

SHE MEANS BUSINESS

A primer on the status of
women's empowerment in
Indian businesses
2014



Commissioned by:



Supported by:



British
High Commission
New Delhi



ABOUT CARE

Our Vision

We seek a world of hope tolerance and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and people live with dignity and security.

CARE International will be a global force and a partner of choice within a worldwide movement dedicated to ending poverty. We will be known everywhere for our unshakable commitment to the dignity of people.

In India, CARE seeks a society which celebrates diversity, where rights are secured, citizenship realized, and human potential fulfilled for all.

Our Mission

We facilitate the empowerment of women and girls from poor and marginalised communities in the fight to overcome poverty, exclusion and social injustice. We nurture leadership internally and among partners to achieve this mission

Our Programme Goal

Women from the most marginalized communities are empowered, live in dignity and their households and communities are secure and resilient.

**Directions to
Systematise, Refine and Scale Up
Women's Empowerment
within the Indian Business Culture**





LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASSOCHAM:	Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India
BCCI:	Bombay Chambers of Commerce and Industry
BPL:	Below Poverty Line
BSE:	Bombay Stock Exchange
CCTV:	Close Circuit Television
CII:	Confederation of Indian Industry
Cop:	Communication on Progress
CSR:	Corporate Social Responsibility
FICCI:	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
GRI:	Global Reporting Initiative
HR:	Human Resources
ILO:	International Labour Organisation
ISO:	International Organisation for Standardisation
IT & ITES:	Information Technology and Information Technology Enabled Services
LPG:	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals
MNC:	Multinational Corporation
MSME:	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
NASSCOM:	National Association of Software and Services Companies
NGO:	Non Governmental Organisation
NSE:	National Stock Exchange
NVGs:	National Voluntary Guidelines
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSH:	Occupational Safety and Health
PHC:	Primary Health Centre
PSU:	Public Sector Undertaking
SC:	Scheduled Caste
SEBI:	Securities and Exchange Board of India
SHG:	Self Help Group
ST:	Scheduled Tribe
TERI:	The Energy and Resources Institute
UK:	United Kingdom
UN:	United Nations
UNEP:	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGC:	United Nations Global Compact
UNIDO:	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
USA:	United States of America
WEP:	Women's Empowerment Principles



CONTENTS



Executive Summary	○-----	9
About the Practical Guide	○-----	12
In Perspective: Primer One and the WEPs	○-----	13
WEPs: The Backstory and the Story Today	○-----	14
Scope of Survey and Design	○-----	17
Matching Insights with Action: Embedding WEPs within the Indian Business Culture	○-----	23
Principle 1	-----	23
Principle 2	-----	28
Principle 3	-----	38
Principle 4	-----	44
Principle 5	-----	49
Principle 6	-----	55
Principle 7	-----	59
The Road Ahead: Necessary Travel	○-----	65
Business Case for Increasing Diversity at the Workplace	○-----	66
Annexures	○-----	70





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



A first-of-its-kind comprehensive introductory primer *Gaining an Edge through Gender Equality* pooled in evidence-based, explanatory and operational tools, techniques and approaches to ground WEPs in the workplace, marketplace and communities. A set of easy-to-understand examples and practical cases of initiatives to both encourage adoption of WEPs and build capacity were included. The importance of empowering women financially were discussed in-depth and issues that could erode gains in this direction were red flagged. Self-assessment tools were also outlined for companies to gauge their readiness to implement WEPs.

This second volume analyses in-depth the acceptance of WEPs in the corporate world by looking at trends within its seven principles. Its detailed findings have been presented in a concise manner for a quick scrutiny.

DEFINING THE DISCOURSE

For the purpose of this study, 'Women's Empowerment' is understood as being a process whereby women enjoy their rights, both within and outside the business organisation, as employees, consumers, vendors, contractors and community members. It ensures:

- -- Dignity and freedom from discrimination
- -- Encouraging women's leadership and workforce diversity
- -- Promotion of women's entrepreneurship
- -- Development of women's skills and capacities
- -- Gender sensitive policy development and implementation
- -- Promote health, safety and well-being of women in the workforce and community

Interpretations of CARE India's second primer that has worked minutely through the nuts and bolts of the Principle for greater acceptability

Principle	Trends
<p>Principle 1: Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall low gender diversity on Boards. Representation of women on Boards, ranged from 4.25-28.5% across sectors • 42% of the businesses are signatories to the UNGC while only 10% disclosed promotion of WEP¹
<p>Principle 2: Treat all women and men fairly at work - respect and support human rights and non-discrimination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preponderance of men over women in the workforce. Highest representation of women in workforce seen in IT&ITES and financial services sector (16% - 24%) • Minimal information on Dalit/Adivasi women in the workforce. Although PSUs provided generic information about SC/ST workforce representation, it was not gender disaggregated • Favourable maternity entitlements, child care and flexible work options were offered by IT&ITES and financial services companies. Only 16% companies provided paternity entitlements
<p>Principle 3: Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 44.1% of the companies had anti-sexual harassment policies in place. These companies belonged to: financial services (86%) and IT and food and beverages (80%) followed by energy (75%) • 41% companies had internal complaints committees in place. The firms were from financial services (86%), energy sector (75%) and IT and metal products (60% respectively) • Only 36.6% had external representation on their complaints committees, although the Vishakha Guidelines on Sexual Harassment in Workplaces clearly state that such committee should involve a third party, either an NGO or any other entity familiar with the issue of sexual harassment • Disclosures on number of cases of sexual harassment reported/resolved were ambiguous. Very few companies provided details both on the number of cases reported/and not resolved. Mostly information was restricted to the number cases resolved. Details of cases reported were patchy. It was thus not possible to make an assessment of reporting mechanisms and the effectiveness of the complaint resolution process

¹The UNGC is a call to businesses everywhere to align their strategies and operations with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of UN goals and issues. The Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) are a set of Principles for businesses offering seven steps on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. WEPs, are thus more specific and pertain to women's empowerment. (http://www.weprinciples.org/files/attachments/WEPs,_UNGC,_Guiding_Principles_on_Business_and_Human_Rights_Explanatory_Note.pdf)

Principle	Trends
<p>Principle 4: Promote education, training and professional development for women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the companies studied had professional training and development programmes for women in place. IT & ITES and consulting companies were at the forefront here • Training and professional development programmes for women pertained to networking, mentoring, leadership and skill up gradation Only anecdotal information was available regarding training of women for non-traditional roles
<p>Principle 5: Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the presence of very few women suppliers, there was not much attention given to supplier diversity • Businesses are using their domain expertise to support social causes or develop products that meet women's needs – particularly in IT, energy and financial services • Minimal information from sectors that carry high risk of human trafficking/sexual exploitation of women on initiatives to address the same – for example, the sectors of aviation, hospitality and media
<p>Principle 6: Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of sectors had CSR programmes that focused on women through education, health and livelihoods • 83% companies in the energy sector had women focused CSR programmes
<p>Principle 7: Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42% companies disclosed information through sustainability reports • Low availability of gender disaggregated information • Poor transparency in media and aviation sectors



ABOUT THE PRACTICAL GUIDE



CARE India is implementing a project to promote adoption of the Women's Empowerment Principles in Indian businesses.

The present volume invigorates and redoubles the efforts of the first publication. It takes the process a step further, measuring the extent to which the WEPs have permeated the fabric of the Indian corporates since 2010. Using a practical frame of reference -- juxtaposing the current realities in these seven areas against expected outcomes -- it seeks to answer two crucial questions:

- How do businesses (across 10 selected sectors) promote 'women's empowerment' in India?
- What critical impediments do they face while promoting women's empowerment within their own organisation and related domains of functioning?

This volume critically evaluates current corporate efforts to instil WEPs with precise intentions. The aim is to redirect

(re-adjusted practices could help prop up failing interventions); deepen interventions (by using good practices and tested approaches), systematise (to ensure permanence of WEP in corporate structures); and scale efforts (expand lessons to benefit more women and companies).

The study methodology uses a combination of primary study, secondary study and study of disclosures.

A total of 56 companies across ten sectors have been studied. The 10 sectors include: aviation, consulting, energy, financial services, food and beverages, hospitality, information technology and information technology enabled services (IT & ITES), media, metal products and telecommunications.

CARE India truly believes when women's talents, innovation and leadership skills are harnessed and their competencies strengthened, the tipping point to a dramatic social transformation can be reached.

Implanting WEPs into corporate structures will mean the accomplishment of new skills, delineation of new roles and responsibilities, refining of learnings and fostering innovative, untried experiments. But at the end of the road there will be dramatic economic turnarounds for women.

CARE India intends this primer to be a guide that enriches and not just a manual. It is meant for all manner of people in the corporate world, situated in various positions and tiers.

IN PERSPECTIVE PRIMER 1 & THE WEPs



'Gaining an Edge through Gender Equality'

This was the first primer or practical guide to understand the WEPs in India. CARE India's history of work in women's empowerment led up to this comprehensive primer that generated a detailed introduction to a new approach to equip women economically. Meant to serve as an adaptation guide, the primer aims to promote a fundamental understanding of WEPs, the immense potential they hold for women employees and the company, how they can be braided into company practices, and how to overcome barriers of implementation.

It collates a range of practical, evidence-based methods, tools, strategies, resources and models to build capacity to instil WEPs into business models and work culture. WEPs, the primer articulates, when infused at every level of service in the company can serve as the launch pad for a significant transformation in a women's social and economic lives.

The current primer builds on the first guide. It goes on to critique the level of acceptance of WEP within companies and advocates ways to anchor them firmly.

WEPs AT A GLANCE

PRINCIPLE 1

Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality

PRINCIPLE 2

Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination

PRINCIPLE 3

Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers

PRINCIPLE 4

Promote education, training and professional development for women

PRINCIPLE 5

Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women

PRINCIPLE 6

Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy

PRINCIPLE 7

Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality

WEPs: THE BACKSTORY AND THE STORY TODAY



Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP) -- a partnership initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact (UNGC) launched in March 2010 in recognition of International Women's Day -- present seven gender-sensitive pathways for businesses to advance and empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community (highlighted earlier). Four years hence, the WEPs business network now comprises more than 450 companies globally. Their CEOs have signed the WEPs Statement of Support and have publicly pledged to work to implement the WEPs.

In India, business scenario contours are shifting swiftly. Companies are increasingly adhering to responsible businesses practices, and more and more business leaders are quickening efforts to embed WEPs within their corporate frameworks -- setting priorities, establishing goals and programmatic approaches. The intent is to both to economically empower the women they employ and

galvanise lasting transformations that anchor value creation and lasting profits for the company.

While for greater global acceptability and sustainability, Indian companies are aligning with initiatives like the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI); UN Global Compact 10 Principles; and SA 8000 .

Companies are equally responsive to national processes like the National Voluntary Guidelines (NVGs) on Social, Environmental and Economic Responsibilities of Business and the Companies Act, 2013 (which now makes it compulsory for all companies within certain criteria, both in the private and public sectors, to develop policies on CSR, earmark a part of the profit for CSR and to monitor the CSR performance at the Board level.

Sharpening economic decline for women, sharper worries

Yet there is cause for concern. Evaluations of the latest Global Gender Gap Index (2013) does not bode well for

Staunching the economic decline of women in India

According to the World Bank:

- Two out of every three women in India are unemployed. The result: negative impacts on the country's GDP

The UN and International Labour Organisation holds the conviction that:

- Increasing economic opportunities for women could push up India's growth rate by 4.2 per cent

Source: Persis Khambatta, India Needs More Women in the Workforce, Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 2013

Gender gap subindexes - India



	Rank	Score
Economic Participation & Opportunity	124	0.446
Labour force participation	124	0.36
Wage equality for similar work (survey)	86	0.62
Estimated earned income (PPP US\$)	125	0.27
Legislators, senior officials & managers	—	—
Professional & technical workers	—	—



	Rank	Score
Educational attainment	120	0.857
Literacy rate	123	0.68
Enrolment in primary education	1	1.00
Enrolment in secondary education	111	0.79
Enrolment in tertiary education	107	0.73



	Rank	Score
Health and survival	135	0.931
Sex ratio at birth (female/male)	133	0.89
Healthy life expectancy	112	1.02



	Rank	Score
Political empowerment	9	0.385
Women in Parliament	106	0.12
Women in ministerial positions	100	0.11
Years with female head of state (last 50)	1	0.72

The prognosis for India by the Global Gender Gap Report 2013 is bleak. This is a table of its findings, compiled by The Hindu.

India. Ranked 101 against 136 countries, its performance in the four fundamental categories for men and women: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment are poor. India's gender gap index is 0.655 on a 0 to 1 scale, with 0 denoting inequality and 1 equality. Accentuating the crisis is the fact that India's score on the economic participation and opportunity index has plummeted and it continues to be the lowest ranked of the BRIC economies.

The time for broad-based, intense and inclusive economic growth in India for women is now. More than ever, it is being recognised that women are a huge demographic group accounting for a significant percentage of the value chain. The challenge lies in finding a fine balance between corporate growth and equitable returns for women's labour in this sphere, the marketplace and communities. It seems forbidding as attitudes and practices that perpetuate and endorse gender-bias are deep rooted, yet is entirely possible if the huge economic returns that flow from investing in women are recognised and build upon.



SCOPE OF SURVEY & DESIGN



Scope of the study

This research was designed as an exploratory study to review the extent of absorption of policies and practices that promote gender equality and women's empowerment within businesses in India. Using the WEPs as the framework, the study examines the aspirations of businesses to promote women's empowerment and existing good practices, while also identifying gaps in need of redress.

The broad research questions that have been studied are:

- How do businesses (across 10 selected sectors) promote 'women's empowerment' in India?
- What critical impediments do they face while promoting women's empowerment within their own organisation and related domains of functioning?

The framework of the study of WEP has been grouped into two domains:

1. Inner space: Most businesses have streamlined processes and systems that facilitate the smooth functioning of the organisation.

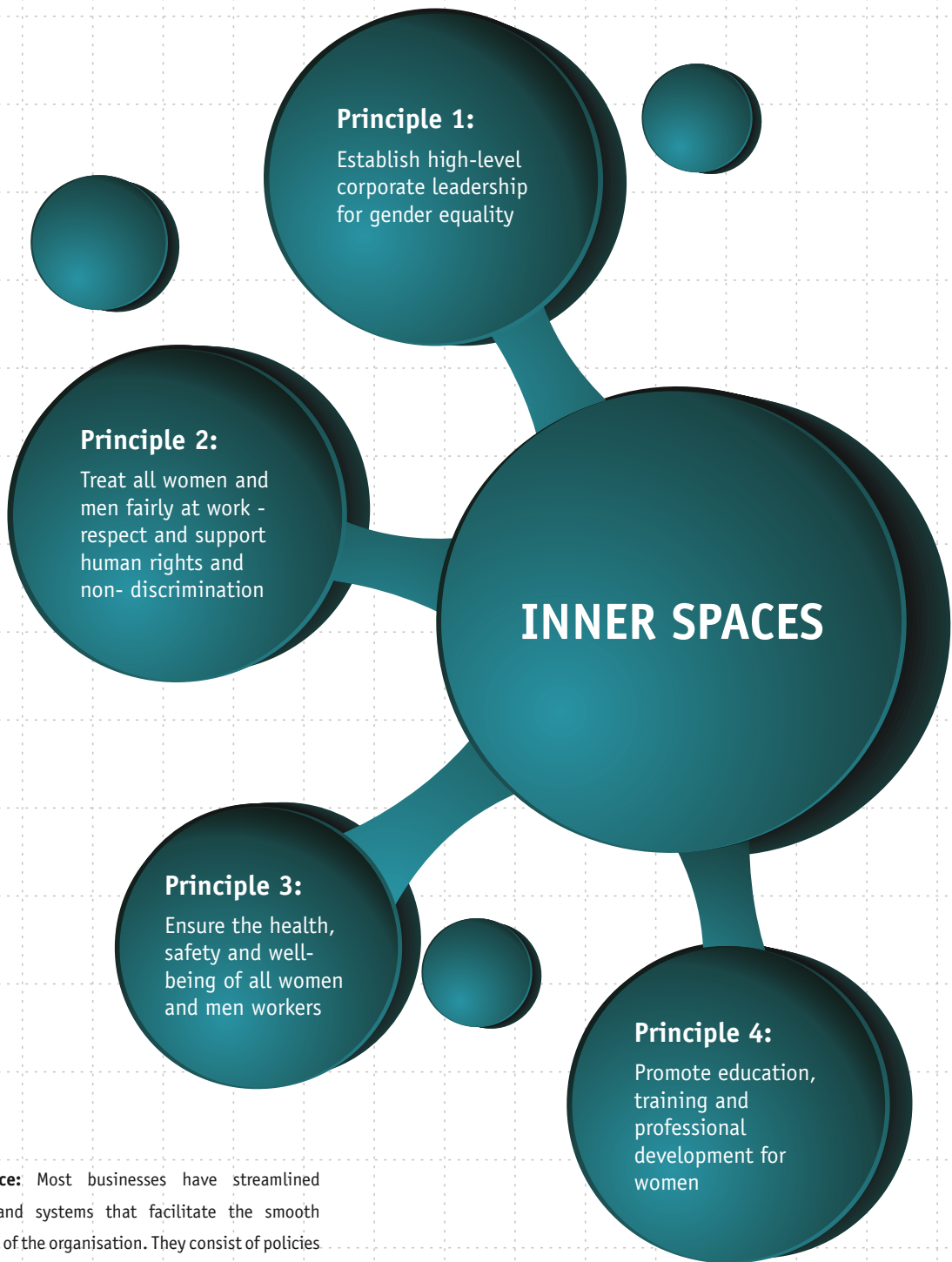
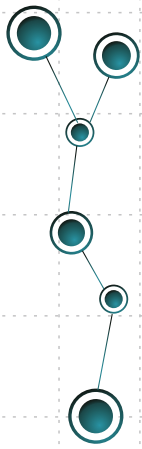
They consist of policies and procedures that direct employees at various levels of decision-making on what steps to take under a given set of circumstances.

These systems of governance also set the tone of the organisational culture including the organisation values, vision, norms, systems, symbols, beliefs and habits. These also have an impact on gender relations and consequently on women's empowerment.

2. Sphere of Influence: Businesses also have the capacity to influence and be influenced by those within their eco system – their employees, vendors, supply chains, consumers and communities.

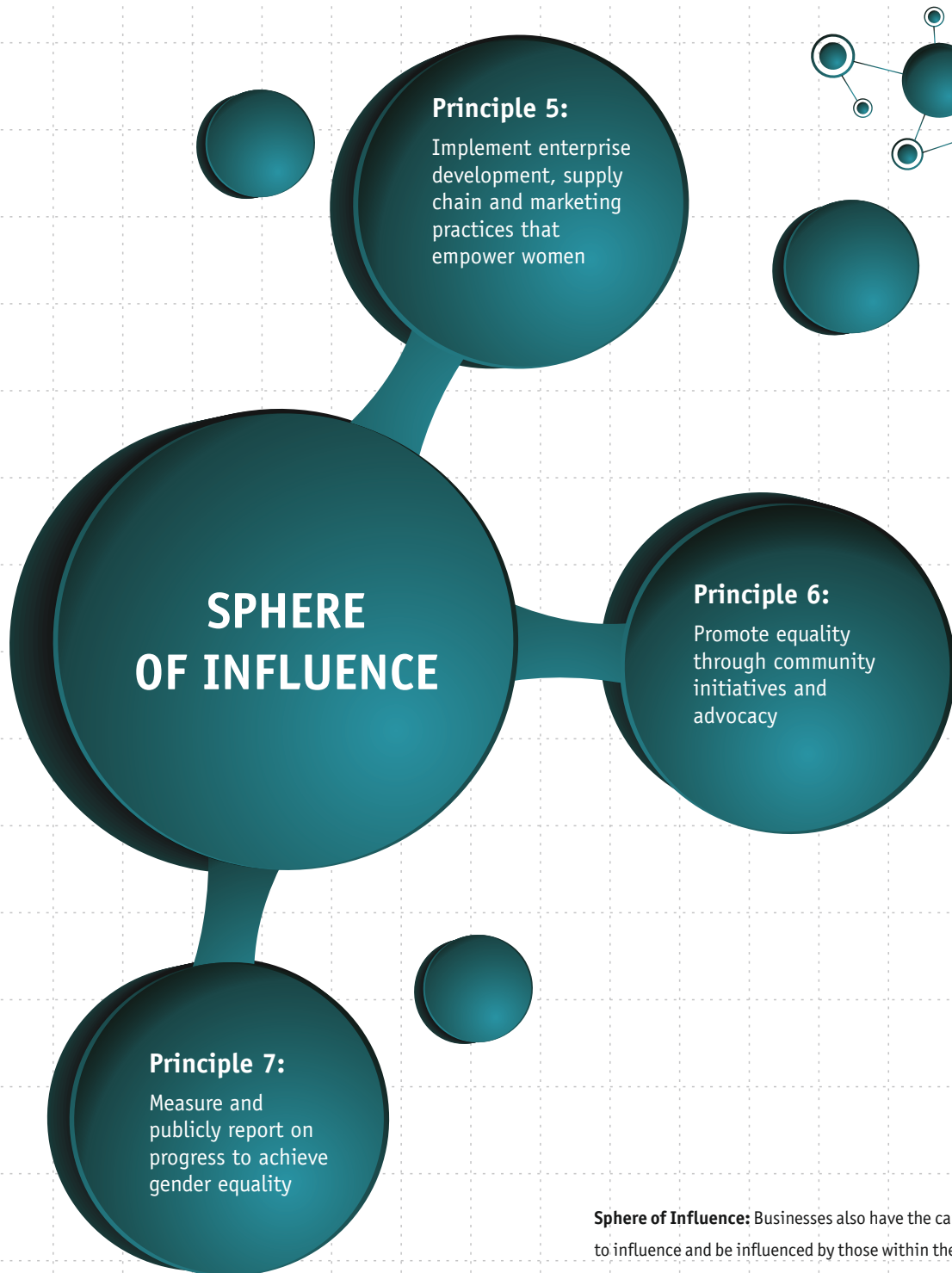
These are stakeholders who are directly or indirectly affected by the decisions and actions taken by the company and vice versa.

The underlying assumption here is that the company can enable positive change among its diverse range of stakeholders through the power of its influence. .



Inner space: Most businesses have streamlined processes and systems that facilitate the smooth functioning of the organisation. They consist of policies and procedures that direct employees at various levels of decision-making on what steps to take under a given set of circumstances. These systems of governance also set the tone of the organisational culture including the organisation values, vision, norms, systems, symbols, beliefs and habits. These also have an impact on gender relations and consequently on women's empowerment.





Sphere of Influence: Businesses also have the capacity to influence and be influenced by those within their eco system – their employees, vendors, supply chains, consumers and communities. These are stakeholders who are directly or indirectly affected by the decisions and actions taken by the company and vice versa. The underlying assumption here is that the company can enable positive change among its diverse range of stakeholders through the power of its influence.

Within each of these two domain, the study broadly aims to assess the following:

Inner spaces	Sphere of influence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which businesses demonstrate gender diversity in their top management and workforce • The extent to which businesses have in place policies and practices that support and promote gender equality. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - policies and practices ensuring freedom from gender-based discrimination (eg. Anti-sexual harassment policies and procedures) - flexible work options, leave and re-entry opportunities to positions of equal pay and status - access to child and dependent care by providing services, resources and information to both women and men • The extent to which businesses offer opportunities for training and professional development to their employees • The extent to which policies and practices ensure health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which businesses uphold women's empowerment in the marketplace vis-à-vis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promoting supplier diversity - supporting enterprise development for women - developing business solutions (products and services) that meet the needs and requirements of women as consumers • The extent to which community engagement initiatives of businesses promote empowerment of women and girls

Methodology

The research methodology has followed the route of sample selection, data collection, data analysis and reporting, as elaborated in the process flow illustration below

1

SAMPLE SELECTION

Selection of selectors
Selection of companies

2

DATA COLLECTION

Collection of Disclosure Information
Collection of Primary Information
Collection of Secondary Information

3

ANALYSIS

Using WEP Framework
Analysis of Trends

4

REPORT WRITING

Recommendations for action

. The final list of sectors were:

- 1.Aviation
- 2.Consulting
- 3.Energy
- 4.Financial services
- 5.Food and beverages
- 6.Hospitality
- 7.Media
- 8.Metal products
- 9.IT & ITES
- 10.Telecommunication



SECTOR SELECTION

Reviewing the extent of absorption of policies & practices



Aviation

No. of companies: 5
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs. 1,600 crore and Rs. 18,000 crore



Consulting

No. of companies: 5
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs 42,000 crore and Rs 19,200 crore



Energy

No. of companies: 8
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs. 9,500 crore and Rs. 83,000 crore
1 small company with a revenue less than Rs. 10 crore



Financial services

No. of companies: 7
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs. 978 crore and Rs. 135,692 crore



Food and beverages

No. of companies: 6
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs 6,000 crore and Rs 210,000 crore



Media

No. of companies: 5
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs. 1,235 crore and Rs. 9,627 crore



Metal products

No. of companies: 6
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs. 35,000 crore and Rs. 135,000 crore



IT & ITES

No. of companies: 5
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs 3,600 crore and Rs 61, crore



Hospitality

No. of companies: 4
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs. 213 crore and Rs. 840 crore



Telecommunication

No. of companies: 5
Size: Revenues ranging between Rs. 2600 crore to Rs. 35,886 crore

Profile of companies studied

A total of 56 companies were studied as part of this research. Of these, 87% were private companies and 13% were public sector undertakings (PSUs). The company selection also had a regional focus in the sense that the companies identified were concentrated in the cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Bangalore, in order to maximise reach and make effective use of time and resources.

MATCHING INSIGHTS WITH ACTION: EMBEDDING WEPs WITHIN THE INDIAN BUSINESS CULTURE



This section of the report makes a Principle-by-Principle assessment, surveying the degree of each one of the seven principle's acceptance within corporate structures.

PRINCIPLE 1: ESTABLISH HIGH-LEVEL CORPORATE LEADERSHIP FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Affirm high-level support and direct top-level policies for gender equality and human rights

Establish company-wide goals and targets for gender equality and include progress as a factor in managers' performance reviews

Engage internal and external stakeholders in the

development of company policies, programmes and implementation plans that advance equality

Ensure that all policies are gender-sensitive – identifying factors that impact women and men differently – and that corporate culture advances equality and inclusion

Introduction

The acceptance and assimilation of Principle 1 -- that means taking on gender equality as a sound business strategy by the top management in an organisation -- will have a positive ripple effect on issues such as governance, operations and organisational culture. Leadership backing for this component will allow for several breakthroughs: the setting of company-wide goals and targets on gender equality, the close tracking and monitoring of its progress, and the involvement of diverse stakeholder groups in gender sensitive policy making.

This section analyses gender diversity in the Board as a key



enabling factor that supports the development of company's policies, programmes and plans to advance equality. It also looks at the seriousness of commitment to gender equality by businesses.

Representation of women in Boards

Under-representation of women in upper tiers of management is a global phenomenon. Research indicates that women constitute less than 15% of corporate Boards in the USA, UK, Canada, Europe and Australia². In Asia the representation of women on corporate Boards is even lower, at an average of six percent³.

India, though poised on the brink of becoming a global

Women at the helm

Chapter XI of the draft rules under the Companies Act, 2013, makes provision for the appointment of women on corporate boards:

11.1. For the purposes of second proviso to sub-section (1) of section 149 the following class of companies shall appoint at least one woman director within the period indicated against each of them, as under:-

- Every listed company - within one year from the commencement of second proviso to sub-section (1) of section 149;
- Every other company having a paid-up share capital of Rs 100 crore or more – within three years from the commencement of second proviso to sub-section (1) of section 149

economic giant, performs poorly on the issue of women in the boardroom. A 2010 study sponsored by Standard Chartered titled 'Women on Corporate Boards in India 2010' found that out of a total of 1,112 directorships on the top 100 companies listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange, only 59 directorships were held by women, representing a mere 5.3% of all directorships. It was seen that 54% of the companies had no female representation at all in their Boards.

Study trends

- Representation of women on the Boards of companies was found to be generally low, ranging between 4.25% and 28.5% across the 10 sectors
- The highest representation of women on the Board was seen in media sector at an average of 28.5%. This is mostly because, one of the companies studied was a family owned business and women constituted 50% of the Board membership, thereby pushing up the average.
- The lowest representation of women on the Board was seen in the aviation sector at 4.25%. This is of significance as the aviation sector has a large female workforce at the lower levels of the organisation – as flight attendants, cabin crew and ground staff. The history of struggle against discrimination and for gender equity faced by these women is well known. The question that arises is, when there are large numbers of women at lower levels in these companies, what are the barriers that prevent them from rising to top management positions? Apart from inadequacy in gender sensitive policy making, it is clear that patriarchal norms are being extended to structures and systems in the business context also

²Siri Terjesen and Val Singh, Female Presence on Corporate Boards: A Multi-Country Study of Environmental Context, Journal of Business Ethics, (2008) 83:55–63, DOI 10.1007/s10551-007-9656-1

³Women Matter: An Asian Perspective, Harnessing Female Talent to Raise Corporate Performance, McKinsey and Company

- Food and beverages, financial services and the telecommunications sectors had an average representation of women on Board greater than 15% but less than 20%
- Among the business associations studied, the representation of women in top management (managing committee, elected office bearers) ranged between 6.25% and 40%. In among half of the associations studied, the top management had no gender diversity

The findings presented above corroborate the trends found in the 2010 Standard Chartered supported research. What compounds the gender asymmetries is the fact that business associations which are representative bodies of industries (and are mandated to undertake policy advocacy on behalf of member companies) also have low women representation in their top management tiers. These bodies are usually elected or nominated by members to represent them in the association. It is usually senior members from a company who serve as top council members/elected members/office bearers in associations. It is not unsurprising then that when the top management of the parent companies have low gender representation this finds reflection in the structures of the top management of business associations.

Why is female representation in high level corporate leadership important for gender equality? To answer this, two things must be considered. One, viewed from the perspective of human rights and equity, increased participation of women in top management is vital to ensure that the rights and choices of women are protected. Two, from a business point of view, an increase in female presence on Boards and senior management perceptibly and positively impacts the bottom line⁴.

The current global climate is marked by economic slowdown and talent scarcity. Hence, in order to maintain competitive advantage, businesses need to bring on board the best talent and capitalise on the benefits that women in leadership positions can bring to an organisation. Research suggests that women leaders bring on board new ideas and improved communication, insights on female market segmentation and alternative leadership and management styles such as influence and inspiration, rather than command and control to achieve their goals.

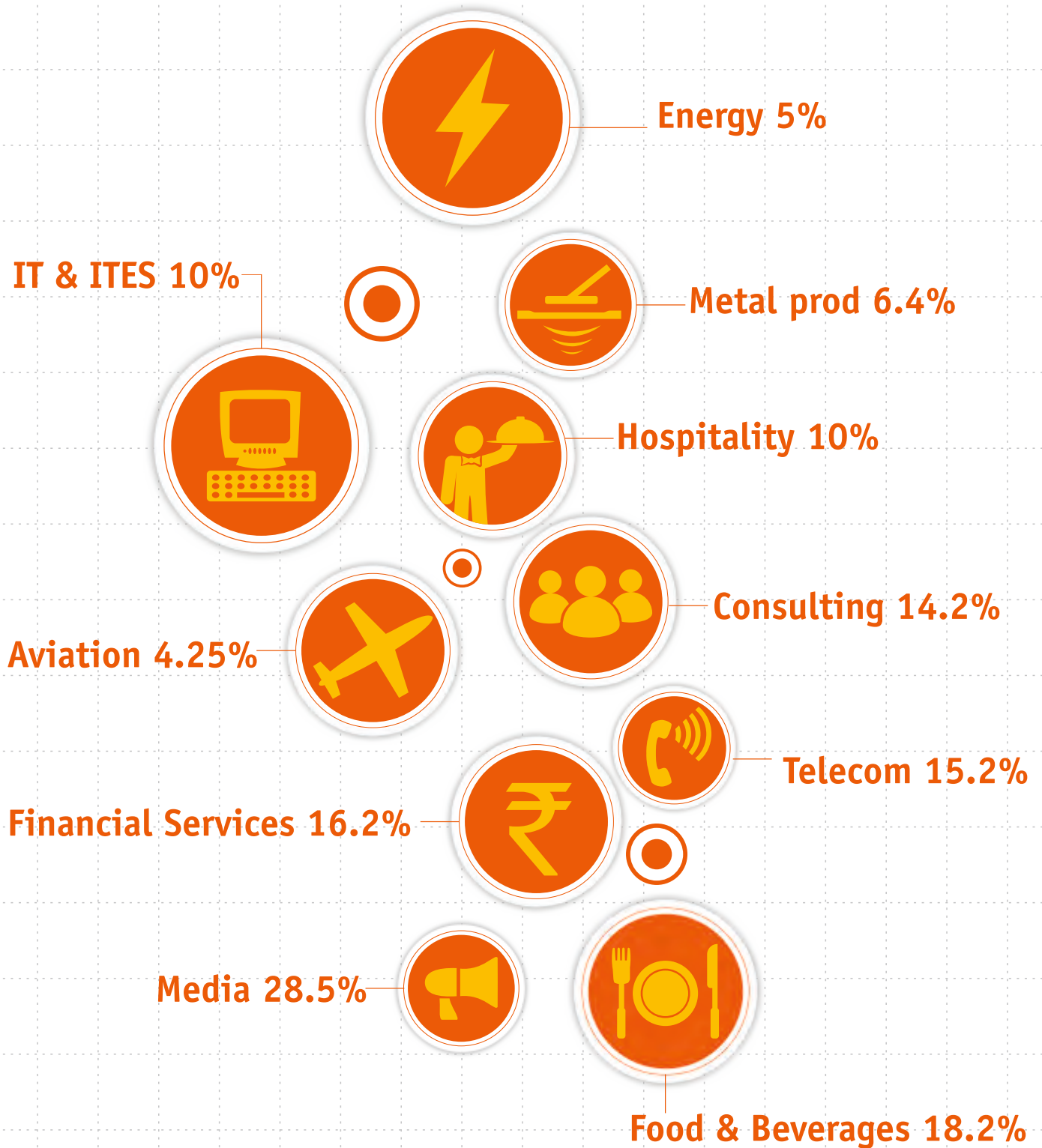
Another important question that should be raised is - do gender diverse Boards positively impact women? (including women employees, women in the supply chain and other women in the eco system of the business) Research suggests that female Board members can represent career opportunities for potential female employees, inspire existing women employees to aspire for senior management roles and also facilitate networking and mentoring of women professionals through corporate networks⁵.

Further, a gender diverse Board can also contribute towards more gender sensitive policy making in terms of recruitments, professional development, employee benefits, contractors and vendors in the supply chain and the company's CSR initiatives. In addition to the benefits it brings to the business, gender diversity at the highest levels, contributes to women's agency significantly. The World Development Report on Gender Equality and Development 2012, defined agency as 'the ability to use endowments to take advantage of opportunities to achieve desired outcomes'. The report outlined five 'expressions of agency', one of which pertained to 'having voice in society and influencing policy'. While this pertains more to the political rights of women, the analysis can be used to strengthen the demand for more gender diverse boards.

⁴Women in the Boardroom: A Global Perspective, Deloitte, Nov 2011

⁵Siri Terjesen and Val Singh, Female Presence on Corporate Boards: A Multi-Country Study of Environmental Context, Journal of Business Ethics, (2008) 83:55–63, DOI 10.1007/s10551-007-9656-1

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN ON BOARDS



International standards, norms and guidelines to advance gender equality

International standards, norms and guidelines provide companies with ethical frameworks and benchmarks to aid their organisational policy making. They provide a forum for businesses to come together and join in to pursue a goal that promotes the common good. The most well-known is the UNGC which outlines 10 universal principles for responsible business.

Several others such as the ISO 26000, Child Rights and Business Principles Initiative, the NVGs on Social, Economic and Environmental Responsibilities of Business, and the OECD guidelines, also support businesses to demonstrate responsibility in their policies, procedure and practices. From the point of view of gender equality, the WEPs provide a set of considerations to help the private sector focus on key elements integral to promoting gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community⁶.

It is envisioned that such engagement would ensure that all policies are gender-sensitive and that corporate culture would advance equality and inclusion.

Study trends

- Study of disclosures revealed that 42% of the businesses accepted and promoted the UNGC; several were also founding members of UNGC in India
- Only 10% of the companies studied, endorsed the UN Women's WEP. Of these 75% are in the IT sector and the remaining are from the sectors of consulting and metal products

- About 16% endorsed/or were members of other standards, norms and guidelines. They include:
 - UNESCO High Level Panel on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity
 - NASSCOM working group on gender inclusion
 - MDGs (1,2,3,4,5)
 - SA8000 standards on issues of labour/human rights
 - NVGs on Social, Economic and Environmental Responsibilities of Business, 2011
 - Transparency International
 - TERI-World Business Council on Sustainable Development (related to environment)
 - UNEP Finance Initiative (related to finance)

The low uptake/endorsement of the WEPs could be on account of the fact that it was released only in 2010 and is still in the process of being rolled out in companies. The potential for the WEP to grow and gain acceptance with more businesses is promising.

Companies that have endorsed the WEPs have spearheaded interesting initiatives to promote the issue of women's empowerment in their ecosystem. Some of these include:

- Setting up forums to connect women employees for networking and professional development
- Setting targets to promote gender diversity in the workplace
- Setting up mentoring and leadership development programmes, in particular those that promote the career growth and development of women employees

⁶<http://www.weprinciples.org/Site/Overview/>

PRINCIPLE 2: TREAT ALL WOMEN AND MEN FAIRLY AT WORK - RESPECT AND SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS AND NON DISCRIMINATION

Pay equal remuneration, including benefits, for work of equal value and strive to pay a living wage to all women and men

Ensure that workplace policies and practices are free from gender-based discrimination

Implement gender-sensitive recruitment and retention practices and proactively recruit and appoint women to managerial and executive positions and to the corporate board of directors

Assure sufficient participation of women – 30% or greater – in decision-making and governance at all levels and across all business areas

Offer flexible work options, leave and re-entry opportunities to positions of equal pay and status

Support access to child and dependent care by providing services, resources and information to both women and men

Introduction

Principle 2 outlines the means by which businesses can ensure fair and just working conditions for men and women employees. From recruitments, remunerations, workplace policies and practices, decision making, working conditions to child care, there are a range of actions that businesses can take to foster gender equality.

This chapter takes a comprehensive look at policies and practices pertaining to women in the workforce by reviewing maternity/paternity entitlements, flexible work options and support for child care. Sadly, study data pertaining to equal wages, recruitment processes and women's participation in governance and decision making, were not available. An informed analysis on these issues has hence not been possible.

Women in the workforce

India has recorded impressive economic gains in the past decade, but women's participation in the labour market has been on a steady decline. According to the Global Employment Trends 2013 report of the ILO⁷ there has been a steep fall in the labour force participation rate for women in India from just over 37% in 2004-05 to 29% in 2009-10. While the number of women in agriculture has reduced, there has been no concurrent increase of women's participation in other sectors like industry and services. Confirming this downward work spiral for women is the 68th round of the National Sample Survey. It says that the work participation rate for women stood at 21.9% in 2011-12 – recording a dramatic four percent fall from the 2001 rate of 25.9%.

The World Bank has more bad news. Its figures point to two out of every three women in India being unemployed. Compounding the crisis and neglect is the reality of the enormous unpaid work that women do, such as domestic chores, and caring for children, sick and the elderly. Apart from being a violation of women's human rights, the impact of unpaid work on women, especially those that live in poverty, is tremendous. It prevents girls from accessing developmental opportunities and impairs women's economic chances. Women in employment, on

⁷Global Employment Trends 2013: Recovering from A Second Jobs Dip



the other hand, are caught in a double bind. They have to fit their home activities into their daily working routines, leaving them with little or no leisure time. When caught in conflicting scenarios such as this, it has been seen that the burden of working women mostly get shifted to other female members of the family⁸. Unemployment and unpaid work are, thus, the two primary factors responsible for escalating the scale and severity of women's inequality.

Prevailing patriarchal attitudes view and define work within narrow confines. Work is seen to be activities that are paid, takes place between nine am and five pm and that which happens outside the home. What does this insular, far-from-inclusive worldview mean for India's economic growth and development? It means serious and undoubtedly lasting negative impacts for the country's GDP as a sizeable number of women are left out of the labour mainstream and their efforts within homes remain economically and socially discounted. According to the UN and International Labour Organisation, increasing economic opportunities for women could take up India's growth rate by a significant 4.2 per cent⁹.

Losing out on talented women

"When women are insufficiently represented in the workplace, we lose out on 50% of the talent pool. In an environment where human capital makes all the difference between success and failure, this is a massive loss which countries and corporates can ill-afford." – Cyrus Mistry, Chairman, Tata Group

Source: Chairman's message, Tata Global Beverages Annual Report and Financial Statements 2012-13 'Celebrating Women'

Study trends

- At all levels and in every sector, the number of men in the workforce far exceed the number of women in the workforce
- In the 10 sectors studied, the IT and financial services sectors are the largest employers of women. In the former it ranges between 24 and 34% while in the

⁸Liz Ford, A Woman's Job: Who Cares about Unpaid Carers?, The Guardian, Monday 7 October 2013

⁹Persis Khambatta, India Needs More Women in the Workforce, Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 9, 2013

India needs more women in the workforce

48% of working women in India drop out of the workforce before they reach mid-career. The largest percentage of Indian women leaving the workforce occurs between the junior and middle level, as opposed to between the middle and senior levels. Family pressure and cultural norms are most often cited as reasons for leaving in the early stages, and women often find it easier to remain at junior levels or to leave the workforce altogether.

Source: Persis Khambatta, India Needs More Women in the Workforce, Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 9th, 2013

latter it ranges between 16 and 24%. It has not been possible to chart trends on the work roles of women due to paucity of information

- In the energy sector, women in the workforce constitute less than 10%. This could be on account of the nature of the business
- In the aviation sector, 20% of the companies did not disclose any workforce related information; 60% disclosed workforce information that was not gender disaggregated; 20% of the companies reported that 60% of their workforce comprises women
- No information was available across companies on Dalit/Adivasi women in the workforce. In disclosures, PSUs provided generic information regarding percentage of SC/STs in their workforce, while private sector companies were not forthcoming with any information. Responses in primary data on the extent of representation of Dalit/Adivasi women in the workforce mostly evoked a response of 'Don't know'.

Some information was available from websites of business associations, regarding vocational training programmes targeted at SC/STs youth to enhance employability and entrepreneurship as part of the Affirmative Action programme. However, this information was not always gender disaggregated or updated

- Some companies in IT, energy and hospitality sectors did provide gender disaggregated workforce information by seniority and age. An analysis of this data indicates that a large percentage of women in the workforce are employed at junior levels in the company. These women are generally below 30 years of age. There is a significant drop in the percentage of women in the workforce at middle levels in the organisation
- Among the companies that provided primary information for the study, intra-organisational information pertaining to workforce varied. While

A fight to the end ... for equal opportunities

The Hotel Association of India had filed a writ petition in the High Court of Delhi in July 1999. It challenged the 92-year old Section 30 of the Punjab Excise Act 1914, arguing that it was enacted under the British Rule in 1914 was totally misplaced, "out of time" and discriminatory towards women on the basis of sex, amounting to violation of their right to equal opportunity at workplaces in the hospitality sector.

After a prolonged legal battle that lasted five years, the Delhi High Court, in a landmark judgment on January 12, 2006, declared Section 30 of the Punjab Excise Act 1914 ultra vires under Article 226 of the Constitution of India.

Source: HAI website

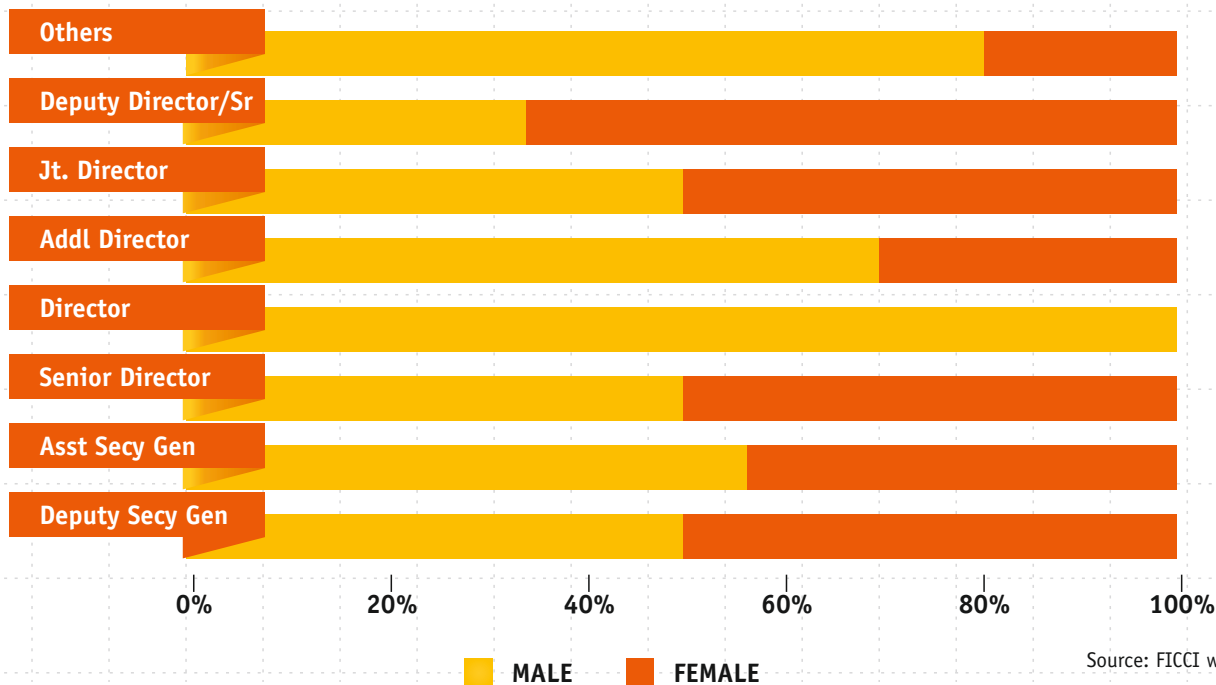
responses provided by senior women professionals generally tallied with that seen in disclosures, responses from junior women professionals were uneven. This indicates a need to sensitise employees at the junior level about these issues, perhaps through induction trainings, orientations and refresher courses. It also indicates a need to strengthen internal communications by companies with regard to their women workforce

business associations for the hotel industry also moved the court on the issue of equal opportunities for work for women in the hotel industry

An analysis of these trends throw up interesting facts. Large representations of women in the workforce were to be found in the IT and financial services sectors. They top the list from among the 10 sectors studied. This can be attributed to the desire among women to have a white collar jobs with high salaries and to the international mobility that the IT sector provides. The fact that IT jobs are accompanied by gender-neutral policies at the

- Among business associations, gender diversity at the top leadership and Secretariat levels were analysed.

FICCI GENDER COMPOSITION OF SECRETARIAT



As has been mentioned in previous sections, there was low gender diversity in top management. At the Secretariat level, while there was still a preponderance of men over women, the representation of women was reasonably good across various roles and positions, as illustrated by the examples given below in the graph. One of the

company level (as the emphasis is on the possession of knowledge-centric skills), flexible work routines, and physically less demanding work processes within comfortable indoor work environments helps women immeasurably. Similarly, the presence of large numbers of women in the financial services sector, particularly banking, could be explained by the fact that such jobs are

viewed as safe, low-stress, with regular work timings and women-friendly environments. Additional incentives for women are good perks (such as, housing, soft loans, structured working hours and maternity policies) and comfortable working conditions.

The energy sector shows low participation of women in the workforce. This could be on account of the nature of the business. The value chain involves exploration/mining, production activities, processing, storing, transporting and the marketing of crude oil and natural gas.

It also involves refining processes to provide consumers with gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, heating oil, asphalt, lubricants, synthetic rubber, plastics, fertilisers, antifreeze, pesticides, pharmaceuticals and natural gas. These production processes involve immense physical labour and are clearly considered to be outside of women's domains. Other reasons why women are discouraged or not employed in this sector are because work in this sphere requires people to deal with heavy machinery, long hours of work under harsh conditions, and duties in remote locations.

The issue of women's participation in the aviation industry is abound with problems. It is a matter of concern and deserves a closer look. The aviation industry employs women in large numbers as flight attendants, cabin crew and ground staff. It has often come under fire for promoting negative gender stereotypes and for its emphasis on women's physical appearance as an important job qualifier.

Historically, women flight attendants have had to fight a tough battle for equal treatment with their male counterparts. Even today, it appears that the battle has not been won. Recently, a private carrier announced that it would employ only women as cabin crew as a fuel saving

measure. The rationale being that women are 20 kgs lighter than men. This would hence make the aircraft lighter and it would burn less fuel.

While this might be seen as a brilliant window for fresh economic opportunities for women, there is a scary countervailing force at play. Such a move carries the very real risk of reverting to the days when airline companies monitored women's weight, fired them for becoming pregnant and did not provide them the same benefits as their male counterparts.

We view the lack of transparency among the aviation companies (even with regard to information in the public domain) and their reluctance to engage in a direct discussion with the research team as a missed opportunity. The initiation of a dialogue process with other stakeholders to make their companies/sector as one that upholds and promotes gender equality in every manner has been let go of.

An analysis of information pertaining to the participation of Dalit/Adivasi women in the workforce did not unfold any significant trends. The 'Affirmative Action' agenda gained momentum ever since its cause was pushed by many companies from 2006. This was after the Prime Minister called upon businesses to play a leadership role in development of SC/STs in the country.

The Indian industry drew up a robust Affirmative Action plan and undertook the 3E approach to enhance - Education, Entrepreneurship and Employability - among SC/STs through various programmes. Industrial houses even agreed to undertake a headcount of SCs/STs in their workforce and divulge details. Yet recent news reports underline the lack lustre measures and the inert responses by companies in the recent years to the action plan.

Reviewing the contribution to the Affirmative Action plans by the industry, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Selja Kumari, in her note addressed to several chambers of commerce like Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), called their achievements 'minuscule' and 'small'.

While undertaking these analysis on trends, major concerns arose. There were two concerns that were far more pronounced. One, while gathering primary data, the majority response of 'don't know' was an enormous discouragement for the researchers who were keen to elicit precise information.

Two, the near absence of workforce information pertaining to SC/STs was disappointing. In light of the importance accorded to the issue by business leaders at the national level and their public commitment to take concrete steps to address this issue, their lack of co-operation and inability to produce/share data on SC/ST employees proved disconcerting.

A huge disconnect between what the business fraternity is saying (through its business associations) and what they are doing at the level of individual businesses is obvious. There seems to be a perception that generating employment for people belonging to SC/ST is a 'political issue' and the duty of the government.

Companies now seem to have absolved themselves of all responsibility. Awareness on how and why Dalits/Adivasis are disadvantaged, what are the deprivations and discriminations they face, and why it is the responsibility of business to participate effectively in programmes for affirmative actions, does not seem to be apparent among the corporate fraternity.

The availability and willingness to disclose information pertaining to Dalit/Adivasis in general and women in particular is worrisome. The data suggests that that companies are not tracking information relating to Dalits/Adivasis, or if they are, they are not willing to disclose it.

PSUs at best provide general information regarding Dalit/Adivasis in their workforce, the private sector does not do even that. In both cases, gender disaggregated information on the subject is unavailable. This limits the scope for stakeholders such as civil society and government to learn, support or collaborate with them in their efforts towards affirmative action. While studying trends pertaining to the career growth of women it became increasingly clear that their career choices were determined by prevailing societal norms that placed the burden of child care and housekeeping almost exclusively on them.

This also severely constrained their mobility, an important expression of women's agency. Our study has uncovered that female presence in the workforce at junior levels was relatively higher as opposed to the middle and senior levels in the company. Below the age of 30, women it was noticed that women were unmarried and free of family responsibilities, thereby allowing more leverage to pursue their careers.

In their 30s and 40s, women were seen to be abandoning their careers to raise their children as per societal roles and expectations.

Creating an enabling work environment

Motherhood and women's traditionally ascribed reproductive roles have put women at a disadvantage in



Mother's Special

Policies across banks extend from childcare to flexi work and maternity leave in tranches

All the banks mentioned here have provision for maternity leave of six months

ICICI BANK

Maternity Leave: Can be extended by taking leaves without pay on a need basis

Child Care Leave: 36 days available each year for mothers and single fathers till the child attains the age of 2 years

Fertility Leave: 180 days for employees seeking to undergo treatment for fertility

Adoption Leave: To support an adoptive parent. 36 days of paid leave each year is available for women employees and single fathers

CITI INDIA

Women can avail of their maternity leave in tranches

Performance rating strategy for securing rating of women professionals at the time of maternity leave

HSBC

Leave without pay for upto 4 months

Maternity cover option to find temporary replacement for new mothers
Counselling sessions for new mothers

STANDARD CHARTERED

Day care centres in New Delhi and Mumbai, called, 'Colours of Joy'
Sabbaticals for women employees

Source: Anumeha Chaturvedi and Saumya Bhattacharya, Banks Lay Out Special Maternity Benefits in an Attempt to Retain Women Employees, ET Bureau Jun 18, 2013

terms of equal wages and opportunities for professional growth and career advancement. Motherhood can be a demanding and an exhausting responsibility, causing women's effort and productivity on the job to reduce. Or even if productivity does not fall, employer perceptions that mothers might be less productive could form barriers to women's careers.

Research suggests that creating an enabling work environment helps to ease women's fertility and career choices while also preventing them from dropping out of the workforce or opting for junior level/less challenging careers. Key among these enablers are maternity and parental leave policies that provide job guarantees to women who temporarily interrupt work for childcare, and childcare arrangements that free parents from their caregiver roles.

Study trends

- Of the companies studied, 44% disclosed information relating to the provision of paid maternity leave to their women employees. These companies belonged to the IT, energy, financial services, food and beverages, consulting, hospitality, metal products and telecommunication sectors. Among these the IT, energy, financial services, consulting, hospitality and metal products reported the period of maternity leave as ranging between 84 and 135 days. The remaining did not provide information about the number of days of maternity leave provided
- About 32% of the companies, who disclosed details of maternity leave, also granted their women employee's additional leave, over and above the stated maternity leave. This included the provision of an additional 15 days to one month leave on medical grounds, or extension of leave without pay for six months. These

companies were from the IT, financial services, telecommunications and metal products sectors

- The maximum maternity leave was provided by PSUs in the energy sector at 135 days
- About 26% of the above companies also provided information pertaining to the percentage of women who returned to work after availing maternity leave. They reported a returning rate ranging between 80.06% and 93%. These were from the IT, telecommunications and hospitality sectors
- About 18% of the companies disclosed details on the provisions of paternity leave. The period of leave ranged from three days to 15 days. These companies were from IT, energy, telecommunications and food and beverages sectors. The leave was available for both childbirth as well as for adoption. One company in the energy sector clearly stated that they did not provide parental leave for male employees
- 10% of the companies studied provided adoption leave to their employees. The period of leave ranged from six days to 135 days, with the highest being in PSUs in the energy sector
- 18% of the companies studied provided child care support/services to their employees. These companies were in the sectors of IT, energy, financial services, consulting, food and beverages and metal products. The support provided included:
 - Referrals and tie ups for crèche/day care at - discounted rates for employees
 - Provision of nursing stations in office premises
 - Provision of child care leave without pay
 - Provision of annual child care leave with pay for single parents

- 14% of the companies studied provided flexible work options to their employees. These companies were in the IT, financial services, consulting and metal products sectors. The various flexi work options provided included:
 - Work-from-home option for employees with children less than three years of age and for dependent care
 - Part time, flexi time and selective telecommuting
 - Work options from satellite offices
 - Leave or flexible work options when an employee's child is taking the standard 10 and 12 exams
 - Providing sabbaticals to employees for community service or higher education
 - Provision of transportation facilities, especially for women employees. This was on account of work shifts or due to health/pregnancy of the woman
- In addition to this, 10% companies had special innovative maternity/paternity benefits. These companies belonged to the IT and consulting sectors. Some of the programmes are as follows:
 - Support programmes for expecting mothers/new parents
 - Support groups and experience sharing forums for parents
 - Cab services for women employees in their third trimester
- 56% of the companies studied did not disclose information pertaining to the maternity/ paternity benefits offered to their employees in the public domain. These companies also did not provide any details of flexi work options, child care services

- 36% of companies that did not provide this information belonged to the media and aviation sectors. It is interesting to note that the aviation sector did not provide information pertaining to maternity/paternity benefits among its employees, although it did provide guidelines on carriage of pregnant female passengers

Paternity leave: a welcome, radical departure

In 1974, Sweden became the first country to replace maternity leave with parental leave. In Sweden, parents are entitled to 480 days of parental leave when a child is born or adopted. This leave can be taken by the month, week, day or even by the hour. Adopting parents are also entitled to a total of 480 days between them from the day the child comes under their care. A single parent is entitled to the full 480 days.

In 2012, men took about 24 per cent of parental leave.

Companies have come to expect employees to take leave irrespective of gender, and do not penalise fathers at promotion time. The shift in fathers' roles is perceived as playing a part in lower divorce rates and increasing joint custody of children.

This is perhaps the most striking example of social engineering, where a new definition of masculinity is emerging.

Source:

(i) <http://sweden.se/society/gender-equality-in-sweden/>

(ii) *Katrin Bennhold , The Female Factor, Sweden's Men Can Have It All, The New York Times, June 9, 2010*

These trends indicate that IT and financial services are the most women-friendly employers in terms of providing generous maternity/paternity entitlements, child care packages and flexible work options. It must be noted that most of the companies that were studied in the IT and financial services sector were either multinational companies (MNCs) or PSUs.

This could have a bearing on the type of policies the companies offer to their employees. It was noticed that MNCs, while adhering to the law of the land, generally tend to follow global precedents within their companies.

As MNCs work in different time zones, flexible work options, becomes a real possibility for their women employees. The work-from-home options provide a two-way solution -- flexibility for the woman employee while she carries on with the 'business as usual' alongside this.

PSUs on the other hand, being State-run organisations, bring the ethos of 'welfare' into their policies. They offer generous maternity leave, lasting as long as 135 days.

The issue of paternity leave presents a different side to the debate on gender equality. Patriarchal norms in India repose women with the primary responsibility for child care¹⁰.

There is need to 'ungender' the business of child care and recognise the rights and responsibilities of fathers equally with that of mothers. However, this concept, while popular in the west, is still in a latent stage in India.

This mind set has understandably influenced policy

making also. While women's right to maternity benefits was recognised as early as 1961 through the Maternity Benefits Act, men's right to paternity benefits has taken much longer to gain recognition and acceptance.

It is only in 1999 that the Central Government, by notification under Central Civil Services (Leave) Rule 551 (A) made provisions for paternity leave for male Central Government employees (including an apprentice and probationer) with less than two surviving children for a period of 15 days to take care of his wife and new born child. However, there is still a long way to go.

While paternity leave is granted to government employees, there is no law that makes paternity leave mandatory for the private sector.



Stepping stones: helping transit to a new life

HCL, an IT& ITES company, and a signatory of the WEP, has introduced 'Stepping Stone', a focussed life coach programme for women who are new mothers and require help to manage new expectations at work and home. Women here also receive access to a number of online resources on health, parenting, managing stress and health. More than 900 women benefitted by this programme during FY 2013.

Source: Rebalance, HCL Sustainability Report, 2013

¹⁰ Caroline Thorpe, Parental Leave: Men and Women at Work, Oct 15, 2012 (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gender/2012/10/15/parental-leave-men-and-women-at-work/>)

PRINCIPLE 3: ENSURE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF ALL WOMEN AND MEN WORKERS

Take into account differences of impacts on women and men, provide safe working conditions and protection from exposure to hazardous materials and disclose potential risks, including to reproductive health

Establish a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence at work, including verbal and/or physical abuse and prevent sexual harassment

Strive to offer health insurance or other needed services including for survivors of domestic violence - and ensure equal access for all employees

Respect women and men worker's rights to time off for medical care and counselling for themselves and their dependents

In consultation with employees, identify and address security issues, including the safety of women traveling to and from work on company-related business

Train security staff and managers to recognise signs of violence against women and understand laws and company policies on human trafficking, labour and sexual exploitation

Introduction

Principle 3 adopts a wide lens approach to women and men workers and sifts through all the conditions that build

resilience and contribute towards their health and wellbeing. This includes elements of occupational health, protection from exposure to hazardous materials as well as medical, counselling and insurance facilities. It also looks at violence against women, both domestic and at the workplace, as these issues detrimentally impact women's health and wellbeing.

The scope of this chapter also covers policies and practices of selected companies with regard to sexual harassment, both preventive and corrective. The available data, however, does not cover elements pertaining to domestic violence, counselling, medical and insurance facilities. It covers occupational health in a limited way but does not really throw light on how these issues impact men and women differently or how businesses address these differences.

Sexual harassment at the workplace

Sexual harassment at the workplace is an unpleasant reality that women professionals the world over have to cope with. It is widespread and affects women in every workplace setting and at every level of employment. According to a study undertaken by Oxfam India, only 17% working women in major Indian cities have admitted to sexual harassment at the workplace. Approximately 88% women in IT companies reveal they have faced some form of sexual harassment on condition of anonymity. In Bangalore, the software capital of India, over 700 complaints were filed with the Karnataka Labour Department in 2012. However, all these complaints are in the nature of anonymous emails, letters and complaints without full details of the cases¹¹.

¹¹Abhinav Bhatt, In India, Silence on Sexual Harassment? May 22, 2013, (www.ndtv.com)

Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 –introductory text

Sexual harassment results in violation of the Fundamental Rights of a woman to equality under Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India and her right to life and to live with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution and right to practice any profession or to carry on any occupation, trade or business which includes a right to a safe environment free from sexual harassment ...

The protection against sexual harassment and the right to work with dignity are universally recognised human rights by international conventions and instruments such as *Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, which has been ratified on the 25th June, 1993 by the Government of India.

Source: Wikipedia

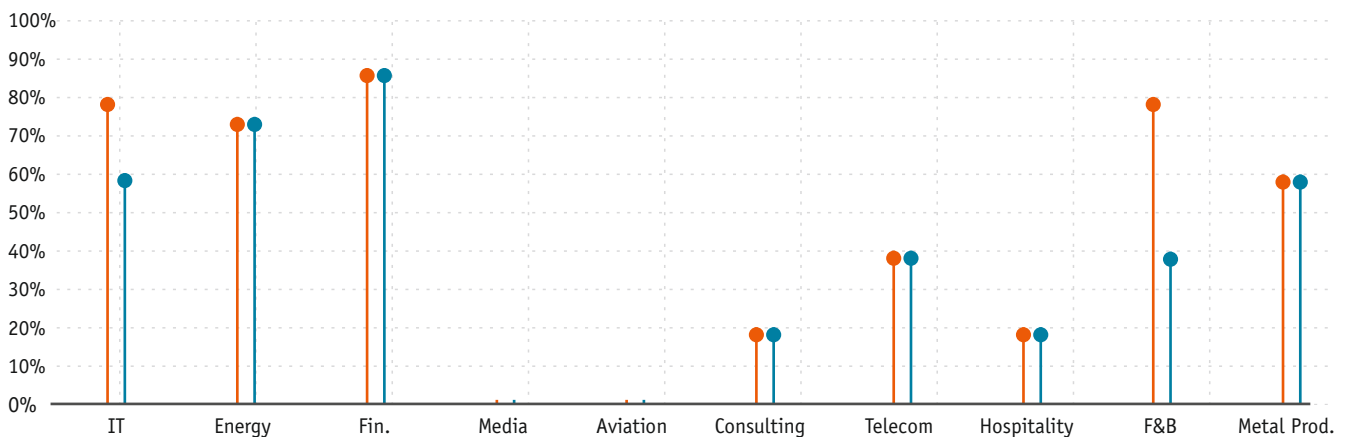
Very few women who are harassed, complain or formally report being harassed. There are many reasons behind this. Their reluctance stems from: fear of losing their jobs, fear of reprisal, fear of not being believed, fear of facing up to social embarrassment and the fear that no action would be taken against the perpetrators. Social norms tend to penalise and lay the blame on women for such acts though they are victims.

Sexual harassment has serious and negative consequences for women's physical and emotional health. Women are seen to suffer from anxiety, depression, sleep disturbance, weight loss or gain, loss of appetite, and headaches in the aftermath of harassment. Apart from creating stress for the victims, sexual harassment has serious economic repercussions with severe financial setbacks for victims. Victims often try to avoid harassment by absenting themselves frequently, applying for sick leave or leave without pay from work. Some even quit or transfer to new jobs, leading to a loss or reduction in wages. Employers also suffer significant financial losses due to job turnovers causing loss of talent, and fall in individual and team

Sexual Harassment Policies & practices

● % having policy

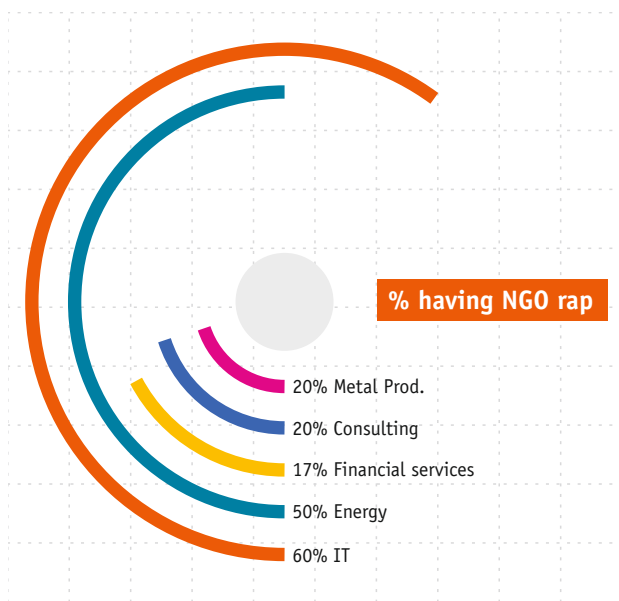
● % having complaints committee



productivity¹². Hence, having mechanisms, both preventive and corrective, in place to safeguard women professionals from sexual harassment, is a matter of right as well as essential from a business point of view.

Study trends

- Across the 10 sectors, only 44.1% reported having specific policies to address issue of sexual harassment at the workplace. Among 12% of the companies, sexual harassment at workplace was included as part of the company's Code of Conduct for all employees
- 40.1% of companies studied reported having a complaints committee to address the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace
- The highest number of companies that reported having sexual harassment policy in place were in the financial services (86%), IT and food and beverages (80%), followed by energy (75%)



- The highest number of companies having a complaints committee were in the financial services (86%), energy (75%) and IT and metal products (60% respectively). None of the companies in the media and aviation sectors reported having any policies or complaints committee to address sexual harassment in the workplace
- Only 36.6% of the companies studied reported having outside representation on their complaints committees. These companies belonged to IT, energy, financial services, consulting and metal products. Among these, 60% of IT companies reported having other stakeholders on their complaints committees; these 'outsiders' were mostly NGO representatives
- Only 15.6% of companies provided information on the number cases of sexual harassment reported. These belonged to the IT, energy, financial services, telecommunications, and food and beverages. Of the companies that disclosed the number of reported sexual harassment cases, only 37.5% disclosed details of the number of cases resolved. The rest did not provide information on how many of the reported cases were resolved

From this it is clear that companies in IT, energy, and financial services have been transparent about having policies and procedures to address sexual harassment in the workplace. Conversely, the media and aviation sectors have not disclosed any information in this regard. This is a matter of serious concern. The media sector has been under critical scrutiny on account of several cases of alleged sexual harassment of junior female employees by senior male employees. There is also an ethical issue at

¹²Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, National Women's Law Center (www.nwlc.org), July 31, 2000

stake here. As the fourth estate which upholds the citizens' right to information, there is need for greater transparency on the part of media houses regarding its policies and practices with reference to women's empowerment.

The aviation sector in India, on the other hand, has a large presence of women in their workforce – particularly women at the front end, in the form of flight attendants and ground staff. Their jobs involve public interfaces. The risk of these women facing sexual harassment from passengers or other male employees is high. On account of the lack of information, there is no way to gauge the extent of the problem, or assess the preventive and corrective measures taken by companies, or extend avenues for collaboration if required.

The second issue pertains to the effectiveness of policy implementation. For example, 80% companies in the food and beverages sector report having a policy to address sexual harassment, while only 40% report having a complaints committee in place. Additionally, if one examines the data regarding the number of cases reported and the number of cases resolved, a disappointing picture emerges.

It is important that companies disclose information regarding both -- the reporting of harassment as well as the resolution of complaints. This will boost confidence among women facing harassment to come forward and report it. The possibility of being exposed could act as a deterrent to potential harassers.

But more importantly, it will provide companies with data and a facilitating compass to assess the extent of the problem and pave way to take preventive and corrective action. In the long run, this could help reduce female attrition in the workforce and enable retention of talent.



Lastly, there is the issue of the composition of existing complaints committees. As has been mentioned, only 36.6% companies reported having outside representation on them. The Vishakha Guidelines state that internal complaints committees should involve a third party, either an NGO or any other body familiar with the issue of sexual harassment in order to prevent the possibility of any undue pressure or influence from senior levels. Although the NGO presence in the corporate ranks in this manner would be low, it does present an opportunity for civil society to reach out, collaborate with businesses, influence them positively in mainstreaming anti-sexual harassment policies and processes, and make them more effective and gender sensitive.

Safety and security measures

Having women as an integral part of the workforce, raises a

host of issues around work-related risks. These vary from exposure to hazardous substances, the impact of biological agents on reproductive health, the physical demands of heavy work, and the length of a working day and hours of work¹³.

In sectors like IT, media and aviation, women are required to travel and work in shifts which exposes them to risks of abuse and assault. In recent memory is the gang rape of a photo-journalist who had gone with her male colleague on an assignment on August 22, 2013¹⁴.

As the demand for increased workforce participation gathers momentum, urgent attention must be paid to



In defense of self

The Taj Falaknuma Palace, Hyderabad, conducted a self-defense class for its female associates in order to equip them with basic skills in self-security. They received training in simple ways of counter attack using the least amount of force. The focus was to teach them specific techniques using joint manipulation to defend themselves. Emphasis was on improving their reflexes. They were taught a number of vital strikes - like the elbow to the face - which could be very helpful in close quarter defense situation. The trainees were also taught how to counter numerous forms of holds, grabs, hair pull, knife strike and various other forms of attacks.

Source:

(I) *Beyond the Numbers, Indian Hotel Company Ltd, Communication on Progress (to UNGC), 2011-12*

(ii) www.jukaado.com

¹³Providing Safe and Healthy Workplaces for Both Women and Men, ILO (http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@gender/documents/publication/wcms_105060.pdf)

¹⁴ Wikipedia



Saying yes to safety!

Yes Bank has set up a 24x7 helpline for all its employees which provides users several response options in an unsafe or emergency scenario. The Helpline is offered through the bank's Contact Center. An employee in distress can either send an SMS or make a call to a secure toll free number that will alert call center officers within the bank and the emergency contacts provided by the employee

Source: *Catalyzing a Shared Sustainable Future, Yes Bank Sustainability Report 2012-13*

issues of their safety and security in order to preserve their freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

Study trends

- 60% of IT companies reviewed had initiatives in place to promote safety and security of their women employees. It must be noted that following some incidents of assault on women employees in IT companies, NASSCOM, the association of IT companies in India, issued safety guidelines to its member companies. Some of the initiatives taken up by the companies studied include:
 - Strong security arrangements in the office through use of trained security guards, close circuit television (CCTV) surveillance etc. With due permissions companies are willing to share the footage with the police if required
 - Joint patrolling of commuting areas in

collaboration with Central Industrial Security Force and police by way of Joint Task Force

- Home pick and drops are provided for women employees working night shifts as stipulated by the Shops and Establishment Act
 - Self-defense trainings are organised for women employees, security guards and housekeeping staff
- The same companies in the IT sector also undertook health and wellness training for their women employees through sessions organised on topics such as breast and cervical cancer and domestic violence
 - 33% companies in the energy sector – all PSUs – reported providing safety training for their women employees. However, no details about the training were available
 - 40% of companies studied in the financial services sector reported setting up of an emergency helpline to assist employees and their families in distress. The support provided included setting up a 24-hour help desk which provides users several response options in an unsafe or emergency scenario. An employee in distress can either send an SMS or make a call to a secure toll free number that will alert call centre
 - 20% of companies in the hospitality sector reported undertaking self-defense training for their female employees. However, this was not a company-wide initiative and limited to one of the hotels in the vast chain
 - All other sectors, with the exception of media, aviation and consulting, undertook initiatives for their employees from a point of view occupational health and safety

Trends reveal that IT and financial services sectors have forged ahead in installing mechanisms to address physical safety of their women employees. The media sector still trails behind. They did not disclose anything that could inform the study – with the exception of one case where a leading English daily undertook a women's safety campaign using the daily as a platform. However, this initiative was a generalised one. Work in the media industry is strenuous with long, erratic working hours.

Scribes need to be available at short notice to cover scoops and important news stories. Such a situation poses risks to women employees and unless measures are in place to safeguard them, it would only serve to heighten their vulnerability.

Aviation, again does not provide adequate information that could throw light on the safety and security measures in place for women employees. Earlier, too, we have highlighted how this sector has come under criticism on account of its discriminatory treatment of its women employees.

It could have easily demonstrated greater transparency and cooperation in this area which would have gone far to enhance its public image while also providing scope for other stakeholders, particularly civil society, to collaborate with them.

Another issue that emerged is that of occupational safety and health. According to an ILO publication, “occupational safety and health (OSH) hazards affecting women workers have been traditionally under-estimated because OSH standards and exposure limits to hazardous substances are based on male populations and laboratory tests”.

Corporates mostly do not take into account the different OSH requirements that women may have, particularly from the point of view of reproductive health. Our study shows that most companies are oblivious to such imminent health threats for women and have no measures in place.

PRINCIPLE 4: PROMOTE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN

Invest in workplace policies and programmes that open avenues for advancement of women at all levels and across all business areas, and encourage women to enter non-traditional job fields

Ensure equal access to all company-supported education and training programmes, including literacy classes, vocational and information technology training

Provide equal opportunities for formal and informal networking and mentoring

Offer opportunities to promote the business case for

The Old Boys' Club

Entails establishing business relationships on high-priced golf courses, at exclusive country clubs, in the executive sky-boxes at sporting events - arenas from which women are traditionally excluded and thus are not privy to the truly 'serious' business transactions or conversations.

Source: Ilene H. Lang, Co-Opt the Old Boys' Club: Make It Work for Women, Harvard Business Review, November, 2011

women's empowerment and the positive impact of inclusion for men as well as women

Introduction

Principle 4 investigates ways for businesses to promote defined improvements and professional development of their women employees. The outcomes of these actions could, on the one hand, widen the talent pool immensely and simultaneously equip women with skills and competencies to move forward within the organisation. And, if these measures that involve radical rethinking are carried forward on a sustained basis they can aid companies achieve the goal of gender equality. Our systematic analysis in this area has made it possible for us to effectively capture trends in areas such as networking and mentoring programmes for women, leadership development, and entry of women into non-traditional areas of work.



Exclusive networks for women

'The Women of Wipro (WOW) programme' is a strategic business enabler for Wipro, a leading IT company. The WOW speaker series enables women employees of Wipro to network with senior women leaders from client organisations. 'Mentoring for Success' is another programme for high-potential women in middle management. In FY 2012-13, 100 high potential women from middle management participated in mentoring conversations, with mentors occupying General Manager and Vice President roles.

Source: Through the Looking Glass of History – Wipro Sustainability Report 2011-12

Training and professional development promotes gender equality

Attrition rates of women is seen to sharply increase as they rise from junior to middle levels of the organisation. This happens mainly due to the fact that their careers conflict with their traditional roles as mothers and care givers. It has long been established that enabling work environments that take these realities into account show marked improvements in retaining women in the workforce.

In addition to this, there is a compelling need for companies to invest in training and professional development programmes that are customised to meet the unique requirements of the women in their workforce. This needs to be embedded into their business strategy.

Some key strategies that businesses use to develop their talent pool are:

Networking

Networking is about making connections and building enduring, mutually beneficial relationships. The benefits of networking are many. It helps one learn about the dynamics of the industry one is associated with, establish business contacts, get connected with one's community, seek new career opportunities, accelerate professional development and develop knowledge resources.

By its very process, networking calls for investment of time and energy. This may prove to be a challenge for women, especially those who are juggling a career with home and children. Unlike men, they may not be able to take advantage of networking opportunities that go beyond regular work hours.

Networking sometimes becomes an instrument of gender discrimination when the 'old boys club' mentality kicks in. In such cases, having specially designed and customised programmes to promote networking for women professionals can be beneficial.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a process through which an individual offers professional expertise as well as support to a less experienced colleague. A mentor serves as a teacher, counsellor, and advocate to a protégée. Mentoring results in a mutually beneficial professional relationship over time. The intent of mentoring is not to strengthen weak performance, but rather to shape a career that shows promise.



'Infosys Women in Leadership'

Infosys, one of the leading IT companies in India, has customised an exclusive leadership programme for women managers at mid to senior level. Named 'Infosys Women in Leadership', it directs Infosys's efforts towards Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) by creating and strengthening a pipeline of women leaders. The programme comprises interactive learning methodologies covering key leadership topics such as adaptive leadership, delegation, negotiation skills, emotional intelligence, work-life balance and topics of relevance to professional women. This is essentially a residential programme that aims to help participants build on their strengths and networks of influence so as to capitalise on leadership opportunities.

Source: Personal communication with company managers

On account of limited representation of women at the higher echelons in companies, women lack ready access to role models and mentors, and tend to be excluded from informal networks that are critical to career advancement. The impact of this can range from reduced effectiveness, work dissatisfaction, and missed organisational talent. Thus, mentoring can play an effective role in shaping and growing the careers of talented women within the organisation.

Adopting mentoring as a strategy to enhance professional growth and career development for women also makes good business sense. The demand for competent professionals is on the rise. Companies need to attract, retain and nurture their talent pool. Mentoring can shape a company's ability to remain competitive by retaining and



Bold departures

In a bold departure, Jindal Stainless Limited, a WEP signatory, is employing women at the shop floor, to manage operations in the area of the blast furnaces and in steel manufacturing processes, post signing the WEP Statement of Support document. From a near zero figure, the company has reached a three digit number in enrolling women at the shop floor.

Diversity among contractual workers has also increased and now the number of women contractual employees has also increased significantly.

Source: Jindal Stainless Ltd

promoting their best employees. Research shows that mentoring leads to higher job satisfaction, career advancement, work success, and future compensation. Employees who are mentored are less likely to leave the organisation. Mentoring also plays a powerful role in helping young employees understand and assimilate organisational culture, accelerate their integration into the organisation and enhance their effectiveness¹⁵.

Leadership development

Representation in key decision-making positions is an important indicator of women's empowerment – of having access to spaces they are traditionally denied access to.

The case for business investment in leadership development of women is strengthened by the fact that it can enhance corporate performance and positively impact the bottom line. A study undertaken by Catalyst in 2004, in the United States, found that, among the companies studied, those with the highest representation of women in their top management teams experienced better financial results than those that had low representation of women in their top management teams. This clearly demonstrates that businesses that invest in professional development of women stand to profit.

Skill upgradation

Most businesses purposively undertake skill upgradation trainings for their workforce to keep pace with changes/advancements in their business processes and technology and to maintain their competitiveness. These trainings also provide employees with the scope to grow and develop within the business, thereby making it a pertinent issue to be examined within the context of women's empowerment.

¹⁵ NCWIT Mentoring-in-a-Box: Technical Women at Work, Mentoring Basics - A Mentor's Guide to Success

Leadership Training



Skill Upgradation Training



Two aspects merit attention. The first is fundamental – that women should have equal access to opportunities for skill upgradation as their male counterparts.

The second issue is a little more nuanced. According to the Global Employment Trends 2013 report of the ILO, women in India tend to gravitate toward certain industries and occupations: agriculture, sales, elementary services and handicrafts.

Women also tend to fill 'soft positions' such as those in human resources, finance and women with low educational qualifications move towards housekeeping. Thus, empowerment also means that women should have opportunities to access and fulfil roles from which they have been traditionally excluded. For this, skill upgradation plays an important part.

Study trends

- It is extremely heartening to note that all the companies studied in the IT and consulting sectors have provided professional development opportunities for their women employees. These have focused primarily on leadership development and creating forums for women to network, and mentorship programmes. Consulting companies have also extended skill upgradation trainings for their women employees. It must be mentioned that information pertaining to the consulting sector is global in nature and not specific to India
- 33% of companies studied in the energy sector provided networking opportunities for their women employees. These companies were all PSUs. Networking was encouraged using existing national

Ladies in league

ASSOCHAM Ladies League is a networking initiative to promote women's leadership and entrepreneurship. The aim is to:

- reach out to a wide range of organisations and encourage them to employ a skilled women work force
- connect working women to further avenues of engagement in civic life and social action

Source: ASSOCHAM website

and regional forums like 'Women in Public Sector' and 'Women in Leadership Roles'

- 25% of companies in the hospitality sector undertook professional development and career advancement programmes for women. These include:
 - Setting up partnership between companies and global non-profits to train and mentor women in emerging economies to enhance leadership skills and economic opportunity
 - Initiating a 'Women's Leadership Development Initiative' which has enabled a steady increase in women at all levels of the company
 - Working with Women Corporate Directors (WCD), by hosting Boot Camps to train executive-level
 - Women for participation on corporate Boards, including top level women executives within the company itself
- About 17% of companies studied in the energy and financial services sectors provided leadership development trainings for their female employees. The programmes undertaken by financial services

companies were designed in collaboration with academic institutions like the International School of Business, Hyderabad

- 20% of companies in the food and beverages and metal products sectors provided skill upgradation training for women in their workforce. One innovative training programme, conducted by a metal products company, aimed to equip office girls willing to operate heavy equipment like tractors and locomotives
- In most other cases, although the companies reported to having taken up leadership and skill upgradation trainings, these trainings were found to be generic in nature and no gender disaggregated information could be obtained
- The business associations studied also provide professional development programmes for women. Associations like CII and ASSOCHAM have set up separate entities to foster networking opportunities for women. Some, like the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), also provide skill building and mentoring programmes for MSME in IT sector



From this it is clear that IT and consulting sectors are at the forefront in investing resources for the professional development of women through programmes that foster networking and leadership among women professionals.

When their efforts are examined against the percentage of women in the workforce, the IT sector's efforts have been brilliant. With their women workforce ranging between 24% and 34%, their efforts to pitchfork women into positions of leadership needs applause. It can be safely concluded that women join this sector because of the promising and lucrative career paths it offers them as well as the many opportunities for growth and development that come their way.

In the area of skill upgradation, although a few companies provided information on how many women employees have received trainings, specifics of these trainings have been hard to determine. Hence, it has not been possible to assess whether these training programmes have contributed in any way towards women's empowerment.

Business associations, having a huge network of members, are well placed to provide networking and capacity building services to women. A few associations are making concerted attempts to support the development of MSMEs as they have amply demonstrated their potential in economic development.

According to the Fourth MSME Census (2006-2007), there are 26.1 million MSME in India; 8% of these are women-run enterprises. By closely working with these women-run businesses, and by building their capacity and strengthening them, businesses can make a tremendous impact on women's empowerment while also adding to their profits.

Also, as umbrella organisations, business associations can customise their services to suit the needs of their industry. They can also draw upon expertise from their membership pool while at the same time influence members to take up the cause of gender equality.

PRINCIPLE 5: IMPLEMENT ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT, SUPPLY CHAIN AND MARKETING PRACTICES THAT EMPOWER WOMEN

Expand business relationships with women-owned enterprises, including small businesses, and women entrepreneurs

Support gender-sensitive solutions to credit and lending barriers

Ask business partners and peers to respect the company's commitment to advancing equality and inclusion

Respect the dignity of women in all marketing and other company materials

Ensure that company products, services and facilities are not used for human trafficking and/or labour or sexual exploitation

Introduction

Principle 5 moves beyond the domains of organisation and looks at how businesses can meaningfully engage with women outside of their value chain. It tackles several 'how's' -- how businesses can take actions to support women in their supply chain, how gender sensitive policies in marketing and communication can help empower

women and how businesses should ensure that their products and services are not used to exploit women.

Our study data, unfortunately, has proved insufficient to inform the above mentioned elements. What it does, however, bring out with irrevocable clarity is that although businesses do engage with their suppliers in different ways, women's empowerment or gender equality does not emerge as a major area of collaboration. No significant trends on supplier diversity or trends pertaining to ensuring dignity of women in marketing and communication materials could, hence, be discerned.

The main trends that could be mapped with the available information pertain to products and services developed by businesses to meet needs and problems faced by women. These are more in the nature of business solutions to address issues pertinent to gender equality.

Women and markets

Apart from the 'inner spaces' within the company, women's empowerment also needs to spread further and further into the 'spheres of influence' that a company has, if the concept has to gain root and its outcomes are to be lasting. This requires companies to work in partnership with other stakeholders on the basis of their collaborative wisdom.

Women's empowerment, within a business context, must also necessarily take into account why and how women engage with the market. Women engage with markets as consumers, producers, entrepreneurs, investors and stakeholders. However, in the current scenario, this engagement tends to increase their vulnerabilities and heighten structural inequalities that prevents them from expressing their agency.

Women play an important role in household level consumption. Studies have shown that women take nearly 80% of decisions pertaining to purchase of goods necessary for household consumption. According to the International Finance Corporation, the financial power of women as consumers is projected to reach \$28 trillion by 2014, an increase from \$20 trillion in 2009.

Despite indications of women being key decision makers at homes and taking the financial lead within their households, such empowerments seem not to have benefitted them. In developing economies, women are responsible for feeding and clothing their families often on shoe string budgets. They have to maintain a fine balance between affordability and availability while also making personal choices for themselves and their families. In urbanised societies, where consumerism is on the rise, women face pressures of having to 'look good'. Here, their purchase decisions are triggered by having to adhere prevailing stereotypes of gender – as professionals, wives and daughters.

Market forces put further pressure on women through advertising. Advertising epitomises the contradictions of women as consumers where women's faces and bodies are used to convince people to buy various goods and services. Advertising also perpetuates negative stereotypes of women. The images of a 'housewife' are predominantly used for instance to sell household goods. All these examples are illustrative of how these so-called advancements have actually detracted from empowering women and stamped down their identities.

Globalisation and open markets only deepen and intensify the contradictions of consumption. It is well known that large corporations produce goods in less developed countries in order to keep labour costs low. The majority of

workers in these manufacturing units are young women who work under unfair conditions. Their common experiences include being paid less than minimum wages, restricted from going to the washroom, forced pregnancy testing, and sexual harassment by male management. A case in point is that of the readymade garments industry in Bangladesh which employs nearly four million people; 80% of these are women, struggling to find a way out of poverty¹⁶.

Entrepreneurship is undoubtedly an effective instrument for the economic development and empowerment of women. An underdeveloped entrepreneurial business culture can work to the detriment of an economy. Yet entrepreneurship requires nurturing the right kind of efforts.

Otherwise it could recoil and retard efforts to empower women (as shown above). Women's progress is further impeded by their lack of literacy, skills, access to credit and access to markets. Worsening their situation is the fact that they have to deal with patriarchal norms that do not accept or encourage women's entrepreneurship.

Considering these disabling factors that draw away from empowering women, there is a pressing need for responsible initiatives by corporates that lead to market and social transformation.

Study trends

- 80% of companies studied in the financial services sector directly engaged with women as clients through their micro-finance programmes that work to



economically empower women by creating and facilitating credit linkages. 17% of the companies studied also provided customised services to their women account holders

- 80% of companies studied in the consulting sector have made use of their research and advisory expertise to generate knowledge that benefit women, particularly in the business sector. These companies also sponsor global forums such as ION¹⁷ and The Women's Forum¹⁸. By combining these two strengths, many companies have even managed to create a strong advocacy agenda. Some of the path breaking research studies undertaken by consulting companies include:

¹⁶Women's Economic Contributions, Women and the Economy, A project of UNPAC (<http://www.unpac.ca/economy/consumers.html>)

¹⁷ION: Founded in 2004, it consists of 16 regional organisations in the United States that combine their energies to advocate for the advancement of women to positions of power in the business world, especially to Boards of directors and executive suites

¹⁸The Women's Forum: An independent global forum that aims to put forward practical solutions for the most pressing economic, social and moral issues of our time. It is dedicated to building and implementing a more balanced world for all, and serves as a platform for debate, best practice sharing, networking, brainstorming and action



The '5by20' women's initiative

Given the crucial role of women in our system—and the economic barriers too many women still face—we have made women's economic empowerment a priority. Our '5by20' women's initiative launched in 2010 and continues to grow and gain momentum. The 5by20 initiative aims to enable the economic empowerment of five million women entrepreneurs in our global value chain by 2020. In collaboration with nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), governments and businesses, we're helping female entrepreneurs associated with our business gain access to three essential economic enablers: business skills training, loans and financial services and assets, and peer networks and mentoring. The 5by20 initiative focuses on women in six segments of our value chain: producers, suppliers, distributors, retailers, recyclers and artisans.

In all, the 5by20 initiative has enabled approximately 300,000 women since the launch of the programme in 2010 through December 31, 2012.

Source: Coca-Cola, 2012-13 GRI Report

- Deloitte : The Gender Dividend
- McKinsey: The Business of Empowering Women
- Ernst and Young: Women in the Workplace: Unleashing the Power of Women Entrepreneurs
- 60% of IT companies undertook programmes that engaged with their stakeholders and supply chain while also bolstering their business strategy, particularly in the area of talent acquisition. Some of

their initiatives include:

- Setting up rural BPOs, training rural youth to enhance employability. (No gender disaggregated information was provided. It maybe posited that though women are covered under this programme, it is apparent that it is by default rather than by design)
- Engaging in gender conversations at various external forums such as Catalyst, CII, and NASSCOM to build a case for inclusivity in the workplace
- Making use of their expertise in technology creation to address issues pertinent to women. Some of their noteworthy initiatives within this ambit include:
 - A programme to further the aims of the UN Secretary General's 'Every Woman Every Child' initiative to end child diarrheal deaths in India by scaling up access to oral rehydration salts (ORS) and zinc
 - Using technology to arrive at holistic solutions in the area of remote health monitoring and diagnosis, particularly foetal monitoring
 - A Mother Infant Tracking System for PHCs and Medical Officers in rural areas on a pilot basis. The application is android tablet based and integrated with a medical gateway to take direct blood pressure readings
 - Using technology as a key enabler to assist and resolve business challenges faced by civil society organisations. A company was able to help Justice and Care, an international NGO supporting victims of trafficking, using technology. A prototype for case management system to monitor trafficking cases and collaterals has been developed for such assistance

- 33% of companies in the energy sector took up initiatives that had indirect benefits for women, particularly those in rural areas. The companies have reached out to these women either as beneficiaries in their CSR programmes or through their business. The initiatives taken up so far are as follows:
 - Facilitating the formation of women's SHGs, training them in savings and credit management
 - Undertaking rural electrification as part of the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyuthikaran Yojana in 29 districts in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal and Jharkhand to provide electricity to 26.42 lakh BPL households



Technology to the rescue of mothers

Vodafone's e-Mamta initiative, in association with the Gujarat state government, is helping ensure timely and pro-active pre-and-post-natal care. This unique initiative provides a tailored voice-based 'closed user group' solution. It extends SIM cards to Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and healthcare workers, who act as an important bridge between expectant mothers and medical staff to ensure timely care before and after childbirth. This initiative has also enabled the collection health information from community members. It is fed into a centralised system, which sends updates via mobile phones to ASHAs and mothers to ensure regular monitoring of mothers' and infants' health.

Source: Vodafone company website: Press release (https://www.vodafone.in/documents/pdfs/pressreleases/pr_1178.pdf)

- Allocating, in accordance with the government guidelines, two percent of the company's net profits towards a one-time grant to BPL families in rural areas for release of new liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) connections under the Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitarak Yojana
- 20% companies studied under food and beverages sector actively aim to help women -- working within the circle of their supply chain -- break down the barriers that prevent them from growing their businesses. By providing them with access to business skills, financial services, assets and support networks of peers and mentors, these companies are helping women across the globe achieve their entrepreneurial dreams, while also creating thriving, sustainable communities
- 20% companies in the telecommunications sector, made use of their technical expertise and mobile network coverage to promote reproductive health
- Another 20% companies in telecommunications reported their commitment towards developing a framework to promote underprivileged groups in society with a special focus on promoting women entrepreneurs and small businesses
- 20% of companies studied in the media sector used the platform provided by their newspapers to create awareness on women's safety. This was done in the aftermath of the gang rape and death of a young girl in Delhi in December 2012
- The hospitality industry has often been an unwitting participant in human trafficking, when men travelling for work use the tourism infrastructure to engage in illegal activities. 20% companies in the hospitality

sector have collaborated with leaders within their industry to increase awareness and prevent trafficking, particularly of children

These trends clearly demonstrate that addressing gender concerns in the market is not a matter of charity or philanthropy but it is a viable business strategy. Financial services companies have developed products that meet specific consumption needs of women and bolster women's entrepreneurship through access to credit.

Banks have shown, through microfinance programmes, that women are bankable customers. Research suggests that women are prompt and reliable in repayment of loans and therefore present lower risks to financial institutions. The growth of microfinance in India has been possible on account of the growth of the SHG movement, aided by the government's credit policies.

Our analysis also show that IT companies have invested in business solutions to address important social issues like maternal health and human trafficking by leveraging their domain expertise.

To a limited extent, products developed by the energy sector also do relate to women. By enabling rural electrification and providing LPG to BPL households, the energy sector has indirectly benefited women. It has enabled safety for women and reduced the drudgery of their work loads.

Consulting companies are also furthering the cause of women's empowerment through the generation of knowledge via their research expertise. This knowledge can serve as an advocacy tool for different stakeholders – business, State and civil society. By making use of the

established knowledge base of the consulting companies, these stakeholders can make a strong case for women's empowerment in business.

There seems to be few takers for women's entrepreneurship among the companies studied. There were very few companies that disclosed having business relationships with women-owned enterprises or having a mandate to promote women's entrepreneurship. In order to break the barriers of structural inequality, women's empowerment in the value chain of businesses must be tackled comprehensively.

This currently does not seem to be happening. While financial services companies are addressing some issues, their efforts are fragmented, stand-alone, discrete activities that do not build up to a movement of value. One area that needs intervention is women's access to credit. The agenda is huge and an unfinished business. Companies need to address this urgently.

The emerging trends also don't show marked improvements in businesses attempting to develop products, services and facilities to stem human trafficking and/or labour or sexual exploitation. The study of company codes of conduct and supplier engagement policies did not reveal any significant mandate to promote women's empowerment beyond disclosure of zero tolerance for discrimination and harassment.

Each of the above interventions detailed above can transform the lives of women and inspire confidence within them by closing the gender gap. They can also serve as lucrative business opportunities. It is time to mesh the two and work with a strategic vision.

PRINCIPLE 6: PROMOTE EQUALITY THROUGH COMMUNITY INITIATIVES AND ADVOCACY

Lead by example – showcase company commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment

Leverage influence, alone or in partnership, to advocate for gender equality and collaborate with business partners, suppliers and community leaders to promote inclusion

Work with community stakeholders, officials and others, to eliminate discrimination and exploitation and open opportunities for women and girls

Promote and recognise women's leadership in, and contributions to, their communities and ensure sufficient representation of women in any community consultation

Use philanthropy and grants programmes to support company commitment to inclusion, equality and human rights

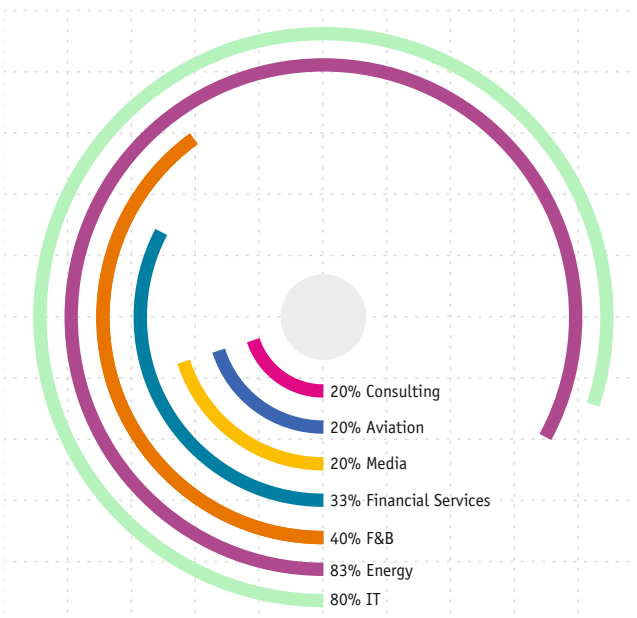
Introduction:

This Principle that seeks to 'promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy' actively guides corporates to widen their commitment to promote women empowerment beyond their own enterprise and business networks. The expected outcomes, like other principles, could begin with the corporates working with a definite vision within their own frameworks and then move to touch all their circles of influence. When this movement begins to reach many more people and when a sufficient

number of individuals embark upon that change, and come together for mutual support and shared action, then a critical mass is attained that can influence and transform the institutions, communities and society of which they are a part of. This is how social movements are built.

Our study data has been unable to trace this trajectory as

% having women focussed CSR



the efforts of the corporates are recent and insufficient to trigger a movement. Yet our data is reassuring. It shows there is a commitment to women's empowerment among corporates. Almost all corporates promote community-based initiatives, either using a direct implementation approach or by funding grassroots NGOs. Our study uncovers that almost all corporates are serious about investing into communities. Equally remarkable is the fact that have been doing so even before mandatory investment was introduced by the government.



Biscuits: the mantra for good health

Britannia India works with the Karnataka Nutrition Mission in two villages to comprehensively address health and nutrition concerns of children, adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women. Part of the programme is to provide biscuits fortified with micronutrients to the target audience. A study done amongst children (6-12 years) and adolescent girls (11-18 years) who consumed the fortified biscuits for four months has shown an improvement in anthropometric parameters like height and weight and a reduction in anemia. The company intends to share the project outcomes with the State Government

Source: Britannia Annual Report 2012-13

Promoting gender equality through CSR

United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) defines Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as *“a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders. CSR is generally understood as being the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives (“Triple-Bottom-Line- Approach”), while at the same time addressing the expectations of shareholders and stakeholders.”* In India CSR has generally been viewed as charitable/philanthropic/humanitarian work undertaken by companies. It is only of late that companies have started viewing CSR as a strategic business management concept.

CSR can be an important tool to address various issues that affect women within the eco system of the business. In a way it provides the metrics to compare results between the company's profit trajectory and its intent of going beyond that. However, the impacts of the CSR programmes will largely be determined by the approach it takes. If looked at and implemented as a goodwill gesture, the benefits for women will be one time and short lived. If approached as a strategic business management approach, one that is a dynamic process, that ties the core business strategy with



Financial literacy for women and youth

CRISIL Foundation, the CSR arm of CRISIL Ltd, promotes financial awareness and inclusion initiatives with a special focus on women.

In 2012, a special financial awareness initiative, 'Pragati – Progress through Financial Awareness' was launched. Here, one-day financial literacy programmes were completed in nine districts of Assam. In 2013, this was scaled to 21 districts across Assam Sikkim and Tripura, targeting women and youth through community-based trainings. The areas of focus were: household budgeting, savings, basic banking practices, loans and insurance. In Rajasthan, Pragati works in Pali, Sirohi and Jalore districts. Here groups of youth volunteers called Team Balikas, have been trained on financial literacy. The Foundation has also developed an audio visual based learning module on financial literacy, which is now being used for its financial literacy programmes across India.

Source: CRISIL Foundation



efforts to create societal value, then the outcomes will be enduring. This is because in these kinds of endeavours women are considered as stakeholders -- as either consumers, producers, entrepreneurs or community members -- both within and external to the organisation, with rights, interests and influence. They are not looked upon just beneficiaries and passive recipients of corporate largesse but as people who have potential to participate in the production process and create shared value. They are viewed as hidden engines of economic growth.

Study trends

- 83% companies studied in the energy sector had CSR programmes that targeted women either directly or indirectly. Of these, 50% were PSUs. Some of the

initiatives for women included:

- Mobilisation of women into SHGs and providing training for SHG members
 - Entrepreneurship and skill development initiatives for girl students belonging to the slums of New Delhi. Training has been provided in the fields of beauty and healthcare, cutting and tailoring, and computer education
 - Indirect educational support to girls through the construction of hostels, running of vocational programmes (like nursing schools and training programmes for women in embroidery, tailoring, food processing) and providing sewing machines
- 80% of IT companies surveyed ran CSR programmes that focused on education. This is understandable as

this is their area of expertise. More specifically, they have engaged with schools and teachers to improve the quality of education and also to promote computer literacy. They have also undertaken awareness generation programmes on issues such as girls' education and child sexual abuse. These companies also leveraged their expertise in IT to develop innovative programmes

- One such initiative is an adult literacy programme where computers, flash cards and animated graphics patterns are used for visualisation and audio appreciation. This course is free cost and what is amazing about it is that it facilitates reading abilities in 40-45 hours
- 40% companies studied in the food and beverages sector had CSR programmes that aimed at women's empowerment. These initiatives include:
 - Focus on women's economic empowerment through entrepreneurship for inclusive growth. The programme's key focus is to build capability and provide women with access to resources
 - Working in partnership with the government to address key social issues that affect women directly or indirectly
- In the financial services sector, while most of the companies had robust CSR programmes, these did not pertain directly to women. Only 33% of companies studied reported having programmes with a targeted focus on women. These include:
 - Giving five percent of employee donations to support women's causes
 - Introducing new models to deliver rural and micro credit, promoting the SHG-Bank linkages (so as to enable leadership, technical expertise and financial inclusion)

- In the aviation sector, 20% of the companies reported celebrating events such as International Women's day and organising fund raising drives. The proceeds of these events are usually donated to select NGOs working to empower underprivileged women
- Only 20% of companies in the consulting sector reported CSR programmes focused on women. These related to supporting livelihood enhancement programmes through SHGs

Our studies show that while businesses and their associations are attempting to empower women in business, their efforts are robust but not yet broad based. Among the associations studied, it was seen that about 30% rolled out initiatives for gender equality. Their activities ranged from awarding women achievers and businesses that promoted diversity and inclusion, organising conferences and seminars, undertaking research to documenting various issues of gender equality. Our analysis also reveals that most of the CSR projects by corporates follow a welfare/philanthropic approach. Except in the case of the IT sector, and a few other companies in the financial services and food and beverages sectors, there was no discernable link between the CSR programmes taken up and the core business of the company. The IT sector, leans towards the education and the promotion of information technology and is keen to stick to this. Similarly, the financial sector adheres to CSR initiatives aimed at promoting financial literacy and financial inclusion (through microfinance programmes).

In India, historically, corporates have kept their CSR programmes separate from their business. Most large corporations have established separate entities to implement their CSR programmes and be a good corporate citizen. Many of these programmes may now have women

and girls as its beneficiaries. However, by design, these programmes are largely welfare driven. Based on the available information, it is not clear whether these contribute towards women's empowerment and usher lasting solutions.

A closer look at the Boards and employee base of corporate philanthropic foundations presents a picture that is normally hidden from public scrutiny. Many of these foundations are headed by women, usually spouses of the Chairman/Managing Director. There is a sizeable representation of women in the CSR teams at all levels. In fact, it would not be wrong to say that there is a preponderance of female over male employees. It overturns the ILO's Global Employment Trends 2013 which states that women in India tend to be grouped in certain industries and occupations. CSR as a profession seems to be attracting more women than men. Studies from the United States and Britain suggest that CSR/social work is not remunerative and therefore not a career of choice for males. So the idea of having more women here seems to be a distinction that is dubious. Particularly, as there seems to be a stigma attached to men being in a profession that is considered 'feminine'. Experience suggests the same to be true for India also.

The passing of the Companies Act 2013 and the Ministry of Corporate Affairs' attempts to bring centre stage NYGs on Social, Economic and Environmental Responsibilities of Business (which provides a set of nine guidelines to businesses to operationalise CSR initiatives) has shot CSR into prominence. It is a concept that has come to stay. It could act as a powerful game changer that could prove central to the building of measures for women's empowerment.

PRINCIPLE 7: MEASURE AND PUBLICLY REPORT ON PROGRESS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY

Make public the company policies and implementation plan for promoting gender equality

Establish benchmarks that quantify inclusion of women at all levels

Measure and report on progress, both internally and externally, using data disaggregated by sex

Incorporate gender markers into ongoing reporting obligations

Introduction

Principle 7 encourages businesses to measure and report on the progress they are making towards achieving gender equality. This chapter considers the current reporting practices adhered to by the companies under the study. It covers the frameworks that companies use for reporting purposes and the robustness of reporting under each WEP Principle.

With continued efforts that involve gathering data, monitoring and evaluation, analysis, learning, feedback and reflection, there is need to accumulate and apply knowledge about which practices are working on the ground and which are not successful or effective. The end result of such an exercise to distinguish best practices could be arriving at a set of explanatory and operational tools that act as an adaptation guide to implement effective programs and target end-users better. It would also be a good way to ensure mistakes are not repeated and there is learning from misadventures. Recording and

utilising innovations and adapting it as an advocacy tool would also be possible. Attempts to identify gaps have been undertaken by relying on the WEP Reporting on Progress guidelines.

Increased transparency promotes gender equality

Corporate transparency describes the extent to which a corporation's actions are observable by outsiders. Corporates are being subjected to increasing scrutiny from diverse stakeholders including investors, the State and the civil society. There is demand for more openness in its decision-making and operations, as much as there is for its social, environmental and economic responsibilities. This is because communities want to know how they are/will be impacted by the corporation's activities.

When companies are upfront with information and follow the processes of sustainability reporting that provide a line-of-sight into the company's growth drivers, it enhances their brand and reputation. It also establishes an open, positive communication between the business and its stakeholders and investors as more information means more certainty. By reporting on gender related indicators, a company can show its commitment to women's empowerment and also benchmark and assess its performance on the issue, both internally and in relation to its peers. It then confidently communicate the findings to its stakeholders. This would go a long way in building trust and enhance the brand image of the company as a woman-friendly workplace. This in turn can attract and retain a diverse talent pool that would ultimately add to the company's competitive advantage¹⁹.

Study trends

Avenues of Disclosure: In the case of sustainability reports, most of the companies we studied have used the GRI index to benchmark their disclosures. Some other companies have used their annual reports and this information has normally been provided in the 'Business Responsibility Report' section of the report. The fact that they have all followed a template, has helped capture more women-related information such as number of permanent women employees, number of women employees who have been provided with training in the reporting year, and the number of sexual harassment cases reported and resolved. It must be mentioned that business responsibility reporting is part of the recently issued SEBI guidelines. It perhaps does not fully capture gender related reporting indicators yet is a step in the right direction and one hopes that that in the future there will be greater transparency in reporting by companies.

- 42% of companies studied disclosed company information through the medium of sustainability reports
- 44% provided information through their annual reports while 16% provided information through the Communication on Progress submitted to the UN Global Compact
- It was seen that disclosures and transparency was highest among the following sectors:
 - Energy: 100% through annual reports and 67% through sustainability reports
 - IT : 80% through sustainability reports and 40% through annual reports

¹⁹Women's Empowerment Principles: Reporting on Progress, Equality Means Business, Guidance Document. (<http://weprinciples.org/files/attachments/61.pdf>)

- Financial services: 100% through annual reports, 20% through sustainability reports and 20% through Communication on Progress to UNGC

Sustainability approach

- Among the companies studied, it was seen that nearly 60% outlined their sustainability goals and priorities either directly or indirectly. Most of the goals pertained to the environment and society. Each of these two categories had specific objectives which were particular to their sector. For example, under society, the specific objectives related to education, health, livelihoods and safety, while under environment it related to reducing emissions, effective waste management, and improving technology to reduce adverse impact on the environment. None of the companies studied identified women's issues specifically as an area of priority, either within the organisation or among its stakeholders, although they may have been covered this in an incidental way by addressing issues like education, health, livelihood and employee welfare.
- The 40% companies who were not forthcoming on their sustainability goals were from the sectors of aviation, media, financial services and consulting. Among the aviation and media sectors, all the companies abstained from providing sustainability information.
- In the financial services sector, the trend was slightly different -- 20% of companies stated their sustainability approach; and 40% of them provided

detailed information about their CSR programmes, carried out through Foundations set up exclusively for this purpose. Women- related programmes, thus, were a part of the company's CSR and did not get directly clubbed under its sustainability programme.

Reporting on gender metric

Indicators such as -- women's participation in the workforce, the presence of women on Boards of directors, and equality of remuneration between male and female employees -- clarify how an organisation is encouraging gender equality. The question remains: is such information being measured systematically? Is it being reported and tracked?

Our research shows that the companies we have studied have rarely bothered with collating or reporting gender disaggregated data. This is despite the inclusion of gender related indicators in various reporting frameworks like the GRI framework, and the increasing insistence of measuring such indicators within other frameworks²⁰.

- Among the 10 sectors studied, the IT sector was the most transparent in disclosing information on gender related indicators such as workforce information, policies on maternity/paternity benefits, child care and other support services to parents, anti sexual harassment programmes policies, professional training and development of women employees
- The energy and financial services sector came up adequate information. The remaining sectors - telecommunication, consulting, food and beverages,

²⁰Reference: Embedding Gender in Sustainability Reporting, A Practitioner's Guide, International Finance Corporations (World Bank Group), Global Reporting Initiative, in partnership with the governments of Germany, Iceland and Switzerland.

hospitality and metal products provided very little information on gender related indicators. The media and aviation companies had no gender- related information. This was even hard to find on the public domain

- The availability of gender disaggregated information in a uniform, quantitative and measurable was hard to come by. While 90% of the companies provided information pertaining to their workforce, 48% of these did not volunteer or provide gender disaggregated information, making it difficult to understand the extent of diversity in their workforce. Also, very few companies, reported on the progress on gender diversity in the workforce from one year to the next
- In the category of workforce information, a large lacuna was the lack of gender disaggregated information on the number of Dalit/Adivasi women on the workforce. Private sectors companies were especially reticent in providing information relating to Dalit/Adivasis, be it male or female employment ratios. PSUs proffered some information relating to their representation in the workforce but this information was not gender disaggregated
- Information on Principle 2, that is, on equal opportunity, inclusion and non-discrimination, was mostly restricted to maternity and paternity entitlements, child care and flexible working conditions. No information was extended relating to basic pay, overtime and bonuses, either for men or women. Companies also did not provide information pertaining to any recruitment campaigns targeting women

- Under Principle 3 -- that relates to health, safety and freedom from violence -- available information pertained to anti-sexual harassment policies and programmes, safety and occupational safety measures taken by the company. Certain companies also provided information relating to facilities provided to nursing mothers and training of women on self-defence. Details on gender sensitisation and self-defence training of women security personal was also reported by a few companies. Information pertaining to health and occupational safety was generic in nature and did not take into account the different needs of men and women. Another interesting point is that several companies disclosed their policy on the prohibited types of client entertainment – gifts and anti-bribery policies, for instance. However, these did not include any provisions relating to genderz
- Almost all the companies studied provided information on training and professional development opportunities for their women employees. They talked of their efforts at promotion, networking, mentoring programmes, leadership and skill upgradation trainings. But though they disclosed these details, the information was not categorised by job category and/or title. Also, there was little to suggest whether the demands of employees' family roles were considered when scheduling training and education programmes
- The companies in the consulting sector provided detailed information on the training and professional development programmes for women. However, in nearly 80% of the cases, the information provided was global in nature or pertained to the workforce in the United States or Europe and not India. Hence, it was not possible to assess how companies performed on

this metric in India, or assess what differences exist in their functioning' methods in India and other countries where their business operates

- In respect to Principle 5 -- enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices -- limited information was available regarding supplier diversity and marketing practices. While supplier compliance was included in company codes of conduct, labour and human rights policies, gender equality was not an important area of coverage. Quantitative information pertaining to number of women owned suppliers, number of contracts awarded to men and women suppliers was generally not available.
- Information was available regarding business solutions to address various issues of concern to women. These have been discussed in the chapter on

Principle 5. Several companies had developed products and services that related either directly or indirectly to women. In this, the IT sector was once again at the forefront in developing several digital solutions to address problems such as illiteracy, reproductive and child health.

- In relation to Principle 6 -- community leadership and engagement -- detailed information pertaining to CSR programmes of companies has been provided. In terms of CSR spending, most of the companies that reported details provided information on their annual CSR budgets. However, very few of them provided a break up of their budgets.

Our analysis makes clear that business do support the cause of women and girls. These interventions are not however direct. They benefit women and girls through CSR programmes in education.



Several companies reported having employee engagement programmes in the form of volunteering and payroll giving. However, there is not much information on how many employees participated in these programmes by gender.

Why should corporates embrace narrative reporting on gender? Why is collating and publicising information on gender-representation, gender diversity, gender policies, opportunities and training for women, their representation on Boards, representation of Dalit/Adivasi women and methods to empower them significant? The answer is simple. It highlights the company's commitment to women's empowerment and used properly it can serve as

a basis for creating real competitive advantage. This is because it leads to better investor understanding of the company and improved stakeholder relationships. Thus, it is not a burden but an opportunity.

Globally, voluntary disclosures are being actively advocated. In India, regulatory requirements are becoming more stringent. This is evident by the Companies Act 2013, Section 135, which lays down several norms including those for enhanced disclosure. There is also a demand for increased transparency on the part of businesses to undertake Triple Bottom Line reporting. In view of these developments, companies must give themselves a head start to competitive advantage.



THE ROAD AHEAD NECESSARY TRAVEL



CARE India hopes to use the expert perspectives derived from this exploratory study to navigate its future course of action, create better plans and programmes when interacting with businesses, and be better prepared to manage the forewarned risks.

This primer is in many ways a call for action from different groups of stakeholders – businesses themselves, the State and the civil society. Each of these stakeholder groups has their own strengths, competencies and expertise. There is need to draw upon these, and bring them together for collaborative wisdom and action to address the issue of women's empowerment and gender equality within businesses.

The main recommendations for action that we have arrived upon based on this study are as follows:

Prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace

Our analysis of trends reveal that less than half of the companies surveyed have policies for prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace. Among those that do, our research trends were unable to establish if the institutional mechanisms in place were adequate and effective. Only 44.1% of the companies studied reported to have complaints committees in place. Only 36.6% of the complaints committees had external representation on these committees, despite the Vishakha Guidelines clearly stating that internal complaints committees must have third party, either NGO or another entity that is familiar with the issue of sexual harassment, to prevent the possibility of any undue pressure or influence from senior levels. Also, disclosures on the number of cases reported and resolved have at best been ambiguous. Again, these do not comply with the Vishakha Guidelines which states that the companies must report to the Government annually on the complaints made and the actions taken to resolve them.

From a policy angle, the Indian Parliament has passed the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013, thus making it a statutory requirement for organisations, public and private, to have mechanisms in place to address sexual harassment in the workplace. Under this Act, it is now imperative that every employer take concrete steps to put in place institutional mechanisms to make workplaces free from sexual harassment.

THE BUSINESS CASE OF EMPOWERING WOMEN



[Excerpts from 'Business Case for Increasing Diversity at the Workplace' by Mitali Nikore]

Aside from a rights based view, it is often wondered why businesses are being encouraged to pay so much attention to the gender dimension of corporate sustainability. However, be it through a Gender Dividend²¹ or through the Third Billion Index²², it has been affirmed, and re-affirmed several times by business itself that diversity and inclusion are good practices.

We have followed Mitali Nikore's specific arguments for India where she highlights how women's economic empowerment can hit the cul de sac if businesses do not respond to their needs or harness their talents, innovation and leadership qualities.

Gender dividend

- Aside from a rights based view, it is often wondered why businesses are being encouraged to pay so much attention to the gender dimension of corporate sustainability.
- At a time when women continue to confront several vulnerabilities in just commuting to their workplace, where 50% of women give up their careers before turning 30 (Economic Times) and 70% of executives surveyed in Asia by McKinsey & Co. say that gender diversity was not in the top 10 priorities of their organisation, it is clear that diversity must be placed front and center by India Inc.
- As outlined by Deloitte, “the Gender Dividend is a steady benefit that is earned by making wise, balanced investments in developing women as workers and potential leaders as well as understanding women as consumers and their impact on the economy and the bottom line. Done right, the Gender Dividend should be reflected in increased sales, expanded markets, and improved recruitment and retention of a key talent segment. In fact, Deloitte hails “Women” as the biggest emerging economy of the world, pointing out that by 2014, women's income will equal \$18 trillion worldwide.”

Women are talent!

- If we accept that inherent talent is evenly spread across the population, then it can be claimed that discrimination of any kind shall limit the

²¹The gender dividend: Making the business case for investing in women', Deloitte 2012

²²Empowering the Third Billion: Women and the World of Work in 2012', Booz & Company 2012

talent pool available to organisations. Hence, if companies are not nurturing their female talent pool, they are at a competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis companies who do take intentional actions for the same.

- In India, the proportion of females in higher education, especially at university level is continually rising, yet their labour force participation and promotion hasn't kept pace, resulting in huge losses of talent.
- Booz & Company's report, also points out that despite the huge gains enjoyed by the Indian economy which have expanded the total opportunity set, women are unable to reach their full potential as they still face “cultural restrictions, gender discrimination, and lack of resources”. Amongst women who work or are entrepreneurs, this report identifies gender-based crime, lack of access to start-up capital as well as safety concerns while commuting as key constraints to growth.
- On International Women's Day, 8th March 2013, the Economic Times carried the results of a recent survey by AVTAR Career Creators & LEXI Careers India which showed that the annual attrition rate of women under 30 was 48%. The biggest reasons for quitting work in this sample were marriage (for women under 25) and childbirth (for women under 30). Most importantly, 98% of women polled said that flexible work was important for them as they wished to balance both their professional and personal commitments.

Women are consumers!

- The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) estimates that by 2020, the overall size of earnings by Indian working women will amount to about \$900 billion almost triple the 2010 figure of \$280 billion. Also, the number of working women will rise from 134 million to 158 million over the decade.
- An IMRB survey (recently featured in the Times of India) of 9000 urban Indian women shows that monthly household income of women living and working in cities has more than doubled, increasing from Rs. 4,492 in 2001 to Rs. 9,457 in 2010
- In a recent publication the Economic Times cited the examples of several companies who were responding to the growing importance of female consumers both for individual as well as household purchases. HDFC Bank is making special products and concessions on loans for women, Godrej Appliances is launching new products targeted specifically at women and Maruti Suzuki believes that women are their “next big consumption driver” making it clear that these companies are innovating to stay ahead of the curve.

Gender diversity leads innovation

- Diversity and inclusion is a key business strategy that can open the doors to several new ways of



doing business for a firm. Latest thinking by Forbes summarises the point quite clearly: *“Multiple voices lead to new ideas, new services, and new products, and encourage out-of-the box thinking. Companies no longer view diversity and inclusion efforts as separate from their other business practices, and recognize that a diverse workforce can differentiate them from their competitors and can help capture new clients.”*

- Though their book 'Innovation and Gender' focusses on European economies; Inger Danilda and Jennie Granat Thorslund make the universal point that gender diversity must be seen *“as a means of creativity and innovation.”* Hence, companies must not view their diversity programs as cost centers, but rather invest in them to increase the productivity & creativity of their resulting gender diverse teams.

- Hindustan Unilever Ltd.'s (HUL) Project Shakti is an excellent example of this trend. Launched in 2001 as a key part of its rural expansion strategy, HUL appointed women belonging to existing local Self-Help Groups as 'Shakti Ammas' to become direct salespersons of their products in villages.
- Another company adopting a similar model is Coca-Cola. As part of its worldwide initiative '5 by 20' the company aims to empower 5 million women by 2020 and in this regard has begun a program called 'Parivartan' (change) in India. Women are trained as retailers in rural markets by the Coca-Cola University with classes being held on buses. Post-training, these women are supplied with Coke products, solar coolers for chilling the beverages and insurance of Rs. 1, 00,00/- for covering accidental death or

premature disability. The Economic Times has reported that about 1.5 lakh women entrepreneurs have set up kirani shops under this scheme.

Women as leaders

- During a recent event at the World Economic Forum 2013, Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook echoed the sentiments of women occupying senior positions in the workplace when she said that *“As a woman becomes more successful, she is less liked, and as a man becomes more successful, he is more liked.”*
- On 3 October 2012, the Economic Times carried the headline *“Not Everyone is Marissa Mayer...”* alluding to the working-mother precedent set by the pregnant Yahoo CEO. In India, the paper reports that there are 9.8 million women working in India Inc., but only 18 per cent are in middle management roles and less than 2 per cent of BSE 500 companies have female CEOs.

- Catalyst Inc.'s 2012 data shows that only 5.3 per cent of board seats in India were held by women.
- Vinnicombe and Singh (2002, 2004) identify two main barriers to women's ascent to directorship – a) due to internalised norms, the view of what makes an effective corporate board, or the characteristics associated with a potential director tend to resemble those of existing directors, rendering it harder for women to break into such positions and leading to a persistence of the *'think director, think male'* phenomenon b) women tend to lack the 'social capital' that is required for such a job.
- In such a scenario, Indian businesses must go beyond mere tokenism and focus on diversity in the boardroom as a goal in itself, nurturing their female employees for top management as well as board level positions so that female leaders can focus on getting their work done, rather than on the double standards, whether subtle or obvious.



Annex – 1

Companies that agreed to be named as part of primary study

Sl. No.	Company Name	Sector
1	Cairn India Ltd	Energy
2	Schneider Electric India	Energy
3	HCL Technologies	IT & ITES
4	Wipro Ltd	IT & ITES
5	Sutherland Global Services (P) Ltd	IT & ITES
6	Infosys Ltd	IT & ITES
7	Yes Bank Ltd	Financial services
8	CRISIL	Financial services
9	Cargill	Food and beverages
10	Jindal Stainless Ltd	Metal products

Annex - 2

References for disclosures obtained

Sl. No.	Company Name	References
1	HCL	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Rebalance 2013, Leveraging Collective Wisdom, Making Way for Tomorrow, Today , Sustainability Report 20132. Corporate Governance Report, 2011-123. Believe: How 'Employees First' Philosophy Helps Women Succeed at HCL4. Websites:<ol style="list-style-type: none">(a) www.hclwomen.com(b) www.hcltfoundation.org
2	Infosys Limited	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Relevance through Innovation - Sustainability Report 2012-13 and Business Responsibility Report 2012-13 (by the same name)2. Diversity from A Global Perspective -Interview with N R Narayan Murthy, Founder and Chairman, Infosys Ltd (part of CEO Diversity Leadership 2009)3. Annual Report 2011-12
3	Wipro	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Through the Looking Glass of History – Sustainability Report 2011-122. Customer Focus Collaborating for the Future - Annual Report 2012-133. Wipro Sustainability Initiatives, Aug 20134. http://www.unwomensouthasia.org/2013/indian-companies-come-together-for-the-first-time-to-champion-gender-equality-2/
4	Sutherland	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Company website
5	Tata Consultancy Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. TCS Annual Report 2012-132. TCS Corporate Sustainability Report - 'Empowering People' 2012-134. TCS Code of Conduct 2008 (employees)5. Maala Diversity Webinar (http://maala.org.il/warehouse/userUploadFiles/File/events/presentations/Maala%20Diversity%20Webinar%20Slide%20Show%20with%20TCS.pdf)6. TCS website7. Tata group website
6	Tata Power	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 94th Annual Report 2012-13
7	ONGC	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Global Compact Annual Communication on Progress 20082. HR Manual (http://ongmazdoorsangh.org/KNOWLEDGE-BANK/HR_Manual.pdf)
8	NTPC	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustainability Report 2011-122. Annual Report 2012-133. R&R policy4. CSR policy5. http://www.business-standard.com/article/management/nipping-sexual-harassment-113060200435_1.html

Contd.

Sl. No.	Company Name	References
9	Indian Oil Corporation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustainability Report 2009-102. Sustainability Report 2012-133. Annual Report 2013:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Report of CSR Activitiesb) IOC CSR Policyc) BRR4. Corporate Governance Report 20115. Communication on Progress to UNGC 2007
10	OPG Power	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Transformational Growth - OPG Power Ventures Plc Annual Report and Accounts 20132. Company website
11	Suzlon Energy Ltd	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Suzlon Energy Limited, Annual Report 2010-112. Suzlon Code of Ethics3. Suzlon Ombudsman Policy4. Company website
12	Yes Bank	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustainability Report 2012-132. Communication of Progress to UNGC: April 2011 - March 20123. Annual Report 2012-13 - Say YES to Balanced Growth4. Company website
13	ICICI Bank	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 19th Annual Report and Accounts 2012-20132. http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-11-27/news/44520359_1_sexual-harassment-kalpana-morparia-largest-private-sector-bank3. ICICI Group of Business Conduct and Ethics4. ICICI Bank Trains Women Staff in Self-defence, Ensures Safe Travel, Beena Parmar, (The Hindu Business Line, July 7, 2013) http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/banking/icici-bank-trains-women-staff-in-selfdefence-ensures-safe-travel/article4892042.ece5. http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2013-06-18/news/40049398_1_maternity-leave-women-employees-icici-bank
14	State Bank of India	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Annual Report 2012-132. Company website
15	CRISIL	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. CRISIL Annual Report 20122. Company website

Contd.

Sl. No.	Company Name	References
16	Axis Bank	1. Annual Report 2012-13 2. http://www.csidentity.com/india/axisbank.asp 3. Company website
17	The Hindu	1. Wikipedia 2. Company website
18	Hindustan Times	1. Wikipedia 2. Company website
19	Times of India	1. Wikipedia 2. Company website
20	News X	1. Wikipedia 2. Company website
21	NDTV	1. Annual Report 2012-13
22	IndiGO	1. Company website
23	SpiceJet	1. Spicejet Annual Report 2013 2. http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/spicejet-ltd/infocompanymanagement/companyid-7876.cms
24	Air India	1. Financial Report http://www.airindia.com/writereaddata/Portal/FinancialReport/1_193_1_management.pdf 2. Director's Report 3. http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2009-10-30/india/28078788_1_sharjah-lucknow-delhi-flight-mid-air-scuffle-sexual-harassment
25	Jet Airways	1. Company Factsheet 2. Annual Report 2012-13 3. Company website 4. http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/jet-airways-(india)-ltd/directorsreport/companyid-4374.cms
26	Go Air	1. Company website 2. http://www.theguardian.com/business/2013/jul/04/indian-airline-goair-female-only-crew-fuel

Contd.

Sl. No.	Company Name	References
27	Pricewaterhouse Cooper	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Global Code of Conduct2. Company website3. Global Review 20134. United Nations Global Compact PwC Communication on Progress 20125. Global Code of Conduct for Third Parties
28	KPMG	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Corporate Citizenship Report 20122. Company website
29	Ernst and Young	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Company website2. UNGC Communication on Progress 2012
30	Deloitte	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Company website2. Global Impact 2013 (review report)3. http://albertaventure.com/women-in-leadership-learning/4. Initiative for retention and advancement of women
31	McKinsey	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Company website2. http://www.next-generation-women.mckinsey.com/3. http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323764804578314450063914388
32	Vodafone	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Vodafone Group Plc , Sustainability Report 2012/132. Company website3. Nipping sexual harassment, Rohit Nautiyal and Ankita Rai June 3, 2013http://www.business-standard.com/article/management/nipping-sexual-harassment-113060200435_1.html
33	Airtel	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Vodafone Group Plc , Sustainability Report 2012/132. Company website3. Nipping sexual harassment, Rohit Nautiyal and Ankita Rai June 3, 2013http://www.business-standard.com/article/management/nipping-sexual-harassment-113060200435_1.html
34	Aircel	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Wikipedia
35	BSNL	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Annual Report 2012 - 2013
36	Idea	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Annual Report 2012-20132. Annual Report 2011-12

Contd.

Sl. No.	Company Name	References
37	Indian Hotel Company (Taj)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Annual Report 2012-132. UNGC Communication On Progress, 2011 - 20123. Tata Code of Conduct4. Company website
38	ITC	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustainability Report 20132. Annual Report 20133. Company website
39	EIH Associated Hotels Ltd (part of Oberoi group)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Annual Report 2012-132. Company website
40	JW Marriott	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Business Conduct Guide2. Sustainability Report 2011-123. Company website
41	Pepsico	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Performance with Purpose, Sustainability Report 2011-122. Annual Report 20123. Pepsico Human Rights Policy4. HR Policies, Industry is Waking up to the Menace, Anirvan Ghosh, Mahima Puri and Neha Dewan: http://epaper.timesofindia.com/Default/Layout/Includes/ETNEW/ArtWin.asp?From=Archive&Skin=ETNEW&BaseHref=ETM%2F2010%2F08%2F22&ViewMode=HTML&EntityId=Ar00700&AppName=1
42	Coca Cola	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Global Mutual Respect Policy2. 2012/2013 GRI Report3. Code of Business Conduct for Suppliers to The Coca-Cola Company4. India Inc Trying to get Proactive in Handling Sexual Harassment Cases, Sreeradha D Basu, Devina Sengupta & Saumya Bhattacharya, ET Bureau May 22, 2013
43	Dabur	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dabur India Limited Business Responsibility Report 2012-132. Dabur India Limited Business Responsibility Report 2011-123. Company website
44	Mondelez International (Cadbury / Kraft products)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Company website2. Code of Conduct
45	Britiannia	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Annual Report 2012-132. http://www.macroaxis.com/invest/ratio/BRITANNIA.NS--Number_of_Employees

Contd.

Sl. No.	Company Name	References
46	Tata Steel	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Empowering Women of Steel (publication)2. Annual Report 2012-133. Annual Report 2011-124. Corporate Sustainability Report 2011-12
47	Jindal Steel & Power Ltd	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Annual Report 20122. Wikipedia3. Company website
48	SAIL	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. UNGC Communication on Progress 20122. Corporate Sustainability Report 2010-113. CSR Policy4. HR Policy5. Safety Policy
49	Arcelor Mittal	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sustainability Report 2009-20102. 37th Annual Report 2012-133. Sustainability Policy
50	Essar Steel	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. UNGC Communication on Progress, 2010-112. Code of Business Conduct3. Responsible Sourcing at Arcelor Mittal: A Guidance Document for ArcelorMittal's buyers and suppliers

Business associations

Sl. No.	Company Name	References
1	CII	CII website
2	FICCI	FICCI website
3	NASSCOM	1. NASSCOM website 2. NASSCOM Foundation website
4	ASSOCHAM	1. ASSOCHAM website
5	Indian Beverages Association	1. IBA website
6	Bombay Chambers of Commerce and Industry	1. Annual Report 2012-13
7	Federation of Indian Airlines	1. FIA website
8	Hotel Association of India	1. HAI website
9	Cellular Operators Association of India	1. COAI website
10	Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry	1. SICCI website

Study Team:

K S Vengatesh, Lead Consultant
Deepa Sundara Rajan, Associate Consultant
Nooreen Dossa, Researcher, Mumbai
Anindita Tagore, Researcher, Delhi



CARE India

E-46/12, Okhla Industrial Area - Phase II, New Delhi - 110020

Ph: 011 - 49101100, 49101101 | Fax: 011- 26385291, 26385292

Email: contactus@careindia.org | Website: www.careindia.org

Please join us : www.careindia.org | www.facebook.com/CAREinIndia | twitter.com/CAREIndia