of results.

1.2 About this Manual and Guide

The B-READY Manual and Guide ("B-READY M&G") specifies the detailed protocols and safeguards the B-READY Project has put in place to ensure the integrity, transparency, and quality of its assessments.

The B-READY M&G presents the protocols at all stages of the production cycle, including the initial screening of experts, data collection, data management, the production of the data and report, and their dissemination. It has been designed in consultation with the World Bank Group's Ethics and Business Conduct Department (EBC) and Group Internal Audit (GIA).

The B-READY M&G is structured in the following way: Chapter 1 introduces the B-READY Manual and Guide. Chapter 2 focuses on data integrity, conflicts of interest, and dealing with undue pressures. Chapter 3 explains the rules covering engagement with experts. Chapter 4 describes how the B-READY Team engages with stakeholders. Chapter 5 sets out the rules on data management and review. Chapter 6 assesses the clearance and publication of the report and data. Chapter 7 details the procedures related to the dissemination of the report and data. Chapter 8 focuses on methodology changes. Chapters 9 and 10 describe the coordination between the B-READY Team and the Subnational B-READY (DECSN) Team and the World Bank Enterprise Surveys (WBES) Team, respectively, and Chapter 11 outlines the implementation of the B-READY M&G.

This B-READY M&G serves as an official source of information for B-READY Team members and interested stakeholders. Each member of the B-READY Team is a World Bank Group (WBG) staff member subject to all applicable WBG staff rules and conduct guidance. These rules take precedence over the content of the B-READY M&G. The B-READY M&G provides supplemental guidance relevant to the B-READY context.

The B-READY M&G should be read in conjunction with the <u>WBES Manual and Guide</u> and the <u>B-READY Methodology Handbook</u>. The B-READY Methodology Handbook outlines the motivation behind each B-READY Topic, its detailed scoring approach, as well as data collection methods and sources. The information contained in the B-READY M&G is primarily intended for internal use by the Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG), but it is also publicly available on the B-READY website.

The B-READY M&G is a live document and will be updated as the project evolves.

Chapter 2–DATA INTEGRITY

The quality and value of the B-READY project and report rest on their accuracy, impartiality, independence, and the integrity of the data that underlie them, as well as the integrity of B-READY Team members. The first part of this chapter describes the Ethics and Business Conduct Department (EBC) policies, procedures, and resources as of late 2024 that apply to all staff of the World Bank Group (WBG) to ensure the integrity of their actions. B-READY Team members are encouraged to always refer to the content on the official WBG website, which supersedes the stipulations in this Business Ready Manual and Guide (B-READY M&G) in the event of discrepancies. The second part of the chapter describes the processes and mechanisms implemented by the B-READY Team to ensure the integrity of the B-READY data and provide a transparent and replicable system of data collection and analysis. Appendix A contains a list of resources for staff with concerns about the integrity of the B-READY project and data, the integrity of the workplace, and their own well-being.

2.1 Integrity of the WBG and Staff: Core Values and Code of Ethics

The WBG <u>Core Values</u>—Impact, Integrity, Respect, Teamwork, and Innovation—guide the decisions made by members of the WBG and the actions taken in carrying out their mission. The B-READY Team adheres to the highest standards for responsibility, accountability, and quality of its B-READY products. The Team understands the great impact of the B-READY report on its Stakeholders and aims to do its work with respect and integrity to build and preserve the trust of its clients.

B-READY Team members abide by the WBG <u>Code of Ethics</u>, which articulates the WBG Core Values and the ethical norms and behaviors that the WBG expects from staff, and that each staff member should expect of themselves, from one another, and from the institution. The Code of Ethics is complementary to Staff Rules that are the basis for determining misconduct and disciplinary sanctions. B-READY Team members should refer to the Code of Ethics as a resource that will help them incorporate the Core Values in what they do and identify and speak up about conduct and behaviors that are inconsistent with the Core Values.

B-READY Team members must (1) complete a mandatory e-learning on the <u>Code of Ethics and Core Values</u> made available by the <u>Ethics and Business Conduct Department</u>, and (2) attend a scheduled training provided by the EBC Team at the beginning of each B-READY report cycle.

2.2 Ethics and Compliance Function within the B-READY Team

EBC has established an independent Ethics and Compliance Function Team within the B-READY project with two EBC staff. These B-READY–EBC focal points provide continuous support to the B-READY project and its Team members. They offer guidance on protecting the project from undue influence from internal and external Stakeholders and raise awareness about the resources available to the B-READY Team, including the organization training sessions and the reporting of any perceived undue influence.

In addition, these focal points provide guidance on avoiding the risk of conflicts of interest within the B-READY Team and in its interactions with the rest of the WBG. B-READY Team members may contact the B-READY–EBC focal points directly to discuss relevant issues and schedule meetings. All interactions with the focal points are confidential and anonymous unless otherwise decided by the B-READY Team member reaching out to them.

2.3 Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

While fulfilling their contractual responsibilities with the WBG, B-READY Team members owe their duty exclusively to the WBG. They must maintain their independence by not accepting any instructions relating to the performance of their duties from any governments or other entities and persons external to the WBG (see Article V, Section 5c of the IBRD Articles of Agreement).

Because working on B-READY research involves interacting with Stakeholders with varying interests, concerns about conflict of interest can arise when B-READY Team members receive instructions beyond the scope of the tasks under their assignments. B-READY Team members who need guidance on concerns about conflict of interest should consult directly with the Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager, Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) Director, or more senior Management, as needed. They can also seek guidance from the EBC Ethics and Compliance Function Team (see Section 2.2). EBC will advise on applicable WBG staff rules and policies, work together with the B-READY Team members to assess the conflict-of-interest risk or reputation risk to the WBG, and provide guidance on how to proceed.

In the context of drafting or revising the B-READY report, a conflict of interest consists of any situation in which the professional commitment of a B-READY Team member to provide the highest standards of integrity, independence, and competence is compromised because (1) it is in the personal interest of the Team member not to do so, or, (2) even if it is not the case, the Team member believes that it is in their personal interest not to do so. It is not possible to give an exhaustive list of situations in which a B-READY Team member may feel that they are conflicted, have some dual loyalty, or feel some obligations toward external parties whose interests are not necessarily aligned with the requirement of impartiality and independence of the B-READY report. B-READY Team members realize that conflicts of interest occur in many different situations. The following list provides some of the most frequent examples of how conflicts of interest develop for the authors of a WBG report:

- The authors have benefited from the generosity of the administration or government of an economy, such as through gifts and entertainment during a mission, and feel that it would be inappropriate to be overly critical (hence it is important not to accept the gifts and entertainments in the first place).
- The authors are keen to avoid conflicts with individuals who they feel could influence their future careers and who suggest a certain interpretation of the data.
- The authors are being under pressure to disregard some elements of the analysis or some data, either to meet a deadline or to make the results less controversial (or simply different).
- The authors are concerned about challenging a consensus and that being seen as "troublemakers" could hurt their careers.
- The authors belong to some social circles or groups that are important for them and constitute part of their identity, and they feel concerned about being ostracized if they criticize too heavily the institutions of the economies where these circles or groups originate.
- The authors have friends who are heavily affected by the result of the B-READY analysis (such as government officials in charge of aspects under review by B-READY) and who will lose out significantly if the B-READY assessment is negative.
- The authorities of an economy have offered the authors a future position in government or the administration, which would be put at risk or would start under delicate auspices if the authors were to release a negative assessment of this economy.
- The authors are concerned that the authorities of an economy where their families live are aware of their involvement in the assessment and that the professional positions or welfare of their families may suffer if the policies of that economy were poorly evaluated or criticized.
- The authors have adopted a lifestyle in Washington, DC that would be problematic if this were known in their home country, and they are being threatened with disclosure of that lifestyle.
- The authors have made investments that would be harmed by a negative assessment of the economy where the investments are located.

The above list does not purport to be exhaustive; it merely offers examples to B-READY Team members. In the event a B-READY Team member feels that they may find themselves in a conflict of interest, they

are encouraged to discuss the situation in confidence with the dedicated B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team (Section 2.2).

2.3.1 Avoiding Conflicts of Interest in Employment and Activities outside DECBE

Generally, WBG staff are restricted in the degree to which they may hold outside and concurrent employment. There is less restriction on outside employment activities with nonprofit entities provided that (1) such activities are not paid and that they take place on the B-READY Team member's own time and do not use WBG resources and (2) the nonprofit activities are not connected to the WBG (that is, they are not financed or supervised by the WBG, do not have the WBG as a partner in any way, and do not contribute to WBG operations). The activities must also be compatible with visa obligations; the People and Culture (PaC) visa office must be consulted about this. Outside employment by full-time B-READY Team members in for-profit entities requires the approval of the Chief Ethics Officer, which is only granted in limited and exceptional circumstances.

B-READY Team members, including those holding Short Term Consultant/Short Term Temporary (STC/STT) appointments, are required to inform their Manager of all other concurrent assignments, including other WBG assignments. For more information on outside employment and activities, see Staff Rule 3.02 [Employment outside the WBG] and consult with EBC.

The provisions of Staff Rule 3.02 are not the only ones that apply. Section 3 of the <u>Principle of Staff Employment</u> policy obligates B-READY Team members to avoid actual and perceived conflicts of interest. For B-READY STCs for instance, this will often mean that working both for B-READY and for a government would be problematic.

Cross-support activities consist of time-bound assistance by members of one WBG unit to another. Among other objectives, cross-support is an opportunity to broaden, strengthen, or build new skills and expertise through collaboration with other WBG groups. It is an integral component of professional growth for WBG staff and consultants. B-READY Team Members may, with approval of the DECBE Manager, undertake cross-support assignments. However, during the three-year rollout phase of the project, the B-READY Team Members will not engage in cross-support activities on advisory services for reforms geared to improving B-READY scores. After the rollout phase, once the protocols and safeguards in the B-READY M&G have been proven effective, the engagement in such cross-support activities will be reassessed. Nevertheless, the DECBE Manager will remain responsible for assessing potential conflicts of interest that may arise from proposed cross-support assignments.

A B-READY Team member who receives a request from a client or other external entity to perform advisory work on reforms related to B-READY must direct such a request to the DECBE Manager and relevant Verticals. The B-READY Team member then informs the client or government via email (copying his/her Manager) that the request has been directed to the DECBE Manager and to the relevant Verticals.

All materials produced or acquired during B-READY assignments—written, graphic, film, video recordings, or otherwise—remain the property of the WBG and the WBG retains ownership and copyright, and the right to publish or disseminate in all languages the reports, books, and documents arising from such materials. B-READY Team members may not personally/privately use information acquired in the performance of their assignments with DECBE unless such use has been authorized in accordance with WBG staff rules. Team members wishing to use WBG information for personal writing and publication must consult with EBC or External and Corporate Relations (ECR) for the relevant policies.

2.3.2 General Issues Regarding Personal and Professional Ethics

Many issues of professional ethics center either on conflicts of interest or interpersonal conflicts between colleagues. B-READY Team members are encouraged to consult EBC for confidential consultations and

guidance to ensure that their personal and professional activities are in compliance with the WBG's staff rules and policies.

2.4 Maintaining Integrity in the Workplace

. Creating a respectful workplace, including one that is free of harassment, is a key responsibility for the WBG. B-READY Team members can contribute to this goal as bystanders, colleagues, and Managers to address concerns raised. The WBG provides B-READY Team members with comprehensive services through Ethics and Internal Justice (EIJ) to confidentially support resolution of their concerns with assistance ranging from counselling to formal review and investigation of concerns to preserve fairness in the workspace. All B-READY Team members, including former B-READY Team members, Managers, and consultants, can access Internal Justice Services (IJS) resources.

2.5 Data Integrity in the Data Review, Storage, and Analysis Process

The B-READY Team ensures data integrity while extracting data from the Expert Contributors questionnaires by exporting received raw data from the survey tool and storing data in three separate restricted locations (the survey software server, the data management portal, and a designated OneDrive folder with restricted access) (see Section 5.3 on Data Storage, Management, and Analysis). Access to the stored raw data on OneDrive is restricted and granted by the DECBE Manager to members of the Data Analysis Function Team only for the purposes of constructing indicators and computing scores. Protocols have been put in place to provide other B-READY Team members access to the folder under exceptional cases. The raw data are then used as the basis for subsequent processing and analysis to produce economy-level data and scores.

Data computation is undertaken using computational files. This term refers to the collection of coding scripts and other documentation used to construct indicators by topic and to compute topic scores for each economy covered by the B-READY project. To ensure the accurate programming of the computational scripts, the final cleared scoring methodology is provided by each topic team, and the computation is done in the data management portal. In addition, the Data Analysis Function Team coordinates, prepares, and executes the appropriate scripts. The programming scripts and files may also be subject to peer review by other teams within DEC. The final data set is reviewed and approved by the DECBE Manager before being executed on the deidentified raw data. To avoid accidental changes to the computational files, a mechanism limiting access to editing these files is put in place along with version control to keep track of the incremental changes made to each year's computation files.

Finalized B-READY data are first approved by the DECBE Manager, then by the DECIG Director before being sent to the Vice President of DEC and Chief Economist of the World Bank for final clearance. Then, the data are shared with World Bank colleagues during the Bank-wide Review (BWR) process (see Section 6.1 on the BWR process and guidelines). The scope of the expected BWR comments is clearly specified in the BWR email circulated by the Chief Economist, which also insists on the requirement of keeping all data absolutely confidential at this stage and not sharing data with clients or outside parties in any way. While economy tables are shared for reference purposes together with the report, WBG colleagues are invited to provide comments only on the report.

Modifications following the Bank-wide Review are subject to specific protocols and limitations. They are limited to correcting mistakes in the data replication files that may be found after circulation for the BWR and to correcting errors identified internally by the B-READY Team. The raw data are not subject to modification. For more details on the modifications following the BWR, please refer to Section 6.2.

Following the project's first data collection round, the Data Analysis Function Team is responsible for preparing programming files to construct an economy-by-year panel dataset serving as a historical dataset on an annual basis, documenting the year-on-year change for each economy on every B-READY topic.

Revisions to the historical dataset are only done as a result of changes in the aggregation method or the scoring methodology and must be well documented.

2.6 Dealing with Undue Pressures on B-READY Data

EBC advises on ways to protect the project from undue influence from internal and external Stakeholders and makes resources available to the B-READY Team to report any perceived undue influence. EBC also provides guidance to avoid potential conflicts of interest within the B-READY Team and in its relationship with the rest of the WBG. In addition, EBC has established an independent Ethics and Compliance Function Team with two EBC staff to support the B-READY project and Team on a continuous basis.

2.6.1 Definition and Examples of Undue Pressure

For the purpose of the B-READY activities, undue pressure is defined as any threat, intimidation, harassment, bullying, and/or shunning intended to force B-READY Team members to alter, omit, or disregard data without evidence that such data are flawed, or to include or rely on data that are known to be methodologically flawed or manipulated. Undue pressure can occur by omission as well as by commission.

A sudden change in work program or reporting line that is not justified by a clear business need or a request from a B-READY Team member, and that follows a request to alter, omit, or disregard valid data or to include or rely upon invalid data, should be treated as potential undue pressure. Similarly, a gradual or sudden exclusion from professional meetings that a B-READY Team member at a given functional level would normally be expected to attend, or even from social activities that a B-READY Team member in the same situation would normally be invited to, will be reviewed as potential undue pressure when combined with a request to alter, ignore, or include data when the request lacks factual grounding.

2.6.2 Undue Pressures from WBG Peers, Management, or Senior Management

The B-READY Management and the Development Economics (DEC) Management are committed to protecting B-READY Team members from undue pressure and to addressing conflicts of interest as they occur. If B-READY Team members feel themselves to be subject to undue pressure, they are encouraged to discuss the situation with their supervisor, or if the supervisor is involved, with the supervisor of the supervisor, or with anyone in the B-READY or DEC Management chain. In addition, B-READY Team members have several independent internal mechanisms at their disposal, including one informal mechanism with an informal appeal (B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function with an informal appeal to the Chief Ethics Officer) and two formal mechanisms (Anti-Harassment Coordinator, EBC Investigation Unit) to report undue pressure from WBG staff, whether peers, Supervisors, Managers, Directors, or more Senior Managers.

The most readily available informal mechanism consists of contacting the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team and requesting a confidential meeting. There is no imposed format on such meetings: these are available both to individual B-READY Team members and to groups of B-READY Team members who would prefer to address an issue collectively. The B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team will seek informal resolutions, including—with the explicit agreement of the reporting B-READY Team member—discussing the matter with the B-READY Team member who is alleged to exert undue pressure. If a more formal response is needed, the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team will pass on the case to the Anti-Harassment Coordinator or to the EBC Investigation Unit (in both cases, only with the explicit agreement of the reporting B-READY Team member). B-READY Team members do not need to obtain proof of undue pressure before contacting the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team; they are welcome to discuss their own perception of the situation. Similarly, B-READY Team members are welcome to contact the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team when such pressure is just emerging.

This informal mechanism has an informal appeals mechanism: EBC staff who compose the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team report to both the Chief Ethics Officer and to the EIJ, which can be contacted if the reporting B-READY Team member considers that the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team is not providing enough attention to the matter that they raised.

This informal mechanism exists in addition to the formal and informal mechanisms available through the EIJ Vice Presidency (Anti-Harassment, EBC investigations, EBC Advisory, Race Equity Officer, Peer Review, Mediation, and Ombuds) (see Appendix A). B-READY Team members can refer directly to other EIJ services: the use of the B-READY informal mechanism is not a prerequisite.

If the situation clearly involves inappropriate behaviors, the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function can refer the matter to the Anti-Harassment Coordinator, who keeps a record of allegations of harassment or sexual harassment, as specified in Staff Rule 3.00, paragraph 5.03. When the undue pressure is intense, the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function may refer the issue to the Investigation Unit. As noted in Staff Rule 3.00, paragraph 6.01, the act of "undertaking an activity when the authority to do so has been denied" also constitutes misconduct. This B-Ready M&G informs all parties that the possibility of manipulating data unduly to modify the final results or the analysis in a way that is not factually justified is fully and permanently denied, and therefore doing so would constitute misconduct.

In the very unlikely case where all internal support and reporting mechanisms fail, <u>Staff Rule 8.02</u> also foresees protection against retaliation for staff who report externally (whistleblowing). External reporting, including the provision of confidential information to the outside, is normally prohibited, but whistleblowing provides an exception.

B-READY Team members are actively encouraged to discuss any situation that may involve retaliation with the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function and to report evidence of retaliation to the EBC Investigation Unit. Human Resources (HR), in cooperation with EBC, can implement interim protections of B-READY Team members who have reported allegations of misconduct and fear retaliation. B-READY Team members are invited to discuss such concerns openly with EBC.

While EBC will accept anonymous allegations for review, B-READY Team members should be aware that the protection against retaliation—which is automatically granted to B-READY Team members who report allegations to EBC or cooperate with EBC in any way—cannot be triggered when B-READY Team members report anonymously. B-READY Team members can contact the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function under their own name but request that the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function not reveal their identity in any subsequent discussions of the matter, for instance, in discussions with Management.

2.6.3 Undue Pressures from the WBG Board

EIJ has no jurisdiction over the WBG Board, and thus EBC cannot investigate a Board official (Executive Directors, Alternate Directors, Senior Advisers, and Advisers) for misconduct. However, it is still possible to report matters to EBC, which will, in turn, report these to the Ethics Committee of the Board. At the request of the B-READY Team members who report the allegations, EBC can protect the anonymity of the reporter and transmit the information to the Chair of the Ethics Committee without revealing the source. Staff Rule 8.02, paragraph 2.01.e. states, "Reports of suspected misconduct involving Board Officials are submitted directly to the Ethics Committee of the Board as provided in the Code of Conduct for Board Officials. In the alternative, a Staff Member may report suspected misconduct to EBC, in which case, confidentiality and anonymity protections available to reporters under this Rule shall apply."

It is also possible for B-READY Team members to report misconduct directly to the Ethics Committee of the Board as per <u>Staff Rule 3.00</u>, paragraph 7.01. B-READY Team members are invited to report undue

pressure by Board Officials (1) to EBC (either directly to the EBC Investigation Unit or through the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function) or (2) directly to any member of the Ethics Committee of the Board of Directors.

2.6.4 Undue Pressures from Governments and Other External Bodies

All member countries of the World Bank Group have signed the Articles of Agreement of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and have committed to complying with the Articles (see Appendix G). Paragraph V, section 5 (c) of the Articles of Agreement of the IBRD states: "The President, officers and staff of the Bank, in the discharge of their offices, owe their duty entirely to the Bank and to no other authority. Each member of the Bank shall respect the international character of this duty and shall refrain from all attempts to influence any of them in the discharge of their duties." As a result, government or public officials who would exert undue pressure on B-READY Team members would violate an international agreement endorsed by their own economy.

While external parties are not subject to WBG rules (and, in turn, the WBG and its staff enjoy some protections from national rules), WBG Management is often able to exert an influence on external parties. EBC and WBG Management cooperate on a regular basis to address unethical behaviors of counterparts, and many cases have resolved these matters successfully. There is a clear commitment from the DEC Senior Management and the B-READY Management to address situations of undue influence by third parties. The B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function is also committed to assisting in such situations. B-READY Team members are encouraged to report such situations, even if this reporting is not foreseen in the Staff Rules and even if they cannot provide proof that the undue influence has taken place.

The Principles of Staff Employment make an obligation for the WBG to "make all reasonable efforts to ensure appropriate protection and safety for staff members in the performance of their duties." As a result, B-READY Team members are encouraged to report any threat against their safety or the safety of their families in connection with the B-READY activities. The same Principle 2 requires the WBG to "provide staff members security in their employment consistent with the terms of their appointments, their satisfactory performance and conduct, and the efficient administration of the WBG." Accordingly, B-READY Team members are encouraged to report any threat against their continuing employment that external parties would make. Finally, if the undue pressure by external parties were to be relayed by anyone inside the WBG, such action could constitute misconduct and could be investigated as such.

B-READY Team members are actively encouraged to contact the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function if they are subject to any undue pressure, irrespective of whether such pressure comes from within or outside the WBG, as many external undue pressures can often be addressed informally yet effectively.

2.7 Transparency

B-READY relies on transparency and replicability to build trust in its data and report. All granular data collected by the B-READY project—raw data, aggregated answers, scores, along with the calculations to obtain the latter from the former—are made publicly available on its website. All results presented in B-READY's reports can be replicable using a reproducibility package made available on the same website.

Raw data collected from Expert Contributors are deidentified to serve as the basis for the subsequent publication of individual responses in order to prevent undue influence and to allow the full publication of the responses (see Section 5.3). All data obtained from either Expert Contributors or firms are collected in raw form and then used to calculate a score that can be combined with other scores.

The detailed scoring and aggregation methodology is also published on the B-READY website, and full replication programs are made available. The full transparency of B-READY's granular data and scoring

methodology may allow users to generate their own alternative scores and rankings that meet their needs. The B-READY Team may facilitate this user capability by setting up an interactive platform on its website.

In addition, to emphasize the transparency of the communication strategy between B-READY and governments (as discussed in Chapter 4), the B-READY Team commits to sharing on its website the schedule of all Bilateral Meetings (videoconferences and in-person meetings) organized per cycle, indicator and per economy on a rolling basis. Section 4.4 provides more details on the publication of interactions between the B-READY Team and governments.

2.8 Quality Assurance Related to the Process

The B-READY data collection and reporting process adheres to the highest standards of data integrity, including sound data-gathering processes, robust safeguards, and clear approval protocols. Following the recommendations from the Group Internal Audit (GIA) Insight Note issued on June 29, 2022 (see Appendix G), B-READY will implement a robust quality assurance (QA) process that will include:

- A review by DEC colleagues who are not part of the analysis;
- A Bank-wide Review process, including World Bank and International Finance Corporation (IFC) Teams that are not part of the analysis; and
- A workflow that proceeds only after the review and clearance at each step.

The QA process will be managed through an electronic workflow to track progress and maintain an audit trail, with clearly defined and documented executive roles and responsibilities. An appropriate process of change management will be instituted for external publication of data and reports, including automatic notifications to key Stakeholders of changes made. Any modifications to the data or the analysis will require re-approval before publication.

In addition, B-READY will also rely on transparency and replicability to build trust in its data and report, as outlined in Section 2.6.

GIA will provide periodic assurance on the production and publication process of the B-READY report. GIA is scheduled to conduct an Assurance Review to examine the end-to-end process of data collection and reporting after the publication of the first B-READY report.

Chapter 3–ENGAGEMENT WITH EXPERT CONTRIBUTORS

This chapter provides a detailed explanation on how the B-READY project collects the data for the B-READY report, including the methods and criteria used to identify private sector Expert Contributors and vendors, contact them, and remunerate them should they wish to be paid. It describes the database that tracks all the information provided by Expert Contributors and their submissions to the B-READY questionnaire. It also documents the rules related to the B-READY Team's interactions with Expert Contributors, interactions between Stakeholders and World Bank Group (WBG) colleagues regarding Expert Contributors specifically, and B-READY travel protocols.

3.1 Data Collection

The data for the B-READY report are collected in two main ways: using (1) Expert Contributors consultations and (2) firm-level surveys. De jure data are collected from Expert Contributors consultations, and de facto data are collected from Expert Contributors consultations or firm-level surveys, depending on the nature of the specific indicator and as specified in the B-READY Methodology Handbook. Expert Contributors consultations refer to data collected from professionals who regularly deal with the relevant legal arrangements, as well as public services and institutions providing those services. The firm-level data are collected by the World Bank Enterprise Survey (WBES) program by administering questionnaires to a nationally representative sample of registered firms with at least five or more employees in the non-extractive and non-agricultural private sector. For more information on the data collection exercise by the WBES program, please refer to the WBES Manual and Guide.

3.1.1 General Topics Covered

B-READY covers a wide range of topics following the life cycle of a firm and its participation in the market. The ten B-READY topics are Business Entry, Business Location, Utility Services, Labor, Financial Services, International Trade, Taxation, Dispute Resolution, Market Competition, and Business Insolvency. In addition, B-READY looks at three cross-cutting themes: digital adoption, environmental sustainability, and gender, anchoring these areas where relevant in each B-READY topic. Each topic is based on three pillars: regulatory framework, public services, and efficiency. Expert Contributors consultations are used to collect data on the regulatory framework, public services, and some efficiency indicators, whereas firm-level surveys are used to assess most efficiency indicators. Because each of the B-READY topics analyzes a specific set of indicators, Expert Contributors consultations involve different professionals, areas of expertise, and requirements for each topic, as detailed in table 3.1 in Section 3.1.6.

3.1.2 Data Collection through Firm-Level Surveys

The Enterprise Surveys produced by the World Bank's Enterprise Analysis Unit is the source of B-READY firm-level data, which comes from relevant variables in existing global WBES modules, as well as approximately 74 B-READY-specific questions, cutting across most topic areas, designed to give de facto information on the efficiency pillars of the B-READY project. The anonymized firm-level data are published as part of the regular WBES process, which complies with the WBG Data and Privacy Policy.

The surveys are conducted by hiring a data collection vendor, such as a local private survey company, through the WBG procurement process. These vendors are responsible for managing a team of survey enumerators, conducting fieldwork, and ensuring data quality that meets the WBES standards. The vendor may also be required to make payments to Expert Contributors on behalf of the B-READY team, as established in their contract. The WBES Team trains enumerators directly, monitors data collection and sample management, and conducts extensive quality control on all data. These latter protocols must be satisfied before data are delivered and approved. a

Detailed information on the implementation of firm-level surveys and firm sample selection, administration, and management by the WBES Team can be found in the <u>WBES Manual and Guide</u>. The interactions between the B-READY Team and the WBES Team are discussed in detail in Chapter 10.

3.1.3 Data Collection through Expert Contributors Consultations

Through the Expert Contributors consultation processes, B-READY collects data directly by sending detailed topic questionnaires to private sector Expert Contributors in all measured economies through the survey software (Chapter 5). The Expert Contributors submit their responses in writing through the same software. They base their responses on their knowledge of and experience with regulatory frameworks, relevant public services, and implementation of regulations and public services for the particular topic.

Three to five private sector Expert Contributors are consulted per topic questionnaire (Section 3.1.13), except for the Credit Registry/Bureau topic questionnaire where only 1 response per economy is necessary. For economies with less than one million inhabitants, between two and five Expert Contributors are consulted per topic questionnaire. Expert Contributors consultations are conducted annually. Each Topic Team is responsible for selecting and managing their network of Expert Contributors and collecting the data. The Centralized Recruitment function collaborates in this endeavor (Section 3.8). A Contributor Manager oversees the process, facilitating the relationship between the B-READY Team and the Expert Contributors (Section 3.2).

The data collection process with Expert Contributors takes place in two main rounds. The first round starts at the beginning of the data collection cycle when the topic questionnaires are sent to Expert Contributors. Expert Contributors are then required to fully complete the topic questionnaire sent to them and submit it to the B-READY Team. If one or more questions remain unanswered, the questionnaire is sent back to the Expert Contributor to be fully completed.

Once the B-READY team determines that the full topic questionnaire is completed, the internal data validation process begins, and Expert Contributors are contacted in a second round if needed (see Section 5.2.3).

3.1.4 Private Sector and Public Sector Expert Contributors

B-READY collects data primarily from private sector Expert Contributors (except for the Credit Registry/Bureau topic questionnaire), which include sole practitioners (for example, a self-employed electrical contractor or a lawyer) and practitioners working in small, medium, and large firms. Some private sector Expert Contributors, especially lawyers, can participate in multiple-topic questionnaires. Topic questionnaires can be completed jointly by multiple Expert Contributors from the same firm and are considered as being completed by one Expert Contributor only.

In addition, B-READY collects data from public sector Expert Contributors. Public sector Expert Contributors work for government agencies or ministries involved in the specific processes covered by each topic. The input from public sector Expert Contributors is combined into a single comprehensive response from the government and limited to one response per topic questionnaire. The data provided by public sector Expert Contributors is not published or assessed but serves as a reference or for cross-validation (Appendix D), except for the questions related to the Credit Registry/Bureau topic questionnaire of the Financial Services topic. Credit Registries are considered as core Expert Contributors and their responses are evaluated and published.

3.1.5 Expert Contributors Selection Process

Appendix B contains detailed guidance on how to select Expert Contributors. To identify private sector Expert Contributors, each Topic Team:

- Prepares an economy-specific list of relevant professions with the relevant areas of expertise and experience (Section 3.1.6)
- Identifies potential Expert Contributors, assesses their expertise (Section 3.1.7), and checks for previous participation in B-READY (Section 3.1.8)

- Administers screener questionnaires (Section 3.1.9)
- Selects the final private sector Expert Contributors to whom the topic questionnaires will be sent (Section 3.1.10)

After obtaining the topic questionnaire responses from Expert Contributors and analyzing them, Topic Team members conduct a final expertise assessment to evaluate whether the responses submitted by Expert Contributors meet the required quality standard and whether these Expert Contributors should be contacted in future cycles (Section 3.1.11).

3.1.6 Relevant Professions and Areas of Expertise

All Expert Contributors must abide by the following requirements:

- Independence, Impartiality, and Objectivity. Private sector Expert Contributors should be and should appear to be neutral, independent, and impartial with respect to the influence of public agencies and demonstrate an absence of bias towards any jurisdiction under review.
- **Knowledge**. Private sector Expert Contributors should be up to date on regulations and practices related to each topic.
- Language. Private sector Expert Contributors should have effective communication skills in one of the core World Bank Group languages. This requirement can be exempted under exceptional circumstances if there are no experts who can communicate effectively in core WBG languages or if the standards of data quality can be compromised by the inability to communicate in such languages.
- **Compliance.** Private sector Expert Contributors are expected to comply during their B-READY engagement with all applicable national laws and codes of ethics relevant to their professions.
- **Proven Availability.** Private sector Expert Contributors should commit to performing the assigned tasks within the indicated schedule and being available in case follow-up is needed.
- **Years of Experience.** Private sector Expert Contributors should have at least three years of experience in their relevant fields.

In addition, each Topic Team identifies for each of its topic questionnaires a list of professionals with specific areas of expertise and additional requirements. Some topics, such as Business Entry, have only one topic questionnaire, whereas other topics may have several (for example, the Financial Services topic has four topic questionnaires, which require a diverse pool of experts).

Table 3.1 summarizes the different professionals, areas of expertise, and minimum requirements for the private sector and public sector Expert Contributors for each of the 10 B-READY topics. In the table:

- Any reference to laws shall include all applicable laws, regulations, policies, rules, orders, and all provisions consolidating, amending, replacing, supplementing, or interpreting those laws.¹
- Professionals are required to be proficient only in their related areas of expertise. For example, in the e-payments section of the Financial Services topic, lawyers are not expected to be experts on the financial or IT aspects of e-payment services and systems but are expected to be experts in the legal aspects in one or more of the following areas: banking laws, electronic payments law, and financial law.
- All bureaus, registries, banks, companies, institutions, and professionals listed in the table must be legally authorized to operate, and/or must possess valid licenses to operate, where applicable.

¹ Law Insider. Accessed 2024. *References to Laws Sample Clauses*. https://www.lawinsider.com/clause/references-to-laws.

Table 3.1. Professionals, Areas of Expertise, and Requirements for the Expert Contributors for each B-READY Topic

Topic and Topic Questionnaire	Professionals	Area of Expertise	Minimum Requirements
Business Entry			
Business Entry	Lawyers Notaries Tax accountants Tax advisors	 Business registration Registration with the authorities in charge of taxes, labor, social security, and pensions Related online services 	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.
Business Location			
Land Administration and Property Registration	Conveyancers Lawyers Notaries	 Cadastral system Contract law Real property law Real property tax law 	Have conducted at least 5 real estate transactions related to commercial properties per year for the past 3 years in the measured economy.
Building Permitting	Architects Engineers Lawyers	Construction lawInfrastructureUrban lawZoning law	Have obtained at least 2 permits related to commercial construction in the past 3 years in the measured economy.
Environmental Permitting in Construction	Environmental consultants Environmental engineers Environmental planners	- Environmental planning and compliance	Have obtained at least 2 environmental clearances (including environmental impact assessment) in the past 4 years in the measured economy.

Utility Services				
Electricity	Construction companies Contractors Electricians Engineers Lawyers	 Civil engineering Construction contracting Construction law Electrical contracting Electrical engineering Energy law General expertise in obtaining or providing electricity connections 	Have at least 2 years of relevant experience in the area of electricity in the measured economy.	
Water	Construction companies Contractors Engineers Lawyers Plumbers Water specialists	 Civil engineering Construction contracting Construction law General expertise in obtaining or providing water connections Water regulations 	Have at least 2 years of relevant experience in the area of water in the measured economy.	
Internet	Computer network administrator Broadband technicians IT architects IT engineers IT specialists Lawyers	 Cloud administration Consumer protection Internet service disputes IT security and cybersecurity IT system administration Management of network interfaces New internet connections Telecommunication laws 	Have at least 2 years of relevant experience in the area of internet in the measured economy.	
Labor				
Labor	Lawyers	Labor lawLabor law enforcementLabor litigationSocial Security law	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.	

Financial Services			
Customer Due Diligence in Commercial Lending	Banks Identity and background verification service companies Financial institutions Lawyers	 Compliance Customer due diligence Customer identity verification Financial law Gathering customer data KYC (Know Your Customer) process and handling KYC regulations Lending to customers Opening of bank accounts Risk evaluation (AML/CFT) 	Have 2 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.
Secured Transactions and Collateral Registries	Lawyers	Banking lawCommercial lendingFinancial lawSecured transactions law	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.
e-Payments	Commercial banks Lawyers Payment service providers	 Banking law Electronic payments law Financial law Payment services and systems 	Have 2 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.
Credit Bureaus and Registries ^a	Credit bureaus Public sector External Contributors: Credit registries	 Gathering and reporting credit information data of customers (companies and individuals) Information management and analysis 	Cover more than 5% of adult population and distribute credit reports during the assessed period.

International Trade			
Quality of Regulations for International Trade Lawyers in goods	Lawyers Trade economists Trade consultants Trade managers	 International trade law (including agreements and framework of the World Trade Organization and World Customs Organization) International trade in goods and services (i.e., World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments in goods and services, domestic regulations on trade in goods and services, trade barriers, trade agreements, sustainable trade) 	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.
Quality of Regulations for International Trade Lawyers in services	Lawyers Trade economists Trade consultants Trade managers	 International trade law (including agreements and framework of the World Trade Organization and World Customs Organization) International trade in goods and services (i.e., WTO commitments in goods and services, domestic regulations on trade in goods and services, trade barriers, trade agreements, etc.) 	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the measured economy
Quality of Public Services for the Facilitation of International Trade	Clearing agents Customs brokers Freight forwarders Shipping line agents Trade consultants Trade economists	 Procedures and requirements for export, import or transit of goods Logistics Procedures and requirements for export, import, or transit of goods 	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.

Taxation			
Taxation	Accounting companies Lawyers Tax accountants Tax advisors Tax auditors Tax consultants	 Accounting, tax reporting and compliance Corporate tax law Environmental tax law Indirect taxation Tax administration law Tax dispute resolution Tax registration and deregistration procedures Tax review and enforcement Social taxes and contributions 	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.
Dispute Resolution			
Dispute Resolution	Lawyers	 Commercial arbitration Commercial litigation Commercial mediation Enforcement proceedings in commercial cases International dispute resolution 	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the measured economy.
Market Competition	1		
Competition	Lawyers Mergers and acquisitions consultants	 Abuse of dominance Antitrust litigation Competition law compliance Competition law litigation Merger control procedures Regulated markets 	Have been involved in at least 1 transaction subject to the merger control regulations in the previous calendar year (does not need to be completed), and 1 antitrust case over the last three years (either at the administrative level or judicial) in the measured economy.

Procurement	Lawyers Consultants for tenders' preparations In-house procurement officers and practitioners	Public procurement regulations and practices at the state/national/federal level, including: - Assessing contract awards - Bidding and/or assisting companies to bid for government tenders for goods, services, and works - Contractual issues related to payment - Formal challenges and appeals procedures on public procurement decisions	Have conducted at least 1 procurement procedure per year for the past 3 years in the measured economy.
Innovation	Lawyers	 Infringement analysis Institutional management of innovation flow Intellectual property protection, including registration of patents, industrial designs, trademarks, and copyright Intellectual property strategy University or institutional-based innovations Registration of licensing agreements and transfer of rights 	Have conducted at least 1 intellectual property right registration or have drafted at least 1 licensing agreement in the previous year in the measured economy.
Business Insolvency			
Business Insolvency	Lawyers	 Corporate insolvency law Corporate insolvency proceedings (liquidation and reorganization proceedings) 	Have completed at least 2 insolvency related cases in the previous 3 years in the measured economy and/or have currently at least 2 insolvency ongoing proceedings. For "no practice" economies these criteria do not apply.

a. *Note:* AML/CFT = anti-money laundering/combatting the financing of terrorism; IT = information technology; UNCITRAL = United Nations Commission on International Trade Law; WTO = World Trade Organization. Credit investigative bureaus that do not directly facilitate information exchange among banks and other financial institutions are not considered.

3.1.7 Initial Expertise Assessment

When identifying potential private sector Expert Contributors, the B-READY Team assesses whether such experts have an adequate level of expertise required to be sent the topic questionnaire and participate in the research. At the beginning of the data collection cycle, Topic Team Leaders (TTLs) train their Topic Team members on how to assess expertise specific to the topic.

3.1.8 Search of Private Sector Expert Contributors

A search shall be done in the Microsoft Dynamics Contributor Relationship Management (CRM) system, to ensure that the expert is not already an Expert Contributor and has not previously provided information that was deemed of substandard quality (Appendix B). After conducting the initial search, the Team produces a list of prospective private sector Expert Contributors for each topic questionnaire. Topic Teams may share Expert Contributors, as needed.

3.1.9 Screener Questionnaire

The Topic Teams prepare a short, standard screener questionnaire for each of their topic questionnaires, as applicable, to determine the level of expertise of potential Expert Contributors for each topic and help narrow down the pool of Expert Contributors (Section 5.1.4). The Topic Teams then send an email to prospective Expert Contributors with a link to the screener questionnaire.

3.1.10 Final Selection of Private Sector Expert Contributors

After administering the screener questionnaire, each Topic Team identifies a list of private sector Expert Contributors who are eligible to provide their expertise on the specific topic and/or subtopic. Each Topic Team then selects up to five Expert Contributors to contact for each topic questionnaire. In cases where there are more than five equally qualified Expert Contributors for a topic questionnaire, the Topic Team selects the candidates randomly. The remaining prospective Expert Contributors can be contacted if the Topic Team needs to obtain more information.

After selecting the private sector Expert Contributors that will provide their expertise, the B-READY Team sends them a document detailing the rules of engagement and a link to the topic questionnaire that the Expert Contributors agreed to complete within a specific deadline.

3.1.11 Final Expertise Assessment

After obtaining the topic questionnaire responses from private sector Expert Contributors and analyzing them, the Topic Teams conduct a final expertise assessment to evaluate whether the responses submitted meet the level of expertise required and if so, whether Expert Contributors may be contacted in future cycles. The Topic Team evaluates the contributions against the following criteria:

- **Recent Knowledge.** Did the Expert Contributors either share or not share updated information about new laws, procedures, taxes, or other relevant factors that are known to have been implemented?
- Lack of Accuracy. Did the Expert Contributors provide information that is factually and verifiably incorrect?
- Thoroughness. Did the Expert Contributor write thorough answers to the questions where applicable? Was the Expert Contributor able to explain/justify the provided responses through follow-up questions? A lack of thoroughness does not indicate a lack of expertise, but thoroughness can indicate strong expertise.
- **Potential Bias.** Are topic questionnaires similar enough to indicate biased responses that were coordinated with undue influence on the data (Section 3.2.3)?

These criteria are offered here as general guidance. In all cases, for both positive and negative observations, Team members write a note in CRM, assessing the knowledge of the private sector Expert Contributor. If the Contributor is deemed to have not provided quality data for a specific topic, the Analyst notes that in

CRM and alerts the TTL, who decides whether the information provided by these Expert Contributors should be discarded when assessing the data. The Topic Team then identifies a replacement. The Team can follow the steps in Sections 3.1.7, 3.1.8, and 3.1.9 or choose an expert from the list of Remaining Prospective Expert Contributor detailed in Section 3.1.10. The replacement Expert Contributor is contacted during the same data collection cycle to provide the necessary information.

B-READY Team members are encouraged to report instances to the Topic Team Leaders and Supervisors during the data validation process where Expert Contributors did not provide quality data. If a Topic Team does not obtain the minimum number of responses required to finalize the data in an economy, whether because of the quality of the data obtained or the inability to obtain the minimum number of completed topic questionnaires, the particular circumstance of the topic and economy is discussed in a debrief meeting, as described in Sections 3.1.13 and 5.4.2. In the debrief meeting (Section 5.4.2), the TTL summarizes the Topic Team's efforts to obtain topic questionnaires before the Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager and the Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) Director.

3.1.12 Expert Contributors Database, Privacy Protections, Publication of Data

B-READY maintains a comprehensive database of thousands of Expert Contributors in CRM. Different teams across the Indicators Group have access to the CRM but maintain their own database of experts. Expert Contributor data is collected, processed, and stored in a manner that is compatible with the purpose for which it was collected and in compliance with the WBG Data and Privacy Policy.

To promote transparency, the raw data (accompanied by supporting legal bases when applicable) provided by private sector Expert Contributors (and Credit Registries where it applies) and used in the score calculation are published on the B-READY website. The comments sections that are not directly used in the score calculation are not published on the B-READY website. The published data are not linked to a particular Expert Contributor. The identity of Expert Contributors is not published or shared, and B-READY Team members (and more broadly any WBG staff) are not allowed to disclose the identity of private sector Expert Contributors or any information that may reveal the identity of such Expert Contributors. Expert Contributors' personal identification information remains confidential, except to identify them in the CRM database. The anonymized raw data are published in compliance with the WBG Data and Privacy Policy.

3.1.13 Completion of Questionnaires by Expert Contributors

The B-READY Team first sends potential Expert Contributors a screener questionnaire to evaluate their expertise for each of the ten topics, and, based on the expertise assessment described above, up to five Expert Contributors are selected. Then, the B-READY Team directly invites selected private sector Expert Contributors and Credit Bureaus or Registries to complete topic questionnaires related to their areas of expertise. Expert Contributors have two weeks to submit the completed topic questionnaires. The B-READY Team may contact the Expert Contributors again if there is information missing or if any clarification might be needed. If Expert Contributors not formally recruited by the B-READY Team respond to one or more topic questionnaires, the Team does not consider the information provided in its assessment of the data. The B-READY Team also invites Executive Directors to share links with governments they represent to complete topic questionnaires.

3.1.14 Number of Expert Contributors per Topic, per Economy, and Remuneration

Every Topic Team must use reasonable efforts to obtain completed topic questionnaires from three to five private sector Expert Contributors per economy for each of its topic questionnaires with the following two exceptions: (i) for economies with less than one million inhabitants, a minimum of two private sector Expert Contributors must complete the topic questionnaire, and (ii) for the Credit Registry/Bureau topic questionnaire, only one questionnaire is necessary to finalize the data. Each Topic Team should try to build a buffer of at least seven to nine eligible experts per economy. This buffer allows for the replacement of

dormant experts—those who have not submitted a questionnaire by the set deadline despite reminders and follow-ups. A Topic Team may not have more than a total of five topic questionnaires received per economy.

If a Topic Team is not able to obtain fully completed quality topic questionnaires from at least three private sector Expert Contributors in an economy for each of its topic questionnaires (except in the two cases described in the previous paragraph of this section), even after contacting replacement Expert Contributors, the TTL alerts the Topic Supervisor during the data collection period, and the DECBE Manager makes a decision on how to proceed. Steps taken to address this include but are not limited to allowing a lower number than three Expert Contributors for the topic, removing the data for the topic for the relevant B-READY cycle, removing the economy data for the relevant B-READY cycle, and keeping the data for the economy but not including it in any aggregate score that may be constructed. The DECIG Director is informed when the data for the B-READY report are closed. During the debrief meeting (Section 5.4.2), the Topic Team, Topic Supervisor, DECBE Manager, DECIG Director, and the B-READY—Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC) focal points (Section 2.2) recapitulate the data collection process's challenges and on exceptions granted for each economy based on its unique circumstances taking into account considerations such as (1) the size of the economy, and (2) the ease of recruitment of qualified Expert Contributors. During this meeting, the TTL must show all the steps that the Topic Team has taken to collect the data.

There is no minimum number of topic questionnaires from public sector Expert Contributors that must be collected to consider a topic complete. The input of public sector Expert Contributors is limited to one response per topic questionnaire. Except for responses provided by Credit Registries, the input of public sector Expert Contributors is not used for the data assessment but may be used for data validation purposes (Appendix D).

All private sector Expert Contributors who participate in the B-READY research according to instructions provided can be compensated for their services if they wish to be (Section 3.4). There is no maximum number of questionnaires that one private sector Expert Contributor can complete. Public sector Expert Contributors who participate in the B-READY research are not compensated for their services.

3.2 Interactions with Expert Contributors

3.2.1 Interactions between the B-READY Team and Expert Contributors

To ensure accurate and impartial responses, the B-READY Team collects information directly from the private sector Expert Contributors and Credit Registries without intermediation from the public sector. The data are collected through several rounds of communication with the selected Expert Contributors, through responses to topic questionnaires, and through follow-ups as needed. Most communications regarding the data are conducted through the survey software, where all comments are retained for auditing purposes. The B-READY Team may also travel to selected economies and conduct meetings with private sector Expert Contributors as outlined in Section 3.6. In these cases, the B-READY Traveling Team should abide by Staff Rule 3.01 – Standards of Professional Conduct, and in particular Section 10 related to Benefits, Favors, and Gifts.

The B-READY Team manages the relationship with private sector Expert Contributors in the following exclusive way: Communications are done on a bilateral basis, and exchanges with experts are separate from any government interactions with the B-READY Team. Private sector Expert Contributors nominated by governments are not considered when the Team is selecting such experts. Expert Contributors are encouraged to report instances of undue pressure to the B-READY Team. They can recuse themselves at any stage in the data collection process if they are under any pressure. In such situations, Expert Contributors may report such undue pressure directly to their contact in the B-READY Team, to the B-

READY-EBC focal points, or to the DECBE Manager. All such reporting is dealt with on a confidential and need-to-know basis to protect the identity of the expert. Generally, private sector Expert Contributors are requested to certify that they did not participate in any meetings/discussions with the authorities to discuss their assessment and that they do not plan to hold such a meeting.

Public sector Expert Contributors who choose to complete topic questionnaires upon receiving the invitation from Executive Directors fill out such topic questionnaires in a specific software which then sends the data directly to the B-READY Team. Public officials may also send B-READY topic questionnaires to their colleagues in public sector agencies as needed. Only one response per public sector agency (land registry, municipality, tax authority, and so on) is considered, even if the Topic Teams contacted multiple experts from the same public agency. If such Expert Contributors do not provide a response from the public agency, the B-READY Team is not obliged to take additional actions to secure a response from them.

3.2.2 Interactions between Public Officials, WBG Colleagues, and B-READY Expert Contributors Public officials, World Bank staff, and other Stakeholders must avoid any undue interference with private sector Expert Contributors, and they should not directly or indirectly be involved in the data collection process. Governments are encouraged to disseminate and communicate reforms and regulatory improvements to the general public and to all relevant practitioners in the economy as a group. However, as noted, governments should avoid communication that could be perceived as efforts to directly influence the responses of individual Expert Contributors. Governments may send B-READY topic questionnaires to their colleagues in public sector agencies and/or ask them to participate. For more information on Stakeholder interactions, please refer to Chapter 4 of this B-READY M&G.

3.2.3 Protocols for the Treatment of Undue Stakeholders' Interference

If the B-READY Team determines that Stakeholders have engaged in activities that are or could be perceived as interference with the independence of Expert Contributors in an economy, the B-READY Team, in consultation with Bank Management and the B-READY-EBC focal points, may take any of the steps detailed below.

3.2.3.1 Internal Notification Process

If the B-READY Topic Teams identify that the data received could have been influenced by a Stakeholder or any public official, or that a Team member has received any type of pressure or invitation to manipulate the data, the TTLs must alert the Topic Supervisor and DECBE Manager. In cases where reliable data cannot be collected due to Stakeholder interference, the TTLs must also notify the Topic Supervisor and the DECBE Manager. In these instances, the TTL, Topic Supervisor, and DECBE Manager meet to decide on the relevance of such topic questionnaires and whether the information should be discarded. Minutes are taken and emailed by the Topic Supervisor to the DECBE Manager with observations after the meeting. The DECBE Manager reviews the proposed decision and provides approval/rejection via email. The correspondence is then saved in the shared drive in the relevant topic folder for that economy. All undue interferences must be discussed during the debrief meetings detailed in Section 5.4.

3.2.3.2 Impact on the Data

Once Team Members have determined that undue interference occurred while data were being collected for an economy, the DECBE Manager informs the DECIG Director in writing and proposes a set of next steps based on the extent of the interference (one or multiple topics affected, number of topic questionnaires/Expert Contributors affected, and so on). The potential next steps include, but are not limited to, informing the relevant Executive Director's office of the situation and asking for their cooperation in preventing such issues from happening, freezing the data (that is, data are not updated) for the relevant edition of the report, and exclusion of the economy or the

topic for that economy from the B-READY report for that particular edition. The DECIG Director then finalizes their decision on the next steps and puts it in writing. The email from the DECIG Director with the final decision is then saved in the shared drive.

3.2.3.3 External Notification Process

The final decision on the data is disclosed in the B-READY report and B-READY website.

3.3 Expert Contributors Database

As noted in Section 3.1.12, access to CRM is restricted to the B-READY Team, the Women, Business and the Law (WBL) Team, and the Subnational B-READY (DECSN) Team. However, vendors in charge of paying Expert Contributors (Section 3.4) are also provided with a list of Expert Contributors to be remunerated. Expert Contributors data is collected, processed, and stored in a manner that is compatible with the purpose for which it was collected and in compliance with the <u>WBG Data and Privacy Policy</u>.

3.3.1 Managing Expert Contributors' Information in CRM

For every Expert Contributor identified and contacted by the B-READY Team, a profile page must be added to CRM detailing the following information whenever available:

- Full name
- Profession
- Company where they work or if they are self-employed
- Phone number
- Address
- Email
- Website
- Topic(s) that they contribute to or may contribute to

During the first rollout phase, there may be some delays in entering Expert Contributors' information in CRM, and B-READY Team members may not always be able to verify the information fully because of time constraints. Generally, starting with the second rollout phase and onward, before adding an Expert Contributor to CRM, B-READY Team members must first ensure that a profile page does not already exist for this expert. Appendix B contains details on how to conduct a thorough search on CRM. If a profile page already exists for an Expert Contributor, Team members must update all information about the Expert Contributor. Generally, Team members of the topic(s) that each Expert Contributor contributes to are responsible for keeping all the above-listed information current on their CRM profile page.

3.3.2 Reasons to Contact Expert Contributors

The B-READY Team members may contact Expert Contributors for administrative reasons, including:

- To request that they complete a screener questionnaire (Section 3.1.9)
- If needed, to remind them to complete the online screener questionnaire
- To inform them whether they were selected to contribute or not to a specific topic questionnaire
- If Expert Contributors are selected, to send them the topic questionnaire link
- If needed, to remind them to complete the topic questionnaire
- If needed, to ask them to respond to follow-up questions

Expert Contributors complete the screener and topic questionnaires strictly through the survey software (Section 5.1). Information about Expert Contributors can be automatically exported from CRM and uploaded to the survey software (some deviation from this procedure may occur during the first rollout phase). Other communications with Expert Contributors may be done through a Topic Team shared mailbox.

3.3.3 Process for Contacting Expert Contributors

As of the second year of the rollout phase, Topic Teams may only contact Expert Contributors for their own topic as marked in CRM. However, exceptions may be made if an expert is identified as a relevant contributor to another topic. When a B-READY Team Member conducts a search in CRM to identify whether an Expert Contributor has a profile page already created (Section 3.3.1), and the Member finds a profile page, they should ideally contact the Expert Contributor only if:

- The Expert Contributor has a topic questionnaire mapped for their own topic in the current B-READY cycle
- The Expert Contributor is not marked as Centralized or Global on their profile page

Multitopic Expert Contributors are those who receive three or more topic questionnaires, and they are contacted and coordinated by the Multitopic Function Leader and his or her team. Global Contributors have a coordinator within their firm, and only a designated B-READY Team member, the Global Contributors Function Leader and his or her team, coordinate their input. Centralized Expert Contributors (Section 3.8) are contacted by the Centralized Recruitment function in selected economies during the data collection cycle.

The CRM contains a comprehensive database of experts who were previously contacted for the Doing Business report. Topic teams are welcome to reach out to any of these experts, regardless of whether they participated in the team's specific topic. These experts are subject to the same screening and selection process as newly recruited experts.

Note: CRM database includes Expert Contributors consulted by the B-READY Team, the WBL Team, and the B-READY Subnational (DECSN) Team. Each Team may only contact its own Expert Contributors, except as provided for in Section 9.4.2. The B-READY Team may only contact experts listed under the B-READY "Product" in CRM.

3.3.4 Updating Questionnaire Status

Each Topic Team is responsible for updating the status of both the screener and topic questionnaires in CRM for each Expert Contributor they contact. During the first rollout phase, as noted, there may be some delays in including experts in CRM and updating their status. If a Topic Team contacts an Expert Contributor, they record the following information on the Expert Contributor's profile page:

- The Expert Contributor's confirmation or rejection for that particular B-READY cycle
- Their request to be contacted again in the future or to never be contacted again
- Their request for an extension and the requested new deadline
- The completion of the topic questionnaire and corresponding date
- The notes added regarding expertise assessment (Section 3.1.11)

3.3.5 CRM Tracking Process

A weekly CRM tracking table is circulated in the team during the data collection cycle to help the B-READY Team visualize the number of completed topic questionnaires per topic and per economy. Tracking begins two weeks after the survey distribution date and ends when most teams have attained 100 percent completion. The weekly tracking table shows the total number and percentage of economies "Received," where "Received Economy" means that at least three quality topic questionnaires have been received from private sector Expert Contributors (and at least two quality topic questionnaires have been received from private sector Expert Contributors for economies with less than one million inhabitants).

3.4 Payment of Expert Contributors

As noted, public sector Expert Contributors (such as municipalities and public utilities) are not paid for their expertise. Paying private sector Expert Contributors is expected to improve the timeliness and quality of the input received because it increases accountability. Thus, B-READY private sector Expert

Contributors can select whether they prefer to provide their services on a pro bono basis or on a fee-for-service basis. Expert Contributors are informed about these two options in the screener questionnaire sent to them at the beginning of the Expert Contributors selection process (Section 3.1.9). The team gauges their preferred method of contribution in the questionnaire.

3.4.1 Remuneration Amount and Time of Disbursement

The B-READY Team recruits all Expert Contributors and sends them the relevant topic questionnaires to be completed. The Team may select the same Expert Contributor(s) to complete different topic questionnaires. In such cases, the chosen expert gets paid for each completed topic questionnaire.

If Expert Contributors are providing their expertise for an economy different from the one where they reside, the Contributor Manager flags the relevant vendor to make the payment in the correct manner.

The remuneration is set at a flat fee of US\$400 (gross) per completed topic questionnaire (which includes the full completion of the topic questionnaire and providing a response if needed during the data validation phase).

The B-READY Team pays Expert Contributors only after the data validation cycle is closed, once the data are collected for all selected economies and all necessary follow-ups are concluded during the data validation phase. This enables the Team to finalize the data, and the B-READY Contributor Manager provides the sign-off information and clearance needed to the WBES TTL, who informs the vendors to provide the payment to all Expert Contributors. Expert Contributors who do not respond to follow-up questions during the data validation phase are not eligible to be remunerated; however, the Team can use their initial response for the assessment.

3.4.2 Vendor Role in the Remuneration Process

Vendors ensure the disbursement of Expert Contributors' remuneration upon receiving the sign-off information from the WBES TTL, as described in Section 3.4.1. Vendors are not responsible for assessing the completion of Expert Contributors' questionnaires, but only to arrange the transfer of funds to each expert after the data collection cycle of the report is closed. Vendors maintain detailed accounts of transactions and provide a report to the WBES TTL when funds have been successfully transferred. Vendors adhere to all required data privacy requirements regarding the personal details of Expert Contributors (as outlined in the Terms of Reference of the contract with the firm in each economy undertaking the survey).

3.5 Vendor Selection

Vendors are private market research firms or similar types of firms hired by the WBES Team to conduct firm-level surveys in each B-READY economy. B-READY Expert Contributors' payments are disbursed by the vendors selected by the WBES unit to undertake firm surveys in each economy. The payment of Expert Contributors is an additional task allocated to such vendors and is clearly specified in the terms of reference of their contract (Section 3.5.2). The selection process of the vendor that conducts firm surveys and completes Expert Contributors payments is outlined in Section 3 of the WBES Manual and Guide and reproduced as follows.

3.5.1 Type of Vendor

A market research firm or similar type of vendor with experience conducting interviews with the private sector is hired to undertake the survey fieldwork. Private market research firms are strongly preferred over official organizations such as government statistical or ministerial offices to preserve the impartial and transparent nature of the survey. Many of the topics covered in the Enterprise Surveys are under the purview of the government, and therefore, the data collector should not be associated with the state. The WBES

Team follows the World Bank's procurement system protocols, via <u>WBGeProcureRFxNow</u>, to identify and hire the vendors.

3.5.2 Terms of Reference (TOR)

The TOR outlines the objectives of the survey project (for an individual economy or a grouping of economies), the target number of interviews across the different stratification levels, an overview of the survey methodology, the roles and responsibilities of each party (the vendor and the WBG), the deliverables of the project, and the associated timeline and payment schedule. The TOR also includes information on the task related to Expert Contributors' payments, and the B-READY Team is involved in the drafting of this section. WBES uses a standardized TOR across projects that can be customized to the individual project.

3.5.3 Expression of Interest (EOI)

Projects undergo a full competitive selection process via <u>WBGeProcureRFxNow</u>. This process has two stages: Expression of Interest (EOI) and Request for Proposal (RFP). In the EOI stage, an announcement describing the project (number of interviews across which economies) is posted in the WBG's public "Business Opportunities" portal in eConsultant2. Prospective bidders typically have three weeks to submit an EOI. After the deadline, EOIs are reviewed, and three to six prospective vendors are shortlisted to the RFP stage. On rare occasions, when specific circumstances may require it, a single-source selection is used.

3.5.4 Requests for Proposals

In the RFP stage, prospective vendors typically have four to six weeks to submit full technical and financial proposals. The technical proposal describes the vendor's experience with similar assignments and their experience working in the economy or region of interest. It also indicates how the vendor will adapt the standard methodology to optimize the project in each economy, including maximizing response rates, reducing potential biases in the data, and minimizing the duration of fieldwork. After the RFP deadline, a scoring committee—typically three to four WBES staff members and, to the extent possible, one counterpart from the economy or region of the project—scores the technical proposals. After all technical scores are entered, financial proposals are automatically scored in the system, and the "top bidder" is called for negotiations.

3.5.5 Contract Negotiations and Signing

Before the contract is signed, contract negotiations take place with the "winner" of the RFP process. These negotiations are an opportunity to clarify any uncertainties regarding the technical proposal, agree on key project milestones and immediate next steps, and reduce the scope of work if the financial proposal exceeds the allocated budget envelope. The contract is processed in the WBG's <u>SAP</u> database only after reaching an agreement on key project milestones, the overall budget, and payment schedule and deliverables.

3.5.6 Looking Ahead

In Rollout Phase II, B-READY will continue to expand collaborations with experts around the globe. To facilitate efficient payments, B-READY is transitioning to electronic wallet payments such as PayPal or e-Visa cards. This shift will streamline the compensation process, eliminating the complexities associated with traditional payment methods across various economies.

3.6 B-READY Official Travel Procedures

3.6.1 Purpose

When necessary, DECBE undertakes official travel to the economies assessed by the B-READY report to:

- 1. Recruit Expert Contributors
- 2. Establish long-term collaboration with global firms and professional organizations
- 3. Conduct methodology workshops

- 4. Disseminate the report
- 5. Provide cross-support (non-advisory) to other WBG units

The DECBE Team abides by all applicable WBG Travel Policy Procedures.

3.6.1.1 Expert Recruitment Mission

The B-READY Team does not collect or discuss data, nor verifies reforms during official travel. Each cycle, the B-READY Team selects specific economies to visit, such as those with low internet penetration rates or an unresponsive private sector and conducts meetings with private sector Expert Contributors identified by each Topic Team. The selection of the economies is based on the need to recruit expert contributors for the data collection cycle.

The Travel Team recruits new private sector Expert Contributors, assesses their expertise, and it may also meet with relevant public service providers and institutions. The list of private sector Expert Contributors and governmental agencies varies by economy and cycle. Accordingly, the Travel Teams may not necessarily visit the same private and/or public sector Expert Contributors even when traveling to the same economies during different cycles.

3.6.1.2 Global Contributors Recruitment Mission

As part of its outreach to global firms and professional organizations, the B-READY Team organizes missions to locations with high concentration of global or regional firms and professional organizations to establish long-term collaboration with those firms and organizations and invite them to become B-READY's global partners.

The locations for the missions are determined based on the high concentration of global and regional firms' headquarters as well as the importance of the location for a particular region's recruitment. The missions take place only if there are enough firms willing to meet with the B-READY team in a given location. The DECBE Manager selects B-READY team members with appropriate seniority, legal expertise, and language skills to participate in those missions.

3.6.1.3 Forum or Workshop Mission

In addition to the travel missions detailed above, the B-READY Team may be requested to give presentations at forums or workshops in specific economies. The DECBE Manager decides how many B-READY Team members can attend such forums and workshops, depending on each event.

After being assigned to attend such forums or workshops, the Travel Team provides the ACS Team with the title of the presentation or workshop, the name of the institution sponsoring or organizing the event, and the department that invited the B-READY Team, along with the agenda of the event. The Country Director/Country Manager, the DECBE Manager, and the External and Corporate Relations (ECR) representative (if applicable) authorize any requests for media interviews.

3.6.1.4 Events to Disseminate Methodology and Findings

B-READY Team members may also travel to disseminate the B-READY methodology and the findings of the yearly B-READY report and conduct launch events. Such travel missions are detailed in Section 7.2. In general, B-READY launch events may be grouped with missions detailed above. They could also be stand-alone missions. The B-READY Team, requesting CMU, or Verticals and/or the inviting economy bears all related costs, including travel fees and staff time, depending on a prior agreement with the DECBE Manager, and following the general guidelines detailed in this section.

3.6.1.5 Cross-Support Mission (Non-Advisory)

B-READY Team members may also travel when providing cross-support to other units of the WBG. When participating in a cross-support mission, the Team member must inform the inviting CMU/Verticals and include the DECBE Manager and the ACS Team when sending out their SMOs. The Team member also asks the WBG unit/department that invited them to copy the DECBE Manager and the ACS Team in their BTOR.

3.6.2 Economy Selection Criteria

Topic Teams identify the economies where expert recruitment travel or engagement with global contributors is most beneficial. Within the allocated budget, the economies are selected according to the following criteria:

- limited pool of identified eligible Expert Contributors
- low internet penetration rates or low Expert Contributors response rates
- quality of the data collected in an economy
- whether the B-READY Team recently traveled to this economy
- travel safety
- high concentration of global or regional firms and professional organizations
- importance of the location for a particular region's recruitment

Then, the DECIG Director and DECBE Manager finalize the selection of economies for the data collection cycle.

3.6.3 Selection of the Travel Team

Once the economies are identified, the DECBE Manager groups them whenever possible according to location and language to identify the trips for the current data collection cycle. Each Travel Team typically visits two economies in the same trip. The DECBE Manager selects the travel Team members, based on their expressions of interest, language skills, years of experience, previous official travel experience, the topics they are assigned to, and the specificities of the trip.

In addition to the Travel Team members, every trip must have a Travel Team Supervisor (TTS), a DECBE staff who oversees the overall priorities of the trip. The TTS usually does not travel to the relevant economies.

Multiple trips may occur simultaneously, but at least one member of each Topic Team must remain in office to ensure the day-to-day needs of the topics are met.

3.6.4 Rules of Engagement with CMUs before Official Travel

The local CMU must clear the trip and its Team members. The Travel Team then consults with the local CMU to prepare for the trip. This consultation covers, among other topics, mission dates, country clearance, expected engagements with government agencies to be held during the mission, and logistical assistance.

When necessary, the Travel Team requests logistical assistance from the CMU. This assistance may include booking rental cars, organizing transportation from and to the airport, preparing meeting rooms at CMU offices, or arranging interpretation services. Additionally, the CMU may assist the Team in scheduling meetings with public agencies. Depending on the local circumstances, Travel Teams can also request assistance to schedule meetings with the private sector. However, the CMU must keep the meetings' schedule and the identity of the private sector Expert Contributors strictly confidential, as detailed in the Guidance on B-READY Contributor Engagement (Appendix C).

3.6.5 Notification Protocol of Upcoming Official Travel

The Travel Team checks the Country Office Home Page in the intranet or calls the CMU for any economy-specific travel requirements well in advance of the trip. Any specific requests or requirements are relayed to the DECBE Manager. The Travel Team prepares the Mission Announcement Letter (MAL), if required, and any economy-specific documents to be sent to the local CMUs in advance of the trip.

The Travel Team shares with the Administrative and Client Support (ACS) Team the names of staff in the Country Office, CMU, and Verticals who need to be copied in the Statement of Mission Objectives (SMO), along with the dates of the mission. Whenever a mission covers two or more economies, the dates in each economy must be specified.

Based on the information provided by the Travel Team, the ACS Team prepares and sends the draft SMO to the DECBE Manager and the Country Director or Country Manager (if applicable) for review/clearance at least two weeks before the mission, as well as any economy-specific documents that may be necessary (for example, the MAL to the government).

For security reasons, the Travel Team must send a copy of its itinerary to the ACS Team before departing on mission. If this itinerary is modified during the trip, an updated version must also be shared.

Regardless of the mission type, the Travel Team must complete all mandatory travel trainings in the Open Learning Campus (OLC). In addition, for safety reasons, especially in fragile and conflict-affected FCV countries, the Travel Team must immediately notify the Country Office Security Focal Point of their arrival. While on mission, the Travel Team is advised to only use transportation services recommended by the Country Office.

Finally, the Travel Team must obtain clearance from the DECBE Manager and the relevant CMU for any meetings or briefings requested with high-level government officials.

3.6.6 Travel Form (TF)

Each Topic Team prepares a TF for each travel economy. The TF contains the list of Expert Contributors that the Travel Team is planning to meet, as well as specific questions to help assess their expertise. Topic Teams may submit a limited number of questions per topic questionnaire designed to help the Travel Team evaluate the Expert Contributors' level of expertise. In principle and depending on mission priorities, the TF should not contain a request to meet with public sector officials unless necessary for a Topic Team. In these cases, the Travel Team members must obtain the approval of the TTS and DECBE Manager.

Once the TFs are cleared by TTL, they are shared with Travel Team members, who may request to meet with the Topic Team to discuss details and clarify any questions. The TTS then discusses, reviews, and approves the TFs and mission requirements.

3.6.7 Rules of Engagement with CMUs during Official Travel

3.6.7.1 Introductory Meeting

At the beginning of the mission, the Travel Team members may meet with the CMU to discuss the mission's main purpose and the public agencies with which the Team has scheduled meetings, if any. The World Bank staff in charge of private sector development, the Country Director, Country Manager, or Resident Representative are usually present at this meeting. This meeting is optional and is decided upon by the CMU and Travel Team members before the mission starts. The CMU may also organize a meeting with government officials if the Travel Team intends to conduct a launch of the report during the mission.

3.6.7.2 Wrap-up Meeting

At the end of the mission and at the request of the CMU, the Travel Team may organize a wrap-up meeting to explain the key mission highlights and the next steps. Government officials may also participate. The Team does not share any information regarding the results of the mission.

3.6.8 Rules of Engagement with Public Authorities during Official Travel

As mentioned in Section 3.6.7, at the request of the government and/or CMU, the Travel Team may participate in a meeting with government officials. Such meetings aim to provide an overview of the project and disseminate summarized findings from the latest published B-READY report. The Travel Team does not discuss any information related to Expert Contributors.

3.6.9 Rules on Gifts

B-READY Team members (including Travel Teams) may not accept gifts, regardless of value, that could reasonably be perceived as intending to influence their work decisions, or that could cause reputational harm to the World Bank Group. Under certain circumstances, B-READY Team members may accept a gift if the gift is presented in a public forum and/or refusal would cause offense or embarrassment to the giver, or the gift is directly associated with the demands of work (for example, working meals). In these cases, Team members must accept the gift on behalf of the WBG rather than in a personal capacity. If valued at more than US\$100, the gift must be declared and surrendered to the Asset Management Unit, Global Corporate Solutions (GCS). The cumulative value of all gifts from the same individual or entity, however, cannot exceed US\$100 in a 12-month period. Any personal benefit of value, such as free or discounted services, favors, entertainment, or hospitality (meals or accommodations) are also considered gifts. More details on the rules regarding benefits, favors, and gifts can be found in the Staff Rule 3.01 — Standards of Professional Conduct.

WBG staff are not allowed to receive cash or monetary payment in any circumstances when they are performing activities in their official capacity, and in particular, may not receive honoraria if they are participating in an event or a conference during their mission (Paragraph 3.10 of <u>Staff Rule 3.02</u> on honoraria for activities carried out in official capacity).

3.6.10 Rules of Engagement with Private Sector Expert Contributors during Operational Travel

The Travel Team generally meets with private sector Expert Contributors proposed in the Travel Forms (Section 3.6.6) alone, without the presence of any third party, to preserve the anonymity of the Expert Contributors. CMU staff, other WBG colleagues, and public sector officials do not participate in these meetings. If WBG colleagues express interest in participating in these meetings, the Travel Team should contact the TTS, copying the DECBE Manager, who will directly reach out to the relevant WBG Country Office to clarify the rules of engagement set forth in this Manual and Guide. When recruiting new experts for the data collection cycle, screener questionnaires can be filled by said experts during the meeting with the Travel Team.

3.6.11 Deliverables Following Official Travel

3.6.11.1 External Back to the Office Report (BTOR)

Upon its return to the office, the Travel Team promptly prepares an external BTOR following the guidelines provided by the DECBE ACS Team. The BTOR states the main purposes of the mission, the key mission highlights, and the next steps. It also indicates each public sector agency the Travel Team met during the mission, if any. The Travel Team then sends the BTOR to the ACS Team for

formatting. After that, the ACS Team asks the DECBE Manager and, in some cases, the CMU/Verticals Manager to comment upon and clear the document.

The ACS Team sends this external BTOR to the same recipients who received the notification of the upcoming mission.

3.6.11.2 Internal Trip Report (ITR)

The Travel Team also prepares an ITR for each topic specified on the Travel Forms and shares it with each relevant Topic Team. The report contains the names and contact information of all the private sector Expert Contributors the Travel Team members met during the mission and their individual responses, as well as contextual information and the findings of the mission. The ITR is intended exclusively for the use of DECBE staff and is not meant to be shared outside the unit without clearance from the DECBE Manager.

The ITR is always saved in the Team's relevant shared folder. The deadline to deliver the ITR is agreed with the TTS, depending on the timing and scope of the mission.

3.6.11.3 Statement of Expenses

Upon returning from the mission, the Travel Team member collects the receipts of the authorized expenses along with the boarding passes and the air ticket receipt. The Travel Team member then submits these documents to the ACS Team, which arranges for the request for reimbursement to be signed by the DECBE Manager and sent to the institution who sponsored or organized the event, along with the countersigned agreement.

The Travel Team member must prepare a Statement of Expenses, which must be approved by the DECBE Manager upon completion of the mission. Given that the costs are prepaid or are covered by an external institution, the B-READY unit (DECBE) code is used with the understanding that no expenses would be charged unless approved by the DECBE Manager before the mission.

3.7 Centralized Recruitment Function

There is a Centralized Recruitment function to recruit experts and support topic teams during the entire data collection cycle. The centrally managed economies are selected in parallel to those selected for travel missions. The centrally managed economies are selected according to the following criteria:

- Limited pool of identified eligible Expert Contributors and data gaps
- Low internet penetration rates or an unresponsive private sector
- No operating global or regional law firms
- Ineffective monetary incentive
- Travel mission is not recommended to the specific economy

The Centralized Recruitment function works closely with the Topic Teams, who provide relevant information about their topics' expert preferences, recruitment strategies, etc. While the function's role is to recruit experts for the Topic Teams, the Topic Teams' prerogative is to select experts for their topics based on the completed screeners.

The Centralized Recruitment Function manages all communication with Expert Contributors in centrally managed economies during the data collection cycle, except for the selection of experts from the pool of received screeners, which remains a responsibility of the Topic Teams. The Centralized Recruitment function specifically focuses on making initial contact with potential Expert Contributors and collecting questionnaires after the Expert Contributors are selected by Topic Teams.

Topic Teams will communicate with Centralized Experis over (e.g., for data validation).	t Contributors after the first phase of data collection

Chapter 4–ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

This chapter contains the revised guiding principles and protocols related to the B-READY Team's engagement with stakeholders, including governments.

4.1 Definitions of Stakeholders

Based on principles of inclusiveness and representativeness, B-READY stakeholders include the following (Chapter 1, Glossary):

- **Civil Society and Private Sector Organizations**. Includes Non-Governmental Organizations, Chambers of Commerce, Labor Unions and Firms Associations, Think Tanks, Trade Associations, and Professional Associations, among others.
- **Governments.** Includes World Bank Group (WBG) Board of Executive Directors and/or their advisors and the relevant technical governmental agencies at the national and local level, including government reform committees.
- WBG Colleagues. Includes WBG staff from different practices and units, including country offices.

4.2 Overview and Principles

The aim of the engagement with stakeholders, including governments, is to promote the understanding, dissemination, and usage of B-READY data and reports in a way that is transparent, open, informative, and efficient. An effective Engagement Strategy is vital for exchanging views, enhancing the understanding of the B-READY methodology, and ensuring an accurate assessment of the business environment. Collaborating productively with B-READY stakeholders is crucial for increasing transparency and maintaining data integrity. The B-READY Engagement Strategy ensures equitable and fair treatment and access for all stakeholders.

As explained in Chapter 3, during each B-READY cycle, the B-READY Team invites governments to complete the B-READY topic questionnaires and provide inputs for their economies. Governments can also interact with B-READY Team members in bilateral overview meetings, topic-specific bilateral meetings on methodology and data queries, and methodology workshops. In addition, governments may meet with B-READY Team members during the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank Group's Spring Meetings and Annual Meetings upon approval from the B-READY Management Team. All such interactions follow strict rules, procedures, and timelines, as described in this chapter.

4.3 B-READY Core Interactions

4.3.1 Completion of B-Ready Topic Questionnaires

During each B-READY cycle, which starts after the publication of the B-READY report, governments are invited to complete all topic questionnaires using a web-based tool. The questionnaires from governments serve as a source of data validation with private sector experts but are not used for scoring purposes. An email from the DECIG Director is sent to (i) the Executive Directors through the Corporate Secretariat and (ii) WBG colleagues to forward to Governments for the appointment of a focal point official(s). Governments then have two weeks for the appointment of focal points through a platform link.

Around the same time as the first distribution of B-READY questionnaires to the private sector, questionnaires are also distributed to the appointed focal point(s). Governments have six weeks from the invitation date to submit the completed questionnaires. The team does not consider questionnaires submitted after this deadline.

4.3.2 Bilateral Overview Meetings during the B-READY Cycle

Governments and other stakeholders can interact with the B-READY team bilaterally, either in-person or virtually, involving the B-READY manager and the stakeholder engagement team. These dedicated interactions should focus exclusively on a general overview of the project and/or project-specific discussions, avoiding methodological aspects of the specific B-READY topics, or discussion of data.

A brief overview of the project will typically be presented during the meeting, and governments may also provide a concise presentation. The meeting may include a general session of questions and answers. This type of meeting typically occurs once per cycle for each economy and lasts one hour maximum. Whenever feasible, a member of the World Bank Enterprise Surveys (WBES) team also participates. Governments or Bank colleagues may request these meetings during the B-READY cycle by sending an email to the B-READY Manager.

4.3.3 Topic-Specific Bilateral Meetings after the B-READY Launch

Governments and other stakeholders can interact with the B-READY team bilaterally, in-person, or virtually, and involve the B-READY manager, lead of the topic team, other topic team members, and the stakeholder engagement team.

Governments are informed on how to request these meetings through an email communication from the DECIG Director sent to Executive Directors, through Corporate Secretariat, and WBG colleagues. The meetings are requested through a link to a platform and can be requested directly by the government or by Bank colleagues on behalf of the government. There is no presentation of the methodology during these sessions. Governments are expected to consult the methodology materials available on the website beforehand. These dedicated interactions should focus on methodological questions and the presentation of economy or region-specific data queries.

The B-READY team does not modify any data following these discussions. The sole purpose of these meetings is to understand the government's viewpoint, identify any discrepancies with that perspective, and consider these insights during future data validation cycles. The team can only address data issues directly, based on the government's feedback, if there are potential mistakes in the statistical aggregation of responses and calculation of scores. Moreover, the B-READY Team members refrain from providing reform advice or any type of recommendation related to the areas covered by B-READY. This is clearly communicated in the platform for meeting requests, in the confirmation email, and at the beginning of the actual meeting. The total time that can be dedicated to this type of meeting is three hours maximum for each economy, in one cycle, including all B-READY topics.

Further, Governments are entitled to conduct these bilateral technical workshops only once annually. Each B-READY Topic Team is restricted to participating in a single technical meeting per economy within a B-READY cycle. This limitation does not apply to requests from academic institutions or other non-governmental organizations within the same economy. The team may engage with these entities separately, and such meetings do not count towards the government's annual technical meeting quota.

To request the meeting, the designated government focal point submits a form beforehand, describing the issues/questions they would like to cover during the meeting. The focal point needs to clearly indicate if any questions pertain to data collected through the Enterprise Surveys. If specific questions are posted about the Enterprise Surveys, a member of the WBES team also participates. The scope of the meetings is based on the list of issues for discussion only. No additional issue not pre-established in the agenda is discussed. This is clearly communicated in the platform for meeting requests, in the confirmation email and at the beginning of the actual meeting. This type of meeting takes place within a dedicated time frame that starts

from the date of submission of the questionnaires to the government (Section 4.3.1) and lasts 6 weeks. Given the high demand for in-person and virtual meetings—and the need to allocate enough time for the preparation and production of the B-READY report—this type of meeting may be scheduled outside this time frame.

4.3.4 Methodology Workshops

The B-READY Team organizes a series of workshops to familiarize governments with each topic's methodology, describe the data gathering process and safeguards implemented in practice, and conduct an in-depth discussion. These workshops are open forums that multiple governments can attend, independently of in which edition of the rollout phase their country will be featured.

The B-READY Team organizes these workshops directly and publishes the schedule of workshops on the B-READY website around the time that the B-READY report is published. Governments are informed of these workshops through an email from the DECIG Director sent to the Executive Directors, through Corporate Secretariat, and WBG colleagues, communicating the date and schedule of these workshops, as well as the connection details and other relevant information.

These workshops are conducted online, held in different time zones, and planned in various languages, with the possibility of simultaneous translation into other languages depending on the geographic time zone. There is one project overview session per workshop led by a senior member of the team. Topic sessions include a methodology presentation led by the Topic Leader or a senior member of the topic team, followed by a Q&A. Each session lasts 1 hour and 15 minutes (30 minutes for the presentation and 45 minutes for the Q&A). Economy-specific discussions about data are outside the scope of these workshops.

At least one methodology workshop takes place within a dedicated time frame that starts from the date of submission of the questionnaires to the government and lasts 6 weeks. Additional methodology workshops are conducted for the remaining regions after the referred 6-week period, during the B-READY cycle.

4.3.5 **Q&A** Website Section on the Methodology

The B-READY team has a dedicated section on its website for general and technical (topic methodology) Questions and Answers (Q&As). The first version of this section was published on the date of the B-READY 2024 report launch and is updated bi-monthly based on written questions submitted by governments and other stakeholders. Governments are welcome to submit written questions on methodology during a given B-READY cycle. The B-READY team collects questions and publishes a curated list of questions with corresponding answers in the Q&A section of the website, as needed. There are no bilateral written exchanges on the B-READY data specifics with governments or stakeholders.

4.4 Other Interactions

4.4.1 Additional Interactions with Governments

The Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) Director (in some cases jointly with the B-READY Management Team) may, when appropriate, conduct additional interactions with high-level government representatives, especially during the IMF and World Bank's Spring and Annual Meetings. Meetings may also be conducted with WBG Board of Executive Directors (EDs) and/or their advisors. These discussions may cover general issues related to B-READY.

4.4.2 General Communication with the Board of Executive Directors

The Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager prepares a written communication to be sent via email to the Board of Executive Directors through the Corporate Secretariat announcing the start of data collection. This communication includes information about cycle milestones, all the rules for

government interactions, and any additional relevant updates. The same email is sent to relevant counterparts within the WBG. Approximately two weeks before the published report is launched, the DECIG Director sends a written communication to the Board of Executive Directors with an embargoed version of the B-READY report.

The DECBE Manager and DECIG Management have an open and permanent dialogue with the Board of Executive Directors throughout the year on general issues pertaining to the B-READY report. If Executive Directors want to submit specific information for an economy they represent, they are expected to coordinate with the respective government and do so through the regular channels described above. The B-READY Team will accept only one comprehensive response for each topic-specific questionnaire from each government of an economy being studied during the B-READY data collection cycle.

4.4.3 Communication with WBG Colleagues

Approximately two weeks before the published report is launched, the DECIG Director sends a written communication to WBG colleagues with an embargoed version of the B-READY report, as described in Section 6.3.1.

4.5 Publication of Interactions

The B-READY team commits to sharing on its website the schedule of all Bilateral Meetings (videoconferences and in-person meetings) organized per indicator and per economy on a rolling basis.

Chapter 5-DATA MANAGEMENT AND REVIEW

The ten B-READY topics have one or more questionnaires and screener questionnaires. This chapter provides information on the software and internal processes used to generate these questionnaires and collect, store, analyze, and review the data. Appendix D summarizes the process for validating the data.

5.1 Questionnaire Generation

The questionnaire generation process is critical for the data collection cycle and involves multiple phases. In the following sections, the term "topic questionnaire" refers to the topic questionnaire used to collect data related to a specific topic. The "screener questionnaire" is used to evaluate the experience of potential Expert Contributors and determine their eligibility to take part in the research (Section 5.1.4).

5.1.1 Questionnaire Development

Each Topic Team develops its own topic questionnaire(s). Each topic questionnaire includes a standardized cover letter, an Expert Contributor page, and a glossary of definitions. The Topic Team refines the topic questionnaires through peer reviews and consultations with subject matter experts, leading to the final versions that will be implemented. The topic questionnaires can be reviewed yearly, and if changes are introduced the reasons for change are clearly documented (Section 5.1.2). To develop the first edition, survey methodology experts were contracted to review each topic questionnaire for clarity and congruence within and with other topic questionnaires. Topic Team members interviewed Expert Contributors to ensure that questions were clear and easy to comprehend.

5.1.2 Questionnaire Clearance and Approval

The respective Topic Team Leader (TTL) is responsible for drafting the questionnaire and submitting it to the Topic Supervisor, for review and approval, ensuring the guidelines for questionnaire design were respected. Following the Topic Supervisor's approval, the questionnaire is submitted to the Business Ready (DECBE) Manager, who clears it, in consultation with the DECIG Front Office. In future cycles, if the topic questionnaire remains unchanged, it does not require yearly clearance. However, if the questionnaire is being modified—to add new questions or edit or drop existing questions—it must undergo the clearance and approval process, even if the scope does not change, given that the comparability of questions, responses, and data may be affected. The standardized cover letter is developed by the Contributor Manager, circulated within the B-READY Team for feedback, and then approved by the DECBE Manager. All topic questionnaires are published on the B-READY website.

5.1.3 Programming the Questionnaire in Survey Software

Survey software is used to collect data through web-based consultations with Expert Contributors. To make the navigation through the online topic questionnaire easy for the Expert Contributor, a suitable skip pattern, validations, and hyperlinked references to definitions and abbreviations are built into the program.

Once the topic questionnaires are cleared (Section 5.1.2), each Topic Team is responsible for programming its topic questionnaire in the survey software. Each Topic Team designates a champion who serves as the Leader in programming the topic questionnaires or serves as a contact person for the Topic Team members who are designing the topic questionnaire. The Topic Team champion also provides technical support and addresses any issues that arise.

After the topic questionnaire is programmed, the Topic Team must test it to make sure that it has no errors, and that the enabling conditions and validations work as expected and instructions are displayed clearly and properly. The testing step also requires verification that all variables have been named following the naming convention determined by the Data Analysis and the Data Management Design functions.

Once testing is complete, the topic questionnaire is translated on the survey software for all languages to be used, which may differ between topics depending on business needs. Expert Contributors can choose the language they want to use at the beginning of the survey or at any time during the survey. The survey programming process and translation are done under the supervision of the TTL, who remains responsible for the final topic questionnaire(s).

5.1.4 Screener Questionnaire

The screener questionnaire is used to determine the level of expertise of potential Expert Contributors for each topic and help narrow down the pool of responding Expert Contributors (Section 3.1.9). Each topic uses its own screener questionnaire(s) based on a standard template that can be modified or adapted to accommodate the specifications of each topic. The screener questionnaires go through the same programming process as the topic questionnaires (Section 5.1.3), before being sent to responding Expert Contributors.

5.1.5 Importing Expert Contributors Information from CRM

Once the Expert Contributors have been identified and confirmed eligible through the screener questionnaire, Topic Teams assign them the respective topic questionnaires in CRM (as detailed in Section 3.3). Topic questionnaires can be assigned as soon as a screener is received, but they are not always sent to experts immediately.

5.1.6 Distribution of the Topic Questionnaires

Topics Teams prepare to distribute the topic questionnaires by assigning them to the relevant Expert Contributors on CRM. The Team then tests the distribution among themselves to make sure everything is set up and works properly. Once the testing is complete, TTLs approve the distribution, and the Topic Teams distribute the topic questionnaires through CRM.

5.1.7 Reminders

Reminders can be sent manually by each topic team or sent automatically through CRM. The automated reminders are programmed to be sent through the CRM two weeks after the distribution date for each topic questionnaire.

5.1.8 Support

For further support on the questionnaire generation process, Topic Teams can reach out to the Data Management Design Function team. For any technical questions related to questionnaire programming, the Team should make use of the available resources and consult with their Team champion.

5.2 Data Receipt and Review

5.2.1 Completing Questionnaires

Expert Contributors receive a link that takes them to the assigned survey, where they can provide their responses. They have two weeks to complete the topic questionnaire and submit it to the B-READY Team. Once the questionnaire is completed, the status of the topic questionnaire will be reflected in the system. The Topic Team should continuously monitor the status of the assigned topic questionnaires.

5.2.2 Extraction

Extraction is the process of transferring the Expert Contributors' answers from the survey software to the Data Management Portal where they will be stored. The data extraction is automated, and raw data is saved with multiple backups before the data analysis begins (Section 5.3).

5.2.3 Receiving and Reviewing Questionnaires from Expert Contributors

Expert Contributors complete and submit the topic questionnaires through the link shared with them, responding to all scored questions. The topic team receives these questionnaires and ensures that each is fully completed; no submission is accepted until all required responses are provided. Once the minimum number of complete topic questionnaires per economy is received, and there are no pending active questionnaires within the deadline, the topic team proceeds to the next phase.

5.2.4 Data Validation

The data validation may be triggered by various situations, such as divergences in the responses or outliers in numerical questions between various private sector Expert Contributors or between the responses of private sector Expert Contributors and governments. The Data Management Portal generates a contributor specific report highlighting all cases that warrant a data validation. Topic Team members review these reports, draft follow-up comments, and flag the questions that need further clarification for the TTL to review. After the TTL's review, the Analyst sends the topic questionnaire back to the Expert Contributors, along with the generated contributor reports for clarification or updates. This phase is concluded when the TTL approves a topic questionnaire submitted or resubmitted from an Expert Contributor.

5.2.5 Process for Questionnaire Review

Every topic questionnaire undergoes a review process in the Data Management Portal. The TTL conducts a mandatory review, while the Topic Supervisor may perform a second review as needed. Comments and reviews are recorded at the questionnaire level. The TTL may send the questionnaire back to the Expert Contributors for confirmation or revision of their responses. Expert Contributors have the prerogative to update their responses or maintain them, with the option to explain their decision. Only one round of comments is conducted with each Expert Contributor per topic. At no point during the data review and validation process may the Topic Team members, TTLs, Topic Supervisors, DECBE Manager, and/or the DECIG Director manually change any of the data submitted by an Expert Contributor. Indeed, the software used provides the responses to the questions in a "read-only" view.

After the Expert Contributor responds to the follow-up and all questionnaires for all economies are finalized, the economy's status is updated on the Data Management Portal, marking it as closed.

5.2.6 TTL Responsibilities during Data Review

The TTL leads a team of Analysts for a topic. The TTL reviews the topic questionnaires examined by the Analysts and approves sending back the topic questionnaires for the second round of review by the Expert Contributors. After receiving the confirmation or revision of the response from the Expert Contributors, the TTL is responsible to ensure that the data are ready for the review of the Topic Supervisor. The TTL also prepares a list of items that may need to be discussed in the debrief meeting (Section 5.4). Such items may include (1) data issues in a particular economy; (2) suspected cases of undue influence; and (3) economies where the minimum required number of topic questionnaires were not received.

5.2.7 Topic Supervisor Responsibilities

The Topic Supervisor performs the second and final layer of review of the validated topic questionnaires for economies flagged by the TTLs via the Data Management Portal.

5.2.8 Survey Software Tracking Process

The progress of topic questionnaire submission and topic questionnaire validation is monitored on a weekly basis, and the monitoring report is sent to the B-READY Team. All comments, approvals, rejections, data modification by Expert Contributors, and resubmissions are captured in the survey software.

5.3 Data Storage, Management, and Analysis

This section covers the processes to securely store and properly manage the data collected through the survey software for each B-READY topic. As the B-READY Team progresses in the process of collecting data, it is the responsibility of the Data Analysis Function Team to coordinate with Topic Teams as to when to initiate procedures to export the data. This section covers the processes to securely store and properly manage the data collected through the survey software for each B-READY topic. The Data Analysis Function Team uses programming software capable of statistical analysis as a computational tool to render economy-level data and scores.

5.3.1 Data Export and Storage

5.3.1.1 Exporting Survey Data

Questionnaire responses received for each economy are deemed ready to be exported upon the review and approval by the Topic Supervisor. The Data Analysis Team exports the received responses, including the Expert Contributors' identifying information, from the survey software and securely saves them per the procedures specified in Section 5.3.1.2.

5.3.1.2 Storage of Raw Data

The term "raw data" refers to a set of individual responses with identifying information on the Expert Contributor(s) directly downloaded from the survey software. Raw data are used as the basis for subsequent processing and analysis to produce economy-level data and scores. To ensure data integrity, they are stored in three separate locations. The first point of storage is the survey software's server while data collection is ongoing. The second point of storage is the data management portal. The third point of storage is a designated shared drive folder with restricted access (Section 5.3.1.3) set up within the B-Ready internal project folder, where the exported raw data can be backed up to the WBG corporate Cloud.

5.3.1.3 Level of Access

Access to the stored raw data on a shared drive is restricted and is granted by the DECBE Manager to members of the Data Analysis Function Team only for the purposes of constructing indicators and computing scores. Access to the folder by general B-READY Team members is granted only in exceptional cases. To request access, the Team member sends an email to the DECBE Manager documenting the reason for access. The DECBE Manager must grant approval, if any, in writing, and only on a temporary basis. When the B-READY Team member who was granted access leaves the B-READY Team or acquires different responsibilities, the access permissions are promptly removed by the DECBE manager and the permission change is documented, informing both the staff and the DECBE Manager. The DECBE Manager conducts an overall review of access each year at the start of each data collection cycle.

5.3.2 Data Management and Analysis

5.3.2.1 Deidentify Raw Data

As a first step, the exported raw data are deidentified and saved in a separate folder within the project folder in preparation for the computation and analyses. The Data Analysis Function Team prepares the proper programming script needed for the deidentification. In pursuance of the commitment to transparency and data integrity, deidentified raw data serve as the basis for the subsequent publication of individual responses.

5.3.2.2 Computational Files

Computational files refer to the collective of programming scripts and other documentation used to construct topic indicators and compute topic scores and aggregate scores (if applicable) for each

economy covered by the B-READY project. The files may include, but are not limited to, programming files for data cleaning and computation, along with their corresponding outputs. The Data Analysis Function Team has the responsibility to coordinate, prepare, and execute the appropriate coding scripts to produce computational outputs (that is, pillar- and topic-level scoring). Each TTL is responsible for providing the final cleared scoring methodology to the Data Analysis Function Team to ensure the accurate programming of the computational scripts for their topic. Once the computational files are programmed, the Data Analysis Function Leader reviews all files and must approve them before raw data can be deidentified, as defined in Section 5.3.2.1. The programming scripts and files may also be subject to peer review by other teams within DEC.

5.3.2.3 Versioning

To avoid accidental changes to the computational files, a mechanism has been implemented to maintain version control and to keep track of the incremental changes made to each year's computation files. Moreover, access to editing these files is restricted, and any changes made are subject to review and approval by the Data Analysis Function Leader before being implemented.

5.3.2.4 Construct and Maintain the Historical Data Set

Following the project's first round of data collection, the Data Analysis Function Team is responsible for preparing the programming files each year to construct an economy-by-year panel data set serving as the historical data set, documenting the year-on-year change for each economy on every B-READY topic. Revisions to the historical data set are only done as a result of changes in the aggregation method, the scoring methodology, or correction of an error in the computational files and must be well documented. The raw historical data cannot be revised. Changes in the aggregation method and scoring methodology are subject to the approval process described in Chapter 8.

5.3.2.5 Analytical Output

When project-wide data computation is complete, the Data Analysis Function Team shares the final output with the full B-READY Team in preparation for further analysis and report writing.

5.4 Debrief Meetings

5.4.1 Preparation for the Debrief Meeting

Once all economies for a topic receive the two-layer approval (as needed), the Topic Team downloads the approved data and provides them to the Data Analysis Function Team, which prepares the Summary Data file. The Summary Data file includes the approved indicators and aggregate measures for all economies under the topic in the current year and previous year. The Topic Team reviews the file and saves it in a designated folder on the shared drive two business days before the debrief meetings.

5.4.2 Process for Debrief Meeting

The Topic Supervisor, DECBE Manager, and DECIG Director review the approved summary data in a documented debrief meeting. The main objective of this meeting is to brief the Topic Supervisor, the DECBE Manager, and the DECIG Director on trends and outliers, and highlight any issues with governments. If a Topic Team experienced or suspected undue interferences from a government, the Topic Team can request the B-Ready–EBC focal points to join the meeting, where the details of such interferences are discussed, and next steps are determined (if any). If a Topic Team was not able to collect the minimum required number of topic questionnaires for one or more economy, the Team also discusses such issues during the debrief meeting and presents the evidence of the efforts exerted to obtain the topic questionnaires, if requested.

5.4.3 Minutes

The Topic Team takes the minutes of the debrief meetings, documenting what has been discussed and agreed. The minutes of these meetings are saved in the Data Analysis function folder, debrief meeting subfolder, which is made available on the shared drive.

Chapter 6-CLEARANCE AND PUBLICATION OF REPORT AND DATA

This chapter provides information on the internal processes to clear and disseminate the Business Ready (B-READY) final data and report, including the process related to the Bank-wide Review (BWR) of the report. B-READY is a corporate flagship report and, as such, follows the corresponding Accountability and Decision Making (ADM) framework of the World Bank Group (WBG).

6.1 Bank-wide Review Process and Guidelines

The Bank-wide Review refers to the stage when the B-READY data are closed, and the draft B-READY report is circulated internally within the WBG for feedback. WBG colleagues are encouraged to provide comments on the report itself without addressing economy-specific data.

6.1.1 Preparation for the BWR

The B-READY Team shares with WBG colleagues the draft B-READY report with an appendix with economy tables containing information on the topics and pillar data for each assessed economy. The B-READY Team also shares a link to the data set with overall and topic results per pillar for each assessed economy. All such information is shared on a strictly confidential basis with WBG colleagues. The processes to prepare and clear the draft report and economy tables are detailed below.

6.1.1.1 Draft Report

- The Production Function Team prepares the BWR version of the report in Word. The report is circulated to Chapter Leaders, who confirm that the content and data used for the draft of the report as well as economy examples are accurate and match the BWR data in the survey software.
- The Production Function Leader sends an email to the Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager to seek recommendations of the BWR version of the report, and highlights that all Chapter Leaders and Topic Teams have confirmed the content, data, and economy examples within the report.

6.1.1.2 Data

- Topic Supervisors confirm 100 percent compliance with the B-READY approval protocol in the survey software for BWR.
- The Data Analysis Function Team downloads the data from the survey software after it is locked and prepares the economy tables in Excel for BWR.
- Topic Teams confirm that the data in the Excel file match their BWR data in the survey software.
- The Data Analysis Function Team Leader sends an email containing the BWR version of the economy tables in Excel format to the DECBE Manager, copying the Production Function Leader.
- The DECBE Manager recommends the BWR version of the economy tables in Excel for circulation.

6.1.2 Process for Obtaining Approval for BWR Circulation

The DECBE Manager conducts the following steps to seek approval for BWR circulation:

- The DECBE Manager recommends the BWR version of the report and the Excel data file and submits them to the Director of the Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) for concurrence for BWR circulation.
- The DECIG Director concurs with the BWR report and Excel data file and sends an email to the WBG Chief Economist to seek a decision on the circulation of the report and the BWR date.

6.1.3 Archiving BWR Materials

- The DECBE Administrative and Client Support (ACS) Team archives the BWR version of the report and data file in the official WBG records management system, SharePoint.
- The DECBE ACS Team archives the concurrence for BWR circulation by the DECIG Director in SharePoint.

6.1.4 Circulation for BWR

The Chief Economist initiates the BWR process by circulating the BWR report and Excel data file within the WBG by email, which includes:

- The SharePoint link to the embargoed report.
- The SharePoint link to the Excel dataset.
- Explanation of the scope of BWR comments (see details in section 6.1.5 below) and invitation to provide them by a designated deadline.
- Invitation to participate in the BWR meeting.

6.1.5 Scope of BWR Comments

The scope of the expected BWR comments is clearly specified in the BWR email circulated by the Chief Economist. While economy tables are shared as an appendix of the report for reference purposes, WBG colleagues are invited to provide comments on the report only. Data shown in economy tables derive directly from the final responses of the Expert Contributors (for expert consultations) and from the firm-level surveys and thus are not subject to further modification based on BWR comments received from WBG experts. Economy-specific data are subject to their own specific review process, as detailed in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of this B-READY M&G.

6.1.6 Preparing for the BWR Meeting

The timeframe to prepare for the BWR meeting is specified in the BWR email sent by the Chief Economist to WBG colleagues. Generally, BWR comments are expected approximately one week after the circulation of the report, and the BWR meeting takes place within two weeks. The B-READY Team thus has around one week to respond to BWR comments and prepare for the BWR meeting, as follows:

- The DECBE Manager and DECIG Director review the comments received during BWR in a meeting with Topic Supervisors, Chapter Leaders, the BWR Function Team, and the Production Function Leader.
- Comments received, together with the B-READY Team's responses, are circulated to the same BWR distribution lists before the BWR meeting. The format is an annotated agenda with a summary of comments and B-READY Team's responses, proposed issues for discussion, and a compilation of verbatim comments.
- The DECBE ACS Team archives emails received with BWR comments in SharePoint.

6.2 Modifications Following the Bank-wide Review

Modifications following the BWR include revisions to the draft report and economy tables. The B-READY Team revises the draft report to incorporate BWR comments, if warranted, and/or to correct data errors linked to mistakes in the data aggregation files.

The B-READY Team makes changes to the code for generating the economy tables only on an exceptional basis to correct errors found in the aggregation files – as the B-READY Team cannot and does not have any means to change or override the final responses provided by Expert Contributors or by firms. Such errors may be identified by the B-READY Team or during BWR. Modifications are implemented by the Data Analysis Function Team and reviewed by the Data Analysis Function Leader.

All modifications to the report are implemented by Chapter Leaders and reviewed by the Production Function Leader. Topic-specific modifications (that is, topic examples) are implemented by Chapter

Leaders in consultation with Topic Teams and are reviewed by the Production Function Leader. The DECBE Manager recommends and the DECIG Director concurs with the revised version of the report, which includes all modifications.

6.3 Final Clearance of Report for Publication

The final clearance of the B-READY report is subject to specific protocols described below. The clearance process follows the Accountability and Decision Making (ADM) protocol for corporate flagships.

6.3.1 Process for Preparing the Final Report

- The Production Team coordinates the PDF version of the report with WBG Publications.
- WBG Publications prepares the layout version of each chapter. The Production Team reviews the layout while consulting with the report drafting team and Data Analysis Team where needed. The DECBE Manager and the DECIG Director clear the layout.
- After review of each chapter, WBG Publications prepares a consolidated eBook of the report (final report) in PDF layout and sends it to the Production Function Team.
- The Production Function Team reviews the final report, the TTL of the Team provides sign-off of the report and seeks clearance from the DECBE Manager and the DECIG Director.
- The DECBE Manager provides final sign-off of the report for the WBG Publications.
- The DECIG Director, by email, concurs with the final report for publication.
- The DECIG Director shares the final report with the WBG Chief Economist who decides on the final publication of the report and data.
- Upon approval, the Production Function Leader refers the clearance of the final report to WBG Publications. The cleared files are converted into specific electronic formats for dissemination, including the World Bank's Open Knowledge Repository and eLibrary.
- The Development Economics Vice Presidency (DECVP) sends the embargoed final report to the Council of Chief Economists and other WBG Senior Management two weeks before publication.
- The DECIG Director sends the embargoed final report to the Executive Directors two weeks before publication.
- If a paper copy of the final report is required, the Production Function Leader requests printing from the WBG Publications print coordinator.

6.3.2 Archiving Approval for the Final Report

The DECBE ACS Team archives the DECIG Director's concurrence of the final report in SharePoint.

6.4 Data Publishing

This section covers the processes for accessing, reviewing, editing, and clearing the B-READY website. It lists the procedures related to the annual release of the project's data on the website (the "Annual Project Launch"), and it specifies how to implement major website changes/updates outside the annual project launch, including how to communicate with relevant colleagues from Information and Technology Solutions (ITS), External and Corporate Relations (ECR), and B-READY Function Teams. This section is prepared with an understanding that the B-READY's website is hosted on the WBG's servers and is managed through the Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) platform.

6.4.1 Internal Processes

This subsection covers (1) the training protocol and access management for B-READY's Team members and (2) the communication strategy with ITS colleagues to design and update the website.

6.4.1.1 Training and Access

Modes of Access. The AEM provides three tiers of access: [Viewer, Editor, and Administrator]. Access is restricted to a specific set of pages within the AEM platform. For the purposes of this Manual, the term "Access" captures access to all the webpages within the B-READY website.

Scope of Access. Viewer Access provides authorized users with the read-only access to the staging website ("staging website" means a modified copy of the live webpages where the changes are not visible on the live website until they are activated). Editor Access provides authorized users with the right to make editorial changes in the staging environment, in addition to read-only access as in Viewer access. Administrator Access allows authorized users to activate ("push live") changes made in the staging environment, in addition to the features available to the Editor access.

Obtaining Access. The Function Leader of the Website Function Team sends an e-mail to ITS with the list of people to be granted AEM access and the level of such access. The Website Function Supervisor and the DECBE Manager are copied on the email. All members of the B-READY Team, as well as the DECIG Director, are granted Viewer Access to the staging website in AEM. All members of the Website Function Team are granted Editor Access after successfully completing the <u>AEM hands-on training</u> provided by ITS. B-READY Team members outside the Website Function Team who require Editor Access must complete the same AEM training before obtaining such access. Administrator Access is granted only to the Supervisor and the Function Leader of the Website Function Team to maintain control over changes that are activated in the live website.

Training Protocol. Team members required to take the AEM training course can enroll in it through the Open Learning Campus (OLC). They must first gain approval from the Digital Governance Officer.

6.4.1.2 Communication with ITS Colleagues

Relevant ITS Teams. There are two ITS Teams that actively participate in the B-READY website. The Back-end Team handles the data infrastructure (for instance, the Application Programming Interface [API]), while the Front-end Team handles the visual components of the website (for instance, website layout and design, visualizations, and edits that go beyond the editor and administrator access granted to the B-READY Team members). Some activities are conducted in close collaboration with both teams (for example, custom data query).

Communicating with the ITS Teams. The Supervisor and the Function Leader of the Website Function Team are the primary points of contact with the ITS colleagues for the B-READY website. While communication can take various forms (e-mails, working chats, meetings, phone calls), any major decisions are documented in e-mail form.

6.4.2 Preparation for the Annual Project Launch

This subsection primarily covers the website-related procedures in preparation for the annual project launch, including communications with various B-READY Function Teams and WBG Teams. The same procedures apply to any major changes to the website outside the annual launch.

6.4.2.1 Topic Teams

Roles. Topic Teams are responsible for reviewing and signing off all topic-related content to make sure that it is accurately presented on the website. This includes, but is not limited to methodological pages, topic data, and scoring metrics, as well as uploaded topic questionnaires and survey instruments. The B-READY Data Analysis Function Team is responsible for reviewing and signing-off the current year's economy data to be released during the launch. The B-READY Supervisors review the overall website structure and contents.

Review and Clearance. During the preparation for the annual project launch, TTLs serve as the focal point for each Topic Team to review, provide updates, and sign off on the topic-related content to be published on the website. The Website Function Team implements changes requested by the

Topic Teams as soon as possible. All topic content must be cleared by the Topic Team within a set timeline. Once the Topic Team signs off on the topic content, the Data Analysis Function Team clears the data within a set timeline, and the Supervisors clear the overall website. The staging website is sent for recommendation to the DECBE Manager and concurrence to the DECIG Director.

6.4.2.2 Data

Data Publication. Data published on the website are sourced via an API that feeds directly from the data management system. The B-READY's Website Working Group coordinates with the ITS Back-end Team to make sure that the data feed into the website accurately. The B-READY's Data Analysis Function Team is involved in the process as needed.

The B-READY Team will not update the B-READY data published on the B-READY Website to align with the subnational data published in the newly launched B-READY Subnational Team (DECSN) reports, which can have a different "as of" date. Once the DECSN reports are prepared, the B-READY Team can promote the newly published reports on its B-READY website.

Additional Materials to Publish. To allow for the reproducibility of results, the B-READY Data Analysis Function Team prepares and provides a reproducibility package to be published on the website. The reproducibility package includes (1) the anonymized final contributor-level responses used in the computation of B-READY scores, (2) the replication files to aggregate answers to the economy-level and to compute the B-READY scores, and (3) the replication files to produce the analysis of the data in the B-READY reports.

6.4.2.3 Communications (Production/Media, OKR, and ECR)

Open Knowledge Repository (OKR). The B-READY Website Function Team obtains links from OKR colleagues to link the published B-READY report to the World Bank Group Open Knowledge Repository. This includes the link to the full report, as well as any related links (for example, to individual chapters).

Information and Technology Solutions (ITS). The B-READY Website Function Team informs ITS (both the Back-end and Front-end Teams) of the expected launch date and time and keeps ITS colleagues updated immediately on any changes in the expected timing of the launch. When the website is cleared for launch by B-READY Management, the Website Function Leader sends a confirmation e-mail to ITS colleagues noting the website's clearance and reconfirming the launch date and time. The Website Function Team must send such final confirmation to ITS no later than two business days before the launch.

6.4.3 Routine Maintenance of the Website

This subsection covers the routine maintenance of the B-READY website, including publishing new content and updating existing materials at any time outside the annual launch period.

6.4.3.1 Levels of Updates

There are three levels of routine updates that can be conducted on the B-READY website: minor, moderate, and major updates.

Minor Update. Refers to changes to the website contents that have minimal implications to the overall page and/or website structure. For example, editorial changes in texts or changes to fix typos on pages.

Moderate Update. Refers to changes (including editorial changes) to the website content that have noticeable implications to the overall page and/or contents. For example, adding or removing an entire paragraph, and edits to methodological pages that go beyond fixing typos.

Major Update. Refers to changes to the website content that have significant implications to the project and/or to the overall structure of the page. For example, adding or removing pages, substantially changing the layout, publication, and/or removal of new internal and external content such as formal documents, statements, media coverage, and so on.

6.4.3.2 Procedures to Request Updates

By Topic Team Members. Members of B-READY Topic Teams may request a change to the website contents related to their respective topics by sending an email request to the Function Leader of the Website Function Team, providing the exact URL and the contents on the page that require updating. Upon receiving the request, the Function Leader of the Website Function Team can either implement the changes in the staging website or assign the task to a member of the Website Function Team. All changes go through the clearance process described in Section 6.4.3.3.

By Management. Members of the B-READY Management Team may request changes to the website by sending an email to the Function Leader of the Website Function Team, providing the link to the page and changes required. Upon receiving the request, the Function Leader of the Website Function Team can either directly implement the changes in the staging website or assign the task to a member of the Website Function Team.

6.4.3.3 Clearance Requirement and Publication of Changes

Clearance Process for Minor Update. Once the changes are implemented in the staging website, the editor informs the requestor and asks for the review and sign-off on the updates. Once the requestor signs off, the Function Leader of the Website Function Team (or Supervisor, in their absence) activates the edit to the live website and informs the editor and the requestor.

Clearance Process for Moderate Update. Once the changes are implemented in the staging website, the editor informs the requestor and asks for the review and sign-off. Once the requestor signs off, the Function Leader of the Website Function Team (or Supervisor, in their absence) sends an e-mail to the DECBE Manager requesting the review and clearance of the changes in the staging website. Upon obtaining such clearance, the Function Leader of the Website Function Team (or Supervisor, in their absence) activates the changes to the live website and informs to the editor, the requestor, and the DECBE Manager.

Clearance Process for Major Update. Editing and clearance process should follow the procedures described in Section 6.4.2, with the involvement of any relevant affected B-READY Topic Teams and Function Teams.

Chapter 7-DISSEMINATION OF REPORT AND DATA

As part of their duties, External and Corporate Relations (ECR) staff oversee all corporate communications (media, online, social media channels) of the World Bank Group (WBG), including those related to the B-READY report. The B-READY Team works closely with ECR staff to put in place and implement a yearly communication strategy related to the launch of the report. The collaboration between the two teams takes place during each cycle. It starts about two months before the launch of each report when the B-READY Communication Team reaches out to the ECR staff responsible for Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) products to work together on the social media campaign and launch events. The following dissemination strategy is intended as a general guideline and is not considered to be mandatory for the B-READY Team.

7.1 Social Media Campaign

Once the B-READY report data are finalized, the B-READY Communication Team drafts a document containing (1) the key messages to be highlighted in the social media campaign, and (2) the regions/economies where these messages should be displayed. ECR and the B-READY Communication Team also agree on the number and frequency of posts. Then, one month before the report launch, the B-READY Communication Team shares the document with ECR, which prepares the corresponding infographics and a list of draft tweets. The Team hashtag is #businessready. Finally, the B-READY Communication Team reviews these publications and provides clearance for their use.

On the day the B-READY report is launched, ECR may start the social media campaign. The official World Bank Group Twitter and Instagram accounts are used for the campaign. ECR also coordinates with ECR regional colleagues to manage the regional social media campaign (official regional/economy Twitter and Instagram accounts where available). The social campaign lasts for one month after the report is launched.

During that month, the ECR Digital Communication Team implements an ongoing analysis and monitoring system of the social media campaign by region and economy and shares it with the B-READY Team on a weekly basis. The analysis and monitoring are used for potential change and improvements to the B-READY communication strategy.

7.2 Report Launch Events

During every cycle, the B-READY Team organizes, in collaboration with ECR, global and regional launch events to present the results of the B-READY reports after each report is launched.

7.2.1 Global Launch Events

One global launch event will be organized in the World Bank Headquarters to present the results of the report. The event is hybrid, with in-person participation and broadcast on the World Bank live channel. The global event is open to anyone, and governments are formally invited to attend.

7.2.2 Regional Launch Events

Dissemination regional events may be organized to present the results for each region, in the main regional language. These regional events would be open only to governments and Country Management Units (CMUs).

The B-READY senior team members will conduct hybrid multilateral regional events to present the results in different regions and in the main regional language. These regional events would be open to governments, Country Management Units (CMUs), and other stakeholders.

The DECIG Director will send an email to CMUs and Verticals inviting them to express interest in hosting additional hybrid launch events for certain regions. The B-READY Management Team

will decide whether to participate in such events depending on the B-READY Team's availability. CMUs and Verticals will oversee hosting such events and are responsible for the logistical organization and coordination with governments (room, connection, invitations...).

The B-READY Management or senior team members will present the results of the report for the region and the main global findings and participate in a question-and-answer session. Discussions will not cover the methodology of the topic or delve into detailed queries about the data.

The DECIG Front Office and the B-READY Communication Team will be responsible for the supervision of the events in coordination with External and Corporation Relations at the World Bank.

The regional dissemination events will take place during a period of six months after the date of the B-READY launch.

Depending on interest and support from other CMUs in the region, the B-READY Management or senior team members could potentially participate in an event in an additional country location, providing that all logistics would be handled by the CMU.

7.2.3 Ad Hoc Country Launch Events

Country Management Units (CMUs) and/or Verticals may request holding a local launch event during a mission (see Chapter 3, Section 3.6). B-READY Management decides on the request depending on the Travel Team's schedule. If the B-READY Travel Team participates in such launch events, it may convey to the CMU a list of private sector practitioners, government officials, and professional organizations that it deems important to invite. CMUs organize local launch events in close collaboration with the B-READY Travel Team, including agreeing on the time, duration, location, and format of the event. The CMU also provides the required funding and logistics support for these events.

During the local launch event, the B-READY Travel Team presents the result of the report for the economy and region, along with the main global findings, and participates in a Q&A session.

Chapter 8-METHODOLOGY CHANGES

8.1 Conceptual Definition

Each topic has a methodology that is published in the Methodology Handbook and on a dedicated section of the B-READY website. The methodology establishes for each topic (1) a brief overview of the topic, (2) a detailed explanation of the indicators and components comprising each pillar, (3) data collection sources, (4) parameters used, and (5) an overview of the topic scoring (by pillar and at the topic level). Methodology changes are defined as any changes, updates, edits, additions, and/or deletions done to any items in the preceding list.

B-READY aims to balance two core objectives: (1) maintaining the relevance of the methodology by updating it as necessary; and (2) preserving comparability over time by only reviewing the methodology at regular intervals, once every three-year cycle.

8.2 Development of the B-READY Methodology

The B-READY methodology has been developed in several stages to ensure the application of a homogeneous approach across economies of different geographic locations, income levels, and development status, including fragile and conflict-affected states. First, a Concept Note establishing the objectives, scope, and approach of the project was developed in consultation with experts throughout the World Bank Group (WBG), and Stakeholders from the private and public sectors outside the WBG through a Public Consultation Process. In addition, previous reviews of the Doing Business report informed the development of the Concept Note, including the External Review Panel (ERP) report and the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) review (Appendix G). The Concept Note was then circulated for review by the Vice Presidents on Operational Matters, who provided written comments, which were incorporated in the final version of the Concept Note. In addition, the B-READY Team consulted with experts throughout the WBG on topic questionnaires and other useful tools for the implementation of the B-READY project. Moreover, the Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) conducted a thorough review with specialists on the update of the World Bank Enterprise Survey (WBES) program, a key companion product and a provider of firm-level data for the B-READY project. DECIG also engaged in multiple rounds of consultations with the office of the WBG President, Corporate Secretariat, and the Board of Executive Directors.

Each B-READY report goes through a Bank-wide Review (BWR) process. In addition, after the first B-READY edition, the Group Internal Audit (GIA) will conduct an Assurance Review to examine the end-to-end process of data collection and reporting for B-READY, which may also result in methodology changes if inconsistencies or irregularities are detected.

8.3 Process to Improve the Methodology during the Rollout Phase

The first three data collection exercises and corresponding reports are used to bring the B-READY methodology to maturity. Methodological updates and refinements resulting from this rollout phase follow a streamlined approval process and may happen on an annual basis.

Under such a process, it is the responsibility of the Topic Team Leader (TTL) to flag and design any required substantive methodological change. The TTL must ensure that economic and topic-specific research has been conducted to justify the change. The TTL should then prepare a comprehensive presentation that outlines the rationale, justification, and details explanations of the proposed changes under the guidance of the Topic Supervisor. This presentation will be made to the Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager and DECIG Director for review, consideration, and approval. In preparation for the presentation, the TTL may, on an as-needed basis, consult with relevant experts and WBG staff who specialize in the thematic area to ensure that the proposed changes are well-informed and

align with the research objectives and standards of the B-READY report. Following the presentation, the DECIG Director decides whether the suggested methodological change will be implemented and provides guidance and direction on the proposed changes. This entire process is summarized in figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1. Process for all Methodology Improvements during the Rollout Phase and for all Minor Changes after the Rollout Phase

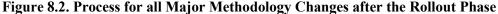


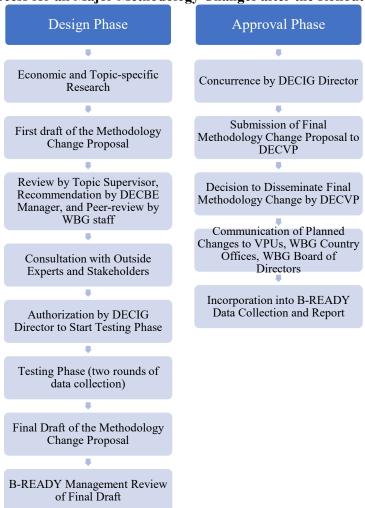
Note: DECIG = Development Economics Global Indicators Group; WBG = World Bank Group.

8.4 Methodology Changes after the Rollout Phase

After the publication of the third B-READY report, the rollout phase is completed. Any subsequent methodology changes are classified as either minor or major changes. Minor changes are defined as edits that are done to provide more clarifications to the questions, data, definitions, parameters, and scoring approach but that do not alter the scope or substance of the existing methodology. Unlike major changes which undergo a more extensive review and approval process, they can be implemented on a yearly basis based on needs. In practice, these minor changes may lead to a different answer being provided to the same question and may have an impact on the assessment of an economy or its scores. For minor changes, the methodology may be revised and approved through the same streamlined approval process detailed in Section 8.3 and Figure 8.1.

Major changes are defined as edits, additions, and/or deletions that have an impact on the scope or substance of the existing methodology. They include any modification, addition, or removal of individual B-READY questions directly used in the score calculation, changes in the assignment of points for these questions, changes to the aggregation approach for calculating pillar or topic scores, or changes in the geographical coverage within an economy. These major changes may alter what questions are scored, how the same answer is scored, and how scores are further aggregated into pillar and topic scores. The B-READY Team keeps the B-READY—Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC) focal points informed of proposed methodology changes. For major changes, the methodology may be revised and approved in two phases. In the first phase (the design phase), the B-READY Team conducts thorough research and discusses the suitability of the proposed change internally. The B-READY Team presents the suggested change to internal and external subject matter experts to assess the merit of the proposed methodology change. In the second phase (the approval phase), the B-READY Team submits the final methodology change proposal for approval before incorporating the changes in the data collection and report. The full process is summarized in Figure 8.2.





Note: DECBE = Development Economics Business Ready; DECIG = Development Economics Global Indicators Group; DECVP = Development Economics Vice President; VPUs = Vice Presidential Units; WBG = World Bank Group.

8.5 Design Phase

The Topic Team Leader (TTL) is responsible for designing any major methodological change. At the initial stage, the TTL must ensure that economic and topic-specific research has been conducted to justify the change. The TTL should then prepare a first draft of the methodology change proposal detailing:

- Research objectives
- Suggested changes to the previous methodology, new additions, or deletions
- Motivation for the change
- Relevant references
- Timeline to implement these changes
- Final reporting instrument (report, Excel spreadsheet, presentation, and so on)

The first draft of the methodology change proposal is reviewed by the Topic Supervisor and DECBE Manager to ensure that the changes meet the research objectives and standards of the B-READY report. The proposal is also peer-reviewed by WBG staff who specialize in the thematic area. The TTL consults internal and external subject matter experts on the proposal to apprise them of changes and seek their feedback. The approved briefing note is then shared with the DECIG Director, who concurs that the testing phase can start or requests more research before that. During the testing phase, the suggested change is

tested in a subset of representative economies during two rounds of data collection. After the Topic Team has collected sufficient data from a representative set of economies, the TTL prepares a final methodology change proposal which is then shared with the Topic Supervisor and DECBE Manager for approval. Finally, the proposal is sent to the DECIG Director for concurrence to begin the editing of the Methodology Handbook.

8.6 Approval Phase

The DECIG Director concurs with the methodology change proposal and sends it to the Chief Economist of the World Bank Group. All major changes to the B-READY methodology must be decided by the Chief Economist of the World Bank Group after consultation with the Council of Chief Economists. The Council of Chief Economists consists of the Chief Economist of the World Bank Group; the six Regional Chief Economists; the five Vertical Chief Economists of Prosperity (formerly known as Equitable Growth, Finance and Institutions (EFI)), People (formerly known as Human Development (HD)), Planet (formerly known as Sustainable Development (SD)), Infrastructure (INF), Digital (DD), and a representative of the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The Development Economics Vice President (DECVP) decides when and how to disseminate the final methodology change.

The Chief Economists will then communicate the planned changes to their respective Vice-Presidential Units (VPUs) and WBG country offices. The WBG's Boards of Directors will also be briefed ahead of implementing these changes—through Executive Director (ED) seminars, technical briefings, or informal Board meetings—as agreed in coordination with the Policy and Operations Department of the Corporate Secretariat (SECPO). Upon receiving the decision from the Chief Economist of the World Bank Group, the B-READY Team will implement the major changes.

8.7 Frequency of Methodology Changes

Major methodology changes after the rollout phase may take place once every three-year cycle. No major methodology changes take place outside this time frame. If unforeseen circumstances arise that call for a departure from the process agreed, the B-READY Team will inform the Chief Economist, who will, in turn, consult the Council of Chief Economists to discuss the issue. No change will be made unless the Council of Chief Economists has thoroughly reviewed the issue and the Chief Economist of the World Bank Group has decided on it.

8.8 Timeline for Implementation

Decisions regarding all methodology changes for a particular B-READY report are made by the end of July before the start of data collection for that B-READY report in September. For example, any changes that will affect the B-READY report launched in September 2029 need to be approved by the end of July 2028. These changes are communicated to WBG Senior Management, the Board of Directors, and country offices when the data collection starts for that B-READY report. Once changes have been decided on by the Chief Economist of the WBG and communicated to the Bank and the Board, the B-READY Team will adhere to the agreed-upon process for the year. No further changes will be made.

All suggested modifications to the methodology, along with corresponding progress updates, will be documented and made publicly available in the Methodology Handbook and the annual Report, until the proposed change is officially adopted and put into effect or a decision is made to abandon or reject the proposal.

Chapter 9–COORDINATION BETWEEN DECBE AND DECSN UNITS

9.1 DECSN Core Work and Structure

The B-READY Subnational (DECSN) Team provides policy makers with analyses on the quality and efficiency of their business regulations on a subnational level, based on newly created data, to inform their regulatory agenda. DECSN customizes B-READY methodology to adapt it to subnational contexts and/or adds locations or sectors of the economy that are not covered by the B-READY project. When assessing several locations within an economy, DECSN usually focuses on topics that are likely to show variation at local level (such as Business Entry, Business Location, Utility Services, Dispute Resolution, or Business Insolvency). However, the topic list for each specific subnational engagement is determined at the preparation stage of individual subnational projects.

DECSN staff provided essential support to the B-READY Team in formulating the B-READY Concept Note. During the first-year rollout stage of B-READY, the DECSN Team supported the implementation and production of the first edition of the B-READY report. This support will continue into the second and third years of the B-READY rollout.

The DECSN Team is led by a DECSN Manager and composed of specialists and analysts with experience in B-READY topics, with managing teams, conducting client-facing projects supported by local and international consultants.

9.2 Coordination between B-READY and DECSN Teams

The Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager and DECSN Manager meet regularly to coordinate the work between the two teams, including discussing the current timeline of the upcoming and ongoing DECSN projects. The DECBE Manager keeps the B-READY Team informed of all such projects, including the names of the respective DECSN Team Leaders (DECSN TLs) for each project. For each DECSN project, the DECBE Manager appoints a focal point to coordinate further communication between the two teams.

9.3 DECSN Project Timeline

DECSN cycles and timelines vary from report to report. DECSN takes the B-READY cycle into consideration when planning project missions (such as data collection) and provides the B-READY Team with tentative milestones for each project. The DECSN Team provides the B-READY Team with access to the shared folder where it saves all milestone documents for each project.

9.4 Expert Contributors for Data Collection

9.4.1 DECSN Expert Contributor Coordinating Firm

An Expert Contributor Coordinating Firm is a vendor used by DECSN to identify and recruit Expert Contributors in each of the locations covered by a DECSN project and for a selected number of topics. An Expert Contributor Coordinating Firm can be an Expert Contributor itself. DECSN can re-enroll an Expert Coordinating firm that they have used in a previous project in an economy. If DECSN needs to hire a new Expert Contributor Coordinating Firm, the DECSN TL contacts the B-READY Expert Contributor Manager. Depending on the Contributor Coordinating Firm's existing contribution to other DECIG projects, and after consultation with the relevant DECIG teams, the B-READY Contributor Manager authorizes DECSN to contract the firm (Section 3.5).

9.4.2 Contributor Management

Before data collection begins, the DECSN TL always checks with the Contributor Manager to verify whether targeted local experts already contribute to B-READY or other DECIG projects. If there is an overlap, DECSN should, in general, remove those Expert Contributors from their list. Similarly, before the B-READY data collection cycle begins, the B-READY TTL always checks with the Contributor Manager and the DECSN Manager to see whether targeted experts already contribute to DECSN or other DECIG projects. If there is an overlap, B-READY should, in general, remove those Expert Contributors from their list for the overlapping cycle. An exception to this general rule applies to the largest city measured by the DECSN and the global B-READY. In general, it is preferable that contributor experts for the largest business city are the same for both the DECSN and the global B-READY data collection. This should be cleared by the team managers, accordingly. The private sector contributors recruited by DECSN will be invited to participate in the subsequent B-READY cycle.

9.5 Data Verification and Changes during the Regular B-READY Data Cycle

9.5.1 Process before DECSN Data Collection Begins

Before a DECSN project starts, the relevant B-READY TTLs alert the DECSN TL of any data issues that might require clarification and provide the DECSN TL with any documentation deemed relevant for the upcoming data collection.

9.5.2 Change of Methodology by B-READY

The DECSN Team has access to the <u>Methodology Handbook</u>. If the B-READY Team amends any of its methodology, the relevant B-READY TTL promptly sends the updated topic methodology note to the DECSN Project Manager, highlighting the changes. If there is a deviation from the B-READY methodology in a given DECSN report, the DECSN team will inform the B-READY management and also provide sufficient disclosure in the report at stake as to what are the specific methodology differences. This includes, for example, changes in the scope or application of the specific topic or indicator, parameter, data validation, etc.

The B-READY and the DECSN teams will conduct coordination meetings to make sure the methodology and scoring is consistently applied.

9.6 Data Exchange between DECSN and the B-READY Team

For the sake of consistency across data produced by DECIG units, DECSN will coordinate with B-Ready on the data published by B-READY for the cities that fall within the scope of both projects and have consistent data when possible. For instance, B-READY will use DECSN input as part of its data validation process, and vice versa.

B-READY and DECSN will conduct several coordination meetings during a B-READY cycle to make sure potential data discrepancies are cleared during the DECSN data collection period. DECSN colleagues will be invited to participate in B-READY topic-specific data review meetings.

If a DECSN report is published in between two B-READY reports and includes more up-to-date data than the ones B-READY has published on its website, an explanatory note should be added on the respective B-READY and DECSN websites.

9.7 Cross-Support Opportunities between DECBE and DECSN

Cross-support is allowed between the two units, with the consent of the DECBE and DECSN Managers. When necessary, resources—staff, headcount, budget—can be reallocated between the units to maximize efficiency and impact and accommodate the variability in the demand for DECSN's services. At least one

B-READY team member should be nominated as peer reviewer in each DECSN report and should also take part in the SN Report's Decision Review Meeting.	

Chapter 10-COORDINATION BETWEEN DECBE AND WBES UNITS

The World Bank's Enterprise Analysis Unit produces the <u>Enterprise Surveys</u> (WBES). The WBES are firm-level surveys covering a representative sample of an economy's private sector. They collect data on firm characteristics and performance, as well as on a broad range of business environment topics, including access to finance, corruption, infrastructure, crime, regulations, and competition.

As part of its mandate, the WBES collect data for the firm-level questions of the B-READY report, as detailed in Section 3.1 of this B-READY M&G. The details regarding the vendor selection and expert contributors' payment are presented in Section 3 of this B-READY M&G. This chapter clarifies the collaboration between WBES and DECBE.

10.1 Coordination among Management

The Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager and the WBES Manager meet regularly to coordinate the work program of the two teams. These meetings are an opportunity for Managers to discuss upcoming and/or ongoing WBES projects and significant changes to their timeline.

10.2 Selection of Questions to Be Included in Enterprise Surveys

The WBES Manager appoints a focal point team member(s) for specific B-READY topics. They advise B-READY Team members on the feasibility of including questions in the survey and help provide guidance.

The process is iterative and is conducted in anticipation of each upcoming WBES round. Three rounds of WBES data collection are included in the three editions of the rollout phase of B-READY: in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

In the initial scoping of questions (to prepare for the 2023 data collection), the process was the following:

- **1.** WBES provided an overall estimate of the number of questions that can be included in the B-READY module.
- **2.** B-READY Topic Teams submitted a proposal to the respective WBES focal point suggesting a set of questions to include in the survey.
- **3.** The WBES focal point provided feedback on the feasibility of collecting firm-level responses for the questions proposed by each B-READY Topic Team.
- **4.** The final decision with regard to the inclusion of a question in the B-READY module relies on a joint decision between the WBES and DECBE Managers, as well as the DECIG Director.

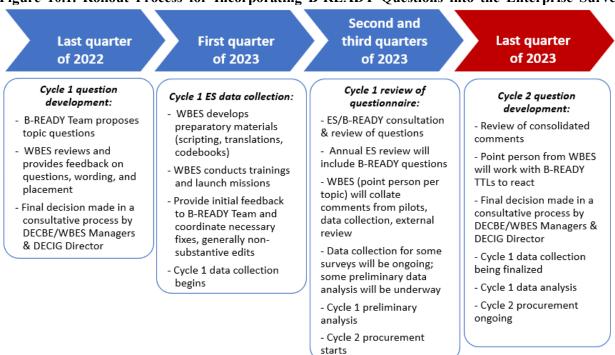
Following the initial fielding of these questions in 2023, in preparation for 2024 and, subsequently, 2025, the following steps were undertaken.

- **5.** A further review of the existing B-READY questions was conducted, including an analysis of response rates and value ranges. Additionally, another review took place after the full list of variables used in scoring was finalized by B-READY.
- **6.** Based on these reviews, some questions were removed from the WBES to promote brevity and cohesiveness. Other questions were revised to increase their conceptual clarity and succinctness. In rare occasions, new questions were proposed following a set of standardized criteria: conceptual clarity, suitability for firm-level surveys, and added value to B-READY.
- 7. Individual topic team consultations between B-READY and WBES were conducted.
- **8.** A comprehensive review of the entire B-READY module was conducted by B-READY Topic Leads, Supervisors, the WBES and DECBE Managers, as well as the DECIG Director.

In addition, the WBES global questionnaire is reviewed on an annual basis. This process is done in a one-day internal retreat (typically in late Summer), when all relevant inputs (team suggestions, tabulations of existing questions, and feedback from specialists) can be considered. Since the global WBES module has gone through this process several times, including the recent modernization effort, changes to that module have been minimal in recent years. However, the process described in the bullets above is needed to compile and review inputs on B-READY-specific questions, including which questions may need to be modified, removed, or added. Figure 10.1 summarizes this process for the first year of the rollout phase.

Any changes to the B-READY questions in WBES global questionnaires done after the rollout phase of the report will follow the procedures and approval steps described in Chapter 8.

Figure 10.1. Rollout Process for Incorporating B-READY Questions into the Enterprise Survey



Note: DECBE = Development Economics Business Ready; DECIG = Development Economics Global Indicators; DECVP = Development Economics Vice President; ES = Enterprise Survey; TTLs = Topic Team Leaders; WBES = World Bank Enterprise Survey.

10.3 Coordination Related to the Dissemination of the B-Ready Report

Two months before the publication of the B-READY report, the DECBE Manager meets with the B-READY Team to develop a dissemination strategy. This includes discussions around launch events where B-READY can be presented with WBES cooperation and where outreach can be targeted to specific audiences (such as chambers of commerce, government, and the private sector). The dissemination guidelines are detailed in Section 7.2.

In addition, the DECBE Manager provides the WBES Manager with the list of economies where the B-READY Team will be conducting travel missions (Sections 3.6, 3.7, and 4.3) as soon as the list is finalized. The WBES Manager may then request the inclusion of some tasks to be conducted by the B-READY Travel Team on the field to help promote the Enterprise Survey, such as providing a briefing or presentation to a local chamber of commerce or other professional associations. The DECBE Manager must approve these tasks in advance.

10.4 Timeline

The detailed timeline of the WBES rollout is incorporated into the B-READY timeline in Appendix E. Importantly, because a full calendar year should be allowed for ES data collection, matters regarding questionnaire review, preparation, and development must be settled while the previous B-READY cycle is underway. For instance, data preparation for the WBES used in the second edition of the B-READY rollout phase occurs before the first edition is launched. The WBES Team provides a set timeline for its project, which is the same for each data collection cycle.

10.5 Data Use by the B-READY Team

All WBES-based data are published, in disaggregated form, through the WBES data portal. Individual economy data sets are published as they become available after clearing all internal protocols, including recommendation by the WBES Manager and concurrence by the DECIG Director. Details on this process can be found in the WBES Manual and Guide.

All quality control (QC) procedures are the responsibility of the WBES TTL for each implemented survey.

The B-READY Team is provided periodic access to the partial firm-level data, provided the relevant WBES TTL approves. Any partial data follow all privacy protocols, meaning that identifying information is removed, and the data are for "Official Use Only." B-READY indicators are calculated using these firm-level data. Lastly, the WBES Team assists the B-READY Team in setting up data organization, data cleaning (if necessary), and data processing.

Chapter 11-IMPLEMENTING THE B-READY MANUAL AND GUIDE

11.1 Training for B-READY Team Members

To ensure knowledge about and compliance with of all the provisions in the B-READY Manual and Guide (B-READY M&G), the Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager ensures that both new and existing B-READY Team members are provided with comprehensive and targeted training, access to knowledge resources, and guidance. The entire B-READY M&G is also made available to the public.

A series of trainings are conducted every year for all B-READY Team members, including staff, Extended Term Consultants (ETCs), Short Term Consultants (STCs), and interns. These trainings aim to provide comprehensive guidance on all aspects covered in the B-READY M&G, including (and not limited to) sessions on the data collection and report preparation process and measures for safeguarding the data quality and integrity of the B-READY report. Appendix F provides a non-exhaustive list of trainings that will be conducted during a report cycle for this purpose. The entire training session is recorded and made available in the learning section of the Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) intranet page and shared as part of the onboarding process of new Team members. In addition, the DECBE Manager can authorize an ad hoc training session on any topic.

All new B-READY Team members receive a detailed onboarding session, as well as continuous guidance from the relevant Topic Team Leaders (TTLs) on the processes they should follow. TTLs monitor repetitive issues faced by B-READY Team members and share them with the B-READY M&G function Team Leader. These observations will inform the review process of the B-READY M&G and its complementary materials (such as staff training).

11.2 Process for B-READY M&G Review by GIA and EBC

With inputs from Group Internal Audit (GIA), the Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC) Department, and the Legal Vice Presidency (LEG), and before the first B-READY data collection start date, the B-READY Team and DECIG Director produced and concurred this B-READY M&G. All the protocols, safeguards, processes, and resources are thus clearly established in writing. EBC has assisted the B-READY Team in drafting several sections of this B-READY M&G and has reviewed the entire B-READY M&G.

GIA provided an Insight Note in June 2022 to assist with the development of the B-READY production procedures. In addition to providing informal feedback on the draft B-READY M&G, in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), GIA will conduct an Assurance Review to examine the end-to-end process of data collection and reporting for B-READY.

11.3 Process for Updating the B-READY M&G

The current B-READY M&G is intended to serve throughout the production of several editions of the B-READY report. While the expectation is that it will remain valid, the B-READY M&G must reflect any properly approved changes that may affect the procedures it describes, such as addressing challenges experienced while collecting data and preparing the B-READY report. Such flexibility is necessary especially during the rollout period of the report. Accordingly, the B-READY M&G may be updated yearly for the first three reports to reflect the lessons learned during this stage.

The systematic review of the B-READY M&G is led by the DECBE Manager and coordinated by the B-READY M&G function Team Leader. The review takes into consideration all relevant protocol and procedural changes, as well as challenges to be addressed in the process of data collection and report preparation. Inputs to this process are provided by B-READY Team members, relevant Function Team Leaders, and Topic Supervisors in the first instance. The Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) Front Office reviews the final changes, and they are concurred by the DECIG Director

subsequently. Along with revising the content, the M&G function Team also performs meticulous consistency checks and formatting revisions to the chapters of the Guide.

Any changes to the B-READY M&G must be properly documented. Emails requesting updates and final approval of revisions must be documented in the existing B-READY M&G shared folder. The different versions of the text in tracked and clean versions must be saved in the same folder.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A-Resources for Concerns about Workplace Integrity, the Integrity of the B-READY Project and Data, or Staff Well-being

A.1 Where to Go with Concerns (IJS options)

Internal Justice Services (IJS) has created a <u>Decision Making Tool</u> that helps staff identify options based on the type of issue they require assistance with. IJS also created <u>A Brief Primer</u> that summarizes available resources. B-READY Team members can take any first step that they are comfortable with because there isn't a "wrong place" to go with a concern—the contact person in any of the IJS Teams can explain the different services and options for next steps. However, it is best to address and resolve workplace conflict at the lowest level and at the earliest opportunity. For contact information and a summary of assistance available from the IJS and related services, please refer to table A.1 (at the end of this appendix).

B-READY Team members are entitled to work in an environment where their psychological safety is protected, and they are encouraged to consult the Ethics and Internal Justice (EIJ) services if they feel that this is not the case. The most appropriate contact points are: (1) the Anti-Harassment Coordinator for any sexual harassment and harassment situation; (2) the Mediation for breakdown in communication and difficult negotiations; (3) the Race Equity Officer for racial discrimination issues; (4) Peer Revieω Services for formal complaints about employment contract; and (5) the Ethics and Business Conduct Department (EBC) intake for formally reporting alleged misconduct. In addition, advice can be sought with EBC Advisory and with the Ombuds. Finally, the B-READY Ethics and Compliance Function Team can act as an entry point and orientate B-READY Team members toward the most appropriate resource or address the issue directly (see Table A.1 at the end of this appendix).

A.2 Issues Relating to Employment (contracts, performance, and so on)

B-READY Team members who have contracts allowing them to have a Performance Evaluation, Salary Review Increase, or placement on an Opportunity to Improve (OTI) Plan may appeal them by going to Administrative Review (AR) (1st tier) and then to Performance Management Review (2nd tier). A B-READY Team member may seek review of a performance management decision by requesting an Administrative Review within 60 days of the decision. B-READY Team members may further request a review, by a neutral reviewer, of a Performance Management Decision (that is, a review of their performance evaluations and performance ratings, and of decisions to place them on OTI plans and the terms governing these plans).

For other employment decisions, actions, or inactions, such as non-renewal of contract, B-READY Team members may submit a request to <u>Peer Review Services (PRS)</u> for an independent review within 120 days of the decision, action, or inaction. If B-READY Team members are concerned that an employment or performance decision has been taken in retaliation, they may also contact EBC for further guidance. The PRS is open to all types of contracts, including Short Term Consultants (STCs).

B-READY Team members may also reach out to any Staff Association Counselor if they are Staff Association (SA) members in good standing. A Staff Association Counselor can be an advocate on behalf of an individual. Colleagues do not have to be a member of the Staff Association to speak with a Staff Association Counselor. Some Employee Resource Groups also have mechanisms to support staff in difficult situations. For instance, LGBT staff can contact GLOBE if they feel discriminated against on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity (SOGI).

A.3 Interpersonal Conflict with a Colleague or Colleagues

If a B-READY Team member has a concern that relates to an interpersonal conflict with a colleague, the Team member should consider raising the issue informally and directly with the colleague. If the B-READY Team member does not feel comfortable raising the issue directly with the colleague, the Team member should discuss the concern with the Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager or consult

this Appendix on where to start, to help with taking the first step in using one of the IJS offices. In general, B-READY Team members may prefer to start with one of the Respectful Workplace Advisors (RWA) or the Ombuds Services. They have information to point the B-READY Team member in the right direction.

The RWA's primary role is to be a confidential, trusted, and readily accessible resource that helps staff (as defined in Rule 4.01) with workplace problems when they feel uncomfortable seeking help from routine channels, such as their supervisors or Human Resources (HR) staff, or want information about where to seek assistance.

The Ombuds unit provides a confidential, impartial, and informal service independent from WBG formal Management channels that facilitates the resolution of workplace issues. An ombudsman helps staff analyze problems, assists in identifying options, and can become involved in trying to resolve issues—but only if requested by the staff member.

If B-READY Team members prefer to have an independent third party mediate their concern or conflict, they should consider <u>Mediation Services</u>. Mediation is an informal, confidential conflict resolution process in which an impartial third party helps two or more participants better understand their issues, interests, and needs. It empowers them to bridge their difference through a voluntary agreement. Mediation is strictly confidential, both for the participants and the mediator. Participants have ultimate control and decision-making power over the outcome of the mediation.

A.4 Inappropriate Behavior by Colleagues or External Counterparts

Inappropriate behavior is any behavior that is unprofessional or unwelcome, that an individual finds offensive or humiliating, or that prevents an individual from performing their work effectively. Inappropriate or unwelcome behavior may constitute harassment, which is a form of misconduct under WBG staff rules. For any concerns about inappropriate behavior, B-READY Team members may speak to the DECBE Manager and/or contact EBC.

The DECBE Manager has a special responsibility as role model to regularly communicate with the B-READY Team members about the Core Values and the Code of Ethics, and to ensure that B-READY Team members have access to resources that support them to live by the Code. The DECBE Manager is also expected to provide a safe space for those who have questions and seek clarity, and those who raise good faith concerns about potential harassment, abuse of authority, or other inappropriate behavior. The WBG will make Every effort to protect B-READY Team members from retaliation for reporting concerns in good faith.

The Anti-Harassment Coordinator (AHC), located within EBC, is a resource available to those who are subjected to inappropriate behavior or feel intimidated in their work environment. Consultations with the AHC are fully confidential. The AHC can take action to address inappropriate behaviors through coaching, intervening with consultation with the offender and/or with the offender's Manager including, when relevant, formally cautioning the offender. The AHC may also refer the matter for misconduct investigation or to another IJS-related service.

B-READY Team members may contact the AHC both if they have experienced harassment or sexual harassment or if they witness situations of harassment or sexual harassment involving others. Instances where B-READY Team members consider that there may be underlying issues of racial discrimination can contact the Race Equity Officer. B-READY Team members are also reminded that when harassment and violence occur in the home, the Domestic Abuse Prevention Program (DAPP) can provide assistance.

A.5 Violations of WBG Staff Rules and Policies

Concerns about potential misconduct may include:

- Harassment, sexual harassment
- Abuse of authority (including pressuring a staff member to distort facts or break rules)
- Discrimination
- Actions or behavior that create a hostile work environment
- Retaliation.

B-READY Team members should contact EBC if they wish to report suspected misconduct. Managers have an obligation to report suspected misconduct to EBC. All B-READY Team members are strongly encouraged to report suspected misconduct to EBC. B-READY Team members may also report misconduct anonymously. B-READY Team members are encouraged to refer to the brochure on Harassment, Abuse of Power, and Discrimination.

EBC also investigates allegations relating to fraudulent claims for benefits, failure to meet personal legal obligations (for example, tax payments or court-ordered spousal or child support), and other violations of the WBG rules and policies.

A.6 Suspected Fraud or Corruption in WBG Projects and Activities

All B-READY Team members have a duty to report suspected fraud or corruption in WBG-financed projects or WBG business to the <u>Integrity Vice Presidency (INT)</u>. INT handles allegations of misconduct involving WBG staff and consultants relating to misuse of WBG funds or other public funds, abuse of position, fraud, corruption, collusion, or coercion occurring in Bank Group-financed operations or in the administration of WBG business.

A.7 Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

For questions or advice regarding ethical issues and conflicts of interest, or to report suspected misconduct, please contact the **Ethics and Business Conduct Department (EBC)** Department: ethics helpline@worldbank.org

The Ethics Helpline can be contacted confidentially and toll-free, 24 hours/7 days a week: 800-261-7497 or (202) 473 0279, 9:00–17:00 EST.

View all information by typing http://ethics or http://EBC in your browser.

A.8 Data Integrity

Data integrity is at the core of the B-READY project because it informs each and every element of the project design and its implementation. Data collection and reporting are governed by the highest possible standards of integrity, including sound data gathering processes, clear approval protocols, robust data safeguards, and clear guidance on protecting the project from undue influence.

DECIG is engaging with the Group Internal Audit (GIA), Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC), Information and Technology Solutions (ITS) units, and the Legal Vice Presidency (LEG) at the WBG to strengthen the governance of the B-READY project. The B-READY project follows the Operations Policy and Country Services (OPCS) guidelines on <u>Accountability and Decision-Making (ADM)</u> framework for the WBG corporate flagship products.

With guidance from GIA, EBC, and LEG, and before the first edition of B-READY data collection start date, the B-READY Team produced this B-READY M&G, where the above-mentioned protocols, safeguards, processes, and resources were clearly established in writing.

After the first edition of B-READY, in Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25), GIA will conduct an Assurance Review to examine the end-to-end process of data collection and reporting for B-READY. In addition, the entire production and publication process for B-READY will be periodically reviewed by GIA to provide assurance to the Board and Management. In addition, GIA has already provided guidance through an initial Insight Note (Appendix G), which was shared with the B-READY Team before the B-READY M&G was drafted. GIA also provided informal feedback on this B-READY M&G before its publication.

A.9 Data Integrity in the Data Collection Process

The data collection mechanisms of B-READY—Expert Contributors consultations and firm-level surveys (Section 3.1)—have built-in checks to ensure the accuracy and quality of the data.

The firm-level survey data collection takes place through the operation of the WBES (Section 3.1.2) and with independence from the B-READY Team (please refer to the WBES Manual and Guide). The raw data produced by the World Bank Enterprise Survey (WBES) Team are made available on the WBES website and are used "as is" (without alteration) by the B-READY Team.

The B-READY Team conducts data collection from the consultations with the Expert Contributors. Expert Contributors are selected following a rigorous screening process conducted by the B-READY Team to ensure that they are the best qualified in their fields and that they will remain impartial throughout their interactions with the B-READY Team (see Appendix B). Data collection from Expert Contributors is conducted completely through the survey software tool, which ensures that a full trail of any communication is preserved.

ITS also works with the B-READY Team to obtain a safe and reliable data management system that protects the data from cyberthreats and unforced errors, while also allowing for public data availability. The information technology (IT) capital investment for B-READY has been endorsed and will be funded through the ITS FY23 and FY24 Annual Investment Planning process.

A.10 Mental and Physical Well-being Resources for Staff

Workplace concerns can lead to added stress. The <u>Mental Health and Well-Being Unit</u> provides guidance on stress, personal, and work concerns to help B-READY Team members manage stress and maintain a work-life balance. B-READY Team members who seek support to manage stress are encouraged to contact the Mental Health and Well-Being Unit for confidential counseling.

- <u>Individual counseling and support</u>. For more information or to make an appointment, contact: +1 (202) 458-4457 or hsdcounseling@worldbankgroup.org
- Counseling 24/7: HELPLINE +1 (202) 458-5600

The World Bank Group Health and Safety Directorate's Domestic Abuse Prevention Program (DAPP) provides also confidential services to B-READY Team members and spouses/partners who are being abused by a partner. These services include crisis management, advocacy, short-term counseling, legal consultations and referrals to outside attorneys, educational services, and other support when appropriate.

B-READY Team members who seek support under the Domestic Abuse Prevention Program are encouraged to contact the confidential helpline, which is available 24/7.

- +1 (202) 458-5800 or DAMA 5220-85800
- daprevention@worldbank.org

If the DECBE Manager or DECIG Director is concerned about one of their B-READY Team members who may be having personal, emotional, or health problems, the Health & Safety Directorate (HSD) offers manager consults and guidance on how to communicate and how to be helpful.

Additional resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Library
- Relaxation and Meditation Programs
- Stress Management Toolkit
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Webinars (Archives)
- DAPP

Table A.1. Staff Resources for Concerns about Workplace Integrity, the Integrity of the B-READY Project and Data, or Their Own Well-being

Issues Relating to Employment (contracts, performance, and so on)

Administrative Review (AR) is the first step for requesting a review of a Performance Management Decision and must be exhausted before seeking PMR. adminireview@worldbankgroup.org

Performance Management Review (PMR) is the second of a two-tier streamlined administrative review of performance evaluations, Salary Review Increase (SRI) ratings, and Opportunity To Improve Performance (OTI) plans. performancemanagementreview@worldbank.org (202) 473-5884

Peer Review Services (PRS) offers a confidential review of staff's employment-related concerns before an impartial and independent panel of peers. peerreview@worldbank.org (202) 473-5884

Staff Association (SA) promotes and safeguards the rights, interests, and welfare of staff, and fosters a sense of common purpose among staff in promoting the aims and objectives of the World Bank Group. staffassociation@worldbank.org

(202) 473-9000 or walk-in MC1-700

The WBG Administrative Tribunal. The Tribunal is an independent judicial forum where staff can bring their grievances about their contract of employment or terms of appointment within 120 days of the occurrence of the event giving rise to the complaint. Staff must exhaust internal remedies before filing an application unless the complaint relates to misconduct and termination of employment, where staff may come directly to the Tribunal. Typically, this would be the date of receipt of a decision from the Bank following a recommendation from Peer Review Services (PRS). Extensions can be requested. All cases are considered by the judges. The Tribunal issues final and binding decisions.

Interpersonal Conflict with a Colleague or Colleagues

Ombuds Services is a confidential, impartial, and informal service that facilitates the resolution of workplace issues. It is independent from the World Bank Group's Management channels. ombudsman@worldbank.org

(202) 458-1056

Mediation Services (MEF) offers mediation, facilitation, training, and team-building. MEF has 23 mediators available to support staff and to provide these services. mediation@worldbank.org (202) 458-0424

http://mediation

Respectful Workplace Advisors (RWAs) are volunteer peers who serve as an informal and confidential sounding board and help colleagues identify options to address workplace concerns by providing information about available resources. rwa@worldbank.org (202) 458-105831

http://rwa

Inappropriate Behavior by Colleagues or External Counterparts

Anti-Harassment Coordinator. For issues on harassment/sexual harassment, you can request an EBC's Anti-Harassment Coordinator for a confidential discussion. Fill out a form at https://www.worldbank.org/en/about/unit/reporting-sexual-misconduct to report sexual misconduct anonymously, if necessary, or call the Ethics Helpline.

Race Equity Office is part of IJS and serves as a focal point on concerns and claims of racism and racial discrimination in our workplace. A main focus will be to help create a safe space for colleagues who have experienced or witnessed racial discrimination or racism within the organization, to discuss what happened, to understand the options available to them, and to ensure follow-up. reo@worldbank.org (202) 458-7979

Suspected Fraud or Corruption in WBG Projects and Activities

Integrity Vice Presidency (INT). Colleagues concerned about fraud or corruption in WBG-financed activities can contact the Integrity Vice President (INT). INT is an independent unit within the WBG whose core function is investigating fraud, corruption, collusion, coercion, and obstruction and pursuing sanctions related to these sanctionable offenses in WBG-financed activities.

Ethics and conflicts of interest

Ethics and Business Conduct Department (EBC). For questions or advice regarding ethical issues and conflicts of interest, or to report suspected misconduct, please contact the EBC Department: ethics helpline@worldbank.org

The Ethics Helpline can be contacted confidentially and toll-free, 24 hours/7 days a week: 800-261-7497 or (202) 473 0279, 9:00–17:00 EST.

View all information by typing http://ethics or http://EBC in your browser.

Mental and Physical Well-being Resources for Staff

Mental Health and Well-Being Unit provides guidance on stress, personal, and work concerns to help you manage stress and maintain balance in your life. HSDCounseling@worldbankgroup.org (202) 458-4457 or DAMA 5220-84457

Domestic Abuse Prevention Program provides free confidential services for short-term counseling and case management. The program provides information and connects you to resources, which can include crisis management, short-term counseling, legal consultation and referrals to outside attorneys, case management, and other internal or external resources. daprevention@worldbank.org +1 (202) 458-5800 or DAMA 5220-85800

Appendix B-Guidance on Researching Expert Contributors Names and Firms

The first step in finding topic Expert Contributors is trying to identify them through one of the following suggested sources:

- **Existing Contributors.** Use the professional associations of a current Contributor for referrals. Search for a current Contributor's name on Google. Often, their name appears on a list of attendees for a professional conference or a list of experts in a professional association. These PDF files or Excel sheets of many expert names are otherwise hard to find with a regular Google search.
- US Embassy Websites. The US State Department lists local lawyers on embassy websites.
- Professional directories. Directories such as the Lawyers Global and HG Legal Directory are good sources
- **Professional Associations**. Search for organizations such as a national construction contractor association, electrical contractor union, national or city bar association, or licensing organization.
- **Journals, Blogs, Manuals.** Search for technical terms related to the topic plus the economy name in Google, Google News, or professional publications related to the topic to see which experts have written about the topic.

The teams should avoid web scraping unless using professional association databases.

To enhance expert recruitment efficiency, in addition to the efforts of individual topic teams, B-READY will realign resources, including targeted engagements with experts at international and regional law firms and professional associations. Recruitment missions will continue as part of the team's global initiatives, with the objective of establishing long-term collaboration with the experts. This approach leverages the expertise and willingness of these firms and associations to undertake global pro bono projects. The B-READY team will also continue to strengthen data quality by recruiting top experts across all economies, utilizing professional networks, industry events, and other adequate channels.

After preparing an initial list of potential experts, Team members must conduct a more in-depth search as an initial expertise assessment (see Section 3.1.7). Sometimes there are two experts with the same name in the same economy. In these cases, B-READY Team members must examine the expert's LinkedIn work history or appearance on firm websites to piece together "who is who."

In addition, B-READY Team members must keep in mind that experts may use and/or refer to themselves and their companies by different names. Thus, it is important for B-READY Team members to conduct a thorough search in CRM for all variations of personal and company names when trying to identify whether such person/company has an existing profile in CRM. Such thorough research ensures that B-READY Team members avoid contacting experts who contribute to other topics and/or WBG projects, and that they are accurately identified.

Appendix C-Guidance on B-READY Expert Contributors' Engagement

B-READY aims to achieve a balance between data comparability across economies and data representativeness in each economy by collecting data through a combination of Expert Contributors consultations and firm surveys.

To ensure accurate and impartial responses, the B-READY Team collects information directly from private sector Expert Contributors or firms without intermediation by the public sector. The B-READY Team manages the relationship with private sector Expert Contributors in an exclusive way. Communications are done on a bilateral basis, and exchanges with Expert Contributors are separate from any government interactions with the B-READY Team.

B-READY Team members may travel to a selected economy to recruit private sector Expert Contributors. To preserve the accuracy, impartiality, and integrity of the B-READY data, public officials, World Bank staff not associated with the B-READY project, and other Stakeholders cannot participate in such meetings, should not directly or indirectly be involved in the data collection process, and must avoid any undue interference with private sector Expert Contributors.

Governments are encouraged to disseminate and communicate reforms and regulatory improvements to the public and to all relevant practitioners in the economy as a group. However, as noted above, governments should avoid communication that could be perceived as efforts to directly influence the responses of individual Expert Contributors. Governments may send B-READY topic questionnaires to their colleagues in public sector agencies and/or ask them to provide inputs to the B-READY team for data validation purposes.

If the B-READY Team determines that Stakeholders have engaged in activities that are or could be perceived as interference with the independence of Expert Contributors in an economy, the B-READY Team, in consultation with World Bank Group Management and the B-READY—Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC) Department focal points, may take steps to preserve the integrity of the data, including by not updating data for the economy in a report cycle, as well as by excluding the economy's data entirely.

When preparing for a mission, Travel Team members may request logistical assistance from the WBG Country Management Unit (CMU), which may include scheduling meetings with private sector Expert Contributors. CMUs assisting the B-READY Team in organizing missions must take all necessary measures to keep the meetings schedule and the identity of private sector Expert Contributors strictly confidential. CMUs may not attribute the receipt of any material, information and/or documentation to any individual in the private sector. CMUs must undertake all necessary steps to ensure that this guidance on how to engage with B-READY private sector Expert Contributors is respected by their teams to the best of their ability.

Appendix D-Improving Data Quality Through Selection of Expert Contributors and Data Validation Process

D.1 Selection of Expert Contributors and Data Collection Processes

- a. High quality of respondents is ensured through strict adherence to screener requirements.
- **b.** Clear expectations are set for the three to five selected Expert Contributors.
- **c.** Uniform instructions on how to fill out the screener and topic questionnaires are provided to respondents.
- **d.** A large contributor base is built to allow for effective selection of Expert Contributors.
- **e.** The online Contributor Relationship Management (CRM) system is used to track the status of the topic questionnaires automatically.
- **f.** Topic questionnaires filled in by governments are treated separately from the private sector ones to provide independent reference points.

D.2 Preparatory Data Analysis and Review

- **a.** Once the required number of topic questionnaires is received, the data are extracted from the survey software and exported to the data processing software.
- **b.** The data processing software compares economy-specific responses from Expert Contributors, identifying data divergence without any manual work from the Teams.
- **c.** Based on the information from the data processing software, the Teams conduct further review of responses and secondary information to determine whether a follow-up is necessary or not.

D.3 Determining the Scope for Data Validation

- **a.** All topic questionnaires must be received by a specified date, but data validation may start before that if Teams received three to five completed questionnaires for an economy and no "live" questionnaires are pending.
- **b.** The following situations trigger data validation once fully completed topic questionnaires are received:
- i. Divergence in private sector responses.
- ii. Divergence between private sector responses and government inputs.
- iii. Extreme values (cases outside +/-50% range from the median) for numerical questions.
- iv. Divergence from last cycle's published response (where available).
- **c.** Follow-up is conducted when the median response contradicts the available secondary evidence (for example, when the median response is calculated as "Yes" but the relevant legal basis alludes to a possible "No" answer).
- **d.** Government Expert Contributors will not be contacted for follow-up.
- e. If a questionnaire has a high level of inconsistencies with other expert contributor responses (more than 50 percent) or two questionnaires have more than 95% match to the level of supporting information, respondent quality is reassessed. The level of inconsistencies is automatically calculated in the data processing software.
- **f.** For cases with low levels of inconsistencies, a targeted follow-up is sent through the survey software. Follow-up is based on the following applicable criteria:
- i. Review of laws and regulations pertinent to the question at hand.
- **ii.** Review of website(s) of government agencies to verify availability of services, information, or statistics as assessed by the methodology.
- iii. Review of the information submitted in the government questionnaires.

D.4 Implementation of Data Validation

- **a.** Follow-up is implemented through the survey software, using flag and comment options.
- **b.** Divergent questionnaires (with flags and comments) are sent back to the relevant Expert Contributors with a clear timeline and instructions for providing a response.
- c. If an Expert Contributor contacts the Team requesting to change their answers after the questionnaire was submitted but during the data collection period, this request is granted. However, the Team reviews the revised responses to understand the reasons for the change.
- **d.** Once the identified questionnaires are revised by the Expert Contributors (with or without changes), the Team reviews the responses to determine whether an economy is ready for review/clearance by the Topic Team Leader. A median is taken if the answers still diverge after the follow-up.
- **e.** Follow-up is done when three to five questionnaires have been received for an economy and no "live" questionnaires are pending.
- **f.** The revised data are extracted again from the survey software and imported into the data processing software for the final data processing.

Appendix E-Timeline

The Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) produced and delivered the first B-READY report in October 2024. The timeline for the first B-READY report was guided by this target. Table E.1 presents the milestones in this process. DECIG expects subsequent reports to be released on a yearly basis.

Table E.1. Detailed Timeline for the First Three Editions of the B-READY Report

a. First B-READY Report a	and Full Data Set for about 50 Economies	
February 2023	Start data collection through firm-level surveys.	
November 2022–October	Identify Expert Contributors in about 50 economies.	
2023	Finalize topic questionnaires.	
May 2023	Conduct workshops on B-READY methodology.	
May 2023	Start data collection through topic questionnaires.	
May 2024	Complete data collection for both firm-level surveys and topic	
	questionnaires.	
October 2023–May 2024	Analyze data and draft report.	
July 2024	Bank-wide Review (BWR) of first B-READY data set and report and	
	Informal Board meeting.	
October 3, 2024	Launch of the first edition of the B-READY data and report.	
b. Second B-READY Report and Full Data Set for about 120 Economies ^a		
January 2024	Start data collection through firm-level surveys.	
February 2024 –October	Identify Expert Contributors in about 62 additional economies.	
2024	Finalize topic questionnaires.	
September 2024	Start data collection through topic questionnaires.	
May 2025	Complete data collection for firm-level surveys in about 62 additional	
	economies and topic questionnaires in about 120 economies.	
October 2024–May 2025	Analyze data and draft report.	
July 2025	BWR of second B-READY data set and report and Informal Board meeting.	
	Launch of the second edition of the B-READY data and report.	
October 2025		
-	and Full Data Set for 184 Economies ^b	
January 2025	Start data collection through firm-level surveys.	
February 2025–October	Identify Expert Contributors in about 72 additional economies.	
2025	Finalize topic questionnaires.	
September 2025	Start data collection through topic questionnaires.	
May 2026	Complete data collection for firm-level surveys in about 72 additional	
	economies and topic questionnaires in about 184 economies.	
October 2025– May 2026	Analyze data and draft report.	
July 2026	BWR of third B-READY data set and report and Informal Board meeting.	
	Launch of the third edition of the B-READY data and report.	
October 2026		
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Note: B-READY = Business Ready; BWR = Bank-wide Review

a. The report will update the data collected through expert consultations for the economies covered in the previous report and will provide a full data set (data collected through expert consultations plus data collected through firm-level surveys) for about 62 additional economies.

b. The report will update the data collected through expert consultations for the economies covered in the previous report and will provide a full data set (data collected through expert consultations plus data collected through firm-level surveys) for the remaining economies.

Appendix F-Training for B-READY Team Members

Many trainings and opportunities for online self-learning are available to B-READY Team members. The trainings listed in table F.1 are in addition to the mandatory ones that B-READY Team Members are notified to attend from time to time.

Table F.1. B-READY Training and Opportunities for Online Self-learning

	e Sen-learning
B-READY Training	Timing
Orientation for New Team Members. Overview of WBG, DECBE, IT systems, and a walk through of the B-READY topics, Expert Contributors, firm surveys, data collection, analysis, and tips on working effectively in the team. Ethics Awareness. Training to (1) understand the various institutional resources available for staff to report conduct or behavior they find concerning or may constitute a violation of WBG staff rules; (2) use an external case study to identify and address abuse of authority situations that include unacceptable workplace pressures; and (3) understand the relevant WBG resources to protect colleagues from retaliation/reprisal behavior.	When each Team member joins: STCs–Usually in beginning of report cycle. Interns–Spring and Summer batch. Beginning of each B-READY data collection cycle.
Questionnaire Generation. Training on how to create and edit questionnaires on the survey tool.	Beginning of each B-READY cycle.
CRM. Training on how to use Microsoft Dynamics to create/update Contributor information for new Team members. Contributor Interactions. Training on how to screen and recruit new Expert Contributors and conduct effective follow-up on received topic questionnaires through the survey tool.	Beginning of each B-READY cycle. Beginning of each data collection B-READY cycle.
All about B-READY Q&A. Training on how to deal with questions Expert Contributors and governments frequently ask about B-READY, standard language of response to be used, and how to deflect contentious/difficult questions.	
Topic Data Collection and Coding. Each Topic Team Leader provides training to new Team members and refreshers to existing Team members on all aspects of data collection and coding of their topic.	Beginning of each B-READY cycle and throughout the data collection cycle.
Topic Questionnaire Review Standards. Each Topic Team Leader provides training to Team members on what constitutes a complete topic questionnaire, and how to take into account variation between Expert Contributors for the same question across each economy.	Before topic questionnaire validation process.
Training on the Processes described in the B-READY M&G.	Ad hoc and when B-READY M&G is updated with new processes.
Report Writing.	Ad hoc.
Advanced Excel. Training on intermediate/advanced features of Excel that the Team is often required to use.	Once in each B-READY cycle.
Training on Statistical Software Code. For users of statistical software code in the B-READY Team.	Ad hoc.

Expert Contributors Recruitment Mission. Training for first-	Before missions in each B-READY
time Expert Contributors recruitment mission travelers: how to	cycle.
prepare for mission, conduct themselves during mission	
(including proper etiquette), collect data effectively, deal with	
governments, Expert Contributors, meet Management, draft	
BTORs, and so on.	
Topic Team Leaders and Supervisors Program (TLSP).	For new TTLs, Supervisors.
Training for TTLs, Supervisors.	_

Note: B-READY M&G = Business Ready Manual and Guide; BTORs = Back to the Office Reports; CRM = Microsoft Dynamic Contributor Relationship Management System; DECBE = Development Economics Business Ready; IT = information technology; Q&A = question and answer; STC = Short Term Consultant; TTL = Topic Team Leader; WBG = World Bank Group.

Appendix G-List of Related Documents

- IBRD Articles of Agreement
 GIA Report
 Concept Note
 IEG Review