BUSINESS READY (B-READY) Manual and Guide

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WORLD BANK GROUP

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Business Ready (B-READY) is the World Bank Group's new corporate flagship being implemented in the Development Economics Global Indicators Group. B-READY provides a quantitative assessment of the business environment for private sector development, published annually and covering most economies worldwide. B-READY data and the summary report will aim to advocate for policy reform, inform specific policy advice, and provide data for development policy research. Through its focus on private sector development, B-READY will effectively contribute to meeting the twin goals of the World Bank Group (WBG) of eliminating poverty and boosting shared prosperity.

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 regulatory framework and public services are combined in practice. B-READY seeks a balanced approach when assessing the business environment: between ease of conducting a business and broader private sector benefits, between regulatory framework and public services, between de jure laws and regulations and de facto practical implementation, and between data representativeness and data comparability.

 B-READY focuses on ten topics that are organized following the life cycle of the 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 Connections, 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 are collected from expert consultations, de facto data are 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.

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 Manual and Guide 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 covers how the B-Ready Team engages with governments. 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 specify 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 WBES Manual and Guide and the B-READY Methodology Handbook, which establishes 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 meant for internal use by the Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG). It is publicly available on the B-READY website.

The initial version of the B-READY M&G was developed and published before the start of the first B-READY pilot data collection cycle. The B-READY M&G is a live document and will be updated as the project evolves.

ABBREVIATIONS

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

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 Program 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.

DECSN Manager: The Program 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 Practices (GPs): The units within the World Bank Group envisioned to be vertical pillars of technical expertise on their respective subject.

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.

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 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; and (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.

Topic: One of the 10 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.

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 Program 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).

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

Chapter 2 – DATA INTEGRITY

The quality and value of the B-READY project and report rest on their impartiality and 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 2022 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 in 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 Core Values—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 Code of Ethics, 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 to 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 Code of Ethics and Core Values made available by the Ethics and Business Conduct Department, and (2) attend a scheduled training provided by the EBC Team at the beginning of each EBC report cycle.

2.2 Ethics and Compliance Function Team within the B-READY Team

EBC has established an independent Ethics and Compliance Function Team within the B-READY project with two EBC staff to support the B-READY project and Team on a continuous basis. These B-READY–EBC focal points advise on ways to protect the project from undue influence from internal and external Stakeholders and develop awareness on the resources available to the B-READY Team, including organizing training sessions, and with regard to reporting any perceived undue influence. They also provide guidance on avoiding the risk of conflicts of interest within the B-READY Team and in its relationship with the rest of the WBG. B-READY Team members may contact the B-READY–EBC focal points directly to discuss relevant issues and request to schedule meetings. The B-READY–EBC focal points keep all such interactions confidential and anonymous except as 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 impossible 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 Principle of Staff Employment 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 Pilot 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 Pilot 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 Global Practice (GP). 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 Global Practice (GP).

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
Being a member of the B-READY Team and conducting B-READY research involves interactions with many colleagues and Stakeholders, which can sometimes be complex or difficult to navigate. 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 data review process will involve a two-step review of all received topic questionnaires: by the Topic Team Leader (TTL) (level 1 review) and the Topic Supervisor (level 2 review). Each layer of data review will take into account the application of the topic methodology, the minimum information required to consider a topic questionnaire as complete, the identification of biased topic questionnaires or responses, and the consistent application of the methodology and data validation across economies.

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 tool, a designated OneDrive folder with restricted access, and an external hard drive that serves as an offline data backup) (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. The Data Analysis Function Team coordinates, prepares, and executes the appropriate scripts. Each Topic Team provides the final cleared scoring methodology to ensure the accurate programming of the computational scripts for their topic. The programing 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 approved by DECIG Management and then 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. They may convey economy-specific data by completing a topic questionnaire at the beginning of the cycle. The B-READY firm-level data collected through the World Bank Enterprise Surveys (WBES) are included in the BWR materials (economy tables as well as the report) as points of comparison. However, they are not part of the BWR process given that they would already be published on the WBES website.

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 an 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 do not need to wait until undue pressure becomes intense; 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, 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, Staff Rule 8.02 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 so 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 Staff Rule 3.00, 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 assist 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 come 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, scores, and 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 straightforward toolkits 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 publishes on its website information regarding all bilateral meetings that took place during the cycle. 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 is governed by the highest possible standards of data integrity, including sound data-gathering processes, robust data safeguards, and clear approval protocols. As recommended by the Insight Note issued on June 29, 2022, by Group Internal Audit (GIA) (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 conducted through an electronic workflow to track progress and maintain an audit trail, where executive roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and documented. 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. In case of any changes to the data or analysis, approvals must be obtained again before publication.

In addition, B-READY will also rely on transparency and replicability to build trust in its data and report, as mentioned 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 for B-READY in Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24).

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 provides the rules related to the B-READY Team's interactions with Expert Contributors, Stakeholders, and World Bank Group (WBG) colleagues, whether during missions related to the B-READY project or otherwise.

3.1 Data Collection

The data for the B-READY report are collected 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. Firm surveys focus on interviewing a representative sample of formal firms. 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 10 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 (Appendix G): digital adoption, environmental sustainability, and gender. Each topic is based on three pillars: regulatory framework, public services, and efficiency. Expert Contributors consultations are used to collect data for 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 Survey (ES) is the source of B-READY firm-level survey 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 Policy on Personal Data Privacy.

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 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.

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 WBES Manual and Guide. 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 (see 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, including for rare events, such as firm entry and exit, that do not occur widely or regularly in a firm's life cycle.

B-READY also collects data from relevant public sector Expert Contributors. This data is not published or assessed but serve 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. Indeed, Credit Registries are considered as core Expert Contributors and their responses are evaluated and published.

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 Contributor consultations are conducted annually. Each Topic Team is responsible for selecting and managing their network of Expert Contributors and collecting the data. 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 completed fully.

Once the B-READY team determines that the full topic questionnaire is completed, the internal data validation process begins. During this process, the Analyst drafts follow-up comments as needed and alerts the Topic Team Leader (TTL) about questions that need further clarification. After the TTL's review, the Supervisor provides final clearance. The TTL then sends the topic questionnaire back to the Expert Contributors with a request to provide additional clarification or information. This phase is concluded when the TTL approves a topic questionnaire submitted or resubmitted from an Expert Contributor. Only Expert Contributors may change the responses they provided (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 (with the exception of 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 completed by multiple Expert Contributors in the same firm 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 serve 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. Indeed, Credit Registries are considered as core Expert Contributors and their responses are evaluated and published.

B-READY Team members must obtain prior approval from their TTL to engage with new public and private sector Expert Contributors.

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 specific Expert Contributors who meet all the requirements and assess their expertise (Section 3.1.7);
- Administers a screener questionnaire (Section 3.1.8); and
- Selects the final private sector Expert Contributors to whom the topic questionnaires will be sent (Section 3.1.9).

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 3.1.10).

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 toward 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 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 (3) 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 five 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.

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[1] 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 incorporated at least 10 companies of diverse types (including both local and foreign companies) and of varied sizes per year for the past 3 years in the relevant 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 relevant economy.
Building Permitting	Architects Engineers Lawyers	- Construction law - Infrastructure - Urban law - Zoning law	Have obtained at least 3 permits related to commercial construction per year for the past 3 years in the relevant 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) per year for the past 3 years in the relevant 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 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant 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 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant 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 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant economy.
Labor			
Labor	Lawyers	- Labor law - Labor law enforcement - Labor litigation - Social Security law	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant 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)	*Expert Contributors effectively undertaking customer due diligence:* Have conducted at least 100 customer verifications per year for the past 3 years in the relevant economy. *All Expert Contributors:* Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant economy.
Secured Transactions and Collateral Registries	Lawyers	- Banking law - Commercial lending - Financial law - Secured transactions law	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant economy.
e-payments	Commercial banks Lawyers Payment service providers	- Banking law - Electronic payments law - Financial law - Payment services and systems	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant economy.
Credit Bureaus and Registries[a]	Credit bureaus	- Gathering and reporting credit information data of customers (companies and individuals) - Information management and analysis	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant economy.
	Public sector External Contributors: Credit bureaus and registries		
Sustainable Finance	Lawyers Sustainable finance consultants	- Green bonds - Green financing - Sustainable finance regulations and principles - Sustainable lending	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant economy.

International Trade			

Quality of Regulations for International Trade	Lawyers
	Trade economists
	Trade consultants
	Trade managers
		- Digital commerce law
		  ▪ Consumer protection
		  ▪ Cross-border electronic payments and data flows
		  ▪ Cybersecurity
		  ▪ Data protection and privacy
		  ▪ De minimis rules/thresholds
		  ▪ Digital advertising copyrights
		  ▪ Digital trade policy (in goods and services)
		  ▪ Electronic documentation and signatures
		  ▪ International taxation measures
		- International trade in goods (non-tariff measures, trade agreements, World Trade Organization [WTO] commitments) and/or trade in services and/or digital trade, and/or sustainable trade
		- International trade law (including agreements and framework of the WTO and World Customs Organization)
		- Online sales bans
			Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant economy.

Quality of Public Services for the Facilitation of International Trade	Clearing agents Customs brokers Freight forwarders Lawyers Shipping lines Trade consultants Trade economists	- Documentary requirements for exporting, importing, or transiting goods - International trade in goods (nontariff measures, trade agreements, WTO commitments) and/or trade in services and/or digital trade, and/or sustainable trade - International trade law (including agreements and framework of the WTO and World Customs Organization) - Logistics - Procedures and requirements for export, import, or transit of goods	*Custom brokers:* Have conducted at least an annual average of 50 transactions in the last 3 years in the relevant economy. *All Expert Contributors:* Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant 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 relevant economy.
Dispute Resolution			
Dispute Resolution	Lawyers	- Commercial arbitration - Commercial litigation - Commercial mediation - Environmental law - International dispute resolution.	Have 3 years of relevant experience in the relevant economy.
Market Competition			
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 administrative level or judicial) in the relevant 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 relevant 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 in the previous year in the relevant economy.
Business Insolvency			
Business Insolvency	Lawyers	- Corporate insolvency law - Corporate insolvency proceedings (liquidation and reorganization) - UNCITRAL Legislative Guide on Insolvency Law - World Bank Principles for Effective Insolvency and Creditor/Debtor Regimes	Have completed at least 2 insolvency related cases in the previous 2 years in the relevant economy.

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, TTLs will train their Topic Team members on how to assess expertise specific to the topic.

When searching for private sector Expert Contributors, a search can be done in a 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.

3.1.8 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 questionnaire

3.1.9 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 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 (Appendix C) and a link to the topic questionnaire they agreed to complete with a specific deadline.

3.1.10 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.

The Topic Team then identifies a replacement. The Team can follow the steps in Sections 3.1.6, 3.1.7, and 3.1.8 or chose an expert from the list of Remaining Prospective Expert Contributor detailed in Section 3.1.9. The replacement Expert Contributor will be contacted during the same data collection cycle to provide the necessary information.

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 will be 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 will inform the Topic Supervisor, Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager, and B-READY–EBC focal point of issues with the quality of the data. The Team will also decide whether to remove all Expert Contributors who did not provide quality data from future cycles. In addition, the Team may decide to discard the information provided by these Expert Contributors when assessing the data. B-READY Team members are encouraged to report instances where Expert Contributors did not provide quality data and are thanked for their diligence in assessing the quality of the data.

3.1.11 Expert Contributors Database, Privacy Protections, Publication of Data
B-READY maintains a comprehensive database of thousands of Expert Contributors in CRM. Access to CRM is restricted to the B-READY Team only. Expert Contributors may also grant consent to the B-READY Team to share their contact information with the Women, Business and the Law (WBL) and B-Ready Subnational (DECSN) Teams. 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 Policy on Personal Data Privacy.

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) directly used in the score calculation are published on the B-READY website. The comments sections 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 Policy on Personal Data Privacy.

The raw data (and when applicable supporting legal bases) provided by the public sector Expert Contributors are published on the B-READY website. The comments sections not directly used in the score calculation are not published on the B-READY website. Personal identification

information of the public sector Expert Contributors remains confidential, and only the name of the public sector agency/agencies providing the raw data is published. The anonymized raw data are published in compliance with the [WBG Policy on Personal Data Privacy.](#)

3.1.12 Completion of Questionnaires by Expert Contributors
The B-READY Team directly invites selected private sector Expert Contributors and Credit Registries to complete topic questionnaires related to their areas of expertise. Expert Contributors have about three weeks to provide a written response to the topic questionnaires. If Expert Contributors not formally recruited by the B-READY Team provide responses to one or more topic questionnaires, the Team will not consider the information provided in its assessment of the data. The B-READY Team also invites Executive Directors to share with governments they represent links to complete topic questionnaires.

3.1.13 Number of Expert Contributors per Topic per Economy and Renumeration
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 2 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. There is no minimum number of pro bono responses that a Topic Team must obtain. 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 informs the DECBE Manager 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, Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) Director and the B-READY–Ethics and Business Conduct (EBC) focal points (Section 2.2) discuss the exceptions that can be granted for each economy based on its unique circumstances and 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 the Topic Team has taken to collect the data. The results of the discussion 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.

There is no minimum number of topic questionnaires from public sector Expert Contributors that must be collected to consider a topic as 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 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 B-READY Team and Expert Contributors

To ensure accurate and impartial responses, the B-READY Team collects information directly from private sector Expert Contributors and Credit Registries without intermediation by 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. All communication regarding the data is conducted strictly 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 an 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 will not be 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 feel 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 will be 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 and World Bank staff 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.

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 a 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 of the meeting are taken, and the Topic Supervisor emails the minutes to the DECBE Manager, explaining the situation and seeking final approval on the proposed decision. Once the approval/rejection of the DECBE Manager is obtained via email, the correspondence is saved in the shared drive in the relevant topic folder for that economy. All undue interferences must be discussed during the debriefs 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 3.1.11, access to CRM is restricted to the B-READY Team, the Women, Business and the Law (WBL) Team, and the B-READY Subnational (DECSN) Team. However, vendors in charge of paying Expert Contributors (as described in Section 3.4 below) will also be provided with a list of Expert Contributors to be remunerated. The information on the Expert Contributors to be provided to the vendor includes their first name, last name, firm name, position, and contact details (including address, email, phone). The vendor must keep the Expert

Contributors' information confidential. The vendor will contact the Expert Contributors directly to obtain all banking information or other information on the means of payment for their services. 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 [WBG Policy on Personal Data Privacy.](#)

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 pilot year, 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 pilot year 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 and Team Members have conducted the steps detailed in Section 3.3.3 below to ensure that they have now become the (or one of the) manager(s) of the Expert Contributor's page, these Team Members must update all information about the Expert Contributor. Generally, Team Members of the topic(s) that each Expert Contributor contribute to are responsible for keeping all the above listed information current in their CRM profile page.

3.3.2 Reasons to Contact Expert Contributors
The B-READY Team Members may contact Expert Contributors for a limited set of administrative reasons:
- To request that they complete a screener questionnaire (Section 3.1.8);
- If needed, to remind them to complete the online screener questionnaire;
- 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; and
- 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 exported from CRM and uploaded to the survey software (some deviation from this procedure may occur during the first pilot year). 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 pilot year, Topic Teams may only contact Expert Contributors to their own topic as marked in CRM. 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 can contact the Expert Contributor only if:
- The Expert Contributor has a topic questionnaire mapped for their own topic in the current B-READY cycle. If the Expert Contributor has another topic questionnaire mapped to them or contributes to a project other than the B-READY project, then the B-READY Team Member cannot contact this Expert Contributor unless the Contributor Manager expressly approves it.
- The Expert Contributor is not marked as Centralized or Global on their profile page. Centralized Expert Contributors are sent four or more topic questionnaires and are contacted by the Contributor Manager. Global Contributors have a coordinator within their firm, and only a designated B-READY Team member coordinates their input.

If an Expert Contributor may be contacted, and they have two or three topic questionnaires mapped to them in the current B-READY cycle, Topic Teams coordinate about contacting the Expert Contributor. The Contributor Manager will contact the Expert Contributor, informing them in advance that they will be contacted by several teams (how many and which topics).

If an Expert Contributor has a profile page in CRM but does not have a topic questionnaire mapped to them in the current B-READY cycle, then B-READY Team Members cannot contact them unless the Contributor Manager expressly approves it.

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 for each Expert Contributor in CRM they contact. During the first pilot year, 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 3.1.10).

3.3.5 CRM Tracking Process
The Contributor Manager sends a weekly CRM tracking table during the data collection cycle to help the B-READY Team visualize the number of completed topic questionnaires per topic 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). Progress can also be tracked through the status report in the survey software, indicating the total number of topic questionnaires sent and the total completed, as well as details on approvals and rejections.

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 can choose their preferred method of contribution in the screener questionnaire sent to them at the beginning of the Expert Contributors selection process (Section 3.1.8). The B-READY Team does not pay Expert Contributors directly; rather, specific vendors make the payments, as described in Section 3.5.

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 will get 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). To the extent possible, payment is made in US dollars. In those economies where banking systems make it complicated to provide US dollar payments, the equivalent of US$400 is calculated as of the data collection closing date. The payment is made via wire transfer or by check.

The B-READY Team pays Expert Contributors only after the data collection cycle is closed. Once the data are collected for all selected economies and all necessary follow-ups are concluded during the data validation phase, thus enabling the Team to finalize the data, 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 will take their initial response into account.

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 type of firms hired by the WBES Team to conduct firm-level surveys in each B-READY economy. As mentioned, B-READY Expert Contributors' payment will be conducted 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 will conduct firm surveys and complete 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 Survey 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 eConsultant2, 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 eConsultant2. 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 SAP database only after reaching an agreement on key project milestones, the overall budget, and payment schedule and deliverables.

3.6 B-READY Mission Procedures

3.6.1   Purpose

When necessary, DECBE undertakes travel missions in the economies assessed by the B-READY report to (1) improve the quality of the Expert Contributor pool and the data collected; (2) conduct methodology workshops; and (3) disseminate the report. The B-READY Team does not collect or discuss data, and does not verify reforms during travel missions. During every cycle, the B-READY Team selects a specific number of economies to travel to (for example, economies with low internet penetration rates or with 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 and assesses their expertise and may meet with relevant public service providers and institutions. The list of private sector Expert Contributors and governmental agencies varies depending on each economy and each cycle. As such, 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. The DECBE Team abides by all applicable World Bank operational travel procedures.

3.6.2   Economy Selection Criteria

Topic Teams identify the economies where travel missions will be most beneficial. Within the allocated budget, the economies the DECBE Team visit are selected according to the following criteria: limited pool of identified eligible Expert Contributors and data gaps.

The B-READY Team collects the expressions of interest in missions and proceeds to select the economies to travel to, taking into account:
- The quality of the data collected in an economy; and
- Whether the B-READY Team traveled to this economy recently.

Then, the DECIG Director and DECBE Manager select the economies where the B-READY Team will travel to in that 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 missions for the current data collection cycle. Each mission

usually visits two economies. The DECBE Manager emails the B-READY Team asking for expressions of interest to participate in those missions. The DECBE Manager then selects the travel Team members, based on their expressions of interest, language skills, years of experience, previous mission experience, the topics they are assigned to, and the specificities of the mission.

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

There may be several missions taking place simultaneously, but one member of each Topic Team must always be available at WBG headquarters to ensure the day-to-day needs of the topics are met.

3.6.4   Rules of Engagement with CMUs before the Mission

The local CMU must clear the mission and its Team members. The Travel Team then consults with the local CMU to prepare for the mission. This consultation covers, among other topics, the dynamics of the mission, 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 be in the form of 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 providing such assistance 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 Mission

The Travel Team checks the Country Office Home Page in the intranet or calls the CMU for any economy-specific travel requirements before the start of the mission. Should there be any specific requests or requirements, the Travel Team relays them to the DECBE Manager. The Travel Team prepares the mission memorandum and any economy-specific documents to be sent to the local CMUs in advance of the mission.

The Travel Team shares with the Administrative and Client Support (ACS) Team the names of staff in the Country Office, CMU, and Global Practice (GP) 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.

The ACS Team sends the SMO to all relevant parties. The SMO is sent with the following "To", "Cc" and "Bcc" lists:
- To: Country Director (CD) or Country Manager (CM) and IFC Regional Director (or IFC CM);
- Cc: DECIG Director, DECBE Manager, Travel Team Supervisor, Travel Team, WB Country Manager or applicable Office Head (e.g., Resident Representative), IFC Country Manager or applicable Office Head (e.g., Resident Representative)[1], WB Operations Manager, WB Cluster Program Leader (for example, EFI – Equitable Growth, Finance and Institutions,

Gender), WB Cluster Regional Director, WB Global Practice Manager (for example, MTI – Macroeconmics, Trade and Investment, FCI – Finance, Competition and Innovation), Country Office counterparts, other WBG colleagues holding a stake in the mission
- BCC: DECIG All.

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 for review/clearance at least two weeks before the mission, as well as any economy-specific documents that may be necessary (for example, the mission announcement letter 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 and particularly for 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 mission country. The TF contains the list of Expert Contributors that the Travel Team is planning to schedule meetings with, 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 make an informed judgment on the level of expertise of the Expert Contributors. 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, of 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 Mission

3.6.7.1 Introductory Meeting
At the beginning of the mission, the Travel Team members may meet with the CMU to discuss the main purpose of the mission and the public agencies with which the Team has scheduled meetings, if any. The World Bank staff in charge of private sector development reforms, 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 (Section 3.7.2).

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 take part in this meeting. The Team does not share any information regarding the results of the mission, the data collected if any, or the identity of the Expert Contributors contacted.

3.6.8 Rules of Engagement with Public Authorities during Mission

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 high-level government officials (a minister, for example) or the team in charge of the reform committee of the economy. Such meetings aim to disseminate the methodology and findings from the latest published B-READY report. The Travel Team does not discuss any information related to Expert Contributors.

The Travel Team may also meet with public agencies involved in each topic where information is collected (for example, the business registry, land registry, municipality, customs administration, tax authority, tribunal, procurement agency, and so on), depending on the request of the Topic Team, local governments, and/or CMUs. Public sector meetings are preferably scheduled at the end of the mission. These meetings should be limited to discussions of methodology and the relevant datapoints.

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 (see [Staff Rule 3.02](#) paragraph 3.10 on honoraria for activities carried out in official capacity).

3.6.10 Rules of Engagement with Private Sector Expert Contributors during Mission

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 and in such a way as 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 the Mission

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/GP 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, with the exception of the relevant Executive Director, who, as the representative of the government within the World Bank, is excluded from the carbon copy list.

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 on 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.

3.7 Other Travel Engagements

3.7.1 Forum or Workshop Mission

In addition to the travel missions detailed in Section 3.6 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.

The Travel Team must prepare a Statement of Mission Objectives (SMO) following the guidelines indicated in Section 3.6.6, as a travel request to be submitted in the WBG's travel system. These must be approved before any travel can take place.

The organizing institution usually sends an electronic round-trip ticket to the Team member and covers lodging expenses, following the same conditions and parameters listed in the [WBG Travel Policy](). However, often the organizing institution proposes to reimburse the costs after the event has taken place. In such a case, the organizing institution and the World Bank must sign a reimbursement agreement after agreeing upon the amount and the costs to be covered. The Travel Team provides the name and contact details of the head of the organizing institution to the ACS Team, which then prepares the agreement, receives clearance from the budget officer, and sends it to the organizing institution with instructions for it to be copied onto their letterhead. The head of the organizing institution signs the agreement addressed to the DECBE Manager, who countersigns it upon receipt. The Team members may travel only after the organizing institution has signed the agreement.

When they have returned from the mission, a Team member collects the receipts of the authorized expenses along with the boarding passes and the air ticket receipt. The Team member then submits these documents to the ACS Team, which will arrange for the request for reimbursement to be signed by the DECBE Manager and sent to the organizing institution, along with the countersigned agreement. In any case, the participation of the B-READY Team members should comply with World Bank Group's travel policy.

The Travel Team 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 will be 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.

The Travel Team member also prepares a BTOR, which must provide background information about the event, details about the different speakers and institutions invited, and any agreed-upon action plans.

3.7.2 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 in Section 3.6 and 3.7.1 above. They could also be stand-alone missions. The B-READY Team, requesting CMU, or GP and/or the inviting economy will bear 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 Sections 3.6 and 3.7.

3.7.3 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/GP 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.

Chapter 4 – ENGAGEMENT WITH GOVERNMENTS

This chapter contains the guiding principles and protocols related to the B-READY Team's engagement with governments. The objective is to promote acceptance, understanding, dissemination, and wide use of the B-READY data and report, in a way that is transparent, open, informative, and efficient.

4.1 Overview and Principles

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 settings that may involve other parties, such as during methodology workshops, webinars, and launch events. 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 obtaining prior approval from the B-READY Management Team. All such interactions follow strict rules, procedures, and timelines, as described in this chapter.

Figure 4.1. Overview of yearly interactions per economy
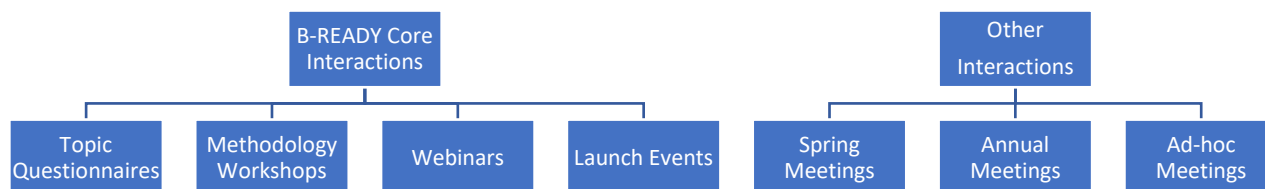
4.2 B-READY Core Interactions

4.2.1 Completion of Topic Questionnaires

During each B-READY cycle, governments are invited to complete all topic questionnaires using a web-based tool. Information submitted to the B-READY Team in any other format will not be taken into consideration. Governments have six weeks from the invitation date to submit their responses. The Team will not consider responses submitted after this deadline.

4.2.2 Methodology Workshops

The B-READY Team organizes a yearly 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. The B-READY Team organizes these workshops directly and publishes the schedule of workshops on the B-READY website about the time the B-READY report is published. Economy-specific discussions about data are outside the scope of these workshops.

During the B-READY piloting phase, the B-READY Team also organizes informational workshops aimed at disseminating the B-READY methodology and promoting the use of the B-READY data and report for policy reform. The first series of such workshops takes place in May 2023. More details on workshops are available in Section 7.2.

4.2.3 Webinars

After the methodology workshops are concluded, the B-READY Team organizes and conducts a series of webinars to provide responses to additional questions that governments may have. These are also open forums that multiple governments can attend. No methodology presentations are conducted during these webinars. The schedule of the webinars is published on the B-READY website after the workshops have concluded. Economy-specific discussions about data are outside the scope of these webinars.

4.2.4 Launch Events

Every year following the publication of the B-READY report, the B-READY Team organizes economy-specific, regional, and/or global launch events to present the results of the report. The B-READY Management Team decides upon these events in advance and they change on a yearly basis. Governments are invited to attend them. The schedule of these events is published on the B-READY website around the time the report is published. More details on the dissemination strategy are available in Section 7.1.

4.3 Other Interactions

4.3.1 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.

4.3.2 General Communication with the Board of Executive Directors

The Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager prepares written communication to be sent via email to the Board of Executive Directors through the Corporate Secretariat announcing the start of data collection. The DECIG Director clears this email and sends it to DECVP for final decision. This communication includes information about cycle milestones, all the rules for government interactions, and any additional relevant updates. It is sent or blind copied to the following officers/units in the Bank: Executive Directors and their Alternates; Senior Advisors and Advisors to the Executive Directors; support staff of the Executive Directors; Vice President and World Bank Group Corporate Secretary; Corporate Secretariat (CORPSEC); Corporate Secretariat Vice Presidency (SECVP); Policy and Operations Department of the Corporate Secretariat (SECPO); Managing Director and Chief Administrative Officer; Managing Director, World Bank Group Chief Financial Officer; World Bank Managing Director of Operations; Managing Director of Development Policy and Partnerships; IFC's Managing Director and Executive Vice President; Managing Director and WBG Chief Administrative Officer (MDCAO); Chief Financial Officer Front Office (CFOFO); the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Chief Executive Officer (CEO); IFC CEO's Front Office; and Development Economics Front Office (DECFO). The same email is sent to relevant counterparts within the WBG. Approximately one week 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.

4.3.3 Communication with WBG Colleagues

The B-READY Team may also invite WBG colleagues to fill out B-READY topic questionnaires during the B-READY data collection cycle. Such questionnaires can be used for data validation purposes only as detailed in Appendix D. Colleagues must submit their responses within six weeks from the time they receive the invitation from the B-READY team. The B-READY Team does not publish information shared by WBG colleagues in their B-READY topic questionnaires.

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.

Chapter 5 – Data Management and Review

The ten B-READY topics have one or more topic questionnaires and screener questionnaires depending on each topic. 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 Contributor 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 final versions that will be implemented. The topic questionnaires can be reviewed yearly, and if changes are introduced during this review, the topic questionnaire undergoes peer review and 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 TTL clears the final draft of the topic questionnaires and sends it the Topic Supervisor, who recommends appropriate changes and who ensures harmonization across different Topic Teams. Following the Topic Supervisor's approval, the TTL consults with subject matter experts—both within and outside of the World Bank Group—and decides whether to include their feedback. Once the topic questionnaire is updated, the TTL clears it with the Topic Supervisor, and finally with the Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager. 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 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 on 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 function.

Once testing is complete, the topic questionnaire is professionally translated on the survey software for all languages to be used, which may differ between topics depending on business need and languages spoken by the Topic Team members. 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.

Topic Teams then email the topic questionnaire to the approved set of Expert Contributors, who are expected to respond comprehensively to all questions posed (Section 5.1.6).

5.1.4   Screener Questionnaire
The screener questionnaire is a standard questionnaire that will be 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 3.1.8). While these screener questionnaires are based on the standard questionnaire, they 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 responding Expert Contributors have been identified through the screener questionnaire, Topic Teams assign them the respective topic questionnaires in CRM (as detailed in Section 3.3). Some delay in this process may occur during the first pilot year.

5.1.6   Distribution of the Topic Questionnaires
Topics Teams prepare to distribute the topic questionnaires by setting up the email texts in different languages in the survey software distribution and uploading the list of targeted Expert Contributors. 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 the designated distribution feature.

5.1.7   Reminders
Reminders are sent automatically through the survey software's distribution function. Each Topic Team decides in which intervals to send the reminders and sets this up at the beginning of the distribution for each topic questionnaire. The reminders can be sent based on predetermined intervals, ranging from one day to a maximum of two weeks.

5.1.8 Support
For further support on the questionnaire generation process, Topic Teams can reach out to the Questionnaire Generation 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 three 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' validated and reviewed answers from the survey software to the storage database. The data extraction will be automated, and raw data will be saved with multiple backups before the data are cleaned and the process of 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. They must respond to all questions. If any responses are missing, the topic questionnaire is sent back to the Expert Contributor for full completion. When the Topic Team has received the minimum number of fully completed topic questionnaires per economy, the Team must first ensure that there are no pending active questionnaires that the Team may still receive within the deadline. Then, the data validation phase begins.

Certain situations may trigger the data validation process to start. These include: (1) a divergence in the responses of various private sector Expert Contributors; (2) a divergence between the responses of private sector Expert Contributors r and governments and/or WBG colleagues submitted with hard evidence; (3) extreme outliers for numerical and/or experience-based questions; and (4) a divergence from the last cycle's published response. In these cases, Topic Team members conduct an initial review of the responses that triggered the data validation process, draft follow-up comments as needed, and flag the questions that need further clarification for the TTL to review. After the TTL's review, the Topic Supervisor provides final clearance. The TTL then sends the topic questionnaire back to the Expert Contributors with a request to provide additional clarification or information. This phase is concluded when the TTL approves a topic questionnaire submitted or resubmitted from an Expert Contributor.

5.2.4 Process for Questionnaire Review
Every topic questionnaire for every economy is subject to a two-layer review process: a mandatory review by the TTL (level 1), and a second review by the Topic Supervisor (level 2) on an as-needed basis. The review, along with comments at each level (when applicable), are recorded at the topic questionnaire level for each topic in the survey software. During the level 1 review, Cross-cutting Theme Leaders participate in the process of data validation and review, together with TTLs, to

examine data trends and patterns on gender, environmental sustainability, and digital adoption (Appendix G). If a Topic Team member flags an economy with comments, the TTL and the Cross-cutting Theme Leader conduct a thorough review of the assessment. Then the Topic Supervisor conducts the final review of the economy and authorizes sending the topic questionnaire back to the Expert Contributor with useful and succinct information to allow them to confirm or revise the responses. It is then the prerogative of the Expert Contributors to update or maintain their responses, with the option to provide an explanation for their decision. Only one round of such 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 resubmits the topic questionnaire, the TTL and Topic Supervisor do a final check of the data. Once all topic questionnaires for all economies are finalized, the extraction process begins, as described in Section 5.1.9.

5.2.5   Questionnaire Review Standards
Each layer of data review must consider the following criteria:
- How the topic's methodology is applied
- Whether the topic questionnaires are fully completed
- Practical tools to identify invalid topic questionnaires or biased responses
- Whether the methodology and data validation have been applied consistently across economies during topic questionnaire review.

Topic questionnaire review and data validation should consider information from completed topic questionnaires by other Expert Contributors, and by governments and public sector Expert Contributors, as well as any additional information provided by the governments (e.g., by providing legal basis), and by colleagues from the World Bank Group when applicable.

5.2.6   TTL Responsibilities during Data Review
The TTL leads a team of Analysts for a topic. The TTL validates the topic questionnaire for all economies in the relevant topic, reviews the topic questionnaires validated by the Analysts of the topic, 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 (2) economies where the minimum required number of topic questionnaires were not received.

5.2.7   Topic Supervisor Responsibilities
The Topic Supervisor oversees reviewing the validated topic questionnaires and data for a set of topics, as flagged by the TTLs. The Topic Supervisor performs the second and final layer of review of the validated topic questionnaires for economies flagged by the TTLs in their topics via the survey software.

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. 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. 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 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. The third point of storage is an external hard drive that saves the current year's raw data at the end of data collection, serving as an offline backup of the data collected.

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 has different responsibilities, the access permissions are promptly removed 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 programing 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 as 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, B-READY–EBC focal points, 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 details of such interferences must be discussed during the debrief meeting, 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 indicators and topics data for each assessed economy. The B-READY Team also shares a link to the disaggregated and anonymized raw data as provided by B-READY Expert Contributors, as well as to the data replication files used by the B-READY Team to aggregate the raw data at the economy level. 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 and Topic Teams, who confirm that the content and data used for the draft of the report as well as economy examples are accurate and match their BWR data in the survey software.
- The Production Function Leader sends an email to the Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager to seek recommendation 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.
- The DECBE Manager recommends the BWR version of the report, which is circulated to the DECBE Function Leaders.

6.1.1.2 Economy Tables (appendix of the draft report)

- 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 report 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.
- Topic Supervisors send an email containing the BWR version of the economy tables to the DECBE Manager, copying the Production Function Leader, to seek recommendation of the data, confirm that all economies for all topics have met the B-READY approval standards, and that all Topic Teams have confirmed the economy tables.
- The DECBE Manager recommends the BWR version of the economy tables.

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 economy tables and submits them to the Director of the Development Economics Global Indicators Group (DECIG) for concurrence for BWR circulation.
- The DECIG Director concurs the BWR report and economy tables 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 economy tables (as well as the disaggregated raw data and replication files) 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 economy tables (as well as the link to disaggregated raw data and replication files) within the WBG by email, which includes:

- The Sharepoint link to the embargoed report and economy tables.
- The Sharepoint link to disaggregated raw data and replication files.
- Explanation of the scope of BWR comments (see details in section 6.1.5 below) and invitation to provide them by a designated deadline, which will be approximately two weeks after the circulation of the email.
- Invitation to participate in the BWR meeting, which will occur approximately three weeks after the circulation of the email.

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.

The B-READY Team shares a link to the disaggregated raw data as provided by the Expert Contributors as well as to the data replication files used by the B-READY Team to aggregate the raw data at the economy level. While the raw data provided by Expert Contributors are not susceptible to any change, the B-READY Team welcomes comments on the data replication files to ensure that formulas and data aggregations are free of errors. The B-READY economy-level data derived from firm-level Enterprise Survey data are also part of the BWR materials. Their governance is detailed in the WBES Manual and Guide.

6.1.6   Preparing for the BWR Meeting

As specified in the BWR email sent by the Chief Economist to WBG colleagues, BWR comments are expected within two weeks of the receipt of the email, and the BWR meeting is expected within three weeks of the receipt of the email. Therefore, the B-READY Team has one week to respond to BWR comments and prepare for the BWR meeting:

- 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 a compilation of verbatim comments, followed by the B-READY Team's responses. The B-READY Team's responses are prepared by the Chapter Leader, Topic Teams, and Data Analysis Function Leaders, as applicable, and are recommended by the DECBE Manager and concurred by the DECIG Director.
- The DECBE ACS Team archives emails received with BWR comments in Sharepoint.

6.2 Protocol for Modifications Following the Bank-wide Review

Modifications following the BWR are subject to specific protocols and limitations described below.

6.2.1   Types of Modifications

Modifications following the BWR include revisions to the draft report, economy tables, and correction of mistakes in the data replication files. 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 replication files.

6.2.2   Report Updates

Modifications can be derived from BWR comments as well as to errors identified internally by the B-READY Team. Modifications derived from BWR are included in the summary of comments circulated to the same BWR distribution lists used before the BWR meeting.

All modifications 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 the revised version of the report, which includes all modifications.

6.2.3   Updates in Economy Tables linked to Mistakes in Data Replication 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 replication files – as the B-READY Team cannot and does not have any means to change or override the final responses provided by Expert Contributors. 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. The DECBE Manager recommends and the DECIG Director concurs the revised version of the economy tables which includes all modifications. A document containing all such modifications and their rationale will be distributed with the embargoed final report to the Council of Chief Economists and other WBG Senior Management two weeks prior to before the publication of the report.

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 a professional designer and sends the PDF layout version of each chapter to the respective authors, who review and clear the PDF layout matching the final Word chapter.
- Following the authors' review and clearance, the Production Function Team sends the PDF layout chapters to WBG Publications, which prepares the final eBook of the report (final report) in PDF layout and sends it to the Production Function Team.
- The Production Function Team send an email to the DECBE Manager, copying the Topic Supervisors, Topic Team Leaders (TTLs), and Chapter Leaders, to seek recommendation on the final report, confirming that all Topic Teams have confirmed that the PDF layout version of the economy tables match the approved underlying data file.
- The DECBE Manager recommends and submits the final report to the DECIG Director for written concurrence for publication, with a copy to Topic Supervisors and the Production Function Leader.
- The DECIG Director, by email, concurs the final report for publication.
- Upon written request of the DECIG Director, the WBG Chief Economist 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 DECIG Director sends the embargoed final report to the Chief Economist.
- 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 one week before publication.
- If a paper copy of the final report is required, the Production Function Leader sends the final files to the WBG Publications print coordinator for printing.

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 in 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 AEM hands-on training 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, 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 for 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 and the historical 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. Their recommendation and concurrence are required within a set timeline.

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 anonymized firm-level responses, (3) the replication files to compute the B-READY scores, and (4) 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 and 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 start working 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 associated with each publication. Finally, the B-READY Communication Team reviews these publications and provides clearance for their use.

On the day each report is launched, ECR starts the social media campaign. The official World Bank Group Twitter and Instagram accounts are used for the campaign. The B-READY project does not have its own account on social media. 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, regional and country launch events to present the results of the B-READY reports after each report is launched.

7.2.1   Regional launch events

The B-READY Team aims to organize one event per WBG region (East Asia and Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa) with help from ECR colleagues. High-income OECD economies within those geographic areas are included in regional events. The B-READY Communication Team and ECR coordinate the organization of the event in collaboration with regional ECR teams, including establishing a list of interested economies, list of participants, and preparation of the invitations. Country Management Units (CMUs) are invited to attend all relevant launch events. The Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Administrative and Client Support (ACS) Team is responsible

for reserving all necessary rooms in all WBG locations and setting up Webex connections when required. The B-READY Communication Team is responsible for the supervision of the events.

Regional launch events may be held in-person or virtually. For in-person events, the B-READY Management Team selects the location of the event based on the interest of economies and on a rolling basis. In addition, the DECIG Director sends an email to CMUs and Global Practices (GPs) inviting them to express interest in hosting additional in-person and/or virtual launch events for certain regions in certain economies. If they would like to request the presence of one or more B-READY Team Members, they must make this request after receiving the DECIG Director's email and at least one month before the publication of the report. and. Then, the B-READY Management Team decides whether to participate in such events depending on the B-READY Team's availability. CMUs and GPs oversee hosting such in-person events and are financially responsible for their organization.

Stakeholders, press/media, and professional associations may be invited to attend virtual, and in-person launch events. The B-READY Communication Team drafts the invitation to the events and CMUs oversee sending them to Stakeholders. CMUs, in collaboration with Regional ECR teams, send the invitations to the press. The B-READY Team may contact (or request CMUs to contact) regional and economy professional associations as well as private sector parties to invite them to participate in the events. Invitations to launch events should be sent at least two weeks ahead of the event.

During launch events organized by the B-READY Team, B-READY Management or senior Team members present the results of the report for the region and the main global findings and participate in a question and answer (Q&A) session. These events are scheduled to last a maximum of two hours and are organized in English. B-READY Team members who speak one of the main official World Bank languages of the region may be selected to conduct these events when they are available. If interpretation services are needed during these events, the B-READY Team will not pay for them.

7.2.2   Ad hoc Country Launch Events
CMUs and/or GP may request holding a local launch event during a mission (see Chapter 3, Section 3.6). B-READY Management decides solely about adding one or more launch events to missions 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 experts from the private sector, 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 pays for these events in full.

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.

7.3   Methodology Workshops
The B-READY Team holds annual workshops to present and explain the B-READY methodology related to each topic and the data collection approach. Governments officials, private sector experts, and professional organizations are invited to attend these workshops. They can be held globally and/or regionally. These workshops can be conducted in person or online.

B-READY Management sends the invitations to these workshops by email to WBG colleagues, CMUs, and the Executive Directors (EDs) (through the Corporate Secretariat). These parties, in turn may then send invitations to governments officials, private sector experts, and professional organizations. When each B-READY report is published, the B-READY website is updated with a list of all workshops to be held, with their date, time, and a registration link.

The workshops can take place over a period of several days with a general presentation of the B-READY report and presentation of B-READY topic methodologies. Participants may ask questions related to the presentations. Specific data are not discussed during these workshops. These workshops are generally moderated by a member of the B-READY Communications Team.

7.3.1   Global and Regional Workshops during the First Data Collection Cycle

Global and regional workshops are organized and conducted during the first data collection cycle in the pilot phase, after the questionnaires have been distributed (around April 2023). In the global workshop, Stakeholders, private sector Expert Contributors, and professional organizations are invited to attend from all over the world. The workshop structure consists of (1) a general presentation by the DECBE Manager on the new B-READY project and its development, and (2) a presentation on the methodology of each of the B-READY topics by their respective Topic Team Leaders (TTLs). The workshop is held in English.

A set of regional workshops may be organized to accommodate different languages and time zones. High-income OECD economies are included in regional events based on the economies' location. The workshops are generally held in English, with B-READY Team Members who speak one or more of the languages in that region present when possible. The workshop structure is the same as the global workshop.

7.3.2   Global and Regional Workshops after the First B-READY Report is Published

A global workshop is organized after the first B-READY report is launched (around April 2024). Its structure consists of a more in-depth understanding of (1) the data-gathering processes and safeguards implemented during the first data collection, and (2) the methodology of each of the B-READY topics. The workshop is held in English.

A set of regional workshops may also be held to accommodate different languages and time zones. High-income OECD economies are included in regional events based on the economies' location. The workshops are generally held in English, with B-READY Team Members who speak one or more of the languages in that region present when possible. The workshop structure is the same as the global workshop.

7.3.3   Global Workshops and Recorded Presentations after each B-READY Report is Published

Starting with the publication of the second B-READY report and onward, the B-READY Team records a segment for each B-READY topic explaining its methodology in detail, including the scoring and data collection approach. The Team also records a separate segment to present the report and information that are relevant to all topics. If needed, the recorded presentations are updated to reflect updates to the methodology. These presentations are uploaded on the B-READY website when the B-READY report is published. These presentations are recorded in English and translated to other languages whenever possible.

The B-READY Team organizes a global yearly B-READY workshop to take place after the publication date. In these workshops, the Team intends to only present the adjustments to the B-READY methodology. Interested parties are invited to watch the relevant recorded presentation on the B-READY website before attending the workshop.

7.3.4 Bilateral Workshops

At the request of CMUs or interested Stakeholders, the B-READY Team may decide to hold a bilateral workshop on the B-READY methodology, once the B-READY report has been published.

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) the data collection approach; (2) the parameters used for collecting the data; (3) the topic questionnaires; (4) the definitions of technical terms; and (5) the scoring methodology (including the scoring criteria for every category and indicator, and methods of aggregation). Methodology changes are defined as any changes, updates, edits, additions, and/or deletions done to any of the 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 to coincide with the year the WBES team provides the firm-level data.

8.2 Development of the B-READY Methodology

The B-READY methodology is being 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 (Appendix G)](#). 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 revised 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 an expert consultation process on the update of the World Bank Enterprise Survey ([WBES)](#) program, a key companion product and a provider of inputs on 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.

The B-READY Team will continue the consultation on the methodology through the Bank-wide Review (BWR) process for the publication of the first three B-READY reports, which serve as pilots of the B-READY methodology. The continued consultation allows the Team to receive additional feedback from the rest of the WBG and refine the methodology to further improve subsequent B-READY data and reports. In addition, after the first B-READY pilot, 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.

8.3 Process to IMPROVE the Methodology during the Pilot Phase

As the first three data collection exercises and corresponding reports are used to bring the B-READY methodology to maturity, all methodological updates and refinements resulting from this pilot phase will follow a streamlined approval process. Under such a process, it is the responsibility

of the Topic Team Leader (TTL) to flag and design any required methodological change. The TTL must ensure that thorough economic and topic-specific research has been conducted to justify the change. The TTL should then prepare a briefing note detailing the suggested modifications, removals, or additions, their objectives, the motivation, and all relevant references. The Topic Supervisor and Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager then review the briefing note to ensure that the changes meet the research objectives and standards of the B-READY report. The briefing note is also peer-reviewed by WBG staff who specialize in the thematic area. The briefing note is then shared with the DECIG Director, who decides on whether the suggested methodological change will be implemented. This process is summarized in figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1. Process for all methodology improvements during pilot phase and for all minor changes after the pilot phase

Drafting of the methodology improvement

Review by Topic Supervisor

Review by DECBE Manager

Peer-review by WBG Colleagues

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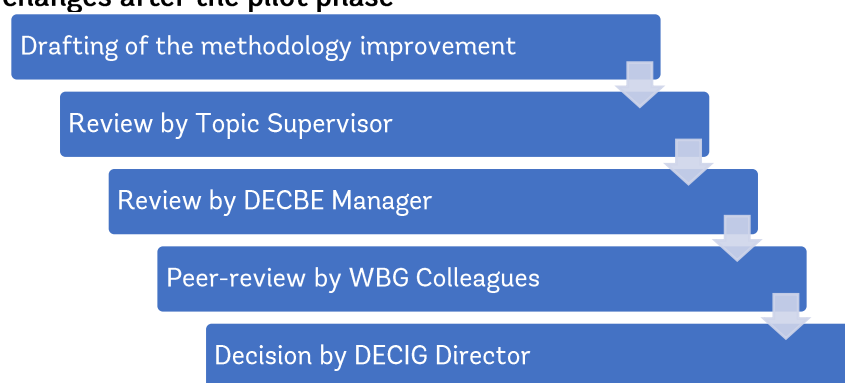
Note: DECIG = Development Economics Global Indicators; WBG = World Bank Group.

8.4 Methodology Changes after the Pilot Phase

After the publication of the third B-READY report, the pilot 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. 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 scores, topic scores, and so on. 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.

Figure 8.2. Process for all major methodology changes after the pilot phase
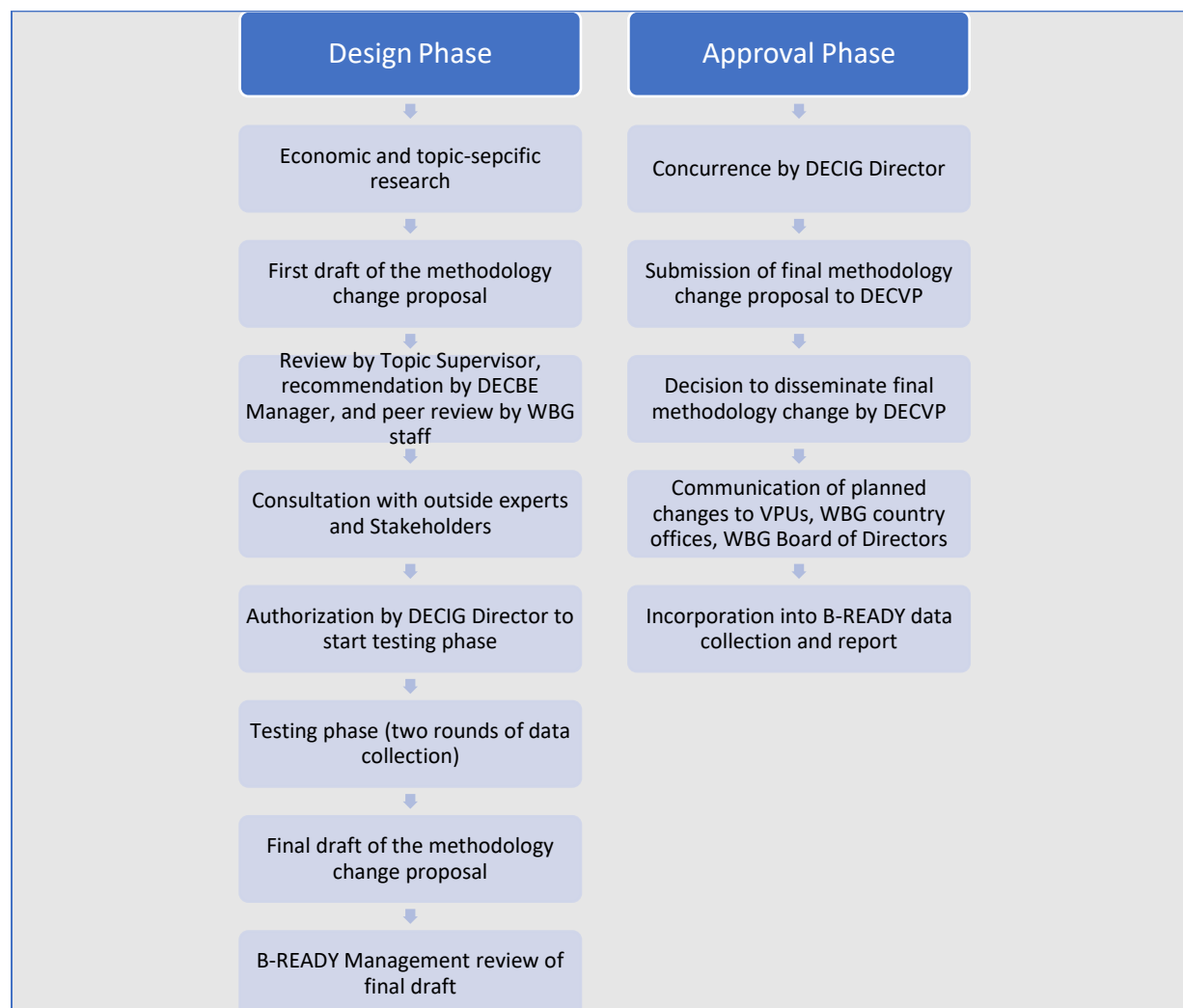
Note: DECBE = Development Economics Business Ready; DECIG = Development Economics Global Indicators Group; DECVP = Development Economics Vice President; VPUs = Vice Presidential Units; WBG = World Bank Group.

8.5 Design Phase

It is the TTL's responsibility to design any major methodological change. At the initial stage, the TTL must ensure that thorough 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 at a minimum:
- 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 piloting phase can start or requests more research before that. During the piloting 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 approval phase.

8.6 Approval Phase
The DECIG Director concurs the methodology change proposal and sends it to the Chief Economist of the World Bank Group. Indeed, 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 four Practice Group Chief Economists of Equitable Growth, Finance and Institutions (EFI), Human Development (HD), Sustainable Development (SD), and Infrastructure (INF); 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 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 pilot phase may take place once every three-year cycle to coincide with the year the WBES team provides the firm-level data. 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 December before the start of data collection for that B-READY report. For example, any changes that will affect the B-READY report launched in April 2029 need to be approved by the end of December 2027. These changes are communicated to WBG Senior Management, the Board of Directors, and country offices by January 15 of the year when the data collection starts for that B-READY report (that is, in January 2028, in the example). 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 proposed methodology changes and related progress updates are published in the annual report until the methodology change is implemented in practice or a decision is made to reject it.

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 can customize B-READY indicators or apply relevant indicators of the B-READY methodology to 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 indicators that vary at the local level (such as the B-READY topics of Business Entry, Business Location, Utility Services, or Dispute Resolution).

DECSN staff provided essential support to the B-READY Team in formulating the B-READY Concept Note. This support will continue, mainly from senior DECSN staff, during the implementation and production of the first edition of the B-READY report.

The DECSN Team is led by a DECSN Manager and composed of specialists with experience managing teams, conducting client-facing projects, and engaging in indicator work. These staff members are assisted by a team of Analysts, Extended-Term Consultants (ETCs), and Short-Term Consultants (STCs), and are supported by the Administrative and Client Support (ACS) Team.

9.2 Coordination between B-READY and DECSN Teams

The Development Economics Business Ready (DECBE) Manager and DECSN Manager meet monthly 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.

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. For each DECSN project, the DECBE Manager appoints a focal point to coordinate further communication between the two teams.

9.4 Contributors

9.4.1   DECSN Contributor Coordinating Firm

A 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. A Contributor Coordinating Firm can be an Expert Contributor itself. DECSN can re-enroll a coordinating firm that they have used in a previous project in an economy. If DECSN needs to hire a new Contributor Coordinating Firm, the DECSN TL contacts the B-READY 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

For cities covered by both the B-READY and DECSN projects (such as the main business cities), DECSN will primarily contact the Expert Contributors who already contribute to the B-READY project and ask them to review and, if relevant, update the responses they gave to the B-READY topic questionnaires. Should DECSN recruit new experts for those cities, they shall be invited to participate in the subsequent B-READY cycle.

For all other cities, before data collection begins, the DECSN TL always checks with the Contributor Manager to see 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.

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 TLs 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.
- The B-READY TTL shares the most recent Internal Trip Report (ITR) with the DECSN Team, when applicable.

9.5.2 Change of Methodology by B-READY

The DECSN Team has access to the Methodology Handbook. If the B-READY Team amends any of its methodology, including the way a data point is coded, the relevant B-READY TTL promptly sends the updated topic methodology note to the DECSN Project Manager, highlighting the changes.

9.6 Data Exchange between DECSN and the B-READY Team

For the sake of consistency across data produced by DECIG units, DECSN uses the data published by B-READY for the cities that fall within the scope of both projects, when possible. If the cutoff date for the data produced by B-READY is more than three months earlier than that of DECSN, or if a significant change in the data is suspected to have happened after the B-READY cutoff date, DECSN contacts the B-READY Expert Contributors to update the data published by B-READY. Similarly, if the cutoff date for the data published by DECSN is no more than three months old, DECBE considers using the data produced by DECSN, provided the methodology is the same.

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.

Chapter 10 – COORDINATION BETWEEN DECBE AND WBES UNITS

World Bank Enterprise Surveys (WBES) is the World Bank Group unit that produces the Enterprise Surveys (ES). The ES are firm-level surveys covering a representative sample of an economy's private sector. They collect data on firm characteristics and firm performance, and on a broad range of business environment topics, including access to finance, corruption, infrastructure, crime, regulations, and competition.

As part of its mandate, WBES collects 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 monthly 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 Team members to be focal points for specific B-READY topics. They guide and advise B-READY Team members on the feasibility of including questions in the survey. The process that follows is used to select the B-READY questions to be included in the ES:
- WBES provides the overall number of questions that can be included in the B-READY module.
- B-READY Topic Teams submit a proposal to the respective WBES focal point suggesting a set of questions to include in the survey. The proposal specifies the reason for suggesting these questions to be included and how they will be used.
- The WBES focal point provides feedback on the feasibility of collecting firm-level responses for the questions proposed by each B-READY Topic Team. In cases where there are reservations with regard to the type or number of questions, the WBES focal point provides possible alternatives.
- 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.

Typically, the ES global questionnaire is reviewed on an annual basis; this is done in coordination with the B-READY Team for the B-READY-specific questions. This process is done in a one-day internal retreat (typically in September), when all relevant inputs (Team suggestions, tabulations of existing questions, and opinions from experts) 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 pilot phase.

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

Figure 10.1. Pilot process for incorporating B-READY questions into the Enterprise Survey

Last quarter of 2022	First quarter of 2023	Second and third quarters of 2023	Last quarter of 2023
Cycle 1 question development: - B-READY Team proposes topic questions - WBES reviews and provides feedback on questions, wording, and placement - Final decision made in a consultative process by DECBE/WBES Managers & DECIG Director	**Cycle 1 ES data collection:** - WBES develops preparatory materials (scripting, translations, codebooks) - WBES conducts trainings and launch missions - Provide initial feedback to B-READY Team and coordinate necessary fixes, generally non-substantive edits - Cycle 1 data collection begins	**Cycle 1 review of questionnaire:** - ES/B-READY consultation & review of questions - Annual ES review will include B-READY questions - WBES (point person per topic) will collate comments from pilots, data collection, external review - Data collection for some surveys will be ongoing; some preliminary data analysis will be underway - Cycle 1 preliminary analysis - Cycle 2 procurement starts	**Cycle 2 question development:** - Review of consolidated comments - Point person from WBES will work with B-READY TTLs to react - Final decision made in a consultative process by DECBE/WBES Managers & DECIG Director - Cycle 1 data collection being finalized - Cycle 1 data analysis - Cycle 2 procurement ongoing

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 Reports

Two months before the publication of the B-READY report, the DECBE Manager and the WBES Manager meet with the B-READY Team and the WBES Team to develop a dissemination strategy covering both products. This includes discussions around launch events where both B-READY and WBES are presented and where outreach can be targeted to specific audiences (such as chambers of commerce, government, 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 ES 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 ES used in B-READY cycle 2 will occur as B-READY cycle 1 is ongoing. 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 ES-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 considered to be for "Official Use Only." B-READY indicators are calculated using these firm-level data. 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 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 pilot data collection start date, the B-READY Team and DECIG Director produced and concurred this B-READY M&G, where all the protocols, safeguards, processes, and resources were 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 this draft B-READY M&G, in Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24), 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 to address challenges experienced while collecting data and preparing the B-READY report. Such flexibility is necessary especially during the pilot 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 Topic Team Leaders (TTLs), relevant Function Team Leaders, and Topic Supervisors in the first instance, followed by a consultation with all B-READY Team members. The final changes are concurred by the DECIG Director.

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.

11.4   Process for Exceptions

If any provisions of the B-READY M&G are deemed impractical or counterproductive, the responsible staff alerts the DECBE Manager. After evaluating the circumstances, the DECBE Manager can ask the DECIG Director to concur an exception to the provisions of the B-READY M&G. The request is submitted in writing and includes the details necessary to make a decision. Emails requesting exceptions and final approval of the exception must be recorded in the existing B-READY M&G shared 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 [Decision Making Tool](#) that helps staff identify options based on the type of issue they require assistance with. IJS also created [A Brief Primer](#) that summarizes available resources. B-READY Team members can take any first step 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.

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 Review 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 [Peer Review Services (PRS)](#) for an independent review within 120 days of the decision, action, or inaction. If B-READY Team members are concerned than 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 help 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 and 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 Mediation Services. 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, Sexual 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 Integrity Vice Presidency (INT). 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 [Accountability and Decision-Making (ADM)](#) framework for the WBG corporate flagship products.

With guidance from GIA, EBC, and LEG, and before the first B-READY pilot 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 B-READY pilot, in Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24), 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 Annual Investment Planning process.

A.10 Mental and physical well-being resources for staff

Workplace concerns can lead to added stress. The Mental Health and Well-Being Unit 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.

- Individual counseling and support. 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 A1. 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. adminreview@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
http://ombudsman

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 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) http://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 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 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.

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). When doing so, it is important to keep in mind that some names may be common in an economy or that there may be many search results for a particular name. Team members must search for variants or nicknames (for example, Richard Demetra, Rich Demetra, Dick Demetra) or with and without a middle name (José Velasquez or José Antonio Velasquez). 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 do not contact experts who contribute to other topics and/or WBG projects, and that they are accurately identified. For example, a person's name on their LinkedIn account, professional email address, personal email address, and resume/CV can all differ. Thus, B-READY Team members must enter all such potential variations in CRM when conducting their research. During the first pilot year, some deviation from this process may occur.

Over the years, DECIG has amassed a database of thousands of experts. B-READY Team members are encouraged to search CRM for the most distinctive part of a firm name and person name (for example, search for "Telemetric" instead of "Telemetric Lawyers and Partners LLC" because in CRM they may be found under "Telemetric Attorneys"). B-READY Team members can also filter CRM search results by economy to help narrow the results.

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 a given 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 general 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 of 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 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 replacement of Expert Contributors.
e. Topic questionnaires with any empty fields are returned to respondents.
f. The online Contributor Relationship Management (CRM) system is used to track the status of the topic questionnaires automatically.
g. Topic questionnaires filled in by governments and WBG experts are treated separately from the private sector ones to provide independent reference points.

D.2 Preparatory data analysis and review
a. Once the minimum 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 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 at least three 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/CMU inputs
   iii. Extreme values (more than two standard deviations away from the mean) for numerical and/or experience-based questions
   iv. Divergence from last cycle's published response (for upcoming reports).
c. Data validation 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/CMU 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), 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/CMU questionnaires.

g. For economies with less than one million inhabitants, where two private sector questionnaires (minimum required) are received, if responses do not match, then Topic Teams must follow up with both Expert Contributors following the steps listed above.

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 Contributors contacts the Team requesting to change their answers after the questionnaire was submitted, 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. If after the follow up the answers still diverge, a median is taken.
    i. Follow-up is done once, when at least three questionnaires have been received for an economy and no "live" questionnaires are pending.
e. The revised data are extracted again from the survey software and imported into the data processing software for the final level of review.
f. Supervisors review datapoints flagged by the Topic Team Leaders.

Appendix E – Timeline

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

The Team acknowledges the challenges the B-READY project and report may face—given the new data collection process to be applied at a large scale, including in challenging environments such as fragile and conflict-affected (FCV) states, and for new indicators—and expects that the first three reports will be used to refine the methodology.

Table E.1. Detailed timeline for the first three editions of the B-READY report

a. B-READY Concept Note	
April 27, 2022	OVP meeting on the B-READY Concept Note.
June 2, 2022	MVP meeting on the revised B-READY Concept Note.
June 6–17, 2022	OVP virtual review of revised B-READY Concept Note.
June 28, 2022	Concept Note submitted to the Board (through Corporate Secretariat).
October 4, 2022	Revised Concept Note submitted to the Board (through Corporate Secretariat).
October 27, 2022	Concept Note discussion with the Board.
October 2022–January 2023	Consultations with the Advisory Group on Indicator Scoring.
	Survey specialist review of topic questionnaires.
b. Implementation preparation	
July 2022–April 2023	Consultation Process with regions, practice groups, IFC, and MIGA.
	Develop communication strategy.
	Test B-READY questions for firm-level surveys.
	Test questions for topic questionnaires in six economies.
	Confirm selection of the economies to be included in the first three editions of the B-READY report.
	Conduct procurement process: Select vendors for firm-level surveys and to administer remuneration to Expert Contributors in about 60 economies.
	Decide sampling frame for firm-level surveys.
	Finalize survey instruments.
	Produce Methodology Handbook to explain B-READY's framework and approach and present full questionnaires and scoring details.
	Produce B-READY Manual & Guide.
c. First B-READY report and full data set for about 60 economies	
Throughout 2023	*Periodic technical seminars with the Board*
February 2023	Start data collection through firm-level surveys.
January–April 2023	Identify Expert Contributors in about 60 economies.
	Finalize topic questionnaires.
May 2023	Conduct workshops on B-READY methodology.
May 2023	Start data collection through topic questionnaires.

November 2023	Complete data collection for both firm-level surveys and topic questionnaires.
October 2023–January 2024	Analyze data and draft report.
January–February 2024	Bank-wide Review (BWR) of first B-READY data set and report.
Spring 2024	Share data and report following the BWR with Bank and Board members. Launch of the first edition of the B-READY data and report.
d. Second B-READY report and full data set for about 120 economies[a]	
June–September 2023	Confirm selection of about 60 additional economies to be included in the second edition of the B-READY report. Conduct procurement process: Select vendors for firm-level surveys and to administer remuneration to Expert Contributors in about 60 additional economies.
	Decide sampling frame for firm-level surveys.
	Prepare survey instruments.
October 2023	Start data collection through firm-level surveys.
January–April 2024	Identify Expert Contributors in about 60 additional economies. Finalize topic questionnaires.
May 2024	Start data collection through topic questionnaires.
October 2024	Complete data collection for firm-level surveys in about 60 additional economies and topic questionnaires in about 120 economies.
October 2024–January 2025	Analyze data and draft report.
January–February 2025	BWR of second B-READY data set and report.
Spring 2025	Share data and report following the BWR with Bank and Board members. Launch of the second edition of the B-READY data and report.
e. Third B-READY report and full data set for 180 economies[b]	
June–September 2024	Confirm selection of about 60 additional economies to be included in the third edition of the B-READY report. Conduct procurement process: Select vendors for firm-level surveys and to administer remuneration to Expert Contributors in about 60 additional economies.
	Decide sampling frame for firm-level surveys.
	Prepare survey instruments.
October 2024	Start data collection through firm-level surveys.
January–April 2025	Identify Expert Contributors in about 60 additional economies. Finalize topic questionnaires.
May 2025	Start data collection through topic questionnaires.
October 2025	Complete data collection for firm-level surveys in about 60 additional economies and topic questionnaires in about 180 economies.
October 2025–January 2026	Analyze data and draft report.
January–February 2026	BWR of third B-READY data set and report.

Spring 2026	Share data and report following the BWR with Bank and Board members.
	Launch of the third edition of the B-READY data and report.

Note: B-READY = Business Ready; BWR = Bank-wide Review; CN = Concept Note; IFC = International Finance Corporation; MIGA = Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency; MVP = Matrix Vice Presidents; OVP = Vice Presidents Operations.

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 60 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 D.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

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.	When each Team member joins: STCs–Usually in beginning of report cycle. Interns–Spring and Summer batch.
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.	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.	Beginning of each B-READY cycle.
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. *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.	Beginning of each data collection B-READY cycle.
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-time Expert Contributors recruitment mission travelers: how to 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.	Before missions in each B-READY cycle.
Topic Team Leaders and Supervisors Program (TLSP). Training for TTLs, Supervisors	For new TTLs, Supervisors.
SELF-LEARNING (ONLINE)	
Training on R for Data Science (4.5 hours) https://worldbank.percipio.com/channels/0ae5275a-1bae-4238-926a-1e04146e453b?tab=WATCH	
Python Fundamentals Bootcamp (11 hours) https://worldbank.percipio.com/channels/2a5ac757-9632-4bed-b071-9f1abb32d7bd?tab=WATCH	
Data Visualization and Story Telling Bootcamp (12 hours) https://worldbank.percipio.com/channels/17ff7298-1005-4507-9672-01437a487ede?tab=WATCH	

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

- [B-READY list of economies for the first three reports](#)
- [IBRD Articles of Agreement](#)
- [GIA Report](#)
- [Cross-cutting Themes Note](#)
- [Concept Note](#)
- [IEG Review](#)