

Building Pathways to Gender Equality and Sustainability through the Women's Empowerment Principles

Philippines Policy Brief

FEBRUARY 2022



FOREWORD

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has had a high impact on economies and people around the globe, with women being disproportionately affected. While the pandemic has exposed and exacerbated vulnerabilities and pre-existing gender inequalities, it opened an opportunity for us to reassess and readjust as a community and to create momentum for action.

The business sector is paramount in building a more inclusive economy, and companies can expand the opportunities for women to fully participate and lead. The **Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)** provide a framework for the business sector to advance gender equality dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals in the workplace, marketplace and community. An increasing number of companies have become WEPs signatories, signaling their commitment to gender equality.

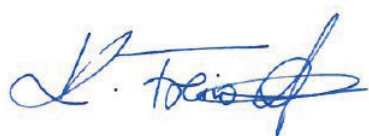
In 2021, the **UN Women** research on the current situation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) entitled "**Ecosystem landscaping to advance the accountability to implement the Women's Empowerment Principles in ASEAN**" assessed gaps and opportunities to inform public and private sector actions to advance women's economic empowerment in the world of business.

This research contributed to this Philippines Country Policy Brief entitled "**Building Pathways to Gender Equality and Sustainability through the Women's Empowerment Principles**" and provides guidance, in particular, for governments, policymakers and regulators.

The Philippines has adopted landmark legislation and national policies to align with international conventions, but much work remains to advance gender equality in business. Proactive and transformative action in the economic sector can address remaining gaps and barriers to Filipino women and achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase women's leadership and participation in corporate boards and management;
- Close the gaps in labor participation, income, and wages;
- Sustain efforts to end gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and workplace discrimination;
- Address the unequal burden of unpaid care work performed by women;
- Strengthen opportunities and support services for women-owned businesses.

Guided by this brief, the Philippines can reboot and refine policies, strategies, and programmes to be more gender responsive. In so doing, the Philippines will be able to realize economic and social benefits. In advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment, the Philippines will demonstrate leadership and inspire other ASEAN member States to shape a sustainable future through a more gender-inclusive business environment in the region.



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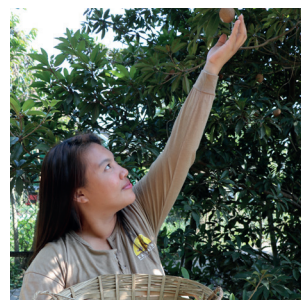
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Building Pathways to Gender Equality and Sustainability through the Women's Empowerment Principles **Philippines Policy Brief**

Across the globe, gender gaps remain in labour force participation, high-medium skilled employment, and representation in leadership and decision-making roles.¹ The COVID-19 pandemic has continuously increased these gender gaps as women and girls bear the brunt of the pandemic in the higher rates of income loss, increased levels of intimate partner violence and more time required on domestic duties and care work.

UN Women has developed the country policy briefs to examine how governments and companies are taking action on gender equality issues and identify and promote gender responsive policies in selected Southeast Asian countries. This policy brief is an analysis of the situation as it pertains to the Philippines. It also offers a practical guide to stakeholders, particularly the government, on how to maximize the WEPs as a framework to stimulate public and private sectors actions that will accelerate the progress to achieve the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDGs 5 (Gender Equality) and 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth).

Firstly, it introduces the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) Public Policy Roadmap and Scorecard for the Philippines. The Roadmap and Scorecard provide a comprehensive review of the public sector's policies, programs and legislation related to the seven WEPs in the Philippines. Secondly, the present brief outlines the key markers in the Philippines illustrating the degree that gender equality is promoted and enabled in the country. These markers are compared against international frameworks and provide research-based assessments of the level of gender equality in society. Finally, it concludes with a list of policy and action recommendations for how the Philippine government policymakers and regulators can advance gender equality in the private sector.

What is the purpose of this policy brief?

This policy brief intends to provide government policymakers and regulators insight into which areas of concern require targeted policies and actions to ensure equal participation and better outcomes for Filipino women in business, the workplace, the marketplace, and the community. And thus, paving the path to a more inclusive, sustainable recovery and growth of the Philippine economy.

Who is this policy brief for?

This policy brief aims to inform the views and policies of the following stakeholders in the Philippines:

1. **Government** policymakers
2. **Regulators** (including stock exchange and securities exchange commissions)

Businesses and the private sector are seen to have increasing role in promoting an inclusive and sustainable economic development. Given this shift, government policymakers and regulators should be able find ways how they can shape and monitor business conduct, specifically in relation to private sector performance linked to socio-economic governance, to include that of promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment. It is crucial that these actors work in collaboration with advocacy, civil society, and workers' organizations and, equally important, with companies, employers' organizations, and business associations as no one group of stakeholders alone can achieve gender equality.

What does this brief offer to its readers?

This policy brief offers:

1. **A review of the current situation and policies** pertaining to gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the Philippines. It introduces the WEPs Public Policy Roadmap for the Philippines, which provides a comprehensive review of the policies, programs, and legislation related to advancing women's leadership and equal participation in business mapped against the globally established WEPs framework.
2. **An analysis of the status of gender reporting and accountability in the private sector** in the Philippines by outlining markers illustrating the degree by which gender-related indicators are incorporated in policies and mechanisms.
3. **A set of policy and action recommendations** for how government policymakers and regulators can promote, improve, and achieve gender equality in business.

The COVID-19 pandemic has continuously increased these gender gaps as women and girls bear the brunt of the pandemic in the higher rates of income loss, increased levels of intimate partner violence and more time required on domestic duties and care work.

I. The WEPs and Reporting as Impetus for Action

**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.

Established by the UN Global Compact and UN Women, the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)² are a set of Principles offering guidance to business on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace, and community. The WEPs are informed by international labour and human rights standards and grounded in the recognition that businesses have a stake in, and a responsibility for, gender equality and women's empowerment.

The WEPs are a primary vehicle to look at and stimulate private sector delivery on the gender

equality dimensions of the 2030 agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By adopting the WEPs, businesses signal their commitment to this agenda and to work collaboratively in multistakeholder networks to foster business practices that empower women.

The different WEPs tools³ offer businesses with clear guidance and recommendations on assessing their performance on gender equality, planning future actions, policies, and programs toward improving their performance and reporting on gender-related indicators. These include indicators for equal pay for work of equal value, gender-

responsive supply chain, and zero tolerance against sexual harassment in the workplace.

Likewise, and as elucidated in the present brief, the WEPs provide government policymakers and regulators a framework for introducing clear guidance and regulations on private sector reporting and accountability. **Improved reporting mechanisms within the private sector can act as a driver for action towards gender equality in business and can catalyze larger transformative social change.** The WEPs indicators and tools can be used as guide by government policymakers and regulators in putting in place a more transparent, public, and consistent monitoring and reporting system with standardized gender equality indicators.

The WEPs Public Policy Roadmap

UN Women, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the Value for Women developed the **WEPs Public Policy Roadmap**⁴ (the Roadmap) to provide governments in the ASEAN region a comprehensive review of public sector policies, strategies, and legislation that relate to each of the seven WEPs. It is a benchmark upon which Southeast Asian countries can assess and compare their current gender-inclusive policies, thereby helping government policymakers and regulators to gain insight into the areas that require more attention and work to advance gender equality in the private sector. Subsequently, a WEPs Philippines Public Policy Roadmap Scorecard (the Scorecard) was produced to offer a policy assessment of gender inclusivity in the country, indicating how closely each of the seven WEPs is met and providing recommendations that will help advance these areas.

With the findings of the Roadmap and the Scorecard, along with the recommendations in the present brief, the Philippine government policymakers and regulators are guided in legislating proactive measures for ensuring gender equality in business, specifically in addressing gender-related issues, improving accountability and reporting mechanisms, and standardizing responsible business conduct that consciously incorporates gender at its core. These also open up areas for collaboration between the government and the private sector to work together toward gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

The Economic and Human Rights Case for Gender Equality in the Philippines

The Philippines has shown its commitment to close overall gender gap. The country ranked 17th out of 153 countries in the 2021 Global Gender Gap Index, with 74.8% of its overall gender gap closed to date.⁵ Although the Philippines has dropped one position lower from the previous year, it continues to be among the best performer in the East Asia and Pacific region and it is among the 18 countries that have closed at least 79.5% of their economic participation and opportunity gap. This result is due, in part, to the fact that the Philippines is one of the few countries that has closed its gender gap in senior roles and in professional and technical roles. Thus, with the Philippines' performance in closing the overall gender gap, the country sets an example and is in the position to inspire other countries in the region by addressing the remaining gaps in gender equality.

Gaps in women's labour force participation and income and wage persist.

Women's participation in the broader labour force still needs to be improved. With only 42.5% of women in the job market, 13.5 % lower than the overall rate in the ASEAN region,⁶ the participation gap of 24.3% remains to be closed.⁷ The Philippines ranks 4th among ASEAN countries in the proportion of women in middle and senior managerial positions with 26%, but the proverbial glass ceiling—or the invisible barrier that hinder the advancement of women up the corporate ladder—persists.⁸ Income and wage gaps persist with 22% of the wage gap and 31% of the income gap yet to be closed. Women workers, especially in the informal economy, continuously face discrimination in accessing credit, benefits, and opportunities to improve their lives and that of their families.⁹ They continue to do most of the unpaid care work and have less access to opportunities linked to work, livelihoods, and personal and professional development compared to their counterparts. The experience of women in the Philippines still hinges to a considerable extent on whether they are wealthy or poor.¹⁰

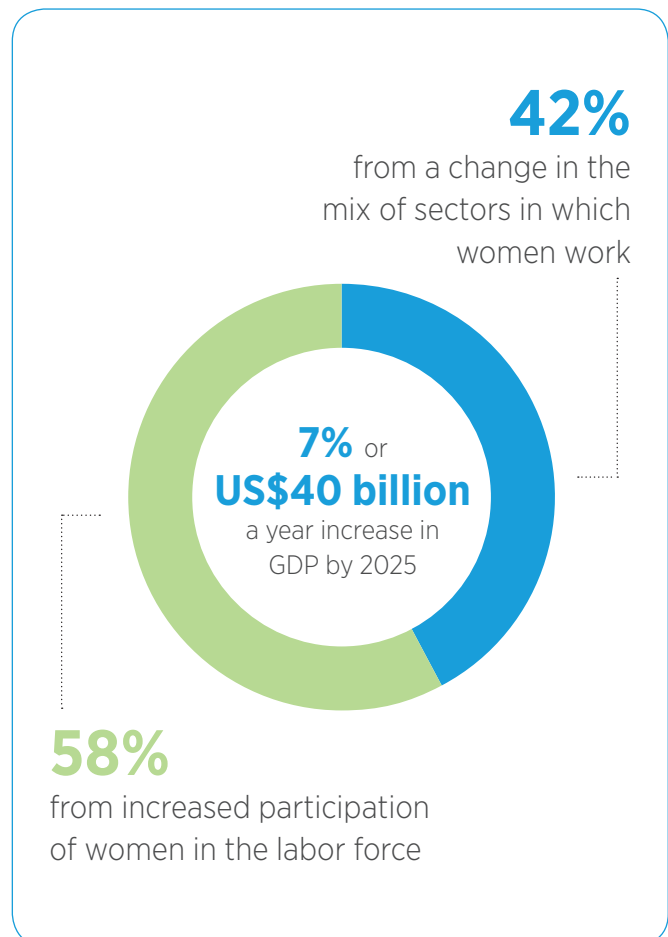
The COVID-19 pandemic has differing impacts on women and men.

The pandemic has changed the business environment and transformed the world of work on a global scale, which did not only exacerbate existing issues, such as higher rates of domestic violence and other forms of abuse, but also presented new challenges to working women. With a shift in work arrangements from on-site to online, women experience difficulty in managing productive and care work due to prolonged hours to tackle care responsibilities

and, consequently, decreased income and job loss. Women (56%) are also more likely than men (54%) to consider working less due to the impact of the pandemic on care work and responsibilities at home.¹¹

Gender equality accelerates economic growth.

In the Philippines and Southeast Asia, gender equality has convincingly shown to stimulate economic growth. By focusing on increasing the number of women in the labour force and their type of work, the Philippines could add 7% or US\$40 billion above business-as-usual GDP by 2025, in a best-in-region scenario.¹²



Source: McKinsey, 2018

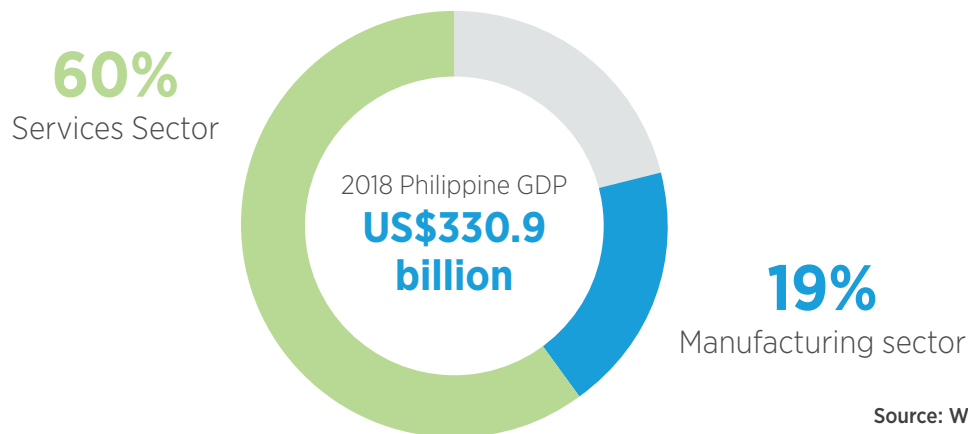
Gender equality supports a more inclusive and sustainable economic recovery.

More women work in industries that are severely affected by the pandemic such as the service, tourism, and manufacturing sectors. Thus, putting gender equality at the center of the government's

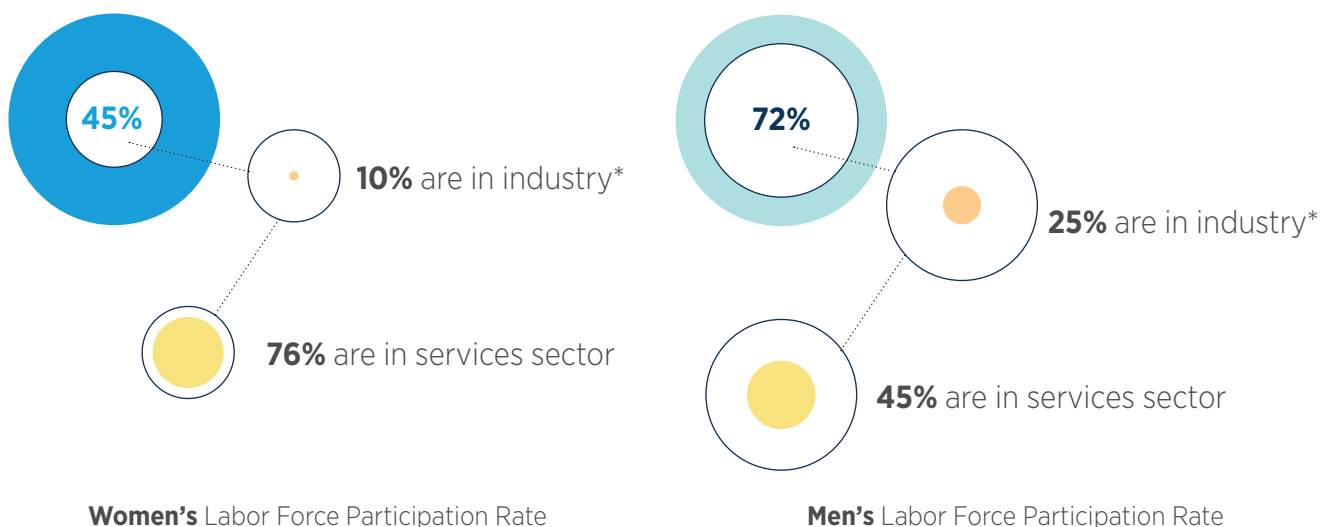
recovery plans ensures and speeds up an equal recovery. It will also prevent the reversal of the progress the Philippine government has made in terms of meeting its SDG commitments, specifically for SDG 5 – Gender Equality.

The Economic Importance of Gender Equality in the Philippines¹³

The Philippines is a dynamic economy with robust services and manufacturing sectors fuelled by urbanization, strong consumer demand, and a competitive workforce.



The labor force in the Philippines totals **45 million people.**



*Industry: businesses that produce goods as opposed to services Source: ILO, 2020

II. WEPs Country Policy Assessment – Philippines

Given the above and reviewing the challenges to achieving gender equality for Filipino companies through the lens of the WEPs, there are opportunities to improve the private sector's work in this space.

This can be realized by addressing the different thematic areas that require targeted government policies and actions, as identified in the WEPs Country Policy Assessment for the Philippines.

(see Annex 1 for the full WEPs Country Policy Assessment - Philippines).



WEP 1: High-level Corporate Leadership

The Philippines has ratified international gender commitments, specifically the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and relevant ASEAN declarations and introduced gender responsive budgeting legislation and strategy. Substantial efforts remain crucial to ensure a more coherent and holistic adoption of international gender commitments in domestic policies and programs. Additionally, improving the implementation of the Gender and Development (GAD) budget policy and strengthening of enabling mechanisms that support GAD efforts of agencies are also areas that government policymakers and regulators should address to help agencies, particularly those that oversee and work with the private sector, address gender issues and concerns relating to women's economic empowerment.



WEP 2: Treat all Women and Men Fairly at Work without Discrimination

Legislation on pay, employment, parenthood, and pensions—such as the prohibition of discrimination in employment based on gender, maternity leave benefits, and equal remuneration for work of equal value—are in place. Government policymakers and regulators, however, have work to do in terms of policies promoting women on corporate boards and actions beyond legislation supporting pay equity. The ratification of ILO conventions relating to parental and family protection and the creation of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights are also two areas that require action.



WEP 3: Employee Health, Well-Being, and Safety

The Philippines has ratified ILO Fundamental Conventions but is yet to ratify ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment (No. 190, 2019). Nevertheless, the country's legislature has passed laws addressing gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the workplace. There must be

sustained efforts to raise awareness and build internal capacities to locally implement and adapt this in specific settings and context of companies, businesses, and offices.



WEP 4: Education and Training for Career Advancement

While there are professional development programs for women in leadership or in non-traditional vocations, such as in STEM, in ILO Decent Work Programme, work is still needed for the development of the same programs in CEDAW. Policies that promote or offer responsive and sensitive career advancement programmes for women facing heavy care work responsibilities are yet to be seen.



WEP 5: Enterprise Development, Supply Chain, and Marketing Practices

Legislation on access to resources, assets, and financial services, which include laws on the prohibition of discrimination in access to credit based on gender and equal property rights, are present in the country. There are currently no policies to promote gender-responsive procurement (GRP). Raising awareness about the business case for GRP and introducing provisions in procurement laws to enable it are examples of the key areas that government policymakers and regulators can do to open more economic opportunities for women and women-owned or -led enterprises.¹⁴



WEP 6: Community Initiatives and Advocacy

Multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships to promote gender equality in the private sector and women's entrepreneurship are evident in the Philippines. Continued encouragement and support for embedding gender in community initiatives and advocacy of the private sector must be pursued through regular exchanges for deeper engagement and partnerships to see longer term positive results.



WEP 7: Measurement and Reporting

With the several reporting and accountability mechanisms in the Philippines, the country is on the right track in terms of private sector reporting and accountability that include, albeit minimal, gender-related indicators. A more substantive incorporation of the WEPs reporting indicators, particularly on the percentage of women on boards, leadership and management, wage transparency, and marketplace indicators, such as procurement spend going to women-owned businesses, is necessary to enhance measurement and reporting in the country and show how the private sector are moving towards promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

Key WEP-related policies and actions in the Philippines

Much of the progress to date has leveraged the gender equality provision enshrined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution: “The State recognizes the role of women in nation-building and shall ensure the fundamental equality before the law of women and men.”¹⁵ Likewise, it affirms “labour as a primary social, economic force and shall protect workers’ rights and promote their welfare.”¹⁶

The strategic actions of the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) Plan 2019-2025 relate to both the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 and the remaining years of the Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD) 1995-2025.¹⁷ They serve as a guide to the government and a key reference in formulating GAD plans and budgets. However, while the Philippine government is proactive in narrowing the gender gap, and achieving significant milestones, there are only 15% of women on Boards.¹⁸

The **PDP 2017-2022** looks at “Negosyo” or business as an economic growth-promoting strategy.¹⁹ The aim is to enhance economic opportunities for Filipinos – a two-pronged approach with specific strategies and actions directed at the Industry and Services sectors and those specific to the agriculture, fishery, and forestry sector. The strategies and actions focus on enhancing productivity, and among these is **the development and promotion of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)**.

Enterprise development has been progressively promoted in the country and several laws over the past three decades were enacted in support of the development and growth of MSMEs. Given that at least **53% of MSMEs in the country are**

led by women, there is an opportunity for the government and the private sector to enable women’s economic empowerment through supporting MSMEs.

Moreover, it anticipates that more women will participate in the labour force (projected to increase 51.3%), overall labour force participation will improve (64.1%), and the unemployment rate will decline to 3-5% by the end of the plan cycle. The identified strategies, which are enumerated below, to achieve the target of the PDP 2017-2022 are linked to WEPs 2 and 5:

- full implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act
- improving access and affordability of childcare services
- formulation of policies that promote work-life balance
- improving women’s access to entrepreneurial opportunities.

Key related policies and laws adopted in recent years include the **Safe Spaces Act**, which prohibits and penalizes gender-based sexual harassment (GBSH) in public spaces, educational institutions, and workplaces.²⁰ It also remedies the gaps in

53%

of MSMEs in the country
are led by women

the old anti-sexual harassment law. In addition to GBSH addressed in this law, the **Labour Code** prohibits discrimination solely on account of sex in matters of compensation for work of equal value, promotion, and in training opportunities, study grants and scholarships.²¹

Another is the passage of the **105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law** in 2019, which increased paid maternity leave from 60 days to 105 days.²² The **Telecommuting Act**,²³ enacted in the same year, grant employers the ability to offer a telecommuting program to its employees. It was seen and being beneficial to women through improved flexibility to balance work and care responsibilities, reducing commute time and cost and improving the safety for women especially when travelling at night. It was anticipated that there would be an increased uptake in telecommuting, especially during the pandemic. However, there is insufficient evidence that there has been an increase in telecommuting.

Particular to reporting and accountability, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) issued Memorandum Circular No. 4 - **Sustainability Reporting Guidelines for Publicly-Listed**

Companies (PLCs) in 2019, requiring PLCs to disclose nonfinancial information and performance across three aspects—environmental, social, and governance (ESG).²⁴ The introduction of the Sustainability Reporting guidelines for PLCs is a step forward to shifting the management focus and bringing attention to the nonfinancial aspects of their businesses. It guides them in assessing and managing ESG performance and risks and in measuring and monitoring their contributions toward the attainment of sustainability targets under the SDGs and national policies and programs. Although the guidelines include some indicators on gender, there is much room for improvements which can be addressed when the policy is revisited, as discussed in the succeeding sections of the present brief.

Further, efforts to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights have gained ground with the publication of the **Guidance Document on Business and Human Rights**, led by the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).²⁵ Nevertheless, the Philippine government is yet to move forward with the process of developing a NAP on Business and Human Rights, in accordance with the gender framework and guidance set out by the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights.²⁶

More recently, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) launched the updated **National Strategy for Financial Inclusion 2022-2028**. The NSFI include the reduction of disparities in financial inclusion based on gender and other status is one of its key outcomes, emphasizing that gender inclusion is an urgent global concern.²⁷

Lastly, the government has already announced that in order to to support the Philippine's

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economic recovery, it will push forward the following bills:

- the Financial Institutions Strategic Transfer (FIST) bill
- the GFI Unified Initiative to Distressed Enterprises for Economic Recovery
- the Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) bill.

These policies and actions underscore the commitment of the Philippine government to promote economic empowerment and will be able to reflect strong commitment to advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment through clear guidelines in incorporating and addressing gender issues and disparities in the proposed bills. Also, while they address several WEPs-related issues, there remain gaps in certain thematic areas, such as women in leadership, equal pay, equal opportunities in the workplace, safe and inclusive workplaces, equitable procurement practices, and reporting.

To forge ahead, government policymakers and regulators must see that the aforementioned policies and actions are effectively pursued and implemented and should take transformative actions to prioritize and tackle the persisting gaps to ensure equal participation and better outcomes for Filipino women in business, the workplace, the marketplace, and the community. Moreover, it is critical that existing and future policies and actions are able to reflect, incorporate, and address women's issues and concerns to truly ensure that these will be more proactive and gender responsive, rather than gender neutral, in order to promote substantive gender equality.

There remain gaps in certain thematic areas, such as women in leadership, equal pay, equal opportunities in the workplace, safe and inclusive workplaces, equitable procurement practices, and reporting.

III. Gender Reporting and Accountability in the Private Sector in the Philippines

Private sector reporting and accountability, which spans across the different thematic areas, is **key to enabling companies to better understand their commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment and contribute more effectively toward a gender equal economy** that works for all women and men. By juxtaposing the WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework²⁸ (see Annex 2) with the Sustainability Reporting Guidelines for PLCs, the remaining gaps are explored both in terms of the thematic priorities and gender indicators contained in the latter.

Sustainability Reporting Landscape in the Philippines

The SEC's Sustainability Reporting Guidelines for PLCs is the primary policy for business disclosure on nonfinancial information, covering environmental, social, and governance aspects. The first sustainability report, as per the SEC, was scheduled for submission in 2020, along with a PLC's annual report. The SEC accorded the PLCs with a certain degree of flexibility in deciding the frameworks they can use in producing their sustainability reports and for companies that are already submitting their sustainability reports prior to the issuance of the guidelines, such reports were considered as their compliance with the reporting requirement. With its "comply or explain" approach for the first three years of implementation, PLCs are given the opportunity to collect data or establish their database that will allow them to extract more detailed information which may be required of them by future policy developments.²⁹

Several gaps in sustainability reporting in the Philippines are identified based on the results of the key informant interviews³⁰ conducted for the present brief. First, **a key gap is the absence of policies or issuances requiring private sector**

reporting on gender equality that cover both listed and non-listed companies. Apart from the SEC guidelines, the BSP issued Circular No. 1085 in 2020, mandating financial institutions to adopt a sustainable finance framework.³¹ Other relevant national government agencies have not issued policies nor introduced mechanisms that require reporting from the private sector—whether on sustainability or gender equality, such as the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) whose oversight mandate is carried out through direct tracking and monitoring of private sector establishments. Second, and related to the previous one, **the lack of institutional capacity of government agencies in-charge of monitoring the private sector** is a significant barrier to the collection, analysis, and reporting on gender. Third, while the SEC is open to updating the Sustainability Reporting Guidelines to include substantial gender-based reporting indicators, the **PLCs are still in the learning process and encounter difficulty in completing documentations**, specifically for the technical aspects of the reporting. Hence, any introduction of additional indicators or changes to the guidelines requires careful consideration of timeliness and other factors, including the capacities of PLCs to comply and report thoroughly.

Reporting and Accountability on Thematic Priorities for Promoting an Enabling Environment for Gender Equality in the Private Sector

The WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework provides indicators to guide businesses in setting indicators, targets, and support to measure performance on gender-equality aligned with the WEPs value-chain approach. Based on the results of the WEPs Country Policy Assessment as well as of the desktop research and subsequent key informant interviews, five thematic priorities were identified as key areas that government policymakers and regulators should focus on to further advance and ensure an enabling environment for gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the private sector, particularly, and in the country in general.

Following the framework, below provides an analysis of the key gaps in gender indicator reporting for the identified thematic priorities. In addition, the findings of the recent study conducted by UN Women, the Philippine Business Coalition for Women Empowerment, and Investing in Women are presented to provide an overview of the current reporting performance of the top 30 PLCs in the country.³²

Starting with women in leadership, the framework provides two indicators:

Percentage of women in senior leadership level positions and percentage of women on non-executive board (for companies with a non-executive board).

The SEC Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, on the other hand, require PLCs to disclose only the overall number of female and male employees and not the gender composition of the workforce at the individual job levels, from entry level to board level within a company. The template does not require further disclosures on gender-related information, such as those identified in the WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework and other indicators including whether it has an approach or a policy on non-discrimination and equal opportunity for its hiring and promotion processes and whether it has set objectives and targets for gender equality.

Improving business performance in terms of increasing women's participation and representation in corporate leadership and management positions is crucial to address the "leaking pipeline" of women leadership—the higher the rank goes, the lesser women in the pipeline—within Philippine business entities.³³ Among the benefits of having more women at the decision-making levels of business include improved organizational performance and increased profitability performance.³⁴ Introducing gender equality and diversity policy at all levels, setting well-defined targets, developing gender

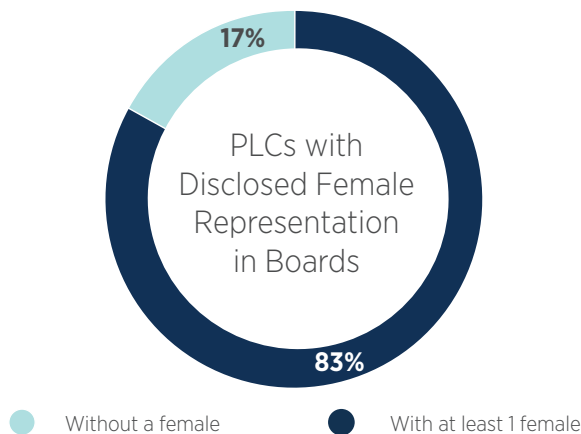
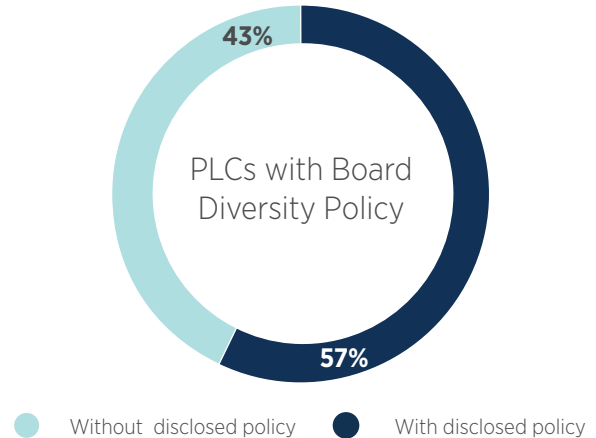
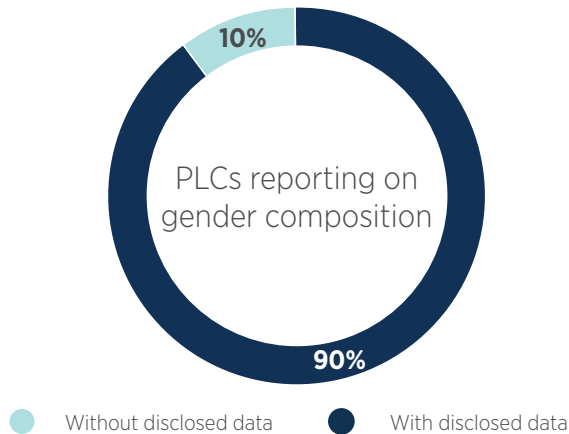
Thematic Priority A

Women in leadership (middle management up)

WEP Indicator

- Percentage of women in senior leadership level positions
- Percentage of women on non-executive board (for companies with a non-executive board)

Assesment of the sustainability reports of the Top 30 PLCs



- Companies with more female employees reported that their gender equality initiatives are in support of SDG 5.
- Only 5 companies reported that they have explicit Gender Equality and Diversity Policies, three of which have specific provisions on ensuring female representation in their leadership.

inclusive programmes and initiatives, including provision of care work support services can help accelerate women leadership. Improving the access of women to training and development opportunities can, likewise, lead to upward movement of women leadership in business.

- By focusing on increasing the number of women in the labour force and their type of work, the Philippines could add **7% or US\$40 billion** above business-as-usual GDP by 2025.

Thematic Priority B Equal Pay

WEP Indicator

- Ratio of the basic salary and remuneration of women to men for each employee category, by significant locations of operations.

The WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework introduces the indicator that measures **the ratio of the basic salary and remuneration of women to men for each employee category, by significant locations of operation.** The SEC Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, on the other, does not require PLCs to disclose gender pay gap. Disclosure item pertaining to wage focuses on the ratio of lowest paid employee against minimum wage. Reporting on whether equal pay is observed

Assesment of the sustainability reports of the Top 30 PLCs

- Only 2 companies reported on gender pay gap, one of which disclosed that the mean gender pay gap in senior management is 41% for women and 59% for men.
- Majority of PLCs made no mention of remuneration policies, citing confidentiality and data security reasons.
- PLCs put a premium on meritocracy and the concept of Pay for Performance.

within businesses is important to address gaps in pay for equal work toward minimizing this gap. gender pay gap can impact commitment and trust of female employees, which can result in lower retention rates, higher turnover, and lower productivity that result in financial and time costs for employers. Being able to show that a business is working on minimizing gender pay gap is useful in retaining talents and attracting applicants.

Thematic Priority C Equal Opportunities in the Workplace

WEP Indicator

- Percentage of new hires who are women
- Percentage of employees promoted who are women
- Retention rate of employees that took parental leave, disaggregated by sex

The WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework uses three indicators to measure business performance in terms of ensuring equal opportunities in the workplace. These are as follows:

percentage of new hires who are women, percentage of employees promoted who are women, and retention rate of employees that took parental leave, disaggregated by sex.

Apart from the disclosures on employee data (see Thematic Priority A), the SEC Sustainability Reporting Guidelines requires PLCs to disclose the number of female employees who availed of mandatory benefits.³⁵ However, it lacks disclosure items that monitor the abovementioned indicators, specifically on retention rates post-parental leaves. It also requires PLCs to show the number of female and male employees availing of telecommuting and

flexible work hours but since it was released prior to the issuance of the IRR of the Telecommuting Law, it does not assess whether a company has its own policy or strategy on flexible or alternative work arrangements for both women and men employees in line with the said law.³⁶

Collecting and analyzing data on the above indicators are important in assessing whether a company culture supports working parents, ensures the welfare of employees, and allows them to balance their personal and professional responsibilities. In addition, guaranteeing equal access to training and development opportunities, and analyzing data on the uptake by gender, can result in better performance of women employees. Through these, businesses will be able to enhance productivity, keep top talents, and improve employee attraction.

Thematic Priority D

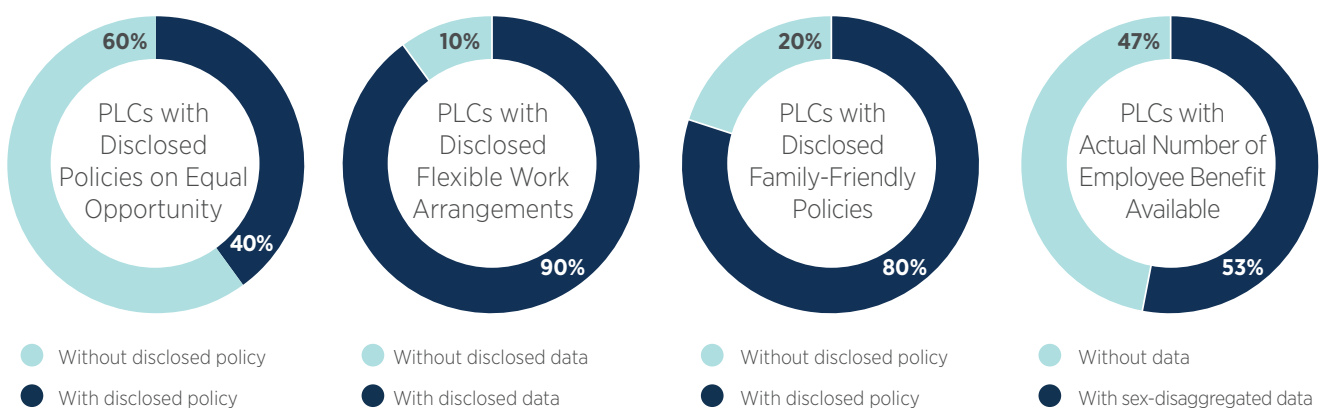
Safe and Inclusive Workplaces

WEP Indicator

- Has confidential, anonymous grievance, resolution, and non-retaliation mechanisms and procedures to address and respond to reports and incidents of violence and harassment

The WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework assesses **whether a business has confidential, anonymous grievance, resolution, and non-retaliation mechanisms and procedures to address and respond to reports and incidents of violence and harassment**. The template of the SEC requires PLCs to disclose the number of legal actions or employee grievances

Assesment of the sustainability reports of the Top 30 PLCs



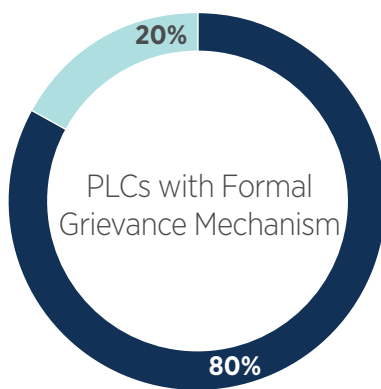
- Flexible work arrangement was put in place as mitigating strategy in pursuit of business continuity amidst the pandemic; none made mention that it is in accordance with the Telecommuting law.
- Only two companies reported flexible work uptake by gender (23% and 33.94%)

involving forced or child labor and whether they have policies that explicitly disallows violations of labor laws and human rights in the workplace. It does not include disclosure items on whether a company has grievance, resolution, and non-retaliation mechanisms and procedures to

address gender-based violence and harassment, specifically in accordance with relevant legislation on workplace gender-based sexual harassment.³⁷

As set out in several domestic laws and international labour standards, employees have a legal right to be safe at work. Thus, employers or businesses are accountable for their health and safety. Beyond the legal standpoint, a safe workplace means sound business. Violence and harassment against women in the workplace constitute a violation of women's rights and have adverse impact on the productivity and opportunities of women employees. Policies and mechanisms addressing these issues are crucial, as well as the conduct of seminars on gender sensitivity, sexual harassment, and safe spaces.

Assesment of the sustainability reports of the Top 30 PLCs



● Without disclosed mechanism ● With disclosed mechanism

- Grievance mechanisms are centered on addressing corruption and/or conflict of interest
- Seven PLCs have notable examples of having gender lens, indicating specific provisions on sexual harassment and anti-discrimination
- Only one company mentioned in their recent report the creation of a Committee on Decorum and Investigation, in line with the Safe Spaces Act.

Thematic Priority E Equitable Procurement Practices

WEP Indicator

- Percentage of procurement spend with women-owned businesses
- Percentage of procurement spend with businesses with gender equality commitments
- Percentage of workers in supply chain receiving a living wage, disaggregated by sex

The WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework measures performance for equitable procurement practices through the following indicators: **percentage of procurement spend with women-owned businesses, percentage**

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of procurement spend with businesses with gender equality commitments, and percentage of workers in supply chain receiving a living wage, disaggregated by sex.

The SEC sustainability reporting template only requires PLCs to disclose the proportion of their procurement budget used for significant locations of operations spent on local suppliers.

Although there are government agencies, particularly the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) and DTI, that have efforts at the local level for procurement from women entrepreneurs and MSMEs in general, there is an absence of a policy or framework on gender responsive procurement that will enable the private sector to leverage their purchasing policies and practices to promote gender equality and women empowerment across its supply chain. Thus, preventing businesses from realizing the benefits that come from integrating a gender lens in procurement policies and practices, which supports not only the economic empowerment of women and women entrepreneurs but also broader inclusive economic development by increasing competition and driving innovation and entrepreneurship.

Overall, it must be noted that the SEC does not require PLCs to follow the template and may choose to adopt a globally recognized reporting framework. Nonetheless, as recommended in the present policy brief, standardizing the reporting of gender-related indicators is beneficial for companies as it will set a benchmark for gender equality performance among businesses, which will help them to fully assess where they are, take on transformative decisions and actions, and, ultimately, start reaping the benefits of having a more gender-equal workplace.

As set out in several domestic laws and international labour standards, employees have a legal right to be safe at work and, thus, employers or businesses are accountable for their health and safety. Beyond the legal standpoint, a safe workplace means sound business.

IV. Recommendations

Policy and Actions to Advance Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment in the Private Sector in the Philippines

With the government's work and existing policy environment, the Philippines is moving in the right direction in supporting an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable economy. Yet to fully realize gender equality in the private sector, much remains to be done. And there are spaces where government policymakers and regulators can easily transform and progress the situation to tip the balance for gender equality through the policy and action recommendations elaborated below.

Thematic Priority	Policy Recommendations	Actions to Support Policy Recommendations	Stakeholders
A Women in leadership (middle management up)	Pursue policy initiatives with a specific target or quota and programs for promoting women leadership on board and (middle) management roles	Open up platforms and spaces for consultation and collaboration with the private sector and business associations in setting and disseminating targets for women on board and middle management roles Expand training and development programs to enhance the leadership capabilities of women already in management and executive roles to prepare them to successfully participate in corporate boards Conduct sensitization and outreach activities for private sector stakeholders on the value of gender diversity in leadership, and develop messaging that seeks to change gender norms in the private sector	Government — Philippine legislature, specifically the relevant committees in both the Senate and House of Representatives (HoR) — Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) — Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) — Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) Non-Government/ Other Stakeholders — Business groups and associations — Stock Exchange — Academe — Advocacy groups

Thematic Priority	Policy Recommendations	Actions to Support Policy Recommendations	Stakeholders
B Equal Pay	Review laws, policies, or strategies on equal remuneration for work of equal value to formulate amendatory or other policy measures to address gaps in pay equity and ensure alignment with international obligations and standards on equal pay, such as the ILO Convention No. 100 (Equal Remuneration Convention of 1951)	<p>Collect and analyze gender-related indicator data from publicly listed and non-listed companies to monitor gender pay gap</p> <p>Develop a national initiative or strategy for promoting pay equity, including incentivizing companies that have already closed gender pay gap or have initiatives or policies to address it</p>	<p>— Philippine legislature (relevant committees in the Senate and HoR)</p> <p>— SEC</p> <p>— Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA)</p> <p>— DOLE</p> <p>— Commission on Human Rights (CHR)</p>
C Equal opportunities in the workplace	Ratify ILO conventions on parental and family protection, specifically Convention No. 183 (Maternity Protection Convention of 2000) and Convention No. 156 (Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention of 1981) and its Recommendation (No. 165)	<p>Commence the ratification process of relevant ILO conventions</p> <p>Assess related domestic legal frameworks to ensure the adoption of and/or coherence with the international standards contained in these conventions</p>	<p>— Philippine legislature (relevant committees in the Senate and HoR)</p> <p>— CHR</p>
	Introduce strategies to strengthen the enforcement of laws prohibiting discrimination in employment based on gender, promoting flexible work arrangements, on mandatory benefits and employee welfare, and other related policies	<p>Conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the implementation and compliance of relevant laws to identify gaps for effective enforcement and increased compliance</p> <p>Design programs and strategies—such as mandatory reporting and incentives for companies that have flexible work arrangements—to promote equal opportunities in the workplace</p>	<p>— Philippine legislature (relevant committees in the Senate and HoR)</p> <p>— DOLE</p>

Thematic Priority	Policy Recommendations	Actions to Support Policy Recommendations	Stakeholders
C Equal opportunities in the workplace	Recognize the care work done predominantly by women (as well as solo-parent families), which is a significant share of economic activity, and find ways to reduce and/or redistribute this work	<p>Work with communities in developing childcare and family-friendly programs, services, and infrastructures</p> <p>Revisit related policies with the view of increasing the number of days for paternity leave and either requiring or incentivizing the provision of childcare services/facilities in the workplace in both the public and private sectors</p> <p>Introduce policies, practices, or programmes that provide employer-supported care programmes</p>	<p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Philippine legislature (relevant committees in the Senate and HoR) — DOLE — Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) — Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and local government units <p>Non-Government/ Other Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Business groups and associations — Academe — Advocacy groups
	<p>Ratify ILO Convention No. 190 - Violence and Harassment Convention of 2019</p>	<p>Commence the ratification process of ILO Convention No. 190</p> <p>Review related domestic legal frameworks to ensure coherence with the standards set out in the convention</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Philippine legislature (relevant committees in the Senate and HoR) — CHR
D Safe and inclusive workplaces	Reinforce the implementation of legislation on sexual harassment in employment, particularly on the legal obligation of employers to create a Committee on Decorum and Investigation in accordance with the Safe Spaces Act.	<p>Collect and analyze data on the level or degree of compliance of publicly listed and non-listed companies with related laws</p> <p>Sustain the efforts to raise the awareness and capacity of the private sector to comply with their</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Philippine legislature (relevant committees in the Senate and HoR) — SEC — DOLE — CHR — PCW

Thematic Priority	Policy Recommendations	Actions to Support Policy Recommendations	Stakeholders
E Equitable procurement practices		legal duties to provide healthy and safe working environment, particularly in ensuring safe spaces free from any forms of harassment, violence, and discrimination	
	Enact a policy initiative or strategy on gender-responsive procurement or supplier diversity both in the public—at all levels of government agencies and units—and private sectors	Convene relevant government agencies and other public stakeholders to build the government's policy agenda and commitment to gender-responsive procurement, with clear and standardized reporting indicators and mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Philippine legislature (relevant committees in the Senate and HoR) — SEC — Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) — PCW
	Revisit laws and programs on MSME development with the purpose of formulating amendatory or other policy measures and providing sufficient budgetary allocation, as needed, to support women-owned or -led enterprises and address their challenges—e.g., access to finance, accreditation, among others—in participating in procurement opportunities	<p>Collect data from women-owned or -led businesses to identify their specific challenges in accessing public and private procurement opportunities</p> <p>Engage with several national and multinational companies to have supplier diversity integrated into their procurement practices, and introduce incentives for companies that have gender criteria in their procurement processes</p> <p>Strengthen support programs and services to women-owned or -led businesses to help them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Philippine legislature (relevant committees in the Senate and HoR) — SEC — DTI — PCW — Bangko Central ng Pilipinas (BSP / Central Bank of the Philippines)

Thematic Priority	Policy Recommendations	Actions to Support Policy Recommendations	Stakeholders
		<p>qualify as suppliers and become major players in the commercial market as well as to expand their access to networks, capital, and markets by facilitating linkages between women enterprises, business groups, MSMEs, financial institutions, and companies. Specific to access to capital or credit, explore incentivizing financial institutions that offer an enabling financial services framework to women entrepreneurs</p> <p>Develop feedback or engagement mechanisms with women entrepreneurs and businesses</p>	

In terms of private sector reporting and accountability, government policymakers and regulators are recommended to revisit private sector reporting and accountability policies, with the end view of substantially integrating and standardizing gender criteria on the above thematic priorities in order to comprehensively measure corporate performance and contributions to gender equality and women's empowerment. A **policy initiative that will mandate gender indicator reporting to all companies**, both listed and non-listed, must be pursued to advance responsible, gender-responsive business conduct in the country. To support this, it is recommended that the government policymakers and regulators—particularly the SEC, DOLE, and DTI—will convene other public stakeholders to address the identified gaps in the current sustainability reporting guidelines and build the policy agenda on gender indicator reporting with clear, standardized measurement indicators and enhanced reporting and monitoring mechanisms.

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Further, the **development of a NAP on Business and Human Rights** that includes specific objectives or actions promoting gender equality is another area that should be pursued by government policymakers and regulators, in partnership with other stakeholders. A gender-responsive NAP will help government policymakers and regulators to map out gaps in all pertinent laws and programs, set priorities, coordinate actions, and track the progress of the implementation of the UNGPs, thereby guiding the government in addressing the persisting gaps in the thematic priorities in the country.

To move forward with this, government policymakers and regulators, together with other public stakeholders such as the CHR, should ensure an inclusive formulation of the NAP, with participation of stakeholders from the private sector, and civil society and community groups, and conduct knowledge transfer activities with the business sector and relevant government agencies.

With government policymakers and regulators laying down an enabling policy environment for business action for gender equality, other stakeholders are enjoined to work alongside them. Business leaders, employers' organizations, and business associations have the leading role of promoting and supporting gender equality within and outside their companies, organizations, or industries. Advocacy, workers' groups, and civil society organizations can support public and private sectors stakeholders by contributing their knowledge of the experiences and needs of the different sectors, particularly of women. Through multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships, the work for gender equality and women's empowerment in the private sector can be accelerated.

A gender-responsive NAP will help government policymakers and regulators to map out gaps in all pertinent laws and programs, set priorities, coordinate actions, and track the progress of the implementation of the UNGPs.

Notes

¹ Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN] & United Nations Entity for Gender Equality the Empowerment of Women [UN Women]. (2021). ASEAN Gender Outlook: Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind. <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/asean-gender-outlook>

² See <https://www.weps.org/>

³ See <https://www.weps.org/resources>

⁴ UN Women & International Labour Organization [ILO]. (2022). Ecosystem landscaping to advance the accountability to implement the Women's Empowerment Principles in ASEAN. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/06/ecosystem-landscaping-to-advance-the-accountability-to-implement-the-weps>

⁵ World Economic Forum. (2021, March). Global gender gap report. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

⁶ ASEAN & UN Women. (2021). ASEAN gender outlook: Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind. <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/asean-gender-outlook>

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⁸ ASEAN & UN Women. (2021). ASEAN gender outlook: Achieving the SDGs for all and leaving no woman or girl behind. <https://data.unwomen.org/publications/asean-gender-outlook>

⁹ ILO. (2014). Gender equality in the Philippines. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-manila/documents/publication/wcms_173283.pdf

¹⁰ Woetzel, J., et. al. (2018, April). The power of parity: Advancing women's equality in Asia Pacific. McKinsey Global Institute. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/the-power-of-parity-advancing-womens-equality-in-asia-pacific>

¹¹ Philippine Business Coalition for Women Empowerment [PBCWE] & Investing in Women [IW]. (2020, December). Impact of COVID-19 on private sector employees in the Philippines – update. <https://investinginwomen.asia/knowledge/impact-covid-19-private-sector-employees-philippines-update/>

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¹³ World Bank. (2020). World Bank Data 2020. <https://data.worldbank.org/country/philippines>; ILO. (2019, May). Women in business and management: The business case for change. https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_700953/lang--en/index.htm

¹⁴ Asian Development Bank & UN Women. (2021). Gender-responsive procurement in Asia and the Pacific: An opportunity for an equitable economic future – An introductory brief. Unpublished.

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¹⁶ Philippine 1987 Constitution. art. II, Sec. 18. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/1987-constitution/>

¹⁷ Philippines Commission on Women. (n.d.). Gender equality and women empowerment plan. <https://pcw.gov.ph/geuwe-plan/>

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¹⁹ National Economic Development Authority. (n.d.). Philippine development plan 2017-2022. <https://pdp.neda.gov.ph/updated-pdp-2017-2022/>

²⁰ Safe Spaces Act, Republic Act 11313. (2019). <https://pcw.gov.ph/republic-act-11313/>

²¹ Labor Code of the Philippines, Presidential Decree 442, as amended. (s. 1974). art. 135. <https://blr.dole.gov.ph/2014/12/11/labor-code-of-the-philippines/>

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²⁶ UN General Assembly resolution 41/43, Gender dimensions of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights - Report of the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, A/HRC/41/43 (23 May 2019), https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/41/43

²⁷ Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the central bank of the Republic of the Philippines, released the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion 2022-2028 in January 2022. It is the country's financial inclusion blueprint for the next six years. See <https://www.bsp.gov.ph/Pages/InclusiveFinance/NSFI-2022-2028.pdf>

²⁸ See <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESEA/Docs/Publications/2021/03/210323WEPsMEGuidance2a.pdf>

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³⁰ Key informant interviews were conducted with legislative bodies, government agencies, the private sector, and civil/business associations.

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³³ Makati Business Club [MBC] & UN Women. (2021, March). Women in the Philippine C-suite: National study. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/01/women-in-the-philippine-c-suite-national-study>; MBC. (2019, March 21). Women in the Philippine C-suite. <https://mbc.com.ph/wp-content/uploads/PBCWE-report-Final.pdf>

³⁴ ILO. (2019, May). Women in business and management: The business case for change. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_700953.pdf

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³⁶ The SEC Sustainability Reporting Guidelines was issued on 15 February 2019, prior to the issuance of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the Telecommuting law, which was signed into law on 20 December 2018 and its IRR (DOLE Department Order No. 202 Series of 2019) was issued on 26 March 2019.

³⁷ Relevant legislation on workplace gender-based sexual harassment are the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 and the Safe Spaces Act of 2019. The SEC Sustainability Reporting Guidelines was issued prior to the enactment of the Safe Spaces Act, which was signed into law on 17 April 2019 and its IRR was approved on 28 October 2019.

ANNEX 1 WEPs Country Policy Assessment - Philippines

Philippines ranks 16th in the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Gender Gap Index, scoring at 0.781; 14th in the Economic Participation and Opportunity sub-index, and looking at laws and private sector regulations, the Philippines performs above average compared with its peers in the ASEAN region in terms of laws, private sector regulations, and economic.

Based on the WEPs Public Policy Roadmap review, Malaysia is performing well in WEP ¹ (High-level corporate leadership), and WEP ⁶ (Community initiatives and advocacy).

However, in order for the Philippines to improve gender equality in the private sector, it needs to prioritize WEP ² (Treat all women and men fairly at work without discrimination), WEP ³ (Employee health, well-being and safety) and WEP ⁵ metrics on supplier diversity or gender-responsive procurement.

Further, the Government of Philippines should consider moving forward on the steps it's already taken to develop a NAP on Business and Human Rights and ratifying the ILO Convention No. ¹⁸³ Convention concerning the Revision of the Maternity Protection Convention, C¹⁵⁶ Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, and the C¹⁹⁰ - Violence and Harassment Convention.

WEP	KEY COUNTRY OUTCOMES	
1	Number of companies that are WEPs signatories	29
2	% board seats held by women in 2018	13.9%
	% labour force participation rate (ages 15 and older) in 2019	W: 48% M: 76%
	Wage Equality for Similar Work Score in 2019 ²⁷⁹	0.645
3	% women who experience violence in lifetime in 2018	18%
4	% professional and technical workers in 2018	W: 58.2% M: 41.8%
5	% of firms with a female top manager in 2016	29.9%
	% women with transaction account at a financial institution / MSP in 2017	39%

GENDER INDEX RANKINGS

UNDP Gender Inequality Index 2019 score and rank out of 189 countries	0.430 (Rank 104)
World Economic Forum (WEF) – Global Gender Gap Index 2020 score and rank out of 153	0.781 (Rank 16)
World Economic Forum (WEF) - Economic Participation and Opportunity 2020 score and rank out of 153	0.792 (Rank 14)
Women, Business and the Law Index 2020 score	81.3/100

WEPs Public Policy Roadmap Scorecard

WEP	Assessment Area	Assessment
1	CEDAW & ASEAN Gender Commitments	
	Gender-responsive budgeting	
2	Women on boards legislation or policies	
	Parental and family protection conventions	
	Laws on work, pay, parenthood, and pensions	
	Programmes on pay equity and support for caregivers	
3	Ratification of Violence & Harassment Convention / Legislation on Sexual Harassment in Employment	
	Ratification of ILO Fundamental Conventions and appointment of the National Focal Point for the MNE Declaration	
4	Programmes for women in STEM and technical workers	
5	Gender-responsive procurement	
	Gender in the National Financial Inclusion strategy	
	Laws on access to resources, assets and financial services	
	Gender stereotype policy or strategy	
	ASEAN SME Policy Index - Inclusive entrepreneurship for women score	
6	Multi-stakeholder partnerships to promote gender equality in the private sector	
7	WEPs reporting mandates	

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WEP 1 **High-level corporate leadership****RATIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL GENDER COMMITMENTS**

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	Y
ASEAN The Declaration on the Elimination of violence Against Women and Elimination of violence Against Children in ASEAN, 2013	Y
Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children, 2010	Y
ASEAN Declaration on the Gender-Responsive implementation of the ASEAN Community vision 2025 and Sustainable Development Goals, 2017	Y

GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

Does the country have gender responsive budgeting legislation?	Y
Does the country have a gender responsive budgeting national plan/strategy?	Y
Does the country have gender responsive budgeting directives or guidelines?	Y

WEP 2 **Treat all women and men fairly at work without discrimination****WOMEN ON BOARDS LEGISLATION OR POLICIES**

Are there any enforceable policy/initiatives with a specific target or quota for promoting women on corporate boards?	N
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PARENTAL AND FAMILY PROTECTION CONVENTIONS

C183 - Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)	N
C156 - Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) and Recommendation (No. 165), 1981	N
Does the country have a National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights that includes specific objectives or actions to promote gender equality?	N

LAWS ON PAY, EMPLOYMENT, PARENTHOOD, AND PENSIONS

Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	Y
Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Y
Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Y
Can women work in jobs deemed dangerous in the same way as men?	Y
Are women able to work in the same industries as men?	Y
Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Y
Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Y
Is paid leave available to fathers?	Y
Is there paid parental leave?	N
Does the government administer 100% of maternity leave benefits?	Y
Does the country have a policy framework regarding menstruation and women in the workplace?	N

Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	N
Are the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits equal?	N

PROGRAMMES ON PAY EQUITY AND CARE WORK

Country has specific national initiative, programme or strategy beyond legislation for promoting pay equity	N
Country has national care work (i.e., childcare/senior care) initiative, programme or strategy with the explicit objective to promote women's labour force participation and/or promote gender equality in care giving.	Y

**WEP 3 Employee health, well-being and safety****RATIFICATION OF C190 VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT CONVENTION**

C190 - violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)	N
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LEGISLATION ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN EMPLOYMENT

Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Y
Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Y

RATIFICATION OF ILO FUNDAMENTALS AND NATIONAL FOCAL POINT FOR MNE DECLARATION

ILO Fundamental Conventions	Y
Has the country appointed a National Focal Point for the Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy?	TBD

**WEP 4 Education and Training for Career Advancement****PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN IN STEM AND TECHNICAL WORKERS**

Presence of professional development programs targeted at women in leadership or in non-traditional vocations (e.g., women in STEM) in CEDAW	N
Presence of professional development programs targeted at women in leadership or in non-traditional vocations (e.g., women in STEM) in Decent Work Programme.	Y

**WEP 5 Enterprise Development, Supply Chain, and Marketing Practices****GENDER-RESPONSIVE PROCUREMENT**

Legislation or programs regarding supplier diversity or gender-responsive procurement?	N
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GENDER-RESPONSIVE PROCUREMENT

Does the country have a national Financial Inclusion Strategy?	Y
Does the Financial Inclusion Strategy mention women and gender inclusive target/data reporting in financial inclusion strategy?	N

LAWS ON ACCESS TO RESOURCES, ASSETS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Y
Does the law grant equal ownership over immovable assets (property rights)	Y
Can a woman register a business in the same way as a man?	Y
Can a woman open a bank account the same way as men?	Y
Can a woman sign a contract the same way as a man?	Y

GENDER STEREOTYPE POLICY OR STRATEGY

Does the country have gender stereotypes, anti-bullying, or other types of gender policy or strategy that seeks to change gender norms in the private sector?	N
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ASEAN SME POLICY INDEX

ASEAN SME Policy Index - Inclusive entrepreneurship for women score	4.9
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**WEP 6 Community Initiatives and Advocacy****MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

Does the country have a national private sector partnership of high-level stakeholders to collaborate in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in companies?	Y
Does the country have a multi-stakeholder partnership of high-level actors to collaborate in promoting gender equality in companies or women's entrepreneurship?	Y

**WEP 7 Measurement and reporting****WEPS REPORTING INDICATORS**

Does the country have a public sector mandate that requires companies to report on the percentage of women on boards?	N
Does the country have a proactive and wage transparency laws and measures to address discriminatory pay gap (including any other measures to address undervaluation of women's work)?	N
Does the country mandate reporting on WEPs Essential Reporting indicators related to equal opportunity in the workplace, parental leave or sexual harassment?	Y

ANNEX 2 WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework

The WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework is a comprehensive tool to measure corporate progress towards implementing the WEPs and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. The WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework is divided into three distinct categories: essential reporting indicators, complementary indicators, and input and support measures and indicators.



ESSENTIAL REPORTING INDICATORS

Women in Leadership	1A	Percentage of women in senior leadership level positions*	Women only hold 29% of leadership roles and 22% of board seats globally. Having more women in leadership holds multiple benefits for companies including improved financial performance and shareholder value, reduced risk of fraud and corruption, increased customer and employee satisfaction, greater investor confidence, and enhanced market knowledge and reputation.
	1A	Percentage of women in senior leadership level positions*	When women leaders have adequate support and resources, increased gender parity at the top can create a role model effect to encourage more women to pursue leadership positions and help counteract societal biases about women in leadership roles. Tracking women in leadership enables companies to set meaningful, time-bound targets and hold themselves accountable.
Equal Pay	2	Ratio of the basic salary and remuneration of women to men for each employee category, by significant locations of operation*	<p>Globally, women are paid 20% less than men on average, contributing to gaps in wealth, retirement savings and income vulnerability limiting women's ability to take full advantage of career and professional opportunities. For women of colour, women with disabilities, Indigenous women, and migrant women the pay gaps are even higher.</p> <p>In addition to being illegal on many countries and a violation of women's rights, gender pay inequities impact employee motivation and productivity, contributing to overall business performance. Paying women less than their male counterparts in the workplace is likely to negatively impact women's commitment and trust in the organization leading to fewer talent interested in joining the organization, greater turnover, lower employee retention, and lower productivity which come at a high monetary and time cost for employers. Increasingly governments and public reporting platforms are requiring companies to report on equal pay, making it a legal and reputational liability for businesses.</p>
Equal opportunities in the workplace	3A	Percentage of new hires who are women*	Women suffer different types of discrimination throughout their careers leading to poorer outcomes in the workplace and economy. Overall, progress on women's labour market participation has stalled, at only 55%, versus 78% of men globally, and women are overrepresented in short-term and part-time contracts. Gender-based discrimination in the workplace infringes on women's economic rights,

	3B	Percentage of employees promoted who are women	impacting hiring and recruitment, promotions and development opportunities, and women's and men's ability to take and return from parental leave. Tracking the share of women hired and promoted provides insights into the opportunities for women to advance in the workplace and create the pipeline needed to achieve more equitable representation of women across a company. Women undertake 75% of unpaid care and domestic work globally, a share that increases when they become mothers. Monitoring employee retention rates post-parental leave can help to identify whether a company culture supports working parents and allows employees to balance their personal and professional responsibilities. In addition, comprehensive maternity and paternity policies and initiatives to ensure both women and men take advantage of paid leave have shown to improve employee attraction and retention rates.
	3B	Retention rate of employees that took parental leave, disaggregated by sex*	
Safe and inclusive workplaces	4	Has confidential, anonymous grievance, resolution and non-retaliation mechanisms and procedures to address and respond to reports and incidents of violence and harassment	<p>Violence and harassment against women is a violation of women's rights but nevertheless present in all jobs, occupations, and sectors of the economy across the world. Currently there is not an agreed set of quantitative indicators for this area and corporate data is rarely collected and even less likely to be reported.</p> <p>However, due to the global and pervasive nature of violence against women, companies have a crucial role to play in combatting workplace violence and harassment and in supporting women victims of domestic violence. The ILO Convention 190 sets out a global framework for governments and companies to address violence and harassment in the world of work, including confidential, anonymous grievance, resolution and non-retaliation mechanisms and procedures to address and respond to reports and incidents of violence and harassment. Additionally, addressing violence and harassment against women provides an economic benefit for the private sector as it is estimated to cost countries up to 3.7% of gross domestic product (GDP) due to loss of incomes, opportunities, and workplace productivity.</p>

COMPLEMENTARY REPORTING INDICATORS

Women's representation in non-traditional roles	5	Percentage of women in traditionally underrepresented roles	While gender gaps in education are closing slowly, women are less likely to have access to training and professional development and women's skills are not in line with skills needs in the changing world of work. As a result, women are often segregated in "feminized" sectors and roles, where wages are typically lower. In addition, women face discriminatory norms, practices and, in some places, laws when entering traditionally male sectors, such as construction, heavy manufacturing, and engineering, among others
	6	Average hours of training that the organization's employees have undertaken, disaggregated by sex and employee level*	<p>Increasing women's access to education and training has been shown to increase women's labour force participation rates. It can also catalyze women's advancement to leadership positions in an organization and enable women to full underrepresented roles.</p> <p>Addressing the training and development gap for women, also enables companies to develop current and future skills, attract, engage, and retain talent, and improve overall productivity, agility, and adaptability of the workforce. The increased application of technology and automation across all sectors makes addressing the training and education gap more imperative as women face a gap in STEM skills, low participation in the technology sector and yet female-dominated sectors and jobs, such as manufacturing and teaching, face rapid automation and technology applications.</p>
	7	Percentage of procurement spend with women-owned businesses	Women-owned businesses face several barriers to access and fully participate in local and global value chains, including limited funding, unpaid care work, and discriminatory business environments. At the same time, women-owned businesses represent the fastest-growing market segment in some regions and globally holds the potential to contribute to global economic growth and the creation of new jobs.
Equitable Procurement Practices	8	Percentage of procurement spend with businesses with gender equality commitments	Sourcing from women-owned businesses increases profitability, provides access to new markets, increases supplier availability, and enhances corporate reputation and customer loyalty. In addition, women are over-represented in vulnerable and low wage positions in supply chains. Minimum wage is rarely enough to meet the basic needs of employees and their families. Thus, a commitment to living wage means companies work toward ensuring all workers in their supply chains are paid a wage sufficient to meet the basic living needs of an average-sized family in a particular economy.
	9	Percentage of workers in supply chain receiving a living wage, disaggregated by sex	

Gender-responsive marketing	10	Has a stand-alone responsible marketing policy or a commitment embedded in a broader corporate policy that addresses the portrayal of gender stereotypes	<p>Advertisements and marketing materials often mirror and reinforce existing gender stereotypes. Taking a gender transformative approach can enhance consumer loyalty, expand market reach, and attract and retain the next generation of skilled workers.</p> <p>Embedding gender into the marketing policy or commitment is the first step to avoid gender stereotypes and promote positive portrayals of women and girls. This includes marketing campaigns are free of gender stereotypes, and respect women, men and gender balance and systematically depict women and men as empowered actors with progressive, intelligent, and multi-dimensional personalities. Companies with inclusive and gender-responsive marketing practices are also more attractive to women talent.</p>
Gender-responsive Product design and development	11	Has a policy or commitment embedded in a wider corporate policy to integrate inclusive gender considerations into product design and delivery	<p>When companies ignore gender perspectives during product design and delivery, they risk exacerbating existing gender divides or creating new ones. Integrating gender considerations in product design and delivery is a business opportunity: women account for over USD20 trillion in consumer spending per year and are the fastest growing consumer economy and that by 2028 women will control close to 75% of discretionary spending worldwide. However, women continue to be underserved and under financed across sectors.</p>
Women in communities	12	Percentage of financial or pro-bono support for gender equality programs	