



Equality needs everyone

The role of men
in gender equity,
diversity and
inclusion

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About IDB Invest

IDB Invest, a member of the IDB Group, is a multilateral development bank committed to promoting the economic development of its member countries in Latin America and the Caribbean through the private sector. IDB Invest finances sustainable companies and projects to achieve financial results and maximize economic, social, and environmental development in the region. With a portfolio of \$13.1 billion in asset management and 385 clients in 25 countries, IDB Invest provides innovative financial solutions and advisory services that meet the needs of its clients in a variety of industries.

About Promundo

Founded in Brazil in 1997, Promundo works to promote gender equality and create a world free from violence by engaging men and boys in partnership with women, girls, and individuals of all gender identities. Promundo-US partners in more than 40 countries to achieve this mission by conducting cutting-edge research that builds the knowledge base on masculinities and gender equality; developing, evaluating, and scaling up high-impact interventions and programs; and carrying out national and international campaigns and advocacy initiatives to prevent violence and promote gender equality. For more information, see: www.promundoglobal.org

About Mercer

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About the Gender Parity Accelerators (IPGs, by their Spanish acronym)

Gender Parity Accelerators (IPG, for its initials in Spanish) are a high-level public-private collaboration model that seek to support countries interested in reducing the economic gender gap. In 2016, the World Economic Forum (WEF) partnered with the IDB to implement these initiatives in Colombia, Chile, Argentina, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Panama. This strategic collaboration seeks to increase female labor participation, reduce the gender pay gap, and promote women’s presence in leadership roles.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past 20 years, women have joined the labor market in a sustained manner in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), and currently companies recognize that gender equality is necessary for competitive business performance.

Despite this recognition, gender inequality persists in the labor market and continues to be a challenge for all the countries in the region. One out of two women is not employed; very few manage to hold executive positions, sit on or chair boards of directors; and many of them still receive salaries lower than those paid to their male peers.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic, which began in December 2019 and expanded to all the countries in the world, has disproportionately affected women, who make up most frontline workers at health centers and primary caregivers in households. Women account for one-half of doctors and more than 80% of the nursing staff in the region. They are not only exposed to the virus because of their daily jobs with patients, but the massive increase in the demand for healthcare due to the pandemic has led them to perform these types of jobs in extreme conditions, including long working days under a high level of stress and without resting.

The economic and labor impact of the crisis affects women to a greater extent for several reasons. First, even before the crisis arose, women were facing greater barriers than men to participate in the labor market. Second, women hold jobs in the sectors most affected by the pandemic (retail, hospitality, restaurants, tourism-related activities, and paid cleaning and domestic care services). Third, many women work in informal conditions and therefore lack the cover of social protection services. Finally, they are underrepresented in technology, banking and other sectors, which are the least affected by the crisis caused by COVID-19 or will recover more quickly.

Additionally, the isolation and recommendations to stay at home to prevent and mitigate coronavirus infections have presented significant financial challenges for women, as the burden of housework and family care has increased. Unfortunately, existing data at least from the early months of the pandemic suggest that COVID-19 and associated shutdowns have not caused men to participate to a greater extent than previously in domestic tasks; to the contrary, the unequal distribution seems to have worsened. According to data from the IDB/Cornell survey on coronavirus in the LAC region during the confinement, women were solely responsible for carrying out unpaid housework. While two-thirds of the women interviewed said they were the only ones who cleaned and cooked, less than one-fourth of men indicated they did these tasks. Almost 60% of the women interviewed said they were solely responsible for the education of their children at home, compared to only 14% of men.¹

¹ More information is available at <https://blogs.iadb.org/ideas-que-cuentan/es/brechas-de-genero-en-tiempos-de-la-covid-19/>

Companies always play a key role in the promotion of gender equality and diversity within their organizations and throughout their value chain, but particularly in the context in which we live. Achieving gender equality and ensuring that women's rights are exercised is an end in itself. It is an objective with a strong commercial argument that allows businesses to achieve specific profit.

Although the companies in the region are implementing measures to address this issue, very few of them engage men as allies for gender equality and diversity. Men can contribute a great deal to achieve gender equality at the family level, as domestic partners and in their roles as fathers at home — and in their roles as co-workers and leaders in organizations.

Since men are part of the gender inequality and discrimination equation, they must be an active part of the solution. The importance of the role of men as allies for equality is being increasingly recognized. An example of this is the #HeForShe movement driven by the United Nations, which has mobilized a global network of male champions in favor of gender equality. Nevertheless, the guidance for companies that want to integrate men into their gender equality efforts is still deficient.

Therefore, IDB Invest, Mercer and Promundo have jointly prepared this report, to bring visibility to the important role that men can play to contribute to gender equality and diversity, and the actions that the private sector can develop to transform them into allies for women's empowerment.

The purpose of this report is to inspire action, especially amidst the COVID-19 crisis, so that LAC companies can attract, develop, strengthen, and boost the participation of men as allies for equality.

Methodology

To develop this report, we:

- Conducted an extensive literature review of both grey- and peer-reviewed sources.
- Conducted 11 semi-structured interviews with key informants in the private sector, specifically human resources (HR) specialists in companies that are already working on engaging men as allies for equality in business administration; academic experts; and non-profit organizations specializing in engaging men in gender equality.
- Led an online focus group using the Remesh platform, with participation of 240 people representing 57 private sector companies from 16 countries² in the region. We explored the role of men in gender equality; the initiatives currently implemented by companies to engage men in being allies to achieve equal opportunities in professional development for men and women; and what would be the main barriers to increasing those opportunities in the near future.
- Identified and described good practices that are being implemented in LAC and other regions.

Based on these considerations, this report comprises three sections:

Section 1 describes the status of gender equality in the workforce, identifies the main barriers that prevent women from progressing in their professional development, and establishes the business case for companies investing in gender equality.

Section 2 synthesizes the benefits of engaging men as allies for equality, in addition to providing tools and good practices that help companies to involve their male leaders and employees in initiatives for equality.

Section 3 details the actions that LAC companies are implementing to encourage men to act as allies for equality in various economic sectors (financial, corporate and infrastructure).

Finally, this report includes final conclusions and recommendations reached after completing the research.

² The participants in the focus group were employees from companies in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay.



1

**GENDER
EQUALITY
IN THE
WORKFORCE**



1

SECTION

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORKFORCE

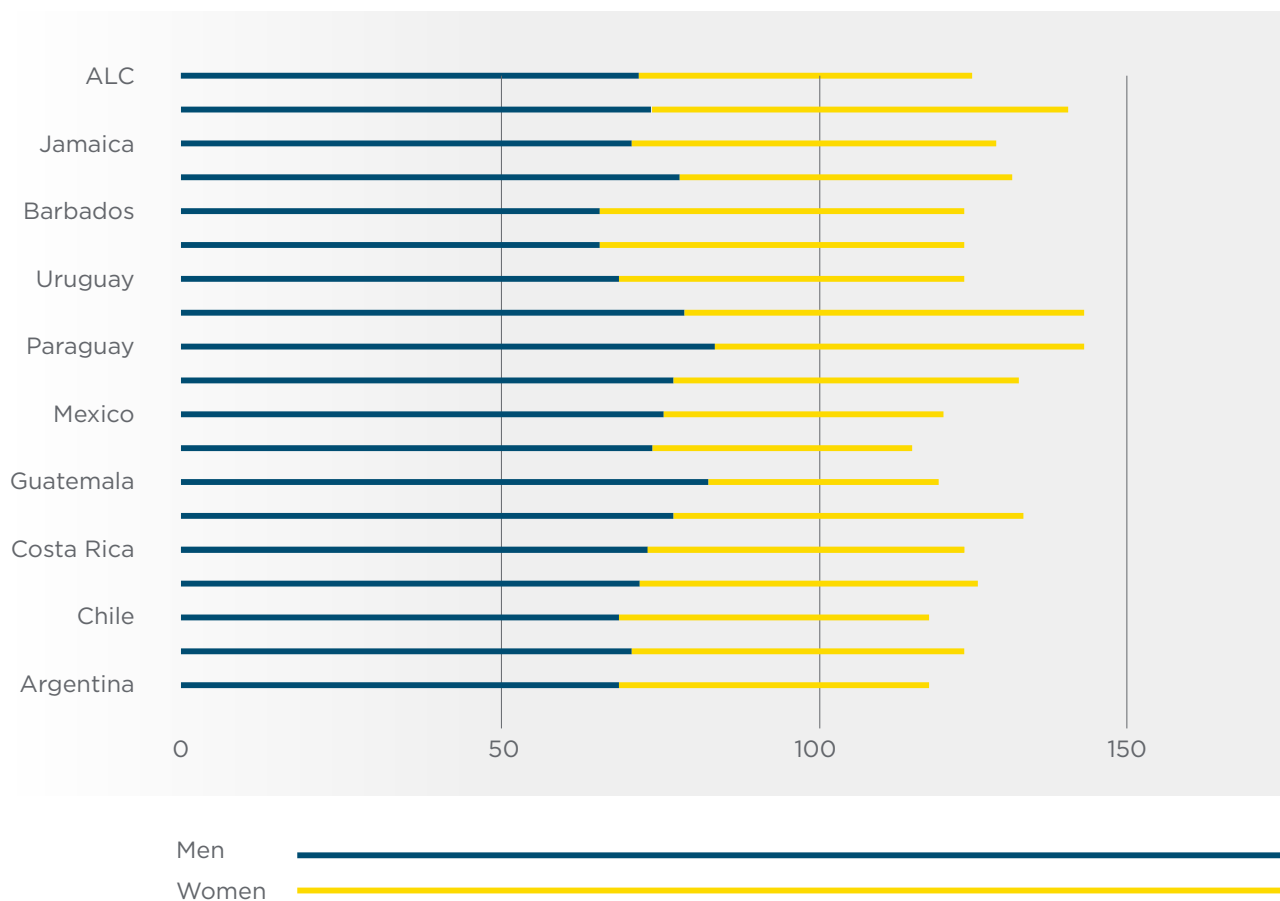
Equality is progressing, but gaps persist

Between 1990 and 2010, the female employment rate showed considerable growth in LAC, increasing from 47.9 to 55.9%. This increase was mainly due to women's higher education levels, greater availability of formal jobs in the service sector, reduced fertility rates, migration from rural to urban areas, and promotion of part-time work opportunities. As a result, the gender gap in the female employment rate decreased from 32.7% in 1990 to 21.8% in 2010 (International Labor Organization (ILO), 2019 - Special Labor Outlook No. 5).

In the most recent decade of the new millennium, this trend was interrupted, and there was a slight decrease in male and female employment rates. Consequently, in 2019, only 50.9% of adult women (ages 15 - 64) in LAC were employed, compared to 74.3% of men.

This situation shows marked variances among the countries of the region (Graph 1) and among different groups of women. The women who achieved greatest progress were those employed in urban sectors, of adult age, without children, and who have greater socio-economic resources and high education levels. In contrast, the women most affected by inequality were rural and agricultural workers, indigenous and Afro-descendant women, those who have fewer years of formal education, and those who live in households with lower income and more children (Lupica C., 2015).

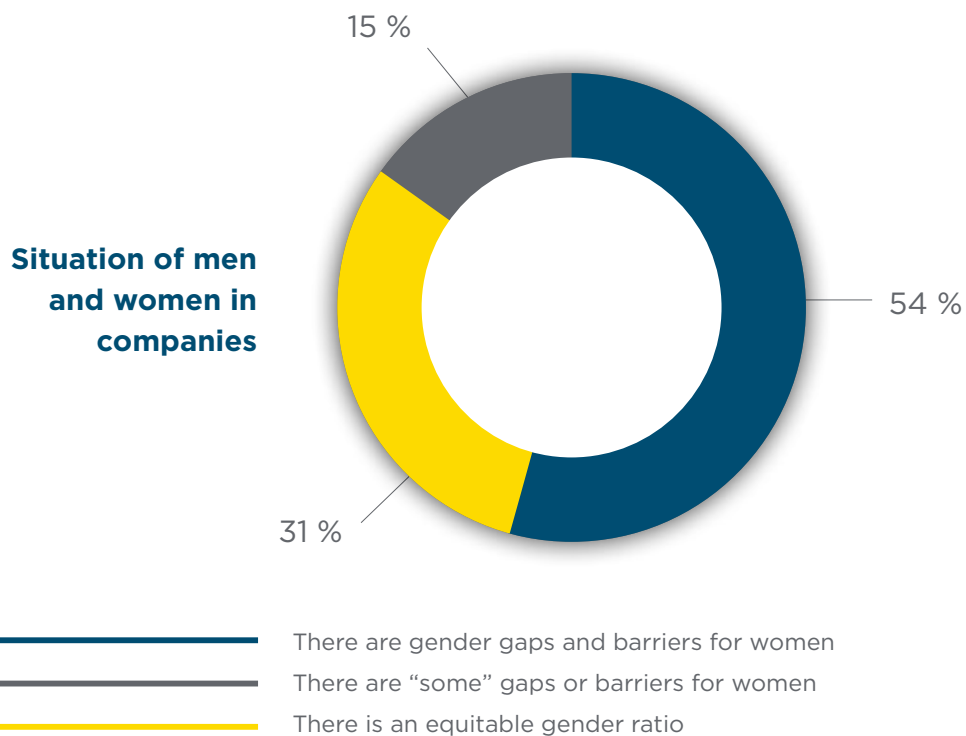
LAC. National employment rates by country and sex; average as of Q3 2019; in percentages (%)



Source: ILO (2019). Labor Outlook.


Today, private sector employees recognize the existence of gender gaps. The participants in the 2020 IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo online focus group were asked *how the opportunities and experiences of men compared to those of women in their companies*. Of the 131 people who answered the question:

- Fifty-four percent think there are gender gaps and barriers for women, which in many cases are invisible for men. The most mentioned gaps were the differences in salary, trust and responsibilities, and participation in higher-ranking positions.
- Thirty-one percent indicated there are some gaps or barriers for women, but the company is implementing measures to remedy the situation.
- Only fifteen percent answered that there is an equitable gender ratio.



Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo (2020).

Participants in the 2020 IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo focus group were also asked *how often women faced difficulties in their professional development at the company*. Seventy-two percent of the 150 responses obtained said "sometimes," "frequently" or "always," while twenty eight percent answered "never" or "I do not know."



DO WOMEN FACE BARRIERS FOR PROFESSIONAL GROWTH IN THE COMPANY

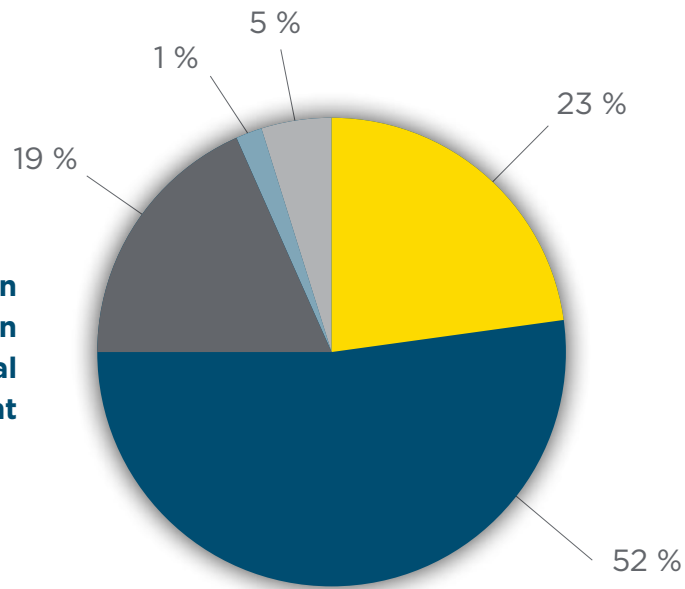
72 %

**POSITIVE
ANSWERS**

28 %

**NEGATIVE/
NEUTRAL
ANSWERS**

How often women face difficulties in their professional development



- Never
- Sometimes
- Frequently
- Always
- I do not know

Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo (2020).

Fewer women in senior leadership positions

Female representation decreases as the professional level increases.

- In Latin America, only 26% of senior leaders and barely 18% of executives are women. (Mercer, 2020).
- Nearly 20% of companies in the region have a female CEO, a percentage that decreases to 8.7% among the largest corporations. Only 45.3% of companies have at least one woman among their owners (World Bank's Enterprise Surveys, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) - ILO, 2019).
- An average of 8.5% of board members of 1,259 publicly traded companies in LAC countries are women. In the Caribbean, 18% of board members are women, and 29% of executive positions are held by women (Flabbi et al, 2016).

Pay gaps between men and women continue to be wide

According to recent estimates, the average working income that women earn per hour is 17% lower than that of men of the same age, education, number of children at home, presence of other income earners at home, rural location and type of work (ECLAC and ILO, 2019).

Data shows that women tend to receive lower salaries than men with the same level of education and experience, showing persistent discrimination phenomena. A recent report from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) revealed that in 50 countries where adult women have a higher education level than men, there is still an average pay gap of 39%. According to current trends, it would take 257 years to close the gender gap in economic opportunities (UNDP, 2020).

In companies, gender pay gaps are considerably broader at the higher levels of the organization. In Peru, for instance, there is a 20% pay gap among male and female employees, while the gap reached 34% at leadership level. In Ecuador, the general pay gap is 3%, versus 30% at leadership level. Panama records a 3% gap at leadership level, compared to a general 2% gap. In Argentina, the pay gap at leadership level is lower (25%) than that recorded for all employees (33%) (ILO and the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP), 2017).

According to Mercer's "Let's Get Real About Equality" research (2020), 72% of organizations in Latin America say that equal pay is part of their organization's compensation strategy, but only 48% have a formalized remediation process to address any pay gaps or risks identified. These remediations may be more prevalent among the LAC affiliates of multinational organizations, but it is a step in the right direction. Mercer's research shows that organizations in Latin America analyze pay equity to ensure fair pay relative to contributions (87%), and to attract or retain the best talent (72%). Finally, although pay equity tends to be framed as a gender issue, it's not only women whose pay may need to be remedied. **Men who are underpaid can also benefit from corrective measures that ensure equal pay for equal work.**

Disadvantages experienced by indigenous and Afro-descendant women

Gender inequalities in the labor market are even greater among female ethnic minorities.

- In the LAC region, the indigenous population is estimated at 28-34 million (approximately 10% of the total population of the region) and the Afro-descendant population is estimated at 150 million.
- Indigenous and Afro-descendant women generally work in the informal sector, characterized by low human capital with low wages.
- An analysis by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) showed a total ethnic pay gap of 38% in Latin America (including explained and inexplicable factors). After validating the education level, gender, work and demographic characteristics, the gap showed a significant decrease but remained consistent across income distribution (between 15 and 20%).

Source: MERCER (2018).

Gender and family care stereotypes: the main barriers for women

According to the latest report from the UNDP (2020), despite stronger and more prominent public articulation in favor of women's rights, such as #MeToo or #NiUnaMenos, 90% of the world's population — men and women — hold some type of bias against women. **For example, more than 40% of people think that men are better business executives and are more entitled to hold a job when jobs are scarce, and almost 50% of people believe that men are better political leaders (UNDP, 2020).**

Gender stereotypes are generalized opinions or bias about the attributes or characteristics men and women have or should have, or about the social functions both genders play or should play. When following traditional gender stereotypes, most people assume that men are leaders and women are followers, men are producers and women are consumers, men are strong, and women are weak. Those stereotypes limit the choices and opportunities of women and become obstacles that prevent them from reaching their potential. However, many men are also affected by these stereotypes, as they are incentivized to serve in “competitive and ambitious” male roles, depriving them of the opportunity to exercise more active fatherhood roles, or to have more respectful and egalitarian relationships with women.

Gender stereotypes are not always easily identified because they are shared by many people and operate at an unconscious level, i.e., they are incorporated in day-to-day relationships and in how they are seen and how they act in life. However, they affect key processes of private sector organizations (such as hiring or promotion) and even give rise to assumptions on women’s ambitions and skills. For example, according to a survey conducted on individuals from 375 listed companies of six Latin American countries, men attribute the lack of representation of women to female employees’ own choices or interests, while women think that this is the result of poor recruitment and biased leadership (Mercer, 2018).

For example, in 2020 Mercer found that 84% of organizations in Latin America state that women have equal access to positions that are more likely to lead to senior management. However, only 59% of organizations responded that women are equally represented in managerial roles and only 57% stated that women are equally represented in profit and loss (P&L) roles.

Stereotypes or stereotypical beliefs are culturally conditioned and may be modified. Nevertheless, the active participation of men and women is necessary to achieve modification. Men play a key role in the eradication of gender stereotypes because men hold most of the leadership positions in private sector organizations. A first step for the eradication of gender stereotypes is to name them, identify the forms they take, explain the harm they cause, and develop appropriate measures for elimination.




Family roles and responsibilities


Gender stereotypes and family roles generate rules of conduct that influence both men and women (for example, a man's role as the provider and the woman's role as the caregiver). The unequal distribution of domestic and dependent care responsibilities, which mostly fall on women, is one of the main barriers to female participation in the labor market or their professional development. A survey conducted by McKinsey & Company among 547 executives from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru identified that the greatest obstacle for female leadership lies in the balance between work and family; a performance model that always demands ongoing availability (at all times and in all places); and geographic mobility (McKinsey & Company, 2013).

In many cases, men are considered more stable and committed to their work when they have a family to provide for. In quite the opposite way, childcare is a barrier to female participation in the labor market because it is associated with a greater demand by women for flexibility in working conditions, and a higher cost for the organization due to the absenteeism related to maternity leave (International Planned Parenthood Federation Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR) and Promundo, 2019).

The disproportionate burden of family care that falls on women has been exacerbated during the global pandemic, affecting the possibilities, performance and stress on female employees. People who work at private sector companies in LAC corroborated this situation. The participants of the online focus group conducted by IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo in 2020 were asked how the experiences of men and women differ during working from home in the time of COVID-19. 96.7% of the 239 responses stated that, compared to men, women have greater responsibilities at home and with respect to the care of children and elderly or sick family members. Only 3.3% expressed that the experiences of men and women while working from home are similar.




"Women may have more inconveniences in working under this method because they are also responsible for keeping the house in order and, if they have children, they have to make sure that they attend virtual classes and participate in school meetings."



"Women take on greater responsibility in childcare and cleaning, in addition to the office work itself."

"Men focus more; they are not thinking about cooking, washing clothes, if the child has materials for his/her online classes, if the house has been cleaned, what to buy from the supermarket..."

Only if men take on the same amount of household and childcare responsibilities as women (co-responsibility), will women have the same opportunities to decide how much time they devote to their jobs and their professional development. This reinforces the idea that we must equitably redistribute the total time allotted to doing paid and unpaid labor between men and women. Hence, to achieve gender equality in the labor market, there is a need to simultaneously address how work is distributed away from the job, in households.



The shared responsibility of family care not only generates benefits for women, but it also gives men the opportunity to participate in more active fatherhood or in the care of elderly or sick family members and in their own self-care. Companies play an essential role in facilitating the involvement of male employees in family tasks, as shown by the social research referred to in Section 2 of this report.

Advantages of gender equality for companies

Gender equality in the job market creates multiple competitive advantages for companies, such as increased business performance and the capacity to attract and retain talented professionals.^{3,4}

Aware of the business case for gender equality, many companies in the region have implemented measures to promote gender balance and leverage women's talent. There is also marked global pressure to diversify talent, and in many cases, multinational companies are leading the way.

- According to global investment trends, there is an increasing number of fund managers that demand greater diversity from executive boards in companies in which they invest, for example, BlackRock.⁵ Goldman Sachs announced a new standard to take companies public: At least one woman must be a board director, or the board must be ethnically diverse.⁶
- In Latin America, 58% of companies surveyed in the region by Mercer have satisfactory indicators that measure the commitment of middle management levels to diversity and inclusion (Mercer, 2020).
- According to data from a survey conducted by ILO, 63% of interviewed companies in the region had an equal opportunity policy, and 66% indicated they had a diversity policy. In addition, approximately 31% of companies had a policy against sexual harassment, 42% offered flexible working hours, 36% offered a reduced workday, and 27% allowed remote work or working from home (ILO and ACT/EMP, 2017).

³ Based on a study of 345 listed companies from six countries in Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru), McKinsey & Company determined that companies that included one or more women on their boards obtained better results than those with all-male boards. More specifically, the profitability of capital was 44% higher, and the earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) were 47% higher (McKinsey & Company, 2013).

⁴ Fifty-seven percent of the almost 13,000 companies that participated in a survey conducted for ILO (2019) in 70 countries mentioned that diversity helped attract and retain talented professionals. More than 54% of the companies expressed they had seen improvements in terms of creativity, innovation and open-mindedness; and a similar percentage pointed out that gender inclusion improved their reputation. Finally, almost 37% of the companies acknowledged that inclusion allowed for a more effective evaluation of their clients' opinions (ILO, 2019).

⁵ BlackRock: Our approach to engagement on board diversity. <https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/publication/blk-commentary-engaging-on-diversity.pdf>

⁶ Goldman Sachs' Commitment to Board Diversity. <https://www.goldmansachs.com/our-commitments/diversity-and-inclusion/launch-with-gs/pages/commitment-to-diversity.html>

- In 2020 IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo focus group participants were asked to list the *policies or actions implemented in their company to promote gender equality*. Of the 176 people who answered this question:⁷
 - Sixty-eight indicated that the policies were related to personnel selection (for example, use of inclusive language in the recruiting process or obligation to include at least one woman in the final shortlists of three candidates), pay gaps, review of promotion policies and gradual inclusion of women on boards.
 - Sixty-eight indicated that the policies were related to personnel selection (for example, use of inclusive language in the recruiting process or obligation to include at least one woman in the final shortlists of three candidates), pay gaps, review of promotion policies and gradual inclusion of women on boards.
 - Twenty-eight responses were associated with a specific gender equality policy that in some cases is included in the company's Code of Conduct or Code of Ethics.
 - Eighteen mentioned that their companies had a committee against sexual and workplace harassment.
 - Thirteen referred to job training and initiatives to make women's leadership roles more visible.
 - Sixteen answers mentioned the idea of "neutrality" of implemented gender-related policies (for example, they mentioned that "*open positions do not have gender distinction*," "*there are no constraints for female personnel in any area*," "*there is no differentiation or harm to the personnel during maternity leave*," and "*experience is considered more important than gender*."
 - Other answers mentioned adaptation of infrastructure to women's needs (for example, implementation of lactation rooms), working clothes designed for women and short extension of paternity leave.

⁷ The sum of the answers is higher than the total number of people who answered this question (176), because each participant was asked to list all the policies, he/she was aware of.

Policies and actions implemented by companies to promote gender equality

Personnel selection, pay gaps, promotion policies and inclusion of women on boards

68

Policies and actions implemented by companies to promote gender equality (Codes of Ethical Conduct)

28

13

Job training and initiatives to make women's leadership roles more visible

Committee against sexual and workplace harassment

18

Gender-neutral policies

16

Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo (2020).



However, how many of these actions or policies are only aimed at women, and which ones engage men as allies for equality? How involved are men in the commitment to equality? How do companies and their policies help promote male allyship in gender equality?

These are some of the questions we will try to answer in the following sections.



2

MEN AS ALLIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY



2 SECTION

MEN AS ALLIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Men win when women's rights are promoted

The importance of engaging men as allies for equality is currently reflected in various initiatives that have mobilized a global network of male champions, such as the #HeForShe campaign launched by the United Nations.

#HeForShe

- In 2014, UN Women launched HeForShe, a solidarity movement in favor of gender equality, to engage men and boys as advocates and agents of change to achieve gender equality and make women's rights prevail.
- Driven by this movement, more than 2.2 million men around the world, including chiefs of state, CEOs and the highest authorities of top universities in the world have made gender equality an institutional priority and have undertaken specific commitments to change the rules of the game as they apply to society, the workforce, home and future generations.

Source: <https://www.heforshe.org>

What do men think about gender equality? Promundo and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) coordinated the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), conducted with more than 30,000 men in 27 countries. This survey revealed that, in general, men in all countries support gender equality.⁸ In one study of nine countries, between 87 and 90% of respondents stated that “men do not lose when women’s rights are promoted.” The study also determined that generations of younger men support gender equality to a greater extent, and they are more likely to take part in housework than older generations (Ricardo C., 2014).

According to data from an online survey conducted in 2019 by Promundo-US and Kantar TNS⁹ with 1,201 adults ages 25 to 45 in the United States, most men acknowledge there are barriers to the progress of women in political and professional spheres, and they support women’s leadership and express interest in being allies and active members for the achievement of gender equality.

- Two-thirds of interviewed men acknowledge that women still face “important barriers” in their professional fields, and 48% believe that it is “easier to obtain your dream job if you are a man.”
- Seventy percent of interviewed men think there should be more women in positions of political power, and 60% support the idea of having more female leaders in their workplace.

According to the same survey, young men have made more progress as allies for gender equality than older men.

- Thirty-four percent of interviewed men said they had talked to a friend or colleague about gender equality over the past six months. Forty-four percent of this group was composed of millennials (ages 25 to 34), and 33% by men of Generation X (ages 35 to 45).

Findings from Mercer’s 2020 “Let’s get real about equality” follow the same line: it is essential to engage men, especially those in middle management, in the pursuit of gender equality. As integral as men are to successfully achieving Diversity and Inclusion (DEI) goals, sadly, they are not participating in the prevailing dialogue: DEI conferences are still composed of mostly women. In only half of organizations in Latin America (51%) men are actively involved or engaged in DEI programs and initiatives. This is particularly true in situations where outcomes are viewed as zero-sum, such as in low-growth industries or situations involving quota schemes¹⁰.

⁸ More information is available at: <https://promundoglobal.org/programs/international-menand-gender-equality-survey-images/>

⁹ The purpose of the survey was to identify perceptions, attitudes and behaviors related to gender equality and workplace and domestic harassment. The sample was representative of all the regions of the country and all the main ethnic groups, and included 602 women and 599 men. Four focus groups, each with 8-10 people of the same gender, were carried out in Washington, D.C. and New York City in January 2019.

¹⁰ Mercer (2020). When women thrive, businesses thrive. Challenges and opportunities in Latin America. <https://www.mercer.com/our-thinking/next-generation-global-research-when-women-thrive-2020.html>

Men as allies for equality

Main results of a survey on men's roles at work

Despite the progress made, men still have taken limited action against workplace discrimination. Although men express their wish to participate in some way, women say they are not doing enough, that men exaggerate with respect to the efforts they make to become allies, and do not fully understand the problems women face. A representative study conducted in 2018 by Promundo-US and Bonobos in the United States revealed these results:

- Seventy-seven percent of men indicated they are doing “everything they can” to support gender equality at work, but only 41% of women agreed.
- Eighty-nine percent of men pointed out they would actively listen if a woman they work with shares a workplace harassment experience with them, but only 58% of women agreed.
- Forty-two percent of female employees reported they had experienced some type of gender discrimination in the workplace. However, 85% of interviewed men did not perceive a significant problem and indicated that their workplace treats women and men equally in terms of pay, promotion and recruiting.
- Thirty-eight percent of women reported they had been sexually harassed at work; despite that, 77% of men pointed out that sexual harassment was not a problem in their workplace.

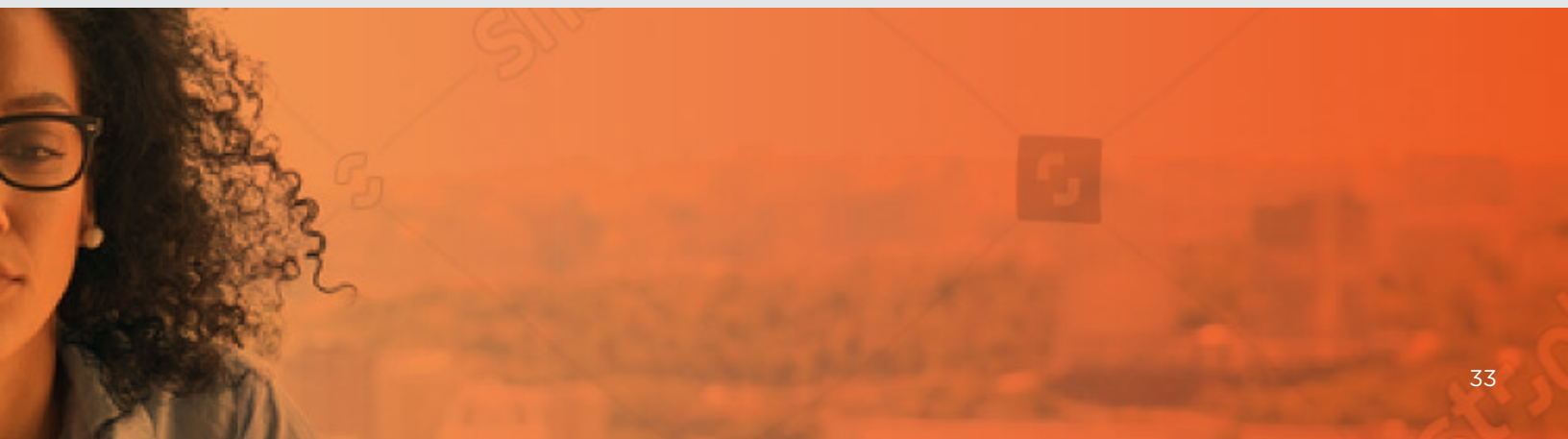
Progress to end sexual harassment and aggression is being hindered by confusion, lack of awareness, and even fear of possible retaliation to an intervention.

- Fifty-nine percent of men felt that campaigns such as #MeToo and #TimesUp, and all the attention sexual harassment is receiving worldwide, have gone “too far,” and 46% of women shared this perception. Some men and women in the focus groups felt that social networks had taken the movement to the extreme, to the point of discrediting the “actual” victims of sexual harassment.
- Both men and women in the focus groups expressed their concern for gray areas and misconceptions when it comes to understanding what sexual harassment is; and some participants expressed being worried because currently “anything” could be considered sexual harassment.
- Thirty-five percent of men agreed that it is difficult to intervene or talk when they witness an act of harassment or bullying against someone else.

One of the areas in which men record less progress is allocation of housework and family care.

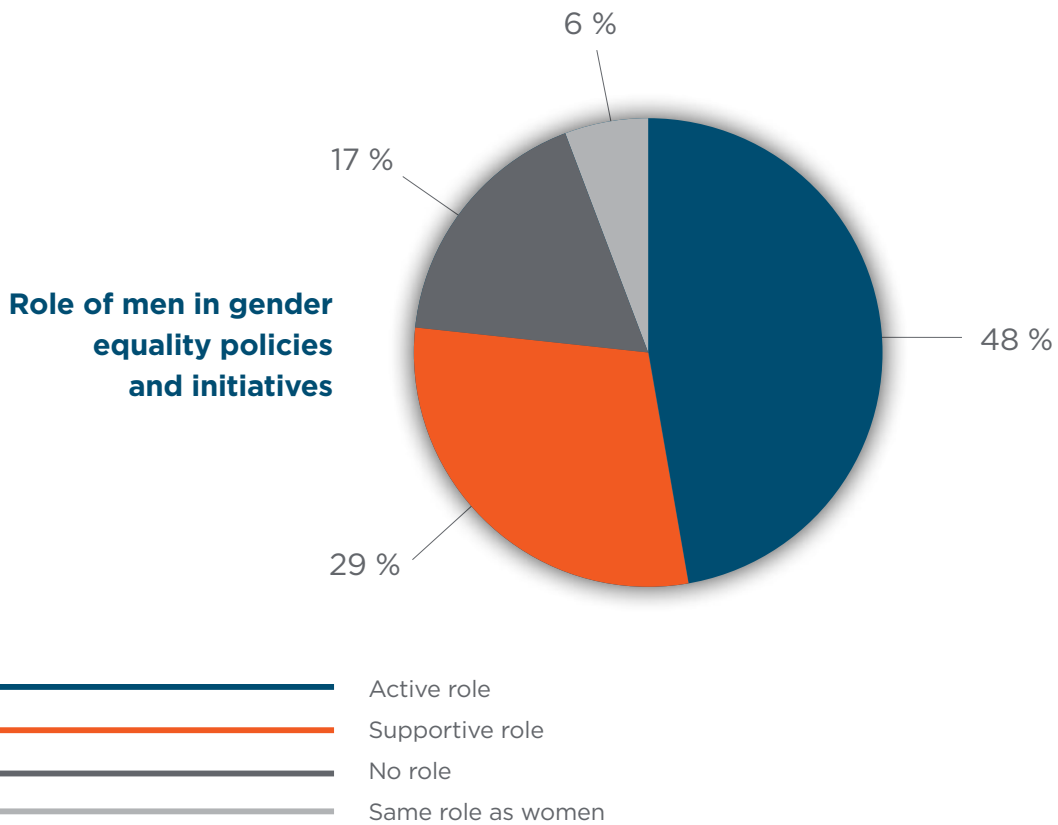
- Forty-eight percent of mothers said they want their male partners to participate more in childcare.
- Fifty-eight percent of women who lived with a male partner said they want him to participate more in housework.
- Women who participated in the focus groups also expressed their frustration for having to take on the role of “project manager” and explicitly delegate tasks to their male partners. They pointed out that men do not understand all the physical and mental effort required to keep a home running smoothly, to coordinate housework tasks and manage children’s schedules.

Source: Promundo-US and Kantar TNS (2019).



If men are part of the gender inequality problem, then achieving equality requires that they be part of the solution. The way men think and relate to women and other men is essential to either keeping gender inequality alive or remedying it. Men's attitudes and behaviors can support the sexist status quo, or contribute to equality (Flood et al., 2017).

Eight out of 10 people who work in the private sector in LAC confirm that men play an active, supportive, or same role as women, in gender equality initiatives and policies. In the 2020 online focus group conducted by IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo with 57 companies in the region, participants were asked to answer what is the role men play in policies or actions to promote gender equality.



Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo (2020).

Of the 168 people consulted:

- Twenty-nine indicated that **men do not play any role:**

“These policies are handled by the Human Resources area.”

- Forty-nine **said men play a supportive role** in gender equality policies:

“Men share and support the policies,” and “The strategy is defined by women.”

- Eighty answered that **men play an active role** in policies or actions that promote gender equality:

“Men participate at the gender equality table and generate ideas to reach equality between men and women.”

“Men play very important roles, from the commitment and participation of the company chairman in the Gender Equality Committee, to the promotion of gender equality for our clients from the lowest hierarchical levels.”

“Men play an important role in fostering egalitarian teamwork.”

“Men have active participation in the development of strategies for gender equality; in some cases, as mentors of new female entrepreneurs.”

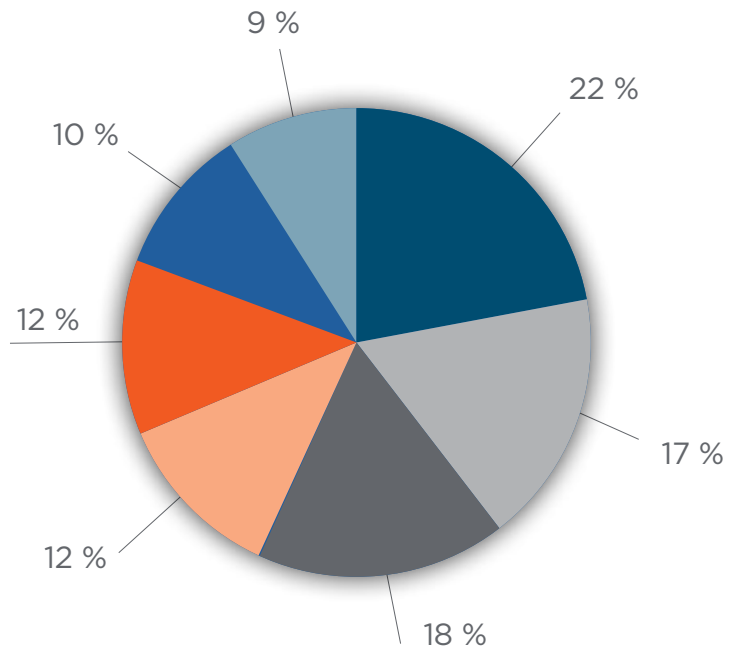
“Men must have an active role, given the current majority male presence in leadership positions.”

- Ten said **men play the same role as women** in gender policies:

“The role of men in gender equality policies is the same as that of the entire organization: to respect, comply with and communicate that policy, in addition to getting training in that respect.”

The same survey asked what type of attitudes, behaviors or actions men could develop to promote gender equality. From the most representative 170 responses, the following stood out:

Attitudes, behaviors or actions that men could develop to promote gender equality



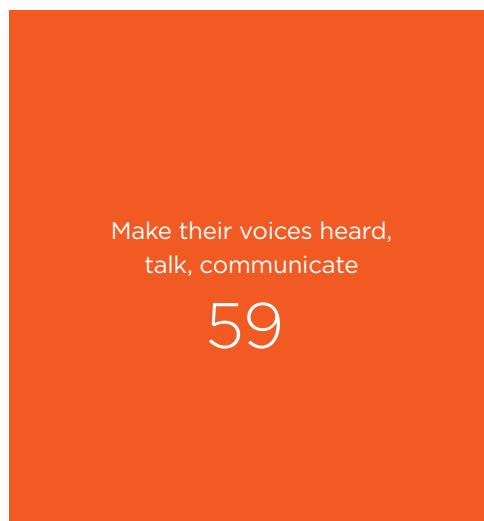
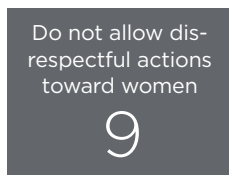
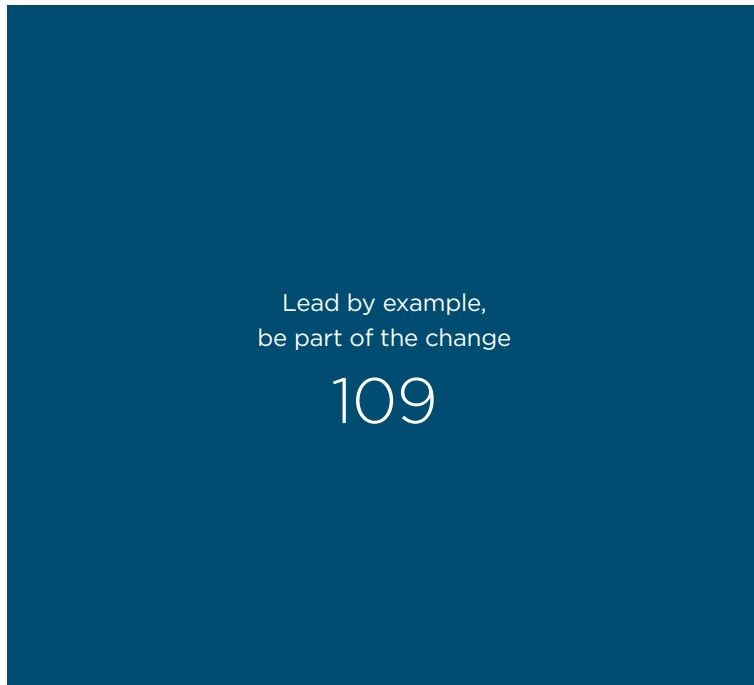
- Empathy, solidarity and respect
- Inclusive leadership, good mentors
- Greater participation in childcare and housework
- Avoid gender biases
- Be an example for inclusion
- Avoid chauvinistic attitudes and behaviors
- Be flexible and support women

Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo (2020).



The survey also asked what areas or topics require greater participation from men to reach gender equity at the company. The 130 answers obtained can be grouped in four areas or topics shown in the graph below¹¹.

Areas or topics for gender equity, requiring greater participation from men



Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo (2020).

¹¹ The sum of the answers is higher than the total number of people who answered this question (168), because each participant was asked to list all the areas or topics they acknowledged.



Roadmap for male allyship

Recommendations for men to become better allies in favor of gender equality at work and at home.

1. Listen better.

Seek opportunities to hear women's stories, acknowledge their experiences, and inform other men. Practice active listening ("What I think I hear you saying is..." and "I can only imagine what that must have been like ..."). Speak from your own experience. Ask questions, and don't interrupt. Acknowledge the limits of your ability to understand what women or individuals of other gender identities may experience.

2. Reflect on your own power and privilege as a man.

Consider how inequality intersects with other identities besides gender (such as race, sexual orientation, religion and skills) and the forms of oppression they may suffer. Challenge workplace sexist, homophobic and transphobic attitudes; and support equal rights, opportunities and protection for all people. Read, observe and discuss stories of people who have faced multiple forms of discrimination, and take them seriously without being defensive.

3. Credit ideas to those who came up with them, especially to female coworkers who are often overlooked. It's not about special treatment - it's about fairness.

Name names of colleagues who worked on a project or came up with an idea. Emphasize a good idea when you hear it, mention it in front of those in charge, and correct them when they misattribute credit ("I want to build on [name's] idea and affirm that..." or "[Name] had a really good idea and I'd like to acknowledge that.").

4. Advocate for women's leadership and equality in the workplace and for pay equality.

Challenge obstacles and stereotypes that limit women's advancement. Schedule a meeting with your human resources department or your supervisor about pay transparency and employee review procedures. Encourage adjustments to remove bias and advance equality and safe, supportive workplaces (which includes parental leave and confidential reporting structures for sexual harassment).



5. Speak up when you hear sexist language and call other men out when they use it.

Step in and make it clear that you don't support sexist language or jokes. Call it out as sexist (or racist, homophobic, etc.), ask the person to explain the "joke" and tell them why it's inappropriate, or use another strategy to let other men know when what they are saying is inappropriate (for example, "Hey, [name], I don't think that's cool to call her that...").

6. Learn to live with discomfort. Being an ally is about making change, not being comfortable.

Remind yourself that it's not about you, and your discomfort in stepping in or speaking up is not greater than the experience of being harassed or discriminated against. Being an ally requires men to listen and to not take it personally when they hear the behaviors of other men being criticized.

7. Step up at home. Advocate for work-life balance and paid leave for all caregivers. Men need to be full partners in childcare and chores.

Ask your partner what you can do to have an equal partnership at home. Discuss what you both spend your time on and how to create a plan that works for you both to thrive. Remember: pay attention not only to the chores themselves but also to who's responsible for remembering appointments, paying the bills, making the grocery list, and more. Advocate for paid leave for all workers for the care of young children and the care of ill or elderly family members. Ask for on-site childcare where appropriate, teleworking, and other flexible arrangements that allow better work-life balance.

8. Volunteer for nonprofit organizations that do good work and support gender equity.

Ask friends and colleagues about nonprofits they love and search online for local groups that do work you support. Be sure they have organizational values that promote increasing gender equity, ending homophobia and transphobia, ending racism, and reducing male violence.

9. Support diverse female leaders you believe in.

Learn more about political candidates in local and national elections, and show your support, volunteer, and vote for female candidates who align with your values.

Source: Promundo-US (2019b).



Men as co-beneficiaries of gender equality

Gender equality benefits men. Therefore, men must not only be allies but also active participants in the progress achieved on this issue. The IMAGES survey organized by Promundo and the ICRW, applied in more than 27 countries, revealed that men who support gender equality or have more equitable attitudes report higher satisfaction with life. In fact, gender equality is not a zero-sum game, but it can be a win-win situation. Based on that survey, the following conclusions may be drawn:

- When women have better access to and can participate in the labor market, household income increases, and men feel less pressure in the role of sole or main family provider.
- Men who take on more responsibility as caregivers create deeper relationships with their children and partners, and they are more likely to have better physical and mental health.
- Abstaining from violent conduct enables men to enjoy relationships of trust and respect with women, girls, boys and other men.
- Men who believe more in gender equality and communicate more openly with their partners have a higher degree of sexual satisfaction.
- Greater participation of men in housework is associated with happier relationships for both men and women.

Although the benefits of gender equality for men are already being perceived, they are not yet well known in private sector companies in the LAC region. In the online focus group conducted by IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo in 2020, participants were asked up to what point they agreed with this phrase, *“Gender equality initiatives are advantageous for men.”* Of the 159 respondents:

- Forty-three percent somewhat or completely disagreed.
- Thirty-four percent somewhat or completely agreed.
- Twenty-four percent maintained a neutral position.

Among advantages of gender equality for men, respondents identified the following: *“less social and economic pressure,” “a better work environment,” “listening to different opinions,” “incorporating different visions, approaches and debates,”* and *“the possibility of taking on roles related to the care of children, elderly or sick people, and exercise the right to see and acknowledge the growth of their children.”* Many answers also highlighted that the benefits of gender equality for men also favorably impact companies.

However, 43% of respondents do not believe that gender equality initiatives also provide benefits for men. This suggests that many people still perceive this as a zero-sum game, i.e., a situation in which there is a winner and a loser.

These results showcase an important opportunity to better communicate the benefits for men and make them more visible. If men themselves cannot clearly identify how they can win with gender equity, and at the same time, ignore the costs of gender stereotypes, it will be difficult for them to become allies for equality.

Since they are part of a dominant and privileged group, many men may find it difficult to identify the problem or the barriers related to gender equality, because most of them have not experienced the challenges firsthand.

According to several research studies conducted by Catalyst, men's indifference or apathy towards gender equality is not only related to lack of awareness, but also to fear of losing the status and privileges they enjoy because they are men, fear of making a mistake and fear of disapproval by other men. Some men think they will have to give up certain spaces to make room for women. In these cases, it is necessary to do work to help them understand that they will be able to occupy spaces that will not be the exclusive territory of women. Many men feel that, regardless of their intentions, no matter what they say or do, there will always be a detail that will be frowned upon or strongly criticized, especially by women, and they opt for disassociating themselves. Moreover, one of men's main fears may be the disapproval of other men and feeling that their masculinity is being questioned. Ultimately, this is the aspect that keeps men silent and disassociated from gender initiatives.¹²

Data collected from some experiences in Chile, Mexico and Uruguay reveal that men do experience improvements in their lives when they participate in programs that involve them in the benefits resulting from better conditions for women, even when they are not fathers or caregivers of elderly people. Those benefits are reflected in the better mental and sexual health and general well-being of men.¹³

¹² More information is available at: <https://www.catalyst.org/research/engaging-men-in-gender-initiatives-what-change-agents-need-to-know/>

¹³ Aguayo, F. and Sadler, M. (2011). *El papel de los hombres en la equidad de género: ¿qué masculinidades estamos construyendo en las políticas públicas en Chile?* (The role of men in gender equity: what masculinities are we building in public policies in Chile?)

Benefits for men who support equality from their role as fathers

Greater participation of men in the care of their children has marked effects on the well-being of the children, women, the men themselves and companies.

Being a committed and active father benefits the fathers themselves, as the parental bond is one of the most important sources of well-being and happiness. Fathers who maintain close, committed and non-violent interactions with their children have a longer average life expectancy, experience fewer mental and/or physical health problems, are less prone to alcohol and drug abuse, and are more productive at work.

Research called Helping Dads Care, conducted in seven countries in collaboration with Unilever/Dove Men+Care, revealed that men who were more involved in care tasks (measured in terms of the time for paternity leaves after the birth of a child) showed:

- More interest or pleasure in performing their activities, and more satisfaction with life in general, work and sex life (fathers in Brazil, the United Kingdom and Japan)
- Greater feelings of optimism, and more satisfaction with life in general and the participation of the children (fathers in Canada and Argentina)
- More satisfaction with their sex lives (fathers in the United States)
- Fewer feelings of depression or despair (fathers in the Netherlands)

Companies that facilitate committed fatherhood behavior improve employee retention, reduce employee turnover and absenteeism, and decrease the cost of training. Consequently, they increase business productivity, and even benefit from an improved public image.

Source: International Planned Parenthood Federation Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR) and Promundo. (2019).



What can companies do?

Businesses have great potential to address gender inequality that persists in the workplace, in the community and internally among families, as they play an essential role in the modification of individual behaviors and social norms.

According to Allan et al. (2020b), *there are at least three key reasons why it is important to involve men in the defense of gender equality in business.*

- 1.** Because of the privilege and power men have. Once they are aware of their advantages and privileges, men can take on new responsibility and challenge structures and systems that bring about inequality and exclusion through initiatives that promote employment equity in companies (for example, train themselves to question their own unconscious biases, participate in sponsorship or mentoring programs, join equity committees, etc.).
- 2.** With men as allies for equality, it is possible to prevent the damages caused by discriminatory cultures and sexual harassment in the workplace.
- 3.** Progress can be accelerated if men become allies for equality. For example, by rebalancing men's work and life at home, it would be possible for women to readjust the time allocated to care-giving responsibilities freeing up more hours to focus on their professional development.

Engaging men as allies for equality involves mobilizing them to make changes in their own lives, in their relationships with other people (partners, children, friends, co-workers), and in their leadership roles.



Modifying men’s individual behaviors through training and changes in the institutional culture

Private sector companies have unlimited potential to promote changes in the individual behaviors of their employees. For example, the program created by Promundo, together with other organizations, to help young men question masculine norms that promote violence, inequity and the objectification of women. Through this program, men are asked to think critically and challenge the assumptions of a society, sector, and even workplace where conditions of inequality prevail. The evaluations of this program concluded that, after participation, it is possible that men’s complicity decreases in relation to the existing unequal power structure (Fleming et al., 2013).

Group education interventions focused on active fatherhood have also shown changes in men’s behaviors regarding co-responsibility and home care, and reduced violence against their partner (Doyle et al., 2018). These types of interventions usually generate a greater impact when the idea is to also modify the context in which men live (for example, norms that include men in pre-natal visits, etc.). In addition, these programs may be even more effective when partners are involved. A 2012 initiative by CARE/Promundo in Rwanda found that, when the male partners of women who were receiving training in economic empowerment participated in a parallel group program focused on promoting more equitable gender attitudes, gender-based violence decreased as support of men to women’s roles in the economy increased.



Companies can also contribute to change the way in which their employees exercise their role as fathers, to promote more active and committed fatherhood.

A 2020 study by Mercer showed that companies in Latin America promote family care by men, and employees do not feel that garnering those benefits interrupts or hinders their ability to move up to higher-level positions:

- Forty-three percent of interviewed companies grant paternity leave that exceeds the period imposed by law. 62% in Argentina, 46% in Brazil, 38% in Colombia and 43% in Mexico.
- Sixty-one percent of employees indicated they strongly agree (33%) or agree (28%) with the statement that employees who take advantage of family vacations, days off or flexible work options progress at the same pace as their colleagues.

However, policy is not enough. Companies must actively promote a work culture where the norm for men is to take paternity leave, family vacations and any other benefits that allow them to participate in child and home care. As demonstrated by the studies, many fathers fear the stigma in the workplace if they prioritize or balance childcare responsibilities with professional responsibilities. The “State of the World’s Fathers” report, prepared by Promundo in collaboration with Unilever, includes a survey conducted in six countries whose results revealed that many fathers do not take any leave after the birth or adoption of their son or daughter (Brazil, 27%; Japan, 35%; and United Kingdom, 16%). The study also analyzed what percentage of fathers enjoyed the entire leave they were entitled to: Canada, 40%; United Kingdom, 44%; and Japan, only 1%.

These data show that, despite the progress, there is still much opportunity in companies to promote the role of men as allies for equality.

In the COVID-19 context, companies should consult and consider the family care burden of their employees, especially that of female heads of single-parent households with people under their care; raise awareness among their personnel; and reinforce messages in favor of the co-responsibility of housework and dependent care between men and women. Companies should also adopt a gender-conscious approach when planning the return of personnel to work, i.e., to incorporate return-to-work policies under that approach and analyze flexible measures in accordance with the opening of schools and care centers.



“Sharing all the tasks and responsibilities in the organization of the household.”

“Distributing the workload. This is not about helping but about taking equal responsibility and acknowledging that the time of both partners is equally valuable when they share a home.”

“Men have to take on the same tasks as women, breaking with the paradigm that women are in charge of the house.”

These suggestions are compiled from the opinions of people working in private sector companies in LAC. The 2020 online focus group conducted by IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo asked the participants “*what men can do on an individual basis to act as allies for gender equality in the context of remote work?*”. Most of the 280 answers focused on the equitable division of housework and care between men and women (co-responsibility).

The focus group also asked the respondents to list the actions *that their company could implement to support gender equality during remote work, because of the confinement to counteract COVID-19.*

Below are the most representative actions among the 199 answers:¹⁴

1. Flexible schedule and meetings

2. Coaching and training

“Training the personnel in remote work.”

“Training the leaders to be empathetic with their employees.”

3. Respect for working hours

“Respect lunchtime, and not to assign weekend tasks.”

“Block lunchtime so that no meetings are organized during that time.”

4. Other answers

“Support men so that they can help their wives and share the housework and childcare.”

“Implement webinars on gender equality.”

¹⁴ The sum of the answers is higher than the total number of people who answered this question (199), because each participant was asked to list all the actions he/she could identify.

What can companies do to support gender equality during remote work in the time of COVID-19?

Flexible schedule/meetings

177

10

Other answers

Coaching and training

54

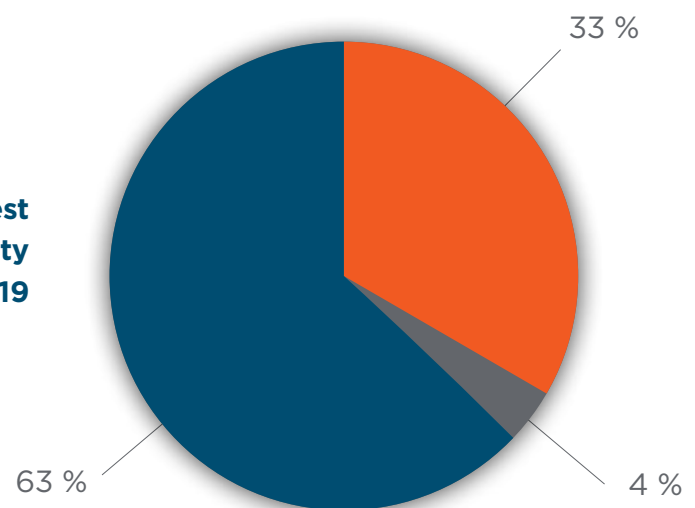
Respect working hours

42

Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo (2020).

Despite the COVID-19 crisis' impact on the work life of employees, especially that of women, the interest of companies in gender equality has remained practically unchanged or has decreased. In the 2020 online survey conducted by IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo, the participants were asked *if they had seen in their company more, less or almost the same interest in promoting gender equality during the COVID-19 crisis*. Sixty-six percent out of a total of 177 answers said, "almost the same interest," 33% said "less interest," and only 4% said "more interest."

**Company's interest
in gender equality
during COVID-19**



More
Less
Almost the same

Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo (2020).

Supporting fathers in companies

Between April and May 2018, Promundo and Dove Men+Care conducted an online survey in the U.S. with 1,088 men and 626 women, ages 25 to 45, 83% of which were fathers and 64% were mothers. The results confirmed that fathers want to involve themselves in the care of their children, and that the main barriers to achieve that are social expectations and the limited support they receive in their workplaces.

- Seventy-three percent of fathers agreed that they receive little support from their workplaces.
- One out of five men (21%) declared they were afraid of losing their job if they took the entire paternity leave offered.

Both the fathers and mothers experience stress when they try to balance their work and family life, but fathers constantly perceive a greater pressure to prioritize work over their families.

- Compared with 30% for the mothers, 40% of the fathers said they feel stressed about work when they spend time with their children.
- Compared with 55% for the mothers, 76% of the fathers indicated they would have to work at least a little during any paternity leave.

Ensuring that fathers can take the time they want and need to be with their families requires broader changes in our social norms and in our workplaces. Companies that intend to retain talent must create work environments that support the comprehensive success of the person, both in their role as an employee and as a parent.

Source: Promundo and Dove Men+Care (2018). *Helping Dads Care*.

Promoting men's social conscience

Companies can promote their male employees' commitment to and respect for women by encouraging them to challenge the broader structure of social power that favors men.

For example, in the workplace, various forms of psychological, physical and sexual violence against women are not addressed. According to Mercer's "Let's Get Real About Equality" research (2020) only 53% of organizations in Latin America report that they offer formal training programs for identifying/mitigating/reporting sexual harassment above a beyond the government-provided or mandated levels. Companies can implement zero-tolerance programs or help establish norms against workplace violence, and at the same time, encourage their non-violent male employees to engage in activities that raise awareness of the damage caused by violence against women, as well as endorse gender equality.

Given the increase in gender-based violence because of pandemic-related confinement at home, companies can adopt various measures aimed at preventing this type of conduct and provide support to women who are victims of violence. Some of these measures include:

- Promoting dialogue and establishing communication channels company personnel can use to discuss the increase in the risks of violence against women and girls, especially regarding domestic violence, cyberbullying and virtual sexual harassment.
- Establishing internal methods and sharing processes that offer protection and support if female employees who are victims of gender-based violence in their homes want to file an abuse report.

White Ribbon Canada

Working with men as allies to prevent violence against women

White Ribbon is the largest global movement of men and boys working to end violence against women and girls, promote gender equity, healthy relationships and a new vision of masculinity. Since its inception in Toronto in 1991, this movement has extended to more than 60 countries around the world. Alluding to its name and as part of its work, the organization asks men to wear white ribbons as a sign of their pledge to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and girls.

During the past 30 years, the movement has been granting certifications to workplaces that develop internal policies and provide training to their employees to become allies for ending and reporting domestic violence. The certification program not only seeks to reduce harassment in the workplace, but also to involve all company's employees in supporting family members, friends and other people who experience violence.

Since 2012, White Ribbon has worked with the Toronto-based mining company Barrick Gold Corp., on the design of violence prevention programs for its mining sites around the world. In most places where major extractive or infrastructure projects are being developed, there is typically a significant increase in violence against women because of rapid economic development, employment migration, greater use of alcohol and drugs, and the presence of predominantly male dominated cultures.

White Ribbon worked with the employees of the Lumwana mine in Zambia, to whom it delivered financial literacy classes, to resolve conflicts between couples around management of household finances. At the Porgera mine in Papua New Guinea, White Ribbon worked with Barrick employees to promote discussion around the importance of diversity in the workforce and the need to ensure a more inclusive and safer workplace for everyone. White Ribbon has even extended its "Walk A Mile in Her Shoes" campaign to host communities in northeastern Nevada, where miners marched the streets in high-heel shoes.

Source: <https://www.whiteribbon.ca>





Promundo provided Rio Tinto's managers with training on domestic violence

Promundo partnered with the mining corporation Rio Tinto to support the rollout of their new domestic violence policy for the United States and Canada. Their policy provides paid leave and other resources to employees experiencing or potentially at risk of experiencing domestic violence, and extends support to immediate family members of employees experiencing domestic violence.

To accomplish this, Promundo conducted interviews and focus groups with over 60 Rio Tinto employees. Also, they developed an online survey for all Rio Tinto North America employees to better understand the prevalence of domestic violence in select communities, and to gauge the office climate around these issues.

Promundo developed a training package for managers and HR staff - with the Center for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children at Western University in London, Ontario - focused on this issue.

Source: <https://promundoglobal.org/promundo-workplace-advisors/>

Modifying rules, regulations and policies at the organizational level

Men hold most of the positions of power and privilege in companies. Therefore, they are in a unique position to implement changes in the formal and informal rules and regulations that limit the development of women within organizations, and to require compliance by all men in different roles and organizational levels.

Below are a few examples of key actions that men can take:

- Exercise transformational and inclusive leadership by increasing female representation in meetings or boards.¹⁵
- In the case of men in leadership positions, prioritize closing gender gaps, including any gender pay gap in company plans and budgets.
- Act when witnessing a discriminatory behavior, for the purpose of building or improving inclusive cultures.
- Implement specific Corporate Social Responsibility actions to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 crisis among women in the most vulnerable population groups.
- Adopt a style of advertising that promotes higher social conscience about gender-based violence and gender inequality at work and at home.
- Apply active listening, which is intended not to impose ideas, but to demonstrate a participatory and respectful attitude toward any equity initiative promoted by the company.

¹⁵ For example, in 2004, Sweden established a code of conduct that included the equitable participation of men and women on the boards of listed companies, but did not include any sanctions for non-compliance. Denmark did the same in 2007, with a voluntary application code for all types of companies, except for state-owned ones. Finland incorporated this measure as a recommendation to companies. Mandatory quotas of female participation in public and private companies have been established in various European countries such as Norway, Iceland, and France (40%), Italy (33%) and Germany (30%). In other countries such as Denmark (50%), Finland (50%) and Slovenia (40%), the quotas apply to public companies.

How to engage men as allies: Principles for organizations

1. Ensure that gender equality initiatives involve women and men as active and equal partners.
2. Address gender equality as a business issue, not a women's issue.
3. Communicate messages that resonate with both men and women that reflect the transformation of gender norms:
 - Appeal to men's care and concern for the women they know, such as for female family members, friends and colleagues.
 - Emphasize the fact that most men are supportive of gender equality efforts, but they often do not know what to do.
 - Encourage men to acknowledge their own privilege and recognize that gender equality is grounded in our workplaces and homes.
4. Target all key gender equality areas (power and decision-making, interpersonal work relationships, caring and community involvement).
5. Educate employees about how to lead change effectively; for example, by resourcing initiatives, being visible and persistent, and "walking the talk."
6. Make a connection between work and home by implementing initiatives that encourage gender equality in caregiving.
7. Provide opportunities for both men and women to change their mindsets, assumptions and behaviors.
8. Make the connection between work and communities, by framing gender inequality as a community and societal problem.
9. Encourage men and women to challenge and change gender-biased organizational policies and practices.

Source: Flood et al. (2017).

A person's arm, wearing a denim shirt, is shown holding another hand. The background is a gradient from green on the left to orange on the right. The text is overlaid on this image.

3

**ACTIONS TO
ENCOURAGE
MEN TO BE-
COME ALLIES
FOR GENDER
EQUALITY**



3

SECTION

ACTIONS ADOPTED BY COMPANIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN TO ENCOURAGE MEN TO BECOME ALLIES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The online survey conducted by IDB Invest- Mercer-Promundo in 2020 asked the participants to list the *specific actions or policies that their company had implemented to encourage men to promote and support gender equality, and those they would like to see their companies implement.*¹⁶ From the responses, we may conclude that two main actions or policies addressing men are currently implemented by companies: 1) awareness-raising workshops and training on gender biases, and workplace and sexual harassment; and 2) paternity leaves.

Looking ahead, the respondents indicated they would like these actions to continue, but with evolved content. For example, the responses reflected the respondent's wish to continue awareness-raising and training policies but expanding the existing content to cover the issue of diversity and going beyond gender equality training to include disciplinary action for sexist attitudes. As for paternity leaves, the respondents stated the possibility of supplementing these policies with offering the option of part-time work for men.

Regarding initiatives for the future, the respondents mentioned that specific and measurable actions such as targets and gender indicators are necessary to gain commitment from men to become allies for pay equity and equality in leadership positions.

¹⁶ The sum of the responses is higher than 100% because each participant was asked to list all the policies they were aware of. Therefore, each person may have listed more than one action.

PAST - PRESENT¹⁷

Specific actions or policies implemented by the company to encourage men to promote and support gender equality¹⁸

FUTURE

Specific actions or policies you would like to see implemented by your company to encourage men to promote and support gender equality¹⁹

<p>61 % Raising awareness on sexual harassment in the workplace</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness about workplace and sexual harassment • Discipline for any mistreatment or action that harms a person due to their gender alone
<p>49 % Initiatives around paternity leave</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer duration of paternity leave • Offering the option of part-time work for men
<p>32 % Discussion groups about men as allies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance to educate our children with the purpose of ensuring gender equality from the family
<p>21 % Workshops on implicit bias</p> <p>32 % Other types of training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training addressed to all the personnel (men and women), not only to some people or only to men • More information for directors, managers and people with employees reporting to them • Discussion groups or committees that help men learn to be mentors or to empower women • Awareness-raising manuals on the various gender types and the importance of respect
<p>25 % Certification in gender equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a committee to promote and support gender equality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring 50/50 gender equality at the senior management level • Pay equity; promotion of equal salary ranges by position and performance • Setting targets and indicators around the percentage of women in an organization

Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo. (2020).

¹⁷ La sumatoria de las respuestas es superior a 100 % porque se solicitó a cada participante enumerar todas las políticas que conociera. Por lo tanto, puede que cada persona haya enumerado más de una acción.

¹⁸ 145 personas respondieron a esta pregunta.

¹⁹ 182 personas respondieron a esta pregunta.

Specific list of actions, including tools and links

In February 2020, Business Fights Poverty convened a group of experts, including Promundo, to develop a specific list of actions and tools so that individuals, teams, companies, industries, and sectors promote the participation of men in gender equality. The proposed recommendations are listed below.

Strategy

- **Identify business gaps** to ensure the effectiveness of gender equality and initiatives that favor increased diversity. These initiatives must be at the heart of one of the company's business strategies; otherwise, they tend to be short-lived.
- **Collect data** on representation and promotion rates, which are vital to understand disparities related to gender, race, and other characteristics, and identify the challenges and opportunities for change.
- **Commit** to making visible the commitments aimed at engaging men as allies in the search for equality and diversity in workplaces. For example, to be Champions of The UN Women [#HeForShe Corporate](#) IMPACT initiative, publicly support the UN and UN Women [women's empowerment principles](#), or register in the [EDGE](#) gender equality certification process.

Policy

- **Be transparent** to ensure that employment policies address the structural barriers for gender equality; for example, transparency in promotion, pay and reward processes may reduce pay inequalities. Appropriate communication with leaders is required so maternity leaves and care issues do not impact performance assessments and professional development of female employees.
- **Support co-responsibility in care** by developing specific policies that support male employees when they exercise their roles as parents and caregivers, including the same paid and non-transferable parental leave for men and women, and flexible work. Support the [MenCare commitment](#). Create measures so that men may visibly use flexible work agreements to take on care tasks at home.
- **Be clear about no tolerance for sexual harassment** by providing a safe and respectful workplace for all genders. Inform all employees that harassment and sexual mistreatment will not be tolerated and ensure there are applicable policies and reporting systems in place. Hold all male and female officers accountable for their biased behavior.



Culture

- **Adopt an inclusive behavior model.** Ensure that senior leaders incorporate inclusive leadership skills to demonstrate their commitment to understanding different perspectives (for example, implement a reverse mentoring program in which a middle management female advises a senior male leader).
- **Create inclusive networks.** “Male networks” still predominate in workplaces and are often obstacles for the promotion or inclusion of women and minorities in project teams. It may prove useful to adopt formal sponsorship programs, in which higher ranked personnel use their social capital on behalf of another member of the team.
- **Make daily changes.** Introduce small daily actions that everyone can carry out to change the culture of the organization. For example, schedule meetings so they do not coincide with children’s school pickup schedules and ensure there is gender balance on big project teams.
- **Mobilize men in their workplaces.** Organize events in workplaces, such as the Barbershop with HeForShe materials, to mobilize men for gender equality. Interact with companies such as [LeanIn](#), [Catalyst](#), [Promundo](#) and [Forté](#), which offer customized programs to mobilize men in their workplaces and engage them in being allies for gender equity.



Influence on society at large

- **Eradicate harmful stereotypes from advertising.** Develop guidelines to eliminate stereotypes in the company's communications and advertising. Support the efforts of the entire industry, and those that take place globally, to remove stereotypes. Access or join networks such as #UNstereotype Alliance and #SEEHER.
- **Involve the commercial partners of the supply chain.** Include the commercial partners of the supply chain in the company's efforts in favor of gender equality, and promote the participation of men as allies of those initiatives. This measure may be implemented through existing objectives in terms of sustainability and corporate social responsibility (for example, agricultural programs). If necessary, consider using purchasing and procurement relationships to influence changes in supplier behavior. Study opportunities to subcontract companies led by women and other minority groups via organizations such as [WeConnect International](#).
- **Support governments and other companies in their actions in favor of gender equity:** Participate in efforts intended to influence national or global public policies that focus on engaging more men as allies for gender equality; for example, participate in the [Corporate Work Group on Paternity Leave](#) or the [MenCare Commitment](#) to increase the amount of time men devote to housework.

Source: Allan, Condi and Bessarabova. (2020).

- **Participate in the Gender Parity Accelerators** (IPGs by their Spanish acronym) of each country,²⁰ supported by the IDB Group, the World Economic Forum and the French Development Agency, as public-private connection platforms to promote equity in the private sector.

²⁰ The countries that have currently implemented Gender Parity Accelerators (IPGs) are Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Panama.

The Focus group respondents were also asked *about the factors that encourage men to promote and support gender equality*. The main factors mentioned in the 176 responses can be grouped into the following categories:

- An inclusive corporate culture and the involvement of company leaders (124 responses)
- Prioritization of gender equality, incorporation of this concept into work and daily actions (24 responses)
- Participation of women in company leadership and various other roles (16 responses)
- Preparation and communication of indicators, results and case studies that demonstrate the importance of creating diverse work teams; consider different opinions, experiences and perspectives of women in business; and include the benefits of incorporating gender equality into company policies (12 responses).



Main factors that encourage men to promote and support gender equality

Inclusive corporate culture and leadership involvement

124

Participation of women in leadership and various company roles

16

Prioritization of gender equality and incorporation of this concept to work and daily actions

24

12

Indicators and case studies that demonstrate the importance of creating diverse work teams

Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo. (2020).

The focus group respondents were also asked about the main barriers in the company to encourage men to promote and support gender equality. Based on the responses obtained from 175 people, the barriers can be grouped into three categories:²¹

1. Male chauvinist culture
(in the country, the industry and/or the company)

“The main barrier is cultural and generational; decision-making falls upon men who keep selecting men as leaders of the organization, without making way for women who have the required capabilities.”

“The male chauvinist culture ingrained in various regions where the organization operates.”

2. Lack of information, lack of awareness and stigmatization

“Unconscious biases and behavioral patterns.”

“Gender equality is considered a feminist issue.”

“Lack of communication, analysis and discussion of gender equality policies.”

3. Lack of interest and/or unwillingness and lack of commitment or involvement, especially from senior authorities

“The personnel do not feel affected by this issue.”

“There is no willingness or true conviction to do this.”

“There is lack of direct involvement of company authorities and assertive communications to promote gender equity.”

“Not all the leaders are involved in the diversity and inclusion process.”

²² The sum of the responses is higher than the total number of people who answered this question (175) because each participant was asked to list all the barriers he/she could identify.

Finally, in the 2020 survey conducted by IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo, respondents were asked *what actions could be implemented to overcome those barriers*. Based on the responses obtained from 176 people, the main actions can be grouped into four categories:²²

1. Raise awareness of gender inequality

Inside the company:

“Of all personnel.”

“Starting with senior authorities.”

“By creating reflection spaces, roundtables and workshops.”

Outside the company:

“Help to raise awareness of the society in which the company is embedded.”

“Start with girls and boys at an early age.”

“Using advertising,”

“working with influencers.”

2. Generate information and create indicators to show the benefits of gender equality.

“Generate indicators and statistics that show the benefits of gender equality policies and actions in the company.”

“Communicate ‘success cases’ with actions and policies that are considered best practice in other companies.”

²³ The sum of the responses is higher than the total number of people who answered this question (176) because each participant was asked to list all the actions he/she could identify.

3. Train all personnel in gender equality topics with the help of experts.

Placing special emphasis on the *“use of inclusive language, unconscious gender biases,” “benefits of egalitarian maternity and paternity leaves,” and “protocols for violence,”* among other topics.

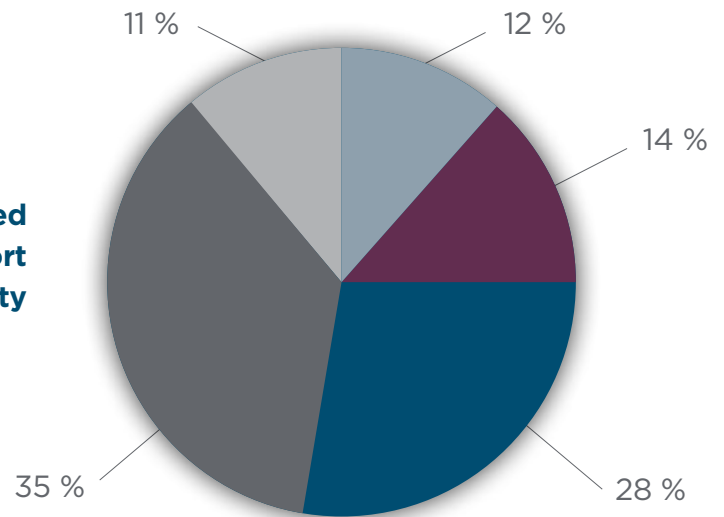
4. Work specifically with company men to involve them in the promotion of gender equality.

“Achieve the commitment and involvement of senior authorities.”

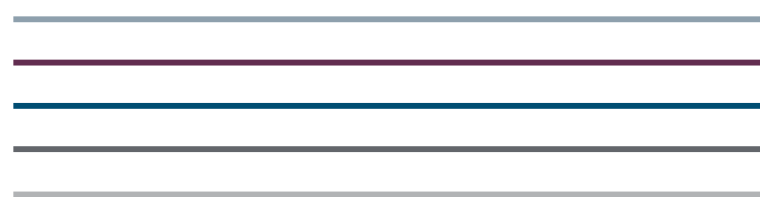
“Include company men in the design and implementation of gender equality actions and policies.”

“Encourage men to help other men get involved in promoting gender equality.”

Actions that could be implemented so that men promote and support gender equality



- Raise awareness inside and outside the company
- Generate information and create indicators
- Train all personnel
- Work specifically with men
- Other responses



Source: IDB Invest-Mercer-Promundo. (2020).

3.1

SECTION

FINANCIAL SECTOR

What are financial sector companies in LAC doing to promote men becoming allies for gender equality?

Compared to men, women are at a disadvantage as users of financial systems and as suppliers to and leaders of private firms and regulatory agencies.

As users of financial services, women are underrepresented among depositors and borrowers.

- Thirty-three percent of women in the LAC region have opened an account with a financial institution or similar entity, compared to 49% of men.²³ In addition, women are less prone to saving and/or borrowing money, and have less financial knowledge compared to men (Lupica, 2019, based on the World Bank's Global Findex Database, 2017).²⁴
- It's good business to include women in the financial sector, as it can contribute to the profitability of financial institutions through the financing of their businesses and improvement in the quality of their portfolio.²⁵

²³ Includes accounts with banks or any other institution such as cooperatives, credit unions or microfinance institutions, and accounts with electronic money suppliers (not supported by a bank account).

²⁴ Lupica, C. (2019). Removiendo las barreras de la inclusión financiera de las mujeres y otros grupos poblacionales en América Latina y el Caribe (Removing the barriers of financial inclusion of Women and other population groups in Latin America and the Caribbean). UNDP Regional Report. <http://americainformacion.org/newsite/index.php/es/informate/informate-noticias/noticia/4533-la-inclusion-financiera-de-las-mujeres-una-herramienta-imprescindible-para-su-autonomia-y-el-desarrollo-sostenible>

²⁵ The Ecobanking Project (www.ecobankingproject.org) is a division of the Latin American Center for Competitiveness and Sustainable Development (CLACDS) at INCAE Business School (www.incae.edu). Its mission consists of improving the competitiveness of the Latin American financial sector by promoting and supporting innovative – green and social – financial investments aimed at sustainability.

Additionally, compared to men, women have less participation in the control, management and administration of financial entities. According to a 2018 International Monetary Fund case study, in 2013, only 15 out of the almost 800 banks in 72 countries in their sample had female CEOs.²⁶ In the LAC region, gender gaps prevail in three ways: Low participation of women in the senior management of the institutions, pay gaps at senior levels, and lower female participation compared to men in all functional areas not associated with commercial and marketing activities (Superintendence of Banks and Financial Institutions in Chile, 2012).²⁷

The results of the first edition of the Study on Diversity and Inclusion in Private Equity, presented by the Mexican Association of Private Equity, confirm that barely 22% of those who manage investment funds in Mexico include female representation. The survey showed that 76% of the funds do not have senior female officers on their investment teams. In fact, the study showed that 62.5% of those managing venture capital funds and 92.9% of those managing private equity funds do not have women on their investment teams.²⁸

²⁶ International Monetary Fund (IMF). (2018). Women in Finance: A case for closing the gap. IMF Staff Discussion Note. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Staff-Discussion-Notes/Issues/2018/09/17/women-in-finance-a-case-for-closing-gaps-45136>

²⁷ Superintendence of Banks and Financial Institutions. (2012). Resultados de Encuesta de Antecedentes de Género (Gender Background Survey Results). Santiago de Chile. https://sbif.cl/sbifweb3/internet/archivos/publicacion_10169.pdf

²⁸ More information is available at <https://wp.capitalinvent.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Diversity-Toolkit-AMEXCAP.pdf>

Companies are adopting a two-pronged approach to remedy gender inequality in the financial sector.

- They are focusing on more effectively reaching underserved markets, such as women-led small enterprises, which usually face more difficulties accessing credit than their male counterparts.
- Financial institutions are improving their own internal policies and procedures to promote an institutional culture of equality and diversity.

Creating true gender parity in organizational strategy, culture and policies of financial sector companies requires the active participation of men, since leadership teams in financial institutions are predominantly male and their involvement is crucial to progressing more rapidly.

- According to global studies conducted by the Boston Consulting Group, when men are directly involved in gender diversity within their companies, men and women believe that the latter achieve much more progress around gender parity. Approximately 96% of companies with active male involvement in gender diversity report progress, while only 30% of companies where men are not involved show progress.²⁹

Developing gender equality certification plans or undertaking public commitments are some of the methods being used by financial sector companies in LAC to encourage men's engagement as allies for gender equality.

³⁰ <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2017/people-organization-behavior-culture-five-ways-men-improve-gender-diversity-work.aspx>



Public commitments and certifications as a tool to engage men as allies for gender equality

Company certifications can provide the necessary inspiration to undertake specific initiatives in favor of gender equality and diversity. These certifications can also help establish clear objectives, make steady progress, build partnerships with others and develop peer networks to connect and make a difference.

Some financial entities in LAC encourage men to become allies upon endorsing public-private initiatives to promote equality in companies; for example, the GPI of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Win-Win program of the International Labor Organization (ILO). This helps them take the initial steps toward gender equality, which consists of understanding first where they currently stand.

Other cases call for the application of tools conceived to promote equality in companies in a practical manner, such as the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP) Gender Entrepreneurial Tool, the EDGE Certification or the Gender Equality Seal developed by governments of countries with the support of the UNDP. White Ribbon Australia prepared a certification with specific indicators and measures about the promotion of men as allies to end workplace harassment and violence against women. Certifications are an interesting tool for companies, as they reveal the gender gaps (in their talent pools, salaries, policies and practices), but also allow them to compare with other players in their sector, country or of similar size.

Finally, some men in leadership positions in financial sector companies have publicly committed to be allies for equality, joining the UN #HeForShe initiative.

Although these tools are not exclusively used for financial sector companies, they are perfectly aligned to this sector due to the high male presence in leadership positions in those companies. The importance of certifications is that they allow companies to develop specific targets, goals and indicators and be transparent about achieving them, so that men stop being passive observers and become active allies for equality.

EXAMPLE OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY

Gender Parity Accelerators (IPGs)

IPGs are a high-level public-private collaboration model intended to reduce the barriers that prevent women's equal access to employment, business and leadership opportunities, under the same conditions as men.

The IDB has collaborated with the World Economic Forum since 2016 to develop and implement GPIs in seven Latin American countries: Argentina, Chile, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica.

IPGs identify the gaps that prevent women's access to employment opportunities and implement 3-year action plans with the following purposes:

- 1.** to increase women's participation in the workforce,
- 2.** to reduce the gender pay gap, and
- 3.** to increase women's participation in leadership positions.

IPGs are chaired by leading government representatives and private sector entrepreneurs, who make up the leadership group and are responsible for guiding the process, prioritizing efforts and ensuring the progress of the established actions.

Source: IDB <https://www.iadb.org/es/gender-and-diversity/iniciativa-de-paridad-de-genero> (gender parity initiative)

Win-Win (Ganar-Ganar, in Spanish / Ganha-Ganha, in Portuguese) Program

The Win-Win Program was developed between 2018 and 2021. The program is based on the concept that when companies achieve gender equality it yields good business results. This program is financed by the European Union Partnership Instrument and implemented by UN Women in partnership with the ILO to promote gender equality via the private sector.

Win-Win has been implemented in six LAC countries: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Jamaica and Uruguay.

The program has ultimately helped achieve gender equality by encouraging women's business leadership, participation in the workforce, entrepreneurship, economic empowerment and, ultimately, their full and egalitarian participation in society.

The program is aimed at women-led companies and networks, multinational companies and relevant stakeholders in Europe and selected LAC countries. Its purpose is to promote trade ties and innovation between women of both regions, while supporting interregional dialogue and exchanging good practices to build private sector capability and implement businesses with gender equality.

Today companies can continue to work on gender equity policies through their adherence to the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP) and the support of UN Women in the countries in which they operate.

Source: UN Women. <https://lac.unwomen.org/es/que-hacemos/empoderamiento-economico/ganar-ganar-what-we-do/economic-empowerment/win-win>



TOOLS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN COMPANIES

WEPs Gender Gap Analysis Tool to measure gender gaps

The Women's Empowerment Principles Gender Gap Analysis Tool was jointly designed by the UN Global Compact, UN Women, IDB Invest and the IDB Lab (formerly the Multilateral Investment Fund), which is also part of the IDB Group. This tool was prepared to provide companies with a free, easy-to-use and confidential instrument that enables them to self-assess their performance in terms of women's empowerment and gender equality. After consulting with more than 190 companies, the tool was launched in March 2017 and offers perspectives and data about the extent to which companies are integrating the gender factor into their policies, programs, measurement parameters and reports.

After implementing the tool, CEOs have shown signs of commitment to the gender equality agenda at the highest levels in companies. This agenda also includes equal pay for equal work, supply chain practices with gender-based perspective, and zero-tolerance for workplace sexual harassment.

According to a report from the UN Global Compact, UN Women, IDB Invest and the IDB Lab (2018), 69% of the WEP Tool users made a commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment at the leadership level, 32% of them translated those commitments into a gender equality strategy across the organization, and 30% established measurable and time-bound goals and targets within their strategy.³⁰

Some of the gender equality promotion policies endorsed by WEP Tool users worldwide include: maternity (87%) or paternity (65%) leave; confidential grievance methods and case resolution without retaliation, to ensure an environment free from violence, sexual harassment and exploitation (49%); equal pay for equal work (45%); and goals around the participation of women in managerial positions (15%).³¹

Source: <https://www.weps.org>

³⁰ UN Global Compact, UN Women, IDB Invest and the Multilateral Investment Fund. (2018). Hoja de ruta para las empresas acerca del empoderamiento de las mujeres y la igualdad de género (Roadmap for companies about women's empowerment and gender equality). <https://idbinvest.org/es/sostenibilidad/genero>

³¹ Ibidem

Gender Equality Seal

The Gender Equality Seal is a seal granted by governments, with the support of the UNDP, as recognition to companies that achieve specific gender equality standards in the workplace.

To obtain it, companies must participate in the Gender Equality Certification Program which generally takes up to two years to complete.

By participating in the certification program, company leaders make a public commitment to work on six key goals: eliminate the gender-based pay gap, increase the number of women in decision-making positions, improve work/life balance, promote the participation of women in non-traditional jobs, eradicate sexual harassment in work environments, and use inclusive and non-sexist language.

The Seal symbolizes identifying targets and indicators of change, as well as developing improvement programs and measuring institutional progress in an objective, systematic and comparable manner in integrating gender equality and women's empowerment.

Currently, the seal is implemented in 11 countries in LAC, and in more than 15 countries in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe and the Middle East, where more than 600 private sector companies have been certified.





Global business certification for gender equality (EDGE)

Launched at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in 2011, the Economic Dividends for Gender Equality (EDGE) global assessment methodology was developed by the EDGE Certified Foundation. It is a business certification standard for gender equality. This very practical methodology uses a business approach that incorporates comparative analyses, metrics and accountability methods. It specifically helps companies to create an optimal workplace for men and women, and benefit from an equitable work environment.

The certification involves assessing policies, practices and figures in six different areas:

- 1.** Equal pay for equal work
- 2.** Hiring and promotion
- 3.** Leadership development
- 4.** Training and mentoring
- 5.** Flexible work formulas
- 6.** Business culture

The EDGE Certified Foundation approves qualified, independent certifying entities to audit companies and certify them under the EDGE standard.

Currently, EDGE works with 100 companies in 40 countries.

EJEMPLOS DE EMPRESAS EN AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE

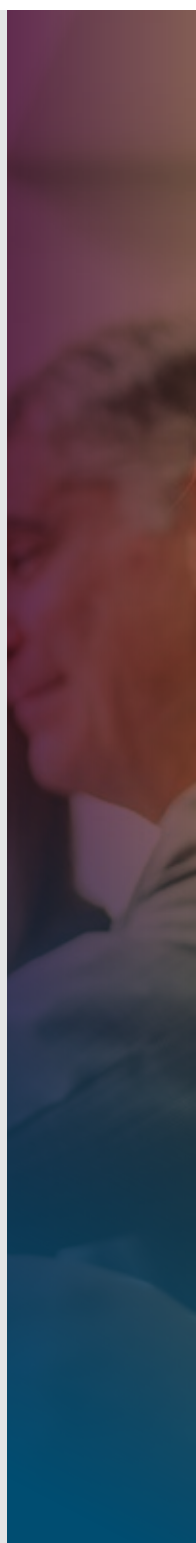
Genera (Mexico)

Using EDGE Certification as a starting point to achieve men's commitment to equality

In 2013, Genera decided to participate in the EDGE Certification to get a better understanding of its strengths and required improvement areas to reach global gender equality standards. Genera reported that the EDGE Certification offered a clear roadmap to create an inclusive and respectful environment.

Genera promotes the involvement of its employees as allies for gender equality through the possibility of flexible work and participates in public sector forums to advocate for better fatherhood practices. In addition, its managers decided to recertify the company with EDGE in 2017, to reconfirm their commitment to equality.

In its capacity as the region's leading financial entity, Genera is an example of the way in which LAC financial intermediaries can promote men's commitment to gender equality within organizations and their communities.





Banistmo (Panamá)

Receiving the Equality Seal and adhering to the WEP principles help gain commitment to gender equality

Banistmo has obtained the Panamanian gender equality seal, adheres to the UN's Women Empowerment Principles and is part of the Financial Alliance for Women.

Together with IDB Invest, Banistmo issued the first gender bond in the region and is currently segmenting its small and medium enterprise (SME) portfolio based on gender variables (leadership and ownership), in addition to understanding the value of making its gender-specific data visible publicly.

The bank's commitment to gender equality was expressed through the Impulsa Program, launched by Banistmo in 2018 with the support of the IDB Lab. Impulsa's objective is to give Panamanian businesswomen and female entrepreneurs access to financial and non-financial services. For that purpose, it provides training programs, access to financial services and collaborative partnerships with various women's professional networks and other associations that promote gender equality.

To date, the Bank has organized more than 22 workshops and trained more than 1,000 women. Banistmo is also making progress in engaging men as allies for gender equality, with the participation of almost 50 employees as mentors, including men, and raising awareness of more than 100 employees in gender equality.

BHD León (Dominican Republic)

First bank in the country to receive the Equality Seal and EDGE Certification

BHD León is one of the largest banks in the Dominican Republic. Since 2011, the bank has focused on the role of women entrepreneurs as an important segment of the Dominican population, to thoroughly understanding of their financial needs and offer value propositions that contribute to their business development. In 2015, BHD León launched its MUJER Gender Strategy, which includes three essential components: an internal gender equity culture, an annual awards ceremony that recognizes the social work of women from the community, and a value proposition of products and services for women.

The bank internally promotes the involvement of men as allies for gender equality by promoting committed fatherhood. In December 2018, it announced the extension of the paternity leave to 10 days, as part of an awareness-raising program on responsible parenthood.

BHD León aligned with the HeForShe Campaign to develop a work plan that favors the involvement of men in the elimination of social and cultural barriers that prevent women and girls from exercising their human rights. A group of 10 bank employees committed to this campaign when they digitally signed the oath to become protectors of women's rights.

Source: Banco BHD León. (2020). <https://www.bhdleon.com.do>



3.2

SECCIÓN

CORPORATE SECTOR

What are corporate sector companies in LAC doing to promote men becoming allies for gender equality?

Like the financial sector, companies in the corporate sector can incorporate the gender-based approach in two ways (agribusiness, manufacturing, tourism and telecommunications).

- First, companies can direct their gender-based approach externally by integrating it into their market segmentation analyses and focusing on meeting the needs of women's markets.
- Women are the largest underserved market in business, since the structures, technologies, and products they interact with are designed by men or for men. A survey conducted with more than 12,000 women in 22 countries with diverse income and cultural levels found that women feel undervalued in the market and underserved by business efforts (ESADE and IDB Invest, 2019).³²

³² Buckland, L., Cordobés, M., Oueda, S. and Murphy, L. *Género + Finanzas. Inversión con un enfoque de género: cómo las finanzas pueden acelerar la igualdad de género para América Latina y el Caribe* (Gender+Finance. Investment with a gender-based approach: how finance can accelerate gender equality for Latin America and the Caribbean). <https://www.idbinvest.org/es/medios-y-prensa/bid-invest-y-esade-lanzan-el-primer-estudio-sobre-inversion-con-un-enfoque-de-genero-para>

- Women are often considered a market niche, although they account for 50% of the population in LAC and are increasingly making purchase decisions, whether directly or by influence. Furthermore, the female market will become more important as female presence grows in the labor market and the economy. LAC is the only region that has seen sustained growth in the participation of women over 15 years of age in the workforce during the past two decades, and this has significant implications for their saving and purchasing power (ESADE and IDB Invest, 2019).
- Second, companies can also focus internally, and improve their equality, diversity and inclusion practices. Due to historical gender disparities, many of these efforts are focused on women; however, companies must begin working with men, to encourage them to make stronger commitments to equality, after understanding that, if men and women reach their potential in the same way, the results will be better for the business.
- Some of the actions that companies in LAC are implementing to engage men include: 1) awareness raising and training workshops in unconscious prejudice and biases, 2) promotion of shared childcare and 3) development of advertisements and advertising campaigns.

Raising awareness about unconscious bias

Companies can promote individual changes in attitudes and behaviors among men through training in unconscious gender prejudice and biases and open conversations about the roles of men and women in families, companies and the community. It is possible to enrich those conversations if companies also communicate the related benefits employees can access (for example, flexible work or leaves to take care of children) and to encourage male employees to use these benefits.

These conversations should be used to raise awareness about sexist language, male privilege and gender stereotypes. They should also encourage men to reflect on how they could benefit by having more equitable relationships at work and in the family, and to promote mutually respectful communication and conflict negotiation techniques.

This discussion is important to reflect on the benefits of gender equality for men and companies, not only for women, but to change specific attitudes and help men support company commitments regarding flexible work, transparency on pay gaps, and sponsoring women, among other aspects.

Information and awareness-raising actions around gender equality issues are necessary and should be widely dispersed within the organization. Although separate group discussions for men and women are important, promoting gender equality together should also be an objective.

There are several global and regional organizations specializing in studying masculinities that help companies organize these workshops with leaders and employees. Examples of these organizations are Catalyst, the MenEngage Network and Cuso International, to name a few. It is important that courses and awareness-raising actions are not limited to achieving attitude changes among a few groups of men; they must also include an analysis of the institutional culture that perpetuates inequalities.



Procter and Gamble leaders participate in workshops from Catalyst to eradicate gender biases

Catalyst is a global nonprofit organization that works with leading companies and some of the most powerful CEOs in the world to help build workplaces with favorable conditions for women through research, the development of practical tools and proven solutions to eliminate gender barriers and drive change.

Eleven hundred managers from Procter and Gamble (P&G) participated in the Men Advancing Real Change workshop from Catalyst that inspires men to leverage the opportunity and responsibility of advancing equity and accelerating the creation of inclusive workplaces. The main purpose is to engage men to champion gender equity.

Workshop participants develop an understanding of how dynamics, roles and gender norms are linked to the workplace and leadership, and why it is necessary to count on men to be allies for gender equality. In a second stage of the workshop, they develop skills to help men acknowledge and address male privilege, to proactively challenge stereotypes and exclusion behaviors in the workplace, and to implement more inclusive communication and leadership. Specific targets around gender equity are recommended, both on an individual basis and to hold other company leaders accountable.

As a result of participation in the workshops, most men from P&G said they were more prepared to address gender inequality at work, and more able to recognize male privilege or unconscious biases. Prior to commencing the workshop, 70% of P&G members admitted they had more privileges than women. At the completion of the workshop, that percentage increased to 96%. After their participation, all men also mentioned they had a personal interest in diversity and inclusion, and that they would try to acknowledge their own prejudice.

Source: Catalyst. <https://www.catalyst.org/marc/>

MenEngage Network trains Paraguayan companies in gender violence and new masculinities

The MenEngage Network is a global alliance of organizations created in 2004 and devoted to work with masculinities on practicing gender equity through programs, projects, influence, campaigns and research.

As for the work of the MenEngage Network with the private sector in the region, in 2016, the network provided training to Paraguayan companies aligned with the #HeForShe movement, the Global Compact and the Empresas Seguras (Safe Companies) initiative. One of the topics addressed during the training session was how men contribute to an inclusive and discrimination-free work climate within companies.

Through group interactive exercises, the participants presented specific situations in which workplace and sexual harassment conduct may arise and shared their perceptions and feelings around discrimination and violence at work.

As a result of the session, the participants committed to achieve an inclusive, discrimination- and exclusion-free work climate in their companies.

Sources: MenEngage Network. (n.d.). <http://menengage.org/regions/latin-america/>
UN Women. (2016). <https://lac.unwomen.org/es/noticias-y-eventos/articulos/2016/09/nuevas-masculinidades-paraguay>

How to fight unconscious gender biases in your company:

Cuso International's work in Colombia

Cuso International is an organization that works to reduce poverty and inequality through sustainable economic development and the promotion of decent jobs. With the support of the Canadian government, it provides awareness raising, training and support to companies seeking to establish an inclusive and violence-free work culture.

This organization has helped achieve that with more than 77,000 employees in more than 13 companies in Colombia, working to tear down the unconscious gender biases that affect personnel recruitment, hiring, engagement and retention processes.

According to Cuso, the recommended practices that help minimize or eradicate biases in companies include:

- 1.** Raise awareness of the HR team, people in leadership positions and all personnel about the impact of gender biases on the company's work environment and sustainability.
- 2.** Gather information that reveals the presence of biases in the company; for example, by applying the Implicit Association Test.
- 3.** Find out the extent and intensity of the biases. This helps to focus the attention on decision-making areas requiring more analysis and consideration.
- 4.** Train the leadership team to include criteria linked to work skills and professional development in their decision-making.
- 5.** Expose personnel to visible examples of environments that challenge stereotypes. For example, visiting a construction site with noticeable participation of women can help counteract the bias toward women in this sector or type of work.

Source: Capital Humano. (2019). <https://www.capitalhumano.com.co/gerencia/como-combatir-los-sesgos-inconscientes-de-genero-en-su-empresa-12322/>

EJEMPLOS COMPANIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT UNCONSCIOUS BIASES AND GENDER STEREOTYPES

Konfio (Mexico)

Male gender champions foster an inclusive culture in FinTech companies and start-ups

Konfio is a Mexican FinTech company specialized in granting loans to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Its 100% online credit approval process facilitates financial inclusion, even for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) owned and led by women.

During 2020 Konfio carried out a gender equality initiative using IDB Invest's advisory services, to identify opportunities to close gender gaps in human talent and in its market strategy and meet the needs of female entrepreneurs.

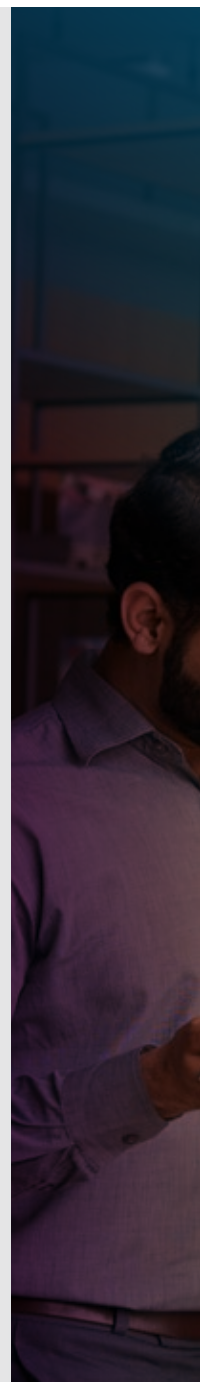
Konfio focused on two areas: training talent teams and identifying the right leader to champion the work.

First, Konfio employees received a course on unconscious biases and gender stereotypes, to understand how biases they limit rational decision-making and may have a direct impact on the business.

Second, the leader of the initiative was not only the vice president of finance and strategy, but he also had a strong commitment to equity. Oftentimes, the managerial team in start-ups is predominantly male. The presence of a male "gender champion" on the leadership team may encourage the implementation of initiatives at the operational level and facilitates the growth of the business with inclusive practices that become an integral part of the business culture.

Based on this collaboration with IDB Invest, Konfio developed a strategy to reach women entrepreneurs. Konfio is now evaluating how to integrate a gender lens from accounts payable to the credit approval process, with the objective of ensuring their processes are not gender-blind, but gender-inclusive. Konfio has made diversity and inclusion part of its business strategy.

Source: IDB Invest. (2020). (Prepared by the authors using project results).





Danper (Peru)

Engaging men as allies for gender equality through internal awareness-raising campaigns for male employees

Danper is a leading agricultural company based in Trujillo, Peru. In 2014, with IDB Invest's support, Danper became the first company to earn EDGE Certification in workplace gender equality, both in Peru and in the LAC agriculture sector. This led to the preparation of a specific action plan that the company committed to achieve a gender-based inclusive workplace, where women and men have the same opportunities for professional development.

As for the engagement of men as allies, the company implemented internal campaigns to foster awareness raising about how to treat women as professional colleagues.

Source: Unguresan, A., Saúl, M. and Murphy, L. (2017). The power of gender equality in the workplace. Sustainable growth and inclusive economic development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Promotion of shared childcare and active fatherhood

Many companies acknowledge that compensation is not the only concern in the well-being of male and female employees. Companies also value good working conditions that allow for more balance between paid work activities and personal and family activities (work-life balance).

Adopting practices that balance these two needs involves organizational and economic costs for companies. For example, organizational costs arise when the usual ways of operating are modified; for example, the introduction of flexible workday systems where employees can select their own work schedules. Economic costs are incurred, for example, when leaves or permits to take leave are extended at the company's expense, beyond the provisions stipulated in national regulations. In 2020, Colombia approved extended paternity leave, and BHD León established a longer leave period than that required by law.

However, companies that adopt these practices also enjoy benefits and a return on the costs incurred. According to data from a Chilean study on the best companies for working mothers and fathers, 83% of the companies stated that reconciliation and co-responsibility practices improved their productivity, 75% indicated reduced absenteeism, 92% indicated a decrease in medical visits, and 75% indicated a decrease in job turnover (Fundación Chile Unido, 2016).³³

In some cases, the best practices of companies around paternity leaves involve deep changes for employees' reconciliation and co-responsibility needs. This is true especially when national laws include these permits in a very restrictive manner, or do not include them at all, as happens in certain countries in Central America and the Caribbean.

³³ Fundación Chile Unido. (2016). Mejores empresas para madres y padres que trabajan (Best companies for working mothers and fathers). <http://www.chileunido.cl/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Informe-General-2016-Estudio-Mejores-Empresas.pdf>



MenCare equitable fatherhood global campaign

Launched in 2011, MenCare is an equitable fatherhood global campaign that is currently active in more than 50 countries on five continents.

The goal of the campaign is for men to become allies in supporting women's social and economic equality and to take more responsibility for childcare and housework. This is based on the belief that true equality will only be reached when men take on 50% of the world's childcare and housework.

The campaign has reached millions of people around the world, thanks to collaboration with women's rights groups, local and national governments, UN agencies and other organizations.

MenCare members in LAC are involving men as caregivers and fathers through compelling media campaigns and paternity leave programs in 11 countries: Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico and Uruguay.

In Brazil and Nicaragua, powerful films tell the stories of men who are acting as role models in supporting men's involvement in the family, and in helping men who have experienced violence and sexual exploitation to heal. From Guatemala to Chile, the work with the health sector has led to positive institutional changes supporting men's involvement in pre- and post-natal care.

Source: MenCare. (n.d.). About MenCare. <https://men-care.org/about-mencare/>





Dove Men+Care and Promundo

Corporate Task Force to promote paternity leave

Dove Men+Care, the male personal care brand of products, launched a campaign to improve global standards of paternity leave. As a result, Unilever adopted a comprehensive internal policy in all markets, and established a Corporate Task Force on paternity leave to encourage action and acceptance by other companies.

In the United States, Dove Men+Care made a commitment to paternity leave, and established a US \$1 million fund so that fathers who are still not enjoying the right to a paid paternity leave can take time off to take care of their newborn children.

Dove Men+Care joined forces with Promundo to convene the Paternity Leave Corporate Task Force. The journey began at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting at Davos in 2019, bringing together leading representatives from progressive global businesses, experts, public organizations and NGOs, to identify, promote, accelerate and take to scale sustainable business and social solutions that will help improve access to paternity leave and its acceptance by all men. Task force members include Bank of America, Deloitte, Facebook, Twitter, Women Deliver and UNICEF as a technical advisor.

Source: Dove Men+Care. (n.d.). Introducing the Paternity Leave Task Force. <https://www.dove.com/uk/men-care/lets-champion-paternity-leave-together.html>

COMPANIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN PROMOTING **PATERNITY LEAVE**

Marriot (Costa Rica)

Using paternity leave to achieve men's commitment to gender equality allies, even when current legislation does not guarantee that right

Marriott International is a company that owns 6,000 hotels in 120 countries, and operates in a sector where customer care is a key factor to generate revenue.

The company decided to implement a paternity leave policy, an ambitious action because the law only requires this right for public officials. Thanks to this policy, from March 2016 to July 2017, the male employees of the five Marriott Costa Rica hotels took a total of 145 days of paternity leave.

Marriott also placed great emphasis on training the members of its managerial team and personnel on gender equality topics, to raise awareness of men and encourage them to fight for gender equality.

Source: IDB Invest and EDGE (2017). El poder de la igualdad de género en el lugar de trabajo (The power of gender equality in the workplace). <https://idbinvest.org/es/sostenibilidad/genero>



IBM (Chile)

Flexible work programs and paternity leaves to encourage men to become allies for equality

As part of its HR policies, the multinational company IBM implements the WorkLife Balance program in all its national subsidiaries, including those in Latin America.

This flexible work program offers several options to organize the workday that personnel may adopt in coordination with their manager. These include a compressed work week, a customized individual schedule for men and women, and a paternity leave policy enabling new fathers to take a flexible work schedule during the first month of a child's life, without requesting management approval.

Source: Pérez, V. (2012). Experiencias de conciliación con corresponsabilidad social en América Latina (Reconciliation with social co-responsibility experiences in Latin America). http://www.americalatinagenera.org/sello/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/CONCILIACION_Veronica_Perez_Sistematización_México.pdf



Advertising and advertising campaigns

A company's external influence can contribute to encouraging men to be allies for gender equality in the community. Companies reach their customers through their products, brands and reputations, and can generate an impact for the purpose of supporting social change.

Despite the significant social influence of companies, the data show that few of them are incorporating international goals for gender equality in their advertisements. According to a report from UN Women, IDB Invest and the IDB Lab (2018), only 19% of global companies do this. Half of the companies (52%) incorporate gender into corporate social responsibility, philanthropy, advocacy and alliances; 16% ensure egalitarian participation of women and men when interacting with the community; and 10% identify different impacts on men and women when human rights or social impact are assessed (UN Women, IDB Invest and the IDB Lab, 2018).³⁴

Companies can play an active role by joining initiatives launched by the government or other companies to encourage more men to be allies for gender equality. Another practical tool of social influence is advertising that is targeted at creating greater commitment of men to gender equality.

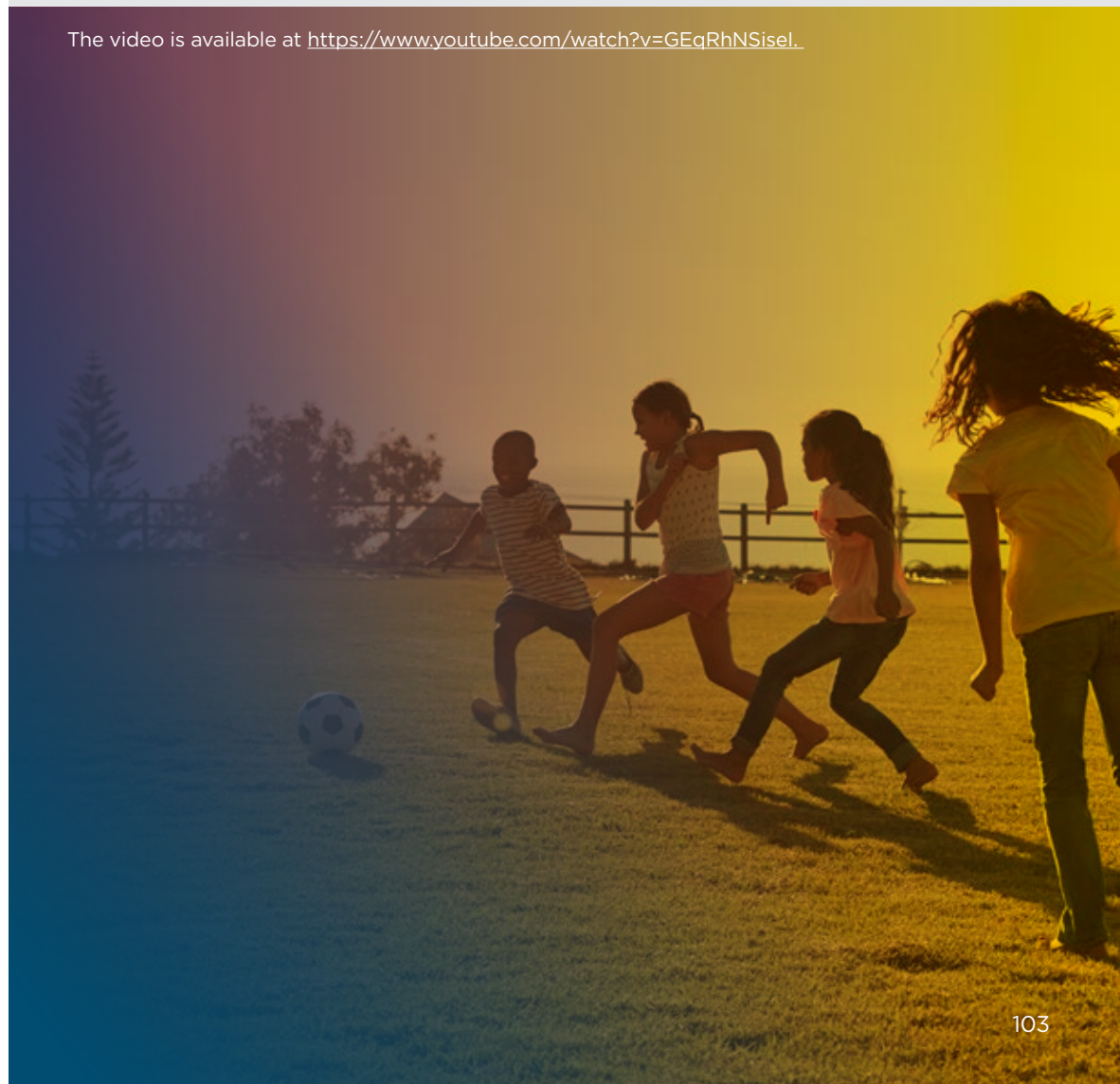
³⁴ UN Global Compact, UN Women, IDB Invest and the Multilateral Investment Fund. (2018). *Principios para el empoderamiento de las mujeres. Informe sobre tendencias mundiales 2018* (Women's empowerment principles. 2018 world trends report). <https://idbinvest.org/es/sostenibilidad/genero>.

UN Women campaign to reflect on gender stereotypes

HeForShe, a UN Women initiative, produced a video that invites people to reflect on gender stereotypes and seeks to engage men in the fight for gender equity.

The video features stereotypes that are still present; for example, that girls must play with dolls and boys must play sports, or that crying is only for women or weak men.

The video is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEqRhNSisel..>



EXAMPLES OF COMPANIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Avon (Argentina)

Men are at the heart of advertising and social actions against violence toward women during COVID-19

Avon has 6 million women in its workforce, 4 million of which work in the LAC region.

The company's work in favor of women's equality focuses on the prevention of gender-based violence. This includes a case in Argentina, where Avon designed its own Gender-Based Violence Protocol and Leave to provide a legal framework to female employees experiencing gender-based violence, so that they can have up to 10 continuous or ad hoc business days to address their situation. The purpose of this work is to contribute to the empowerment of women who are victims of violence and by encouraging them to "speak up" and take time for self-care without the fear of losing their source of employment.

In addition, Avon has sponsored various campaigns against violence with the purpose of working with men in two ways: to reverse violent behavior and to encourage men to become allies for equality, so that they motivate other men to end situations of domestic and sexual harassment or violence against women. Under the premise that "la violencia que no mata, mata igual" (the violence that does not kill, kills the same), in 2018, it launched *#CambiaElTrato* (*#ChangeHowYouTreatHer*), a campaign that presents three advertisements: *acoso callejero*, *violencia doméstica* and *violencia sexual digital* (street harassment, domestic violence and digital sexual violence). These ads recreate scenes of daily life where women are subject to bullying, abuse or violation of privacy. The campaigns are available at <https://www.fundacionavon.org.ar/cambia-el-trato/>

Due to the increase in gender-based violence against women and girls because of confinement during COVID-19, Avon joined Natura in the *#AisladasNoSolás* (*#IsolatedButNotAlone*) global movement to help prevent violence at home.

Finally, Avon will make a global donation of US \$1 million to civil sector organizations that act as first line of support for women affected by violence.

Source: Axel Gegenshar, Avon's General Manager for South America. Webinar organized by IDB: "COVID-19: Cuando quedarse en casa no es seguro" (COVID-19: When staying at home is not safe). April 23, 2020.

Singenor Contratistas Generales (Peru)

Senior management's commitment to helping women experiencing violence during COVID-19

Singenor is a company engaged in consulting and carrying out public and private civil works. Under Ministerial Resolution No. 055-2020 issued by Peru's Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP), in March 2020, the company was certified as a Safe, Violence- and Discrimination-free company, in the GOLD category, the highest in the construction sector.

This recognition is the result of implementing a diversity and inclusion program that includes a standard of wage equality, among other initiatives that are part of its working culture, such as awareness-raising talks among company employees.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the company donated food, cleaning items, materials and medicines to women experiencing violence and using the services provided by the MIMP, such as the "Sagrado Corazón de Jesús" Safe Home (Puno), the Lima and Bagua Family Comprehensive Development Centers, and the Chachapoyas Women's Emergency Center of the AURORA National Program.

Source: Peru's Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations. (2020). <https://www.mimp.gob.pe/empresasegura/noticia10.html>

Hogan Lovells (Mexico)

Engagement of men as allies for gender equality at a law office, among clients and in society

Hogan Lovells, a law firm, works with employees and clients to promote more women into higher-level positions in a male-dominated sector. Based on data from Latin Lawyer, 49% of associates in law firms in Latin America are women, a figure that decreases to 20% at a partner level.

Convinced that men's participation is essential to reach equality, the firm promotes culture change among the partners and lawyers of the firm. To do this, Hogan Lovells provides awareness-raising courses that emphasize that gender equality is a generational issue. It also includes men in the dialogue to prepare its diversity strategies, and organizes breakfasts with its clients to talk and raise awareness about diversity and gender equality.

Finally, the law firm favors developing new masculinities in society. In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, it is working from the diversity area with a nonprofit organization to identify free applications, send messages of support to women who are victims of violence, and promote new non-violent masculinities.

Source: Interview with Lila Alejandra Gasca Enríquez (May 8, 2020).



Sexual diversity and gender policies

Many companies are working to recognize gender and diversity, and are facing various forms of discrimination (chauvinism, racism, xenophobia or homophobia) that arise as backlash to an increasingly diverse workplace.

Gender inequalities overlap with these forms of discrimination. They obstruct the right to self-determination and development of indigenous and Afro-descendant women and men whose gender identities do not match the traditional, binary gender identities assigned at birth (male or female) and individuals whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual.



Some important concepts to understand diversity

- **Ethnic and racial diversity:** refers to various cultural characteristics shared by a population (for example, language, religion, worldview, idea of belonging and common history rooted in myths and traditions), as in the case of Indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples.
- **Sexual diversity** recognizes and defends the rights of intersexual people, who are strongly stigmatized and discriminated against because they have sexual or reproductive anatomy with both male and female characteristics from birth and in variable degrees.
- **Gender identity** is related to socio-cultural patterns learned in early socialization. When a person is born, family and society assign them a gender in accordance with their sex – female or male – and this person is expected to behave accordingly. However, there are people whose gender identity does not match that assigned at birth, such as transgender people (who identify with the opposite gender), bigender (who identify with both the male and female gender), or intergender (who define their identity as one of the many possible genders beyond male and female), who claim the right to self-identify themselves as man, women, both or none, without experiencing rejection, discrimination and violence because of who they are.
- **Sexual orientation** is a concept intimately related to the preceding identities. The heteronormative term is used to describe the cultural gender system, which determines that women must be attracted to men and vice versa, establishing heterosexuality as a given. Thus, any type of attraction outside of this rule, either homosexuality (attraction toward same-sex people), bisexuality (attraction toward people of both sexes), or the attraction from and toward transsexual people, is discriminated against, rendered invisible, deprived of equal rights and even criminalized in some countries.
- **The LGBT+ social movement** is a movement in favor of the recognition of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender and intersexual people, which has succeeded in positioning the fight for sexual rights as one of the new issues in human rights.

Source: América Latina Genera. https://www.americalatinagenera.org/es/documentos/tematicas/tema_diversidad.pdf

As a first step, oftentimes companies start working for equal opportunities for men and women. With time, these initiatives become the starting point to achieve greater racial, ethnic, socio-economic and capability inclusion.

Incorporating these other dimensions to the equality conversation has the advantage of adding new perspectives to leadership and increasing the benefits for companies. Furthermore, according to the How Diversity and Inclusion Drive Business Value report (2019), companies in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are 35% more likely to have financial returns greater than the national industry medians, while those in the top upper quartile for gender diversity are 15% more likely to have financial returns greater than the national industry medians (McKinsey, 2020, Diversity Matters).

Although Diversity adds value to companies, few companies in the LAC region consider Diversity a business imperative. Some multinational companies operating in Latin America are having a positive impact on the ecosystem, and this gives more relevance to diversity and inclusion initiatives and paves the way for the adoption of better practices.

Free & Equal: United Nations global campaign for the rights of LGBT+ people

In July 2013, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights launched the UN Free & Equal campaign, a global public information initiative aimed at promoting equal rights and fair treatment of LGBT+ people.

The campaign advises member states to follow five steps: to provide protection against homophobic violence, to prevent torture and cruel treatment toward LGBT+ people, to abolish laws that criminalize homosexuality, to prohibit the discrimination for sexual orientation or gender identity, and to safeguard the freedom of expression of this group.

Private sector companies are advised to: a) respect the human rights of the LGTB+ community members, employees and clients, b) eradicate workplace discrimination against LGBT+ employees, c) support LGBT+ employees at work, d) not discriminate against LGBT+ clients, suppliers and distributors, and e) defend the human rights of LGBT+ people in the communities.

National activities linked to the Free & Equal initiative have been organized in almost 30 countries. In 2014, the launching ceremony of the campaign in Peru included the participation of EY, IBM and Sodexo, which highlighted their commitment to ensure that no employee be discriminated against for their sexual orientation. For example, it was mentioned that when the local law does not allow LGBT+ people to access certain benefits, such as partner's insurance, the company offers these benefits for same-sex partners as a part of affirmative action.

Source: <https://uniclima.org.pe/2019/07/01/lgbti-marcha-orgullo-onu-libres-e-iguales/>

Five ways men can improve gender diversity at work

Recommendations of the Boston Consulting Group

Companies must work on making gender diversity an initiative in which everyone in the organization, including men, are involved. As a recommendation for all sectors, there are five ways for men to get involved:

1. Support flexible work policies

Men can show their support by making use of diversity programs and explicitly supporting everyone on their team who chooses to work under these programs.

2. Model the right behaviors

Men should raise their hand to express their disagreement when anyone behaves inappropriately, whether through comments to colleagues or in client interactions.

3. Communicate fairly

In meetings, male leaders must ensure that everyone has sufficient opportunities to speak, that no one is consistently interrupted, and that the credit goes to the originator of a good point, and not just those who talked the longest or the loudest.

4. Sponsor a high-potential woman

Sponsorship involves advocating for an employee at key inflection points in her career, (for example, bringing her to high-profile meetings, supporting her application for a promotion or a key international position, and ensuring that she gets the training she needs to move up in the company).

5. Get involved with company-specific initiatives

A CEO who attends a gender diversity event or conference can help signal the importance of the topic more than any number of press releases or emails.

Source: Krentz, M., Wierzba, O., Abouzahr, K., Garcia-Alonso, J. and Taplett, F.B. (2017). Five ways men can improve gender diversity at work. Boston Consulting Group. <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2017/people-organization-behavior-culture-five-ways-men-improve-gender-diversity-work.aspx>

COMPANIES **WORKING FOR DIVERSITY** IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Think Etnus (Brazil)

Founded in 2014, Think Etnus is the first Brazilian company specialized in the study of the behavior, consumer habits and trends of the Afro-Brazilian population. It highlights the largest ethnic group in Brazil and helps brands successfully connect with them.

Think Etnus emphasized at least two successful diversity promotion experiences from its work in Brazil. One of them is Google's AfroGoogle program, which increased flexibility in the employee selection process and removed certain criteria that are traditional barriers for the Afro-descendant population to access employment. For example, the university from which the candidate graduated, their geographic residence, and their ability to speak English were not considered.

The second experience is related to Wunderman Thompson Brazil <https://www.wundermanthompson.com/brazil>. In 2018, it launched the 20/20 Program with goal that at least 20% of the positions in the company are filled by Afro-Brazilian people by 2020. To implement the program, it trained the officers who were already working at the company and implemented the "blind CV" methodology at job interviews. As a result of this experience, 90% of the selected Afro-Brazilian people kept their jobs and received a positive assessment of their work performance.

Source: Interview with Fernando Montenegro, founder of Think ETNUS.
www.etnus.com.br

Tenaris (Argentina)

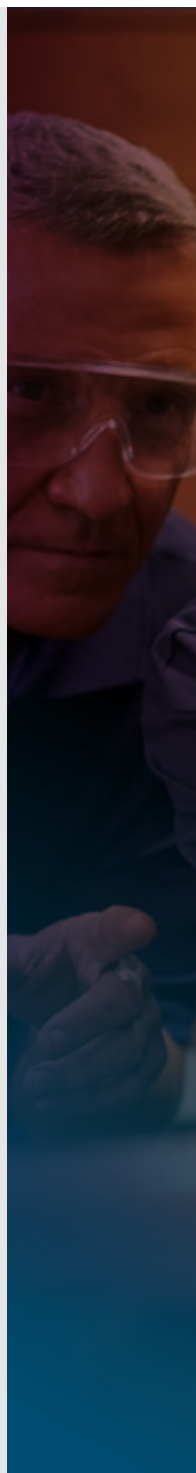
Addressing the diversity challenge in a sector highly dominated by men

Tenaris is an Argentinian multinational company that manufactures steel pipe products for the oil and gas industry worldwide. It employs approximately 30,000 people in more than 40 countries, 78% of whom are men. Four percent of the senior leaders are women, and the first woman on the leadership team, composed of 14 members, was hired in 2016.

In 2009, the company included gender diversity as one of the 10 key strategic areas to improve the company's competitive advantage. The specific objective is to integrate gender diversity in a sustainable manner by identifying and implementing initiatives throughout the talent process (attraction, retention and development), to increase the participation of women in all positions and functions.

Among the specific results, the company currently has a code of conduct that prohibits illicit discrimination in working relationships, sends out an internal news bulletin on gender diversity, and maintains a whistleblower line to file anonymous complaints of abuse, discrimination and harassment.

Source: International Labor Organization. (2017). Camino hacia la diversidad de género: buenas prácticas empresariales (The road to gender diversity: good business practices). https://www.ilo.org/public/spanish/dialogue/actemp/downloads/publications/wibm_cogoodpract_2017_sp.pdf





Telefónica (Argentina)

Inclusion and diversity between employees and clients

In 2016, Telefónica designed and launched the Diversity Driving Plan, which involves senior leaders and is an important element of the telecommunications company's innovation and transformation process. Telefónica's global leadership team, mostly composed of men (74%), is involved in and committed to the work for diversity.

With 62% of men globally on the company's payroll, it has implemented online training that promotes a diversity culture among all professionals (We Choose Diversity) and all people managers (We Choose Diversity and Inclusive Leadership), to set guidelines to promote, develop and foster diversity on teams.

The company also encourages changing attitudes among men to help them become allies for equality and diversity. It also offers newscasts on its Intranet with the mission of improving sensitivity regarding the distribution of responsibilities between men and women, and informing male employees about their rights as fathers, to promote the use of paternity leaves.

At the local level, in 2018, Telefónica signed an agreement with the National Institute of Women in Argentina to communicate gender violence problems and implement a line to report violence (call 1-4-4), to contribute to the eradication of violence against women.

Source: Telefónica. (2018). + de 100. Medidas que impulsan la igualdad, conciliación y diversidad. (100+. Measures that promote equality, reconciliation and diversity). https://www.telefonica.com/documents/364672/472909/100_medidas_conciliacion_telefonica.pdf/2fcfa22b-22d5-f7cd-595c-5b41ed6022a1

Ben & Jerry's (Brazil)

In May 2013, Brazil's National Justice Council ruled that same-sex couples had a right to receive marriage licenses. This ruling was the starting point to perform same-sex unions across the country. As inclusion grows among the Brazilian people, brands like Ben & Jerry's are experiencing the benefits of serving LGBT+ communities and those who support them, whether through products that promote certain ideals, specific campaigns that defend equality, or through representation of LGBT+ people in advertising.

Ben & Jerry's has a history of fighting for LGBT+ rights and marriage equality. In 1989, Ben & Jerry's was one of the first U.S. employers to start offering medical insurance to partners in general, including employees' same-sex partners.

In Brazil, at the beginning of 2015, the company donated one full day of sales of its Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough ice cream to Casa 1, a shelter for young people evicted from their homes due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. To honor this victory, the Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough flavor was renamed I Dough, I Dough (a reference to "I do").

Source: <https://www.benjerry.com/values/issues-we-care-about/marriage-equality>



3.3

SECTION

INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR

What are infrastructure and transportation sector companies in LAC doing to engage men as allies for gender equality?

Infrastructure is not gender neutral. Gaps in access to good infrastructure affect women disproportionately. For example, women depend on public transportation more than men, and meeting their needs for safe, reliable and affordable transportation can open employment and other opportunities for them. It also leads to a better transportation system for all. Urban transportation improvement and connection projects, with accessible and well-lit stops and benches, limit the risk of violence in general, especially violence against women.



Women need to have a voice in the design and operation of infrastructure. However, the infrastructure sector has been traditionally dominated by men. This is partially due to stereotypes that hinder women's participation in infrastructure projects. For example, fewer women seek technical or college degrees in engineering and construction, a disparity that is subsequently transferred to the lack of women's participation in this type of work.

Since infrastructure is a traditionally male-dominated sector, solving problems such as sexual harassment is critical, especially in certain LAC countries. According to the World Bank's Women, Business and the Law data project, approximately one-third of LAC economies lack laws that prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace. And even when these laws exist, in some countries, like Honduras, sexual harassment continues to be a problem for many female employees, 90% of whom say they have been victims of these type of harassment (ESEADE and IDB Invest, 2019).

The eradication of workplace violence and harassment against women is a goal that calls for men's commitment.

Policies of zero-tolerance for workplace sexual harassment and abuse

Promoting a workplace that is safe and respectful for all genders involves developing and implementing policies and actions in companies to detect, handle, correct and prevent gender-based violence and its manifestations.

Some of these policies include making it clear in companies that sexual harassment and abuse will not be tolerated, to prevent violent conduct; implementing methods for early detection; and ensuring that appropriate reporting and redress systems are in place.

Campaigns to help combat gender-based violence toward women have expanded at the global and regional level; without a doubt, this has helped make the problem more visible, in addition to raising public awareness and alerting companies of this issue. One example is the UN's UNETE global campaign.

Additionally, IDB Invest developed a tool to assess and identify gender risks in the area of influence of projects. The Gender Risk Assessment Tool (GRAT) helps companies develop appropriate mitigation plans.³⁵

³⁵ Certain factors affect men and women, and boys and girls, differently for a variety of reasons (such as socio-economic, specific role and control over assets). The Gender Risk Assessment Tool was developed with the purpose of understanding and mapping the ways in which different genders are affected by a project. The analysis includes the client's workforce and the surrounding community. <https://www.idbinvest.org/en/publications/gender-risk-assessment-tool>

United Nations' UNETE campaign to end violence against women

Violence against women is one of the most frequent human rights violations in the world. It affects almost 70% of women at some time in their lives and generates high costs for society (direct costs in terms of services and indirect costs in terms of jobs, productivity loss and human suffering); hence, it is a true obstacle to development.

The general purpose of the UN's UNETE campaign is to raise public awareness, prompt deeper political willingness to act, and increase the resources to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women and girls in the world, particularly through three action lines: 1) awareness-raising campaigns about abuse in courtships, for female youth and adolescents; 2) prevention of domestic violence and its consequences; and 3) encouragement of men's commitment to gender equality and eradication of violence against women.

In Latin America, UNETE was launched in Guatemala on Nov. 25, 2009. The three main pillars of the campaign are: "No más impunidad" ("No more impunity"), "Ni una más" (Not one more) and "Es responsabilidad de todos" (It is everyone's responsibility). The third pillar is meant to encourage the social mobilization and proactive involvement of non-traditional members, especially young men.

Source: <http://www.onu.org.ar/campanas/en-argentina/unete/>

COMPANIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN **PARTICIPATING** IN GENDER EQUALITY

Cabify: More women drivers in the ride-hailing industry

Cabify is a Spanish ride-hailing company that offers transportation via vehicles driven by independent service providers, through its mobile application.

Cabify and other companies have tripled their customer base in two years, carrying more than 2 million riders, 51% of them women. Economic and employment opportunities accompany this growth, for people who have a vehicle and want to work as drivers. However, women drivers have low presence in ride-hailing companies: in Cabify's fleet in LAC, women account for between 1.5% and 14.4% of drivers. This low level of participation presents a potential opportunity for women drivers in this market.

IDB Invest and Cabify joined forces to understand women drivers, their needs, and steps they can take that can break through the barriers women face from the time they join Cabify until they leave.

Through extensive interviews, focus groups, literature review and quantitative data analyses, the results of the report they presented showed that women face significant barriers to join Cabify as drivers. For example, they did not know people who drive for Cabify; hence, it was not as easy for them to use the platform as it was for their male co-workers. They were also worried about safety; it was more likely that they would have to balance childcare and work; and it was less likely that they owned the cars, so they had to rent or borrow the vehicles, and this affected their earnings. These and other findings helped Cabify understand the barriers for women and the company was able to develop a hiring strategy that attracted more women drivers.

Based on this report, Cabify planned the implementation of several actions, including: investing more in recruiting and mentoring women drivers; encouraging women drivers through greater benefits (for example, medical and accident insurance, and financial assistance to buy a car); and mitigating the concerns around safety by allowing drivers to select the gender of their passengers, passengers to select the gender of their drivers, and women drivers to select certain passengers.

Source: IDB Invest, Cabify and Ernst & Young.

Central Puerto Renovables S.A.

IDB Invest finances a wind farm in Argentina

Central Puerto is the majority private shareholder of companies Central Vuelta de Obligado S.A., Termoeléctrica José de San Martín S.A. and Termoeléctrica Manuel Belgrano S.A. Central Puerto produces electricity using effective and efficient methods, helping to meet electrical demand in Argentina with a high level of quality. It also intends to manage the business with the premise of creating value, not only for the company, but also for society, in a sustainable and eco-friendly manner.

In 2019, IDB Invest agreed to finance the construction, operation and maintenance of the Achiras wind farm, located in the southeast region of Córdoba province, in Argentina. The project includes a 14 km-long transmission line and is developed by Central Puerto S.A. The financing consists of a US \$20 million IDB Invest loan and mobilization of US \$10 million from the Canadian Climate Fund for the Private Sector in the Americas (C2F), managed by IDB Invest.

The operation contributes to the diversification of Argentina's energy matrix and to the sustainability of its power generation capacity. The Achiras wind farm will displace the equivalent of 2.047 million tons of carbon dioxide over the next 20 years. With the mobilization of capital, the project also increases private participation in the Argentinian energy sector.

The participation of the C2F Fund includes incentives for the project to incorporate an internship program for women. The wind farm involves the female workforce in disciplines related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics, both at the corporate level and in the execution of the project. Also, through IDB Invest, the parties involved in the operation agreed to increase their commitment to implement best practices in environmental and social matters.

Source: [IDB press releases](#). (2018).

Uber (Brazil)

Launch of podcast for drivers on violence against women

Uber, a member of the Brazilian Association for Business Communication (ABERJE), launched the Respect Podcast in March 2019. The six-podcast series is intended to transform men who use the application daily to earn extra income into allies in the fight to eradicate violence against women.

The episodes were distributed on a weekly basis to all Uber drivers in the country (600,000 drivers per month). Those who listen to the full series receive the following badge of commitment to respect women:

Promundo-Brasil created the educational content in the podcasts using the results of surveys they conducted with dozens of drivers from Rio de Janeiro and Fortaleza.

As a result of this initial step in the commitment to gender equality, Uber continued to promote awareness-raising campaigns with the participation of well-known actresses and celebrities in Brazil. For example, the company launched a video starring actress Tatá Werneck with safety instructions for Uber that are useful to both drivers and passengers. In addition, Uber partnered with the AzMina digital magazine, and launched a program of monthly interviews on various topics related to feminism —“Café con AzMina”— broadcast on YouTube.



Source: Aberje. (2019). <http://www.aberje.com.br/uber-lanca-podcast-para-motoristas-sobre-violencia-contra-a-mulher/>

Petrobras (Brazil)

Employees and contractors participate in awareness-raising campaigns to prevent child sexual exploitation

Petrobras, a Brazilian multinational power company and one of the largest companies in the Americas, hired Promundo from 2013 to 2015 to help prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in urban areas that surround five of its projects in Brazil. Promundo worked with Petrobras in the states of Mato Grosso do Sul, Pernambuco, Sergipe, Rio Grande do Sul and Rio de Janeiro, to reduce the sexual exploitation of children that typically occurs when large numbers of male employees arrive.

Promundo-Brasil led educational workshops for employees to raise awareness about the payment to have sex with children and minors and designed the *Eu digo não!* (I say no, in Portuguese) campaign. It also provided training on the prevention of commercial sexual exploitation for Petrobras employees and contractors as part of the company's corporate social responsibility commitment.

The workshops were attended by:

- 40,000 Petrobras employees and contractors
- 1,500 professionals of the child protection network
- Employees of 16 municipalities

Source: Promundo. (2015). [2015 Annual Report](#).

CONCLUSION

Today, more than ever, we know that gender equality cannot be achieved through the effort of only half the population. Achieving gender equity necessarily requires the involvement of men:

From a purely pragmatic place, men occupy significantly more leadership positions, giving them the capabilities to influence decision making and the responsibility to change unequal structures through actions that promote equality (for example: questioning their own unconscious biases, empathizing with work colleagues, participating in mentoring programs, joining resource groups and equality committees, etc.).

Second, when men act as allies for equality, they not only understand but may prevent and offset inequality caused by discriminatory work cultures.

Finally, when men act as allies, progress can be accelerated, and their general well-being improved. Men themselves benefit from these efforts to achieve greater well-being in both at work and in their private lives.

Companies in Latin America and the Caribbean are at a pivotal moment to push for structural change that not only improves their way of doing business, but also the private lives of their employees.



COVID-19 has worsened existing gender inequities. The effects of the pandemic are evident in the loss of service and caregiving jobs; the inequality in the distribution of caregiving responsibilities, which disproportionately fall on women who continue to perform their paid work from home; and the increase in gender-related violence in all countries of the region. As this will not be the last pandemic, and as remote work practices become more widespread it is key to continue to apply the lessons learned for the future.

These circumstances make the business case clearer than ever, especially the need to pay more attention to gender equity in the private sector and to the role that men play for equality worldwide. We must acknowledge that workplaces have been organized in a way that has not done much to support gender equality; in fact, it has been detrimental. The historical and ongoing work of civil society and feminist activists in Latin America and elsewhere has prompted a focus on the structural barriers that women face in the workforce: Standards, policies and practices that have been the norm for a long time are being questioned and revised.

Most importantly, male employees are realizing that efforts for gender equality are not only positive but advantageous for them, as well as for women, children and families. Work flexibility policies offer men time to devote to taking care of their families and their own happiness. The private sector is increasingly understanding that happy employees are productive employees. Therefore, companies are focusing on promoting more supportive workplaces that are free from harassment and unfair hiring practices. In turn, these changes benefit companies in terms of increasing their revenue. Consumers value inclusive practices, which is in turn reflected in brand loyalty, and increases the talent pool by opening more opportunities for women to compete for jobs on an equal standing with men.

The company practices highlighted in this document are good examples of how various industry sectors can leverage the current situation to promote gender equality. We thank those companies and institutions included in the report for sharing their successes, challenges and desire to create fairer, more egalitarian workplaces.

As mentioned throughout this report, the private sector can make countless contributions. The cited case studies represent clear and practical models for companies to support gender equality, both in their workforces and in society at large. The message is clear — companies have the unique ability, along with the responsibility, to ensure that their workplaces are environments with equal opportunities for all.

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Methodology

To develop this report and qualitative study, IDB Invest, Promundo and Mercer used semi-structured interviews and a virtual focus group as instruments to collect primary data, and the sources cited in the bibliography to obtain secondary data. The research process was conducted under an interpretative paradigm, in which the researcher assesses the objects of study, and intends to make sense of the phenomena based on the meanings assigned by people.

Eleven semi-structured interviews were conducted with various individuals, most of them from companies and partners in the private sector. We interviewed HR specialists and employees from other areas of companies that are already working on engaging men as allies for gender equality in business management, as well as academic experts and specialists from nonprofit organizations focused on engaging men in diversity and inclusion processes.

The research process focused on understanding the role of men in gender equality, the initiatives of companies to engage men as allies for equality and the main barriers to implement or enhance those initiatives in the near future. We conducted an online focus group based on a script and a 27-question questionnaire to guide a live conversation through the virtual platform. The focus group adapted the research methodology to the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. We asked open or multiple-choice questions so the participant could select all the options that corresponded to his/her company. The virtual platform allowed for the participation of several users in a synchronized focus group format. The sample included 240 respondents (49% women, 50% men and 1% who preferred not to be identified) representing 57 private sector companies from 16 countries of the region.³⁶

Finally, we collected demographic data to analyze differences in opinion between men and women and implement regional approaches, always maintaining the anonymity of the participants. Since the format of the conversation allowed the participants to ask more questions and establish dialogues, these new perspectives were incorporated into the analysis. Questions on the experience of men and women during remote work were included to get a better understanding of the role of men during Covid-19 telework.

³⁶ The participants of the focus group were employees from companies located in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay.



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GENDER PARITY ACCELERATORS (IPGS)

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Central Puerto S.A.
Coalición Costarricense de Iniciativa de Desarrollo
Comité Colombiano de la Comisión de Integración Energética Regional
Corporación Favorita Corporación Multi Inversiones
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