



# WOMEN AND GIRLS: POWERFUL AGENTS OF CHANGE, able to transform businesses, societies and economies

Business cannot thrive unless people and planet are thriving. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), with 17 deeply interconnected Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. The SDGs underscore women’s empowerment as an important development objective, in and of itself, and highlight the relevance of gender equality to addressing a wide range of global challenges. Investing in women and girls is the right thing to do and the smart way to reduce poverty and inequality. Companies that focus on women’s empowerment experience greater business success. Research shows investing in women and girls can lead to increases in productivity, organizational effectiveness, return on investment and higher consumer satisfaction.

Businesses are increasingly engaging with the Global Goals and using their creativity, resources and reach to drive change both within their companies and around the world promoting gender equality and women’s full participation and leadership in the workplace, marketplace and community.

UN Global Compact is encouraging firms of all sizes, in all countries, industries and sectors, to take decisive action towards gender equality with the Women’s Empowerment Principles. To date, over 2,100 companies have signed up, and are integrating them into their business strategy.

Yet despite progress, women and girls around the world do not fully experience equal rights and their potential as economic, social and sustainable development change-agents remains untapped. Women are underrepresented in power and decision-making roles. They receive unequal pay for equal work and they continue to be targets of physical and sexual abuse. Additionally, women-owned enterprises are economically disadvantaged and lack equal opportunity to compete for business opportunities. Women also face legal and other barriers that affect their opportunities at work and as entrepreneurs. Projecting current trends into the future, the overall global gender gap will close in 108 years. The most challenging gender gaps to close are the economic and political empowerment dimensions, which will take 202 and 107 years to close respectively\*.

While significant gender inequality occurs in many countries, including in some of the wealthiest ones, on average it takes a bigger toll on lower-middle income countries like Ukraine. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2018, Ukraine ranks 65th out of 149 countries for which the Gender Gap Score is calculated across four thematic dimensions (Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment).

## EQUALITY MEANS BUSINESS

(Women’s Empowerment Principles)

**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 nondiscrimination

**Principle 3:** Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers

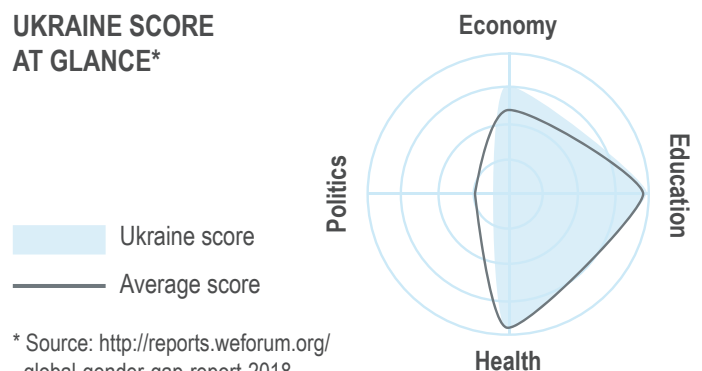
**Principle 4:** Promote education, training and professional development for women

**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

## UKRAINE SCORE AT GLANCE\*



\* Source: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2018>

## UKRAINE, GLOBAL GENDER GAP SCORE, 2018

	RANK, 2018	SCORE, 2018*
Global Gender Gap Score	65	0.708
Economic participation and opportunity	28	0.747
Educational attainment	26	1.000
Health and survival	56	0.978
Political empowerment	105	0.107
<b>RANK OUT OF</b>	<b>149</b>	

\* 0.00=imparity 1.00=parity

Source: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2018>

Ukraine has taken the key international commitments on gender equality by ratifying key human rights treaties. Gender equality is enshrined in the Ukrainian Constitution, State Strategies and legislation. However, despite these existing gender equality and women's empowerment frameworks, Ukraine still faces challenges affecting the enjoyment of equal opportunities and rights by women in general and those facing compound discrimination in particular. The root causes can be found in patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes as well as in deeply engrained systemic gaps.

**As estimated by the Center for Economic Strategy, Ukrainian economy may gain from 7.5 to 23.6 billion US dollars from increase in the number of women in the workforce\*\*.**

Such complex and systemic challenges to women's rights can only be addressed through the power of collective action taken together by the international community, Ukrainian government, civil society, businesses, and committed individuals. There are more than 1,000 Women's Organizations officially registered in Ukraine. They have a critical role to play in advancing women's voice and leadership in Ukraine and in mobilizing a variety of partners towards a shared agenda, but often they lack resources needed to provide the help women and girls need.

To support and expand the work of Women's Rights Organizations in Ukraine, the Ukraine Development Program of Global Affairs Canada is funding a number of initiatives. "Women of Ukraine: heard, capable, resilient" project implemented by Pact is one of them.

\*\* Center for Economic Strategy, 2019, How to Increase Women's Employment and why this is Important for Economy. Executive Summary, <https://ces.org.ua>

The aim of "Women of Ukraine: heard, capable, resilient" project (2019 - 2023) is to increase the enjoyment of human rights by women and girls. To achieve this goal, the project will help Ukrainian Women's Rights Organizations, particularly those representing vulnerable and marginalized women and girls, strengthen their individual and collective capacity, performance, coordination, and collaboration between themselves and with other actors, including private sector.

**"Gender equality is not only the right thing to do, but it is also the smart thing to do. It powers our economies, and changes our communities for the better. Everyone should be able to get behind that,"**

Justin Trudeau,  
Prime Minister of Canada

Supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is the best way to build a more peaceful, more inclusive and more prosperous world. But it requires targeted investments, innovation and advocacy efforts and involves actions across all sectors – government, business, and civil society. High-impact partnerships have a key role to play in mobilizing various stakeholders, their commitment, expertise and resources to make the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development a reality.



Image Source: Global Affairs Canada, 2018, Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy #HerVoiceHerChoice