



International
Labour
Organization

Women in Business
and Management

GAINING MOMENTUM

Global Report



ACT/EMP
Bureau for Employers' Activities

Women in Business
and Management

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Global Report

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This global report, *Women in Business and Management: Gaining Momentum*, was compiled by Ms. Linda Wirth-Dominicé for the ILO-Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP). It is part of the Bureau's initiative on promoting women in business and management coordinated by Ms. Anne-Brit Nippierd and funded under the ILO-Norway Partnership Agreement.

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Preface

Promoting gender equality at the workplace is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do. A growing body of evidence shows that utilizing the skills and talent of both men and women is beneficial for enterprises and for society in general. I commend the ILO-Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP) for embarking on this research project which brings together statistics and information on measures that can be taken to advance women in business along with analysis and ideas for future areas of focus. I am confident that it will become a key reference document for those seeking updated information and authoritative data on women in business and management.

The report underlines the fact that women's presence in the labour market is increasingly significant for economic growth and development at both national and enterprise levels. It seeks to demonstrate the benefits that enterprises stand to gain in recognizing and supporting women's talent. As women surpass men in educational attainment in most regions, they represent an incredible talent pool and national resource. Women are running more businesses, and consumer-spending decisions are increasingly in their hands. These realities often seem to be overlooked, even though there is an intensive search for global talent and skills as economies are more and more based on knowledge and technology.

The report shows that women still have to deal with a number of hurdles to reach positions as CEOs and company board members. While they have advanced in business and management they continue to be shut out of higher level economic decision-making despite the last decade of activism to smash the "glass ceiling".

A wide array of initiatives challenging gender stereotypes, corporate cultures and lack of measures to reconcile work and family responsibilities are discussed and the report calls for a closer examination of the career paths of women and men to ensure

that subtle gender biases are eliminated from the very first assignment.

The report stresses that a wealth of resources, good practices, organizational structures and networks are already in place. And, while progress is slow, women who are appointed to the highest positions attract media attention, creating new role models.

More concerted efforts and advocacy are needed to share information on the benefits of utilizing women's talent and skills at all levels, including in the boardroom. While many multinational companies are already on this track, a major challenge is to ensure that national firms, especially medium and large sized firms, receive advice and tools on how to advance women and improve their business outcomes.

National employers' organizations have a strategic and timely role to play as the business world is on the cusp of recognizing how women's contribution to economic decision-making can make a positive difference to the "bottom line" and business performance.

It is heartening to see that, with the support of national employer's organizations, many companies from the developing regions responded to the ILO Company Survey that provided rich material for the global report. The participatory approach of the report with inputs from national employers' organizations and companies themselves will undoubtedly ensure that it is relevant and useful. Employers' organizations will be able to incorporate elements into their national programmes and activities while companies will find it useful in designing and implementing their business strategies.

Expanding women's businesses and moving more women into decision-making positions involve particularly challenging and complex issues which also reflect the many inequalities that exist at all levels of sex-segregated labour markets.

It is my sincere hope that this report will stimulate and motivate all actors in the world of work to join forces in achieving greater gender equality at all levels. It is a fundamental right integral to the ILO's Decent Work Agenda and its Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. It is also a condition for sustainable development.

Guy Ryder

Director General
International Labour Office

I also hope that this initiative will inspire our work under the ILO Centenary Initiative on 'Women at Work – a major stocktaking of the status and conditions of women in the world of work that could serve as a springboard for renewed ILO action, with the engagement of our tripartite constituents, to promote full and lasting gender equality and non-discrimination. ▶

Acknowledgements

Preparation of this Global Report entailed a participatory approach with contributions from national employers' organizations, companies from five regions, ILO employer and gender experts, and consultants with expertise in gender equality and entrepreneurship.

National employers' organizations from Africa, Asia and Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Middle East and North Africa made extremely valuable contributions to the preparation of the Global Report. They provided national reports on the situation of women in business and management and shared their knowledge, initiatives, challenges and ideas at workshops held in each region. National employers' organizations also played a key role in disseminating and collecting company responses for the ILO Company Survey conducted in 2013 by the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP).

Through the ILO Company Survey, close to 1,300 companies from the regions referred to above provided critical information and reflections on the situation of women managers in their companies, the barriers faced by women in leadership and the measures they considered effective for advancing women in management. The companies were mostly small, medium sized and large national companies as well as multinational companies in developing regions. Their contribution is particularly unique in that much of the research literature on women in business and management focuses on large and multinational companies in developed economies.

The ILO regional senior employers' specialists played an important role in the preparation and holding of the regional workshops as well as in mobilizing the national employers' organizations to assist in disseminating and collecting responses for the Company Survey. Particular appreciation goes to Ms. Rose Anang, Ms. Jae-Hee Chang, Mr. Gotabaya Dasanayaka, Mr. Jorge

Illingworth, Mr. Lorenzo Peláez Dorantes, Mr. Dragan Radic, Mr. Gary Rynhardt and Mr. Andrés Yurén.

Gender specialists and technical experts also participated in the workshops sharing their knowledge with participants from national employers' organizations. Particular appreciation goes to Ms. Grania Mackie, women's entrepreneurship expert of the ILO Pretoria office, Ms. Nelien Haspels, gender specialist from the ILO Bangkok office, Ms. María José Chamorro, gender specialist and Ms. Keisy Rodriguez, employer-expert, both of the ILO San José Office, and Ms. Rania Bikhazi, the ILO regional specialist for enterprise development in the Arab states and Susan Maybud, ILO Geneva.

In addition, officials and directors in the ILO offices of Beirut, Lima, Johannesburg, Budapest and Bangkok as well as the ILO national coordinator and local consultants in Kiev gave their valuable time in the organization of and attendance at the workshops.

Ms. Nada Al-Nashif, Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Arab States opened the workshop in Beirut and Ms. Elizabeth Tinocco, Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean opened the workshop in Lima. Mr. V. Van Vuuren, Director of the ILO Decent Work Team for Southern Africa and Country Office for South Africa, Pretoria, opened the workshop in Johannesburg and Mr. Maurizio Bussi, Director of the ILO Decent Work Team in Bangkok, opened the Bangkok workshop. Mr. Vasyl Kostyrytsya, ILO National coordinator in Ukraine opened the workshop in Kiev.

A number of experts and company representatives also made important contributions at the workshops. These included Ms. Tidarat Kanchanawat of ADECCO, Ms. Manusrudee Suwannarat of L'OREAL, Ms. Jitlada Sirachadapong of AXA and Ms. Parul Arora of HINDUSTAN UNILEVER LTD, at the Bangkok workshop, Ms. Lidia Heller, and Ms. Rosa María Fuchs at

the Lima workshop, and Ms. Ganna Gerasymenko, member of the research team for the Study of Gender Equality in Ukraine and Ms. Nuzhat Ehsan, UNFPA Representative for Ukraine, at the Kiev workshop.

The ILO Department of Statistics provided critical assistance and advice for accessing and navigating the most up-to-date statistics possible through their newly designed statistical database. Much appreciation goes to Mr. Rafael Diez de Medina, Director of the Department and his staff, in particular, Mr. Edgardo Greising, Mr. Francisco Guerreiro, Ms. Adriana Mata-Greenwood, Ms. Valeria Nesterenko and Ms. Marie-Claire Sodergren.

The assistance of Mr. Paolo Salvai was invaluable in formatting the Company Survey to which many companies submitted their answers electronically. Mr. Salvai assisted in trouble shooting during the roll out of the survey. Much appreciation goes to the ILO International Training Centre in Turin for hosting the electronic survey.

For the Middle Eastern and North African Region, Ms. Charlotte Karam, Assistant Professor, Management & Organizational Behaviour at the American University of Beirut, coordinated the dissemination and collection of survey reports in Arabic and English. She and her

team prepared an analysis and report on the survey results which were integrated into the global report. Ms. Karam also participated in the regional workshop in Beirut sharing her expertise in gender and management issues.

The consultant, Ms. Linda Wirth drafted the report. In preparation for the global report, Ms. Wirth wrote five regional papers on women in business and management for workshops as well as reports for each. Ms. Wirth suggested the initial design of the ILO Company Survey and incorporated comments from those consulted. She also analyzed and prepared a report on the survey results as well as integrating the findings in the global report.

Ms. Anne-Brit Nippierd of the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities conceptualized and managed the project including the organization and coordination of the regional workshops, the Company Survey and the global report. Mr. Adam Adrien-Kirby provided valuable support in the finalization of the report for publication.

Finally, the guidance and support of the Director of the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities, Ms. Deborah France-Massin, was key to the implementation of the various stages of preparation of the report. ▶

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