

B20 ITALY



Special Initiative  
on Women Empowerment

POLICY PAPER 2021



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## Foreword by the Taskforce Chair

*"It has been a pleasure to serve as the Special Ambassador for the B20 Special Initiative on Women Empowerment this year. I was glad to work in close collaboration with our members, knowledge partner, and, of course, with the task force manager and my deputy, to draft this policy paper.*

*Empowering women today is even more critical than just one year ago. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly set back the progress towards gender parity and inclusion. We must react to the pandemic, reaffirming that there is no other way to proceed towards truly inclusive economic growth other than by unleashing the full potential of women.*

*Coming from the business world, I have a soft spot for data and metrics; during its proceedings, this special initiative, has thoughtfully considered three main cross-cutting themes: "build the relevance and resilience of women's skills", "embed a gender lens at the core of innovative activity", and "target gender parity in senior decision-making positions".*

*The following three policy recommendations stem from these three cross-cutting themes, each one highlighting one aspect that we consider of paramount importance to effectively empower women: to act towards a more **inclusive** world, bringing more women back to the workforce and into the heart of economic activity shaping the future; to **reimagine** the society we live in, building an inclusive society and workplace cultures which dismantle pervasive gender stereotypes; and to foster economic **growth**, smoothing the road for women into business leadership and ownership.*

*The last piece of the puzzle was identifying three KPIs to more easily track G20 members' progress in implementing our recommendations. These KPIs are: "female participation in the labour force"; "women's percentage of unpaid work compared to men"; and the "percentage of women in senior or middle management". I hope that these KPIs become firmly rooted and that they will act as a benchmark to trace positive developments in women's empowerment globally.*

*We, together with the G20 governments, have the opportunity to design a post pandemic world that is more inclusive and fairer to women. The call to action for women's empowerment comes from 3,64 billion people all around the world. It is our duty to not leave this call unanswered."*

*Sincerely,*

**Diana Bracco**

*Special Ambassador for Women Empowerment  
President & CEO, Bracco Group*





## Recommendations: Summary

**Recommendation 1: Include: Bring more women back into the workforce and into the heart of economic activity shaping the future** – The G20 should support women's return to the post-pandemic workforce and advocate for gender balance across high-growth, high-impact activities such as the design, development and delivery of health and advanced technologies.

**Policy Action 1.1: Mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on women's economic opportunities** – Design gender-responsive measures to ensure that progress made over recent decades towards equality is not lost – but is strengthened in the post-pandemic world.

**Policy Action 1.2: Strengthen the pipeline of women into STEM and other high-growth sectors** – Cultivate early interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and build women's aspirations and skills to increase participation in the most in-demand job roles.

**Policy Action 1.3: Embed a gender lens at the core of innovative activity** – Increase gender equity in research and development (R&D) and develop gender-sensitive ethical guidelines in key areas such as health and advanced technologies.

**Recommendation 2: Reimagine: Build an inclusive society and workplace cultures which dismantle pervasive gender stereotypes** – The G20 should boost women's economic opportunities by eliminating legal and cultural barriers to paid work, and actively upskilling female workers.

**Policy Action 2.1: Eliminate barriers to the equal participation of women in the economy** – identify current gender gaps and address the associated social and cultural norms that limit women's opportunities, including unpaid work, occupational segregation, and stereotypes.

**Policy Action 2.2: Build the relevance and resilience of women's skills** – Promote gender equity across business departments and functions; and provide women in roles at higher risk of disruption with specific reskilling and training.

**Policy Action 2.3: Eradicate sexual discrimination, harassment, and gender-based violence** – Work to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and violence in society through targeted education programs and develop support mechanisms to aid reporting of unethical behavior in the workplace.

**Recommendation 3: Grow: Smooth the road for women into business leadership and ownership** –The G20 should mitigate the barriers that limit the ability of women to advance, lead and start businesses.

**Policy Action 3.1: Target gender parity in senior decision-making positions** Advocate for and eliminate barriers to women reaching senior decision-making positions, with a focus on comprehensive collection of sex-disaggregated data.

**Policy Action 3.2: Enhance the entrepreneurial potential of women** – Build the aspirations and capacity of female entrepreneurs and actively support the starting, financing, scaling, and sustainability of women-owned businesses.

# Introduction

## A Seminal Moment for Women's Empowerment

Italy assumes the G20 Presidency at a critical moment in modern human history. The intense, often devastating impact of COVID-19 on the lives and livelihoods of people around the world has spurred governments to take unprecedented action; it has sharpened the minds of individuals, organizations, and societies to imagine a brighter future; and it has highlighted pervasive inequalities which have seen certain groups hit harder by the ongoing social and economic crisis.

The B20 Taskforce on Women's Empowerment commits to harnessing this momentum to reverse the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women and to unlock new income generation opportunities. Underpinned by a broad consensus that the scale of pre-pandemic gender gaps was unacceptable, we suggest a comprehensive policy framework to support women along the work-life cycle.

The 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the progressive blueprint for advancing the rights of girls and women, was overshadowed by the pandemic. This taskforce has the privilege to pick up the baton and reshape a gender equal future through targeted, actionable recommendations.

## An Unequal Past

The scale of the COVID-19 crisis and the associated desire to 'go back to normal' should not be allowed to mask the staggering gender inequalities we were living with. In 2019, women were over a third less likely to be in the labor force than men – a figure broadly unchanged over the past two decades<sup>1</sup>. Women's opportunities have been held down by the burden of unpaid work; by discrimination and harassment; and by outdated laws and socio-cultural norms. Even among those women who do reach paid employment, they are less likely to work full-time; less likely to work in key, high-growth sectors such as engineering and technology, and less likely to reach senior leadership positions.

This is a moral, social and commercial catastrophe for the world. Women's economic empowerment has a symbiotic relationship with health and education which extends into their families and wider society<sup>2</sup>. And at every level, but especially at the decision-making levels, greater gender diversity has been linked with a host of benefits from increased national productivity and export diversification to innovation and corporate growth<sup>3</sup>. A recent Accenture study found that companies led by executives focused on creating cultures where women and men thrive are growing 2-3x faster than their competitors<sup>4</sup>. The World Bank analysis has estimated a global wealth dividend of US\$172 trillion would result from equalizing women's earnings with men's<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> World Bank, 2020. *Labor force participation rate, 2005-2020*; <https://data.worldbank.org/>

<sup>2</sup> W20 Saudi Arabia & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> IMF, 2018. "Pursuing women's economic empowerment"

<sup>4</sup> Accenture, 2020. "The Hidden Value of Culture Makers"; <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/about/inclusion-diversity/culture-equality-research>

<sup>5</sup> World Bank, 2020. "How large is the gender dividend? Measuring selected impacts and costs of gender inequality"; <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/03/03/world-couldachieve-gender-dividend-of-172-trillion-from-closinglifetime-earnings-gaps>



## An Even Less Equal Present

Early hopes that COVID-19 would help 'level the playing field' for women in the workplace – for example, through mass adoption of flexible working practices – quickly faded. The reality is that the pandemic has exacerbated existing gender inequalities. At Carbis Bay, the G7 recognised the "the devastating and disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, which risks reversing hard-won gains especially with regards to gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, education and jobs<sup>6</sup>."

Women's jobs are 19% more at risk than men's due to their overrepresentation in the sectors hardest hit by lockdowns, such as retail, tourism and hospitality<sup>7</sup>. In the period from March to August 2020, women were 79% more likely to have been made redundant and their earnings fell 63% faster, compared with men. Worryingly, analysis of the impact of the Ebola and Zika viruses suggests that women's earnings take longer to recover than men's<sup>9</sup>.

Reduced earning potential is being compounded by the greater burden and intensity of unpaid work that has fallen on women, further entrenching antiquated gender roles<sup>10</sup>. And an estimated 20 million girls in developing countries may never return to school after pandemic-related shutdowns in order to supplement household incomes<sup>11</sup>. The cumulative impact has added 36 years to the timeline to reach gender parity – from 99.5 years in 2020, to 135.6 years today – according to a recent World Economic Forum (WEF) report<sup>12</sup>, and is likely to drag an additional 47 million women into poverty<sup>13</sup>.

## A More Equal Future

However, there is a potential upside to the grim tragedy of the COVID-19 pandemic. The combination of unprecedented government action with clearer recognition and reporting of the unequal impact of the crisis creates a unique opportunity to dismantle barriers to women's empowerment and to rebuild our economies and societies with women at the core.

Building a world in which women have equal opportunities to engage in income generating activities is a central pillar of the SDG5. Outlining a series of actions to educate girls, empower women and end gender-based violence, the G7 declared in June that "Gender equality is at the heart of an open, inclusive, and just society<sup>14</sup>." To accelerate progress, we call on the G20 to adopt our ambitious, comprehensive policy framework which aims to: bring more women into secure, rewarding employment; reimagine a workplace free from archaic, restrictive gender stereotypes; and grow the next generation of women executives and entrepreneurs.

<sup>6</sup> MF, 2018. "Pursuing women's economic empowerment"

<sup>7</sup> IMF, 2018. "Pursuing women's economic empowerment"

<sup>8</sup> W20 & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Wenham, Smith & Morgan, 2020. "COVID-19: the gendered impacts of the outbreak", *The Lancet*, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339756913\\_COVID-19\\_the\\_gendered\\_impacts\\_of\\_the\\_outbreak](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339756913_COVID-19_the_gendered_impacts_of_the_outbreak)

<sup>10</sup> UNWomen, 2020. "Whose time to care?"; [https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Whose-time-to-care-brief\\_0.pdf](https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Whose-time-to-care-brief_0.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Malala Fund, 2020. "Girls' education and COVID-19"; <https://www.malala.org/newsroom/archive/malala-fund-releases-report-girls-education-COVID-19>

<sup>12</sup> World Economic Forum, 2021. "Global Gender Gap Report 2021"; <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>

<sup>13</sup> UNWomen, 2020. "From Insight to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19"; <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-COVID-19-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5142>

<sup>14</sup> G7, 2021. Carbis Bay Summit Communiqué

### **Partnering to Shape a New Path**

In line with the B20 Italy focus on partnership and shared action, our taskforce has committed to an inclusive approach that involves consultation with the broadest set of social partners possible. As such, we have made efforts to align our priorities and recommendations with our partners in related B20 workstreams, such as the B20 Taskforce on Employment and Education and the B20 Taskforce on Digital Transformation, as well as our G20 engagement partners at the L20 and W20, the G20 EMPOWER alliance and the G20 Employment Working Group itself. Beyond this, we make efforts to align with other important initiatives that support cross-sectoral action on the future of employment and education, such as the International Labor Organization (ILO) Centenary Declaration of 2019. We believe that through shared objectives and a collaborative spirit, we are well placed to seize this historic opportunity to build a gender equal future.

In fact, the only way to achieve our ambitious goal is through strong partnership, continuous dialogue and a shared commitment to act.

## Recommendation 1 - Include: Bring more women back into the workforce and into the heart of economic activity shaping the future

The G20 should support women's return to the post-pandemic workforce and advocate for gender balance across high-growth, high-impact activities such as the design, development and delivery of health and advanced technologies.

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### Policy Actions

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**1.1 Mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on women's economic opportunities** – Design gender-responsive measures to ensure that progress made over recent decades towards equality is not lost – but is strengthened in the post-pandemic world.

- The G20 should adopt gender budgeting in post-COVID-19 recovery programs based on robust tracking of female participation in the labor market.
  - The G20 should encourage the development of programs to support women re-entering the workforce after time away.
  - The G20 should fund research on the effects of female employment on economic growth to facilitate evidence-based policymaking and international comparability.
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**1.2 Strengthen the pipeline of women into STEM and other high-growth sectors** - Cultivate early interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and build women's aspirations and skills to increase participation in the most in-demand job roles.

- The G20 should actively address the physical and cultural barriers which limit the access to digital technologies and the engagement of girls and women in STEM education.
  - The G20 should mitigate barriers and eradicate stereotypes which limit women's access and ability to thrive in high-growth sectors.
  - The G20 should help women reskill/upskill to attain in-demand roles with the biggest gender gaps.
- 

**1.3 Embed a gender lens at the core of innovative activity** - Increase gender equity in research and development (R&D), including design, and develop gender-sensitive ethical guidelines in key areas such as health and advanced technologies.

- The G20 should place the views, skills and needs of women at the heart of efforts to tackle major global challenges such as climate change and inequality.
- The G20 should develop gender-sensitive ethical guidelines governing R&D (including design) in areas such as advanced technologies and medicine.
- The G20 should encourage gender parity throughout the innovation cycle to ensure the needs of women are not overlooked.

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### Proposed KPI

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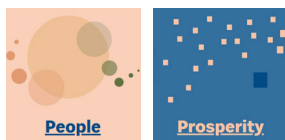
The B20 Women's Empowerment Taskforce proposes that current and future G20 processes monitor progress on the **female labor force participation rate**. Specific targets for these KPIs are proposed in the Annex, with ambitions for 2024. We also propose to begin monitoring and tracking several Key Pilot Performance Indicators (KPIs), including the **proportion of females graduating in subjects related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)** and **rate of attrition the percentage of women employed in STEM, and the percentage of female researchers**. More information on these indicators can be found in the Annex.

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**SDG impacted - 5: Gender Equality** - Recommendation 1: is primarily aligned to **SDG5**, particularly **SDG 5.B** 'Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women' and **SDG5.1** 'End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere'. **9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure** - The policy actions strongly contribute to achieving **SDG9**, especially **SDG9.B** 'Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries', **SDG9.5** 'Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending and **SDG9.C** 'Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the internet in least developed countries by 2020'. **8: Decent Work and Economic Growth** - It also supports both **SDG8.2** 'Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors and **SDG8.5** 'Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value'. **4: Quality Education** - And it resonates with **SDG4.4** 'Substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship'. **3: Good Health and Well Being** - Finally, there are links into **SDG3.B** 'Support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and noncommunicable diseases' and **SDG3.7** 'Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes'.

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**Italy's G20 principles - People:** Recommendation 1 supports the Italian G20 Presidency priority theme of 'People', particularly in the ambition to shape a "sustainable, just, inclusive and resilient recovery" by "promoting women's empowerment" and "ensuring universal access to education". **Prosperity:** It also supports 'Prosperity' 1 in terms of "reducing the digital divide, promoting infrastructural developments able to guarantee universal internet access and achieving adequate and widespread digital literacy" and "exploiting the full potential of the technological revolution to concretely improve the living conditions of citizens all over the world, in every aspect of their lives".

## Policy Action 1.1: Mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on women's economic opportunities

Design gender-responsive measures to ensure that progress made over recent decades towards equality is not lost – but is strengthened in the post-pandemic world.

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### Context and COVID-19 Impact

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COVID-19 has had a large, negative impact on women's economic opportunities. The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021 estimates that the pandemic has added 36 years to the timeline to gender equality. The gender gap in "Economic Participation and Opportunity" is now forecast not to close for more than 250 years<sup>15</sup>.

It is important to note that many men have also been negatively impacted by the pandemic. But women have been hit harder than men because they didn't enter the pandemic equal with men, thus widening gender gaps. For example, women accounted for just 38% of the global labor force in 2019<sup>16</sup>; women's employment is more concentrated in sectors vulnerable to job loss and sectors which have been most affected by the short economic fallout from COVID-19 (e.g. women make up 54% of employees in tourism)<sup>17</sup>; women are more likely to work part-time, often due to the burden of unpaid work<sup>18</sup>; and women are still under-represented in sectors identified to have increasing employment prospects<sup>19</sup>. The upshot is that women were much more likely to lose their jobs than men over recent months (see Exhibit 1)<sup>20</sup>.

With the global vaccination campaign in progress, there is hope that the nascent recovery will gather momentum over the coming months. However, there remains a risk that the recovery will not be gender-balanced if governments and businesses fail to take concrete and timely actions to bring women's economic opportunities back to pre-pandemic levels, at the very least.

This is not only a women's issue: Both men and women would benefit from a more equal society. According to World Economic Forum analysis, companies leading their geography and industry for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging perform better than the market average across a wide range of key performance metrics. For example, they are 25% - 36% more likely to outperform on profitability; they see up to 20% higher rates of innovation and 19% higher innovation revenues; and improve their ability of spotting and reducing business risks by up to 30%<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> WEF, 2021. "Global Gender Gap Report"; <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>

<sup>16</sup> World Bank Statistics. Derived from ILOSTAT database; retrieved on January 29, 2021. Data accessed by Accenture Research 16 April 2021.

<sup>17</sup> World Tourism Organization, 2019. "Global Report on Women in Tourism"; <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420384>

<sup>18</sup> OECD, 2021. *Employment and unemployment rate, by sex and age group, quarterly data*

<sup>19</sup> WEF, 2021. "Global Gender Gap Report"; <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>

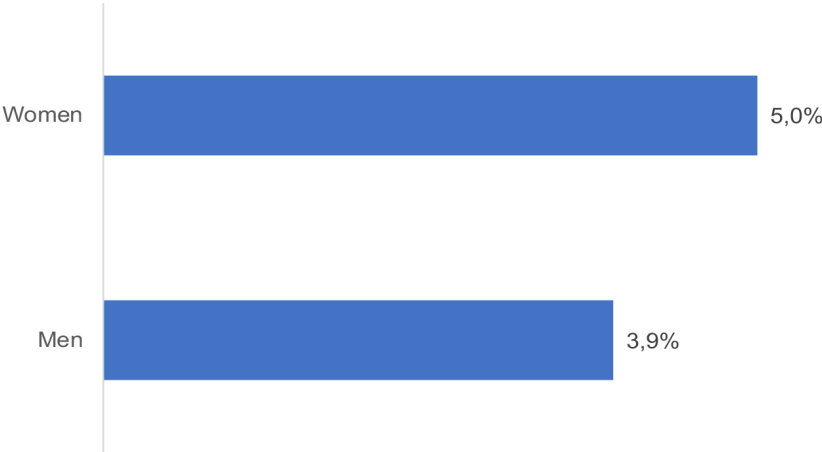
<sup>20</sup> ILO, 2021. "COVID-19 and the world of work. Seventh edition"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms\\_767028.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_767028.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> WEF, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 4.0, June 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/reports/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-4-0-atoolkit-for-leaders-to-accelerate-social-progress-in-the-future-of-work>

Across the European Union alone, research by the European Institute for Gender Equality, estimates that a more gender equal EU would boost GDP per capita by 6.1% - 9.6%, amounting to €1.95 - €3.15 trillion, and creating an additional 10.5 million jobs<sup>22</sup>.

We urge businesses and governments to take immediate action to mitigate the devastating impact of COVID-19 on women and, in doing so, to help to drive a faster socio-economic recovery.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Employment loss**  
**for women vs. men in 2020**



Source: ILO, 2021. "ILO Monitor: Covid-19 and the world of work". Seventh edition

<sup>22</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality. "Economic case for gender equality in the EU"; <https://eige.europa.eu/gendermainstreaming/policy-areas/economic-and-financial-affairs/economic-benefits-gender-equality>

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## Exploration of Action Areas

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### **Adopt gender budgeting-COVID-19 recovery programs based on robust tracking of female participation in the labor market**

#### **Promote investment in the long-term sustainable development of the sectors traditionally employing women (e.g., tourism)**

Women account for a disproportionate number of jobs in the sectors hit hardest by the pandemic. ILO analysis suggests that two-thirds of the jobs that will be lost and not recovered are women's jobs<sup>23</sup>. Governments must take urgent action to help businesses in these sectors map out sustainable development plans for the future.

The tourism industry is a prime example. The sector has historically provided important job opportunities for women, but the seasonal, low-skilled and informal nature of some of these roles has left many women struggling to generate an income without either social or institutional support. The UN World Tourism Organization has called on governments to develop a gender-sensitive response<sup>24</sup>. This includes shorter-term measures, such as financial support and guidance, but also longer-term initiatives such as increasing flexible working, social protection, skill development and the numbers of women in senior leadership which will also have a positive impact on the entire informal sector.

The role of public employment services to identify sustainable employment opportunities for women is also crucial. Local employment centers should help women jobseekers find work in sectors which have been recruiting during the pandemic and to reskill for the demands of the future<sup>25</sup>. For example, in Korea, employment offices provided special COVID-19 funding for employers who allowed women to take childcare or maternity leave and subsequently retained them<sup>26</sup>.

#### **Assess the implications for women of all recovery policies and programmes and identify upfront metrics for measuring their associated success**

Governments must engage in effective gender-mainstreaming. This means bringing the experience of women into the core of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all domains to ensure that they can benefit equally. Importantly, relevant plans should be drawn up at the government ministry or departmental level to ensure effective, holistic implementation and to track progress.

The first step is to understand the direct and indirect impact of the pandemic on women and girls; a report produced by UNWomen for Ukraine based on remote surveys, is a good example.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> ILO, 2020 "A gender-responsive employment recovery"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_751785.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_751785.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> UNWTO, 2021 "Inclusive Recovery Guide – Sociocultural Impacts of COVID-19, Issue 3: Women in tourism"

<sup>25</sup> ILO, 2020 "A gender-responsive employment recovery"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_751785.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_751785.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> 27 UN Women, 2020. "Rapid Gender Assessment: Ukraine" [https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20eca/attachments/publications/2020/06/rapid%20gender%20assessment\\_eng-min.pdf?la=en&vs=3646](https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20eca/attachments/publications/2020/06/rapid%20gender%20assessment_eng-min.pdf?la=en&vs=3646)

Secondly, policymakers need to conduct comprehensive gender impact assessments to aid design; this is part of the standard budget proposal process in Canada<sup>28</sup>. Thirdly, governments must provide sufficient funding to successfully fulfil each policy using tools such as the Budget Circulars and Gender Budget Statements<sup>29</sup>. Finally, a strong set of metrics must be identified to allow the impact of policies to be tracked and evaluated with the goal of refining interventions, as necessary.

### **Encourage the development of programs to support women re-entering the workforce after time away**

#### **Work with employers to provide return-to-work programs for women, placing a premium on skills and experiences developed outside of the workforce**

Return-to-work programs can offer a robust, structured path back into employment for women who leave paid employment for a period of time, for example to look after children or elderly relatives. Such programs are becoming increasingly important due to shifting demographics and the increasing prevalence of chronic disease, as well as the increase in women who have taken a leave from work during the pandemic to care for children at home. Governments should work with employers to design and subsidize programs to help the millions of women forced out of the labor market to integrate back into the workforce.

Interventions should provide at least six weeks of on-the-job training to help women re- or upskill, with the option of a permanent contract upon mutually successful completion. Such programs should recognize and place a premium on some of the "softer" skills, such as negotiation, communication and time management, that can be developed outside the workforce. For example, the Accenture Technology "Return to Work Program" is a 16-week paid "returnship" program for women looking to refresh skills and learn new technologies after a career break<sup>30</sup>.

#### **Develop innovative incentives and work-life balance schemes to stimulate female employment creation**

The pervasive impact of COVID-19 on women's lives and livelihoods has pulled gender inequality more firmly into the public spotlight. This provides an opportunity for governments to work with the private sector and NGOs to develop innovative incentives and work-life balance schemes to attract women back into the labor force.

Lowering the burden of unpaid work is key so child and elder care provision should be a key element of national plans for recovery. Governments should invest in affordable, high-quality child and eldercare services and workers, backed by voucher schemes. For example, in United Kingdom, people can claim up to GBP2,000 in tax-free childcare every year.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> OECD, *The Directorate for Public Governance*

<sup>29</sup> OECD, 2018. "Gender equality in Canada"; <https://www.oecd.org/gov/gender-equality-in-canada-2018-launch-version.pdf>

<sup>30</sup> Accenture. *Return to work program*; <https://www.accenture.com/us-en/careers/local/return-work-program>

<sup>31</sup> Gov.uk. *Tax-Free Childcare*. <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>

<sup>32</sup> TalentCorp. *Career Comeback Tax Exemption*. <https://www.talentcorp.com.my/initiatives/career-comeback-tax-exemption>



Another idea is to encourage women to return to work through providing tax relief. For example, in Malaysia women can claim income tax exemption of up to 12 months after returning to work from a career break.<sup>32</sup>

Financial and other support can also be made dependent on company action on improving gender diversity. For example, in France, the insurance industry is investing €2 billion in "Sustainable Recovery France" – a responsible investment recovery fund to help small and medium-sized enterprises in the health and tourism sectors recover from the pandemic. Reporting on the proportion of women in management positions is a key criterion for any businesses wanting to access to the program.<sup>33</sup>

### **Fund research on the effects of female employment on economic growth to facilitate evidence-based policymaking and international comparability**

#### **Investigate the impact of increasing female labor force participation on the labor market and wider measures of economic and business growth**

The positive impact of increasing the economic participation of women is increasingly well understood at both the corporate and macroeconomic levels. For example, a recent IMF study found that adding more women, as opposed to more men, to the labor force tends to increase skills diversity, consumption and leisure time, so boosting growth and productivity.<sup>34</sup>

However, more investigation is needed on potential multiplier effects, such as the extent to which women moving into the labor force boosts demand for ancillary household management services such as child and eldercare; and whether women are creating and taking "new" jobs, as opposed to simply replacing men. For example, research from the Women's Budget Group finds that increasing employment boosts demand for "all the goods and services that enter household consumption, such as food, clothing, and entertainment".<sup>35</sup> These so-called "induced employment effects", which are included within the ILO Employment Impact Assessments framework,<sup>36</sup> suggest increasing women's employment stimulates both economic and labor force growth. Greater workforce diversity has also been found to have a positive impact on business growth.<sup>37</sup>

### **Fund research into the longer-term impact of the pandemic on women, backed by the robust collection of sex-disaggregated data, to help policymakers to make wellinformed, gender-sensitive decisions**

The pandemic has already had a huge impact on lives and livelihoods around the world. But its longer-term impact on, for example, working practices and social norms, remains uncertain. It is therefore critical that governments continue to monitor these impacts in a gender-responsive way to ensure a more equitable future.

<sup>32</sup> French Insurance Federation. <https://www.ffa-assurance.fr/en/sustainable-stimulus-investment-programme>

<sup>34</sup> IMF, 2018. "Economic Gains from Gender Inclusion: New Mechanisms, New Evidence"

<sup>35</sup> Women's Budget Group, 2016. "Investing in the Care economy to boost employment and gender equality"; <https://www.lse.ac.uk/gender/assets/documents/news/Investing-in-the-Care-economy.pdf>

<sup>36</sup> ILO. Employment Impact Assessments; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_774061.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_774061.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> Accenture, 2020. "The hidden value of Culture Makers" [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF-2/Accenture-Getting-To-Equal-2020-Research-Report.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF-2/Accenture-Getting-To-Equal-2020-Research-Report.pdf)

Without sex-disaggregated data, the perspectives of women are often hidden, making the job of policymakers much harder. Governments should work with the private sector and NGOs – including through capacity building and funding to boost compliance – to systematically collect, produce and report reliable, high-quality, granular data.

**G20 member countries should therefore:**

- Adopt gender budgeting in post-COVID-19 recovery programs based on robust tracking of female participation in the labor market.
- Encourage the development of programs to support women re-entering the workforce after time away.
- Fund research on the effects of female employment on economic growth to facilitate evidence-based policymaking and international comparability.

## Policy Action 1.2: Strengthen the pipeline of women into STEM and other highgrowth sectors

Cultivate early interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and build women's aspirations and skills to increase participation in the most in-demand job roles.

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### Context and COVID-19 Impact

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The impact of digital technology over recent decades has been so profound that it is described as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. However, the persistent exclusion of women from associated job roles weighs on economic development and also on the ability of women to share in the benefits. Women are heavily underrepresented in some of today's most in-demand job roles, such as Cloud Computing (14%), Engineering (20%) and Data & AI (32%) with no significant progress since 2018<sup>38</sup>. Such narrow talent pools limit the ability of women to shape our future.

The pipeline of women into STEM careers narrows from a young age. However, this is not due to aptitude: Girls do at least as well, if not better, than boys on internationally standardized science and math tests<sup>39</sup>. Rather, girls' interest in STEM subjects tend to wane for more for cultural reasons, such as the (negative) influence of family and peers, teachers and the media, and the male-centric curricula and physical environments in which they learn<sup>40</sup>.

The latest Global Gender Gap Report notes: "Gendered signals from the labor market—the social experience of learning in STEM classes and working in technology fields—go a long way toward shaping the potential employee base of the professions making them distinctively male<sup>41</sup>." Tellingly, a 2020 survey of 7,000 adults in seven countries, found that 19% of female respondents and 25% of males said they believe STEM careers are more suitable to men than women<sup>42</sup>.

These attitudes are entrenched by the time students begin to select subjects: In secondary education, boys tend to be more likely than girls to take advanced courses in mathematics and physics<sup>43</sup>. At the age of 15, boys are, on average, ten times more likely than girls to want to become Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) professionals<sup>44</sup>. At the tertiary level, women are much less likely to major in STEM subjects such as Information and Communication Technologies (3% vs 8% of men) and Engineering, Manufacturing, or Construction (7% vs 22%)<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> World Economic Forum, 2021. "Global Gender Gap Report 2021", <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>

<sup>39</sup> World Bank, 2020. "The Equality Equation", <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/34317/Main-Report.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

<sup>40</sup> UNESCO, 2017. "Cracking the Code: Girls' and women's education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)"

<sup>41</sup> World Economic Forum, 2021. "Global Gender Gap Report 2021", <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>

<sup>42</sup> W20 Saudi Arabia & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?", [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> French Insurance Federation. <https://www.ffa-assurance.fr/en/sustainable-stimulus-investment-programme>

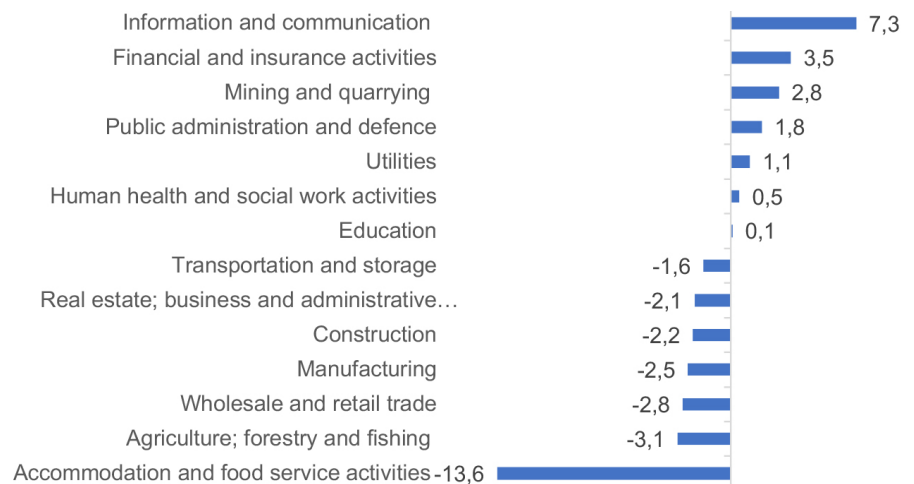
<sup>44</sup> IMF, 2018. "Economic Gains from Gender Inclusion: New Mechanisms, New Evidence"

<sup>45</sup> Women's Budget Group, 2016. "Investing in the Care economy to boost employment and gender equality"; <https://www.lse.ac.uk/gender/assets/documents/news/Investing-in-the-Care-economy.pdf>

The low numbers of women qualifying in relevant subjects is then compounded in the workplace by high attrition rates. A recent study in the United States found that 50% of women who take roles in technology drop out by the age of 35, compared with around 20% in other job types, principally because of non-inclusive working environments<sup>46</sup>. The ILO estimates that women hold just 33% of managerial roles in the IT sector across G20 countries<sup>47</sup>. Naturally this shrinks the talent pool at more senior levels: Analysis of the executive teams of 3,000 companies in 56 countries found just 14% of companies had a female head of information technology (IT)<sup>48</sup>.

Given how sharply the returns to digital have risen during the pandemic, the lack of women working in technology-related roles is a concern on multiple of levels. For one, these roles have proved far more resilient during the pandemic: ILO data from the third quarter of 2020 suggests that both employment (7.3%) and working hours (5.8%) have increased faster than in any other sector over the past 12 months globally<sup>49</sup>. A male-centric workforce may also overlook the needs of women at a time when reliance on the internet (where available) has soared.

**Exhibit 2**  
**Sectoral employment growth**  
**rates in the third quarter of 2020**  
**(%, year-on-year)**



*Note:* Average growth for any given sector is unweighted and based on a maximum sample of 49 countries

*Source:* ILO, 2021. "COVID-19 and the world of work"

<sup>46</sup> ILO. *Employment Impact Assessments*; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_774061.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_774061.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> Accenture, 2020. "The hidden value of Culture Makers" [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF-2/Accenture-Getting-To-Equal-2020-Research-Report.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF-2/Accenture-Getting-To-Equal-2020-Research-Report.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> ILO, 2020. "Women in managerial and leadership positions in the G20"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---ddg\\_p/documents/publication/wcms\\_762098.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---ddg_p/documents/publication/wcms_762098.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> ILO, 2021. "COVID-19 and the world of work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms\\_767028.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_767028.pdf)

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## Exploration of Action Areas

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### **Actively address the physical and cultural barriers which limit the access to digital technologies and the engagement of girls and women in STEM education**

#### **Invest in digital and physical infrastructure and hardware to boost access and digital skill development opportunities for girls, especially in remote and rural areas**

Helping more girls and women connect to the internet is a fundamental first step to boosting the engagement of women in STEM. The OECD notes: "Hurdles to access, affordability, lack of education as well as inherent biases and sociocultural norms curtail women and girls' ability to benefit from the opportunities offered by the digital transformation <sup>50</sup>."

Governments should prioritize extending broadband networks, especially to more rural areas. Across the OECD there were 32.5 fixed broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants as of June 2020. On average, 29% of these were fibre connections – up 5 percentage points from 2018 – ranging from over 80% in Korea and Japan to under 5% in Germany, the UK, Belgium and Greece<sup>51</sup>.

Access to the necessary hardware is clearly crucial. An increase in mobile phone ownership and access has increased connectivity around the world: Since 2015 an estimated 1 billion people have gained access to the internet through a mobile phone<sup>52</sup>. Mobile devices provide an invaluable "bridge" in places where robust digital infrastructure is not yet in place and have been a lifeline for women during the pandemic, enabling them to access COVID-19 information, stay connected to their families, continue their business activities and access government support<sup>53</sup>.

However, women are less likely than men both to own a mobile device, and to use mobile internet, due to issues such as access to networks and devices, affordability, literacy and skills, safety and security, knowledge and the availability of relevant, userfriendly products, services and content<sup>54</sup>.

The CFS+ program in Canada, which has distributed more than 1.7 million refurbished computers since 1993 to libraries, not-for-profit organizations, Indigenous communities and lower-income groups, is a good example of how to tackle upfront costs. However, ongoing costs such as data and electricity must also be considered when rolling out such interventions – as well as the need to boost digital literacy. In India, female digital instructors have helped to boost the skills and confidence of over 2.6 million women in 60,000 rural villages through the Internet Saathi initiative.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>50</sup> OECD, 2018. "Bridging the gender divide"; <https://www.oecd.org/digital/bridging-the-digital-gender-divide.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> OECD, 2020. Broadband Portal; <https://www.oecd.org/sti/broadband/broadband-statistics/>

<sup>52</sup> GSMA, 2020. "State of Mobile Internet Connectivity Report"; <https://www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/GSMASate-of-Mobile-Internet-Connectivity-Report-2020.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> GSMA, 2021. "The Mobile Gender Gap Report" [www.gsma.com/r/gender-gap](http://www.gsma.com/r/gender-gap)

<sup>54</sup> *bid.*

<sup>55</sup> OECD, 2018. "Bridging the gender divide"; <https://www.oecd.org/digital/bridging-the-digital-gender-divide.pdf>

### Reimagine the early years STEM learning experience through a gender lens, focusing on the curricula, learning environment and teachers

The early years learning experience is critical to sustaining the interest of girls in STEM subjects. Beyond elevating STEM subjects as a priority at all age groups, governments should reimagine what, where and how girls learn.

A first step is to get more girls into school. The recent commitments by the G7 to bring 40 million more girls into education and to get 20 million more girls reading by age 10 in low and lower-middle income countries by 2026 – backed by USD2.75 billion in funding over the next 5 years – are welcome in this regard.

However, many school curricula need modernizing to give girls a greater chance of reaching their potential in the modern world. Studies have shown that educational materials in that span different countries and cultures still tend to depict men in professional roles (especially as scientists) with women more often portrayed in domestic roles such as child or eldercare givers.<sup>56</sup> And beyond stereotypical gender roles, curricula need to incorporate the latest technological advances and ground learning in solving real-world challenges to properly reflect what UNICEF calls the "transformative potential of STEM education"<sup>57</sup>.

Modernized curricula should be amplified by reimagining the learning environment. Studies have shown that boys tend to show more interest in STEM in the traditional classroom setting<sup>58</sup>. Engaging in related activities outside the classroom, such as museum visits or coding camps, can help elevate the relevance of science both to girls and to broader society through a clearer focus on "learning by doing"<sup>59</sup>. A good example is the European Commission/ UNESCO "Ark Of Inquiry" project, which aims to empower girls in the science classroom through more real life, hands-on scientific discovery<sup>60</sup>.

Finally both who the teachers are and how they teach need to be considered. Inspirational STEM teachers are as a key driver for women to pursue associated careers. However girls' ambitions are often curtailed by a lack of women teachers and outdated pedagogical practices. "TeachHer" is a UNESCO initiative to help educators develop a more engaging learning experience for girls, through methods such as gender-responsive lesson planning<sup>61</sup>. And a key pillar of another UNESCO program, CapED, supports the professional development of teachers in terms of reducing gender bias in STEM teaching and encouraging girls to participate in classroom activities<sup>62</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> World Bank, 2020. "The Equality Equation"

<sup>57</sup> UNICEF, 2020. "Towards an equal future: Reimagining girls' education through STEM"

<sup>58</sup> World Bank, 2020. "The Equality Equation"

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Ark of Inquiry. <http://www.arkofinquiry.eu/>

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*

<sup>62</sup> UNESCO. CapED; <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education/caped/about>

### **Develop clear pathways for women into STEM careers, including clear signposting of the opportunities and support available for both individuals and their support networks**

STEM education provides students with critical skills – from assessing evidence to creativity – for a variety of career paths. However, given current employment trends, strengthening the connection between STEM education and an associated career for women is becoming more important. For example, in the United States, the proportion of women working in technology has actually declined since 1984 despite significant job growth.<sup>63</sup>

Governments should help girls and women to make informed choices about their education. For instance, Fondazione Agnelli in Italy, identifies the high schools that best prepare students for university and the workplace depending on their field of interest.<sup>64</sup> National and international comparisons of high schools and universities should also factor into the gender diversity of their alumni – and provide incentives for these institutions to boost the number of female STEM graduates. Another example is STEM in the City, an initiative launched by the Municipality of Milan in 2017 to promote and educate girls about STEM careers and provide access to role models, training and hands-on experience.<sup>65</sup>

Once at school or university, providing sound career advice is key to reducing both the attrition rates of women studying STEM and those in the workplace. Governments should ensure that teachers and other advisors are familiar with STEM careers and can address common misconceptions about what such roles entail. The UNESCO "Girls into Science" training module is a good example, offering training and support for educators on STEM career guidance, as well as helping to promote a positive, aspirational image of women in the industry. As discussed in the B20 Employment and Education Policy Paper, business-university partnerships play an important role in this regard.

Governments should also facilitate the growth and development of university and professional associations aimed at women in STEM-related fields at the national and global levels. Such groups offer women significant career development opportunities from the tangible – including such as formalized mentorship, network development, and job and scholarship opportunities – to the more intangible, such as problemsolving and building resilience in male-dominated sectors.<sup>66</sup>

Finally, providing parents and other caregivers with clear information can also help overcome STEM stereotypes. Developing materials like brochures and websites, which outline career pathways, "day-in-the-life" case studies and work experience opportunities, can help parents and other caregivers have informed conversations with children, boosting motivation.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Accenture, 2020. "Resetting Tech Culture"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-134/Accenture-A4-GWC-Report-Final1.pdf#zoom=50](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-134/Accenture-A4-GWC-Report-Final1.pdf#zoom=50)

<sup>64</sup> Fondazione Agnelli. <https://www.fondazioneagnelli.it/2020/11/11/eduscopio-2020-21-e-online/>

<sup>65</sup> STEM in the City. <https://www.steminthecity.eu/>

<sup>66</sup> World Bank, 2020. "The Equality Equation"

<sup>67</sup> UNESCO, 2017. "Cracking the code: Girls' and women's education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)"

## **Mitigate barriers and shift perceptions which limit women's access and ability to thrive in high-growth sectors**

### **Work with high-growth sector employers to identify key attrition points in the work lifecycle of women and design relevant interventions**

Reducing attrition rates benefits not just the employee, but also the employer in terms of lower recruitment costs, higher productivity and innovation.<sup>68</sup> However, upon entering certain high-growth, male-dominated sectors, women often face non-inclusive working environments which weigh on progression, and lack the flexibility they need to balance their personal and professional lives when other commitments such as child and eldercare arise. Governments should work with employers to mitigate the structural problems driving these key attrition points.

The working environment could be improved for women in a number of ways. Networks, which provide a framework of peer support to help women handle difficult situations, should be developed and sponsored, very visibly, by senior leaders. Managers should be encouraged to give women responsibility and the space to be creative; to offer unbiased, tailored feedback; and to learn more about the specific barriers women face in the workplace. Reducing sexual discrimination and harassment (see Policy Action 2.3) is also crucial.

Providing employees with the flexibility to juggle personal and professional commitments is vital to helping both women and men thrive in any workplace. It can also help to accelerate the shift in the existing caregiving paradigm while building resilience against future pandemics and shifting demographics (see Policy Action 2.1). However, because women are underrepresented in high-growth sectors today, interventions such as mentoring, male advocates and allies programs, and building role models become even more important in helping women manage their careers. In Saudi Arabia, the proportion of women employed in the telecommunications and technology sector has increased from 7% to 25% over the past three years thanks to initiatives such as in-house nurseries and leadership training provided by INSEAD.

### **Launch comprehensive communication campaigns to transform perceptions of women in STEM, including elevating female role models and celebrating women's achievements**

Governments should also do more to modernize the image of STEM in society, in order to eliminate the pervasive associations of related careers with men. High-profile awards for women and campaigns featuring female role models can help to tackle socio-cultural norms, biases and stereotypes. The "International Day of Women and Girls in Science" on 11 February every year offers a globally recognized anchor for such events.

The UNESCO-L'Oréal "For Women in Science program" has been running since 1998 and is a good example of a global awards program which offers both tangible and intangible benefits for winners. Every year, five women scientists from five regions of the world are awarded €100,000 for important contributions to science. A sister initiative, "International Rising Talents", selects 15 of the most promising female talents globally who each receive €15,000.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Accenture, 2020. "The Hidden Value of Culture Makers"; [https://www.accenture.com/gb-en/about/inclusion-diversity/\\_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF-2/Accenture-Getting-To-Equal-2020-Research-Report.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/gb-en/about/inclusion-diversity/_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF-2/Accenture-Getting-To-Equal-2020-Research-Report.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> For Women in Science. <https://www.forwomeninscience.com/>



At the country level, in 2008, Germany launched the National Pact for Women in MINT (STEM) in 2008 which brings together relevant parties from multiple disciplines, including politics, science and the media, to modernize the image of STEM-related roles.<sup>70</sup> In Australia, increasing visibility is a key pillar of the government's "Advancing Women in STEM strategy". Initiatives include the appointment of a "Women in STEM Ambassador", a digital awareness-raising initiative to reach young Australian women on the importance of STEM to their future, and "Superstars of STEM" to boost recognition of Australian women who work in science and technology.<sup>71</sup> And in Italy, an online database – [www.100esperte.it](http://www.100esperte.it) – collects the resumes of female STEM experts to boost representation of women in the media.

### **Provide direct and indirect incentives for high-growth sector organizations that hire women and achieve gender parity**

Reducing attrition rates benefits not just the employee, but also the employer in terms of lower recruitment costs, higher productivity and innovation.<sup>68</sup> However, upon entering certain high-growth, male-dominated sectors, women often face non-inclusive working environments which weigh on progression, and lack the flexibility they need to balance their personal and professional lives when other commitments such as child and eldercare arise. Governments should work with employers to mitigate the structural problems driving these key attrition points.

Governments should look into both direct and indirect incentives for organizations to increase gender parity in terms of hiring, retention and progression. Direct incentives such as grants, wage and credit subsidies, and tax relief could all offer organizations financial encouragement to hire more women. For example, film production teams in France can secure a bonus of up to 15% in state funding if they meet certain gender equality criteria. Canada reduced the tax contribution of secondary earners within households to increase the financial incentive for women to work. And in the United States, proposed legislation would provide grants of up to US\$50 million per year for small and medium-sized businesses to help women return to or transition into the STEM workforce.

Indirect incentives could include reporting and certification. For example, since 2017 all large companies in the United Kingdom have been obliged to publish gender pay data. A similar requirement could be introduced to track levels of recruitment and promotion across levels and departments. The UNDP's "Gender Equality Seal" offers an interesting certification approach that governments could look to adopt. It awards bronze, silver, or gold 'seals' according to organizations' ongoing progress on gender equality commitments.

<sup>69</sup> For Women in Science. <https://www.forwomeninscience.com/>

<sup>70</sup> Komm mach MINT. "Go MINT" - National Pact for Women in MINT careers"; <https://www.komm-mach-mint.de/englishinformation>

<sup>71</sup> Australia Government. Advancing Women in STEM strategy; <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/advancingwomen-in-stem-strategy/vision-for-equal-opportunity-in-stem/action-area-making-women-in-stem-visible>

## **Help women re/upskill to attain in-demand roles with the biggest gender gaps**

### **Develop collection and reporting mechanisms of sex-disaggregated data by job role to better respond to market needs, identify gaps and track progress**

Sex-disaggregated data is a critical tool for policy makers to be able to understand the realities of the lives of women and men. According to the OECD, such data make it easier to "assess the situation and develop appropriate, evidence-based responses and policies."<sup>72</sup>

The collection of sex-disaggregated data can draw on a variety of methodologies, including surveys, interviews, reviews, desk review and focus group discussion. Such data should ideally be made available in a time series format to track changes and adapt policies accordingly. However, all analysis should be performed in regular consultation with relevant civil society organizations, such as women's advocacy groups.

In Spain, the "National Statistical Plan" requires public bodies to systematically include a sex variable in their datasets. And the "Institute of Women", an autonomous body attached to the Spanish Ministry of Equality, maintains a database of over 300 social and economic indicators.<sup>73</sup>

### **Provide funding for training and career development for women to access high-growth sectors**

High-growth sectors are characterized by rapid change, especially in skills requirements. Governments should work with employers to support women looking to transition with relevant training and career development, including through apprenticeships and work experience.

For example, the ILO's "Women in STEM Workforce Readiness and Development Programme" aims to mitigate the imminent threat of automation by boosting the STEM-related skills of women. More than 12,000 women workers in Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand have passed through the program which offers skills gap identification and upskilling as well as job placement and in-company developing and mentoring.<sup>74</sup> The ILO also offers the "#WOMENCANDOIT" scholarship which provides bespoke support for women looking to enter careers such as game and software development.

In the United States, the "STEM Restoring Employment Skills through Targeted Assistance, Re-entry, and Training (RESTART) Act" would provide small and medium-sized businesses grants that offer "returnships" for women in STEM. Targeted at mid-career women, these training and development programs would span a minimum of ten weeks with the aim of mitigating the challenges some face when moving (back) into STEM-related roles.

<sup>72</sup> OECD. *Governance for Gender Equality Toolkit*; <https://www.oecd.org/gender/governance/toolkit/governance/assessment-of-gender-impact/disaggregated-data/>

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>74</sup> ILO. *Women in STEM Workforce Readiness and Development Programme in Indonesia*; [https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS\\_624553/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/jakarta/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_624553/lang--en/index.htm) & UNICEF, 2020. "Towards an equal future: Reimagining girls' education through STEM"

### **Build a global database of information and best practice on digital inclusion and STEM engagement solutions**

G20 governments should bring together interested parties to develop and maintain a database of interventions and information relating to boosting the digital inclusion and STEM engagement of women. This should include key multinational organizations – such as UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, ITU, ITC, UN Women, EQUALS: The Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age and The World Bank – relevant NGOs – such as The Women's Engineering Society and Girls Who Code; and educators, private sector and critical stakeholders.

The database would be a repository for both individuals and organizations to access best practice case studies and relevant data to support career and policy development and will build on existing initiatives such as the EQUALS Digital Skills Hub.<sup>75</sup>

#### **G20 member countries should therefore:**

- Actively address the physical and cultural barriers which limit the access to digital technologies and the engagement of girls and women in STEM education
- Mitigate barriers and shift perceptions that limit women's access and ability to thrive in high-growth sectors
- Help women re/upskill to attain in-demand roles with the biggest gender gaps

<sup>75</sup> UNESCO. *EQUALS Digital Skills Hub for girls and women*; <https://en.unesco.org/news/launch-equals-digital-skills-hub-girlsand-women>

### Policy Action 1.3: Embed a gender lens at the core of innovative activity

Increase gender equity in research and development (R&D), including design, and develop gender-sensitive ethical guidelines in key areas such as health and advanced technologies.

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#### Context and COVID-19 Impact

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Diversity is the mother of innovation. When asked recently about the development of a COVID-19 vaccine in just 11 months, Dr. Özlem Türeci, the co-founder and chief medical officer of BioNTech, said gender balance was “critical to making the seemingly impossible possible.”<sup>76</sup> Professor Sarah Gilbert from Oxford University notes that two-thirds of the team that developed the vaccine with AstraZeneca were women.<sup>77</sup>

Unfortunately, neither organization is typical. Globally, women are estimated to account for less than 30% of R&D employees, ranging from 48.2% in Central Asia to just 18.5% in South and West Asia.<sup>78</sup> The lack of women conducting research is compounded by a lack of a gender representation in research subjects. A 2019 study looked at 43,000 articles and 13,000 clinical trials; it concluded that “sex bias against female participants in clinical studies persists despite legal and policy initiatives to increase female representation.”<sup>79</sup> In the technology arena, men’s needs are often treated as the “default” with new products and services then adapted for women.<sup>80</sup>

These gender imbalances have serious consequences. For example, analysis of car crash data in the United States found that women are 47% more likely than men to be seriously injured, and 17% more likely to die<sup>81</sup>; a finding linked to a lack of “female” crash test dummies.<sup>82</sup> Diseases which manifest differently in women compared with men can result in misdiagnosis, mistreatment and inappropriate drugs reaching the market, potentially with fatal consequences.<sup>83</sup> These issues could be exacerbated if the artificial intelligence (AI) which underpins new services, such as precision medicine, is trained on biased datasets.<sup>84</sup> Meanwhile, technologies aimed at women’s health – so-called “femtech” – remain chronically under-funded.<sup>85</sup>

The pandemic has both highlighted and sharpened existing gender gaps. Many countries were slow to study the impact of the pandemic through a gender lens; even today, three G20 countries – Japan, Saudi Arabia and Russia – still do not provide fully sex-disaggregated data on COVID-19-related cases and deaths.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>76</sup> UN, 8 March, 2021. “COVID-19 doesn’t discriminate, but societies do; say women frontliners”; <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1086692>

<sup>78</sup> UNESCO, 2019. “Women in science”; <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs55-women-in-science-2019-en.pdf>

<sup>79</sup> Feldman et al, 2019. “Quantifying Sex Bias in Clinical Studies at Scale With Automated Data Extraction”; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6613296/>; Allen Institute for Artificial Intelligence

<sup>80</sup> Criado Perez, Caroline, 2019. “Invisible Women: Data Bias in A World Designed for Men”; Penguin Random House.

<sup>81</sup> US Department of Transportation, 2013. “Injury Vulnerability and Effectiveness of Occupant Protection Technologies for Older Occupants and Women”; <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/811766>

<sup>82</sup> Criado Perez, Caroline, 2019. “Invisible Women: Data Bias in A World Designed for Men”; Penguin Random House.

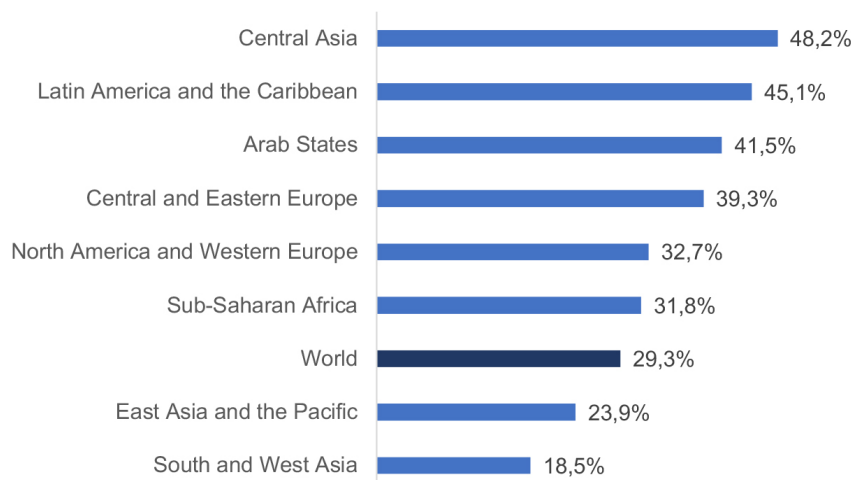
<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Cirillo et al, 2020. “Sex and gender differences and biases in artificial intelligence for biomedicine and healthcare”; <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41746-020-0288-5>; npj Digit. Med. 3, 81

<sup>85</sup> Research and Markets, 2020. “Global Female Technology (Femtech) Market: Analysis and Forecast, 2019-2030”

<sup>86</sup> Global Health 5050, 2021. <https://globalhealth5050.org/the-sex-gender-and-COVID-19-project/dataset/>; Dataset accessed 6 April, 2021

And data suggests that the academic output of women relative to men has fallen during the crisis, a loss of expertise which weighs both on the global response to the pandemic and on the future career trajectories of female academics.<sup>87</sup>



*Note: Data from 2017 or latest year available*

*Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019. "Women in Science – Fact Sheet No.55"*

<sup>87</sup>Gabster, vanDaalen, Dhatt&Barry, 2020. "Challenges for the female academic during the COVID-19 pandemic", [https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)31412-4.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(20)31412-4.pdf); *The Lancet*, Vol 395, 27 June 2020

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## Exploration of Action Areas

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### Place both the skills and needs of women at the heart of efforts to tackle major global challenges such as climate change and inequality

#### Fund research into the gendered impact of major global challenges to help shape women-specific interventions

The impact of COVID-19 showed once again that the impacts of major global events are rarely gender-neutral. Governments must place the needs of women at the heart of recovery efforts, as well as at the center of interventions addressing challenges such as climate change and inequality.

A key issue highlighted by the pandemic is the narrow focus on direct impacts, such as infection and death rates. However, women are often disproportionately affected by indirect impacts; the proportion of women working in the health and social care sectors and the rise in domestic violence are just two recent examples. Governments must fund more research to understand, highlight and mitigate these indirect impacts.

The climate crisis is another example. While the potential societal impact of climate change is increasingly well understood, the gender-differentiated effects are not. The OECD highlights "the use of time, exposure to violence, intra-household inequalities, use of natural resources, and specific health concerns" as relevant areas where current data fails to capture gender differences.<sup>88</sup>

Moreover, governments need to harness the potential of women in supporting the energy transition. For example, thanks to strong social networks and their position as primary energy users within households, women are ideally placed to lead and support the delivery of off-grid renewable energy solutions.<sup>89</sup> However, more research is needed to understand how to overcome prevailing gender gaps in terms of training, occupational segregation and financing to realize such opportunities.

### Target gender parity on taskforces and in senior decision-making bodies set up to tackle major global challenges

Diversity has a strong positive association with innovation.<sup>90</sup> However, too often women are excluded from key decision-making bodies. Analysis of COVID-19 pandemic taskforces and government health ministers were both found to be heavily male-dominated.<sup>91</sup> And at the 2019 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 25) in Madrid, women accounted for 40% of delegates, falling to 27% of leads.<sup>92</sup> As Soumya Swaminathan, Chief Scientist at the World Health Organization (WHO) noted during the pandemic: "Policies for women are often not being decided by women."<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> OECD, 2021. "Let's choose to challenge the climate crisis with a gender lens"; <https://oecd-environmentfocus.blog/2021/03/04/lets-choose-to-challenge-the-climate-crisis-with-a-gender-lens/>

<sup>89</sup> IRENA, 2019. "Gender Equality for an Inclusive Energy Transition"; <https://www.irena.org/newsroom/articles/2019/Jan/Gender-equality-for-an-inclusive-energy-transition>

<sup>90</sup> Accenture, 2019. "Equality = Innovation"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF/Accenture-Equality-Equals-Innovation-Gender-Equality-Research-Report-IWD-2019.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/Thought-Leadership-Assets/PDF/Accenture-Equality-Equals-Innovation-Gender-Equality-Research-Report-IWD-2019.pdf)

<sup>91</sup> W20 Saudi Arabia & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

<sup>92</sup> UNFCCC, 2021. "Gender composition"; [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp2020\\_03\\_adv.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp2020_03_adv.pdf)

<sup>93</sup> GCSP, 2020. "COVID-19: What does this mean for gender?"; <https://www.gcsp.ch/global-insights/COVID-19-what-does-mean-gender>

Governments should set a clear tone from the top by actively bringing more women into decision-making bodies. For example, the Independent Panel on Pandemic Preparedness and Response, established by the WHO Director-General last year, has female co-chairs and a gender-equal split of members.<sup>94</sup> And in Rwanda, the 2003 constitution set a 30% mandatory minimum quota of women on all decision-making bodies.

### **Develop gender-sensitive ethical guidelines governing R&D in areas such as advanced technologies and medicine**

#### **Work with developers of advanced technologies (e.g., Artificial Intelligence) to map out the inherent biases and associated risks for women**

Advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) offer huge potential benefits across a wide variety of sectors and domains, not the least of which is reducing recruitment bias. However, they also present risks relating to discrimination, privacy, safety and security. Governments must work with the developers of such technologies to draw up robust ethical guidelines surrounding their development and deployment, with a clear focus on monitoring and mitigating gender-differentiated impacts.

For example, the European Commission's regulatory framework on AI refers to the need to address gender bias. The proposed legislation states that AI systems should contribute to reducing rather than creating bias; those identified as "high-risk" would need to prove that they do not discriminate; that the data underpinning them is representative; and that any decisions made are auditable.<sup>95</sup>

Governments should also clearly map out the threat posed by automation to women's livelihoods (see Policy Action 2.1). IMF research found that 11% of jobs done by women are under severe threat of being automated, compared with 9% of men's because women tend to perform more routine tasks than men. Women over the age of 40 are particularly at risk.<sup>96</sup>

### **Invest in boosting awareness and development of gender medicine to ensure womenspecific health challenges are properly diagnosed and treated**

Gender medicine recognizes that fundamental differences in male and female bodies due to both biology and environment, mean that diagnoses and often treatments should be gender responsive. Governments must support the development of gender medicine and raise awareness of the need to apply critical existing knowledge, such as how symptoms of certain diseases manifest differently in men and women.

Building the gender competencies of medical professionals is key. This should include basic gender concepts such as power relations and bias; the ability to explain gender differences in health outcomes; and effective and empathetic, gender-sensitive communication with patients.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>94</sup> *The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response*; <https://theindependentpanel.org/panel-members/>

<sup>95</sup> *European Commission, 2021. "New rules for Artificial Intelligence – Questions and Answers"*; [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA\\_21\\_1683](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_21_1683)

<sup>96</sup> *IMF, 2021. "An Economy for All"*; <https://www.imf.org/External/Pubs/FT/irb/2020/SpringSummer/index.pdf>

<sup>97</sup> *WHO, 2006. "Integrating gender into the curricula for health professionals"*;

In Austria, gender medicine is integrated into university curricula, helping students develop gender responsive clinical skills and helping them to understand how patients interact with male and female physicians. And in Italy, the "application and diffusion" of gender medicine throughout the national health system became law in 2018.<sup>98</sup>

As discussed in the B20 Health and Life Sciences Policy Paper, governments should also support employers in building awareness at the individual level so they can inform women about potential illnesses and help them take control of their health.

### **Encourage gender parity throughout the innovation cycle to ensure the specific needs of women are not overlooked**

#### **Advocate for a gender lens in the development and trialling of new medicines and technologies**

Women are still seen too often as a "subgroup" in the development and trialling of new medicines and technologies. Governments should advocate for gender parity in the evidence gathering and reporting phases, and through regulatory policy and practice.

Greater attention must be paid to the inclusion of females in medical studies and trials. For example, in 2016 the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) mandated the inclusion of both male and female samples in preclinical studies. And the European Medicines Authority and Health Canada have advocated for including more women – including those who are older, pregnant or lactating – as part of the drug approval process.<sup>99</sup>

In terms of new technologies, the lack of women working in STEM (see Policy Action 1.2) sometimes leads to the needs of women being ignored in the design phase resulting in, for example, smartphones too big for the average women's hands and pockets.<sup>100</sup> Governments should advocate for gender-sensitive product and service design, highlighting both the societal and commercial benefits for technology developers. The "Female Interaction" project, sponsored by the Danish government, is an example of how technology developers can better understand female needs and preferences and so establish appropriate product, service and content development guidelines.<sup>101</sup> And "Horizon Europe", the EU's flagship research and innovation program, requires gender to be integrated into all related activities.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Baggio and Malorni, 2019. "The Italian law on gender medicine: a reality and a hope", *The Italian Journal of Gender-Specific Medicine*; <https://www.gendermedjournal.it/archivio/3245/articoli/32143/>

<sup>99</sup> Ravindran at al, 2020. "Making pharmaceutical research and regulation work for women", *BMJ*; <https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m3808>

<sup>100</sup> Criado Perez, Caroline, 2019. "Invisible Women: Data Bias in A World Designed for Men"; Penguin Random House.

<sup>101</sup> UNESCO and UNWomen, 2010. *Gender, science and technology*; <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Women-and-Girls/Documents/ReportsModules/Final-Report-EGMST%20Gender%20science%20technology%20expert%20group%20report.pdf>

<sup>102</sup> European Union, 2021. "Horizon Europe"; <https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eu-law-and-publications/publication-detail/-/publication/c0b30b4b-6ce2-11eb-aeb5-01aa75ed71a1>



### **Educate and incentivize the investment community to incorporate a gender perspective into decision-making in order to boost the capital available for femtech and womenfocused start-ups**

Finding investment for women-focused innovation remains a challenge. Governments should advocate for more gender diversity in the venture capital sector, and for teams to build gender perspectives into decision-making.

Shifting societal stereotypes is an important first step. Governments should bring women's health issues such as menstruation and menopause into the public discourse, helping to mitigate societal taboos, and highlight the associated commercial opportunities. For example, in Argentina, the women's development organization Pro Mujer educates young women on menstrual hygiene management by partnering with nurses, providing free sanitary products and launching social media and communication awareness campaigns.<sup>103</sup>

Governments then need to shift funding stereotypes. For example, applicants to "Horizon Europe" must present gender equality plans and specific funding is set aside for gender research and empowering women innovators.<sup>104</sup> And Investing in Women (IW), an Australian Government initiative, works with impact investors to provide capital for small and medium-sized enterprises focused on providing gender responsive products and services.<sup>105</sup> Greater support for increased impact investing (see B20 Finance and Infrastructure Policy Paper) could also help address diversity, gender and inclusion issues.

#### **G20 member countries should therefore:**

- Place both the skills and needs of women at the heart of efforts to tackle major global challenges such as climate change and inequality
- Develop gender-sensitive ethical guidelines governing R&D in areas such as advanced technologies and medicine
- Encourage gender parity throughout the innovation cycle to ensure the needs of women are not overlooked

<sup>103</sup> Pro Mujer, 2019. <https://promujer.org/2019/09/19/lets-talk-menstruation/>

<sup>104</sup> European Union, 2021. "Horizon Europe"; <https://op.europa.eu/en/web/eu-law-and-publications/publication-detail/-/publication/c0b30b4b-6ce2-11eb-aeb5-01aa75ed71a1>

<sup>105</sup> Investing in Women, 2020. "How to invest with a gender lens"; <https://v4w.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/HOW-TOGUIDE-REPORT.pdf>

## Recommendation 2 - Reimagine: Build an inclusive society and workplace cultures which dismantle pervasive gender stereotypes

The G20 should boost women's economic opportunities by eliminating legal and cultural barriers to paid work, and actively upskilling female workers.

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### Policy Actions

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#### 2.1 Eliminate barriers to women's full inclusion in the workplace for an equal participation in our economy – Address social and cultural norms that limit women's opportunities, including unpaid work, occupational segregation and stereotypes.

- The G20 should develop and fund programs and incentives to allow women and men to balance work with family care responsibilities.
  - The G20 should advocate for gender balance in the workplace and help organizations to mitigate occupational segregation.
  - The G20 should develop innovative initiatives that support women working informally, or part-time, or who are self-employed.
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#### 2.2 Build the relevance and resilience of women's skills – Promote gender equity across business departments and functions; and provide women in roles at higher risk of disruption with specific reskilling and training.

- The G20 should identify women in high-risk roles and work with companies and education institutions to reskill them for high-growth sectors
  - The G20 should encourage new gender-sensitive recruitment and promotion strategies which boost the representation of women across all roles and departments
  - The G20 should develop and fund a comprehensive, dynamic, gender-sensitive lifelong learning framework to encourage continuous upskilling
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#### 2.3 Eradicate sexual discrimination, harassment, and gender-based violence – Work to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and violence in society through targeted education programs and develop support mechanisms to address unethical behavior in the workplace.

- The G20 should deliver comprehensive social education campaigns focused on reducing gender-related bias, discrimination, harassment, and violence.
- The G20 should encourage and support employers to adopt tools to give women greater confidence in reporting unethical behavior.
- The G20 should work with internet providers, social and traditional media and publishing companies to reduce discrimination and abuse of women.

**Proposed KPIs**

The B20 Women’s Empowerment Taskforce proposes that current and future G20 processes monitor progress on **the percentage of unpaid work done by women**. Specific targets for this KPI are proposed in the Annex, with ambition for 2024. We also encourage that current and future G20 processes monitor progress on **KPIs relating job quality between men and women**. This refers to multiple aspects of employment that contribute to the well-being of workers, such as earnings quality, quality of the working environment and role sustainability. More information can be found in the Annex.

**SDG impacted - 5: Gender Equality** - Recommendation 2 is primarily aligned to **SDG5**, particularly **SDG 5.1** ‘End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere’ and **SDG5.2** ‘Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres...’ and **SDG5.4** ‘Recognize the value of unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.’ and **SDG5.b** ‘Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women’. **4: Quality Education** - And it resonates with **SDG4.4** ‘Substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment...’ In addition to **SDG4.5** ‘...Ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training...’ and **SDG4.7** ‘By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development including, among others...human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity...’ **8: Decent Work and Economic Growth** - IAnd it applies to **SDG8.5** ‘Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value’. **10: Reduced Inequalities** - It also supports both **SDG10.2** to ‘Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.’ As well as **SDG10.3** ‘Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation,policies and action in this regard’ and **SDG10.4** ‘Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality’. **1: No Poverty** - Finally, there are links into **SDG1.3** ‘Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.’ As well as **SDG1.4**: ‘By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance’.



**G20 Italy's priority impact - People:** Recommendation 1 supports the Italian G20 Presidency priority theme of ‘People’, particularly in the ambition to shape a “sustainable, just, inclusive and resilient recovery” by “promoting women’s empowerment“ and “ensuring universal access to education”. **Prosperity:** It also supports ‘Prosperity’ 1 in terms of “reducing the digital divide, promoting infrastructural developments able to guarantee universal internet access and achieving adequate and widespread digital literacy“ and “exploiting the full potential of the technological revolution to concretely improve the living conditions of citizens all over the world, in every aspect of their lives“.



## Policy Action 2.1: Eliminate barriers to women's full inclusion in the workplace for an equal participation in the economy

Address social and cultural norms that limit women's opportunities, including unpaid work, occupational segregation and stereotypes.

### Context and COVID-19 Impact

Across the world, women are much less likely than men to be economically active: In 2020, 47% of women participated in the labor force, compared with 74% of men.<sup>106</sup> And even when they participate, they tend to work in less secure roles for less money.

Over the years, multiple, systemic barriers have weighed on the ability of women to engage in paid employment. For instance, World Bank analysis shows that 90 economies still restrict the types of jobs women are able to do.<sup>107</sup> This contributes to approximately 740 million women working in the informal economy who are overrepresented among domestic and home-based workers.<sup>108</sup> Such roles tend to leave women working for lower wages without income protection or other social protection, such as health insurance, pension or paid sick leave.<sup>109</sup>

More intangible, socio-cultural norms also continue to limit opportunities and inclusive workplaces for women. For example, deeply ingrained gender stereotypes promote women as caregivers and men as breadwinners.<sup>110</sup> A 2017 Gallup/ILO study found that 20% of men and 14% of women globally believe it is unacceptable for women to work outside the home.<sup>111</sup> And across the European Union, care responsibilities keep approximately 7.7 million women out of the labor force, compared to just 450,000 men.<sup>112</sup>

Even for women in the workforce, these socio-cultural norms can translate into underemployment, pay gaps, and discrimination. Prior to the pandemic, across the OECD, one in four women were working part-time compared with just one in ten men (see Exhibit 3 below),<sup>113</sup> largely driven by the burden of unpaid care work.<sup>114</sup> Similarly, in Europe, 18% of women reported reducing working hours due to childcare, compared to only 3% of employed men. In turn, wages are also impacted, with the OECD citing a "motherhood penalty" on women amounting to a 7% reduction in wages per child.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>106</sup> World Bank, 2019. *Labor force participation rate, female/male (% female/male population ages 15+)*

<sup>107</sup> World Bank, 2020. "Women, Business and the Law 2020"; <https://wbl.worldbank.org/>

<sup>108</sup> ILO, 2018. "Women and men in the informal economy: A statistical picture"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_626831.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_626831.pdf)

<sup>109</sup> UN Women. "Women in the informal economy"; <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/csw61/women-in-informaleconomy>

<sup>110</sup> ILO, 2020. "World Employment and Social Outlook - Trends 2020"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_734455.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_734455.pdf)

<sup>111</sup> ILO & Gallup, 2017. "Towards a better future for women and work: Voices of women and men" [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_546256.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_546256.pdf)

<sup>112</sup> European Institute for Gender Equity, 2021. "General inequalities in care and consequences for the labor market"; 20204948\_mh0220888enn\_pdf.pdf

<sup>113</sup> OECD, 2019. "OECD Employment Outlook"; <https://data.oecd.org/emp/part-time-employment-rate.html>

<sup>114</sup> 29% of female part-time workers in the EU cited care duties as the main reason for their part-time employment. European Institute for Gender Equity, 2021. "General inequalities in care and consequences for the labor market"; 20204948\_mh0220888enn\_pdf.pdf

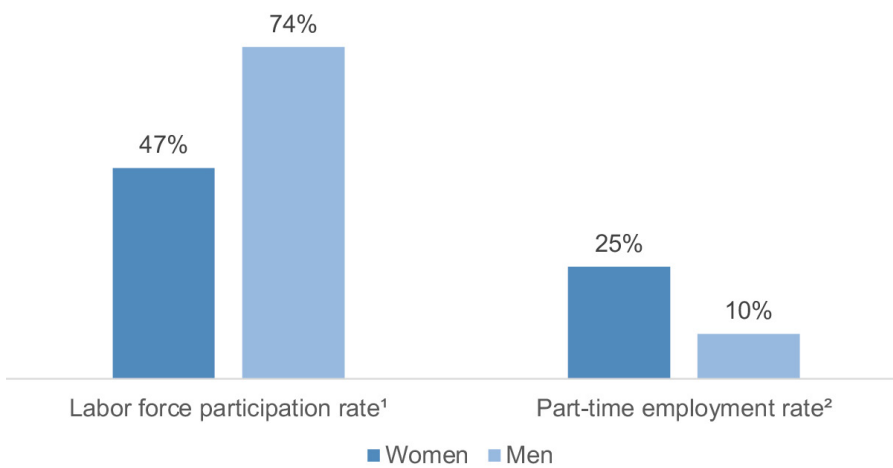
<sup>115</sup> WEF, 2019. "An economist explains why women get paid less"; <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/03/an-economist-explains-why-women-get-paid-less/>

Flexible work arrangements could help women juggle multiple commitments, but research shows many fear being penalized for making use of such arrangements.

The challenge presented by the prevailing parenting paradigm and the burden of unpaid work has been highlighted by the experience of women during the COVID-19 pandemic. The “double shift” for women juggling both unpaid and paid work responsibilities has been dragged into the mainstream. Data from UNWomen suggests that both women and men are doing more unpaid work, but that the burden and intensity on women has been greater, further entrenching gender stereotypes.<sup>116</sup>

The burden of unpaid care on women has been compounded by the concentration of women in more vulnerable sectors and employment formats over recent months. ILO data suggests that 5.0% of women in paid employment lost their jobs in 2020, compared with 3.9% of men, partially driven by the overrepresentation of women in part-time and other temporary roles.<sup>117</sup> A W20 study estimates that women’s earnings fell by 16.5% on average between March and August 2020 compared with a drop of 10.1% for men – but women in full-time employment saw a decline of just 8%, on average, compared with a decrease of 33% for their self-employed peers.<sup>118</sup>

**Exhibit 4**  
**Gender gaps in labor force participation and part-time employment rates**



Source: 1. World Bank (2019), percentage of population aged 15+ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.CACT.FE.ZS>; 2. OECD (2019), percentage of total employment, <https://data.oecd.org/emp/part-time-employment-rate.htm>

<sup>116</sup> UNWomen, 2020. “Whose time to care?”; [https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Whose-time-to-carebrief\\_0.pdf](https://data.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Whose-time-to-carebrief_0.pdf)

<sup>117</sup> ILO, 2021. “COVID-19 and the world of work. Seventh edition”; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms\\_767028.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_767028.pdf)

<sup>118</sup> W20 Saudi Arabia & Accenture, 2020. “If not now, when?”; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

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## Exploration of Action Areas

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### **Fund and develop programs and incentives to allow women and men to balance work with family care responsibilities**

#### **Develop family-friendly policies, including incentives for men to take parental leaves**

For women to thrive in the workplace, men need to take on a greater burden of childcare. As former United States Supreme Court Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg noted, "Women will have achieved true equality when men share with them the responsibility of bringing up the next generation." It is therefore critical that governments develop a range of policies to allow women and men to share both paid work and childcare more equally.

Comprehensive parental leave is a key first step. This should include not just adequate maternity leave, but also paternity leave to change the prevailing parenting paradigm that designates women as "caregivers" and men as "breadwinners". Moreover, research has shown that organizations which encourage maternity leave alone have a detrimental impact on women's career progression, but those which encourage maternity and paternity leave have a positive impact.<sup>119</sup>

In Sweden, parents receive 480 days' parental allowance per child – but a minimum of 90 days for each parent and days can be taken until the child turns 12.<sup>120</sup> In the United Kingdom, Shared Parental Leave allows couples can share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay between them in the first year of the child's life.<sup>121</sup> However, such policies need to be backed up by campaigns to reduce the social stigma attached to men taking time off to care for children.

Governments should also consider how to reduce the burden of other family management responsibilities on women. For example, basic household infrastructure – such as more efficient cooking stoves and fuel, and better sanitation and running water – could free up women's time for economically productive activities.

#### **Provide greater access to high-quality, affordable, professional childcare and eldercare support**

Across the world, the burden of childcare and eldercare continues to fall disproportionately on the shoulders of women. Governments must look to build and strengthen the provision of care infrastructure to allow women to take a full and active role in the labor force.

Childcare is prohibitively expensive in many countries around the world. Across the OECD, childcare costs average 17% of a women's earnings in a median, dual-income household, rising to around a third in Ireland and Switzerland, and a half in Japan and the United Kingdom.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Accenture, 2018. "When she rises, we all rise"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-73/Accenture-When-She-Rises-We-All-Rise.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-73/Accenture-When-She-Rises-We-All-Rise.pdf)

<sup>120</sup> European Commission, „Sweden - Parental benefits and benefits related to childbirth“; <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1130&intPagId=4808&langId=en>

<sup>121</sup> UK Government, "Shared Parental Leave and Pay"; <https://www.gov.uk/shared-parental-leave-and-pay>

<sup>122</sup> European Commission, „Sweden - Parental benefits and benefits related to childbirth“; <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1130&intPagId=4808&langId=en>

However, in other countries, such as Italy and Germany, net costs are close to zero as families who use public childcare centers can benefit from subsidized fees.<sup>123</sup> In the United States, a new tax credit plan would cap the contribution of families earning 1.5 times their state median child-care services at 7% of their annual income.<sup>124</sup>

Governments could also do more to stimulate both the availability and quality of childcare provision. For example, in Japan the government is looking to train another 77,000 childcare workers to meet demand following the expansion of preschool subsidies.<sup>125</sup> In the United States, the new tax credit plan would raise the minimum wage for childcare workers to \$15 an hour.<sup>126</sup> And in countries such as Saudi Arabia, governments require private-sector employers (with a certain number of female employees) to provide on-site childcare facilities.

The need for eldercare support is also growing as rising longevity increases the risks and burdens associated with diseases such as Alzheimer's. Eldercare policy differs significantly around the world. For example, UNWomen analysis finds the share of public expenditure aligned to long-term care ranges from 2.2% in Finland and 2.1% in Japan to just 0.7% in Spain and 0.1% in China.<sup>127</sup>

### **Advocate for gender balance in the workplace and help organizations to mitigate occupational segregation**

#### **Work with employers to mitigate occupational segregation and lower the gender pay gap**

Occupational segregation weighs on women's economic opportunities and is a key contributor to the gender pay gap. Governments should work with employers and education providers to reduce segregation between sectors, departments and levels.

Sectors such as construction and care work have traditionally been dominated by men and women respectively; this is also true of today's high-growth sectors (see Policy Action 2.1) which limits women's opportunities in higher-growth, higher-paying roles. At the organizational level, women also tend to be concentrated in certain departments such as human resources, finance, and marketing. And finally, women are underrepresented at the more senior levels (see Policy Action 3.1).

To highlight such disparities, governments should work with employers and organizations such as the ILO to measure and track the proportion of women by sector, department, and level. This can be supported by robust gender gap reporting, such as that introduced by the United Kingdom in 2017 for all organizations with 250 or more employees.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>123</sup> OECD, 2020. "Is Childcare Affordable?"; <https://www.oecd.org/els/family/OECD-Is-Childcare-Affordable.pdf>

<sup>124</sup> US Government, 2021. Fact Sheet: The American Families Plan; <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/28/fact-sheet-the-american-families-plan/>

<sup>125</sup> New York Times, 2019. "Japan desperately needs more care workers"; <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/09/world/asia/japan-day-care.html>

<sup>126</sup> US Government, 2021. Fact Sheet: The American Families Plan; <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/28/fact-sheet-the-american-families-plan/>

<sup>127</sup> UNWomen, 2017. "Eldercare policies in East Asia and Europe"; <https://www.unwomen.org/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2017/discussion-paper-eldercare-policies-in-east-asia-and-europeen.pdf?la=en&vs=1127>

<sup>128</sup> UK Government. The gender pay gap data you must gather; <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-gender-pay-gap-data-you-must-gather#next-steps-making-your-gender-pay-gap-calculations>

Progress could be further strengthened by providing financial incentives to organizations which hire women in the form of grants, wage and credit subsidies and tax relief (see Policy Action 2.1).

**Develop and fund campaigns which promote the benefits of gender parity, including elevating female role models and celebrating women's achievements**

Occupational segregation also be mitigated by shifting stereotypes around the types of roles women and men hold. Governments should highlight the proven benefits of diversity in decision-making and raise awareness of women's achievements, especially in non-traditional sectors and departments, using International Women's Day as an important – but non-exclusive – hook.

Public awareness initiatives can play a major role in highlighting the pervasive, detrimental impact of gender stereotypes which drive occupational segregation. Importantly, these should address both male and female biases. Inspiration can be drawn from innovative stereotype-busting campaigns such as "This Girl Can" by Sport England, "Bet She Can" or "#banbossy".

Governments can also work with and support the efforts of business associations and networks, particularly those which focus on collective problem-solving and the amplification of achievement in male-dominated roles and sectors. Finally, governments should consider how they can support the growing number of women in business awards<sup>129</sup>, for example, through amplifying the achievements of the winners.

**Develop innovative initiatives that support women working informally, part-time or who are self-employed**

**Ensure that women working in alternative models of employment have sufficient access to benefits such as pension, health insurance and paid sick leave**

Social protection plays an important role in reducing poverty and inequality. However current systems often fail to provide full, effective coverage for people working in alternative models of employment such as those working part-time; for temporary, selfemployed or "gig" workers; or informal caregivers. The B20 Finance and Infrastructure Taskforce have identified gender gaps in both insurance and pensions, for example.

Governments should therefore develop and test innovative solutions to close coverage gaps and adapt systems to emerging forms of employment.

One key area governments can address is the application of minimum thresholds in terms of earning, hours or time in employment which disproportionately affect part-time and contract workers. For example, in the Netherlands, social insurance contributions work on a "per hour" basis while part-time workers are legally entitled to the same wages, benefits and training opportunities as fulltime employees.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>128</sup> UK Government. *The gender pay gap data you must gather*; <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-gender-pay-gap-data-you-must-gather#next-steps-making-your-gender-pay-gap-calculations>

<sup>129</sup> International Women's Day. *International Awards*; <https://www.internationalwomensday.com/Missions/15535/Internationalawards-celebrate-impressive-achievements-of-women-worldwide>

<sup>130</sup> ILO, 2018. *Innovative approaches for ensuring universal social protection for the future of work*; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms\\_629864.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_629864.pdf)



Another area of focus should be on increasing the flexibility of systems – for example, to eliminate coverage gaps that occur when women take career breaks, change employers or work for multiple employers. Intermediary bodies play a role here, helping to aggregate contributions across multiple employers and reduce the administrative burden on individuals. For example, in Colombia, cooperatives enter into collective agreements with social insurance schemes, and manage key elements of the process such as negotiation, contribution and distribution.<sup>131</sup>

Finally, governments should create minimum levels of benefits – or social protection "floors". Areas of focus include child, family and disability benefits, pensions, and health coverage.

**G20 member countries should therefore:**

- Fund and develop programs and incentives to allow women and men to balance work with family care responsibilities
- Advocate for gender balance in the workplace and help organizations to mitigate occupational segregation
- Develop innovative initiatives that support women working informally, or part-time, or who are self-employed

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<sup>131</sup> ILO, 2018. "Innovative approaches for ensuring universal social protection for the future of work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms\\_629864.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_629864.pdf)

## Policy Action 2.2: Build the relevance and resilience of women's skills

Promote gender equity across business departments and functions; and provide women in roles at higher risk of disruption with specific reskilling and training.

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### Context and COVID-19 Impact

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The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been amplified across industries in which there are high concentrations of women. Sectors such as hospitality, tourism and retail have suffered from demand and supply pressures due to lockdown measures, limiting both the consumer demand and the ability of employees to do their jobs.<sup>132</sup>

Unfortunately, pre-existing occupational segregation (or “glass walls”) and varying impact by industry also resulted in an unequal impact on women. A UNWomen study found that women’s jobs are 19% more vulnerable than those of men, noting that 80% of domestic workers – 72% of whom are women – have lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic.<sup>133</sup> The ILO similarly reports that almost half (49%) of employed women are working in sectors with a medium or high-risk of income and job loss during the pandemic, compared with 40% of men.<sup>134</sup>

As a result, women’s employment status, earnings and potential for future employment have all been negatively impacted. Data from the WEF and LinkedIn suggests that some industries which employ a lot of women, such as education and retail, have seen “notable declines of women hired into senior management roles.”<sup>135</sup> Another study across six G20 countries found that women have been 24% more likely to permanently lose their jobs compared to men over the last year.<sup>136</sup>

In addition to unequal representation across industries, women are also over-represented in specific functions (e.g., human resources; finance and administration; and marketing and sales) and under-represented in others.<sup>137</sup> One contributing factor may be inequities inherent in workplace hiring and promotion practices. For example, a high prevalence of women or men in certain jobs influences thinking that women or men are more suitable for those roles, respectively, which then impacts hiring<sup>138</sup>.

<sup>132</sup> World Economic Forum, 2021. “Global Gender Gap Report 2021”; <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gapreport-2021>

<sup>133</sup> UNWomen, 2020. “From Insight to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19”; <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digitallibrary/publications/2020/09/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-covid-19>

<sup>134</sup> ILO, 2020. “A gender-responsive employment recovery: Building back fairer”; [https://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS\\_751785/lang--en/index.html](https://www.ilo.org/emppolicy/pubs/WCMS_751785/lang--en/index.html)

<sup>135</sup> World Economic Forum, 2021. “Global Gender Gap Report 2021”; <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gapreport-2021>

<sup>136</sup> Countries included China, Italy, Japan, South Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States. IZA Institute of Labor Economics., October 2020. “Gender inequality during the COVID-19 pandemic: Income, expenditure, savings, and job loss”; <https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/13824/gender-inequality-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic-income-expenditure-savings-andjob-loss>

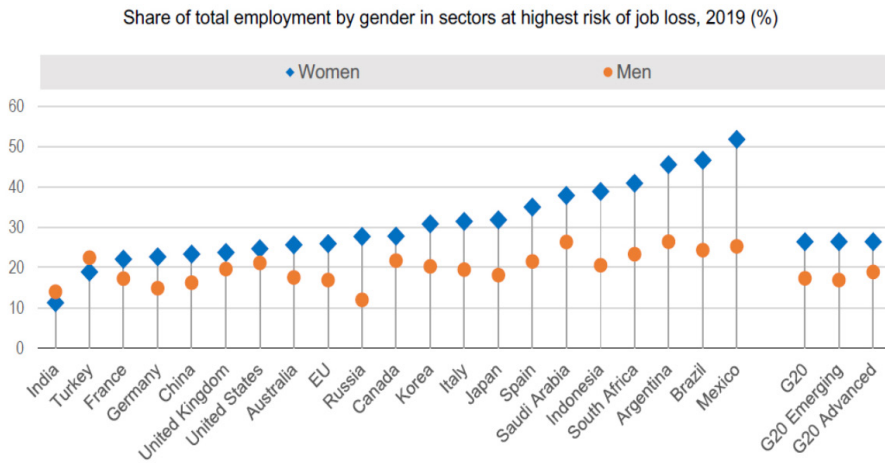
<sup>137</sup> ILO, 2020. “The business case for change”; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_dialogue/---act\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_742697.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/publication/wcms_742697.pdf)

<sup>138</sup> Riach, P. and Rich, J., 2006. “An experimental investigation of sexual discrimination in hiring in the English labor market”, *Advances in Economic Analysis & Policy*; [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4908229\\_An\\_Experimental\\_Investigation\\_of\\_Sexual\\_Discrimination\\_in\\_Hiring\\_in\\_the\\_English\\_Labor\\_Market](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4908229_An_Experimental_Investigation_of_Sexual_Discrimination_in_Hiring_in_the_English_Labor_Market) & <https://hbr.org/2021/02/research-to-reduce-gender-bias-in-hiring-make-your-shortlist-longer>

Studies have shown, for instance, how women are more likely to be recruited for secretarial positions, and men are more likely to be hired for STEM roles, despite identical resumes.<sup>139, 140</sup>

These gender gaps underscore the need to build the relevance and resilience of women's skills. A recent WEF study found that 50% of all employees will need reskilling by 2025 – but that the vast majority of business leaders (94%) expect workers to upskill "on the job".<sup>141</sup> Organizations that actively align the skillsets of female workers with high-demand areas – such as digital and technical skills – will not only "future-proof" their careers, but should also be able build more equitable departments, functions, and industries.

**Exhibit 5**  
Gender distribution across workforce sectors in the G20



**Note:** The ISIC Rev. 4 sectors covered are: Retail trade (45 & 47), Accommodation and food services (I), Arts, entertainment and recreation (R) and Other services (S, T, U & V)

Source: ILO & OECD, 2020. [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms\\_756334.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---cabinet/documents/publication/wcms_756334.pdf)

<sup>139</sup> Riach, P. and Rich, J., 2006. "An experimental investigation of sexual discrimination in hiring in the English labor market", *Advances in Economic Analysis & Policy*; [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4908229\\_An\\_Experimental\\_Investigation\\_of\\_Sexual\\_Discrimination\\_in\\_Hiring\\_in\\_the\\_English\\_Labor\\_Market](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4908229_An_Experimental_Investigation_of_Sexual_Discrimination_in_Hiring_in_the_English_Labor_Market) & <https://hbr.org/2021/02/research-to-reduce-gender-bias-in-hiring-make-your-shortlist-longer>

<sup>140</sup> Yakowicz, W., 2014. "How to Remove Gender Bias From the Hiring Process"; <https://www.inc.com/will-yakowicz/how-to-help-end-gender-bias-while-hiring.html>

<sup>141</sup> World Economic Forum, 2020. "Future of Jobs Report"; [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs\\_2020.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2020.pdf)

## Exploration of Action Areas

### Identify women in high-risk roles and work with companies and education institutions to reskill them for high-growth sectors

#### Work collaboratively with ecosystem partners to identify best practices in reskilling women for the future

Research shows that women are often prevented from accessing the skilling and vocational programs offered by businesses, government, and NGOs by care obligations, distance, and time pressures.<sup>142</sup> As noted by the ILO: "Helping low-skilled women participate in the labor market would appear to be a key policy challenge in virtually all G20 economies."<sup>143</sup> Ensuring that women upskill in areas that open up avenues to stable and higher-income jobs not only increases the incentive to participate in the labor market, but also ensures the supply of workers with skills aligned with companies' emerging needs.

Uniting ecosystem partners to work together on the issue of reskilling women holds the promise not only of advancing best practices, but also publicly committing to change. Such partnerships are critical to "future-proofing" women's careers and to changing the current occupational and functions segregation that exists. Efforts start with targeting children in school, and continue with a focus on women who are already part of, or who are looking to re-integrate into, the workforce.

For example, the Scottish government is aiming to reduce gender-based occupational segregation with its "Be what you want" campaign". The campaign targets 11-14 yearold students in Scottish schools and tries to support their career aspirations while highlighting the barriers that boys and girls face when trying to enter non-traditional areas of work.<sup>144</sup> And the European Commission's Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition brings together member states, companies and other organizations to pledge to take action to help close the digital skills gap. Each year, the best capacity building initiatives for women and girls are recognized through the European Digital Skills Awards, which helps to spotlight innovative models that groups can learn from.<sup>145</sup>

### Develop fiscal policy that supports companies to double down on reskilling investments that focus on women

Financing mechanisms are an important policy tool to drive women's participation in skilling and training programs, as well as improve women's skill alignment to emerging business needs. Many G20 member states have used subsidies, tax incentives, and subsidized loans to boost training and development. Policies and incentives aimed at institutions, employers, or individuals could target the in-demand skills women need to access sectors in which they are under-represented.<sup>146</sup>

<sup>142</sup> Cho, Yoonyoung, et al., 2013. "Gender differences in the effects of vocational training: Constraints on women and drop-out behavior." *The World Bank*; <https://gap.hks.harvard.edu/gender-differences-effects-vocational-training-constraints-women-and-drop-out-behavior>

<sup>143</sup> OECD, 2019. "Women at work in G20 countries"; <https://www.oecd.org/g20/summits/osaka/G20-Women-at-Work.pdf>

<sup>144</sup> World Economic Forum, 2017. "Accelerating gender parity in the fourth industrial revolution"; [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_EGW\\_White\\_Paper\\_Gender\\_Parity\\_4IR.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_EGW_White_Paper_Gender_Parity_4IR.pdf)

<sup>145</sup> European Commission. *Digital skills and jobs coalition*; <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/digital-skills-coalition>

<sup>146</sup> ILO, 2018. "Financing life-long learning for the future of work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms\\_646046.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_646046.pdf)

Brazil, for instance, taxes companies to provide training. The training levy is managed by a private sector non-profit organization to ensure the strong alignment of skills with private sector needs.<sup>147</sup> In New Zealand, through the Aotearoa New Zealand Skills Pledge, some of the country's largest employers have committed to publishing how much they spend on training and double the number of training hours per employee by 2025.<sup>148</sup> And in Germany, individuals without a college degree, or those who have spent at least four years in a job unrelated to their initial training, may receive government funds to re-train in an area with strong labor market demand.<sup>149</sup> Tailoring such incentives to focus explicitly on women could help to eliminate occupational segregation and set up women to compete on a level playing field in the labor market.

### **Bring together education providers, government and business to strengthen the in-demand skills profile of women**

Governments should bring together key stakeholders to develop a common vision around how to align women's skills with the needs of the modern world. This should outline how to develop gender-responsive skills development strategies and ensure that vocational training is aligned with market demand.

The first step is to conduct market assessments across high-growth sectors to provide information on which skills are in high demand and to forecast the needs and number of new entrants that a given sector can accommodate. The second step is to understand the skills profile of roles in these sectors and to develop an associated training and development program for women looking to switch.

Collaborating with ecosystem partners can also help to determine which interventions to focus on and provide women with the information they need to pursue such opportunities, including the type of reskilling programs that can best support their ambitions. One example is the recent focus on apprenticeships for women. In 2016, the G20 adopted the "Initiative to Promote Quality Apprenticeship" which acknowledged that "apprenticeship has proven to be an increasingly useful method to deliver vocational training globally."<sup>150</sup>

### **Encourage new gender-sensitive recruitment and promotion strategies which boost the representation of women across all roles and departments**

#### **Promote strategies and best practices to increase the recruitment and promotion of women within sectors with low female representation**

Companies have a number of options available to them to attract more female candidates and achieve greater gender balance in areas where women are underrepresented. Specifically, reducing discrimination during both recruiting and promotion processes is vital, as they are critical avenues for achieving equal representation of women across different sectors and functions in the workforce. Research has shown that unconscious bias can negatively impact women's opportunities to get hired, receive equal pay offers and get promoted. Implementing processes that mitigate such bias, is therefore essential.

<sup>147</sup> Costin, C. 2015. "Insights from Brazil for skills development in rapidly transforming African countries," *The World Bank*; <https://blogs.worldbank.org/education/insights-brazil-skills-development-rapidly-transforming-african-countries>

<sup>148</sup> Ardern, Rt Hon. Jacinda, 2019. "Boost for employee skills and training"; <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/boost-employee-skills-and-training>

<sup>149</sup> ILO, 2018. "Financing life-long learning for the future of work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms\\_646046.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_646046.pdf)

<sup>150</sup> G20 Research Group, 2016. "Innovation and inclusive growth: decent work, enhanced employability and adequate job opportunities"; <http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2016/160713-labour.html>

In terms of recruitment, a number of approaches – such as mandatory unconscious bias training for hiring managers, blind applications that remove personal information, tracking acceptance ratings by hiring managers to check for bias, and even affirmative action to reduce gender imbalances in specific departments – can be employed. Companies and government also need to be sensitive to how recruitment screeners and artificial intelligence (AI) algorithms may discriminate against female applicants. For instance, some companies may screen out women who have taken time out from work to care for children or elderly family. Without proper supervision, AI could also target job advertisements specifically at men over women or rank male applicants more highly as a result of cumulative bias contained in the historical or training data.<sup>151</sup>

Once women are hired, targeted retention strategies can help to maintain strong female representation across roles and departments. Role-specific mentoring and sponsorship programs, gender-equal rates of promotion and advancement, flexible work arrangements, and "equality ambassadors" who help create a more inclusive workplace culture can all increase the likelihood of a woman staying in a role.<sup>152, 153</sup> These initiatives should be supported by the collection of sex-disaggregated data on hiring, retention and progression to help organizations understand what works at the individual, organizational and sectoral level.

### **Work with organizations to develop incentives for units and managers that achieve gender parity, with a particular focus on women in senior leadership who can become key role models**

Incentives for achieving gender parity at the sectoral and organizational level should also be considered. At the sectoral level, funding mechanism or tax relief measures could be used to influence organizations' efforts at meeting specific gender targets. For instance, the Canadian government has recently created financial incentives for university research departments in life sciences; specifically, research funding criteria now includes minimum gender representation requirements.<sup>154</sup> At the organizational level, HR managers, corporate leaders and department heads can be provided with incentives such as bonuses, promotions or a percentage of their total compensation tied to achieving specific gender targets and retaining women at a specific level within their organizations.

### **Develop and fund a comprehensive, dynamic, gender-sensitive lifelong learning framework to encourage continuous upskilling**

#### **Identify key attrition points in the work lifecycle of women and design relevant interventions, with a focus on helping mothers return to the workforce after time out**

A significant proportion of women drop out of the workforce after having children, which contributes to a decline in gender diversity at more senior levels in business. Designing effective interventions that can help women get past key attrition points is critical.

<sup>151</sup> Catalyst Research, 2020. "AI and equitable hiring in a post-pandemic world (trend brief)"; <https://www.catalyst.org/research/ai-equitable-hiring-trend-brief/>

<sup>152</sup> Ibarra, H., 2019. "A lack of sponsorship is keeping women from advancing into leadership," *Harvard Business Review*; <https://hbr.org/2019/08/a-lack-of-sponsorship-is-keeping-women-from-advancing-into-leadership>

<sup>153</sup> OECD, 2020. "Policies and practices to promote women in leadership roles in the private sector"; <https://www.oecd.org/corporate/OECD-G20-EMPOWER-Women-Leadership.pdf><sup>154</sup> World Economic Forum, 2017. "Accelerating gender parity in the fourth industrial revolution"; [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_EGW\\_White\\_Paper\\_Gender\\_Parity\\_4IR.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_EGW_White_Paper_Gender_Parity_4IR.pdf)

Support for effective interventions can come from either the government or the private sector. For example, Singapore's nationwide SkillsFuture program provides all citizens with the resources they need to develop and advance their skills at different stages in their lives. To further motivate Singaporeans to take an active approach for their own skills development and to inculcate a lifelong learning mindset, all citizens aged 25 and above receive a credit of S\$500 for the purpose of reskilling and/or upskilling.<sup>155</sup> Additional one-off top-ups were also made available to aid Singaporeans who were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Private companies are also making inroads. For example, in Japan, 1,000 businesses announced that they would provide digital training to 10 million people by 2022. This includes "Women Will", an initiative inspired by studies that showed two out of three women in Japan did not return to work after having children. The program helps new mothers return to the workforce by leveraging technology, such as internet-enabled tools, to allow them to better juggle personal and professional commitments.<sup>156</sup>

### Identify avenues to finance lifelong learning opportunities for women

Significant funding is required to extend lifelong learning opportunities to women. There are a range of financial mechanisms to achieve this. For example, employer training or Corporate Social Responsibility levies to increase the amount of funds available for education and training could be introduced. The use of social and development impact bonds, global solidarity levies to increase investment and the specific realignment of government revenues are other avenues that could be explored.

For example, Australia's 2021-22 budget committed over AUS\$42M to co-fund scholarships in partnership with industry for over 230 women to pursue higher STEM qualifications.<sup>157</sup> In Ireland, "Women ReBOOT", an enterprise-led initiative cofunded and supported by Skillnet Ireland, helps women to develop skills to reenter the technology sector after a career break. The program includes group seminars, technology and knowledge training, individual coaching and in-company work placements.<sup>158</sup>

Similarly, WomEng is a social enterprise that aims to develop the next generation of women engineering leaders in society. It works to actively promote STEM education; support skills development, employability and entrepreneurship; and provide mentoring. WomEng works to attract, retain and develop women in the engineering pipeline through every stage of development, from primary school through to professional workers.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>155</sup> SkillsFuture; <https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/credit>

<sup>156</sup> Tsusaka, M, 2020. "The reskilling revolution can transform the future of work for women," *The World Economic Forum*; <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/01/women-reskilling-revolution-future-of-work/>

<sup>157</sup> Women in STEM Ambassador, 2021. "Budget 2021-22: Women in STEM Ambassador welcomes funding to support gender equity in STEM"; <https://womeninstem.org.au/latest-news/budget-2021-22-women-in-stem/>

<sup>158</sup> OECD, 2020. *OECD economic surveys: thailand 2020: economic assessment*; <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/36a174fd-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/36a174fd-en>

<sup>159</sup> World Economic Forum, 2017. "Accelerating gender parity in the fourth industrial revolution"; [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_EGW\\_White\\_Paper\\_Gender\\_Parity\\_4IR.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_EGW_White_Paper_Gender_Parity_4IR.pdf)

**G20 member countries should therefore:**

- The G20 should identify women in high-risk roles and work with companies and education institutions to reskill them for high-growth sectors
- The G20 should encourage new gender-sensitive recruitment and promotion strategies which boost the representation of women across all roles and departments
- The G20 should develop and fund a comprehensive, dynamic, gender-sensitive lifelong learning framework to encourage continuous upskilling



### Policy Action 2.3: Eradicate sexual discrimination, harassment, and gender-based violence

Work to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and violence in society through targeted education programs and develop support mechanisms to address unethical behavior in the workplace.

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#### Context and COVID-19 Impact

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Gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence remains pervasive across the world. The WHO estimates that 30% of women globally are subjected to physical or sexual violence in their lifetimes, a figure which has remained stable over the past decade.<sup>160</sup> A 2014 study in the European Union, found that 55% of women had faced sexual harassment since the age of 15, and 21% over the previous 12 months.<sup>161</sup> Four years later, the average for Europe was estimated at 59%.<sup>162</sup>

This behavior spills over from society into the workplace. A W20-Accenture survey found that almost one in three women experience sexual harassment on the job at least “sometimes”; and more than one in seven say they experience such behavior “regularly”.<sup>163</sup> This can severely limit women’s economic opportunities. Not only does such behavior negatively impact physical and mental health, but it also weighs on pay and career progression; reinforces occupational segregation;<sup>164</sup> and can sometimes lead women to prematurely exit the labor force. Accordingly, experiencing harassment in the workplace often negatively impacts women’s long-term professional success and financial well-being.<sup>165</sup> It also imposes costs on both society and organizations, for example through lost productivity, settlements and medical care.<sup>166</sup>

However, many countries still do not afford women legal protection in the workplace against discrimination and harassment. A World Bank analysis of employment laws around the world finds that 31 countries do not prohibit discrimination based on gender; 48 have no legislation on sexual harassment; and 56 have no criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment.<sup>167</sup> Tellingly, the report finds that “economies where women face less discrimination under the law, greater progress has been made in closing the gender gap in [economic] outcomes.”<sup>168</sup>

<sup>160</sup> WHO, 2021. “Devastatingly pervasive: 1 in 3 women globally experience violence”; <https://www.who.int/news/item/09-03-2021-devastatingly-pervasive-1-in-3-women-globally-experience-violence>

<sup>161</sup> European Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014. “Violence against women: an EU-wide survey”; <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>

<sup>162</sup> Ipsos, 2018. “Perils of Perception”; [https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2018-12/perils\\_of\\_perception\\_2018\\_charts\\_v1\\_final\\_041218\\_1.pdf](https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2018-12/perils_of_perception_2018_charts_v1_final_041218_1.pdf)

<sup>163</sup> W20 Saudi Arabia & Accenture, 2020. “If not now, when?”; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf) - 7,000 adults were surveyed online in Brazil, India, Japan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

<sup>164</sup> ILO, 2019. “Sexual harassment in the world of work”; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/briefingnote/wcms\\_738115.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/briefingnote/wcms_738115.pdf)

<sup>165</sup> ILO, 2018. “Women and men in the informal economy: A statistical picture”; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_626831.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_626831.pdf)

<sup>166</sup> ILO, 2019. “Sexual harassment in the world of work”; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/briefingnote/wcms\\_738115.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/briefingnote/wcms_738115.pdf)

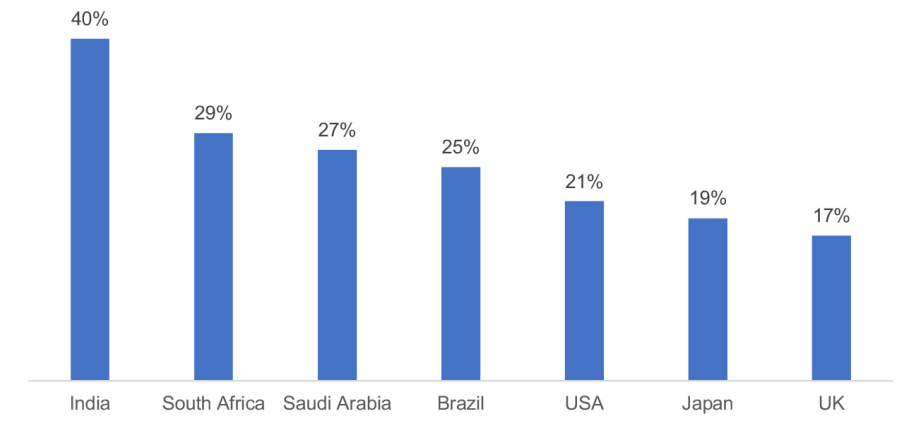
<sup>167</sup> World Bank, 2021. “Women, Business and the Law 2021”; <https://wbl.worldbank.org/>

<sup>168</sup> World Bank, 2021. “Women, Business and the Law 2021”; <https://wbl.worldbank.org/>

COVID-19 has served to exacerbate some of these challenges. Strict "shelter-in-place" measures have not only raised tensions in households but also restricted the ability of women to access support services. Early in the pandemic, the United Nations reported that gender-based violence was increasing "exponentially",<sup>169</sup> with reports of domestic violence rising rapidly in many countries.<sup>170</sup> Moreover, travel restrictions and difficulties in interviewing women confidentially have made collecting data even harder.<sup>171</sup>

An increase in time spent online as a result of confinement is also a concern, given the opportunities for abusers to hide behind distance and anonymity. Before COVID-19, 52% of young women and girls surveyed by the World Wide Web Foundation said they had ever experienced online abuse such as threatening messages.<sup>172</sup> Data is sparse, but since the start of the pandemic, the situation for women online appears to have further deteriorated. In the United Kingdom, 46% of women reported experiencing online abuse, mostly from strangers.<sup>173</sup> And in Saudi Arabia, there was a 163% increase in online searches around sexual assaults in 2020 compared with 2019.<sup>174</sup>

**Exhibit 6**  
**Women who experience sexual harassment while doing their job**  
**(% at least "sometimes")**



*Note:* N=4813 women adults surveyed online in August 2020; Q: "How often, if at all, do you experience sexual harassment while doing your job?"; 5pt scale from Always to Never; Harassment defined as conduct which annoys, threatens, intimidates, alarms, or puts a person in fear of their safety (e.g., unwanted sexual advances, obscene remarks).

*Source:* W20 Saudi Arabia & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

<sup>169</sup> UN, 2020. "The Impact of COVID-19 on Women"; <https://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/report/policy-brief-the-impact-of-COVID-19-on-women/policy-brief-the-impact-of-COVID-19-on-women-en-1.pdf>

<sup>170</sup> UNWomen, 2020. "From Insight to Action: Gender Equality in the Wake of COVID-19"; <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-COVID-19-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5142>

<sup>171</sup> Devex, 2020. "Has it become too dangerous to measure violence against women?"; <https://www.devex.com/news/has-it-become-too-dangerous-to-measure-violence-against-women-97112>

<sup>172</sup> World Wide Web Foundation, 2020. "There's a pandemic of online violence against women and girls"; <https://webfoundation.org/2020/07/theres-a-pandemic-of-online-violence-against-women-and-girls/>

<sup>173</sup> End Violence Against Women, 2020. "Online abuse during Covid"; <https://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/online-abuse-during-covid-almost-half-of-women-have-experienced-online-abuse-during-pandemic/>

<sup>174</sup> W20 Saudi Arabia & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

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## Exploration of Action Areas

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### **Deliver comprehensive social education campaigns focused on reducing gender-related bias, discrimination, harassment and violence**

#### **Launch high-profile campaigns to eliminate gender-based harassment and harmful gender stereotypes in society**

High profile campaigns against gender-related harassment and violence can not only help to raise awareness about the problem, but also, can inspire action and promote the adoption of new legislation. Violence and harassment are addressed in a range of laws, including those on equal opportunities and nondiscrimination, labor codes, and criminal laws, among others. However, not all types of violence and harassment, or all workers, may be covered. An 80-country ILO study, found that 27% of countries do not define or only vaguely define violence and harassment, and 6% only cover physical conduct, thus excluding pervasive forms of psychological violence and harassment.<sup>175</sup>

Encouragingly, recent active global movements against violence and harassment have succeeded in raising awareness of the pervasiveness of sexual harassment against women and influencing governments and the criminal justice system to re-examine the way that such incidents are addressed. The influence of the "#MeToo" movement, for instance, can be seen in advancing legislation which protects women across multiple global jurisdictions. In France, the movement inspired the minister for gender equality to write a new bill on sexual harassment which extends the statute of limitations for sex crimes, creates new sanctions for cyberstalking and imposes fines for street harassment.<sup>176</sup> Similarly, in Japan, an online petition inspired by the movement, prompted an advisory board of the labor ministry to convene public discussions on harassment in the workplace, resulting in the ministry committing to submitting legislation to address the issue.<sup>177</sup>

At the global level, the ILO adopted a new convention on violence and harassment in 2019. Governments that ratify the treaty are required to develop national laws prohibiting workplace violence and take preventive measures, such as information campaigns and requiring companies to have workplace policies on violence in the workplace. They are also required to take measures to protect workers from violence and harassment, with a focus on women. Prior to this treaty, there was no international standard for addressing violence and harassment in the world of work.<sup>178</sup>

As legislation slowly changes, businesses have a strong role to play in continuing the fight against gender-based harassment and harmful gender stereotypes.

<sup>175</sup> ILO, 2019. "A quantum leap for gender equality: For a better future of work for all"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcms-sp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_674831.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcms-sp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_674831.pdf)

<sup>176</sup> Time, 2018. "France's Gender Equality Minister Has Already Cracked Down on Catcalling and Online Abuse."; <https://time.com/5358798/marlene-schiappa-interview-harassment/>

<sup>177</sup> Stone, M. And Vogelstein, R., 2019. "Celebrating #MeToo's global impact"; *Foreign Policy*; <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/03/07/metooglobalimpactinternationalwomens-day/>

<sup>178</sup> ILO, 2019. "ILO: New treaty to protect workers from violence, harassment"; <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/06/21/ilo-new-treaty-protect-workers-violence-harassment>

As lockdowns led to increased levels of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, and cyber violence, like online stalking and abuse, has intensified over the last year,<sup>179</sup> companies can take swift action—often more swift than government—to help turn the tide back on these rising numbers. Indeed, there is great need for safe access to support services and emergency measures, including legal assistance, judicial remedies, and medical and psychological support for women who have suffered such harassment.<sup>180</sup> Similarly, the need remains for business leaders to send repeated signals to workers, consumers and stakeholders that there is no place for such harassment within their workplaces.

### **Work with schools, community groups and other organizations to reimagine sex education curricula, and to provide a platform for dialogue about sexual harassment and violence**

The link between childhood experience and future cognitive, emotional, physical and social development is well established. Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) aims to equip both girls and boys with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to help them develop respectful relationships which they bring with them into the workplace.<sup>181</sup> Done well, it can provide individuals with insights into gender and power dynamics in intimate relationships, including issues such as consent, coercion, and violence. Moreover, it can help to counter cultural stereotypes about masculinity and the sexual portrayal of women and it can also assist victims in breaking their silence on sexual harassment and violence. A UNICEF report found that violence is the second leading cause of death among adolescent girls globally.<sup>182</sup>

Nevertheless, there is great inconsistency in terms of how CSE is provided across states and countries around the world, and in some instances, opposition to CSE persists. Fortunately, a plethora of research now exists that demonstrates the benefits of comprehensive CSE on reducing teenage pregnancies, and incidence of STIs and HIV. High-quality CSE has also been linked to positive impacts on power dynamics in intimate relationships.

Leaders worldwide should support evidence-based education about sexuality and relationships that is provided continuously over time. In addition, they need to do so together in partnership with schools, universities, the health community, and other community organizations. Such collaborations have been shown to be more impactful than siloed, and independent programs.<sup>183</sup>

Strengthening CSE provision should be consolidated with tackling gender stereotypes in the classroom. This includes providing gender sensitive teaching materials – which offer a range of role models and do not perpetuate gender stereotypes – and training teachers to discuss and challenge such stereotypes (see also Policy Action 1.2).

<sup>179</sup> UNWomen, 2020. "From insights to action"; [gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-COVID-19-en.pdf](https://unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-COVID-19-en.pdf) ([unwomen.org](https://unwomen.org))

<sup>180</sup> Bhargava R., and Bhargava, Dr. M., 2021. "COVID-19 has been a setback for women. Gender-responsive policies can stem the losses," *The World Economic Forum*; <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/04/women-must-not-be-left-behind-in-the-fight-against-COVID-19-india>

<sup>181</sup> UNESCO, 2018. "Why comprehensive sexuality education is important"; <https://en.unesco.org/news/why-comprehensive-sexuality-education-important>

<sup>182</sup> UNICEF, 2014. "A statistical snapshot of violence against adolescent girls"; <https://data.unicef.org/resources/statistical-snapshot-violence-adolescent-girls/>

<sup>183</sup> UNESCO, 2018. "Why comprehensive sexuality education is important"; <https://en.unesco.org/news/why-comprehensive-sexuality-education-important>

### **Make the business case clear to companies to eradicate sexual harassment and violence from the workplace**

Companies stand to lose when sexual violence and harassment are not adequately addressed, and yet hundreds of companies across the globe continue to forge ahead in business with either no policy or a sub-optimal policies on this issue. Evidence shows that violence and harassment is associated with increased absenteeism and turnover. A recent study found that for each employee who is sexually harassed, a company loses US\$22,500 in productivity, on average.<sup>184</sup> And this figure does not include the high cost of litigation or the cost of reputational damage.<sup>185</sup>

Ensuring that businesses are aware of the business case is critical to achieving adoption of more stringent policies to thwart such behavior in the workplace. Governments, along with local NGOs, industry groups and business coalitions should therefore work together to ensure that such messaging is being communicated to all levels of enterprises—big and small—in conjunction with guidance for organizations to update their policies in this area.

### **Encourage and support employers to adopt a comprehensive and effective workplace policy on violence and harassment tools**

#### **Work with organizations to upgrade relevant corporate training from optional to compulsory, and from passive to interactive, and to help employees to identify unprofessional behaviors in the workplace**

According to an ILO report, "unfair treatment" – which includes abuse, harassment and discrimination – is among the top three challenges facing working women, especially young women between the ages of 15 and 29.<sup>186</sup> With statistics such as these, it is clear that more training needs to be done across workplaces on how to identify, prevent and eliminate sexual harassment at work. Training is important to ensure both a common understanding of what constitutes violence and harassment, and that employees are aware of actions to address and prevent such issues. As part of the training, companies must ensure that there is utmost clarity on the consequences for individuals who perpetrate harassment as well as the resources available to those who experience it, including reporting and support mechanisms.

Research shows that single-use training is insufficient and that indeed, frequent, in-person, interactive training is most impactful, especially, when customized for a select group of employees. Additionally, multiple types of training over time can help to advance employee sensitivity to these topics. Unconscious bias training, bystander intervention training, and diversity training, for instance, can be offered to employees through a blend of group training sessions, gamification and events-based training. Employee feedback as well as benchmarking the impact of such training, should be undertaken to evaluate and monitor effectiveness at both corporate and industry levels.

<sup>184</sup> Hart, C., Crossley, A.D., and Correll, S.J., 2018. "Study: when leaders take sexual harassment seriously, so do employees," *Harvard Business Review*; <https://hbr.org/2018/12/study-when-leaders-take-sexual-harassment-seriously-so-do-employees>

<sup>185</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2020. "Empowering women at work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_756721.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf)

### **Empower organizations to develop a culture of inclusivity and diversity in which employees are guaranteed both physical and psychological safety**

Encouraging leaders to publicly commit to an organizational culture of zero-tolerance can help to drive change across organizations and more broadly, across the workplace at large. Organizational culture is one of the leading contributing factors to sexual harassment in the workplace. When leaders take a stand against sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace, it has a ripple effect across its leadership team and downstream across the organization. Leaders should communicate strongly and frequently on the issue, but also, highlight the action that they are taking to build physical and psychological safety for all women within their organization. Accountability measures across all levels of leadership and nurturing a culture of inclusivity are paramount. Commitment to the issue through support of public legislation or through membership of business coalitions that work to eradicate harassment and violence from the world of work also send clear messages to employees about the stance that their organization takes on the issue.

Unsurprisingly, under-representation of women in an occupation or industry is associated with increased risk of sexual harassment. Male-dominated and hierarchical workplace cultures as well as female-dominated functional roles that are viewed as subservient tend to increase risk. Therefore, leadership commitment to diversifying their workforce across occupations, functions and levels is also important for tackling this issue.<sup>187</sup>

### **Develop a framework to help organizations manage unprofessional behaviors in the workplace, with a clear focus on consequences and non-retaliation**

In order to adequately address harassment and violence in the workplace, organizations are encouraged to have a framework that can guide their actions. Fortunately, many international bodies, such as the ILO, have developed such models.

Frameworks often include leadership's commitment to zero-tolerance for violence and harassment in the workplace; the establishment of prevention programs with measurable KPIs; the identification of the rights and responsibilities of workers and the employer, including the right to privacy and confidentiality; establishing complaint and investigation procedures; and processes to protect complainants, victims, and witnesses against retaliation.

More recently, some frameworks have come to include measures to address domestic violence and extend support to victims within their workforce. This includes actions such as providing leave or flexible work arrangements for victims, providing temporary protection against dismissal, and connecting them with support services, counselling and emergency health services.<sup>188,189</sup> They should also consider how the intersectionality of gender with other characteristics such as ethnicity, race, disability and sexual orientation could heighten women's vulnerability.

<sup>186</sup> ILO, 2019. "A quantum leap for gender equality: For a better future of work for all"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_674831.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_674831.pdf)

<sup>187</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2020. "Empowering women at work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_756721.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf)

<sup>188</sup> UNWomen, 2019. "Handbook: Addressing violence and harassment against women in the world of work"; <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2019/addressing-violence-and-harassment-against-women-in-the-world-of-work-en.pdf?la=en&vs=4050>

<sup>189</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2020. "Empowering women at work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_756721.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf)

The framework and policies which organizations adopt should instill confidence and trust and should be reflected in broader organizational policies as well, such as codes of conduct and equality policies. Providing clear information about the complaints process and consequences for offenders, ensuring anonymity of reporting and protecting against retaliation can all help to achieve this. To encourage reporting and compliance, swift speed of enforcement mechanisms, the burden of proof and sufficiency of redress should also be given very careful consideration.<sup>190</sup>

### **Work with internet providers, social and traditional media and publishing companies to reduce the discrimination and abuse of women**

#### **Develop collection and reporting mechanisms to properly measure and track sex-disaggregated incidence of abuse**

Reliable gender-disaggregated data is essential to designing policies and monitoring outcomes to establish a clear view of how women may be experiencing harassment online. They are also critical to understanding the effectiveness of specific policies on mitigating sexual harassment on the internet. However, information gaps in data collection on this topic are commonplace. Currently, only 45% of the data needed to measure violence against women and girls is available<sup>191</sup> with investment in gender statistics largely flat over the past decade. And data on cyber violence against women and girls is even more scarce, in part because the phenomenon is not criminalized in many jurisdictions.

Member states should make the collection of sex-disaggregated data a priority in order to understand the extent of cyber violence against girls and women, as well as the contexts in which it occurs and the responses that are taken. Increased investment is needed to do so. However, clear processes for collecting such data must also be developed and organizations must work closely together with ecosystem partners to use insights from such data to inform policy both at the organizational and state level to drive real change.

#### **Measure and track incidence of online abuse and work with internet providers and social media to identify and take appropriate action against perpetrators of online abuse**

The WHO estimates that that one in ten women over the age of 15 have experienced a form of cyber violence.<sup>192</sup> Sadly, as the internet became a lifeline for many to connect to both work and the outside world during the pandemic, cyber violence increased. UNWomen, for instance, reports that in Australia, online abuse and bullying increased by 50% since social distancing began.<sup>193</sup>

Cyber violence can manifest in different forms, including cyber stalking, gender-based slurs and harassment, and non-consensual ("revenge porn") or unsolicited pornography.

<sup>190</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2020. "Empowering women at work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/-/multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_756721.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/-/multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf)

<sup>191</sup> UNWomen, 2020. "From insights to action"; [gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-COVID-19-en.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/11/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-covid-19) (unwomen.org) <sup>192</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality. "Cyber violence against women"; <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/cyber-violence-against-women>

<sup>193</sup> UNWomen, 2020. "From insights to action"; [gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-COVID-19-en.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/11/gender-equality-in-the-wake-of-covid-19) (unwomen.org)

As it is a relatively new phenomenon, legislation against cyber violence is largely absent in most jurisdictions, though several G20 countries – including France, Germany and the UK – recently adopted legislation to address specific aspects of cyber violence. In the UK, for example, sharing private sexual photographs without the subject's consent became a criminal offense with maximum two years' imprisonment. Within 18 months of its introduction, more than 200 people had been prosecuted.<sup>194</sup>

Governments must do more to criminalize cyber violence and formulate policy to minimize its growth. In addition to legislation, government should work with leading companies in the ICT sector, including social media companies, to introduce standards and regulations that can prevent online harassment, online threats, and the spreading of video and imagery that associates sex with violence. As hybrid work models accelerate and more women find themselves online in a digital economy, ensuring that they are safe from harm in an online world should be an increasingly important focal point for both businesses and governments alike.

### **Develop and implement gender-sensitive ethical guidelines for media and publishing sector to eradicate gender stereotypes**

The portrayal of women in publishing, entertainment and the media often serves to perpetuate gender stereotypes. The Beijing Platform for Action<sup>195</sup> called for an increase of women in decision-making positions and for the content produced by relevant organizations to do more to present women as leaders and role models.

A good example is "50:50 The Equality Project", started in 2017 by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) as a way to increase female representation on news programs.<sup>196</sup> A number of other media organizations have adopted the methodology – which covers data collection, setting parameters of control and not compromising on quality – including ABC News (Australia), Deutsche Welle (Germany), Folha de Sao Paulo (Brazil) and La Nacion (Argentina).<sup>197</sup>

Governments should also work with the publishing sector to remove gender stereotypes in both educational (see Policy Action 2.1) and other books and materials they create. The "Let Books be Books" campaign has called on publishers to avoid labelling titles as either "for boys" or "for girls".<sup>198</sup>

### **G20 member countries should therefore:**

- Deliver comprehensive social education campaigns focused on reducing gender-related bias, discrimination, harassment and violence
- Encourage and support employers to adopt tools to give women greater confidence in reporting unethical behavior
- Work with internet providers, social and traditional media and publishing companies to reduce the discrimination and abuse of women

<sup>194</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality. "Cyber violence against women"; <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/cyber-violence-against-women>

<sup>195</sup> United Nations, 1995. "Report of the fourth world conference on women"; <https://beijing20.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20beijing%20plus/attachments/beijingdeclarationandplatformforaction-en.pdf#page=104>

<sup>196</sup> BBC. "50:50 The equality project"; <https://www.bbc.co.uk/5050>

<sup>197</sup> BBC. "50:50 The equality project"; <https://www.bbc.co.uk/5050>

<sup>198</sup> Let Toys Be Toys; <https://www.lettoysbetoys.org.uk/about/letbooksbebooks/>



## Recommendation 3: Grow: Smooth the road for women into business leadership and ownership

The G20 should mitigate the barriers that limit the ability of women to advance, lead and start businesses.

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### Policy Actions

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**3.1 Target gender parity in senior decision-making positions** – Advocate for and eliminate barriers to women reaching senior decision-making positions, with a focus on comprehensive collection of sex-disaggregated data.

- The G20 should develop and fund comprehensive programs to eliminate regulatory, legislative, and socio-cultural barriers to women's career progression
  - The G20 should develop incentive schemes for organizations that achieve gender parity in decision-making positions or within their supply chain
  - The G20 should bring together all relevant parties to set ambitious national goals for gender representation in senior decision-making positions and measure and report on progress against those goals over time
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**3.2 Enhance the entrepreneurial potential of women** – Build the aspirations and capacity of female entrepreneurs and actively support the starting, financing, scaling, and sustainability of women-owned businesses.

- The G20 should improve women's access to credit and financial products and provide business development resources that empower women to start and scale their businesses
  - The G20 should invest in closing digital inclusion gaps and help build women's capacity to lead businesses underpinned by technology
  - The G20 should design incentives for investing in female-led companies and for venture capital firms to meet gender-specific targets for executives/partners
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### Proposed KPIs

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The B20 Women's Empowerment Taskforce proposes that current and future G20 processes monitor the progress of **the percentage of women in senior and middle management**. Specific targets for these KPIs are proposed in the Annex, with ambitions for 2024. We also encourage that current and future G20 processes monitor progress on **KPIs relating to the Total Entrepreneurship Activity (TEA) ratio for men and women**. More information on this indicator can be found in the Annex.



**SDG impacted - 5: Gender Equality** - Recommendation 3 is primarily aligned to **SDG5**, particularly **SDG5.5** 'Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life...'; **SDG5.c** 'Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.' and **SDG5.1** 'End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.' **4: Quality Education** - And it resonates with **SDG4.4** 'Substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment...' In addition to **SDG4.5** '...Ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training...' **10: Reduced Inequalities** - It also supports both **SDG10.2** to 'Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.' As well as **SDG10.3** 'Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard' **9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure** - The policy actions strongly contribute to achieving **SDG9**, especially **SDG9.B** 'Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries', and **SDG9.5** 'Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.'



**G20 Italy's priority impact - People:** Recommendation 1 supports the Italian G20 Presidency priority theme of 'People', particularly in the ambition to shape a "sustainable, just, inclusive and resilient recovery" by "promoting women's empowerment" and "ensuring universal access to education". **Prosperity:** It also supports 'Prosperity' 1 in terms of "reducing the digital divide, promoting infrastructural developments able to guarantee universal internet access and achieving adequate and widespread digital literacy" and "exploiting the full potential of the technological revolution to concretely improve the living conditions of citizens all over the world, in every aspect of their lives".

### Policy Action 3.1: Target gender parity in senior decision-making positions

Advocate for and eliminate barriers to women reaching senior decision-making positions, with a focus on comprehensive collection of sex-disaggregated data.

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#### Context and COVID-19 Impact

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In 2012, then United States Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton said: "Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world. It is past time for women to take their rightful place, side by side with men, in the rooms where the fates of peoples, where their children's and grandchildren's fates, are decided."<sup>199</sup> Yet, nearly ten years later, it is clear that women continue to be under-represented in senior decision-making roles across both the private and public sectors at every level.

The ILO notes that women hold only 27% of managerial positions globally—a percentage which has hardly shifted over the last 30 years.<sup>200</sup> That figure drops to 25% for women with children under 6 years of age, compared to 31% for women without young children.<sup>201</sup>

And the gender gap increases with seniority. As of 2020, for example, only 9% of global enterprises had female chief technology officers, while only 14% had female chief information officers and 16% had female chief digital officers at the helm.<sup>202</sup> Although women are said to hold approximately 20% of CEO positions, this drops to just 16% in large enterprises.<sup>203</sup> Just 2.6% of Fortune Global 500 companies are led by women (all of them caucasian).<sup>204</sup> The pandemic has compounded the problem: The proportion of women CEOs hired has declined 6% over the last year.<sup>205</sup>

Female representation on corporate boards is similarly discouraging. Approximately 4% of board chairs are currently occupied by women across 44 countries studied by the ILO, and only 15% of board seats are held by women.<sup>206</sup> The silver lining is that policy change is already creating significant impact in places. For instance, France, Germany and Italy, which all have government-mandated quotas for female representation on corporate boards have the best representation of women on boards across all G7 countries.<sup>207</sup>

<sup>199</sup> Combe, R, 2012. "At the pinnacle of her career"; *Elle*; <https://www.elle.com/culture/career-politics/interviews/a12529/at-the-pinnacle-of-hillary-clintons-career-654140/>

<sup>200</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2020. "Empowering women at work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_756721.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf)

<sup>201</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2020. "Empowering women at work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_756721.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf)

<sup>202</sup> Bokil, S., 2020. "CTO gender gap-gartner recommends tips for IT leaders"; <https://enterprisetalk.com/featured/cto-gender-gap-gartner-recommends-tips-for-it-leaders/>

<sup>203</sup> ILO, 2020. "The business case for change"; *Women in Business and Management: Sectorial snapshots (ilo.org)*

<sup>204</sup> Hinchliffe, E., 2020. "A new low for the Global 500: No women of color run businesses on this year's list," *Fortune*; <https://fortune.com/2020/08/10/a-new-low-for-the-global-500-no-women-of-color-run-businesses-on-this-years-list/>

<sup>205</sup> Masterson, V., 2020. "Fewer women CEOs have been appointed since the start of the COVID-19 crisis—here's why," *The World Economic Forum*; <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/12/fewer-women-ceos-covid-gender-gap/>

<sup>206</sup> ILO, 2019. "Improving gender diversity in company boards"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_dialogue/---act\\_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms\\_754631.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms_754631.pdf)

<sup>207</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2020. "Empowering women at work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_756721.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/--multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf)

And equal representation on corporate boards can spark a domino effect down the chain of command: ILO analysis suggests that male-dominated boards are associated with fewer women in middle management, while companies with women as board chairs are more likely to have greater gender parity across middle management.<sup>208</sup>

Gender inequities in senior positions of the corporate world are mirrored to an extent in the public sector. According to the WEF's latest Global Gender Gap report, women represent only 26% of parliament seats and just 23% ministerial positions globally. Sectoral segregation persists even at these levels, with the five most common portfolios for female ministers reflecting gender stereotypes.<sup>209</sup>

Longitudinal data shows that female political representation is growing at a slow pace and isn't always linear. The WEF's "political empowerment sub-index", which indicates the extent of gender equity across politically appointed positions, declined by 2.4%, falling back to 2014 levels. The main cause is a reversal in progress for several large countries.<sup>210</sup> Australia, for instance, has fallen from 15th to 50th in the world for parliamentary gender diversity over the last 20 years, with men constituting 80% of its majority parties.<sup>211</sup> Yet at the same time, policy change is turning the tide in other countries. According to UNWomen, across 19 countries which reached or surpassed 40% female representation in national parliament, more than two-thirds had applied gender quotas to achieve such milestones.<sup>212</sup> An additional four countries have reached at least 50% female participation parliament.

When COVID-19 struck, the lack of women at the top of key health and political roles left female voices conspicuous by their absence. For example, W20 analysis found women heavily underrepresented on pandemic advisory teams and among G20 health ministers.<sup>213</sup> And a study of 200 of the largest health organizations in the world found that 73% of the "executive heads" were men and that just 28% of senior management teams had reached gender parity.<sup>214</sup>

<sup>208</sup> ILO, 2020. "The business case for change"; [https://www.ilo.org/actemp/publications/WCMS\\_742697/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/actemp/publications/WCMS_742697/lang-en/index.htm)

<sup>209</sup> The five most common portfolios for female ministers are family/children/youth/elderly/disabled, social affairs, environment/natural resources/energy, employment/labor/vocational training, and women affairs/gender equality according to a 2020 Inter-Parliamentary Union and UN Women Report; Women in politics 2020 map.

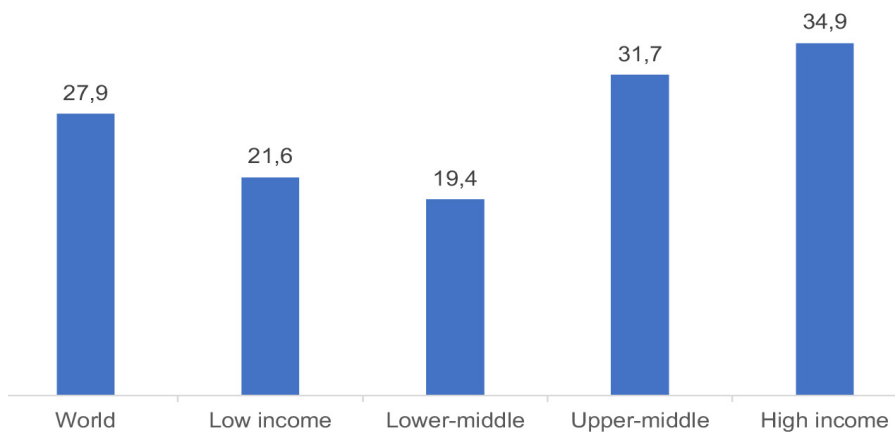
<sup>210</sup> World Economic Forum, 2021. "Global Gender Gap Report 2021"; <https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2021>

<sup>211</sup> Cave, D., 2021. "The most unsafe workplace? Parliament, Australian women say," *The New York Times*; <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/05/world/australia/parliament-women-rape-metoo.html>

<sup>212</sup> UNWomen. "Facts and figures: women's leadership and political participation"; [https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures#\\_edn10](https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures#_edn10)

<sup>213</sup> W20 Saudi Arabia & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

<sup>214</sup> Global Health 5050, 2020. "Power, privilege and priorities"; <https://globalhealth5050.org/2020report/>



Source: ILOSTAT, 2019. <https://ilostat ilo.org/topics/women>

**Exhibit 7**  
Female share of employment in managerial positions (%)

## Exploration of Action Areas

### Develop and fund comprehensive programs to eliminate regulatory, legislative, and socio-cultural barriers to women's career progression

#### Identify key barriers to the progression of women into senior leadership, and design tailored, mitigating interventions

Laws which establish that women and men have equal rights are the basis for demanding and achieving equity within the workplace. Foundationally, discriminatory laws against women and girls must be repealed and barriers to specific occupations or types of participation in the workforce must be lifted. Going one step further, laws that actively promote equality can further accelerate progress.<sup>215</sup> For instance, enforcing gender quotas for specific positions and across select types of organizations have continuously proven to be effective at changing the balance of power. Governments should also develop mentoring schemes, to guide women past common socio-cultural hurdles that stifle progression.

However, interventions need not only be policy driven from government. The Australian Human Rights Commission prompted the establishment of Male Champions of Change (MCC) in 2010 with 21 CEOs, department heads and non-executive directors from across business and federal government. The aim of the program was to increase the number of women in leadership positions through influencing and mobilizing senior male leaders to dismantle barriers, disrupt the status quo, and create greater accountability.<sup>216</sup> Since its establishment, 27% of MCC corporations achieved gender balance across their key management personnel and 91% exceeded the benchmark for their industry. Beyond their own walls, they have driven change across Australian businesses, in part by lobbying the ASX Corporate Governance Council (which sets the governance principles for the 2,000 public companies in Australia) to adopt a new reporting approach that includes gender diversity.<sup>217</sup>

<sup>215</sup> ILO, 2019. "A quantum leap for gender equality: For a better future of work for all"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcms-sp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_674831.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcms-sp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_674831.pdf)

<sup>216</sup> The Commonwealth, 2015. "Strategies for increased participation of women in leadership across the commonwealth"; <https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/Women%20in%20Leadership%20Discussion%20Paper.pdf>

<sup>217</sup> The Commonwealth, 2015. "Strategies for increased participation of women in leadership across the commonwealth"; <https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/Women%20in%20Leadership%20Discussion%20Paper.pdf>

### **Advocate for gender parity in decision-making, drawing on research which outlines the moral and commercial case**

The business case for gender parity at senior levels of organizations is strong. A large number of studies have documented the link between diversity and financial performance; for example, an IMF study of companies in Europe found that replacing a male leader with a female leader was associated with a 8–13 percentage point increase in return on assets.<sup>218</sup> However, alone such evidence is insufficient to drive change; diversity champions, role models, and senior leaders are key agents of change who can amplify the commercial case and influence peers.

The Business Roundtable earlier this year partnered with the Women Business Collaborative (WBC). They called on US public companies to consider diversity when selecting board members, to measure progress in increasing diversity and to support voluntary public disclosure of key diversity metrics on indicators such as board diversity, senior executive diversity, and workforce diversity overall.

### **Develop incentive schemes for organizations that achieve gender parity in decision-making positions or within their supply chain**

#### **Provide incentives for employers and government agencies that achieve gender parity in senior decision-making positions**

A number of companies have started linking executive compensation to gender diversity goals to satisfy the interests of their shareholders and other stakeholders. Some of these programs specifically link incentives to advancing women in senior decision-making positions. For example, two of the world's biggest asset managers, managing almost \$5.5 trillion, have linked bonuses of top-level employees to the number of women those employees help to bring into senior roles.

In government, financial penalties are sanctioned to provide disincentives for non-compliance with legislated gender quotas. In Portugal, parties can lose between 25%– 80% of their public funding for non-compliance, while in Ireland, 50% of funding is at stake if parties include less than 30% of either gender. In Italy, public funding to parties is reduced in proportion to the number of candidates exceeding the maximum percentage allowed for each gender; the sum is then re-distributed to parties adhering to the law.<sup>219</sup>

#### **Provide incentives for employers and government agencies who source goods and services from women-led business and/or suppliers with strong gender-equity profiles**

Providing incentives to companies to purchase from women-owned businesses and companies with strong gender-equity profiles can help to support gender parity across supply chains. In turn, companies themselves can use supplier sustainability awards, long-term contracts and preferred status strategies as incentives for their suppliers to meet specific gender-equity targets and conditions.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>218</sup> Catalyst, 2020. "Why Diversity and Inclusion Matter: Financial Performance"; <https://www.catalyst.org/research/why-diversity-and-inclusion-matter-financial-performance>

<sup>219</sup> OECD, 2015. "OECD toolkit for mainstreaming and implementing gender equality"; <https://www.oecd.org/gov/toolkit-for-mainstreaming-and-implementing-gender-equality.pdf>

<sup>220</sup> Villena, V., and Gioia, D., 2020. "A more sustainable supply chain," *Harvard Business Review*; <https://hbr.org/2020/03/a-more-sustainable-supply-chain>

Policy intervention, however, can elevate such efforts. In South Africa, for example, The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (“BBBEE”) Act, awards points to companies with black female directors and sets compliance targets for 30% of senior management to be Black women. Any company seeking government contracts, whether on the provincial or federal level, is evaluated on the basis of its score on Black Empowerment Code measures.<sup>221</sup>

Such action can be taken at individual corporate level as well. For instance, one of Australia’s largest multinational banks introduced a change to its supplier conditions, including equal pay and parental/carers’ leave and developed a database of women-owned business from which to facilitate increased procurement.<sup>222</sup>

**Bring together all relevant parties to set ambitious national goals for gender representation in senior decision-making positions and measure and report on progress against those goals over time**

**Set targets to achieve greater gender equity for executive level and public board positions of publicly listed companies and similarly, in government and policymaking bodies at the domestic, national and international levels**

Many studies have been conducted examining the impact of setting targets and quotas to bring more women into positions of leadership. A 2015 meta-review of 200 studies showed that not only are quotas very effective, but also, that greater female membership on boards resulted in better financial performance. Quotas associated with penalties were more effective than those with limited or no penalties (including comply-or-explain policies).<sup>223</sup>

Fortunately, many governments have been catching on over the last 10 years. In 2011, France passed its Cope-Zimmerman Law; by 2017 this mandated a quota of at least 40% of women (and men) on company boards for all publicly traded companies, or those with more than 500 employees and €50 million in revenues. In 2012 and 2014, this legislation was extended to leadership in governmental bodies, social security organizations, and the cultural and sports sectors. As a result, the proportion of women on the boards of France’s largest publicly listed companies increased by almost 32% between 2010 and 2018 and France now boasts the highest proportion of women serving on company boards across the EU.

The Golfo-Mosca law implemented in 2012 in Italy helped to achieve the same, increasing female representation on corporate boards from 5.9% in 2011 to 36.4% in 2019 and initiating close to 400 administrative proceedings against noncompliant companies. Similar to France, Italy has also introduced gender quotas across local and federal government, along with its representation in the European Parliament. Accordingly, in 2020, the Italian legislature had the highest representation of women parliamentarians in Italy’s history (35.7%), having doubled over the last ten years.<sup>224, 225</sup>

<sup>221</sup>African Development Bank, 2015. “Where are the women: inclusive boardrooms in Africa’s top listed companies?”; [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Where\\_are\\_the\\_Women\\_Inclusive\\_Boardrooms\\_in\\_Africa%E2%80%99s\\_top-listed\\_companies.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Where_are_the_Women_Inclusive_Boardrooms_in_Africa%E2%80%99s_top-listed_companies.pdf)

<sup>222</sup>The Commonwealth, 2015. “Strategies for increased participation of women in leadership across the commonwealth”; <https://thecommonwealth.org/sites/default/files/inline/Women%20in%20Leadership%20Discussion%20Paper.pdf>

<sup>223</sup>Kronfol, H., Nichols, A., and Tran, T., 2019. “Women at work: how can investment incentives be used to enhance economic opportunities for women?,” The World Bank Group; <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/32055/WPS8935.pdf?sequence=6>

<sup>224</sup>ILO, 2019. “Improving gender diversity in company boards”; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_dialogue/---act\\_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms\\_754631.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms_754631.pdf)

<sup>225</sup>OCED, 2020. “Policies and practices to promote women in leadership roles in the private sector”; <https://www.oecd.org/corporate/OECD-G20-EMPOWER-Women-Leadership.pdf>

Encouragingly, advancing women's representation on boards and within government is something that can be accomplished quickly through targets and quotas. For instance, as President Joe Biden took office and sought to fulfill his campaign pledge to appoint a gender-balanced cabinet, the number of women cabinet members rose from 17% to 47% within weeks.<sup>226</sup>

Gender quotas not only change the gender composition of the organizations which they target, but also, there is a ripple effect, often changing social norms and influencing policy in other areas. In Canada, for instance, after the country's first gender-balanced cabinet was announced in 2015, it was found that gender equality was "the single most acted-on SDG in Canada in 2017." The Canadian federal government also incorporated gender-equality indicators and goals into its core budget documents for the first time that year.

### **Develop regulations for public sector and large public enterprises to publicly report on current gender-composition across levels and changes over time**

Providing greater transparency on gender composition across public and private organizations has evolved significantly over the last decade. Increasingly, companies have voluntarily reported on gender metrics, often as part of broader Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance reports. For example, the 'Champions for Change' program, for instance, includes 70 global companies, with over 10 million employees and representing over \$3 trillion in revenue, that have publicly pledged to advance more women into senior positions and share their data on women's advancement within their organizations.<sup>227</sup>

Policy intervention is also supporting more transparency. In the UK, for instance, the government introduced legislation in 2013 requiring companies to annually disclose the number of female and male board directors, senior managers and total employees in their organizations to the public.<sup>228</sup> The Canadian government passed similar legislation, requiring all companies governed by the Canada Business Corporations Act (CBCA) with publicly traded securities to provide shareholders with information on corporate policies and practices related to diversity on their boards and across senior management, as well as the percentage of board members and senior management who are women.<sup>229</sup>

G20 governments should encourage all organizations to publish data key metrics – such as the proportion of women in STEM roles, and in senior management – alongside ambitious, yet realistic targets. This should be supported by providing clear guidance, including sector-specific remedial actions, for organizations on how to improve.

<sup>226</sup> Vogelstein, R., and Fliegau, E., 2021. "Women's power index: find out where women lead—and why it matters." Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/womens-power-index-find-out-where-women-lead-and-why-it-matters>

<sup>227</sup> Catalyst. "About Catalyst CEO champions for change"; <https://www.catalyst.org/champions/about/>

<sup>228</sup> ILO, 2019. "Improving gender diversity in company boards"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_dialogue/---act\\_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms\\_754631.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---act_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms_754631.pdf)

<sup>229</sup> Jeffery, J., MacDougall, A., and Valley, J., 2019. "Canada is the first jurisdiction worldwide to require diversity disclosure beyond gender"; <https://www.osler.com/en/resources/regulations/2019/canada-is-first-jurisdiction-worldwide-to-require-diversity-disclosure-beyond-gender-diversity-disc>



**G20 member countries should therefore:**

- Develop and fund comprehensive programs to eliminate regulatory, legislative, and socio-cultural barriers to women's career progression
- Develop incentive schemes for organizations that achieve gender parity in decision-making positions or within their supply chain
- Bring together all relevant parties to set ambitious national goals for gender representation in senior decision-making positions and measure and report on progress against those goals over time

### Policy Action 3.2: Enhance the entrepreneurial potential of women

Build the aspirations and capacity of female entrepreneurs and actively support the starting, financing, scaling, and sustainability of women-owned businesses.

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#### Context and COVID-19 Impact

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Entrepreneurship is recognized as an important driver of economic growth and development. Though female entrepreneurs significantly contribute to such growth, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), finds that women are pursuing work as entrepreneurs at three-quarters the rate of men and that the gender gap is higher on average across high-income countries.<sup>230</sup>

Empowering women entrepreneurs and supporting female entrepreneurship in high-growth sectors has the potential to increase incomes, create jobs, and lead to greater economic and social transformation. However, significant factors inhibiting women's ability to start, fund, and grow their businesses currently work against much of their success.

One of the greatest challenges is that women face higher barriers to access financial capital. A recent study by Accenture for the W20 found that 97% of prospective female entrepreneurs require funding to set up their business, and 45% of them expect this to be a major challenge.<sup>231</sup> That sentiment is indeed well-founded: Analysis from the European Investment Bank shows that US-based and EU-based start-ups founded exclusively by women entrepreneurs received only 2% and 11% of overall venture capital, respectively.<sup>232</sup> Additionally, in a number of countries, legal and institutional barriers keep women from owning or inheriting assets and accessing formal financial infrastructure.

Social norms and bias also impact the success of female entrepreneurs. In many cases, social norms dictate the sectors in which women work, leading many to start businesses in service sectors with low productivity and low-growth potential. Additionally, venture capital and private equity firms continue to be predominantly male, with only 10% of decision-making positions held by women.<sup>233</sup> Academic studies have shown repeatedly how strong gender bias has played out in VC decisions over time, in part due to a lack of gender-diversity on their executive teams.<sup>234</sup>

Commensurate with the heavy toll of COVID-19 on women in general, its impact on female entrepreneurs has been severe. In Accenture's study, almost three-quarters of self-employed women report that COVID-19 has had a negative impact on their working lives (72%) and their personal earnings (74%). Additionally, 46% of self-employed women say they feel "insecure" about their job/income, up from 13% pre-pandemic. The analysis suggests that women who are self-employed have lost 33% of their incomes on average since the pandemic started, compared with 8% for women employed full-time.

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<sup>230</sup> Analysis is based on total entrepreneurial activity across 59 countries. *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2019. "2018/19 Global Report"*; <https://www.gemconsortium.org/report/gem-2018-2019-global-report>

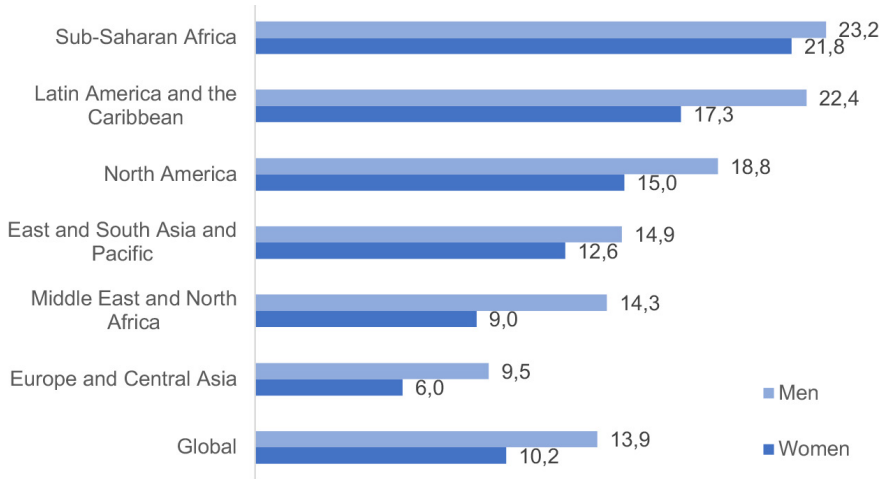
<sup>231</sup> W20 & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

<sup>232</sup> European Commission and European Investment Bank, 2019. "Why are women entrepreneurs missing out on funding?"; [https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why\\_are\\_women\\_entrepreneurs\\_missing\\_out\\_on\\_funding\\_summary\\_en.pdf](https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why_are_women_entrepreneurs_missing_out_on_funding_summary_en.pdf)

<sup>233</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2020. "Empowering women at work"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_756721.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---multi/documents/publication/wcms_756721.pdf)

<sup>234</sup> Hassan, K, Varadan, M, and Zeisberger, C., 2020. "How the VC pitch process is failing female entrepreneurs," *Harvard Business Review*; <https://hbr.org/2020/01/how-the-vc-pitch-process-is-failing-female-entrepreneurs>

**Exhibit 8**  
**Total Entrepreneurial Activity (%)**



*Note:* Total Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) represents the percentage of the adult working-age population (18–64) who are either nascent or new entrepreneurs

*Source:* Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2018/19 Women’s Entrepreneurship Report

That said, there are pockets of hope. A W20 survey fielded in August 2020 found that two in five women in seven G20 countries would like to start a business in the next five years.<sup>235</sup> Also, as of December 2020, although more than a quarter of small businesses were shuttered in the United States, there were more than 1.5 million new business applications, up 82% compared with the same time last year. Data from LinkedIn found that part of the increase may be attributed to women—the share of female entrepreneurs on its platform grew 5% year-over-year, from March to November 2020, more than double the pre-pandemic average.<sup>236</sup>

In the latest WEF report on the future of jobs, entrepreneurship appears in the top 15 "specialized skills" of the future.<sup>237</sup> This confirms that supporting female entrepreneurs should continue to be an integral part of business and government strategies to achieve gender parity.

<sup>235</sup> W20 & Accenture, 2020. "If not now, when?"; [https://www.accenture.com/\\_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/PDF-147/Accenture-W20-2020-Final-Report-If-Not-Now-When.pdf)

<sup>236</sup> Zimmerman, E., 2021. "The pandemic has been an economic disaster for women. Some took advantage of it" *The Washington Post*; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/road-to-recovery/2021/01/21/female-entrepreneurs-coronavirus/>

<sup>237</sup> World Economic Forum, 2020. "Future of Jobs Report"; [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_Future\\_of\\_Jobs\\_2020.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2020.pdf)

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## Exploration of Action Areas

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### **Improve women's access to credit and financial products and provide business development resources that empower women to start and scale their own businesses**

#### **Offer incentives and targeted programs to increase the number of women-owned and women-led companies**

Government intervention is essential for advancing women's entrepreneurship and improving their access to capital and resources. The removal of discriminatory finance and property rights – and building tax systems which encourage entrepreneurship – are critical first step. Incentives to banks to promote financial access for women should also be explored by governments in countries where necessary. Yet, those are the basics. Countries and businesses must do more to increase the quantity of financing available to female founders, as well as the establishment and enhancement of programs that support women to start and scale a business. They can do so through a combination of women-focused funds, incubators and accelerators and integrated programs.

Fortunately, we have witnessed several recent efforts to increase the quantity of financing available to female entrepreneurs. India, for instance, offers a number of credit subsidy programs to promote female entrepreneurship. The programs are financed through banks and subsidized by the government, with many targeting marginalized women. NGOs also play a part by helping women to file their subsidy requests.<sup>238</sup> On the corporate side, Goldman Sachs, announced its "Launch with GS" fund in 2018, which backs private, late-stage women-led companies. Along with its clients, it has raised \$500M to lead institutional funding rounds for women-driven companies and seed female investment managers launching their own funds.<sup>239</sup>

Integrated programs that combine access and control of resources together with training and support are particularly effective.<sup>240</sup> One strong example is the European Community of Women Business Angels for Women Entrepreneurs. Created in 2017 and funded by the European Parliament, their aim is to support women seeking alternative sources of funding by increasing awareness among business angels, training would-be angels, and coaching women entrepreneurs in pitching their ideas to potential investors.<sup>241</sup>

<sup>238</sup> Fruman, C., 2017. "incentivizing equality: investment-led development as a win-win for all," *The World Bank*; <https://blogs.worldbank.org/psd/incentivizing-equality-investment-led-development-win-win-all>

<sup>239</sup> European Commission and European Investment Bank, 2019. "Why are women entrepreneurs missing out on funding?"; [https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why\\_are\\_women\\_entrepreneurs\\_missing\\_out\\_on\\_funding\\_summary\\_en.pdf](https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why_are_women_entrepreneurs_missing_out_on_funding_summary_en.pdf)

<sup>240</sup> ILO, 2021. "Government laws and policies for gender equality"; [https://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS\\_773233/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS_773233/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>241</sup> European Commission and European Investment Bank, 2019. "Why are women entrepreneurs missing out on funding?"; [https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why\\_are\\_women\\_entrepreneurs\\_missing\\_out\\_on\\_funding\\_summary\\_en.pdf](https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why_are_women_entrepreneurs_missing_out_on_funding_summary_en.pdf)

Provide tangible financial support, such as grants and tax relief measures, to help women scale their businesses, particularly through international trade. Across the world, women-owned businesses are awarded approximately 1% of the funds that large corporations and governments spend on products and services. Changes in policy related to procurement could significantly cause this to shift. By prioritizing women-led businesses when awarding contracts, facilitating women's access to more lucrative contract opportunities, and extending financial support of different forms, governments and businesses can help to level the playing field.<sup>242</sup>

There are a number of aspects that policy can and should focus on in this area. Providing female founders with equal access to resources, credit, legal protection and the capital to start and expand a business beyond national borders is critical. In 2018, the European Parliament found that only 20% of EU trade agreements mentioned women's rights, causing them to adopt a resolution to give more consideration to gender equality in trade agreements.<sup>243</sup> In June 2021, the G7 committed to review trade policy to ensure it supports women's economic empowerment.

Providing incentives to companies to purchase from women-owned businesses and gender-conscious enterprises is another way that governments can support female founders. In addition, setting national gender goals on procurement, international trade and ecommerce as well as reporting out on progress over time can also be an incredibly effective strategy. In the United States, for instance, federal law requires all federal agencies to set targets to award contracts to female-owned small businesses. The Small Business Association is responsible for establishing new annual targets with each federal agency.<sup>244</sup> Research also shows that enabling more female founders to participate directly in contract bidding can help them to secure a greater share of public contracts.

The Trade Commissioner Service in Canada has established a number of programs to help businesses owned by under-represented groups achieve success in exporting. For instance, the "Business Women in International Trade" program, created in 1997, connects women-owned businesses with private and public-sector partners and trade commissioners in 160 cities around the world. The program offers resources to assist women in penetrating the global market, such as webinars, information on existing trade deals and a LinkedIn group for networking. Despite the number of women-owned SMEs not changing significantly between 2011 and 2017, the proportion of women-owned SME exporters doubled from 7.4% to 14.8% in large part due to this initiative.

Finally, to build on the gender goals being set by governments and businesses, organizations such as trade unions, boards of trade, employer organizations, economic and social councils, and labor advisory boards, should be encouraged to do the same. As women are under-represented in these arenas, they are unable to adequately inform national social dialogue and represent women at the collective bargaining table. Indeed, data from 2018, indicates that female membership in national social dialogue institutions ranged from 20% to 35%.<sup>245</sup>

<sup>242</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2019. "Empowering women at work: government laws and policies for gender equality"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_773233.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---multi/documents/publication/wcms_773233.pdf)

<sup>243</sup> ILO and UNWomen, 2019. "Empowering women at work: government laws and policies for gender equality"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_ent/---multi/documents/publication/wcms\\_773233.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_ent/---multi/documents/publication/wcms_773233.pdf)

<sup>244</sup> Kronfol, H., Nichols, A., and Tran, T., 2019. "Women at work: how can investment incentives be used to enhance economic opportunities for women?," The World Bank Group; <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/32055/WPS8935.pdf?sequence=6>

<sup>245</sup> ILO, 2019. "A quantum leap for gender equality: For a better future of work for all"; [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms\\_674831.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_674831.pdf)

## **Invest in closing digital inclusion gaps and help build women's capacity to lead businesses underpinned by technology**

### **Develop and fund programs targeted at raising the digital inclusion of women, with a focus on boosting access, affordability, confidence and skills**

Closing the digital inclusion gap is of paramount importance to support more female entrepreneurs. The idea that "every business is a digital business" is widely accepted, and so, ensuring that women are digitally fluent and have access to technology provides them with significant opportunities. Today, women are behind in aggregate in terms of their digital fluency and their likelihood of founding digital-based companies. For instance, it is estimated that women accounted for only 15.6% of digital start-ups in 2018 across the EU.<sup>246</sup> Of equal concern, a recent WEF study found that women are under-represented in six of the eight fastest growing professions of the future. Developing targeted programs to direct more women into high-growth areas and support their success is critical.<sup>247</sup>

There are several strong models of digital inclusion programs focused on women. For example, UNESCO and the Women in Africa Initiative (WIA) came together with partners from the public and private sector to develop an open online course to promote African women's digital entrepreneurship and digital literacy in the field of AI. Independent initiatives have also had strong impacts. All Raise, for example, started by a group of female investors in the US, seeks to support women in the funding, founding and scaling of technology companies. Since its establishment in 2017, All Raise has supported 5,500 female founders and funders with nearly 30,000 hours of mentorship and coaching.<sup>248</sup>

### **Nurture women's participation in innovation ecosystems through financial support, training, and other programs to build women's capacity**

Connecting female founders to business associations, innovation ecosystems, and training and coaching can act as a powerful catalyst to build women's capacity and their social capital. Although businesses and boards of trade can take action unilaterally to support this, policy initiatives clearly help to pave the way for action on a broad scale. The European Commission's Small Business Act for Europe and its Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan, for instance, helped to instigate the establishment of a number of programs and networks to support female founders. For example, the European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors, started in 2009, has held more than 650 national meetings, reaching more than 61,000 would-be women entrepreneurs. It has also supported the founding of over 250 new women-led ventures and started 22 networking and business support clubs for women.<sup>249</sup>

<sup>246</sup> OECD, 2019. "The missing entrepreneurs 2019: policies for inclusive entrepreneurship"; <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/28e047ba-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/28e047ba-en>

<sup>247</sup> Zahidi, S., 2019. "We are 100 years from gender equality-how can we change that?" *The World Economic Forum*; <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/12/how-to-close-gender-gap-2020s/>

<sup>248</sup> Kostka, P., 2020. "All Raise attracts fresh funding to build a more equitable tech ecosystem"; <https://medium.com/allraise/all-raise-attracts-fresh-funding-to-build-a-more-equitable-tech-ecosystem-a844e2a2ba32>

<sup>249</sup> European Commission and European Investment Bank, 2019. "Why are women entrepreneurs missing out on funding?"; [https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why\\_are\\_women\\_entrepreneurs\\_missing\\_out\\_on\\_funding\\_summary\\_en.pdf](https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why_are_women_entrepreneurs_missing_out_on_funding_summary_en.pdf)

Similarly, the European Network of Mentors for Women Entrepreneurs, founded in 2011, was set up to advise and support women entrepreneurs on starting, managing, and scaling their businesses specifically from the second to the fourth years of operation.<sup>250</sup>

Incubators and accelerators can also support female entrepreneurs in this area. The Founder Institute, for instance, with 4,500+ portfolio companies and operations in 200+ cities globally, formed The Female Founder Initiative in 2016. This provides scholarships for top female applicants across every global chapter. At the same time, female mentors and local leaders in the institute's programs provide coaching and mentorship; they also host female entrepreneurship-focused events around the world. The goal of the program is to leverage the institute's network to make the global technology sector more gender-balanced. As a result of this initiative, approximately 40% of companies which the institute helps to realize are women-founded, compared to roughly 20% prior to starting the initiative.<sup>251</sup>

### **Design incentives for investing in female-led companies and for venture capital firms to meet gender-specific targets for executives/partners**

#### **Design incentives for firms to broaden the number of female investment partners, including business loan officers, angel investors and venture capitalists**

Ensuring that more women are at the table to make investment decisions in new businesses is critical for advancing female entrepreneurship. Despite a number of venture capital firms being established in recent years with a distinct purpose of investing in female founders, the majority of investors and decision-makers on investment teams are men. In the US, for instance, recent research shows that roughly four out of five VC firms have never employed a woman in a senior investment role, and less than 9% of venture capitalists are women.<sup>252</sup> At the same time, research also shows that investment firms with women partners are more than twice as likely to invest in women-led enterprises and more than three times as likely to invest in enterprises with women CEOs.<sup>253</sup>

There is a highly compelling business case for gender parity among investors as well. First, more gender-diverse VC teams are more likely to demonstrate superior financial returns and exits compared to non-gender-diverse teams.<sup>254</sup> Secondly, they are more likely to invest in founding teams that include men and women—a characteristic that is known to be associated with stronger valuation growth compared to all-male founding teams. Yet despite a plethora of research demonstrating such findings, we haven't seen meaningful change in terms of the number of women investment partners. Since change isn't happening organically, incentives can help.

<sup>246</sup> European Commission and European Investment Bank, 2019. "Why are women entrepreneurs missing out on funding?"; [https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why\\_are\\_women\\_entrepreneurs\\_missing\\_out\\_on\\_funding\\_summary\\_en.pdf](https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why_are_women_entrepreneurs_missing_out_on_funding_summary_en.pdf)

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>251</sup> Founder Institute, 2020. "Female founder initiative impact report"; <https://fi.co/insight/female-founder-initiative-impact-report>

<sup>252</sup> European Commission and European Investment Bank, 2019. "Why are women entrepreneurs missing out on funding?"; [https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why\\_are\\_women\\_entrepreneurs\\_missing\\_out\\_on\\_funding\\_summary\\_en.pdf](https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why_are_women_entrepreneurs_missing_out_on_funding_summary_en.pdf)

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>254</sup> Gompers, P. and Kovvali, S., 2018. "The other diversity dividend," *Harvard Business Review*; <https://hbr.org/2018/07/the-other-diversity-dividend>

Incentives can be provided in a number of forms. Publicly sharing data on venture capital firms and accelerators is one way to influence change. Founders for Change, for instance, has worked together with partners like Crunchbase to provide a list of venture capital investors based in part on which firms have diverse teams, including which have a strong mix of female and male investors. The more information like this is shared, the more pressure may increase for all-male firms to become more inclusive.<sup>255</sup>

Government tax incentives could also be introduced to put further pressure on firms to change the gender composition of their teams. These should place particular focus on helping women entrepreneurs who struggled during the pandemic to return to the market.

### **Educate and incentivize the investment community to incorporate a gender lens into decision-making to increase women's access to capital**

Female-led venture-backed companies enjoy higher exit rates in terms of deal value than those that are led by male-exclusive teams.<sup>256</sup> Similarly, global performance per median revenues by stage shows that companies with at least one female executive outperform start-ups without female executive presence.<sup>257</sup> In fact, according to Morgan Stanley, seizing opportunities to invest in underrepresented founders in the U.S. alone could generate over \$4.4 trillion.<sup>258</sup> Yet, how many VC investors know this? Based on how funds are currently being directed, it appears not enough.

Targeted gender-specific programs, such as those discussed above, shouldn't be limited to aspiring female entrepreneurs. Indeed, developing a two-pronged approach and developing targeted training programs for investors can also help to further advance the number of female founders and their success. Research has shown, for instance, that investors require gender-bias training on the questions that they pose to aspiring entrepreneurs.<sup>259</sup> Similarly, many require training on how to track and monitor their investments through a gender lens as well as reviewing in-house processes to identify where gender bias may be creeping in. Some organizations are already making inroads. Diversity VC and Diversio, for instance, help venture capital firms identify strategies to improve their diversity practices. Launched in September 2020, their "Diversity VC Standard", has already provided certification to 40 VC firms across Europe and Canada, ensuring that they have the tools and are implementing recommended practices to make funding available to underrepresented founders.<sup>260</sup>

<sup>255</sup> Founders for change; <https://www.foundersforchange.org/diverse-investors-list>

<sup>256</sup> European Commission and European Investment Bank, 2019. "Why are women entrepreneurs missing out on funding?"; [https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why\\_are\\_women\\_entrepreneurs\\_missing\\_out\\_on\\_funding\\_summary\\_en.pdf](https://www.eib.org/attachments/thematic/why_are_women_entrepreneurs_missing_out_on_funding_summary_en.pdf)

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Morgan Stanley, 2018. "The trillion-dollar blind spot"; <https://www.morganstanley.com/ideas/trillion-dollar-blind-spot-infographic>

<sup>259</sup> Kanze, D., Conley, M, and Higgins, T., 2016. "We ask men to win and women not to lose: closing the gender gap in startup finding," *Academy of Management*; <https://journals.aom.org/doi/abs/10.5465/amj.2016.1215>

<sup>260</sup> Diversity VC; <https://www.diversityvc/the-diversity-vc-standard/>



**G20 member countries should therefore:**

- Improve women's access to credit and financial products and provide business development resources that empower women to start their own businesses
- Invest in closing digital inclusion gaps and help build women's capacity to lead businesses underpinned by technology
- Design incentives for investing in female-led companies and for venture capital firms to meet gender-specific targets for executives/partners

## Annex

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### Key Performance Indicators

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This paper cover two types of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

**1.** KPIs that are currently collected by international institutions for some G20 countries, but that we propose should be collected and tracked across the entire G20. We refer to these indicators as Key "Pilot" **Performance Indicators (KPPIs)**, highlighting the need to track these measures where they are available and also to target their wider collection across the G20. We also urge future G20 and B20 processes to define relevant targets for these KPIs.

**The KPPIs highlighted in this paper are:**

#### Recommendation 1:

- Proportion of females graduating in subjects related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) – and the rate of attrition. This data is currently collected by international institutions, but not in a globally comparable way that covers all G20 countries. We also specifically urge government to increase the number of female STEM graduates.
- Percentage of women employed in STEM. This data is currently collected by a variety of different organizations. However, again there is no universal definition of STEM occupations, making comparisons between countries difficult. We urge government and ecosystem partners to find consensus on a definition for this KPI and to track it over time accordingly.
- Percentage of women researchers. Organizations, such as UNESCO, have measured country performance on this KPI in the past, yet the data is not collected on a regular basis.

#### Recommendation 2:

- "Job quality" KPIs refer to multiple aspects of employment that contribute to the well-being of workers; for example, earnings quality, labor market security and quality of the working environment. Such data can provide insights into the potential for job disruption, safety and inclusion in the workplace and earning potential. We urge the G20 to begin collecting this valuable data across all G20 countries to track and set targets against accordingly.

#### Recommendation 3:

- Total Entrepreneurship Activity (TEA) ratio for men and women. This data is collected by a variety of different organization, but not in a globally comparable way that covers all G20 countries.

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**2.** KPIs that are currently collected by international institutions for which the taskforce has proposed specific targets for 2024. The KPIs highlighted are:

**Recommendation 1:**

• Female labor force participation rate. This is collected by the OECD. We have analyzed the data and propose specific targets for 2024 below:

**2024 targets have been set for the Share of Women Participating in the Labor Force**

**Current Baseline\* and 2024 Targets\*\***

Countries in the **Top (1st) Quartile** (highest participation rate):

- Baseline: **76.4%**
- 2024 Target: **81.1% or higher**

Countries in the **2nd Quartile**:

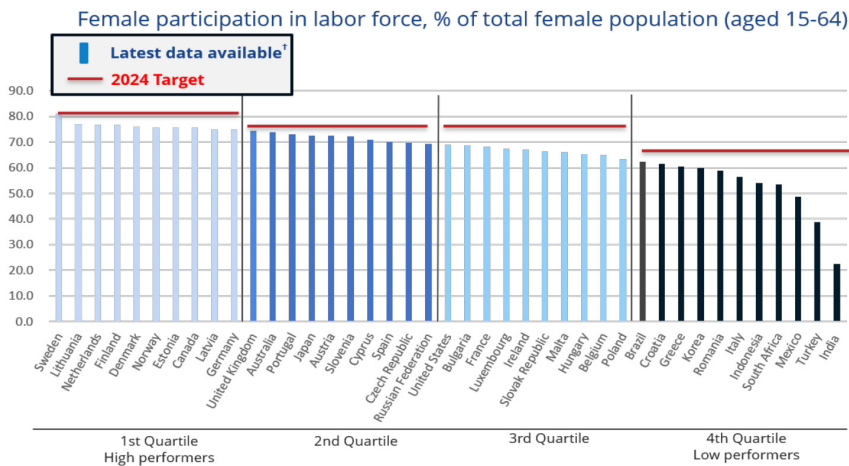
- Baseline: **71.8%**
- 2024 Target: **76.4% or higher**

Countries in the **3rd Quartile**:

- Baseline: **66.6%**
- 2024 Target: **76.4% or higher**

Countries in the **Bottom (4th) Quartile** (lowest participation rate):

- Baseline: **52.5%**
- 2024 Target: **66.5% or higher**



† Data source is OECD. Analysis by Accenture. Latest data is from 2019, except for India (2018). Data covers G20 countries except Argentina, China and Saudi Arabia.

\* Baseline figures are a simple average of the participation rates for each quartile, using the latest data.

\*\* 2024 Target for 1st Quartile is based on the rate of the highest performer. 2024 Targets for 2nd and 3rd Quartiles are based on the average of the 1st Quartile. 2024 Target for 4th Quartile is based on the average of the total sample.

**Recommendation 2:**

- The gender gap in unpaid work between men and women. This data is collected by the OECD. We have analyzed the latest available data and propose specific targets for 2024 as outlined below:

**2024 targets have been set for closing the gender gap in unpaid work between men and women**

**Current Baseline\* and 2024 Targets\*\***

Countries in the **Top (1st) Quartile** (closest to parity):

- Baseline: **59.5%**
- 2024 Target: **56.3% or lower**

Countries in the **2nd Quartile**:

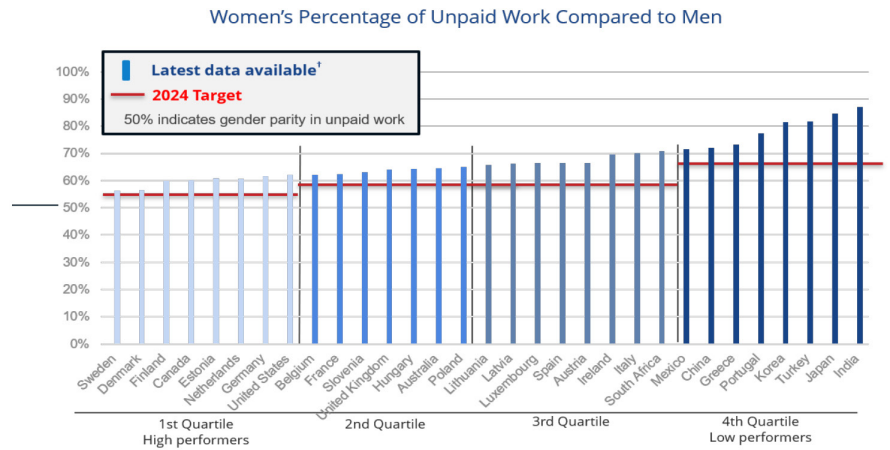
- Baseline: **63.5%**
- 2024 Target: **59.5% or lower**

Countries in the **3rd Quartile**:

- Baseline: **67.8%**
- 2024 Target: **59.5% or lower**

Countries in the **Bottom (4th) Quartile** (furthest from parity):

- Baseline: **78.7%**
- 2024 Target: **67.6% or lower**



<sup>†</sup> Data source is the OECD. Analysis by Accenture. Latest data from 2020. Data covers 31 countries from the EU and G20.

\* Baseline figures are a simple average of the participation rates for each quartile, using the latest data.

\*\* 2024 Target for 1st Quartile is based on the rate of the highest performer.

2024 Targets for 2nd and 3rd Quartiles are based on the average of the 1st Quartile.

2024 Target for 4th Quartile is based on the average of the total sample.

**Recommendation 3:**

• The percentage of women in senior and middle management. This data is collected by the ILO. We have analyzed the latest available data and propose specific targets for 2024 as outlined below:

**2024 targets have been set for the percentage of women in middle and senior management roles**

**Current Baseline\* and 2024 Targets\*\***

Countries in the **Top (1st) Quartile** (highest participation rate):

- Baseline: **40.6%**
- 2024 Target: **43.5% or higher**

Countries in the **2nd Quartile**:

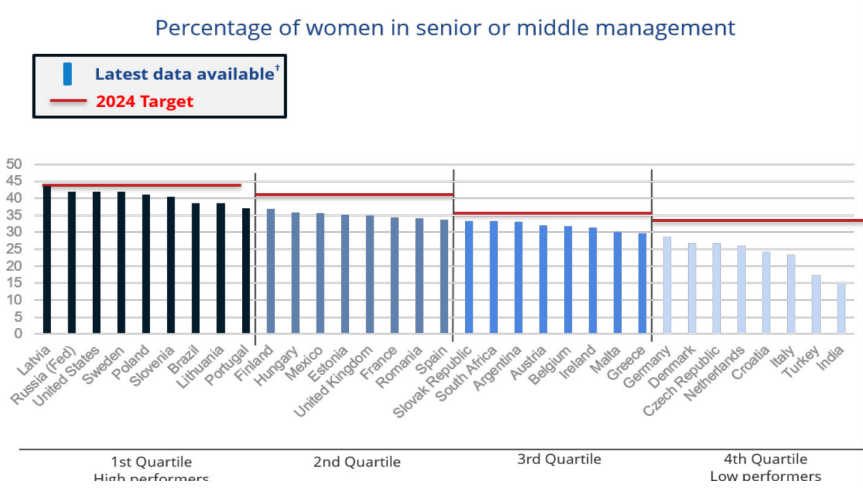
- Baseline: **35.0%**
- 2024 Target: **40.6% or higher**

Countries in the **3rd Quartile**:

- Baseline: **31.8%**
- 2024 Target: **35.0% or higher**

Countries in the **Bottom (4th) Quartile** (lowest participation rate):

- Baseline: **23.5%**
- 2024 Target: **34.1% or higher**



† Data source is ILOSTAT database (indicator: SL.EMP.SMG.T.FE.ZS). Analysis by Accenture. Latest data from 2019, except U.S. (2020). Data covers all G20 countries with data availability.

\* Baseline figures are a simple average of the participation rates for each quartile, using the latest data.  
 \*\* 2024 Target for 1st Quartile is based on the rate of the highest performer.  
 2024 Target for 2nd Quartile is based on the average of the 1st Quartile.  
 2024 Target for 3rd Quartile is based on the average of the 2nd Quartile.  
 2024 Target for 4th Quartile is based on the average of the total sample.

### Acronyms

ILO	International Labor Organization
AI	Artificial Intelligence
WHO	World Health Organization
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
US	United States of America
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
R&D	Research and Development
ITU	International Telecommunication Union

### Schedule of Taskforce Exchanges

#	Date	Location	Theme
1	17/03/2021		Conference Call I
2	23/04/2021		Conference Call II
3	28/05/2021		Conference Call III
4	30/06/2021		Conference Call IV
5	28/07/2021		B20 - G20 SIWE Global Dialogue

### Distribution of Members

Country	#	Country	#	Country	#	Country	#
Italy	41	South Africa	4	Turkey	2	Australia	1
USA	9	Argentina	4	Tunisia	2	Indonesia	1
United Kingdom	6	Global	4	Russia	2	Netherlands	1
France	5	Mexico	3	Jordan	1	China	1
Switzerland	5	Germany	3	Singapore	1	Ghana	1
Saudi Arabia	5	Spain	3	Canada	1	Belgium	1
Brazil	4	Japan	2	South Korea	1	United Arab Emirates	1

<b>Name</b>	<b>Company/Organization</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Deputy</b>
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Tala Al Jabri	HOF Capital	General Partner	United Arab Emirates
Alanoud Alqahtani	Fixtag	Chairman & CEO	Saudi Arabia
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Yean Cheong	SGTech	Executive Director	Singapore
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Paola Olivieri	Fameccanica	Head of Business Development	Italy
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