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A Path to Empowerment: **The role of corporations in supporting women's economic progress**

Jane Nelson, Marli Porth, Kara Valikai, and Honor McGee

Summary report of a roundtable series on women's economic empowerment

Written by Jane Nelson, Marli Porth, Kara Valikai, and Honor McGee

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Photographs: All the photographs on the cover and throughout the report are representative of women employees, business partners, individual contributors or community partners of companies that participated in the Path to Empowerment roundtable series and are profiled in the report. Cover photos are as follows:

Top Row (L to R): Qualcomm community partner (Indonesia); SABMiller retailer (Colombia); Amway Business Owner (Thailand); Coca-Cola retailer (The Philippines); Kate Spade & Company artisan (Rwanda); Amway Business Owner (United States); Walmart factory worker (China); Walmart smallholder farmer (Rwanda).

Bottom Row (L to R): ExxonMobil engineer trainee (Papua New Guinea); Amway Business Owner (United States); Kate Spade & Company artisans (Rwanda); Walmart supplier (Guatemala); Walmart smallholder farmer (Nepal); Abbott supported health partners (Afghanistan); Walmart smallholder farmer (Peru); Abbott supported students (Bangladesh).

Our thanks to these and other companies for providing photographs.

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Foreword

As the international community focuses on the post-2015 global development agenda, it is a particularly important time for those engaged in efforts to advocate for and advance women's economic empowerment. Governments, companies and nongovernmental organizations are focusing more than ever on the critical and catalytic role that women play in driving more inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Building on existing evidence and leading models, numerous efforts are underway to demonstrate both the development benefits and the business case for empowering many more women as business and community leaders, managers, scientists, innovators, entrepreneurs, artists, producers, employers, employees, investors, savers, consumers, health workers and educators.

There is a growing recognition that the private sector, from multinational corporations to microenterprises, will be central in helping to achieve the agenda of women's economic empowerment. A vanguard of companies is already playing a leadership role. From corporate boardrooms to mines; on farms and in factories; in markets, across communities, and through policy dialogues, more companies are making public commitments and setting targets to improve gender diversity and support women leaders. Industry coalitions and NGOs with specific remits to support women's economic empowerment are scaling up existing programs and establishing new ones. These include efforts to champion career development opportunities for professional women, initiatives that connect women-owned suppliers to corporate purchasing departments and broader markets, programs to improve women's rights, training and healthcare in factories and on farms, projects to increase women's access to finance and technology, social investments targeted at supporting better education, health, financial literacy and community leadership opportunities for women, and

corporate-sponsored research and communications to raise public awareness and strengthen public policy on women's economic empowerment.

In March 2014, at the International Women's Day Forum at the United Nations, we made a joint commitment to convene a series of roundtable dialogues to explore the role of corporations in supporting women's economic empowerment. Each invitation-only roundtable was comprised of 15 to 20 senior leaders from major multinational corporations currently engaged in or interested in women's economic empowerment as a business case and/or a social venture. The companies spanned industry sectors and their participants represented various functional areas within their organizations, from supply chain management and human resources to community engagement and public affairs. Expert presenters joined each session to provide further thought leadership and to challenge the group to identify ways that each company, alone or in partnership, could most effectively engage. The content of the roundtables informed this framing report and its affiliated policy briefs. We are grateful for the shared learning experience with our corporate colleagues and topic experts, who helped us better understand both the obstacles and opportunities that companies face in supporting the economic empowerment of women. We hope some of the frameworks developed and good practices identified during the roundtable series will be helpful for other companies and their partners in the public, private and civic sectors.

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Methodology and Acknowledgements

Methodology

This report is the summary of a series of roundtables convened by the Harvard Kennedy School Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative and U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Corporate Citizenship Center. Titled *A Path to Empowerment*, the five roundtables took place between April 2014 and February 2015. They were facilitated under the Chatham House Rule and the report is framed on the discussions and presentations without compromising the privacy accorded to the conversations.

The report is not an exhaustive survey of the literature on women's economic empowerment. It does not cover all of the ways that the private sector can engage in women's economic empowerment globally, nor does it systematically map or analyze the initiatives that are doing so. Rather, the report's sections on women in the value chain, women in the community, tools to catalyze women's economic empowerment, and advocating for women through research, communications, and policy dialogue stem from the programs, partnerships and ecosystems that were discussed by the roundtable participants, and are intended to help frame further discussion and catalyze action.

For each section, we present the challenges and business (and, in some instances, development) case, as well as good practice examples from the companies and organizations that participated in the series. In some cases, companies that were not in attendance are profiled because their programs drew notice from roundtable participants. Although there were U.S. and European examples, the roundtables had a focus on business initiatives in developing countries. It is our hope that this report shares some of the valuable insights and learning from the *Path to Empowerment* roundtables with a broader audience and thus offers a useful contribution to the ongoing global dialogue around women's economic empowerment.

Section I, which provides an introductory framework on the role of corporations, is drawn from an article that Jane Nelson wrote for GE in July 2014. An edited version of this article, "Giving women a seat at the economic table," was first published on July 1, 2014 on the Ideas Lab website supported by GE. The framework also draws on earlier research by Jane Nelson on the role of business as a partner in development through its core business activities, social investment and philanthropy and public policy dialogue outlined in the report *Business as Partners in Development: Creating Wealth for Countries, Companies and Communities* (1996) with the World Bank, UNDP and International Business Leaders Forum.

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The authors would like to express their appreciation for the presenters and participants in our *Path to Empowerment* roundtable discussion series, who have shared their expertise with candor; learning with them has been a valuable and insightful experience.

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PART I

The Role of Corporations: Engaging, Enabling and Advocating



“A woman is economically empowered when she has both the ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions.”

“Understanding and Measuring
Women’s Economic Empowerment”
**International Center for Research
on Women (ICRW), 2011**

I The Role of Corporations: Engaging, Enabling and Advocating

The evidence is clear and compelling. Supporting women's economic empowerment is one of the best investments we can make. It improves development outcomes. It strengthens the quality of policy making. And it makes good business sense to harness the potential of women as directors, executives, employees, entrepreneurs and consumers. Yet, in most countries women remain under-represented and inadequately empowered as economic actors who have equal voices, choices and opportunities with men.

Multinational companies can play a vital leadership role in helping to bridge this gender gap. They can engage women more strategically in their core business operations and governance structures, and at every stage in their value chain. Their community investments can enable women and girls to build human capital, economic assets and leadership capacity. And they can advocate for women's rights and opportunities through their corporate research, communications and policy platforms.

Engage. Enable. Advocate. Over the past decade, a vanguard of leading companies has set ambitious goals in each of these areas. They are taking action wherever they operate around the world, even in countries where the gender gap is particularly wide and where women's rights are particularly challenged. But progress is not happening at the scale or speed at which it needs to. The time has come for all companies to move beyond compliance-driven gender diversity programs to more aspirational and transformational initiatives that truly harness the potential of the 'other 50 percent.'

The evidence for investing in women is clear

There is growing consensus that women's economic empowerment improves both development outcomes and business success. According to the International

Monetary Fund and World Bank, women's low economic participation creates income losses of 27 percent in the Middle East and North Africa, while raising female employment and entrepreneurship to male levels could improve average income by an estimated 19 percent in South Asia and 14 percent in Latin America, not to mention the development multipliers that result from women being able to invest more in their families' health and education.¹

The OECD calculates that even in developed countries, achieving gender parity in labor-force participation rates would increase GDP by 12 percent by 2030.²

If female farmers in developing countries had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20 to 30 percent, thereby raising agricultural output and reducing the number of hungry people by 12 to 17 percent.³

The story is the same in most companies and industry sectors. Studies by the Boston Consulting Group, Catalyst, Credit Suisse, EY, Goldman Sachs, International Finance Corporation (IFC), McKinsey & Company, the UN Foundation and the World Economic Forum point to likely gains in business productivity, efficiency, growth, safety, shareholder

value and the quality of stakeholder relationships by engaging women more effectively at all levels of a company and in all stages along its value chain. There is growing evidence to demonstrate that this business case is relevant not only in sectors where women now constitute a majority of entry-level jobs or for consumer-facing companies, for which women make up or influence some 80 percent of household buying decisions.⁴ It is also highly relevant, although often more challenging to address, in industries that rely heavily on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills, such as high tech, infrastructure, manufacturing, oil, gas and mining.

Tackling the obstacles that impede women's progress

Despite the growing evidence of the benefits of women's economic empowerment, women remain under-represented at almost all levels of the formal, paid workforce, although they account for most unpaid work and are prominent in the often unsafe and poorly paid informal sector. When they do participate in the formal sector, they continue to be paid less than men for the same jobs, even in the OECD economies, where they earn on average 16 percent less.⁵

The reasons are multi-faceted and often context-specific. At their most serious and challenging, they are due to lack of rights. Most egregious is the lack of basic human rights, resulting in women and girls being unable to determine their own futures or stand up against gender-based violence, sexual abuse, child marriage, forced labor and human trafficking. Lack of legal economic rights for women in many countries, from the inability to own property to being unable to open a bank account without the backing of a male relative, also make it close to impossible for many to advance.

Even when rights are recognized and legally protected, women often face negative cultural norms, daily discrimination, and unsupportive attitudes from their families, colleagues and communities. Linked to this is the lack of access to affordable or reliable inputs and enablers that can help a person to build human capital and assets. This includes lack of access to relevant education and training, healthcare, childcare, financial services such as credit, savings and insurance products, and technology. Women also lack sufficient access to business networks, mentors, champions and sponsors, and often find it difficult to integrate into formal sector value chains and markets. And in far too many countries, government policies and incentives targeted specifically at empowering women are either weak or non-existent.

The obstacles are complex and challenging, but they are not insurmountable. Governments, inter-governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations clearly have a key responsibility in overcoming them. But what can multinational companies do to advance women's economic empowerment—especially in developing countries where the positive impacts are likely to be substantial? The following agenda for action is relevant for almost any company or industry sector:

- 1 Engage** women more strategically in core business operations, governance structures and corporate value chains.
- 2 Enable** women and girls to build their leadership capacity, human capital and economic assets through support from corporate community investment and philanthropy programs.
- 3 Advocate** for women's rights and opportunities through evidence-based corporate research, communications and policy platforms.

ACTION #1

Engage women directly in core business operations and value chains

Many large companies have established strategies to recruit, retain and promote women as directors, executives and employees. Some have also set ambitious goals to increase the number of women producers, suppliers, entrepreneurs, employees, distributors, retailers and consumers in their global value chains. Examples profiled in this report include IBM, Sodexo, Rio Tinto, GE, Chevron, Marriott, Bright Horizons, Pfizer, Dell, EY, Asda, Amway, SABMiller, Unilever, Nestlé, BD Imports, The Coca-Cola Company, West Elm, Kate Spade & Company, ANN INC., Gap Inc., and Walmart. These are just a few companies in diverse industry sectors that have had the strong leadership to make public commitments, set measurable time-bound targets, and implement clear strategies, internal management systems and external partnerships to engage more women directly in their core business activities and global value chains as professionals, hourly workers, business partners, farmers, artisans and factory workers.

Whether driven by a direct business case or to strengthen their broader operating context, thousands of other companies can develop strategies that are directly aligned with their own core products, services and business models. Ideally, every company should be focusing on new approaches to ensure that women are better represented at all levels of the company, from board rooms and senior management to entry-level positions and along the value chain. They should support equal opportunities at each level for women to participate and progress along with their male colleagues. At a minimum, and as a fundamental foundation for women's economic empowerment, all companies should have policies in place to respect human rights (and by extension women's rights) and to tackle formal discrimination against women. This includes the establishment of policies and due diligence management systems to help companies

identify, prevent and mitigate the risks of either directly causing or being complicit in discrimination or abuses against women, and a commitment to remediation if such situations do occur.

ACTION #2

Enable women through corporate community investment and philanthropy

The greatest impact any company can have on advancing women's economic empowerment is through its core business operations and value chain. At the same time, companies can also make a substantial contribution through leveraging their corporate community investment and philanthropy programs to enable women and girls to build their leadership capabilities, economic assets and human capital. Key areas of philanthropic focus for many leading companies are initiatives to improve women's access to education, training, skills development, information and communications technology, and financial and digital literacy as well as programs that proactively support women's health, safety and wellness.

Community investment initiatives profiled in this report include Intel, Microsoft, Qualcomm, ExxonMobil, Goldman Sachs, Tupperware Brands Corporation, Nike, Abbott, Accenture, Bank of America, AbbVie, Pearson, Chevron and Merck. These are examples of companies in different sectors that are strategically leveraging a combination of their core business capabilities with philanthropic dollars and other partners to enable the economic empowerment of women. Most companies can apply similar approaches aligned to their own needs and assets.

ACTION #3

Advocate for women through corporate research, communications and policy platforms

Large companies can play an additional leadership role by using the influence and reach of corporate-led or sponsored research, communications platforms and public policy dialogue to raise awareness and advocate

for women's rights and opportunities. Some companies have commissioned research to strengthen data collection and the evidence base for women's and girls' rights and economic empowerment. Examples profiled in this report include the Nike Foundation, US Trust, Intel, ExxonMobil, Credit Suisse, EY, Goldman Sachs, Chevron Corporation, Amway and the International Center for Research on Women.

Others are using their marketing budgets and communications platforms to raise public awareness and advocate for women's issues. Examples include The Body Shop, L'Oréal, Procter & Gamble, Unilever and Diageo. A growing number of companies are also joining forces with each other and through collective multi-stakeholder platforms such as Vital Voices, UN Women, the World Economic Forum, CARE, WEConnect International, Girl Rising, Women's World Banking, the IFC's WINvest, Catalyst, Women Thrive, and the Clinton Global Initiative to engage with policy makers and promote women's rights and opportunities through advocating for public policy reform and innovative government approaches.

Scaling up impact through individual leadership and collective action

Every company in every country and industry sector can take practical action to support women's economic empowerment.⁶ Although this report focuses primarily on the role of multinational companies, companies of all sizes can take steps to improve gender equity and opportunity in their core business activities. Even if they don't have the resources to support broader community engagement or public advocacy initiatives, they can encourage greater participation, progression and equal pay for women in their workforce.

In addition to what each company can achieve in its individual capacity, there is untapped potential for collective action among companies in order to scale up impact and overcome particularly complex and systemic barriers to women's economic empowerment.

Working collectively on a pre-competitive basis within an industry sector can be especially effective in tackling industry-specific obstacles to women's progression and leadership. Such initiatives have been established within the professional services sector, and increasingly in the energy, mining, agribusiness, financial services and information technology sectors.

In all cases, the individual commitment and leadership of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), board directors and other senior executives and thought leaders is crucial for success. While senior women executives must be more proactive in engaging, enabling and advocating for other women in their own companies and beyond, the lessons of recent decades suggests that men in leadership positions can make a substantial contribution by standing up, speaking up and scaling up their efforts as champions for women's economic empowerment. Achieving greater gender equity and opportunity within the private sector and in the communities and countries where companies operate is a leadership imperative for all business executives. And it is one that must be addressed both internally within their own organizations and externally within the broader economic, social and political ecosystems in which they all operate and often have influence.

The potential is great. Working both individually and collectively with others, companies have the ability to help drive transformative change in supporting the economic empowerment of women. There is a long way to go in almost all countries, but growing momentum over the past decade by leaders in business, as well as government and civil society, bodes well for the future—a future where women have equal opportunities to participate in the formal economy and to contribute to the progress and prosperity not only of their families and communities, but also of their countries. This report captures just a few examples, but aims to provide an agenda for action that all companies can draw on to inspire greater corporate action and leadership.

FIGURE 1: **THE ROLE OF CORPORATIONS IN SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT** **AN AGENDA FOR ACTION**

INTEGRATE GENDER PRIORITIES INTO CORPORATE STRATEGY, LEADERSHIP and GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	
1	<p>Take a holistic approach to developing a gender strategy: Identify the specific gender-related risks, responsibilities and opportunities that the company faces throughout its business activities and areas of influence (core business operations; value chain; communities; and policy dialogue) and develop an overarching strategic plan that leverages all of the company's assets to address these in a comprehensive and integrated manner.</p>
2	<p>Embed the corporate responsibility to respect women's rights into relevant policies and standards: At a minimum, aim to 'do no harm.' Implement policies and undertake due diligence to identify, prevent, mitigate and remediate human rights risks and formal discrimination against women in the company's business operations and value chain.</p>
3	<p>Establish goals, incentives and programs to actively promote women's opportunities: Aim explicitly to create shared value through actively empowering women. Identify a small number of priority goals to increase women's participation and progress at all levels of the company's business operations, value chain, communities and policy dialogue and establish time-based targets, incentives and programs to drive performance and culture change.</p>
4	<p>Create cross-functional leadership structures and champions for women's empowerment: Too often, gender is addressed in corporate silos. Human resources focuses on workplace inclusion and diversity; procurement on supplier diversity; community relations on community initiatives, etc. While functional specialization is needed, this limits synergies and shared learning between different parts of the business. Create senior corporate-level or operational-level Women's Leadership Councils and/or identify some of the most respected female and male executives across the company to act as champions for women's advancement, both internally and externally.</p>
5	<p>Ensure senior executive leadership: Having cross-functional leadership structures and champions for women's empowerment throughout the company is necessary but not sufficient to drive culture change and transformation. The Chief Executive Office (CEO) and senior executives must take the lead. Their role is essential to move gender diversity beyond a compliance-driven approach to a more aspirational and transformational agenda—one that is aligned with corporate strategy, organizational excellence and competitiveness. This is especially important when they are predominantly male, as most executive teams still are. They must lead in terms of being visible role models and vocal champions as well as holding their managers to account for performance.</p>
6	<p>Keep gender on the board agenda: Ensure that the full Board of Directors and relevant Board Committees are kept regularly informed on the company's gender strategy and how it is performing against its own policies, goals and targets, as well as its competitors. Also, set gender targets for board membership.</p>
7	<p>Measure and communicate results: Once priority goals and time-based targets are established, commit to assess the company's performance against these and to take part in independent evaluations and case studies to share lessons and good practice.</p>
8	<p>Participate in industry-wide collective action: Support precompetitive alliances and cross-sector partnerships to tackle systemic obstacles to women's progress in the industry and in key countries of operation. This could include sharing corporate policies, guidelines and project evaluations and lessons learned; creating shared databases of vetted women suppliers and community partners; working together on specific projects; and exploring common communications and policy messages to promote women's empowerment.</p>

ENGAGE DIRECTLY WITH WOMEN IN CORE BUSINESS OPERATIONS and VALUE CHAINS [PART II p45](#)

Promote participation, equal pay and progression of women employees	Build capacity and linkages with women-owned businesses	Improve access to rights and productive assets for women farmers, artisans and factory workers
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Integrate gender targets into managers' performance 2 Commit to equal pay for women 3 Establish sponsorship programs 4 Invest in women-led employee networks 5 Implement gender-sensitive work policies and job design 6 Tackle gender bias and cultural obstacles 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Leverage impact through existing business partners 8 Match high-potential suppliers with experienced mentors 9 Create platforms for shared learning and business networking 10 Explore internal synergies between different functions 11 Leverage commercial relationships to improve supplier access to products and services 12 Partner with and build intermediary organizations 13 Work collectively to enhance the enabling environment for women entrepreneurs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Improve awareness of basic rights, especially labor and land rights 15 Enhance access to financial services, training and technology in appropriate combinations 16 Increase access to business networks and markets 17 Help women to organize collectively 18 Implement programs that combine personal and professional development

ENABLE WOMEN and GIRLS THROUGH CORPORATE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT and PHILANTHROPY [PART III p61](#)

- 1 Focus on projects that help women and girls to build their human capital, economic assets and leadership capacity
- 2 Align community investments with key business competencies and priorities
- 3 Partner with specialist women's organizations at the grassroots, national or global level

ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN THROUGH CORPORATE RESEARCH, COMMUNICATIONS and POLICY DIALOGUE [PART IV p74](#)

- 1 Fund or co-fund public research to improve data collection and analysis on women and girls
- 2 Explore ways to harness corporate communications platforms
- 3 Include women's empowerment in relevant policy and government dialogues
- 4 Participate in global platforms and frameworks for women's empowerment

“The private sector plays a crucial role in catalyzing change [in women’s economic participation], and corporations have the opportunity to be on the cutting edge. Access to finance, access to technology, sourcing from women-owned businesses, and changes to corporate culture all have the potential to increase women’s participation and transform business as we know it. It has been demonstrated that diversity and inclusion are not only the right things for businesses to do, they also make the most business sense. Companies that are more diverse financially outperform their less diverse counterparts by about 18 percent.”

Ambassador Melanne Verveer

Executive Director, Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security
(and host of the International Council on Women’s Leadership)

“Driving Growth Through Women’s Economic Empowerment”
Article in Huffington Post, November 18, 2014

PART II

Engaging Women in Core Business Operations and Value Chains



- 1. Direct Employees**
- 2. Business Partners**
- 3. Individual Contributors**

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

Katherine Giscombe, Vice President and Women of Color Practitioner, Catalyst

Despite progress in the world of employment, women still lag men in attaining senior leadership positions in business. Claims that women do not progress because they do not take charge of their careers are flawed; studies of graduates from top-tier MBA programs show that women do seek high-profile assignments and do communicate openly and directly about their career aspirations. Individual action alone cannot change systems. The systems—in this case, business organizations themselves—must change.

Formalized Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) practices represent a powerful route to changing organizations to be more inclusive and empowering of women. Effective gender D&I programs typically enjoy strong senior leadership. The importance of a CEO's continual and highly visible support of a company's efforts cannot be overstated. Effective programs also include the formation of structures that support efforts across a company's varied functions and/or geographies; support from champions arrayed throughout

the company; and alignment of D&I strategies with the business and current policies and programs, and, more specifically, alignment of scorecards/metrics with business functions. One common tactic among gender D&I programs is facilitating mentoring or sponsoring relationships among under-represented groups and senior leadership.

Savvy companies are also aware of the special challenges that women of color confront—as “double outsiders,” they are even less likely than white women to be chosen as protégées by powerful leaders. One successful initiative is PepsiCo's Power Pairs, which used outside facilitators to build trust and strengthen candor in these working relationships.

If leadership of business organizations can become more intentional in their efforts to develop women and expose them to advancement opportunities, women's careers—and their empowerment—will improve dramatically.

CATALYST

Catalyst's mission is to expand opportunities for women and business. Since 1962, the nonprofit membership organization has been dedicated to creating more inclusive workplaces through its research, tools and services, events, and recognition programs. Catalyst documents the representation of women in these workplaces and explores the barriers and root causes of gender gaps that may exist in leadership. Through the combination of research and practical implementation, it identifies and provide the solutions to mitigating these barriers and creating equitable workplaces for all talent to thrive. The organization also raises awareness of how diversity benefits today's global businesses and the societies in which they operate, and provides guidance on how to enact change for positive impact. Catalyst and its 700 member organizations work together and with partners to realize its vision of changing workplaces and changing lives.

www.catalyst.com

II Engaging Women in Core Business Operations and Value Chains

As the private sector examines pathways toward women's economic empowerment, the obvious starting point for any company is within its own workplace and value chain. Companies have a vested core business interest in the success of their employees, suppliers, distributors, and retailers. Their potential to achieve scale and impact is particularly high if they have global value chains and are able to spread policies, standards and good practices through their subsidiaries, suppliers and other business partners.

According to research by McKinsey & Company, closing the gender gap in employment alone in just 15 target countries would push per global capita incomes 20 percent higher by 2030.⁷ As women earn income, they tend to invest that income into their families' well-being, making women's economic empowerment a driver of more inclusive economic growth and development. In this section, we illustrate some of the ways in which companies can engage more effectively with three specific groups of women in their workplaces and value chains:

- their **direct employees**, both professional and hourly workers;
- their **business partners**, women who own either established companies or small and micro-enterprises that serve as suppliers, contractors, distributors or retailers for the company; and
- women who engage as **"individual contributors"** within certain industries and company supply chains, such as artisans, farmers and factory workers.

1 DIRECT EMPLOYEES

Regardless of industry sector, every business depends on the aptitude, commitment, and quality of its directly employed staff, whether chief executives, senior managers, professional employees, technical experts or hourly workers. A company's success is largely determined by the ability of its direct

employees to understand their industry, respond appropriately to market changes and customer needs, ensure quality processes, products and services, work efficiently and effectively with each other, demonstrate initiative and creativity, and operate with integrity. There is now solid evidence that higher levels of gender diversity, alongside other forms of diversity and inclusion, can have a positive impact on the above drivers of success.

Yet despite growing evidence of the gains that companies stand to make from including more women in management and in boosting women's productivity while on the job as well as their professional trajectories, serious gender gaps remain in almost all workplaces:

- First, there are **gaps in labor force participation**. In many parts of the world, women are not represented or are poorly represented in wage employment in the formal sector.
- Second, there is the need to overcome **gaps in pay and progression**. Even when women enjoy access to the formal labor market, they do not end up with the same opportunities as men when it comes to the rate of their promotions and pay.
- Third, there are the **gaps in senior promotions and power**. Women are still a minority in senior executive positions and boards of directors, in every industry and country.

FIGURE 2: MAIN OBSTACLES TO WOMEN IN ADVANCING THEIR CAREERS

Individual	Cultural	Workplace	Structure
Educational choices	Perception of female commitment	Face time and flexibility	Lack of shared parental leave
Sector choices	Double standards	Staff rather than line role promotions	Lack of childcare assistance
Pipeline availability	Spousal role and support	Mentoring for women rather than sponsorship	Differentiated taxation
Risk aversion disparity	Work-life balance priorities	Promotion rates	Organizations were designed for men and manufacturing

Source: *The CS Gender 3000: Women in Senior Management*, Credit Suisse, September 2014

The obstacles to women’s advancement in the workplace, whether as professionals or hourly workers, are well researched and documented. They range from the individual attitudes, skills and leadership styles of both women and men to institutional and cultural obstacles within companies to broader structural and public policy challenges. Analysis by the Credit Suisse Research Institute has categorized four types of obstacles that undermine career advancement for women, which are summarized in Figure 2.⁸

Given the gains to be made by embracing gender diversity and inclusion and the obstacles and gaps that still pervade most workplaces, there is a critical need for more companies to implement well communicated and executed policies and programs to directly meet this agenda for both professional women and hourly workers. The following two sections offer a brief summary of some of the messages and examples discussed at the second *Path to Empowerment* roundtable held in Washington DC in May 2014.

1.1 Professional Women

The Challenge

In a growing number of countries, women with university degrees or other professional qualifications are entering the workforce in almost every sector and outnumbering their male counterparts in any number of cases. Many of them succeed to the level of middle management and then, in almost every country and

industry, there is a dramatic fall in the numbers that make it to senior management. Although the issue has been recognized for decades, in recent years a combination of lawsuits, media coverage, strong research findings and initiatives such as Sheryl Sandberg’s “Lean In” movement have sparked new conversations as to why more women have not achieved this level of corporate leadership.⁹ Even with companies publicly identifying the problem and changing their practices to support women as professionals, the results remain a work in progress.¹⁰

Women currently comprise a majority of the entry-level high-skill talent in professional and technical positions in 62 out of 124 countries.¹¹ Furthermore, women have surpassed men in higher education, with women earning almost ten million more college degrees than men since 1982 in the United States.¹² Although they hold almost 52 percent of all professional-level jobs in the United States, as of December 2013, research by the Center for America Progress showed that women held just 14.6 percent of executive officer positions, 4.6 percent of CEO posts and 16.9 percent of board positions at Fortune 500 companies. They comprise between just ten and 20 percent of executive officers and board members in the financial services and health care industries represented in the Fortune 500; make up 45 percent of associates at major law firms but only 15 percent of equity partners; and represent only 9 percent of

management positions in information technology.¹³ Fully ten percent of Fortune 500 companies have boards with no women at all.¹⁴

Though women strive to reach the executive level, many lose momentum in their careers. Some become stuck in middle management, sometimes known as the “sticky floor,” while others exit completely. Research to provide explanations for this phenomenon points to common causes such as the desire for work-life balance, lack of mentors, sponsors and role models, lack of inclusion in informal networks, and collective, cultural factors that create implicit gender bias in performance management and succession planning processes.¹⁵

Companies can help tackle these challenges by taking a more active approach to recruit, mentor, and sponsor women as they advance professionally and to tackle the challenge of cultural obstacles and cognitive bias against women. This should include concerted and sustained efforts by executive leadership teams to:

- set and communicate clear targets for progress,
- move beyond compliance to instill a corporate philosophy for diversity and inclusion at all levels,
- integrate diversity targets into managers’ performance objectives and reward those who are active in mentoring and advancing women,
- formalize mentorship and sponsorship programs,
- encourage formal and informal networks for women,
- provide more flexibility for employees, and
- directly acknowledge and tackle cognitive or unconscious bias and other cultural or behavioral obstacle to change.

The Business Case

There is a strong business case for why private sector firms should more proactively support the career trajectories of their professional women employees. Consider the performance of private-sector firms with women in leadership roles. According to research

by Credit Suisse in 2012, large cap companies with women board directors had a share price that outperformed their peers by 26 percent, while similarly inclined small to mid-cap companies outperformed their peers by 17 percent.¹⁶ Companies with top-quartile representation of women on executive committees have a greater average return on equity of 47 percent and greater average earnings before interest and tax of 55 percent.¹⁷ And companies that have a good gender balance in management reap benefits as varied as a better mix of leadership skills, a more accurate reflection of consumer decision-makers, enhanced critical thinking by members of more diverse management teams, and the approval of shareholders who see this as a proxy for the company’s commitment to examine and improve its management and corporate governance.¹⁸

Good Practice Examples

Integrating women’s advancement into accountability and leadership structures

Chevron Corporation’s vision, The Chevron Way, drives its diversity strategy, which comprises a variety of programs, processes, and tools to attract, retain, develop, and advance women throughout the company that roll up into an initiative called *Engineering Opportunities for Women*.¹⁹ The company empowers its own employees to create an inclusive corporate culture through accountability mechanisms that tie diversity goals to performance evaluations. These include Diversity Action Plans, which are measurable objectives for each employee that can be linked to compensation, and Personnel Development Committees (PDCs), which are part of each business unit or strategic job family and which monitor diversity by tracking workforce metrics, documenting all hiring and advancement decisions, and addressing barriers to progress. The PDCs report up to a global PDC that is chaired by the company’s CEO. Chevron’s 12 Employee Networks, including its Women’s Network, each have an executive-level sponsor and a

yearly plan linked to business objectives that include a return on investment. Country-level chapters of the Women's Network have also been established in key locations of operation to further spread and embed a focus on advancing women employees. Additionally, the Women's Network provides a global mentoring program with an extensive matching process. Beyond employee-based strategies, a number of corporate leadership development programs support women's advancement, including an emerging leaders program as well as the Chevron Advanced Management Program (CHAMP). Since putting these various programs in place, Chevron has seen an increase in the percentage of women among new hires as well as in both mid-level and senior level leadership roles, and was recognized with the 2015 Catalyst Award for this progress.^{20, 21}

Improving professional gender balance through C-Suite-led strategic initiatives

Food services and facilities management company **Sodexo** is pursuing an accelerated gender balance through a strategic initiative: the *Sodexo Women's International Forum for Talent* (SWIFT), which was founded in 2009. SWIFT, co-chaired by Sodexo's CEO, meets twice a year and comprises 34 of the company's senior executives, representing 15 nationalities, who work together to identify specific actions and outcomes. SWIFT's priorities include increasing the number of women in the company's upper management, with an aim for 25 percent of its top 300 managers by 2015, and ensuring access to broader, more robust mentoring and networking programs. Both strategies have proven successful so far. The number of women in upper management is up to 23 percent in 2014 from 17 percent in 2009; in addition, currently 43 percent of the members of Sodexo's Group Executive Committee and 38 percent of the members of its board are women. The number of women participating in mentoring programs, such as a yearlong opportunity pairing senior leaders with

female mentees in China, has increased from 260 in 2009 to 1,000 in 2014, and the number of employee gender networks has gone up from one to thirteen, with dozens of chapters globally.²²

Creating internal and external mentoring and networking opportunities

The global technology and consulting corporation **IBM** has been successful at creating multiple opportunities for women to meet with peers and leaders who share their backgrounds. Of IBM's 200+ Employee Networking Groups (ENGs), more than 50 are for women. The company matches women with formal mentors upon their employment and pairs them with additional mentors, both formally and informally, throughout their careers. Regional ENGs expand this effort globally, with a focus on building internal connections and camaraderie; developing professional opportunities through education and business networking; engaging with different constituencies across geographic locations; and driving business value.²³ Participants find value in developing not just career-related connections and prospects, but support for work-life balance that comes from increased trust and personal relationships with colleagues.²⁴ IBM's commitment to increasing gender diversity at the top is exemplified by the career trajectory of Virginia M. Rometty, who joined the company's consulting practice in 1991 and is now its first female CEO.²⁵

Engaging women through more flexible working options

Rio Tinto has established clear targets, strategies and partnerships to improve gender diversity in its senior ranks, recruitment and community engagement activities, and in the male-dominated mining industry more broadly. By 2015, it aims for women to represent 20 percent of senior management and 40 percent of its graduate intake. In 2013, the inaugural

peer-driven 100 Global Inspirational Women in Mining Project identified 13 Rio Tinto employees as leaders and role models in the industry.²⁶

One key strategy has been to introduce more flexible working hours at many of its operations. In March 2007, for example, Rio Tinto Iron Ore Pilbara in Australia released a *Flexible Work Arrangements Policy* to provide opportunities for current employees to better balance their work and other life commitments, as well as making Rio Tinto Iron Ore a more attractive place to work for those who could not work the traditional mining schedule due to family commitments—most often, women. For the Australian business unit, part time work, job sharing, phased retirement, working from home, and flexible work hours were all part of the new policy. Flexible shifts had been piloted successfully during school hours, including arrangements where contractors come in for short “hot seat” shifts so that mothers can work a shorter, four-hour shift.

Surveying the employees who chose flexible work arrangements, 93 percent of whom are female, Rio Tinto found that 80 percent of users are between the ages of 31 and 40, and 87 percent of them chose to work flexible hours to care for young children. Additionally, site managers have found that the new policies have been a “significant step” in better attraction and retention of women in those locations.²⁷

Providing role models for women’s professional advancement in challenging contexts

Companies can play a leadership role to engage with women as economic actors everywhere they operate, but arguably have a particularly important role in countries where women’s rights are challenged and where there is a need to adhere to local laws and respect local cultures while also serving as a leadership model for women. Saudi Arabia, for example, has one

of the lowest levels of female labor participation in the Middle East, with fewer than 15 percent of women engaged. The Kingdom’s unemployment rate for women is four times greater than that of men, despite that nearly 80 percent of unemployed women seeking work have a post-secondary education.

In 2013, **GE**, along with **Saudi Aramco** and **Tata Consultancy Services**, announced the launch of the first all-female business process services center in Riyadh, which initially employed approximately 400 female Saudi university graduates en route to a goal of 3,000. GE will work with leading Saudi universities and educational institutions to launch specialized training programs to achieve further job-creation goals.²⁸ A number of other multinational and Saudi companies are establishing similar core business initiatives and supporting women’s university education through their community investment programs.

1.2 Hourly Wage Workers

The Challenge

By 2020, the world economy faces a potential shortage of 45 million workers qualified to work in labor-intensive manufacturing and services in developing countries.²⁹ These jobs, in industries from travel and tourism to retail, and in workplaces from automotive plants to restaurants, are often paid by the hour. In the United States, though the number of hourly-wage workers is about equally split between men and women, women make up more than 62 percent of workers in lower-wage, hourly jobs.³⁰ This disparity extends globally, including both developing countries and those in the OECD.³¹

Whether working in administrative support positions, in retail sales, in manufacturing, as providers of education or health services, as servers in restaurants, or as housekeepers in hotels, hourly employees of large private-sector companies face challenges that may include low wages; unpredictable or rigid

schedules; limited support for health, wellness, and childcare; lack of financial security; and a dearth of advancement opportunities.³²

The Business Case

Jobs that are typically filled by hourly workers are among those expected to grow at the fastest rates in the coming decades.³³ The expanding global middle class means a growing demand for workers in retail, restaurants, and hospitality. An aging population in some quarters and a youth bulge in others will necessitate more qualified workers in health, education and childcare. To effectively meet these needs, large companies must look to implement programs that help recruit, develop and retain talent, reduce absenteeism, control costs, increase productivity, and boost morale. And there's a likely bottom-line impact: a recent Gallup poll of approximately 800 electronics retailers and restaurants in the United States found that after controlling for other variables, the retailers with a stronger mix of men and women had a 14 percent higher growth in same-store sales; for the restaurants, increased gender diversity brought an average of 19 percent higher quarterly net profits.³⁴

Good Practice Examples

Improving hourly wages, training and flexibility

In February 2015, **Walmart** made a significant announcement regarding its hourly workers in the United States. All starting employees will make at least \$9 per hour effective April 2015 and at least \$10 per hour by February 2016. As the largest private employer in the United States, this announcement will impact approximately 500,000 people, of which many are women. In addition to providing a wage increase for its current employees, Walmart has identified career tracks to help employees identify their path for advancement beyond their starting level. Hourly workers will receive six months of training in areas such as teamwork, merchandising, and retail

fundamentals. Lastly, the company has announced the option for flexible or fixed schedules to meet the varied needs of employees. The aim would be that all employees—from single moms to working college students—will have a schedule that works for them.³⁵

As a new initiative, the qualitative and quantitative impact on Walmart employees and the business is still uncertain.

Offering pathways to professional positions

Hourly employees make up more than 80 percent of **Marriott's** total global workforce of 300,000; of these, more than half are women.³⁶ At Marriott's managed and franchised hotels worldwide, the company offers a number of special benefits that support hourly associates, including programs to help them gain the necessary skills to move up to professional positions. This programming has seen measurable results; more than 3,000 current Marriott managers began their careers with the company in hourly roles, and a full 60 percent of the company's managers overall are women.³⁷

With the anticipation of needing 10,000 new associates for nearly 40 new hotels planned for Africa by 2020, in September 2012 the company announced its partnership with the Akilah Institute for Women, which offers “market relevant” higher education, including a diploma in hospitality management, for disadvantaged Rwandan women. More than 40 women have participated in the Akilah/Marriott program, which includes working and training in Marriott hotels in Dubai. The women receive 18 months of on-the-job skills and leadership training in preparation to return to Rwanda, as part of the management team, to open the company's first new-build Sub-Saharan Africa hotel—the Kigali Marriott Hotel—in 2016.³⁸

Creating a supportive environment for progression into management

Though women comprise 68 percent of Asda's hourly sales force, the company found that only 30 percent of its employees suitable for promotion to management were women. To ensure fair and equitable recruitment, promotion, and retention processes and to retain a diverse and gender-balanced talent pool, the UK retailer consulted directly with its employees to identify specific challenges. The resulting feedback included perceived long hours for management positions, a lack of role models, and a lack of self-confidence. In 2013, Asda rolled out unconscious bias training to educate managers, including the company's Executive Board. The company's human resources department revised its recruitment and professional development tools to be more women-friendly and added diversity competencies to performance metrics for senior leadership.

Asda also launched a Women in Leadership program, which includes career development training, group mentoring, and a "Pay It Forward" component where second-year participants train other women. A "Mum to Mum" mentoring group and an LGBT network rounded out Asda's new strategy. More than 1,000 women have now participated in career events. Within the first year of the Women in Leadership program, the representation of female store managers increased by 4 percent, and the percentage of female employees ready for promotion to management increased from 30 to 67 percent. 85 percent of Asda's female employees now agree that *"I have the opportunity to progress if I want to"*—16 points higher than the retail benchmark.³⁹ As a result of these gains, Asda won Opportunity Now's Advancing Women in the Workplace award in 2014.⁴⁰

Using creative scheduling options to attract and retain high-quality employees

Massachusetts-based **Bright Horizons** manages 882 childcare centers that serve nearly 100,000 children globally for corporations, institutions, and the U.S. government, and provides families with additional emergency or back-up childcare.⁴¹ The company has 22,000 employees, the vast majority of whom are women working hourly.⁴² Childcare is a heavily regulated industry with laws that vary by geography; young children are sensitive to frequent changes in caregivers; and families may have their children at the centers for different hours each day. Despite these challenges, Bright Horizons has empowered its regional directors to work with individual center directors to find creative scheduling solutions to attract and retain qualified childcare providers.

Workers benefit from a combination of compressed four-day workweeks, customized schedules, shift swapping, reduced commuting costs and varied start and end times. The company benefits from increased retention of qualified staff in a profession with a limited labor pool. This teacher longevity attracts parents to the centers as well as reduces the costs of hiring and training new employees.⁴³ Bright Horizons is consistently named a *"Top 100 Best Company to Work for In America"* by Fortune Magazine while the company's revenues have increased substantially since its initial public offering in January 2013.⁴⁴

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

Elizabeth Vazquez, President, CEO & Co-Founder, WEConnect International

Amazingly, it is not the public sector, but the private sector that is driving more inclusive value chains. The world’s largest corporations are actively working together to ensure that underutilized businesses, including women-owned businesses, have an equal opportunity to compete for corporate contracts. This pioneering effort is not easy. Large organizations have a difficult time sourcing from much smaller organizations, and small organizations have a difficult time selling to much larger organizations. However, there is an economic imperative for large organizations to source more from underutilized businesses that offer innovation, flexibility, and solutions that anticipate user needs—all users.

The private sector cannot do this work alone. Policy makers and the non-profit community must collaborate with the private sector to build a more inclusive and enabling environment for all growth-oriented businesses to compete and prosper. It is increasingly important to create platforms for buyers and sellers to meet, share ideas, discuss challenges, agree on solutions, and do deals.

More engagement and collaboration are required to help ensure large organizations are leveraging more than their typical one percent of all spend with women-owned businesses globally. Women entrepreneurs are not looking for charity—they only want to sell their products and services—but they need better access to markets, financial tools, business skills, leadership training, and other resources that will help them grow their companies, build and share wealth, and create much needed jobs. For now, we each have the ability to decide how we spend our money, and we can influence how our organizations and communities invest in sustainable solutions. What will you do with your power?

WECONNECT INTERNATIONAL

WEConnect International is a nonprofit membership organization founded in 2009 to help women-owned businesses succeed in global value chains. WEConnect works with women’s business enterprises based outside of the U.S. that are at least 51% owned, managed, and controlled by one or more women, and then connects them with multinational corporate buyers.

Currently operating in 17 countries, the organization raises awareness regarding the key role women business owners play in global economic development and sustainability, and builds the capacity of women business owners to scale their operations and sell successfully to major regional and global corporations. WEConnect also identifies women owned businesses and evaluates their business readiness to participate as certified Women’s Business Enterprise (WBE) vendors in supplier diversity and inclusion programs. This assessment includes compliance with the universal standards for a WBE, and approved companies are recognized by major regional and global corporations through WEConnect’s Seal of Certification Process. WEConnect helps its women business owners to interact with peers and gain access to growth opportunities with large companies, including its members, which collectively purchase \$700 billion annually.

www.weconnectinternational.org

2 BUSINESS PARTNERS

Multinational corporations engage with thousands of other companies as their suppliers, contractors, distributors, retailers, and, in some industries, joint venture business partners. These ecosystems of business relationships provide an unprecedented platform not only for direct value creation for a company and its partners, but also for spreading standards, technologies, expertise and good practices. These can be dispersed both across different industries within a single geographic location or globally across national boundaries. Working with business partners to promote women's economic empowerment can be especially effective in countries where local government policies and regulations or cultural norms are not conducive to equal rights, treatment and economic opportunities for women.

Large companies can influence the spread of good practices in respecting women's rights and in improving gender diversity and inclusion through their business partners in two key ways:

- **Influencing their larger Tier One and Tier Two business partners**, many of which are other large companies in their own right or professional services firms, to establish their own policies, goals and management systems to support women's economic empowerment. At a minimum, companies should ensure that their supplier codes of conduct and other business agreements contain language about non-discrimination and respecting human rights.
- **Identifying and partnering with women-owned or managed enterprises**, whether these are established businesses or small, medium and micro-sized enterprises. In the latter case, there is often a challenge associated with building the capacity of women-owned or managed enterprises in order for them to be able to provide the quality and reliability that large companies require in their value chain.

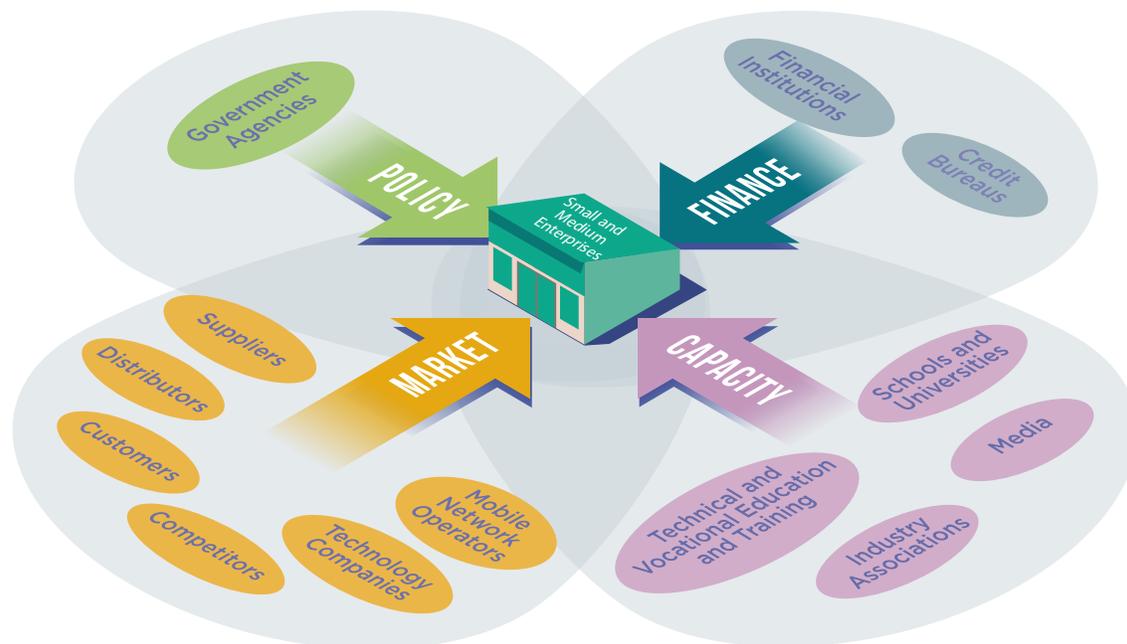
The *Path to Empowerment* roundtable series focused its attention on the second of these modes of engagement, with an emphasis on small and medium-enterprises. Leading multinational companies, especially in the United States, have long-standing supplier diversity programs, some of which have been in existence for 30 to 40 years. While their origins lie in the civil rights movement and they have had a strong focus on supporting minority suppliers, a number of them have also focused explicitly on increasing the number of women-owned suppliers. Yet, according to WEConnect International, women-owned enterprises in 2012 represented less than 1 percent of the total global procurement and vendor spend of the Fortune 1000.⁴⁵

The Challenge

Though women own anywhere from 8 to 10 million small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs) globally, including a third of SMEs in emerging markets, these women entrepreneurs largely lack access to banks and financial institutions as well as support from policy makers.⁴⁶ The majority of women-owned SMEs in developing countries are micro or small entrepreneurs, with five to fifty employees, often working from home, in the informal sector, and out of necessity over opportunity.

Women entrepreneurs have an estimated credit gap⁴⁷ of between \$285 and \$320 billion, depending on geography,⁴⁸ and an estimated 70 percent of women-led SMEs are either unserved or underserved financially.⁴⁹ Beyond a dearth of formal capital, and additional business tools such as insurance, appropriate infrastructure, technology, and enabling regulatory environments, women entrepreneurs around the world also lack access to the business education, training, networks, and encouragement that are usually key to starting let alone growing a business.

FIGURE 3: WHAT WOMEN-OWNED ENTERPRISES NEED TO SUCCEED



Source: Jenkins, Beth, Richard Gilbert, and Piya Baptista. 2014. *Sustaining and Scaling the Impact of Enterprise Development Programmes: SABMiller's Approach to Strengthening Business Ecosystems*. Cambridge, MA: The CSR Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School and Business Fights Poverty.

The Development and Business Case

Whether entrepreneurs start their businesses out of opportunity or necessity, their success can provide diverse benefits to their communities, their families, and themselves. This is particularly the case for women entrepreneurs, who are more likely than men to reinvest any profits back into their businesses and the well-being of their families or communities. Robust SME growth creates jobs, increases GDP, generates tax revenues, and helps to catalyze multiplier effects in everything from improved food security to better access to health care and education. Enterprise development can also benefit the broader *business ecosystem* by strengthening the value chain. Rather than viewing support for entrepreneurs as a social investment, large firms are increasingly realizing that their demand for goods and services is an essential way for entrepreneurs to grow their companies.⁵⁰ By working individually, through industry partnerships,

or with enabling players such as banks, technology or logistics companies to see that women are given the education, training, and mentoring to start their own businesses or to scale a nascent business into a success, large firms can ensure that women can play a key role in this ecosystem. In many cases, they can also help these women entrepreneurs to connect into their own value chains or other markets.

Good Practice Examples

The following examples illustrate a few of the ways in which leading companies are supporting women-owned businesses to either integrate into the company's own value chain or into markets more broadly. They are drawn from the discussions at the *Path to Empowerment* roundtables held on September 8, 2014 in Washington, DC, and December 4, 2014, in New York City.

Connecting high-potential women entrepreneurs through networks and research

Dell engages with women entrepreneurs through an integrated approach that includes certification, networking, capacity building and research. The Texas-based technology products and services company certifies entrepreneurs through WEConnect International, the Women's Business Enterprise National Council and other partners, both nationally and globally. It aligns its supplier diversity programs with the Dell Women's Entrepreneurship Network (DWEN), the company's signature program for women that connects entrepreneurs with networks, capital, knowledge, and technology.⁵¹ Women in DWEN collaborate to grow their businesses through the annual *Dell Women's Summit* and through networking events in cities around the world, and interact through DWEN-specific groups on social platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr and Storify.⁵²

DWEN's successes are many and include Victoria Ransom, founder of Wildfire, who was named EY's Young Entrepreneur of the Year in New Zealand after being introduced to EY at DWEN Brazil; Wildfire was bought by Google for US\$250 million in 2012.⁵³ The 10,000+ women in Dell's network also participate in the company's *Pay It Forward initiative*, which asks each woman business owner to help another advance in order to amplify their impact.⁵⁴ To further its engagement with women entrepreneurs, Dell has an *Entrepreneur-in-Residence* who travels the world supporting related projects and policy and who offers the company insight into the on-the-ground challenges and opportunities faced by women suppliers and potential suppliers.⁵⁵ Dell also partners with the Global Entrepreneurship and Development Index to publish a report that measures the quality of the entrepreneurial environment and women's entrepreneurial aspirations in 30 countries.⁵⁶

Offering networking and leadership training to high-potential women entrepreneurs

Multinational professional services firm **Ernst & Young (EY)** has established the *Entrepreneurial Winning Women program*. This program is both a competition and a leadership training platform for women whose businesses have the potential to reach scale. Participants are selected through an application process that seeks out women with a level of business sophistication to interact effectively with potential investors, advisors, and executives, and with ambitious company growth goals as well as personal commitment and creativity. During the yearlong program, women learn the latest research and trends; identify potential partners, customers, and investors; meet one-on-one with senior advisors and successful entrepreneurs for high-level, informal guidance; and receive increased visibility for themselves and their companies through the EY Strategic Growth Forum. The Forum convenes more than 2,300 leaders of the nation's most successful high-growth companies, their investors and advisors to share growth strategies and discuss current marketplace opportunities and challenges, and Entrepreneurial Winning Women have the opportunity to introduce their companies with established entrepreneurs, top executives, business advisors and prospective investors who can guide their decision-making and contribute to their success. The all-expenses-paid trip to the Forum also includes the EY Entrepreneur of the Year Awards. Babson College reported that the program had significant results; participants' company earnings were 63 percent greater than prior to program participation.⁵⁷

Empowering mothers through entrepreneurship

Global direct seller **Amway**, whose health, home and nutrition products are sold in more than 100 countries around the world, offers a wide range of training and encouragement programs for entrepreneurs to grow their businesses successfully. These Amway

Business Owners (ABOs) often work part time on their businesses and thus enjoy even more scheduling flexibility than those focusing on their own businesses full time. 71 percent of ABOs are women.⁵⁸ For mothers seeking income and fulfilment that aligns with childcare necessities, entrepreneurship, whether full or part time, can be a particularly effective path.

In April 2013, Amway Russia commissioned research that showed that more than 90 percent of women in big cities would like to start their own businesses, but felt constrained by lack of capital and business knowledge. In partnership with universities, chambers of commerce, media, government, and business associations, Amway Russia launched the *Mom Entrepreneur* program. It offers business training and encouragement to expecting mothers, mothers with young children, or mothers of many children in the cities of Moscow, Krasnodar, Yekaterinburg, Samara and Novosibirsk. More than 200 women participated in the program, which included lectures on taxation, legislation, marketing, financial planning, stress and time management, and business style. Participants had the option to develop their own business plans during the course and apply for a grant to fund their business venture. A winner in each city received 200,000 rubles (approximately US\$5,500) for her startup, and 90 percent of participants planned to launch the businesses they conceived during the program.⁵⁹

Prioritizing procurement from women through an integrated supplier diversity strategy

Pfizer sources raw materials, research, architecture and engineering, biology and chemistry, drug safety, furniture, and even the art displayed in its various national corporations from women.⁶⁰ The pharmaceutical and life sciences company's long-standing supplier diversity program is affirmed by its CEO and Chairman in a policy statement and is embedded within its global procurement function so that qualified diverse suppliers have

equal opportunities to compete for business. Pfizer establishes internal goals for all areas of spend and reports progress accordingly, and is an active participant in trade events that offer opportunities to connect with diverse suppliers.⁶¹ This strategy has been successful for Pfizer, which has won multiple awards for its supplier programs for minority and women-owned businesses.⁶² With hundreds of millions of dollars of spend with women-owned businesses in the US, Pfizer works with the Women's Business Enterprise National Council and the Women Presidents' Educational Organization to find and recruit women suppliers, and to help those who aren't yet fit for purpose to revise their strategies and expectations around Pfizer's specific business needs. Globally, Pfizer works with WEConnect International to bring more women into its supply chain to scale its international spend on track with its US spend.⁶³ One of the activities that WEConnect is undertaking with Pfizer and other business partners is to hold events that bring together screened entrepreneurs with the procurement or supply chain management teams from potential and existing corporate clients. Such engagement is not only a networking and business development opportunity for the entrepreneurs, but also helps to build capacity and awareness of the needs and processes of large companies when they are evaluating and selecting suppliers.

Providing women entrepreneurs with access to business acumen, networking and finance

In 2008, **Goldman Sachs** established the *10,000 Women* initiative, working in partnership with 16 business schools and other organizations to provide women entrepreneurs in developing countries with access to business training and networks. By 2015, the community of partners had grown to about 90 academic institutions, and 10,000 women from 43 countries had graduated from programs including the 10,000 Women-U.S. State Department Entrepreneurship Program. Launched in March 2015,

this newest initiative brings 29 entrepreneurs from the business, media, technology, social entrepreneurship and non-profit sectors to the Harvard Kennedy School for a two-week program focused on entrepreneurship, leadership training, mentoring and networking to help them grow their business and create jobs. An evaluation conducted by the International Center for Research on Women found that on average, graduates of 10,000 Women programming had doubled the size of their workforces and increased their revenues fivefold—but many still faced barriers to accessing finance. In 2014, Goldman Sachs made a US\$32 million commitment from its foundation in partnership with the IFC to create the Women Entrepreneurs Opportunity Fund, which aims to raise up to US\$600 million with additional co-investors and ultimately enable 100,000 women entrepreneurs in developing economies to access capital.⁶⁴

Creating business and leadership opportunities for small-scale shopkeepers

Global brewing and bottling company **SABMiller** has identified enterprise development as one of its most effective pathways to create value for its business and for society. Through its value chain and in local communities, SABMiller has opportunities to engage through its work with thousands of micro, small and medium enterprises.⁶⁵ In Latin America, small-scale shopkeepers, known locally as *tenderos*, account for around 40 percent of the company's regional sales volume. 70 percent of these *tenderos* are women. Ten percent of the *tenderos*, from the base of the pyramid, run their businesses, called *tiendas*, on a subsistence basis, lack access to finance, and do not have understanding of relevant regulations. SABMiller has been running programs to help these *tenderos*, like its *Oportunidades Bavaria* programme in Colombia, which has enabled more than 10,000 *tenderos* to obtain micro credit worth more than US\$15 million, and its *Progresando Juntos* initiative in El Salvador, which aims to provide market opportunities for micro enterprises

in sectors including retail and farming. In 2013, the initiatives were broadened to cover six Latin American countries—Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Panama, Honduras and El Salvador—supporting 40,000 *tenderos* who collectively serve around 1.7 million households and more than seven million people.

Called *4e, Camino al Progreso* (Path to Progress), the program is in partnership with the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) of the Inter-American Development Bank, and FUNDES. *Tenderos* participating in *4e* pass through four stages (*etapas*): 1) Responsible *Tendero*, which focuses on improving their business and leadership skills; 2) Sustainable *Tendero*, family-business interaction, including a group project to promote cohesion; 3) Excellent *Tendero*: growing their *tiendas*, bringing new products and improving services so they can generate positive changes in their community; and 4) Leader *Tendero*: select participants are guided in ways to stimulate positive changes in their neighborhoods by identifying needs and taking leadership in problem-solving. *4e* also offers practical benefits such as improved marketing and retailing skills, access to credit and financial services and assistance with business formalization, including relevant permits to operate. In the first year of implementing *4e*, more than 8,000 *tenderos* have participated; these *tenderos* have seen a 13 percent increase in their sales.^{66,67} By 2020, the *4e* program will benefit 200,000 *tenderos* in Latin America, and will be replicated in Africa starting in 2016.⁶⁸

Integrating business interests and societal needs through microentrepreneurship

Seeking ways to reach India's 500,000+ rural villages in the late 1990s, **Hindustan Unilever Limited** (HUL) created Project Shakti, a direct-to-consumer sales initiative that taps into the power of India's nearly one million women's self-help networks.⁶⁹ Project Shakti ("Shakti" meaning "strength" in Hindi) began in 2000 with 17 women in the state

of Andhra Pradesh; it now includes more than 65,000 Shakti Entrepreneurs (SEs) who distribute Unilever's products in some 165,000 villages, reaching more than 4 million rural households. Each Shakti "Amma" invests in Unilever stock at the outset, usually borrowing from her self-help group or, with facilitation from HUL, from microfinance banks. HUL trains each SE in sales and bookkeeping, helps them to reach their goal of approximately 500 customers, and provides access to sales tools like mobile phones (through which a mini Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution was rolled out to the Ammas in 2013) as well as practical items like carts and bicycles. SEs benefit from almost doubling their household incomes, communities benefit from better standards of living through access to health and hygiene products, and HUL benefits from being able to "tap opportunity at the bottom of the pyramid." The project is being customized and adapted in several South Asian, African and Latin American markets.⁷⁰

3 INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

Beyond their direct employees and women-owned enterprises in their value chain, companies across a number of industry sectors rely on the contributions from women who serve as "individual contributors" in their global supply chain. These include women farmers, artisans, and factory workers whose productivity is important for corporate success. Women in these positions tend to be low-income, either poor or very poor. They are often marginalized and vulnerable, with low literacy levels and awareness of their rights. Lacking both voice and choice, they need access to basic rights (human rights, land rights, labor rights) as well as to economic capital and to knowledge, skills, and relationships. Due to the breadth and complexity of their needs, these women require higher levels and costs of support to succeed. That said, ensuring the success of these women can offer companies great opportunities for impact, from mitigating their own risk through respecting women's

rights and creating safer and more reliable providers of goods and services to catalyzing change in these women's lives, those of their families, and in their communities.

3.1 Women Farmers

The Challenge

When women farmers have access to the same amount of land as men, there is a more than 10 percent increase in crop yields;⁷¹ that opportunity for increased yields and potentially food security is deeply undermined by the fact that women comprise between just three and 20 percent of landholders globally.⁷² Despite research showing that addressing gender gaps in agriculture can increase sustainability by 16 percent, traditional cultural norms and institutional obstacles ensure that farmers' organizations, a constituency key to agricultural capacity building, remain dominated by men. Women farmers tend to lack the knowledge to add value to their products or grow their businesses, lack access to finance and beneficial technology, and lack capital for proper storage and processing. They remain at higher risk from a wide range of issues from theft, arson and lack of personal safety to the effects of drought and climate change, with little ability to protect or insure what few assets they have.⁷³

The Development and Business Case

With the world's population expected to grow by more than 30 percent by 2050, food production must grow by 70 percent to meet rising demand.⁷⁴ Women make up more than 43 percent of the global agricultural labor force, and thus have a critical role to play in meeting this need; if women had the same access to productive resources as men do, they could increase farm yields by 20 to 30 percent and therefore reduce by up to 150 million the number of hungry people globally.⁷⁵ Women are also more likely than men to reinvest any earnings back into their household for nutrition, health care, and education.⁷⁶ Agribusiness companies and companies in other

sectors that have a large rural footprint or presence in countries dependent on agriculture, such as many oil, gas and mining companies, have an opportunity to engage with women farmers in ways that achieve mutual benefits. These can be achieved by increasing yields, improving quality and reliability of supply, enhancing farmer incomes and rural livelihoods more broadly, and improving environmental sustainability to ensure longer-term supply of agricultural commodities.

Good Practice Examples

Advancing economic and personal empowerment along with technical education

As part of its Creating Shared Value strategy and in its role as a signatory to the Women's Empowerment Principles, **Nestlé** implements enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women globally.⁷⁷ Nestlé is the world's largest milk company; it sources more than 12 million tons of milk annually, more than half of which is purchased locally as fresh milk, from 600,000 mostly smallholder farmers in more than 30 countries. Nestlé offers these suppliers free technical support, veterinary services, transportation and infrastructure networks, and US\$25 million each year in microfinance loans.

In India, where women are often the primary caretakers of cattle, Nestlé launched the Village Women Dairy Development Programme (VWDDP) to train women dairy farmers in improving their farming practices and milk quality.⁷⁸ An all-women training team conducts sessions on feeding and breeding practices, animal care and treatment, and sustainable agriculture practices, but also on personal health, hygiene, water conservation, and economic independence.⁷⁹ Women are also encouraged to become milk collection agents, moving them from suppliers of raw material to procurement, and thus up the supply chain.⁸⁰

Improving yields, market access and incomes

Launched in 2010, **Project Nurture** was a four-year, US\$11.5 million partnership among The Coca-Cola Company, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and TechnoServe. The goal was to double the fruit incomes of more than 50,000 smallholder farmers in Kenya and Uganda by building inclusive mango and passion fruit value chains. TechnoServe implemented a program to address the barriers farmers face in existing training programs, in taking part in Producer Business Groups (collective marketing organizations that increase bargaining power and access to buyers), and in their own households. Using a train-the-trainer approach, it taught techniques to help women speak up and addressed obstacles to women attending training sessions due to location and timing. Trainers also raised awareness of the benefits of gender equality and of women's unique leadership skills. Producer Business Group (PBG) members were encouraged to work together to identify and overcome barriers for women participating as group leaders.⁸¹ Recognizing that women make up nearly 75 percent of the agricultural labor force in those countries, Project Nurture targeted at least 30 percent women's participation. This target was reached over the course of the program, with 15,000 women farmers participating out of some 53,000 in total. Participating women farmers saw their average incomes increase by 140 percent over the four-year program.⁸²

Connecting women coffee farmers to global markets

BD Imports is a US-based social enterprise founded in 1999 by Phyllis and Patrick Johnson. It imports unroasted coffee from small-scale farmers, mostly women, in Africa and Latin America and works with roasting partners to supply specialty blends to the hospitality industry and other customers in the United States. From the outset, the founders have made a strong commitment to women's empowerment. This has included direct engagement with women farmers

and entrepreneurs to purchase their coffee as well as active support of the **International Women's Coffee Alliance** (IWCA). Founded by a group of women in the coffee business in 2003, IWCA is a global peer network that aims to train, network and empower women throughout the coffee value chain from origin to cup and support them in taking on leadership roles. BD Imports has partnered with others to help IWCA establish new chapters and engage with women farmers in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This example illustrates the multiplier impact that even a small, family-owned enterprise can have by partnering with others to improve the skills, productivity and incomes of smallholder women farmers in remote, low-income communities.

3.2 Women Artisans

The Challenge

Globally, women comprise more than half of the participants in the artisan sector. For many, it is their primary source of income, and how they support their families.⁸³ Artisan activity is a way to keep ancient traditions alive, to work a flexible schedule, and to do both with very low barriers to entry in terms of capital. Yet artisans tend to lack the skills and knowledge to earn greater income, increase business and management skills, and gain access to a wider customer base, whether as micro-entrepreneurs or as members of cooperatives. Broader market access is particularly critical for these largely informal businesswomen, many of whom rely heavily on the immediate market around them, which may be limited, irregular, or fluctuate seasonally. Lastly, although artisans play an important role in many communities, they are seldom recognized as a driver of economic growth or looked to as a recipient of development assistance efforts.⁸⁴

The Development and Business Case

A rapidly growing number of global customers want handmade baskets, mirrors, furniture, clothes and jewelry. World trade of creative goods and services

more than doubled between 2002 and 2011, with an average annual growth rate of 8.8 percent. Developing country exports of creative goods averaged an even more impressive 12.1 percent growth rate annually in the same period.⁸⁵ The global market for handcraft home accessory products alone is estimated at more than \$100 billion.⁸⁶ Competition to sell these goods includes both big box stores catering to middle-class shoppers and “lifestyle” retailers with a more affluent customer base; these vary in price point as well as customers’ motivation to purchase. Engaging women artisans into global commerce not only offers businesses ways to make their products more distinctive and to give their customers the desired ability to buy non-mass produced goods, but also helps increase the standard of living for the artisans and their communities, yield transformative microeconomic benefits, promote cultural pride and, particularly in fragile states, it can help to support reconciliation and healing.⁸⁷

Good Practice Examples

Partnering through global platforms to promote women artisans

Based in Brooklyn, New York, home furnishings company **West Elm**, part of multi-channel specialty retailer Williams-Sonoma, Inc., offers its wares online, in catalogues, and more than 70 stores in the U.S. and globally.⁸⁸ In 2013, West Elm made a Clinton Global Initiative Commitment to purchase US\$35 million in handcrafted products over the following two years. The company is collaborating with more than 20 artisan groups in 15 countries (including India, Nepal, The Philippines, Guatemala, Peru, and Haiti), making long-term commitments of three to five years and directly impacting the lives of 4,500 artisan workers and their family members. More than half of these artisans are women, who are learning new skills, supporting their families and empowering themselves through their work. In the U.S., under the West Elm LOCAL initiative, the brand is empowering its store

staff as community shopkeepers to find local makers and designers, and to introduce regionally-sourced assortments into all of its stores, supporting more than 500 artists and makers. Globally, West Elm is helping grow sustainable artisan enterprises like its Nepali felt-making partners, which started with just US\$150 and today is a US\$3.5 million business that supports more than 500 artisans.^{89,90}

Creating and scaling an artisan social enterprise to serve as an independent supplier

In 2013, upmarket retailer **Kate Spade & Company**, looking to incorporate a new supplier that would also empower women in a developing country, helped start a social enterprise in a small, rural community in Rwanda called Masoro. Launched in May 2014, the Rwandan for-profit supplier produces Kate Spade & Company's *on purpose* label. The *on purpose* label is a trade initiative through which the company is building the capacity of the social enterprise comprised of more than 160 local women, called ADC, to become an independent, profitable supplier to Kate Spade & Company. The company has been hands-on in its efforts to integrate these artisans into its supply chain as a true manufacturing partner. This program is not a charity or contribution model. The company has not only trained the artisans in vocational and technical ability, but is also actively guiding them on how to participate in the global marketplace. Additionally, Kate Spade & Company has worked with the Rwandan government to lower tariffs on raw materials for ADC's products from 50 percent to zero; it has also advocated with the U.S. government to get handbags included in the African Growth and Opportunity Act. In just its second year, the enterprise has already turned a profit. The approach of trade-based activities is meant to not only positively affect the lives of the artisans, but also enable them to improve the broader quality of their lives and reinvest in their community. Kate Spade & Company's goal is to introduce this economic model

and the lessons the company has learned through its work into other communities and industries once Masoro is sustainable.^{91,92}

3.3 Women Factory Workers

The Challenge

Globally, 80 percent of garment workers are women, yet few have opportunities to advance.⁹³ Their pay is low, their working hours are long, their working conditions are often challenging (if not measurably unsafe), they have little job security, and they often have difficult commutes to work which increase their already-high levels of personal vulnerability and risk. These women tend to be young, from rural communities, and with low literacy levels. Low wages are due to the sheer numbers of women willing to work in one of the few modern employment opportunities available to them, as well as to the absence of labor protections even where policies are in place.⁹⁴ For companies, changing the mindset of the factory owners, managers, or government officials necessary to change this paradigm is particularly difficult because extremely low margins make any perceived challenges to the norm highly difficult to implement.⁹⁵

The Development and Business Case

Factories and manufacturing plants provide a convenient platform for engagement on both work-related skills development and for interventions to improve life skills and health. And effective programs to engage women factory workers not only improve workers' lives, but their productivity, performance, and loyalty. Companies that invest in women's health and wellness, for example, have been demonstrated to achieve a 3 to 1 return on their investment from reduced absenteeism and turnover as well as enhanced productivity.⁹⁶ A shift is underway from auditing factories and "blaming" to building capacity and "problem-solving," which should help recruit more factory owners and managers to view empowering their female workers as an investment.⁹⁷

Good Practice Examples

Building personal and job skills

ANN INC. is working to empower the women in its supply chain through personal and job skills training programs as well as by engaging with suppliers to create a “new normal” in which its factories are positive environments for women. In 2012, the company announced a Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) Commitment, which focused on updating its Global Supplier Principles and Guidelines as well as working with strategic suppliers to promote practices that support and empower women through new management practices and employee benefits.

To operationalize this commitment, ANN INC. has partnered with Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) to offer HERfinance, which promotes financial literacy through trainings on budgeting, saving, and appropriate financial products and services and thus helps women save, build credit worthiness, invest, and reduce risks related to illness or loss of employment. The partnership also offers HERhealth, which provides factory-based programs that educate women on health and well-being. The positive results of the HERhealth trainings have led the company to expand the offerings to women beyond the factory floor, including artisan communities in the Indian Himalayas. These programs had empowered 30,000 women by 2014.

Also in 2014, ANN INC. became the first U.S. women’s specialty retailer to commit to the Women’s Empowerment Principles, and has been integrating these principles into its responsible sourcing practices. This commitment launched a new multi-year strategy to empower 100,000 women in ANN INC.’s global supply chain by 2018 by further expanding the work on health and financial programs and safe, equal working conditions.⁹⁸

Promoting confidence that benefits self-worth as well as productivity

For many young and under-educated female factory workers, jobs in garment factories are their first opportunity for formal employment. They not only lack skills, but also confidence to advocate for themselves or their peers. Since 2007, retailer **Gap Inc.**, in partnership with CARE, the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), and Swasti Health Resource Center, have implemented P.A.C.E. (Personal Advancement and Career Enhancement), a workplace educational program for the female garment workers in Gap’s supply chain. P.A.C.E. trains women on time management, job skills, health, and financial literacy. It also empowers women by teaching them communication tools, legal literacy, gender norms and influences, how to set and achieve goals, and how to make effective decisions.

ICRW evaluated the program in 2013. Participants reported that their self-esteem had increased by 50 percent, that they enjoyed a heightened sense of self-worth, and that they were able to communicate more effectively with their supervisors and managers. Factory owners have benefitted from increased productivity, efficiency, and retention, in some cases in startling numbers; in Cambodia, P.A.C.E. participants were 66 percent more likely to stay employed with their factory, and in India, P.A.C.E. participants were 58 percent more likely to be promoted and receive higher wages. Communities have also seen a positive impact, as women share their knowledge with families and friends. In Bangladesh, there was a six-fold increase in the number of P.A.C.E. participants who reported feeling that their family members highly respected their opinion (from 13 percent to 72 percent).⁹⁹ P.A.C.E., which had an original goal of reaching 7,500 women by 2015, has reached 28,000 women, and expanded its original remit beyond factories to implement additional programming in community settings.¹⁰⁰

COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY

THE COCA-COLA COMPANY'S 5by20 Initiative

Launched at the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting in 2010, 5by20 is The Coca-Cola Company's global commitment to enable the economic empowerment of 5 million women entrepreneurs across the company's value chain by 2020. Specifically, that means the small businesses the company works with in over 200 countries around the world. From fruit farmers to artisans, this initiative aims to help women overcome the barriers they face to business success.¹⁰¹

To help address the barriers that prevent women entrepreneurs within the Coca-Cola value chain succeed in the marketplace, Coca-Cola works with partners to develop and implement programs that provide 1) business skills training courses, 2) financial services and assets and 3) networks of peers or mentors.

As previously published in a report by The Harvard Kennedy School Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative in 2013, the six elements of the Coca-Cola value chain are described as:

- **Producers**, who are trained in agricultural and business skills practices as well as gender equality and parity, and encouraged to work together to promote women as leaders and as participants.
- **Suppliers**, which include companies that supply packaging or equipment, are identified, trained, and evaluated per Coca-Cola's already-extensive supplier diversity guidelines.
- **Distributors**, who deliver beverages from bottlers to retailers in transport ranging from large trucks to pushcarts, include micro-distribution centers (MDCs), which are largely women-owned and which distribute Coca-Cola's products to the thousands of small and micro retailers in congested urban environments. In the MDC model, MDC owners

receive mentoring and coaching from Coca-Cola sales staff on everything from inventory to customer service to storage standards. The MDC owners also participate in training sessions that use simulations in order to learn financial, technical, and other business skills "on the job."

- **Retailers**, the sellers of Coca-Cola products, are offered training, access to resources such as microfinance and merchandising, and peer mentoring; the long-term relationships that develop have led to increased sales of Coca-Cola products.
- **Recyclers** work mostly in cooperatives which are mostly informal groups of low-income individuals that gather cast-off waste, bring it to central points for sorting, and sell it to brokers who, in turn, sell it to recycling plants. Coca-Cola's partners in reaching out to the recycling cooperatives help them with life and business skills, and the Company itself has launched a campaign urging recycling, which would increase the quantity and quality available to the members of the cooperative.
- **Artisans**, who produce handicrafts made from Coca-Cola packaging. Coca-Cola's local partners visit with the artisans and train them on technical, personal, and business skills like workshop organization, pricing, packaging, and diversifying who buys their products.¹⁰²

Along with many on-the-ground grassroots partners, Coca-Cola has been joined in this endeavor by organizations including UN Women, IFC, the Inter-American Development Bank, MercyCorps, TechnoServe and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. At the end of 2014, there were 5by20 programs in more than 50 markets, and 865,000 women had participated in the initiative.¹⁰³

COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY

WALMART'S Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative

Walmart strives to economically empower women internally through its employees and externally through its value chain. As outlined on page 22, in February 2015, the company made a significant commitment to improve income and career advancement for hourly working women. Walmart also has various initiatives to advance the careers of salaried women. The company's Building Opportunities through Leadership Development Women's Program (BOLD) targets female directors and senior directors to prepare them for promotion, and its International Academy, from which women represent more than half of all graduates, develops skills at the beginning of a person's career with a focus on four functional areas: Merchandising, Replenishment, Logistics and Real Estate, and soft skills. Women at Walmart across the world have a variety of groups to seek networking and mentoring, including Walmart's Women's Resource Council, Women's Resource Group, and Women of Merchandising.

Walmart has also made important strides for how to economically empower women throughout its value chain. In 2011, Walmart launched its Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative (WEE), which committed to source US\$20 billion from women-owned businesses in the United States; to double spend on women-owned businesses outside of the U.S.; to train one million women globally on farms and in the workforce; and to promote gender diversity among Walmart's supplier base. Walmart embedded the sourcing pillars domestically and globally in its business to create sustainable opportunities for women as suppliers. The company started working on its sourcing goals by speaking with suppliers and with the U.S. and international buying teams. To deliver on these goals, Walmart set up a comprehensive set of initiatives, including working with a third party to verify sourcing numbers, setting up supplier summits to connect to women-owned businesses,, partnering

with other organizations to make a Clinton Global Initiative commitment to buy US\$1.5 billion globally from women, providing grants to WEConnect International for e-learning training modules for women suppliers, and establishing a global women-owned business directory.^{104,105}

In November 2013, Walmart launched its Supplier Academy, a seven-module course to prepare suppliers to be "merchant ready." From focus groups, the company knew that its current suppliers, including many women, felt challenged by understanding its wants and needs, so modules include subjects such as "Keys to a Successful Buyer Presentation," which aim to clarify the process to supply to Walmart.¹⁰⁶

A 2014 Walmart study found that a majority of female customers would "go out of their way" to purchase a product made by a woman-owned business.¹⁰⁷ As a result, Walmart developed a "women-owned" logo to identify female-made products to customers. The Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) and WEConnect International own the rights to this logo, so that the women-owned business may sell her product with the logo at any establishment.



A dedicated women-owned online marketplace on walmart.com, Empowering Women Together (EWT), launched in March 2013 and has sold 350 distinct products from 12 different countries and 30 suppliers.¹⁰⁸ EWT is unique within the Women's Economic Empowerment initiative because it intends to include very small businesses to economically empower women at the base of the pyramid; one of the criteria for inclusion in the site is that the business must have less than \$10 million in revenue.¹⁰⁹ The success of the website has led to pilot initiatives

COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY

WALMART'S Global Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative *continued*

in stores; on Mother's Day in 2014, more than 2,600 Walmart stores sold products from the EWT website.

As part of its commitment to Women's Economic Empowerment, the Walmart Foundation has dedicated \$100 million in grants to support this initiative.¹¹⁰

A significant portion of this funding is being dedicated to the public commitment to train nearly one million women working in factories supplying retailers around the world, as well as women in farming and in the retail and adjacent sectors.

- **Creating an open-source curriculum for training of women factory workers:**

Women working in factories supplying retailers around the world. The Walmart Foundation has funded a Women in Factories program that aims to train 60,000 women factory workers in China, India, Bangladesh, Honduras and El Salvador. The Women in Factories program has two phases. 60,000 women in 150 factories spread across five countries will have an opportunity to participate in a 10-hour foundational training course; of those women, 8,000 high potential workers will be selected for a 100-hour leadership course.

The curriculum, developed by CARE, has been adapted for each of the countries where the program is operating, and includes financial planning, health and wellness, time management, career development, and leadership. Implementation partners include CARE in Bangladesh; Business for Social Responsibility in China; Swasti Health Resource Center in India; and World Vision in El Salvador and Honduras. Tufts University manages the project measurement and evaluation—a key program component. Since 2011, 40,000 women have been trained using the open-sourced curriculum, which Walmart is making available for free to any factory or organization interested in

providing job readiness and life skills training to its workers. By offering it at no cost, the training will enable greater impact by reaching more workers throughout the global supply chain.^{111, 112}

- **Building the capacity of women farmers:**

Walmart's commitment to training women farmers is part of a larger goal to reach one million farmers in emerging markets by the end of 2016. In Africa alone, the Walmart Foundation anticipates that the programs it has funded in partnership with USAID will reach 30,000 women in Rwanda; 22,500 women in Zambia; and 32,000 women in Kenya through combining training in advanced agricultural techniques with management and leadership skills.¹¹³ The farm initiative is also targeting growers in Mexico, India, South America, China, and Central America.

- **Pre-employment training for women in retail:**

Walmart's program to provide pre-employment training to women in the retail profession will reach 200,000 women in emerging markets by the end of 2016. Programs are already underway in Brazil, Argentina and Chile, with pilots complete in South Africa and Mexico. In the United States, the Walmart Foundation has funded numerous workforce programs aimed at providing low-income women with job training and certifications to put them on a path to more secure livelihoods.

The final pillar of the Global WEE Initiative aims to increase the inclusion of women and minorities among Walmart's key merchandise and professional service suppliers. Walmart created a tool that tracks diversity representation among its suppliers. More than 100 suppliers were invited to report the diverse make up of their teams by the end of 2013. Walmart will be collecting this information for 2014 to compare year over year changes in diversity.¹¹⁴

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

Mary Ellen Iskenderian, President & CEO, Women's World Banking

There are more than one billion women around the world without access to the formal financial products critical to their full economic empowerment. The microfinance institutions that have traditionally targeted poor women with basic financial products only reach 120 million clients. In order to reach those one billion unbanked women, private sector players, particularly commercial banks, need to reach this untapped market. For banks, there is a tremendous market opportunity in delivering financial products to low-income women. Women are generally better savers, have higher repayment rates, are more likely to pick up multiple products and are more loyal.

So why aren't the banks embracing this segment? The challenge for commercial banks is to offer products women want at a price they can afford. A savings account can provide a natural first step for commercial banks and low-income women to meet and develop a relationship. A bank, however, will have to improve on existing savings options. In most communities an informal savings collector visits customers daily, weekly or monthly and pays out on a set schedule. These methods are easy, familiar, convenient, and have stood the test of time, but are risky. If a commercial bank can

offer women an improvement on these informal products, a large and lucrative market awaits.

One bank that has recognized this market opportunity is Diamond Bank, a large commercial bank in Nigeria. Women's World Banking worked with Diamond Bank to introduce a BETA (meaning "good" in pidgin English) savings account that can be opened in fewer than five minutes and targets the self-employed market women who want to save frequently. Because women value convenience, the product is built around serving women in the market where they work. Agents, known as BETA Friends, visit a customer's business to open accounts and handle transactions using a mobile phone application. In the 6-month pilot, more than 38,000 accounts were opened with 74 percent of clients transacting more than once a month. With the success of BETA, Diamond Bank saw the market opportunity in serving this segment and is investing in the un- and under-banked market as a part of their growth strategy.

The banks that recognize the market opportunity first will reap the benefits—as will the women who have the opportunity to build a secure and prosperous future for themselves and their families.

WOMEN'S WORLD BANKING

Women's World Banking is a global nonprofit devoted to giving more low-income women access to the financial tools and resources they require to build security and prosperity. For more than 35 years, the organization has worked with financial institutions to show them the benefit of investing in women as customers, and as leaders. In order for more low-income women to have access to financial products than ever before, Women's World Banking works closely with its global network of 34 financial institutions from 24 countries to create new credit, savings, and insurance products specifically designed for the unique needs of women. Women's World Banking has found new ways to help women build financial safety nets, by showing a broader range of financial institutions how to move beyond traditional microfinance to provide financial products that include savings and insurance.

www.womensworldbanking.org

CATALYTIC TOOL: **FINANCE**

Women have dynamic finance needs throughout their lives—savings, credit, and insurance are all critical enablers at some point. There are necessary costs or financial inputs related to education, starting a business, childbirth, home ownership, children’s education, marriage, health interventions and funerals.¹¹⁵ Many low-income women have a steady paycheck but make too little money for most traditional financial institutions to offer appropriate products and services. The majority of these women have no control over their own bank accounts, lack understanding of formal financial systems, and need help figuring out fees and deductions.

Women entrepreneurs, for whom access to credit and savings accounts is critical to their business’ success, are similarly unable to benefit from tailored financial tools and services; such financial products may be limited or simply never offered due to concerns about risk. Women in communities where cultural context renders them particularly vulnerable to men’s decisions may be left without any resources whatsoever—if a personal or health emergency occurs, and these women not only have no savings or insurance but also no recourse, they may be left with troubling choices for survival. Globally, women must have personal financial literacy, access to financial programs and services that fit their needs, and the ability to spend or save confidentially.^{116, 117} A few private sector firms and financial services companies have begun to respond to these needs, often in partnership with a vanguard of civil society organizations that champion finance as a critical tool to empower women.

■ **GIRLS AND SAVINGS: Women’s World Banking, the Nike Foundation, and XacBank**

In 2008, Women’s World Banking (partnered with the Nike Foundation, whose primary focus is the empowerment of girls) launched a project with Mongolia’s XacBank geared toward financial literacy and services for girls aged 14 to 24. No Mongolian bank had ever offered products to youth under the age of 16, but focus groups all resulted in a similar message: girls had savings, needed a safe place to put them, and wanted to learn about savings and investing. The project partners chose to offer a range of products to the girls in order to meet varying spending and savings goals as well as preferences for access; it also set up the affiliated education programs in partnership with expert NGOs, trained XacBank’s front-line staff in appropriate customer service, and organized girl-oriented giveaway gifts and brochures. The savings product, called Temuulel (“Aspire” in Mongolian), included colorful passbooks, new signage in branches to make them more welcoming, widespread ads, and Temuulel days at more than 100 schools nationwide. In just the first year, nearly 19,000 youth participated in XacBank’s education programs and 8,500 opened accounts—79 percent of them girls.¹¹⁸ The program has now expanded so that schoolteachers across Mongolia are trained by XacBank on the Temuulel curriculum.¹¹⁹

■ **ENTREPRENEURS AND LENDING: IFC and The Coca-Cola Company**

IFC and The Coca-Cola Company announced a \$100 million, three-year joint initiative in March 2013 to provide access to finance for thousands of women entrepreneurs in Africa and other emerging markets. IFC works through its network of local and regional banking institutions to provide financing and business skills training to SMEs that are owned or operated by women entrepreneurs across the Coca-Cola value chain, starting with an IFC investment in Access Bank, Nigeria. The initiative is set up under a memorandum of understanding between IFC’s Banking on Women Program and Coca-Cola’s 5by20 initiative.^{120, 121}

■ **WOMEN AND INSURANCE: Vimo SEWA and L&T Insurance**

The Shree Mahila Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) is a women’s cooperative operating under the Reserve Bank of India that aims to empower its members by providing them with access to financial services. In 2012, Vimo SEWA partnered with L&T Insurance, an Indian insurance company, to become L&T’s first micro-insurance agent. The cost of the insurance ranges from US\$1 to \$US14 per year, with coverage that includes protection against illness, loss of wages and death. 125,000 women across five Indian states, most of whom work outside the formal economy, are covered, and the partnership plans to extend into sectors such as rural housing, consumer education and setting up a micro-insurance school.¹²²

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

Henriette Kolb, Head, Gender Secretariat, IFC

Breaking down gender barriers can help businesses and institutions perform better, boost competitiveness and promote economic growth, thereby helping to reduce poverty and improve development outcomes for the next generation. The private sector plays a critical role in advancing equal opportunities for women and men, through the provision of access to finance, jobs and not least technology.

Access to technology is vital for women entrepreneurs to grow their confidence, capacity and capital. Technology can open new paths for women to access information, receive training, mentoring, networks, and capital. Take for example the Google-built online mentoring program of the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women, which matches women entrepreneurs with male and female mentors from across the world. It facilitates access to business guidance through mentors and peer advice through the large mentee network.

But not all people can rely on technology enabled support. 4.4 billion people are still offline confirms a McKinsey report: “Offline and falling behind: Barriers to Internet adoption”. About 75 percent of the offline population is disproportionately rural, low

income, elderly, illiterate, and female. And GSMA confirms in its most recent study: “Bridging the gender gap: Mobile access and usage in low and middle-income countries” that women still lag behind in accessing, owning and using mobile phones compared to men. The report finds that over 1.7 billion women in low- and middle-income countries do not own mobile phones and women are on average still 14% less likely to own a mobile phone than men, which translates into 200 million fewer women than men owning mobile phones. The report outlines that closing the mobile gender gap would not only help women be healthier, safer and more independent, but it could also unlock an estimated \$170 billion market opportunity for the mobile industry in the next five years and contribute to economic growth in these regions.

If we want women and men to fully participate in the economy, we must focus our efforts on enabling equal access and usage of financial services and technology while recognizing that affordable and accessible child and elderly care are equally important to facilitate labor force participation and entrepreneurship.

IFC AND GENDER

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is helping its clients build robust business performance by making them aware of, and invest in, the value women can bring either as a defined consumer segment, as employees in particularly male-dominated sectors, as business leaders, or as entrepreneurs and suppliers. To engage in the different roles described above, women must be able to raise capital to run and expand businesses and care for their families.

IFC supports women’s access to financial services through its “Banking on Women Program” where IFC is working with more than 25 banks and other financial institutions to better serve the women’s market. This includes innovative approaches to finance such as the release of a first Women’s Bond in 2013 as well as the recently launched first internet-based gender-finance program in China together with Ant Financial Services Group. IFC—through the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women/IFC Women Entrepreneurs Opportunity Facility, is providing Ant Financial’s microcredit arm Ant Credit a loan of RMB500 million. The financing will be used for Ant Credit to expand its lending to women entrepreneurs who often face difficulties in obtaining loans. Many of Ant Credit’s clients are women who run businesses on Alibaba Group’s online marketplaces.

www.ifc.org

CATALYTIC TOOL: TECHNOLOGY

Technology is transformative. It helps to eliminate limits. It can empower through conveying information and education. It can improve efficiencies to streamline work and simplify home tasks. It can act as an engine for economic growth. More inclusive and sustainable economic development is highly dependent on technology.¹²³ Yet there is a significant gender gap in access to technology, particularly the Internet and mobile phones. Approximately 200 million women lack online access. In developing countries, 25 percent fewer women have Internet connectivity compared to men; this gender gap is even worse in regions such as India, where the gap is 35 percent, and Sub-Saharan Africa, where it is 45 percent. The similar gap exists for mobile usage among women. In low and middle-income countries, a woman is 21 percent less likely to use a mobile phone. This figure increases in South Asia and Africa, where it is 37 percent and 23 percent respectively.¹²⁴

With increased Internet access through multiple platforms, including mobile, an estimated 180 million women and girls would improve their ability to generate income, nearly 500 million would improve their education, and over 500 million would feel they had greater freedom as a result of being online. Women experience multiple catalytic benefits from having mobile and Internet access, including better access to health, education, financial, and safety resources, and improved economic opportunity. The disparity in access represents an opportunity to both improve women's empowerment and capture a multi-billion dollar opportunity (estimated at anywhere from \$50 billion to \$70 billion).¹²⁵

■ Intel® *She Will Connect*

The Intel® *She Will Connect* program aims to reduce the Internet gender gap. Intel's multi-tiered strategy includes:

- improving digital literacy skills through integrating digital literacy training into gender and development programs in shared computing environments (such as community computer centers), where women can access hardware, software, Internet connectivity, digital training, an online peer network, and other gender-specific content;
- developing an interactive online learning platform to facilitate various modes of learning across different devices;
- offering a robust peer network, through which women can find relevant content and safe access to online communities to exchange ideas and support; and
- connecting participants to other gender-relevant content and resources, including education, financial and health information, and employability and entrepreneurship skills.

Intel's goal is to reach 5 million young women in Africa, where the gap is greatest¹²⁶

■ Microsoft

Microsoft supports initiatives that address career opportunities for women in computing and coding, such as its annual international women's hackathon, which seeks to empower university-level women to become leaders and producers in coding, and a variety of programs within its *YouthSpark* initiative, including *DigiGirlz*, a program now in its 15th year that gives high school girls the opportunity to learn about careers in technology, connect with Microsoft employees, and participate in hands-on workshops.¹²⁷

Microsoft hosts the *Imagine Cup* competition annually, which brings together teams of students from around the world each year to compete for the most innovative technology solutions to global problems and thus provides them with opportunities to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)-related fields. In 2013, Microsoft partnered with UNWomen to provide a special prize, the Women's Empowerment Award, for the two teams whose projects provided the best solutions for challenges facing women globally. Microsoft has also worked with UN Women on a white paper looking at STEM challenges and opportunities for girls.¹²⁸

CATALYTIC TOOL: **TECHNOLOGY**

■ Qualcomm® Wireless Reach™

Qualcomm® Wireless Reach™ has collaborated with the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women, the Foundation for Women's Education and Vocational Training, and Tune Talk to support women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Wireless Reach™ provides funding, technical and project management support, and employee mentors.

Through the Women in Business Program developed by Cherie Blair Foundation, which combines mentoring with technology to offer global support to unleash women's potential, participants use 3G-enabled tablets to connect and engage with skilled business professionals and entrepreneurs from around the world. The program aims to simultaneously improve women's technology and business skills. Prior to receiving the mentoring, the women entrepreneurs receive in-person information and communication technologies, English and business skills training from the Foundation for Women's Education and Vocational Training to build their confidence and skills to ensure a successful mentoring relationship. Participants receive tablets powered by Qualcomm® Snapdragon™, and Internet connectivity via Tune Talk's 3G network.

By the end of 2015, 200 women entrepreneurs will have completed the training and have received tablets and data plans. Mentees have reported significant results, with 100 percent having improved scores on ICT assessments, 93 percent stating that their mentoring relationship has had a positive impact on their business, 96 percent having grown their business skills through the program, and 100 percent asserting that the program helped them build confidence as a businesswoman.¹²⁹

"Meeting women's organisations in all parts of the world, I was impressed to see how the use of a mobile phone can improve women's access to literacy, health, banking, employment and business opportunities to mention just a few.

If there was any doubt about the importance of having a phone, the report tells us that 93% of all women surveyed feel safer and more connected. 55% of all women in business say they have earned additional income due to owning a mobile phone and 41% of all the women interviewed have testified that the phone has increased their income and professional opportunities."

Cherie Blair

Founder, the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women
Foreword to report "Women and Mobile:
A Global Opportunity"

AGENDA FOR ACTION PART II

ENGAGE WOMEN DIRECTLY IN CORE BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND VALUE CHAINS

Promote participation, equal pay and progression of women employees	
<p>1 Integrate gender targets into managers' performance</p>	<p>What gets measured gets managed. Setting corporate-level goals and targets for gender diversity (and, if appropriate, business unit or regional goals and targets) and then translating these into the performance objectives and measurement systems of individual managers—including their role in mentoring, sponsoring and actually promoting women—is a key stepping stone to achieving these goals. Finding creative ways to recognize and learn from the leaders and also rewarding team-wide performance can also contribute to necessary cultural change.</p>
<p>2 Commit to equal pay for women</p>	<p>One of the most pernicious forms of discrimination for women employees is less pay and/or benefits for the same level of responsibility and performance as male colleagues. Given the confidentiality around pay packages and relative lack of public disclosure at an aggregate level, unequal pay remains a tough challenge. Companies can become leaders by publicly committing to and implementing equal pay policies, and by being more transparent in decision-making around talent management, bonuses and promotions.</p>
<p>3 Establish sponsorship programs</p>	<p>There is growing recognition that mentorship programs are necessary but not sufficient and may even be detrimental if not accompanied by clear pathways for advancement and evidence of success among peer groups. The concept of sponsorship is gaining traction as a more directed, high-profile and explicit process whereby respected senior executives sponsor high-potential women—facilitating proactive individual development plans; opening networks for both internal and external leadership and education opportunities; getting engaged in and monitoring gender bias in talent reviews; and identifying specific stretch roles to accelerate progress.</p>
<p>4 Invest in women-led employee networks</p>	<p>Companies should invest sufficient resources—financial, technical and management and employee time—to establish and facilitate women-led networks. These can take a wide variety of forms and operate at different levels of a company, within specific functional, operational or skills groups and/or focus on different issues, ranging from broad women's interests to addressing specific challenges and opportunities.</p> <p>A growing number of these networks strongly encourage male membership and are being used as internal platforms to support frank female-male exchange and shared learning in order to build a more inclusive corporate culture and to tackle unconscious gender bias. Others are linking internal networking objectives with external partnerships and opportunities for their members to mentor women suppliers, support women community partners and/or gain leadership experience by serving on community or nonprofit boards. The key common principles are that such networks or groups should be well resourced, employee led and strongly supported by the CEO and senior management team.</p>
<p>5 Implement gender-sensitive work policies and job design</p>	<p>The way human resource policies are structured and specific jobs are designed can have a substantial impact on the ability of women, and where relevant their partners, to align their roles as professionals or hourly workers with their roles as mothers and daughters (who still carry the main burden of care giving in most cultures). Companies continue to experiment with different approaches to more flexible working options, greater work control, fairer maternity and other family leave policies, and a range of support mechanisms, from onsite child care to concierge services and emergency support options. As they do so, there is also growing recognition for the need to have a more targeted focus on job design for specific high-intensity and highly demanding senior-level executive positions to make them more compatible with women's professional and family roles.</p>

AGENDA FOR ACTION PART II

ENGAGE WOMEN DIRECTLY IN CORE BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND VALUE CHAINS

Promote participation, equal pay and progression of women employees *continued*

6 Tackle gender bias and cultural obstacles

Even with all the other stepping stones in place, women are still not advancing at the pace or level that they are capable of achieving. There is evidence that corporate culture is a key culprit—and in particular, the existence—often not acknowledged or even fully recognized—of gender bias. Termed variously as unconscious bias, implicit bias or cognitive bias, it refers to the myriad ways in which masculine stereotypes and leadership characteristics continue to pervade day-to-day workplace dynamics and relationships, influence talent management and promotion decisions, and undermine the ability of women to advance, even when they are as capable, competent and ambitious as their male counterparts.

Gender bias cannot be tackled through rules and procedures alone, although they play a role. It can only be overcome through changes in corporate culture. Such changes rely on sustained senior-level leadership and role models, constant awareness-raising, training and interpersonal skills development; the ability to have robust dialogue; and managers at all levels taking responsibility, and being held accountable for their personal behaviors. Some companies see parallels between developing effective safety cultures and more inclusive cultures in terms of diversity. Lessons can be learned from this and from changing corporate culture more broadly. Until companies tackle this challenge, gender bias will remain a major obstacle to women's advancement as employees.

Build capacity and linkages with women-owned businesses

7 Leverage impact through existing business partners

In addition to procurement teams developing their own targets and standards for working with women-owned or gender diverse suppliers, distributors and joint venture partners, large companies can have a strong multiplier effect by partnering with their existing business partners, which are often large companies themselves. At a minimum, they can use Supplier Codes of Conduct and contractual agreements to address discrimination against women along their value chains. Beyond this, they can work together to create shared databases on existing and high-potential women suppliers and host joint networking and training sessions.

8 Match high-potential suppliers with experienced mentors

A number of companies are providing targeted support to high-potential suppliers and distributors through a combination of training and mentoring. This includes matching them with existing business partners in the company's value chain who are experienced in working with the company and have capabilities that are directly relevant to the high-potential business partner. Incentives need to be created for existing business partners to participate in such efforts, as they can be a useful tool to further strengthen business relationships and trust.

AGENDA FOR ACTION PART II

ENGAGE WOMEN DIRECTLY IN CORE BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND VALUE CHAINS

Build capacity and linkages with women-owned businesses <i>continued</i>	
<p>9 Create platforms for shared learning and business networking</p>	<p>Companies are also hosting a wide variety of virtual platforms and physical meetings, workshops and conferences that bring together existing and potential women business partners to learn from and network with each other. This can help the host company select high potential women-owned businesses and entrepreneurs for its own value chain, while offering all participants an opportunity to develop their skills and networks and identify other business opportunities.</p>
<p>10 Explore internal synergies between different functions</p>	<p>There is an untapped opportunity for companies to strengthen synergies between different functions that focus on women's economic empowerment, especially human resources, procurement and community relations. Community teams, for example, can support projects to identify, train and improve access to credit and business support services for women entrepreneurs in relevant locations or industries who have potential but do not yet have the capability to be a business partner or on the company's supplier database. Likewise, women's employee networks can develop partnerships whereby company employees with relevant skills and experiences can serve as mentors or advisors to potential women business partners outside the company.</p>
<p>11 Leverage commercial relationships to improve supplier access to products and services</p>	<p>For many potential suppliers, access to credit and other financial services, legal and accounting services, relevant business skills, technology and logistics capabilities are often necessary for them to meet the quality and reliability standards set by large companies. Almost all companies have an existing network of commercial relationships that provide the company with these products and services. There is an opportunity for more creative partnerships whereby such products and services could be provided to the company's smaller or less established women-owned business partners on a lower-scale and cost basis. Banks, for example, can provide small business loans to women-owned enterprises that are on the company's supplier database, technology companies can support small business training, and so on.</p>
<p>12 Partner with and build intermediary organizations</p>	<p>Given the support that many smaller or newly established women-owned enterprises require to be ready to work with a larger company, a valuable role can be played by intermediary organizations that are dedicated to building linkages between large companies and smaller businesses. Such organizations include local chambers of commerce, specialized non-profits and consulting firms. They can help lower the transaction costs of supplier development and provide more dedicated and targeted support than even a large company can offer on its own. There is potential also for governments, donor agencies and private foundations to fund these intermediary organizations to build a broader ecosystem for women-owned enterprise development.</p>
<p>13 Work collectively to enhance the enabling environment for women entrepreneurs</p>	<p>In a number of countries and/or industry sectors, there is a critical mass of large companies that have made a commitment to increasing women-owned businesses in their value chain. This creates an opportunity for them to work jointly on addressing systemic obstacles to women's entrepreneurship and ownership. This may include joint advocacy efforts to encourage policy reforms, for example, making it easier for businesswomen to own economic assets or get access to credit. It may involve setting up joint small business development centers, creating shared databases of potential suppliers or calling jointly on government and donors to increase public funding to support women's enterprise development. Despite competitive issues that need to be addressed, there is great potential for more precompetitive alliances to be established.</p>

AGENDA FOR ACTION PART II

ENGAGE WOMEN DIRECTLY IN CORE BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND VALUE CHAINS

Improve access to rights and productive assets for women farmers, artisans and factory workers	
14 Improve awareness of basic rights, especially labor and land rights	Even when appropriate laws and regulations are in place, many women farmers, artisans and factory workers lack awareness of their legal rights, especially in terms of labor standards and ownership of land and other essential economic access. Large companies can partner with specialist intermediary organizations to help women who are already working in their global value chains or who are potential participants to improve their awareness of these rights and their confidence and ability to demand them. These activities can range from providing factory workers with a small card and hotline number in their own language to more intensive workplace-based awareness and training sessions, and engaging with governments to strengthen public policies in this area.
15 Enhance access to financial services, training and technology in appropriate combinations	<p>It is simple to say that most women farmers, artisans and factory workers require some type of access to financial services, training and technology. The specific needs of these women and the most effective interventions for meeting them are much more complex and nuanced. It depends on a variety of factors, ranging from the woman's own level of literacy and confidence to the state of economic development in her region or country and the industry sector involved.</p> <p>Seminal research undertaken by the UN Foundation and The ExxonMobil Foundation entitled "A Roadmap for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment" provides detailed and evidence-based analysis of the most effective types and combinations of interventions for women entrepreneurs, farmers and employees in different economic environments. It assesses interventions such as financial services (savings as well as credit); business management training; demand-driven job services such as skills training, internships, vouchers and subsidies; bundled services; land rights and titling; child care for wage workers; rural electrification; conditional cash transfers; mobile phones; business networks and farmer associations; and the role of mentors and role models. In addition to providing empirical evidence on the interventions that are proven or most promising, the framework provides valuable lessons and guidance for any company engaging with women in these areas.</p>
16 Increase access to business networks and markets	Low-income women entrepreneurs, farmers, artisans and factory workers benefit from being supported with platforms and resources that increase their access to business networks and larger companies. They often lack the existing relationships, technologies or confidence to build these on their own and supporting them to make market-driven linkages can help to improve their skills and confidence as well as their access to specific business contacts and income generating opportunities.

AGENDA FOR ACTION PART II

ENGAGE WOMEN DIRECTLY IN CORE BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND VALUE CHAINS

Improve access to rights and productive assets for women farmers, artisans and factory workers	
17 Help women to organize collectively	<p>Another major challenge that low-income women face in joining the formal labor market and integrating into corporate value chains is their relative lack of voice and bargaining power when it comes to negotiating prices, contracts and other terms of engagement with middlemen and larger businesses.</p> <p>One of the most valuable ways that companies and governments can support the economic empowerment of these women is through helping them to either play a more integrated and visible leadership role in existing farmer, producer and business associations or helping them to establish their own women-led associations. Such associations can help women not only improve their market-based skills and bargaining power, but also their ability to advocate collectively for more gender-friendly public policies.</p>
18 Implement programs that combine personal and professional development	<p>A growing number of corporate-led programs that support women farmers, artisans and factory workers are focusing not only on helping them to develop technical and business skills, but also broader interpersonal and life skills. Lack of confidence is often as much an obstacle for these women as lack of capability, and giving them the tools they need to increase both can be an immensely valuable contribution along the path to economic empowerment. Greater market-based confidence and capability can translate not only into better opportunities for low-income women to increase their direct incomes and livelihood opportunities, but also into greater investments in their families and communities more broadly, resulting in a potentially transformative development impact.</p>

*“My message is simple: we need a 21st century mentality for women’s economic participation. We need to flush away the flotsam of ingrained gender inequality. We need to, as I like to say, “dare the difference”. To “dare” means to take risks, to step out of our cozy comfort zones, to let hope extinguish fear and courage conquer timidity. Ultimately, daring the difference means wedging open the door to the contribution of women—their **learning**, their **labor**, and their **leadership**. The “3 L’s” of women’s empowerment.”*

Christine Lagarde

Managing Director, International Monetary Fund

“Daring the Difference: The 3 L’s of Women’s Empowerment”

Speech to National Democratic Institute, Washington DC, May 19 2014

PART III

Enabling Women Through Corporate Community Investment and Philanthropy



1. Investing in women leaders
2. Improving women's education and skills
3. Strengthening women's health, safety and wellness

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

Alyse Nelson, President & CEO, Vital Voices

When we consider strategies for sustainable economic development on a global scale, we need to look beyond broad numbers and set our sights on sustained impact. It is not enough to increase women's representation in business; we need to leverage women's unique contributions as leaders. In societies where women's rights are valued and their access to opportunity is unrestricted, children are better educated, families are healthier, and economies thrive. While women are increasingly tapped as catalysts for economic growth, what has not been quantified is the particular impact that powerful female business owners have on the communities around them.

At Vital Voices, we consistently see that when women leaders experience an increase in influence, they use it to improve much more than the bottom line. This is the true untapped potential of women's economic development. Empowered economically, businesswomen often extend their efforts to social challenges — they take on education reform, initiate community

development projects, and become committed human rights advocates. This is the space in which we must continue to innovate. The needs are evolving quickly. Gone are the days when one-off trainings were enough. Today, women in business need highly coordinated systems of support that reach them where they are and that stay with them as they develop. With ongoing access to training, mentors, and markets, an individual entrepreneur can grow her enterprise into a thriving business. And her success in business brings her leverage to influence the essential needs of her community.

Over the next decade, women's impact on the global economy as producers, entrepreneurs, employers, and consumers will be substantial; if we commit ourselves to not only support women's economic participation, but also develop their potential as community leaders, we will see benefits that extend beyond a woman's family to her community, country, continent, and our shared world.

VITAL VOICES

Vital Voices Global Partnership identifies, invests in and brings visibility to extraordinary women around the world by unleashing their leadership potential to transform lives and accelerate peace and prosperity in their communities. Founded by former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 1997, the organization trains and mentors women leaders as agents of transformative change in economic development, human rights and political participation. The Vital Voices Global Leadership Network includes more than 14,000 leaders representing 144 countries who have trained and mentored 500,000 additional women and girls in their communities.

www.vitalvoices.org

III Enabling Women Through Corporate Community Investment and Philanthropy

Companies seeking to economically empower women can look beyond their core business activities and value chains to understand how their philanthropic and community investment programs can also enable women to build their leadership potential, their technical and business skills, and their health, safety and wellness. A company might define its area of impact as a community that has significance to the company's operations, or any location in the world where the company recognizes a need. It may engage in individual action or cross-sector partnerships to help improve women's potential to be a community leader, entrepreneur or consumer through interventions that include leadership training, education and skills training, and health, safety and wellness programs.

As previously stated in this report, working toward women's economic empowerment has a multiplier effect in society, as women are much more likely than men to reinvest any earnings and share any learnings with their families and communities.¹³⁰ Solutions tailored to local societal norms, education levels and standards, and political engagement are often the most effective—hence the importance of working with grassroots women's organizations when aiming to have a positive impact on women in local and global communities.¹³¹

1 INVESTING IN WOMEN LEADERS

As Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has said, “The changing agency of women is one of the major mediators of economic and social change, and its determination as well as consequences closely relate to many of the central features of the development process.”¹³² One of the most sustainable interventions to improve gender equality and women's economic empowerment is to identify and empower the women who already serve, in some form or function, as leaders in their communities, defined not only as local communities and grassroots leaders but also broader national and even global communities. At a local

level, these leaders may be as diverse as a manager or administrator with a local women's organization, a shopkeeper whose neighborhood retail kiosk serves as center for community information, an educator at a technical or academic institution or a community-based healthcare worker. These women have a special remit, as they are often trusted by others in their communities and can serve as vital advocates and drivers of positive change. More broadly, companies can support women to develop the necessary leadership skills, mentors and networks to have influence at the national or global level.

Good Practice Examples

Boosting core competencies of women leaders in community organizations

ExxonMobil, the world's largest publicly traded international oil and gas company, focuses on women in many different capacities, including its own employees, of which 39 percent of new managerial and professional hires in 2013 were women;¹³³ its leadership in collaboration with civil society organizations, like The ExxonMobil Foundation's seminal report in partnership with

the United Nations Foundation, *A Roadmap for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment*; and in its community and stakeholder engagement. Since its launch in 2005, The ExxonMobil Women's Economic Opportunity Initiative has reached tens of thousands of women in some 90 countries through nearly \$100 million of investment in programs, including Global Women in Management (GWIM), a cornerstone in reaching women leaders in community organizations. GWIM, run by Plan International, USA, is a month-long workshop that strengthens the leadership, management and technical skills of mid-career women from diverse cultures working in a variety of regional or local NGOs in order to enhance and bring to scale programs that advance women's economic opportunities. Working within the context of participants' technical and program priorities, GWIM strengthens competencies in project and financial management, leadership, fundraising and proposal development, strategic communications, supervision, and advocacy to prepare women leaders to assume increased responsibilities and accountability. Following the GWIM workshop, participants embark on a year-long coaching relationship with experienced Plan alumni.

In Papua New Guinea (PNG), a country with a significantly high level of gender inequality, ExxonMobil is operating the PNG LNG Project, a US \$19 billion capital investment. Helping to build the capacity of PNG's citizens, organizations, and government is key to the success of the Project and to the long-term sustainability of gains made. Working closely with community groups is critical to the project's stakeholder engagement strategy and a way to help build local, regional and national capacity.¹³⁴ Through GWIM to date, the company has supported 49 women leaders from PNG, many selected from communities and/or non-governmental organizations working in the PNG LNG Project area. A number of participants have reinvested the skills they gained in the GWIM program to offer training

and mentoring to other women leaders within their own organizations and communities. Several have also established or scaled-up organizations and programs to directly support women and girls and to serve the public good more broadly.^{135, 136} This multiplier impact is helping to improve the lives and opportunities of other women in PNG, both in terms of economic empowerment and social resilience, and to help build the long-term capacity of one of the world's poorest countries.

Developing women leaders in global public health

There is an urgent need to develop a new generation of leaders in public health, from community-based healthcare workers to nurses, doctors, administrators, scientists and government officials. Increasing the quantity and quality of professionally trained women leaders in each of these areas, alongside men, will be vital to strengthening health systems more broadly. In recent years, a number of companies in the pharmaceutical sector and beyond have provided financial and in-kind support for innovative initiatives to develop such leaders. One example is **AbbVie**. Although only established as a new company in 2013, it can draw on a longstanding legacy of scientific breakthroughs, pioneering philanthropic strategies and on-the-ground capacity building from its years as part of Abbott. Building capacity remains a core pillar of the company's strategy to improve health outcomes and contribute to communities.

GlobeMed and **Global Health Corps** are two of the leadership development organizations partnering with the company. Created by undergraduate students at Northwestern in 2007, GlobeMed facilitates direct partnerships between some 2,000 students and student chapters in 56 universities with grassroots health organizations in 19 countries in Asia, Africa and the Americas.¹³⁷ Global Health Corps was created in 2008 by a small group of recent graduates who saw the potential of selecting and training outstanding

young leaders from several African countries and the United States to serve for a year with high-impact health organizations in these countries. Today it works with over 300 fellows and alumni and 59 placement organizations, ranging from Ministries of Health to international NGOs and grassroots organizations.¹³⁸ Neither organization focuses solely on women's leadership development, but the majority of participants in both initiatives are women. The 2014 class of Global Health Corps fellows is 63 percent women, although men are still the majority among African fellows, and likewise GlobeMed estimates that some 60 to 75 percent of its active students are women.¹³⁹

In addition to AbbVie, the two organizations are supported by other companies such as **Abbott, Bristol-Myers Squibb, BD, ExxonMobil, Bank of America, Cisco, Goldman Sachs** and **Pfizer**. The companies are providing a combination of financial support, governance and strategic advice, product donations, useful networks, introductions to relevant leaders and employee-led mentoring and engagement opportunities. They are harnessing their community investments to develop diverse health leaders, while also helping to address health issues that impact women and girls.

Connecting emerging women leaders with global mentors

Bank of America can point to a longstanding history of hiring women and serving women customers. In recent decades it has continued to build on this, establishing a variety of employee networks for women, who represent over 50 percent of the bank's employees, investing in research and thought-leadership on the growing economic importance of women through U.S. Trust and Bank of America Merrill Lynch, and partnering with the Tory Burch Foundation to create Elizabeth Street Capital to deliver loans to women-owned small businesses in the United States.

The bank is also supporting the emergence of women leaders in business, politics and civil society in a variety of countries through the Global Ambassadors Program undertaken in partnership with **Vital Voices**.

The five-year Global Ambassadors Program was launched in 2012, with a mission to invest "in the potential of emerging women leaders around the world by matching them with mentors who are established leaders." The program aims to build communications, advocacy and decision-making skills as well as local and global networks for these emerging leaders and to help them create strategies to advance their work in ways that benefit their wider communities. Vital Voices plays in a key role in identifying and matching the women leaders with "Ambassadors" from business, government, media, and nonprofit organizations who not only have content expertise and recognized leadership experience, but are also skilled at mentoring. Since its inception, the Global Ambassadors Program has reached more than 6,700 women through facilitating mentoring forums, study trips and other interactions in Poland, Northern Ireland, Mexico, Qatar, Brazil, Singapore, India, South Africa, and Haiti.¹⁴⁰

Fostering education to empower the next generation of women social entrepreneurs

At the World Economic Forum in 2012, **Tupperware Brands Corporation**, along with the U.S. Department of State's Office of Global Women's Issues and Rollins College, launched a public-private partnership, the Tupperware Global Links Program. The program, an educational initiative to encourage entrepreneurship in developing markets, is designed to train female professors in social entrepreneurship and has since expanded from Iraq to India. At its core, Global Links serves as a catalyst for national development stemming from its support of women's entrepreneurship through business training and mentorships. Global Links utilizes a train-the-

trainer model, with the goal of creating a pool of students who will support and mentor women in the community in starting their own businesses. Through Global Links, a female professor of business is selected for a yearlong program comprising both an externship at Tupperware Brands' headquarters in Orlando, Florida, and an academic year-in-residence at nearby Rollins College. According to Tupperware Brands Chairman and CEO Rick Goings, the goal is for the professor to "learn and return," inspiring a new generation of female entrepreneurs in her own students.¹⁴¹ At Rollins College, the scholar participates in a curriculum that includes coursework on human-centered design thinking, entrepreneurship, and small and medium enterprise development. At the company, she gains practical experience and learns the fundamentals of direct selling, market analysis, and management.

The first Global Links scholar was Babylon University's Dr. Amel Abed Mohammed Ali, whose influence has been multiplied upon her return to Iraq; her students have helped at least 75 women start their own businesses.¹⁴² According to Dr. Amel, the confidence that will allow her students to become financially independent also will empower them to further impact their post-conflict society.¹⁴³ Tupperware Brands is currently working to scale the Global Links program to 10 female professors from India over the course of the next year, including 2015 Global Links Scholar Dr. Sharmistha Banerjee, a Fulbright Scholar from the University of Calcutta.¹⁴⁴ The company is currently reaching out to the additional academic and nonprofit partners to develop a broader coalition. Global Links embodies the mission of Tupperware Brands, with its iconic portfolio of global direct-selling home, beauty and personal care product companies; the company's goal, termed Chain of Confidence, is "to empower women, enable their financial independence, and change their lives through opportunity, support, and relationships."¹⁴⁵

2 IMPROVING WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education and skills training provide a myriad of benefits to women and girls—and to their communities.¹⁴⁶ The mortality rates of children whose mothers have at least seven years of education are up to 58 percent lower than rates among children whose mothers have no education.¹⁴⁷ Educated women are more likely to participate in political discussions, meetings, and decision-making, which in turn promotes a more representative, effective government.¹⁴⁸ They are less likely to be victims of domestic and sexual violence or to tolerate it in their families. And when an educated woman's income increases, she will reinvest 90 percent of that money in her family, compared to 30 to 40 percent for a man.¹⁴⁹ Quantifiable financial benefits accrue as well: in developing countries, each extra year of secondary school a girl receives will boost her wages 15 to 25 percent.¹⁵⁰

Benefits are not limited to basic education; educating women in health and wellness, financial literacy, and legal rights enables them and their families to remain healthier, to improve financial security, and to have the agency to pursue justice. In addition, education focused on helping women and girls to acquire technical skills, for example in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), helps to enhance their digital literacy, which is an increasingly important skill generally, and position them for work opportunities in fast-growing sectors that rely on such technical capabilities.

Good Practice Examples

Tailoring education and mentoring programs to reach vulnerable rural girls

Despite the power of education to raise up girls in society, 62 million girls globally are out of school, with even primary school completion rates below 50 percent in most low-income countries.¹⁵¹ Launched in 2012,

the UK's Department for International Development's Girls' Education Challenge (GEC) sought innovative models for improving the lives of one million of the world's poorest girls through education.¹⁵² The Campaign for Female Education (Camfed) and education company **Pearson** were awarded a GEC grant for their proposal to incentivize 60,000 girls to enroll in secondary school and to empower more than 400,000 girls and boys to improve the educational experience and post-school prospects. The partnership is supported by the Ministries of Education in Zimbabwe and Tanzania, and offers tailored learning modules and peer mentoring specifically to vulnerable girls living in remote rural areas of both countries.¹⁵³ Pearson and Camfed extended the partnership in 2014 as part of a Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) commitment (Girls CHARGE). After witnessing the impact of the initial partnership over two years, Pearson further committed to develop a qualification that would certify 5,000 Camfed 'Learner Guides'—the young women who volunteer to teach and mentor girls to help improve their attendance, retention and learning at secondary school—ensuring they have an improved pathway into higher education and work.¹⁵⁴

Scaling STEM education and career opportunities for women and girls

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education provides multiple benefits for women and girls. Growth in STEM careers is three times that of others, women in STEM fields earn 33 percent more than comparable women in non-STEM fields, and STEM is one of the few areas in which women and men have near-equal wage parity. Despite these advantages, women make up only 25 percent of STEM professionals and only 15 percent of undergraduate STEM degree seekers. To change this equation, **Accenture** is a founding sponsor of Million Women Mentors, a movement that aims to educate and empower one million women and girls to pursue STEM education and careers through high quality

mentoring and sponsorship programs that connect girls and young women with STEM professionals. The initiative aims to connect women and girls to successful role models in order to counter negative stereotypes; these mentorships may be connected to a school, an afterschool program, a post-secondary institution, or the workplace, and are meant to both reduce factors that lead attrition and increase those that support retention, keeping educational and career interests on track for success in STEM.¹⁵⁵ In November 2014, Accenture announced a partnership with Girls Who Code, a U.S.-based national nonprofit that aims to close the technology gender gap. With a cash grant, pro bono services, and in-kind support, Accenture is helping the organization expand across the United States. The company will host summer immersion programs, support new locations for Girls Who Code clubs, and establish an online community for Girls Who Code alumni.¹⁵⁶

3 STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLNESS

Women's health and economic empowerment are inherently linked. Having a steady income helps a woman care for herself and her family; being healthy allows a woman to further pursue her economic goals. Education around reproductive health and sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS prevention, sanitation and hygiene, tobacco and indoor smoke exposure, tropical and chronic diseases, domestic violence, and stress management is key for the ongoing health and well-being of women as well as adolescent girls. And because access to prenatal care and infant immunizations is a good first entry point to the wider health system and offers the chance to identify risk factors and otherwise undiagnosed health burdens, investing in facilities and capacity building programs that improve maternal and child health can help strengthen health systems overall.^{157, 158}

Good Practice Examples

Providing technical skills training to combat a grave health risk while providing sustainable employment

Despite some promising gains, Afghanistan has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. As recently as 2002, the lifetime risk of maternal mortality was one in seven; by comparison, the same risk in the United States was one in 3,500. A wide range of factors contribute to this situation: limited access to health services, particularly in rural areas where 77 percent of Afghans live; nonexistent roads or transit options; and the social, cultural and political complexities that result in Afghanistan being ranked the most dangerous country in the world to be a woman.¹⁵⁹ Afghanistan's male healthcare providers are not allowed to treat women, which leaves only 14 percent of women with access to skilled medical childbirth care.¹⁶⁰

To U.S.-based pharmaceutical and health care company **Abbott**, working in Afghanistan to combat the challenges faced by women was in line with the company's philosophy of viewing women as recipients of investments that lead to sustainable development outcomes. To that end, Abbott and the Abbott Fund work in partnership with Direct Relief International (DRI) and the Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL), the organization founded in 1995 by Nobel Prize nominee and Opus Prize winner Sakena Yacoobi. AIL, an NGO run by Afghan women, helps to create or reconstruct education and health systems capable of reaching Afghans where they live. It currently runs 8 medical clinics, has served nearly 2 million patients, and has trained another 12,000 or so through workshops.¹⁶¹ AIL has five clinics serving rural areas, staffed by Afghan women and providing health services and education; because AIL is run by Afghans and is respectful of Afghan culture, conservative villagers trust AIL to provide services for their women.¹⁶²

The Abbott/DRI/AIL partnership focuses specifically on supporting women's health workshops, expectant mothers' workshops, and nutrition education programs. It also works to train women as midwives or as health care providers for infants and children, which allows them not only to help their communities, but also to gain sustainable employment and the empowerment that comes in hand. According to Kathy Pickus, Abbott's Divisional Vice President, Global Citizenship and Policy, "What we found within the year of their completion of training is that each and every midwife had a job in one sense or another and was making money for their families, investing that money, again, in their girls' education and really developing a cycle of credentialing and education... we'll see the results and the impact for years to come on that."¹⁶³ Abbott and the Abbott Fund have supported AIL with more than \$4.5 million in product donations and \$1.2 million in grants since the partnership began in 2005.¹⁶⁴

Linking health education and outcomes to microfinance

With 800 Caltex service stations, a supply and trading team, and a large refinery, American multinational energy corporation **Chevron** has a sizeable presence in South Africa, a country in which intimate-partner violence and HIV/AIDS are significant and related public health challenges.¹⁶⁵ Women and girls comprise 55 percent of those with HIV infection, and violence is an independent risk factor for HIV infection.¹⁶⁶ Chevron, through its subsidiary Chevron South Africa Ltd., has partnered with USAID and others to support Intervention with Microfinance for AIDS & Gender Equity (IMAGE). IMAGE, which falls under the company's Community and Economic Development corporate social investment (CSI) pillar, is a participatory, community-centered intervention initiative that combines micro financing with a gender and HIV training curriculum called Sisters for Life.

The purpose of the IMAGE program is to improve the economic condition and independence of women, reduce vulnerability to HIV and gender-based violence, and foster robust community mobilization to address common concerns. The IMAGE intervention consists of two components: 1) group-based microfinance, in which groups of five women received loans to establish small businesses and further credit was offered when all women in these ‘solidarity groups’ repaid their loans, and 2) a gender and HIV training curriculum, which was integrated into established meetings of 40 women that took place every two weeks over the course of a year.¹⁶⁷ Over the past two years, more than 1,750 loans have been disbursed, with repayment rates close to 99 percent. There has also been a consistent pattern of improvement in multiple indicators focused on women’s empowerment, including self-confidence, challenging gender norms, autonomy in decision-making, and communication with partners about HIV.¹⁶⁸

Addressing maternal mortality through health systems strengthening

Globally, around 800 women each day die from preventable or treatable complications related to pregnancy and childbirth. These women’s babies are more likely to die before the age of two, and any of her other children are up to 10 times more likely to leave school, suffer from poor health, or die prematurely themselves. Though maternal mortality is a global issue, 99 percent of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries, with 56 percent in sub-Saharan Africa and 29 percent in South Asia.¹⁶⁹ In 2011, with an aim to address Millennium Development Goal #5 (calling for a 75 percent reduction in maternal mortality by 2015), global pharmaceutical company MSD, known as Merck in the United States and Canada, launched a 10-year, \$500 million initiative called **Merck for Mothers**.¹⁷⁰

Merck for Mothers focuses on the two leading causes of maternal mortality globally, postpartum hemorrhage and preeclampsia, and on family planning education and access, which play an important role in reducing maternal mortality rates as well. The initiative tackles maternal mortality through a variety of locally tailored interventions, including product innovation, access to good affordable care, and awareness and advocacy, through partnerships with government and civil society organizations.

In Senegal, for example, Merck for Mothers collaborates with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to improve access to family planning, including expanding the availability of contraceptive supplies. In Brazil, the initiative is working closely with the national government to survey hospitals to determine why maternal deaths are occurring in formal care settings, and how to develop appropriate initiatives to improve the quality of care.¹⁷¹ And in Uganda and Zambia, its programs roll up into *Saving Mothers, Giving Life*, in which it is a partner. *Saving Mothers, Giving Life* is a five-year public-private partnership led by USAID and launched in 2012 to strengthen health systems in countries with particularly high maternal mortality and HIV rates. In just its first year, its efforts in health worker training, infrastructure improvements, and linkages to transportation have helped result in a significant rise in deliveries taking place in a health facility (62 percent in Uganda, 35 percent in Zambia), an exponential increase in access to basic emergency obstetric and newborn care (200 percent increase in facilities offering emergency services in Uganda, and 100 percent in Zambia); and expansion of testing and treatment for HIV/AIDS to prevent mother-child transmission (28 percent increase in Uganda, 18 percent in Zambia).¹⁷²

Taking a holistic approach to improve child and maternal nutrition

It is estimated that some two billion people around the world need access to more nutritious food in order to live healthy lives, and in some cases, even to survive. Most of them are women and children. In 2009, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition joined forces with DSM, Mondelez and Unilever to establish a five-year initiative called **Project Laser Beam**, aimed at exploring new models for tackling child undernutrition.

From the outset, the partners recognized that working with women in their capacity as mothers, health workers, income earners and community leaders would be essential, and that improving women's nutrition, especially for new mothers, pregnant women and adolescent girls, is one of the keys to better child nutrition. They also recognized the need for a holistic approach; one that focused not only on improving access to food and micronutrients, through interventions such as micronutrient powders, fortified oils and school feeding programs, but also on providing clean drinking water and sanitation, addressing basic healthcare and hygiene, and improving food security, farming and income generation. And they also saw the leverage potential of combining public donor grants, government funding, corporate community investment and market-based solutions.

They focused their collaboration on two low-income regions of Bangladesh and Indonesia. In each location, Project Laser Beam worked with local implementation partners including government, local and international nonprofits and domestic food processing companies. They identified existing programs and then worked with local community leaders, many of them women, to strengthen and scale up these programs. Over the five-year partnership, the

initiative implemented 18 coordinated interventions, with 2.48 million people participating in Bangladesh and 424,000 in Indonesia. Of these, it is estimated that some 1.74 million people new to nutrition support were reached.¹⁷³ The long-term impact is yet to be determined, but the project has demonstrated the potential of more holistic approaches that combine public and private resources, and strengthen the role of women in their communities.

Harnessing technology to improve women's safety

As the world's largest software company, **Microsoft's** professional ranks are filled with engineers who gain personal fulfilment from tackling systemic challenges. The company empowers its employees through encouraging them to create solutions to problems that they see through initiatives such as Microsoft Garage, which gives them an outlet to explore ideas in their free time.¹⁷⁴ This strategy has resulted in several powerful initiatives and programs with both local and global impact. Members of one of the Indian chapters of the affinity group Women@Microsoft were horrified at the violent rape and murder of a young woman in Delhi in December 2012 and wanted to use their skills to come out with an application to protect women. They worked through Microsoft Garage to create Guardian, a safety application available exclusively for Windows phone users in India that lets users allow their friends and family to track them in real time using Microsoft cloud and software services. Guardian users can also call for help with an alert button that immediately sends a distress text message, emails, and private Facebook posts to their selected friends and family, and quickly connect to hospitals and police.^{175, 176}

AGENDA FOR ACTION PART III

ENABLE WOMEN AND GIRLS THROUGH CORPORATE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT AND PHILANTHROPY

<p>1 Focus on projects that help women and girls to build their human capital, economic assets and leadership capacity</p>	<p>One of the most important contributions a company can make through its community investment and philanthropy is to build the individual capacity of the women and girls with whom it partners and supports. Building or strengthening capacity gives individuals a set of capabilities and assets they can use as a foundation for further progress—one that often endures over time.</p> <p>Such efforts include building human capital through improving education, skills, training, health and confidence; building economic assets through increasing access to finance, income-generating livelihoods and better financial literacy, flexibility and resilience; and building leadership capacity through providing emerging leaders with platforms to learn, network and lead. Some of these are not easy to measure and their impact may only be demonstrated over long periods of time, but they are essential foundations for both individual and often broader institutional success. Equally, by engaging their own employees more effectively in community service, companies can also enable their employees to build capacity in a manner that benefits the individual employee, the community and the company.</p>
<p>2 Align community investments with key business competencies and priorities</p>	<p>There is untapped potential for companies to achieve greater alignment between the type of community projects and partners they support and the company's own capabilities and interests. Regardless of industry sector, most companies have a set of capabilities that can be effectively leveraged through their community programs in a way that benefits the company, the community and the women and girls with whom it works.</p> <p>For example, how can companies with a physical presence in the community strengthen their operating environment by developing women leaders and promoting diversity in that particular community or the country more broadly? How can health companies enhance women's leadership for public health or improve women's health and nutrition? How can companies that rely on technology and scientific R&D build women's skills in science, technology, engineering and math? How can financial companies ensure greater financial inclusion and literacy for women? Or water and energy companies improve the affordability and reliability of women's access to these vital resources? Regardless of industry sector, most companies have a set of capabilities that can be effectively leveraged through their community programs in a way that benefits the company, the community and the women and girls with whom it works.</p>
<p>3 Partner with specialist women's organizations at the grassroots, national or global level</p>	<p>There are a growing number of nonprofit organizations, networks and associations that focus specifically on promoting women's empowerment in a particular location and/or industry sector or addressing a particular set of challenges or opportunities that women face. The latter ranges from NGOs focused on tackling violence against women to those that focus on opening up new markets and business opportunities for women entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Many countries and cities now have women's business associations or chambers of commerce and women are playing a growing role in producer associations, such as farmers and artisan cooperatives. Partnering with such dedicated organizations can often improve the effectiveness and reach of a company's community investments in supporting women and girls, while also helping to strengthen that organization's own capacity and ability to sustain impact over the longer-term.</p>

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

Kathy Calvin, President and CEO, UN Foundation

Women and girls are high on the agenda of many of UN Foundation's corporate partners—especially as we approach the 20th anniversary of the historic Beijing Conference on Women in a few months.

The UN Foundation worked with The ExxonMobil Foundation to produce *A Roadmap for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment*, which looks at women in their roles as producers, workers, and contributors to their local and national economies. Work like this is important to establish what has been done and what needs to be done to continue improving the status of women around the world.

That knowledge is an important first step in regards to the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With those goals, we have strived for a more collaborative and inclusive process to work with the private sector. The business community weighed in on good governance, regulatory reforms, and other issues that affect

businesses. The task at hand now is to weigh in on and refine targets and indicators for those SDGs, which include a number of factors that impact the lives of women.

We need commitments from both the public and private sectors. From the private sector, we don't just need funding—we need to figure out their role in each country, and work in partnership with them and our NGO and government partners to accomplish those goals.

UN Foundation

The United Nations Foundation links the UN's work with others around the world, mobilizing the energy and expertise of business and non-governmental organizations to help the UN tackle issues including climate change, global health, peace and security, women's empowerment, poverty eradication, energy access, and U.S.-UN relations. The UN Foundation believes that empowering women and girls with educational and economic opportunities and securing their health and human rights is one of the best investments we can make for families, communities, and the world. We work with the UN and our NGO, corporate and government partners to promote gender equality; advance sexual and reproductive health and rights (including family planning); advocate for increased resources and funding for programs and activities benefitting adolescent girls; eliminate gender-based violence; combat climate change; and improve maternal health care using integrated health systems and mobile technology.

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PART IV

Advocating for Women through Corporate Research, Communications and Policy Dialogue



- 1. Data, research and evaluation**
- 2. Corporate communications platforms**
- 3. Public policy dialogue**
- 4. Global principles and standards**

IV Advocating for Women through Corporate Research, Communications and Policy Dialogue

Multinational and well-established national companies and their senior executives often have an influential voice. They are better able than most institutions and individuals to reach political leaders and policy makers, industry peers and competitors, the media, consumers, and the general public through their communications and stakeholder relations activities. This voice and these platforms for sharing ideas and information can be powerful tools for raising awareness and mobilizing collective action on women's issues. By measuring, evaluating, publicizing and advancing the multifaceted case for women's economic empowerment, companies can sustain and amplify their efforts to engage women through their core business operations and value chains and to enable women and girls through their social investment and philanthropy programs.

Four key approaches and tools offer particularly high potential for corporate leadership when it comes to advocating for women:

- Sponsoring, commissioning, undertaking, sharing, and publicizing **data collection and evidence-based research and evaluation**
- Leveraging **corporate communications platforms** such as marketing and advertising campaigns, corporate reporting, executive leadership statements and speeches, and social media
- Engaging in **policy dialogues** with governments at the local or country-level and with inter-governmental agencies at the global level
- Working together to develop and spread **global principles and industry standards**.

Companies can lead or get involved in the above interventions on both an individual basis as well as collectively. The power of a collective corporate voice, when a large number of companies join forces within a specific industry sector or country or on a specific issue, can be particularly effective as a driver of public policy reforms, greater public awareness, and even behavior change.

1 DATA, RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Reliable data and information matters—and significant gaps exist when it comes to data and information on women and girls.

The collection, analysis and dissemination of reliable data and information on women and girls are increasingly recognized as an essential foundation for scaling up efforts to respect their rights and advance their opportunities. Reliable data and information are crucial drivers for raising awareness, increasing understanding and making informed decisions. They can help to convince the skeptics, challenge the laggards, support the leaders, and mobilize the majority of people as well as organizations who broadly know that women's empowerment is 'important' but don't know what they can do about it or who to partner with.

Yet there are serious gaps in the collection and effective use of such data and information. These gaps range from poor to non-existent statistics and insights about many aspects of women's lives and their circumstances to inadequate assessments

of what policies and programs are most effective in empowering women, and why.¹⁷⁷ The United Nations Foundation's Data2X project, founded in 2012 by then-Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has identified 28 key gaps in data that are critical to developing effective strategies and public policy regarding women and girls. These gender data gaps span the areas of health (including mental and physical health as well as health services and violence against women), education, economic opportunities (including access to various inputs), political participation, and human security (including status related to conflict). They show a global lack of coverage across countries and/or regular country production; of international standards; of complexity (that is, information across domains); and of granularity in the form of large, detailed datasets that allow for disaggregation.

Companies can play a valuable role in helping to tackle these gaps in data and information. They can undertake or support evidence-based research to raise public awareness and improve knowledge on issues relating to women beyond the company's own boundaries. They can develop and share guidelines and toolkits to help their own managers and employees, as well as facilitate other companies' and organizations' implementation of programs that support women and girls. They can undertake gender impact assessments to better understand the status of women and the impact of the company's overall business or philanthropy activities on women in a specific location or anywhere the company operates. And they can commission independent evaluations of the performance and impact of dedicated programs they operate for women and girls, and use these to share lessons and good practices with others.

Good Practice Examples

1.1 Raising public awareness and improving knowledge

Over the past decade, several companies have either undertaken or commissioned seminal research that has helped to influence key decision-makers in business and government and move the agenda forward for women's economic empowerment.

In March 2008, **Goldman Sachs** published *Women Hold Up Half the Sky*. The author made a compelling economics and business case argument for the need to reduce gender gaps in education, health, work, wages and political participation.¹⁷⁸ It was one of the first widely disseminated publications researched and written by a private firm that provided evidence-based and data-driven arguments for the need to dramatically scale up efforts to empower women. In addition to influencing Goldman Sachs' own activities and leading to the launch of the company's 10,000 Women initiative (see page 30), the research helped to spur other corporate leaders to take action. **The Goldman Sachs Foundation, with the Nike Foundation, the IKEA Foundation, Intel, The Coca-Cola Company** and a number of private philanthropic foundations and public donor agencies, have also supported a documentary and movement entitled *Half the Sky*, which has helped to further spread both the moral and economic arguments for tackling oppression against women and promoting women's empowerment.

In addition to Goldman Sachs, other knowledge-driven companies, including **McKinsey & Company, Booz/Strategy&, EY, Deloitte, Credit Suisse** and **US Trust**, have published a number of seminal studies during the past decade that provide rigorous data and analysis on the business case for women's economic empowerment at different stages of the corporate value chain and in society more broadly.¹⁷⁹

FIGURE 4: **GENDER DATA GAPS** TYPE OF GAP

	Lacking coverage across countries and/or regular country production	Lacking international standards	Lacking complexity (information across domains)	Lacking granularity (large detailed datasets allowing for disaggregation)
HEALTH				
Maternal morbidity/mortality	●			●
Women's excess disease burdens	●			
Violence against women	●		●	
Mental health	●		●	
Adolescent health	●		●	
Utilization of health services by women	●			
EDUCATION				
Learning outcomes	●	●		
Excluded girls	●	●		
Transition rates	●			
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES				
Unpaid work	●			
Informal employment	●			
Earnings and opportunity cost of work	●	●		
Conditions of migrant workers	●	●		
Employment mobility	●	●	●	●
Entrepreneurship	●		●	●
Asset ownership	●		●	●
Productivity in agriculture	●	●	●	●
Access to financial services	●			
Access to childcare	●	●	●	●
Access to ICT (mobile phones and internet)	●	●	●	●
POLITICAL PARTICIPATION				
Representation in local governance, political organizations & the professions	●	●		
National identity documentation	●			●
Voter registration and turnout	●	●		
HUMAN SECURITY				
Conflict-related mortality and morbidity	●			●
Forcibly displaced and migrant profiles	●			●
Impact of conflict on gender variable; women's adaptive responses to conflict	●		●	●
Conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence	●		●	●
Women's participation in peace and security processes	●	●	●	●

Source: Data2X Project, UN Foundation

Another example is *A Roadmap for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment*, which was co-sponsored by **The ExxonMobil Foundation** and the **United Nations Foundation**. The two organizations set out to address a crucial knowledge gap about what interventions are most effective in increasing women's productivity and earning in developing countries, and why. They commissioned 18 research studies and compiled a first of its kind database of 136 published empirical evaluations of women's empowerment programs and policies. These studies and evaluations were then used to develop a 'roadmap for action' focused on four major categories of interventions: entrepreneurship; farming and rural entrepreneurs; wage employment; and young women's employment. These were further evaluated based on different stages or scenarios of economic development. Interventions were assessed as proven or being proven, promising, high potential and unproven. Published in 2013, the report is now being shared with policy makers, companies and funders in different countries, and the project continues its research, which is publicly available on its website.¹⁸⁰

Global direct seller **Amway** has a longstanding commitment to entrepreneurship, which has become a highly relevant topic when it comes to women's economic empowerment. The company's annual *Amway Global Entrepreneurship Report* (AGER) is published with academic partners in 38 countries, including lead academic partner Technische Universität München, and international research company Gesellschaft fuer Konsumforschung Nuremberg (GfK).¹⁸¹ First launched in 2010 as the Amway European Entrepreneurship Report, the most recent AGER included the results of telephone and face-to-face interviews with more than 43,000 people globally on questions including attitudes about entrepreneurship, such as what drives individuals to become entrepreneurs and in which geographies is entrepreneurship most enabled, as well as the state of entrepreneurship education.¹⁸²

Some companies have commissioned research of direct relevance to their industry sector and used it to inform both their own programs on women's economic empowerment, those of industry peers, and government policies. **Intel** commissioned the 2013 report *Women and the Web*, which was researched by Dalberg and GlobeScan and which produced groundbreaking statistics on the gender digital gap. The report estimated that, on average, nearly 25 percent fewer women than men are online in developing countries, representing some 200 million fewer women, with the gap increasing to 43 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa. Based on the report's findings and recommendations, Intel partnered with other donors to launch the Intel® She Will Connect program, which was reviewed earlier in the report.¹⁸³ **Qualcomm® Wireless Reach™** has worked with Vital Wave and the mobile operators association GSMA through its mWomen Initiative to produce the report *Transforming Women's Lives through Mobile Broadband*.¹⁸⁴ A number of financial services companies have sponsored independent research on improving women's access to finance and gender-related challenges and benefits of greater financial inclusion. These include **Standard Chartered, MasterCard, Visa, and JPMorgan Chase**.¹⁸⁵

1.2 Providing guidance and toolkits

In addition to advancing research that helps to make the business case and the development case for women's economic empowerment and provide examples of good practice, some companies have also developed practitioner-focused guidelines and toolkits to help other companies and organizations to take action. Some of the empirical research studies outlined above are being used or adapted for this purpose. **The Nike Foundation**, which has been a longstanding champion and pioneer focused on the empowerment of girls through, among other initiatives, the Girl Effect movement, is supporting *Girl Hub*, which works to empower the world's 250 million adolescent girls living in poverty. A strategic collaboration between the Nike

Foundation and the UK Department for International Development, Girl Hub currently operates in Rwanda, Nigeria, and Ethiopia, with a focus on unlocking insights through direct communications with the target girls so that they get what they need in a way that works for them.¹⁸⁶

Rio Tinto developed *Why Gender Matters*, a resource guide for integrating gender considerations into its community engagement programs around the world, which it has also made publicly available to other companies. The guide, published with the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining at the University of Queensland, offers guidance including the background and case for integrating gender into community work in mining, how to plan and effectively implement strategies within the complex context of mining communities, the importance for monitoring and evaluation of such work, and the value of communicating the work both internally and externally. The guide also includes the international standards and protocols for gender mainstreaming, a glossary, and robust data.^{187, 188}

The Niger Delta Partnership Initiative (NDPI) offers another example of a corporate-led initiative that is sharing guidance on how to integrate gender issues more strategically into project impact assessments and as a core component of economic development and peace-building programs. Established in 2010 by **Chevron** and supported by a variety of public donors and government partnerships, NDPI and its Nigeria-based sister organization, Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND), has commissioned several independent and publicly available studies to identify key gender considerations and constraints in the complex Niger Delta region and to support the development of proposals for addressing these.¹⁸⁹ As part of its ongoing efforts to tackle these constraints and to promote women's empowerment, the foundation has shared research findings and guidance tools with

other public sector and NGO partners, conducted capacity building of women's groups and associations, supported the role of women as peace-builders, worked with women within the initiative's agricultural value chains, whether as market traders or as leaders of agricultural associations, and hosted development forums in Nigeria and internationally that profile women leaders as role models.

1.3 Evaluating corporate-led women's programs

In addition to identifying and closing gaps in data about women and girls, researching and promoting the business case for women's empowerment, and developing practical guidance to enable more companies and development partners to address these issues, there is also a need for more rigorous and independent evaluations of corporate-led programs to support women and girls. Such evaluations not only help to assess the impact of these programs and identify lessons that can be more broadly shared, but also help to build credibility and trust among companies and their public sector and NGO partners. In addition, they can be useful tools for engaging in public policy dialogue with host governments and with donor agencies to increase awareness and public sector resources for effective business or market-led initiatives.

The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) has been a pioneer in undertaking evidence-based research on the role of women as economic actors since its creation in 1976. For almost four decades, ICRW has played a vital leadership role in quantifying how "...women contribute to the economy through diverse occupations and showing that a growing number of poor households depend on income from women's labor."¹⁹⁰ It has demonstrated the shortfalls of various poverty alleviation programs that have failed to focus on the crucial economic role played by women, and it has produced compelling evidence on the links between women's health, safety,

food security and economic empowerment. ICRW has also been effective in using its applied research to engage with policy makers, funders and decision-makers to advocate for women’s empowerment.

Over the past decade, as a growing number of corporations have established dedicated programs to support women and girls, ICRW has been an obvious partner both as an advisor and as an experienced research institute. Among a wide variety of engagements, it has been commissioned to conduct publicly available evaluations on the Goldman Sach’s 10,000 Women Initiative, Gap’s P.A.C.E. program and the Intel Learn and Teach Programs.^{191, 192, 193} Such evaluations are an important foundation for ongoing efforts to better understand what works most effectively and what needs to be improved in corporate-led efforts to support women’s empowerment, and in drawing broader lessons for both companies and public policy from specific programs.

In 2014, working with the Oak Foundation, Dalberg and Witter Ventures, ICRW published a useful diagnostic tool to help companies take a more integrated approach to addressing the underlying structural barriers to women’s economic

empowerment across corporate value chains.¹⁹⁴ Based on analysis of 31 of the largest corporate-funded women’s economic empowerment programs run by 28 companies and corporate foundations (all launched in the past 12 years) the report explored ways that companies can leverage their core assets—people; investments; brands; partners; and purchasing power—to implement eight building blocks for achieving women’s economic empowerment. These eight building blocks are based on a human-rights framework and the report provides guidance for companies across industry sectors on how they can support women in each of these eight areas as suppliers, contractors and distributors; employees; consumers; and members of communities.

Whether companies undertake evidence-based research and evaluations themselves or they commission independent research institutes and other organizations to do so, such activities can play a valuable role in supporting women’s economic empowerment. They can help to close the data and evidence gaps on women and girls, raise awareness and provide guidance, analytical tools and evaluation to drive action not only by corporate decision makers, but also by donors and policy makers.

FIGURE 5: EIGHT BUILDING BLOCKS FOR AN INTEGRATED APPROACH



Source: *The Business Case for Women’s Economic Empowerment: An Integrated Approach*, ICRW

2 CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORMS

With billions of customers reached by professionally-crafted, well-researched campaigns for products and services, corporations with well-known consumer brands not only have a massive pool of potential hearts, minds, and wallets to win, but also the professional teams to craft effective messaging. This communications ability holds great potential in terms of the breadth and scope of audience, the content and effectiveness of messaging, and the ability to capture attention of consumers and decision-makers, both women and men. In addition to a company harnessing its advertising and marketing platforms to promote awareness of women's issues, company-sponsored awards and recognition programs can also promote projects that empower women as well as the commitment of the sponsoring company. These corporate communications platforms comprise an untapped component of the toolkit that many consumer-facing companies can use to promote women's economic empowerment.

2.1 Individual corporate advertising and marketing

Using their marketing budgets and communications platforms, a variety of companies are successfully highlighting the importance of empowering women and girls. **Procter & Gamble's** Always brand *Like a Girl* campaign helps to tackle gender stereotypes by highlighting how young girls, unaware that "like a girl" is often an insult, respond to the phrase by showing how fast, strong, brave, or smart they are, whereas adults respond by acting in more negative and unconfident ways.¹⁹⁵ Additionally, the company's Pantene brand won recognition for an advertisement in The Philippines that challenged gender discrimination in the workplace.¹⁹⁶ Indian jewelry chain **Tanishq** opened dialogue by tackling stereotypes against the remarriage of widowed and divorced women—a first for an Indian company.¹⁹⁷ **The Coca-Cola Company's** 5by20 initiative sponsors

The Adelante Movement founded by Nely Galan, which is designed to unite and empower Latinas in the U.S. economically through inspiration, motivation, training and resources on entrepreneurship.¹⁹⁸ Other messaging ranges from **Bobbi Brown's** Pretty Powerful cause marketing for girls' education to **The Body Shop's** campaigns against human trafficking and domestic violence to **Unilever's** public health messages on hand-washing and nutrition.

2.2 Public awards and recognition

Awards and recognition programs can help raise the profile of individual women or initiatives working to empower them, and provide impetus to compel others to take part. In partnership with UNESCO, the **L'Oréal** Foundation's For Women in Science program, which supports women researchers at different points in their careers, presents awards annually to women working in life or physical sciences. Each year, five exceptional established scientists receive the L'Oréal-UNESCO Award, while 15 doctoral or post-doctoral researchers in the life sciences are awarded International Fellowships. There are also National Fellowships in nearly 50 countries, plus Regional Fellowships in the Arab States and in sub-Saharan Africa that aim to help young women launch their scientific careers.¹⁹⁹ Other examples include **Diageo's** Women's Empowerment Awards, which recognizes journalists who write about and help promote women's empowerment, and **EY's** Entrepreneur of the Year award, which was reviewed earlier in this report.²⁰⁰

2.3 Joint campaigns for women and girls

In addition to individual action, companies can partner with industry peers, across industries, or across sectors to create joint campaigns or movements. The *Girl Rising* campaign, which uses a strong media component to frame its work around the importance of empowering the girl child, is a collaborative, ongoing partnership of **Intel, Bobbi Brown, Google.org, Nike Foundation**, and other companies, along with a host of civil society and government partners.²⁰¹ The

Half the Sky movement, with its mission of “turning oppression into opportunity for women worldwide,” has more than 30 NGO partners and counts **IKEA Foundation, Zynga.org, The Coca-Cola Company, Goldman Sachs Foundation, Nike Foundation,** and **Intel** among its corporate partners and funders.²⁰² And *Chime for Change*, founded by **Gucci**, works to raise funds and awareness to promote education, health and justice for girls and women with partners including the **Kering Foundation, Facebook, Hearst Magazines, Procter & Gamble** Prestige, **Kellogg’s** Special K, and **Unilever’s** Dove brand, as well as foundations and crowd-funding organizations.²⁰³

3 PUBLIC POLICY DIALOGUE

Even the most comprehensive and well thought-out strategies for women’s economic empowerment cannot be sustained in the absence of an enabling policy environment. Companies have an important role to play in encouraging governments and supporting NGOs and civil society organizations to push for public policies that promote not just women’s economic empowerment, but the education, health, and social systems that must be in place for those policies to succeed. Further, companies are often governments’ natural allies in wanting a workforce to be more competitive—and can increasingly provide the data and empirical research that could help convince government ministries and legislative bodies to craft and implement policies that are at a minimum more inclusive of women and in some cases explicitly protect and benefit women.

Companies with specific programs for women’s economic empowerment are often effective in targeting policy most relevant to their initiatives. In Myanmar, for example, U.S.-based information technology companies **Qualcomm, Microsoft, HP, Google,** and **Cisco** have worked with the U.S. Agency for International Development to create the U.S.-Myanmar ICT Council, which among other goals aims to create an enabling environment in the

country for improving access to ICT and for ensuring that women do not get excluded in this process.²⁰⁴ In Rwanda, retailer **Kate Spade & Company** worked with the Rwandan government to reduce tariffs on materials necessary for its artisan supplier, ADB (profiled in an earlier section of the report), as well as advocated to get handbags included in the African Growth and Opportunity Act.²⁰⁵ Executives from companies as diverse as **Nike, Goldman Sachs, ExxonMobil** and **The Coca-Cola Company**, have engaged with government leaders in specific countries of operation and at the global level to make the business case and the development case for women’s economic empowerment and to support country-level gender studies and policy dialogue.

Global organizations with a strong private-sector presence have been particularly effective in working with governments. **The World Economic Forum’s** Global Agenda Council on Women’s Empowerment, for example, advised task forces from the governments of Mexico, Turkey, and Japan on how to close their gender gaps by up to 10 percent by 2017, and shared this work more broadly by highlighting the research and knowledge through events, blog posts, and videos.²⁰⁶ The Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report benchmarks national gender gaps in 142 countries. Now in its ninth year, the report allows for a time-series analysis on the changing patterns of gender equality globally and tracks a strong correlation between a country’s gender gap and its national competitiveness.²⁰⁷

Companies can also consider partnering with multilateral organizations, whose frameworks offer strategic pathways for involvement in the empowerment of women and girls. The **United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)**, which asks companies to embrace universal principles and to partner with the UN, is an important platform for the UN to engage effectively with business. Through both the Business and Industry Major Group and individual business input and feedback, the private

sector has played an active role in developing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will be launched at the UN General Assembly in September 2015. The goals include SDG #5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls,” as well as multiple sub-goals that demonstrate how women and girls are disproportionately affected by a wide range of issues from climate to peace and justice, and how women are essential in the achievement of most of the other SDGs.²⁰⁸

As previously mentioned, without robust data to support it, policy is often ineffective or not implemented at all. **The Clinton Foundation’s** *No Ceilings* project and the **UN Foundation’s** Data2X initiative have worked to identify major data gaps, which include civil registration and vital statistics, women’s work and employment, supply side data on financial services, women’s subjective well-being and poverty, big data and gender, improved gender data on U.S. foreign assistance programs. The projects work with partners to gather the missing data as well as analyze, report, and promote it.²⁰⁹

4 GLOBAL PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

Signing up to and implementing global principles, and standards, can offer companies a way to demonstrate their commitment to women’s empowerment to key stakeholders such as employees, customers, communities and, in some cases investors and host governments. In addition, the internal assessments and information gathering necessary to meet the requirements of these frameworks often help companies to better identify and understand the issues and obstacles they face, and can improve internal decision-making and corporate culture.

Certifications and labeling offer one route. **The Global Reporting Initiative** and the **IFC** have created a practitioners’ guide to embedding gender in sustainability reporting. The guide, based on research as well as a global series of stakeholder workshops,

offers companies that use the GRI Sustainability Reporting Framework a way to embed material gender issues into their sustainability reports.²¹⁰ For comprehensive certification, **EDGE** is a global business standard for gender equality. Its methodology and certification system can be applied across industries and regions to assess and track progress in closing the corporate gender gap in areas including assessing equal pay for equivalent work; recruitment and promotion; leadership development training and mentoring; flexible working; and company culture. Since its official launch at the 2011 Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum, EDGE has certified Deloitte Switzerland, IKEA Switzerland, CEPD NV, Compartamos Banco, Lombard Odier, L’Oreal USA, and Technip, and has presented its findings at The White House.²¹¹ In addition to seeking certification for themselves, companies may also consider labeling their products or services. As stated earlier in the report, **Walmart**, along with the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council and WEConnect International, has adopted a logo indicating that the company behind the labeled product is a woman-owned business.²¹²

Another example is the **Women’s Empowerment Principles** (WEPs). These are a collaboration between UN Women and the UN Global Compact and are summarised in Figure 6. The WEPs were launched in 2010 after extensive multi-stakeholder input. They are adapted from the Calvert Women Principles, which were developed in a pioneering effort in 2004 in partnership with UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) and were “the first global corporate code of conduct focused exclusively on empowering, advancing, and investing in women worldwide.”²¹³ As a voluntary framework, the WEPs do not bind signatories to any obligations; they do, however, offer companies an effective way to show their commitment to advancing gender quality and to encourage others to do the same. The CEO Statement of Support for the Women’s Empowerment Principles has 550 signatories to date.²¹⁴

FIGURE 6: UN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES



**EMPOWERMENT
WOMEN'S PRINCIPLES
EQUALITY MEANS BUSINESS**



**EQUALITY
MEANS
BUSINESS**

- 1** Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
- 2** Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and nondiscrimination.
- 3** Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers.
- 4** Promote education, training and professional development for women.
- 5** Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.
- 6** Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
- 7** Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.



UN PHOTO/STEPHENIE HOLLYMAN



United Nations Global Compact



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

AGENDA FOR ACTION PART IV

ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN THROUGH CORPORATE RESEARCH, COMMUNICATIONS AND POLICY DIALOGUE

<p>1 Fund or co-fund public research to improve data collection and analysis on women</p>	<p>There are untapped opportunities for companies to support publicly available research that will help to empower women. For companies with their own research capabilities, this can involve directly producing data, evidence and/or analysis on women’s issues relevant to their industry that can be used to influence public policies or corporate strategies and decision-making.</p> <p>Examples include, financial services firms researching women’s financial inclusion and ways to better serve women consumers and scientists in technology-based companies sharing their expertise as advisors on public health and nutrition research projects of relevance to women. Alternatively, companies can commission or sponsor research relevant to women’s empowerment undertaken by academic institutions, consultants or nonprofits with a focus on women.</p>
<p>2 Explore ways to harness corporate communications platforms</p>	<p>More and more companies have a public voice through a combination of traditional public relations channels such as corporate advertising, media coverage and speaking at conferences and increasingly through social media platforms. These can be more effectively harnessed to reach out to women as customers, employees, investors, policymakers and thought leaders; to profile women leaders as role models; and to raise public awareness on women’s issues.</p>
<p>3 Include women’s empowerment in relevant policy and government dialogues</p>	<p>Business leaders meet frequently with policymakers and influencers, especially at the local level in the cities, towns and regions where they operate, but in some cases also nationally and globally. There are opportunities to include more data and examples about the importance of gender diversity in such dialogues, whether the meetings are private one-to-one discussions or joint dialogue on public platforms.</p>
<p>4 Participate in global platforms and frameworks for women’s empowerment</p>	<p>CEOs and their senior executives can also publicly support key global initiatives that are focused on women’s empowerment and encourage their functional and business unit leaders to participate in industry sector alliances or broader networks and business associations that are advocating for women, developing management systems for improving gender diversity or sharing best practices on what works for women’s economic empowerment.</p>

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS:

An Agenda for Action



"...We can dramatically advance our efforts in every sphere by working with ... and working for ... women and young people. Women hold up more than half the sky and represent much of the world's unrealized potential. They are the educators. They raise the children. They hold families together and increasingly drive economies. They are natural leaders. We need their full engagement ... in government, business and civil society."

Ban Ki-Moon

United Nation Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.

"We the Peoples"

Remarks to the 66th UN General Assembly, 21 September 2011

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director, UN Women

One of the defining challenges for UN Women in 2015 is going to be to secure and leverage game-changing partnerships. The United Nations is a partnership of governments. As UN Women, we also have a strong relationship with non-governmental actors. To make the radical changes we want to see in the empowerment of women and gender equality, we need to mobilize not just parliaments but populations, not only civil society but all society, including the business sector.

We will need friends in great places, in small places, in all places. Most important, we have to reach those who are not friends, and with whom we urgently need to connect and start the hard conversations. We are networking at an extreme stretch. Strategic partnerships are the smart way to tap into the networks in which we need a voice, and through which we can exert pressure for action.

UN Women

UN Women's vision is a world in which societies are free of gender-based discrimination, where women and men have equal opportunities, where women and girls are empowered to lead the change that they want to see, and where women's rights are upheld in all efforts to further development, human rights, peace and security.

UN Women works to bring about change in the relationships between women and men in families, communities, societies and countries— inclusive, transformative, sustainable changes that do not pick winners and losers, but rather benefit all of humankind. Our close ties with women's organizations on the ground let us understand what women around the globe think are the most critical issues of the day.

The challenges today are considerable. Global growth has liberated many people from poverty—but it has also widened the gap between the rich and the rest. The economic crisis pushed millions of workers, especially women, into poorly paid, insecure employment—and many have not yet escaped. Women are still most of the poor, most of the uneducated, most at risk from ill-health, most vulnerable to violence.

Yet the world is making progress towards gender equality. More girls are in school and more are staying there. Fewer pregnancies end in death, debilitating illness or injury for the woman. Countries have outlawed domestic violence, adopted equal pay laws, ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and guaranteed women's equal property rights. Women are standing alongside men to demand freedom, dignity and the right to participate in revitalizing their societies.

Change can happen—but partnerships are essential for change. Working with UN organizations, civil society groups, the private sector and governments, we are not only more *comprehensive* in bringing together knowledge and expertise from different sectors to tackle challenges, but also more *powerful* in creating momentum for the results and progress we all want to see.

www.unwomen.org

V Conclusion and Recommendations: An Agenda for Action

Women’s economic empowerment is not only a “women’s issue.” It is a human rights issue and speaks to the need for greater fairness and justice everywhere. It is an economic issue; an essential foundation for achieving more inclusive and sustainable economic growth and development. It is a political issue; a key to tackling conflict and building more peaceful, prosperous and resilient communities and countries. And it is a business issue; an increasingly important driver of higher productivity, profitability, stakeholder trust and long-term business success. Supporting women’s economic empowerment is therefore a leadership imperative for all leaders in all sectors. And leaders in the business sector, both male and female, have a vital role to play both within their own companies and industry sectors as well as in the private sector and society more broadly.

Engage. Enable. Advocate. Every company in every country and industry sector can take practical action to support women’s economic empowerment. This report has focused primarily on the role of multinational companies, with global reach and influence, but companies of all sizes can take steps to improve gender equity and opportunity in their core business activities if not within their broader community. Regardless of a company’s size, country of operation or industry sector, every business leader should ask himself or herself the following four questions:

1. How can we most effectively integrate gender priorities—both risks and opportunities—into our **corporate strategy, leadership and governance structures**?
2. How can my company engage more directly and effectively with women as employees, business partners and individual contributors in our **core business operations and value chain**? In particular, what steps do we need to take to promote participation, equal pay and progression of women employees, whether professionals or hourly workers; how can we invest in building the capability of women-owned business partners; and—if relevant to the industry—how can we improve access to rights and productive assets for women farmers, artisans and factory workers?
3. How can we harness our **community investment and philanthropy programs** to enable women

and girls to build their human capital, economic assets and leadership capacity? Can we engage more effectively with partners to scale impact?

4. How can we leverage **corporate research, communications and policy dialogue** to improve the quality of data collection and analysis on women and to advocate for women’s rights and opportunities?

The **Agenda for Action** on pages 74 and 75 is focused around these four questions. It provides a set of 32 different actions that companies can consider, most of which have been tried with some degree of success by other companies. Some of these actions may not be relevant or feasible for certain companies. Many of them are context specific and will vary depending on issues such as the state of economic development, the public policy environment and industry sector. A number of them are underpinned by a body of more detailed research and analysis on what works and what doesn’t in terms of their implementation. Although it was not within the remit of this report to undertake a comprehensive literature review or academic study, we have highlighted some of the useful research and tools available for companies interested in further levels of detail. We hope that the Agenda for Action can be used as a diagnostic tool and the basis for further exploration by companies and their partners.

FIGURE 1: **THE ROLE OF CORPORATIONS IN SUPPORTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT** **AN AGENDA FOR ACTION**

INTEGRATE GENDER PRIORITIES INTO CORPORATE STRATEGY, LEADERSHIP and GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	
1	<p>Take a holistic approach to developing a gender strategy: Identify the specific gender-related risks, responsibilities and opportunities that the company faces throughout its business activities and areas of influence (core business operations; value chain; communities; and policy dialogue) and develop an overarching strategic plan that leverages all of the company's assets to address these in a comprehensive and integrated manner.</p>
2	<p>Embed the corporate responsibility to respect women's rights into relevant policies and standards: At a minimum, aim to 'do no harm.' Implement policies and undertake due diligence to identify, prevent, mitigate and remediate human rights risks and formal discrimination against women in the company's business operations and value chain.</p>
3	<p>Establish goals, incentives and programs to actively promote women's opportunities: Aim explicitly to create shared value through actively empowering women. Identify a small number of priority goals to increase women's participation and progress at all levels of the company's business operations, value chain, communities and policy dialogue and establish time-based targets, incentives and programs to drive performance and culture change.</p>
4	<p>Create cross-functional leadership structures and champions for women's empowerment: Too often, gender is addressed in corporate silos. Human resources focuses on workplace inclusion and diversity; procurement on supplier diversity; community relations on community initiatives, etc. While functional specialization is needed, this limits synergies and shared learning between different parts of the business. Create senior corporate-level or operational-level Women's Leadership Councils and/or identify some of the most respected female and male executives across the company to act as champions for women's advancement, both internally and externally.</p>
5	<p>Ensure senior executive leadership: Having cross-functional leadership structures and champions for women's empowerment throughout the company is necessary but not sufficient to drive culture change and transformation. The Chief Executive Office (CEO) and senior executives must take the lead. Their role is essential to move gender diversity beyond a compliance-driven approach to a more aspirational and transformational agenda—one that is aligned with corporate strategy, organizational excellence and competitiveness. This is especially important when they are predominantly male, as most executive teams still are. They must lead in terms of being visible role models and vocal champions as well as holding their managers to account for performance.</p>
6	<p>Keep gender on the board agenda: Ensure that the full Board of Directors and relevant Board Committees are kept regularly informed on the company's gender strategy and how it is performing against its own policies, goals and targets, as well as its competitors. Also, set gender targets for board membership.</p>
7	<p>Measure and communicate results: Once priority goals and time-based targets are established, commit to assess the company's performance against these and to take part in independent evaluations and case studies to share lessons and good practice.</p>
8	<p>Participate in industry-wide collective action: Support precompetitive alliances and cross-sector partnerships to tackle systemic obstacles to women's progress in the industry and in key countries of operation. This could include sharing corporate policies, guidelines and project evaluations and lessons learned; creating shared databases of vetted women suppliers and community partners; working together on specific projects; and exploring common communications and policy messages to promote women's empowerment.</p>

ENGAGE DIRECTLY WITH WOMEN IN CORE BUSINESS OPERATIONS and VALUE CHAINS [PART II p45](#)

Promote participation, equal pay and progression of women employees	Build capacity and linkages with women-owned businesses	Improve access to rights and productive assets for women farmers, artisans and factory workers
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Integrate gender targets into managers' performance 2 Commit to equal pay for women 3 Establish sponsorship programs 4 Invest in women-led employee networks 5 Implement gender-sensitive work policies and job design 6 Tackle gender bias and cultural obstacles 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Leverage impact through existing business partners 8 Match high-potential suppliers with experienced mentors 9 Create platforms for shared learning and business networking 10 Explore internal synergies between different functions 11 Leverage commercial relationships to improve supplier access to products and services 12 Partner with and build intermediary organizations 13 Work collectively to enhance the enabling environment for women entrepreneurs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Improve awareness of basic rights, especially labor and land rights 15 Enhance access to financial services, training and technology in appropriate combinations 16 Increase access to business networks and markets 17 Help women to organize collectively 18 Implement programs that combine personal and professional development

ENABLE WOMEN and GIRLS THROUGH CORPORATE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT and PHILANTHROPY [PART III p61](#)

- 1 Focus on projects that help women and girls to build their human capital, economic assets and leadership capacity
- 2 Align community investments with key business competencies and priorities
- 3 Partner with specialist women's organizations at the grassroots, national or global level

ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN THROUGH CORPORATE RESEARCH, COMMUNICATIONS and POLICY DIALOGUE [PART IV p74](#)

- 1 Fund or co-fund public research to improve data collection and analysis on women and girls
- 2 Explore ways to harness corporate communications platforms
- 3 Include women's empowerment in relevant policy and government dialogues
- 4 Participate in global platforms and frameworks for women's empowerment

Scaling impact through collective action

In addition to what each company can achieve in its individual capacity, there is untapped potential for collective action among companies in order to scale up impact and overcome particularly complex and systemic barriers to women's economic empowerment. Working collectively on a pre-competitive basis within an industry sector can be especially effective in tackling industry-specific obstacles to women's progression and leadership. Such initiatives are being established within the professional services, energy, mining, agribusiness, financial services and information technology sectors, all of which face major obstacles to women's participation and advancement.

There are also growing opportunities for companies to work across industries and with other actors in multi-stakeholder platforms at a country-level or in joint projects. Working in partnership with multilaterals like UN Women or international and grassroots NGOs, companies can engage at the country or regional level, bringing in their local subsidiaries, suppliers and other business partners. Or they can support issue-based platforms focused on specific global challenges that are particularly relevant to women and girls, such as education and skills development, access to financial services and technology, family health and wellness, entrepreneurship and climate change.

The importance of individual leadership

In all cases, the individual commitment and leadership of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), board directors and other senior executives and thought leaders is crucial for success. While senior women executives must be more proactive in engaging, enabling and advocating for other women in their own companies and beyond, the lessons of recent decades suggests that men in leadership positions can make a substantial contribution by standing up, speaking up and scaling up their efforts as champions for women's economic empowerment. Achieving greater gender equity and opportunity within the private sector and in the

communities and countries where companies operate is a leadership imperative for all business executives. And it is one that must be addressed both internally within their own organizations and externally within the broader economic, social and political systems in which they operate and often have influence.

Aligning with national and global development agendas

In September 2015, the world's governments will approve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are intended to provide a universal framework for national agenda-setting in all countries. Together with the results of the Financing for Development conference in July 2015 and the negotiations on a global climate agreement culminating in December 2015, these frameworks will provide an important foundation for ongoing efforts to achieve women's economic empowerment. One of the likely 17 SDGs is targeted specifically at "Achieving gender equality and empowering all for women and girls", but many of the other goals are also essential to the achievement of women's and girls' empowerment. At the same time, all of them will require the skills and commitment of women leaders as well as men to ensure their success. As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted, "We can dramatically advance our efforts in every sphere by working with, and working for, women."²¹⁵

The potential is great. Working both individually and collectively with others, companies have the ability to help drive transformative change in supporting the economic empowerment of women. There is a long way to go in almost all countries, but growing momentum over the past decade by leaders in business, as well as government and civil society, bodes well for the future—a future where women have equal opportunities to participate and succeed in their endeavors, to benefit their families through financial and social empowerment, to shape their communities through leadership roles, and in so doing to fully contribute to global progress and prosperity.

FIGURE 7: THE PROPOSED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10	Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

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HARVARD Kennedy School

*Corporate Social
Responsibility Initiative*



U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION
Corporate Citizenship Center

About the CSR Initiative

The Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative (CSRI) at the Harvard Kennedy School's Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government (M-RCBG) is a multi-disciplinary and multi-stake-holder program that seeks to study and enhance the public contributions of private enterprise. The initiative explores the intersection of corporate responsibility, corporate governance, and public policy, with a focus on analyzing institutional innovations that enhance governance and accountability and help to achieve key international development goals. It bridges theory and practice, builds leadership skills, and supports constructive dialogue and collaboration among business, government, civil society and academics.

Founded in 2004, the CSR Initiative works with a small Corporate Leadership Group consisting of global companies that are leaders in the fields of corporate responsibility, sustainability or creating shared value. The Initiative also works with other leading CSR and sustainability organizations, government bodies, non-governmental organizations and companies to leverage innovative policy research and examples of good practice in this field.

CSR Initiative

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About the CCC

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Corporate Citizenship Center (CCC), a nonprofit affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, helps advance the positive social, economic and environmental impact of business. The Center works to educate the public and the business community on the positive efforts of business through best-in-class communications, fact-based research, and a convening power that brings together key business and policy leaders.

CCC is a leading resource for businesses dedicated to making a difference. For more than 15 years, CCC's programs, events, research, and relationships with key nonprofits and governments have helped hundreds of companies improve the impact of their efforts to improve social and environmental conditions.

CCC works with an influential business network to maximize the individual and collective impact of business resources invested to address societal challenges and tell the story of the powerful difference business is making.

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