



# SheWorks: Putting Gender-Smart Commitments into Practice

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



An Ooredoo Group company Asiacell won an award for its “Almas” line as one of the most innovative services offered to women in emerging markets that helped distinguish the company in a competitive category.

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## Foreword

Today, the chances for women to participate in the labor market worldwide remain almost 27 percentage points lower than those for men. Women are more likely to be unemployed than men.<sup>1</sup> Yet, women's employment is vital to driving economic growth and development—no country can afford to lose half its talent pool. The private sector, which provides about 90 percent of jobs, is essential for meeting this employment challenge. The key is to identify “gender smart” employment solutions that generate opportunities for women while also contributing to companies' bottom lines, productivity, and growth.

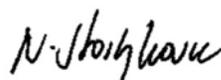
For IFC, the world's largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector and with six decades of experience, job creation is a top priority. IFC's commitment to advancing gender equality is anchored in a strong business case and in client demand for gender-smart solutions. In response, we are working with clients to reduce the gap between women and men as entrepreneurs, employees, corporate leaders, suppliers, consumers, and community stakeholders. When World Bank Group President, Jim Kim, launched the IFC-led SheWorks private sector partnership at the 2014 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting, our objective was clear: improve employment opportunities and working conditions for thousands of women over the two-year partnership. Our approach was a practical one: focus on the “how” and encourage leading companies to “stretch” themselves while exchanging their experiences with women's employment. Thirteen leading companies and three strategic partners joined this initiative, implementing gender-smart workplace measures based on the business case.

The report—SheWorks: Putting Gender-Smart Commitments into Practice—highlights private sector approaches and learning in recruiting, retaining, and promoting women. It draws on global business case data, practical guidance, best practices, and lessons learned shared by SheWorks members and strategic partners to

show how companies across regions and sectors can further invest in their female talent to strengthen the bottom line. Our hope is that this publication will reach hundreds of businesses that can learn from our partners' experience and replicate what works.

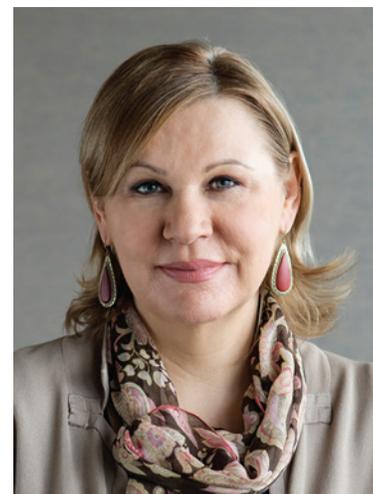
Our goal is to help IFC clients and other companies worldwide reduce gender gaps in their operations while reaping business rewards.

On behalf of IFC, I would like to thank our SheWorks members and partners for their commitment over the past two years. While the SheWorks Partnership comes to an end, the work continues. We all can do more. At IFC we are committed to applying the knowledge learned with clients and leveraging our partnerships, including with the public sector as outlined in our recent World Bank Group Gender Equality Strategy. Only by working in tandem with civil society as well as the public and private sectors, will we be able to more effectively support women's participation in the labor market and create opportunity where it is needed most.



**Nena Stoilkovic**

IFC Vice President of Global Client Services



## ABOUT IFC

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets. Working with 2,000 businesses worldwide, we use our six decades of experience to create opportunity where it's needed most. In FY16, our long-term investments in developing countries rose to nearly \$19 billion, leveraging our capital, expertise and influence to help the private sector end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. For more information, visit [www.ifc.org](http://www.ifc.org).

*A full version of this report is forthcoming in November 2016. For more information, please visit [www.ifc.org/gender](http://www.ifc.org/gender).*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication, *SheWorks: Putting Gender-Smart Commitments into Practice*, was developed by Carmen Niethammer and Rudaba Nasir, who are part of IFC's Gender Secretariat. It is the result of a collaborative effort with SheWorks member companies and strategic partners. The authors of this report would like to highlight the invaluable contributions of Maria-Lizzy Massa at Belcorp; Aysun Sayin and the team at Boyner Group; Avra Siegel and the team at Care.com; April Jordin and the team at the Coca-Cola Company; the EY team; Kindley Walsh-Lawlor and the team at Gap Inc.; Renee Wittmeyer and the team at Intel; Besma Alqassar and the team at Kuwait Energy; Carla Pires, Sergio Leão, and their team at the Odebrecht Group; Hanady El Sherif and the team at Ooredoo; Nicole McCabe and the team at SAP SE; Simla Ünal and the team at TEB; and Vijaya Sen and the team at Zulekha Hospitals, as they provided critical data, timely support, and feedback. This report would not have been possible without them. A special thanks also goes to the three SheWorks strategic partners: Aniela Unguresan and the team at the EDGE Certified Foundation; Susan Maybud and the team at the International Labour Organization; and Lauren Gula, Tulsi Byrne, and the team at the UN Global Compact. IFC's Gender Secretariat is also grateful for the support of Ilana Jaffey and Julie Schoenthaler at the Clinton Global Initiative, as well as Rachel Tulchin at the Clinton Foundation. We would also like to acknowledge Caren Grown, Senior Director, World Bank Group Gender Cross-Cutting Solution Area; Henriette Kolb, Head of IFC's Gender Secretariat; members of IFC's Women's Employment Working Group; and IFC Gender Secretariat colleagues, including Esther Dassanou, Sammar Essmat, Heather Kipnis, and Amy Luinstra for their input and guidance.





COURTESY OF KUWAIT ENERGY

Kuwait Energy's Quality Control Engineer Shatha Almayahi at work in the field.

## Introduction

Between 1995 and 2015, the global female labor force participation rate decreased from 52.4 to 49.6 percent,<sup>2</sup> even though women's labor is crucial to many sectors that are critical for economic growth in emerging markets, such as textiles, agribusiness, and tourism. Across industries, women have a lower representation at the management level than they do in the workforce.<sup>3</sup> For example, women make up only 4 percent of the CEOs of publicly listed companies among the Bombay Stock Exchange 100 India, 3 percent in the Mexico Expansion 100, and 1.8 percent of the Latin 500.<sup>4</sup>

Gender gaps in employment, however, are not just an emerging or developing economy problem. Developed economies also have a range of gender gaps to tackle. The average Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) gender wage gap is over 15 percent.<sup>5</sup> Women are less than 5 percent of the CEOs of publicly listed companies in OECD countries, 4 percent in the FTSE 100 UK, and 2.8 percent in the European Union.<sup>6</sup>

The good news is that global gender gaps in primary, secondary, and tertiary education are closing.<sup>7</sup> In Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, for example, women are the majority of university students.<sup>8</sup> In the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) sectors as well, women are the majority of graduates in many geographies.<sup>9</sup> However, this trend is not necessarily translating into more women entering and staying in the workforce and occupying skilled roles and leadership positions. Women continue to face significant barriers to their workforce participation, such as harassment, discrimination, and lack of childcare, paid leave, and career advancement opportunities. As a result, and due to a host of other legal and sociocultural barriers, women in many parts of the world still lag behind men in terms of employment, income, skills, and access to assets. The World Economic Forum (2015) estimates that the global gender gap in economic opportunity has closed by only 3 percent in the past 10 years, suggesting that it will take another 118 years to close this gap completely.<sup>10</sup>

Employees, employers, and economies around the world cannot wait for a century to close the gender gap in employment. When female employees are unable to realize their full economic potential, businesses, communities, and economies also fall behind, unable to maximize their growth potential. Evidence of this is being substantiated by a growing body of research covering developed and emerging economies, such as IFC's (2013) *Investing in Women's Employment: Good for Business, Good for Development* report.<sup>11</sup> A number of studies, such as those by Catalyst, the Center for Talent Innovation, the EDGE Certified Foundation, EY, the International Labour Organization, Mercer, McKinsey, and the World Bank Group, have established a link between women's employment and various business benefits, such as increased productivity, retention, and firm performance.

Many forward looking employers and governments are already convinced that investment in women's employment is good for business and development. The focus is now shifting from "why," the business case, to "how," the practical steps companies can take to close corporate gender gaps in recruitment, retention, and promotion. Yet many companies that are starting their journey towards workplace gender equality are unsure of how to put the business case into action in a way that benefits employees and the business.

This report is a summary of the full version titled *SheWorks: Putting Gender-Smart Commitments into Practice*. It is the culmination of the IFC-led SheWorks global private sector partnership launched at the 2014 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting. The partnership's aim was to advance employment opportunities and improve working conditions for more than 300,000 women by 2016.<sup>12</sup>

Thirteen leading companies<sup>13</sup> joined SheWorks, focused on putting the business case into practice. They committed to implement a minimum of three gender-smart workplace measures, such as sponsorship/mentorship programs, effective anti-sexual harassment mechanisms, and gender assessments. Three strategic partners—the EDGE Certified Foundation, the International Labour Organization, and the UN Global Compact—provided strategic direction and expert advice and knowledge to help member companies

realize their commitments. Two years later, the partnership grew from ten to 13 companies and reached the lives of 313,000 women.

The full report consolidates the 13 members' learning and best practice around the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female employees. SheWorks members and strategic partners have contributed their knowledge and expertise to this report. While this report is focused on the experiences of SheWorks members and partners, at times it also draws on examples of other companies around the world that are similarly committed to advancing women's employment.

The aim of this report is to help companies across regions and sectors identify and implement gender-smart recruitment, retention, and promotion policies that work best for their (female) employees and the business. The six chapters of the full report reflect the SheWorks members' most prominent commitment measures:

1. Women in Business Leadership and Management
2. Recruitment and Retention of Female Talent in the Workforce
3. Effective Anti-Sexual Harassment Mechanisms
4. Supporting Women in the Value Chain as Employees and Entrepreneurs
5. Measuring and Reporting on Progress
6. Leadership's Public Commitment to Women's Employment as a Smart Business Strategy

Each chapter of the full report is divided into three sections: The business case, promising practices, and lessons learned. The report concludes with suggestions for future research and partnerships, and highlights issues that were beyond the terms of reference of the SheWorks partnership but vital to advancing women's employment. This summary provides a brief synopsis of each chapter while additional promising practices and lessons learned are provided in the full report.

## Box 1: SheWorks Members and Partners

An important part of the methodology of this report involved drawing on the practical experiences of the 13 SheWorks member companies as well as the knowledge and expertise of the three strategic partners. IFC gratefully acknowledges the invaluable contributions made by:

### SheWorks Member Companies

**BELCORP**, a Peruvian company involved in the manufacturing and direct sale of beauty products in 15 countries. Belcorp's direct sales network includes over 800,000 women.

**BOYNER GROUP**, a Turkish retailer employing more than 12,000 people and serving over 15 million customers.

**CARE.COM**, the world's largest online marketplace for finding and managing quality family care services. Care.com spans 16 countries, serving more than 19.5 million members.

**THE COCA-COLA COMPANY**, a U.S.-based multinational beverage corporation.

**EY**, a global professional services organization, headquartered in the United Kingdom.

**GAP INC.**, an American multinational clothing and accessories retailer.

**INTEL CORPORATION**, an American multinational technology company.

**KUWAIT ENERGY**, a Middle East and North Africa-focused oil and gas exploration and production company headquartered in Kuwait and led by a female CEO.

**ODEBRECHT GROUP**, a global organization of Brazilian origin with a presence in Brazil and 27 countries, which runs diversified businesses in the fields of engineering, construction, energy, chemicals, petrochemicals, and agribusiness.

**OOREDOO GROUP**, a telecommunications company headquartered in Qatar and operating in emerging markets across the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia with a customer base of nearly 90 million people.

**SAP SE**, a German multinational company specializing in enterprise software to manage business operations and customer relations.

**TURK EKONOMI BANKASI OR TURKISH ECONOMY BANK (TEB)**, a Turkish financial institution with an asset size of TRL 72 billion and more than 10,000 employees.

**ZULEKHA HOSPITALS**, run by Zulekha Healthcare Group, a women-owned private healthcare network in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

### Strategic Partners

The **EDGE CERTIFIED FOUNDATION** developed EDGE (Economic Dividends for Gender Equality), the leading global assessment methodology and business certification standard for gender equality.

The **INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)**, is the only tripartite United Nations agency. It brings together governments, employers, and worker representatives of 187 member states to set international labor standards, promote rights at work, and develop policies and programs to champion decent work for all. Gender equality is at the heart of the ILO mandate.

The **UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT**, the world's largest voluntary corporate sustainability initiative with more than 8,000 company participants, which along with UN Women developed the seven Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPIs).



SheWorks member Kuwait Energy's  
CEO Sara Akbar.

## Chapter 1

# Women in Business Leadership and Management

**A**lthough a lot of progress has been made towards enabling more women to rise to the top, the glass ceiling is still intact. Various sociocultural and enabling environment barriers continue to hamper women's career advancement. In the U.S. alone, research shows that it will take 25 years to reach gender parity at the senior-VP level and more than 100 years to achieve it in the C-suite.<sup>14</sup> To close this gender gap in business leadership and management, many companies are beginning to position women's leadership more broadly and strengthen the female talent pipeline. In addition to increasing the number of women on boards, companies are focusing on women at the CEO, senior management, and C-suite level, in middle management positions, and in "First Women" roles. These are roles, such as petrochemical engineer or construction supervisor, performed by women in a traditionally male-dominated sector and regional

context. As the first female CEO in the global automobile industry, Mary Barra is a prominent example of a "First Woman."

While many studies have established a strong correlation between gender diversity in business leadership and better firm performance, it is more difficult to present unequivocal evidence for causality.<sup>15, 16</sup> Yet, existing business case research has already convinced companies to take action.

### SHEWORKS HIGHLIGHTS OF PROMISING PRACTICES

**ASSESSMENTS AND ACTION PLANS:** Gender assessments, including employee surveys, can help companies identify gender gaps in recruitment and promotion and develop customized action plans to address

these gaps. SheWorks member Zulekha Hospitals, for example, carried out a comprehensive gender assessment, developed an action plan, established a baseline, and set targets to ensure that hiring managers consider qualified female candidates for all open positions and promotions.

#### **ROLE MODELS, MENTORS, AND COACHES ARE KEY.**

For example, Sara Akbar, the CEO of Kuwait Energy, is an advocate for women's employment and leadership in the traditionally male-dominated energy sector across the Middle East and North Africa.

**SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMS:** According to the Center for Talent Innovation (2015), women tend to be over mentored and under sponsored. They lack sponsors that deliver high-octane support and advocate on women's behalf to enable them to achieve their career goals. SheWorks member EY has created a culture of sponsorship guided by transparency and accountability in which employees are encouraged to become "sponsor ready" from day one.

**EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS:** Women's networks or employee resource groups (ERGs) can serve as internal catalysts and advocates for advancing women in leadership. SheWorks member SAP's employee-driven Business Women's Network is linked to the company's business strategy and provides its members with a range of opportunities to advance their careers.

**RESULTS-ORIENTED WORK ENVIRONMENT:** Advancing more women in leadership requires innovation to establish more gender inclusive metrics for gauging employee performance and awarding promotions. For example, companies can consider establishing a Results-Oriented Work Environment (ROWE) where employees are evaluated on performance instead of presence, which allows flexibility and remote work.

**SENIOR (MALE) LEADERSHIP SUPPORT:** The buy-in of male CEOs, senior and middle managers, and co-workers is key. The CEOs of Salesforce and SheWorks member EY, for example, have made efforts to advance women's leadership in their organizations. Business case evidence often helps secure and sustain leadership support.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF LESSONS LEARNED



**Link** sponsorship/mentorship programs to the performance management and career development of both mentors/sponsors and mentees/protégés.



**Strike a balance** and ensure that other segments of the workforce, such as men, also feel included in the process of advancing women in leadership. For example, too many programs focused on developing female leaders and not enough resources or inclusive programs targeting future male leaders might drive this cohort away to seek other opportunities.



**Avoid "tokenism"** by going beyond increasing just the *quantity* of women in leadership.



**Yet, quantity is important too** and *one is not enough*. Women must be present in sufficient numbers at senior levels to drive cultural change and better business results.<sup>17</sup>

For a complete list of promising practices and lessons learned, please refer to the full version of the report.

COURTESY OF THE WORLD BANK GROUP



SheWorks members and partners met at the 2016 WEPs Annual Event.



Zulekha Hospitals organized a staff photo opportunity with their SheWorks membership certificate on 2015 International Women's Day.

## Chapter 2

# Recruitment and Retention of Female Talent in the Workforce

The basis of the so-called "War for Talent" has shifted: many companies are moving away from outsourcing jobs to maintaining strong talent pipelines.<sup>18</sup> In addition, millennials, the largest cohort in the global workforce, value job quality, benefits, family-friendliness, and work-life support, and decide between jobs based on these criteria.<sup>19</sup> Companies are realizing that gender-smart recruitment and retention policies and practices are the keys to profitable and sustainable business. Such policies and practices are particularly critical to retaining female employees as inadequate workplace supports are driving qualified women out of the workforce,<sup>20</sup> especially in STEM.

### SHEWORKS HIGHLIGHTS OF PROMISING PRACTICES

**ASSESSMENT:** Examining existing HR data, organizational policies and practices, and employee survey results from a gender perspective allows companies to gauge whether existing policies and practices are having the desired impact. Gender assessment and certification frameworks such as those offered by SheWorks partner EDGE Certified Foundation enable companies to better measure progress and benchmark themselves against other companies and established international standards. As a result, companies can better position themselves in the market and become an employer of choice.

**RECRUITMENT:** In Mexico, SheWorks member Odebrecht Group's petrochemical project put in place women-targeted recruitment policies, gender-inclusive job advertisements, and entry-level skills training programs to increase women's local labor force participation. Such measures helped the employer meet skilled labor shortages and minimize hiring and relocation costs.

**RE-ENTRANCE:** Recognizing that re-entrance can be challenging for workers, many companies are keen to make it work better for those who took a break from their careers to fulfill family responsibilities and would like to stay/get back on the career track. JP Morgan's re-entry program and MetLife's Act 2 program are prominent examples of re-entrance, or *returnship*, programs.<sup>21</sup>

**RETENTION:** As resources are limited, many companies focus on prioritizing and implementing high impact initiatives depending on their business and employees' needs and demographics. SheWorks member Care.com suggests offering employees a menu of workplace solutions. These can include:

- **Flexible Work and Paid Leave:** To encourage all employees to avail flexible work and parental leave options, SheWorks members advise framing these benefits as gender-neutral and available to all employees, not just women. Senior management often has to lead by example to change mindsets and culture.
- **Child and Elderly Care:** Providing on-site daycare is not the only option available for employers. Companies are supporting employees' childcare needs yet saving costs and maximizing benefits by, for example, providing subsidies, vouchers, and backup care. Employers are also focusing on elderly care given the changing demographics in many countries, by expanding paid family leave and emergency leave and putting in place dependent care assistance programs and resources.
- **Equal Pay for Equal Work:** SheWorks member Gap Inc. tracked and analyzed its pay gap data and learned that it pays its female and male employees equally for equal work, across all its locations. Gap Inc. then hired a consulting firm to confirm its findings and establish third-party credibility. The company now conducts a

## HIGHLIGHTS OF LESSONS LEARNED



**Complement** adequate parental leave and flexible working arrangements with proactive career management that helps women (and men) stay/get back on the career track.



**Incentivize, support, and educate** male employees to take paternity leave so that caregiving responsibilities do not rest with women alone.



**Change the culture** and misconception that flexible work is a "career killer" for men.<sup>24</sup>



**Ensure** the use of technology to enable employees to work more flexibly but make efforts to prevent burn out that can result from the feeling of being "on call" and accessible 24/7.

For a complete list of promising practices and lessons learned, please refer to the full version of the report.

similar exercise each year to re-verify these findings. Similarly, SheWorks member Intel Corporation celebrated the 2016 Equal Pay Day by announcing that it has achieved 100 percent gender pay parity in its U.S. workforce. The company conducts an annual, comprehensive pay audit in the U.S. to analyze pay by gender and ethnicity and in 2015, looked at pay across job types and levels as well.<sup>22</sup> Chapter 5 of the full report provides more information on conducting a gender pay gap analysis.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** Companies often partner with other organizations and companies to enhance the impact and outreach of their recruitment and retention efforts. For example, various Clinton Global Initiative Commitments to Action, such as the Working Parent Support Coalition,<sup>23</sup> are addressing work-life issues.

## THE 5 STEPS INVOLVED IN BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT MECHANISM



**1** DEVELOP  
STRONGLY  
WORDED POLICY  
STATEMENT



**2** ESTABLISH  
COMPLAINTS  
PROCEDURE



**3** DEFINE  
CONSEQUENCES  
AND REMEDIATION



**4** TRAIN AND  
RAISE  
AWARENESS



**5** MONITOR AND  
EVALUATE

Source: IFC Gender Secretariat, adapted from content produced by the Australian Human Rights Commission

## Chapter 3 Effective Anti-Sexual Harassment Mechanisms

Research shows that 68 percent of sexual harassment takes place at work and people are more likely to be harassed by someone they work with than by a stranger.<sup>25</sup> Sexual harassment can be more prevalent in jobs where there are large power differentials between women and men. Jobs characterized by informality and insecurity can particularly create opportunities for sexual harassment, although high skilled, formal occupational groups are not immune to it. In communities where domestic violence is prevalent, women and men can be more prone to thinking that sexual harassment in the workplace is also acceptable.

SheWorks strategic partner ILO defines sexual harassment as “a sex-based behavior that is unwelcome and offensive to its recipient”<sup>26</sup> that may take two forms: a) **Quid pro quo**, when a job benefit is made conditional on the victim agreeing to engage in some form of sexual behavior and b) **Hostile working environment** in which the conduct creates

conditions that are intimidating or humiliating for the victim. Many companies find it critical to do the right and smart thing: Define, identify, address, and prevent sexual harassment at the workplace. While many companies have standard anti-sexual harassment policies in place, leading companies are pushing the envelope to better understand how to measure and ensure the *effectiveness* of their anti-sexual harassment mechanisms.

### SHEWORKS HIGHLIGHTS OF PROMISING PRACTICES

When designing approaches to combat sexual harassment, it is important to think in terms of anti-sexual harassment *mechanisms* instead of policies. Mechanisms imply that eliminating workplace sexual harassment depends on a number of organization-wide strategies, policies, and changes that are embedded in the company culture and work together to create a harassment-free work environment.

**STEP 1** entails instituting a clearly defined, strongly worded, and readily accessible company-wide anti-sexual harassment policy, preferably a stand-alone policy so that it does not get obscured within the broader company code of conduct. A clear definition of sexual harassment should be accompanied by a list of prohibited actions, illustrative examples, and possible scenarios to give employees a complete picture. SheWorks member Gap Inc., for example, developed and instituted a Zero Means Zero policy, which underscores the company's zero tolerance stance towards harassment of all kinds. The policy is anchored in Gap Inc.'s overall ethics program and sustainability initiatives and applies to all employees and business partners, including contractors and suppliers. The policy defines sexual harassment, lists behaviors and actions of which employees should be mindful, and outlines reporting procedures as well as remediation measures and consequences.

**STEP 2** entails establishing a fair, efficient, and transparent complaints procedure and ensuring confidentiality and security while reporting an incident.

**STEP 3** involves defining consequences and remediation measures that are serious, powerful, and tailored to the nature of the offence and applicable to all staff members, clients, and value chain participants. Measures can include counseling, warning, training, demotion, mediation, and dismissals.

**STEP 4** emphasizes training and raising awareness among staff at all levels, including HR personnel, senior leadership, and managers, on how to recognize, prevent, and manage harassment of all kinds.

**Step 5** requires companies to regularly monitor and evaluate their policies, complaints procedures, remediation measures, and trainings to ensure their effectiveness and continuous improvement. Best practice shows that successful companies maintain thorough and confidential records of all sexual harassment complaints, track and analyze numbers of complaints by department, gender, outcomes, and remedies to identify patterns across departments and locations, and periodically review their policies to ensure that they are having the desired impact.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF LESSONS LEARNED



**Focus** on building stronger relations between supervisors and workers, revising incentives and benefits structures, and making performance assessment and reward systems more equitable so that there is no room for sexual harassment.



**Conduct** research to better understand and effectively address sensitive, sociocultural issues.



**Partner** with government and civil society to drive greater impact. The government can help ensure the effectiveness of anti-sexual harassment mechanisms by enacting new laws, revising old ones, and starting nation-wide campaigns such as the Australian government's *Know Where the Line Is* campaign.



**Support** bystanders and witnesses as research shows that 82 percent of them take some sort of action and they are four times more likely to take action than victims are to make a report.



**Consider** instituting digital wage and salary payments where possible to contribute towards ensuring women employees' security and control over their income.



**Be careful.** Companies operating in female dominated sectors often assume that sexual harassment is not an issue. Female employees may still face sexual harassment from clients and male supervisors.

For a complete list of promising practices and lessons learned, please refer to the full version of the report.



Boyner Group's "Good for Business" Program trains female managers and owners of companies that are suppliers of Boyner Group.

## Chapter 4

# Supporting Women in the Value Chain as Employees and Entrepreneurs

Companies that are reaping the business benefits of workplace gender equality are increasingly expanding their policies to support women as employees and entrepreneurs in their value chains. Many companies (and governments) are doing this by eradicating barriers to markets and financial access for women entrepreneurs, sourcing their products from women-owned/led businesses, and encouraging their suppliers to implement gender smart recruitment, retention, and promotion practices to support women employees in the value chain.

### SHEWORKS HIGHLIGHTS OF PROMISING PRACTICES

**COLLECT, ANALYZE, AND SHARE DATA:** To better understand women's roles in the value chain and report on supplier diversity,<sup>27</sup> companies are conducting assessments

to gather gender-disaggregated data on their value chain. To diversify their supplier base, many companies also try to provide clarity to stakeholders, including women employees and entrepreneurs, regarding the various entry points for participating in their value chain.

**THE LINK BETWEEN DIVERSITY IN THE WORKFORCE AND THE VALUE CHAIN:** When there is diversity in value chain management roles, including in product planning, procurement, production, and distribution, employees have more opportunities to drive greater gender diversity in the value chain.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** SheWorks member Odebrecht Group's petrochemical project in Mexico established cooperatives in which over 100 community members, 92 percent women, participated. These

cooperatives now provide a range of goods and services to the petrochemical company and other companies in the industrial complex.

**GENDER-INCLUSIVE SUPPLIER CODES:** By including equal opportunity provisions in their supplier codes, many companies encourage their suppliers to employ more women and source from women entrepreneurs in an effort to create a strong value chain consisting of businesses that are also committed to gender equality. Unilever's Responsible Sourcing Policy requires its suppliers to satisfy specific and measurable targets for achieving equality between women and men and take affirmative action to attain these targets.<sup>28</sup> Afrifresh Group, a South African producer and exporter of citrus fruit and table grapes, became a preferred supplier for markets in the European Union by complying with a number of labor standards and supplier codes, which encompass workplace gender equality.

**STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES:** Women entrepreneurs often need financial and non-financial services to be able to access opportunities higher up the value chain. SheWorks members Boyner Group, The Coca-Cola Company, and Turkish Economy Bank have made efforts to strengthen the women-owned businesses they work with, ultimately enhancing their own business and value chain. IFC also has a number of financial and non-financial services programs to support women-owned business.

**CERTIFICATIONS:** Companies such as Starbucks know that certification increases a company's visibility for opportunity.<sup>29</sup> Certifications such as the ones offered by SheWorks partner EDGE Certified Foundation and WEConnect International at the global level and KAGiDER in Turkey can help companies in the value chain expand their access to new and more profitable investors, markets, and customers.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF LESSONS LEARNED



**Promote** companies' workplace gender equality efforts in the value chain as part of a long-term risk management strategy and socioeconomic investment in people and sustainable business.



**Establish** a baseline of how many suppliers are women-owned/led businesses to more effectively monitor the progress of value chain diversity efforts.



**Play** an active role in supporting women-owned/led businesses along the value chain expand their market access and diversify their customer base:

- **Partner** with banks and financial institutions to provide credit lines and other financial and non-financial services tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs.
- **But remember**, greater access to capital for women entrepreneurs should be accompanied by technical trainings so that women are able to effectively and efficiently invest their capital, reap returns, and pay off their loans.

For a complete list of promising practices and lessons learned, please refer to the full version of the report.

"Placing women and men throughout our operations allows us to tap into a much wider and more diverse pool of resources."

— Ümit Boyner, Member of the Board, Boyner Group (SheWorks member)



SheWorks members and partners EDGE Certified Foundation, Care.com, SAP and Gap Inc. in a panel discussion on women's employment at the 2015 WEPs Annual Event.

## Chapter 5 Measuring and Reporting on Progress

Gender gaps in recruitment, retention, and promotion are often the result of unconscious biases and hidden stereotypes embedded in company cultures.

Conducting firm-level gender assessments enables companies to identify corporate gender gaps, prioritize gender smart solutions that benefit employees and the business, uncover business benefits, and gauge how their performance compares to that of their peers in the market and region. Simply stated, assessments help companies measure more effectively where they stand, which is critical because **what gets measured gets done**. Publicly reporting on gender diversity commitments and progress made can further enhance companies' position in the market, be it vis-à-vis employees, consumers, buyers, or investors.

### SHEWORKS HIGHLIGHTS OF PROMISING PRACTICES

SheWorks strategic partner EDGE Certified Foundation leads a global certification system for gender equality that draws on HR data, employee feedback, and best practices and policies.<sup>30</sup> EDGE, which stands for Economic Dividends for Gender Equality, helps employers shape an equitable work environment by looking at five key workplace areas: recruitment and promotion, leadership development, equal pay, flexible work arrangements, and overall company culture.<sup>31</sup> SheWorks member SAP is the first technology company in the United States to become EDGE gender certified in recognition of its commitment to gender equality in the workplace.<sup>32</sup>

**EMPLOYEE SURVEYS:** As part of SheWorks member Odebrecht Group's corporate gender assessment, the company conducted an employee survey across its various companies to gauge staff perceptions on career opportunities, training and leadership development, employee health and safety, sexual harassment and discrimination, maternity, paternity, flexibility, and a host of other issues. The survey results helped the company make its gender equality policy more targeted and strategic. The company, in tandem with staff, was able to make plans to improve recruitment and training practices, wage and career evaluation, work-life and family-friendly support, worker health, and empowerment of women in the value chain and community.

**CONDUCTING A GENDER PAY EQUITY ANALYSIS:** Actively managing pay equity is associated with a faster trajectory to higher current female representation at the professional through executive levels. Research led by SheWorks partner EDGE Certified Foundation (2015) suggests that while communicating and documenting gender equality and pay equity are important, actively managing pay equity is a critical driver of gender diversity, as it improves the value proposition for women and their household income vis-a-vis men with the effect that women are more likely to stay in the labor force.<sup>33</sup> As part of their regular gender assessment process, companies are encouraged to also conduct a gender pay gap analysis to come up with ways to create a fair compensation and reward system and promote pay transparency.

**GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA AND SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING INITIATIVES:** Gender disaggregated data enables companies to strengthen their sustainability reporting and effectively engage with reporting frameworks such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), which is an established, globally-recognized framework for reporting on gender-related indicators. Biosev, a Brazilian sugar cane and ethanol company, for example, uses the GRI framework to report on gender in its annual sustainability report.

**WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES (WEPs) REPORTING ON PROGRESS:** For companies seeking guidance on how to report on progress made towards putting the WEPs into practice, SheWorks strategic partner the UN Global Compact along with UN Women has

## HIGHLIGHTS OF LESSONS LEARNED



**Triangulate** and gather data from a number of different sources, such as employee surveys, a review of company policies and practices, and HR data, to verify and confirm findings.



**Conduct** gender assessments by location, taking into account geographical and cultural contexts that may impact the work environment and corporate gender gaps.



**Benchmark** against other companies in the market and region as well as against international standards of excellence to compare performance and credibly communicate successes.



**Ensure** that gender assessments are authentically referring to all employees, not just women.



**Measure and articulate** the benefits of gender assessments and gender equality for men as well.



**Remember**, the journey is often more rewarding than the destination. An inclusive assessment process can start conversations and provide deeper insights and fresh takes on old issues.

For a complete list of promising practices and lessons learned, please refer to the full version of the report.

produced gender-specific guidelines *The Women's Empowerment Principles: Reporting on Progress*.<sup>34</sup> These guidelines offer practical advice, general reporting approaches, and specific examples of disclosures and performance indicators for operationalizing the seven WEPs.

COURTESY OF GAP INC.



A Gap Inc. store employee at work.

## Chapter 6 Leadership's Public Commitment to Women's Employment as a Smart Business Strategy

Many companies develop innovative measures to promote women's recruitment, retention, and promotion. Yet these measures can fail to have the desired impact or even take off if they lack one crucial ingredient: strong leadership commitment, buy-in, and support. The good news is that many business leaders recognize that equal treatment of women and men at work is not just the right thing to do—it is also good for business. This is evident from the fact that more than 1,200 CEOs globally have signed the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) CEO Statement of Support.<sup>35</sup>

### SHEWORKS HIGHLIGHTS OF PROMISING PRACTICES

**GAINING RECOGNITION—AWARDS AND LISTS:** Winning an award or featuring on a list of preferred companies that

promote workplace gender equality presents an ideal PR opportunity for companies to gain recognition for their efforts and energize their existing and future employees. Many SheWorks members including Boyner Group, The Coca-Cola Company, Gap Inc., and Ooredoo have received awards such as the WEPs CEO Leadership Award, Catalyst Award, Real Business First Women Awards, and Global CSR Awards. SheWorks members have also featured on lists such as DiversityInc's Top 10 Companies for Global Diversity and Working Mother 100 Best Companies.

**RAISING AWARENESS THROUGH MULTIPLE CHANNELS:**

Senior management teams across all SheWorks members and strategic partners frequently speak publicly about the importance of women's employment as a smart business strategy. Members have used multiple channels to communicate these messages, including at global, regional,

and national conferences and public speaking engagements as well as broadcast, print, and social media. Additional details are provided in the full report.

### **WE NEED MORE MALE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE!**

Innovative global initiatives, such as Male Champions of Change,<sup>36</sup> Geneva Gender Champions,<sup>37</sup> and the HeForShe campaign and its IMPACT 10X10X10 pilot initiative, are bringing together diverse allies and stakeholders, especially men, to make progress on gender equality.

**THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT PANEL PLEDGE:** At the 2016 WEPs Annual Event, Lise Kingo, Executive Director of SheWorks partner UN Global Compact, announced the organization's commitment to ending all male panels by taking the #PanelPledge.<sup>38</sup> As part of this pledge, the organization's male employees will help advance gender equality when they are invited to speak on an all-male panel by asking to substitute a female colleague, raising the importance of women speakers if they do attend the event, or declining the speaking engagement. Organizations such as Chief Executive Women, Geneva Gender Champions Male Champions of Change, and Women's Leadership Institute Australia have also made similar pledges.

### **SIGNING THE SEVEN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**

**PRINCIPLES (WEPs):** Many companies, including SheWorks members Care.com, Gap Inc., and Odebrecht Group's petrochemical arm Braskem, found it valuable to demonstrate their gender commitment and leadership by signing the WEPs, an initiative developed by SheWorks partner UN Global Compact along with UN Women. This makes them part of a global community of likeminded business leaders who regularly share their experiences and best practices.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF LESSONS LEARNED**



**Appoint** female and male spokespersons in the organization to be the leading voices on the topic of workplace gender equality.



**Mainstream** leadership messages internally and externally by developing a set of talking points and compiling business case data and examples ready for use by senior management.



**Involve** multiple stakeholders and partners. SheWorks members have collaborated with a number of internal and external partners and organizations, such as CGI, GSMA, ILO, Mercer, and PwC to further enhance their impact and outreach.

For a complete list of promising practices and lessons learned, please refer to the full version of the report.

### **PARTICIPATING IN "RING THE BELL FOR GENDER EQUALITY" EVENTS:**

In 2016, 34 stock exchanges participated in this global initiative to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality to sustainable business.<sup>39</sup> Led by SheWorks partner UN Global Compact, IFC and others, the events were attended by business leaders across regions and industries who reinforced their commitments, shared and celebrated progress, and stressed the importance of fostering gender equality in their companies. The cumulative efforts of all these leaders as well as knowledge-sharing has influenced how other business leaders and stock exchanges can help advance workplace gender equality.

COURTESY OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION



This illustration captures discussions during a 2015 conference in London organized by ILO, IFC, and the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) to identify steps to accelerate women’s leadership in business and management.

# Afterword: The Work Is Never Done

Two years. 13 companies. 41 commitments in six topic areas. The SheWorks global private sector partnership for women’s employment accomplished a lot in two years: It advanced employment opportunities and improved working conditions for more than 300,000 women by putting in place new and strengthening existing gender-smart recruitment, retention, and promotion policies and practices. Women’s employment numbers have gone up in more than 60 percent of SheWorks member companies. Despite their achievements, SheWorks members and partners recognize that there is still a lot more that needs to be done.

There is a particular need to address “disruptive changes” brought on by the Fourth Industrial Revolution which will result in a net loss of over 5 million jobs in 15 economies between 2015 and 2020, projected to adversely impact more women than men.<sup>40</sup>

A few examples of where SheWorks members and partners feel other large scale partnerships and private, public, and civil society actors can unite to reduce economic gender gaps include:

- Leveraging the public sector's role in supporting the private sector's efforts to advance women's employment globally.
- Eradicating existing legal barriers to women's employment, which have been well-documented by the World Bank Group's Women, Business and the Law.<sup>41</sup>
- Gauging and mitigating the negative impact of climate change on women's employment and access to natural resources such as water in emerging markets.
- Helping redistribute childcare and elderly care responsibilities evenly between members of households to reduce women's time spent on unpaid care work and enhance their income earning potential.
- Advancing women's employment in fragile and conflict-affected regions.
- Strengthening the role of businesses in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly goal number 5 pertaining to gender equality.

SheWorks members and partners hope that the SheWorks partnership model and knowledge will inspire others to continue to take the lead and tackle these issues by leveraging resources, networks, and knowledge to make the world a better place for employees and business.

## A Short Reading Guide

For a complete bibliography and list of resources, please refer to the full version of this report.

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*This report highlights the business case for gender diversity, the obstacles women face, and ways to move forward. The report shows that women's labor force participation is crucial for business and economic growth. ILO's Women in Business and Management report series also includes two additional, regionally-focused reports: Women in business and management: Gaining momentum in Asia and the Pacific: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_379571.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_379571.pdf) and Women in Business and Management: Gaining momentum in the Middle East and North Africa: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_446101.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_446101.pdf).*

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