



## The Case for Advancing Women in the Global Marketplace

### Snapshot of Women Worldwide: Facts and Figures

Advancing and empowering women requires the participation of many partners – governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector. Until recently, guiding principles for business to advance women in the global marketplace have been unarticulated, yet the business community has a vital role to play -- especially as there is consensus that empowering women to fully participate in economic life across all sectors and throughout all levels of economic activity is essential to build strong economies, more stable societies, and achieve internationally agreed goals for development and human rights. However, the statistics on women's health, participation in society, and economic well-being show that there is a long road to travel.

#### Women at Risk

- More people have been lifted out of poverty in the last **50 years** than in the previous **500**; yet more than **1.2 billion** still subsist on less than **\$1 per day**.<sup>1</sup>
- The World Food Programme reports that **7 out of 10** of the world's hungry are women and girls.<sup>2</sup>
- According to U.S. Government-sponsored research completed in 2006, approximately **800,000** people are trafficked across national borders annually. In addition, millions of victims are trafficked within their own national borders. Approximately **80%** of transnational trafficking victims are women and girls and up to 50 percent are minors.<sup>3</sup>
- An estimated **72%** of the world's 33 million refugees are women and children.<sup>4</sup>
- According to Habitat for Humanity, women own **less than 15%** of property worldwide.<sup>5</sup> The International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD) reports that in the developing world, the percentage of land owned by women is **less than 2%**.<sup>6</sup>
- The IPU in 2008 reported that of all the legislators in parliament around the world, only **17.7%** are women – and that is an all-time high. In 1995, only **11.3%** of all parliamentary seats were held by women.<sup>7</sup>
- Rural women are particularly vulnerable to poverty. In some regions, especially sub-Saharan Africa, women provide **70%** of agricultural labor and produce over **90%** of food.

## Women at Work

- Some **60%** of the world's working poor are women, primarily clustered in part-time, contract and other forms of informal employment, which are badly paid, lack job security and all forms of social protection.<sup>8</sup>
- Women in the US currently earn only **77 cents** for every \$1 earned by a man, according to the Institute for Women's Policy Research. In the developing world, the ratio is just **73 cents**, according to World Bank estimates.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2007, women at the global level still had a higher likelihood of being unemployed than men -- the female unemployment rate stood at **6.4%** compared to the male rate of 5.7%.<sup>10</sup>
- Over the past decade, the services sector has overtaken agriculture as the prime employer of women. In 2007, 36.1% of employed women worked in agriculture and 46.3% in services. In export industries, women provide up to **80%** of the labour force in sectors such as textiles or electronics.

### **Women in Business Leadership**

- The BBC reports that only **10%** of directors of UK's FTSE 100 firms are women.
- Women account for less than **1%** of directors on corporate boards in Japan.
- Of the top 10 Asian companies -- drawn from the latest Fortune Global 500 listing -- only one woman sits on an executive committee of these major global enterprises.
- According to the 10th-year Cranfield Female FTSE Report, the share of women on FTSE 100 corporate boards rose by only five percentage points in the 10 years since the first report. The total number of women on FTSE 100 corporate boards is **131**, or **12%** of the total, up from 79, or 7% in 2008. 22 FTSE 100 companies still do not have a single woman on their boards. Female directors expect that women will hold only **14%** of FTSE 100 directorships after the next 5 years.
- A September 2007 survey by Calvert of 636 large U.S. companies reported that only **7%** made public the detailed demographic data the government requires of such companies, and only a bit over half of companies had at least one family-friendly benefit like flexible schedules, adoption benefits or subsidized wellness programs.

[Source: [http:// www.women-omics.com](http://www.women-omics.com)]

### Costs of Gender Inequality

- Inadequate reproductive health care limits female labor productivity – in some cases by **20%**, costing the world **250 million years** of productive life annually, according to an Alan Guttmacher Institute 2004 study.<sup>11</sup>
- The cost of intimate partner violence in the United States alone exceeds **US\$5.8 billion** per year: US\$4.1 billion is for direct medical and health care services, while productivity losses account for nearly US\$1.8 billion.<sup>12</sup>
- In Canada, a 1995 study estimated the annual direct costs of violence against women to be approximately **Can\$1.17 billion** a year. A 2004 study in the United Kingdom estimated the total direct and indirect costs of domestic violence, including pain and suffering, to be **£23 billion** per year or £440 per person.<sup>13</sup>
- **Every minute** somewhere in the world a woman dies due to complications during pregnancy and childbirth. **99%** of an estimated total of **536,000** maternal deaths worldwide in 2005 occurred in developing countries, more than half of them in sub-Saharan Africa, followed by South Asia. In the developing world as a whole, a woman has a **1 in 76** lifetime risk of maternal death, compared with a probability of just **1 in 8,000** for women in industrialized countries.<sup>14</sup> Access to quality health care services, including maternal and reproductive services, saves women's lives.

### Spotlight on Women and Productivity

- When women are afforded the equality of opportunity that is their basic human right, the results are striking. In 2006, the *Economist* estimated that over the past decade, women's work has contributed more to global growth than China.<sup>15</sup>
- The *Economist* further noted that if Japan raised the share of working women to American levels, it would boost annual growth by **0.3%** over 20 years.<sup>16</sup>
- Goldman Sachs has reported that different countries and regions of the world could dramatically increase GDP simply by reducing the gap in employment rates between men and women: the Eurozone could increase GDP by 13%; Japan by 16%; the US by 9%.

### Violence against Women

- The most common form of violence experienced by women globally is physical violence inflicted by an intimate partner. On average, at least **1 in 3 women** is beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused by an intimate partner in the course of her lifetime.<sup>17</sup>
- It is estimated that, worldwide, **1 in 5 women** will become a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime.<sup>18</sup>
- Violence against women during or after armed conflicts has been reported in every international or non-international war-zone.

- Many women face multiple forms of discrimination and increased risk of violence. Indigenous women in Canada are **5 times more likely** than other women of the same age to die as the result of violence. In Europe, North America and Australia, **over half of women with disabilities** have experienced physical abuse, compared to one-third of non-disabled women.<sup>19</sup>
- Women experience sexual harassment throughout their lives. Between **40% and 50%** of women in the European Union reported some form of sexual harassment in the workplace.<sup>20</sup>
- In Malawi, **50% of schoolgirls** surveyed reported sexual harassment at school.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Two Pandemics: Violence and HIV/AIDS**

- The prevalence of violence and of HIV/AIDS is interlinked. Women's inability to negotiate safe sex and refuse unwanted sex is closely linked to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Women who are beaten by their partners are **48% more likely** to be infected with HIV/AIDS.

#### Women and HIV/AIDS

- The AIDS epidemic has had a unique impact on women, which has been exacerbated by their role within society and their biological vulnerability to HIV infection -- **Over half of the estimated 33 million** people living with HIV worldwide are women.<sup>22</sup>
- That proportion has remained stable since the late 1990s, but has increased in many regions. More than **3 in 4 (77%) of adult women** (15 years and older) with HIV globally live in Sub-Saharan Africa – that's an estimated 12 million out of the 15.5 million women infected with HIV worldwide.<sup>23</sup>

#### Women and Education

- About two-thirds of the estimated 776 million adults – or **16%** of the world's adult population – who lack basic literacy skill are women.<sup>24</sup> In developing countries, nearly **1 out of 5** girls who enrolls in primary school does not complete her primary education.
- In 2008, the International Trade Union Confederation reported that women are often educated equally high as men, or to a higher level. Higher education of women does not necessarily lead to a smaller pay gap, however, and in some cases the gap actually increases with the level of education obtained.<sup>25</sup>
- The Women's Learning Partnership (WLP) estimates that worldwide, for every year beyond fourth grade that girls attend school, wages rise **20%**, child deaths drop **10%** and family size drops **20%**.<sup>26</sup>

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Women's Funding Network. 2007. World Poverty Day: Investing in Women – Solving the poverty puzzle. Poverty Statistics. Available from: <http://www.wfnet.org/sites/wfnet.org/files/jenn/Poverty%20Statistics.doc>].
- <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>3</sup> USAID website, accessed 27 February 2009: [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/cross-cutting\\_programs/wid/wid\\_stats.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/wid_stats.html).
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>5</sup> Habitat for Humanity website, accessed 27 February 2009: [http://www.habitat.org/gov/public\\_policy/property\\_rights\\_for\\_women.aspx](http://www.habitat.org/gov/public_policy/property_rights_for_women.aspx).
- <sup>6</sup> IFAD website (fact sheet on women), accessed 27 February 2009: [http://www.ifad.org/pub/factsheet/women/women\\_e.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/pub/factsheet/women/women_e.pdf)
- <sup>7</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Press release, 'Women in Politics – not enough progress', 4 March 2008. Available from: <http://www.ipu.org/press-e/gen298.htm>
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- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>10</sup> International Labour Organization (ILO). 2008. *Global Employment Trends for Women*, March 2008. Available from: [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_091225.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_091225.pdf)
- <sup>11</sup> Women's Funding Network. 2007. World Poverty Day: Investing in Women – Solving the poverty puzzle. Poverty Statistics. Available from: <http://www.wfnet.org/sites/wfnet.org/files/jenn/Poverty%20Statistics.doc>.
- <sup>12</sup> United Nations. 2008. Unite to End Violence against Women Fact Sheet. Available from: <http://endviolence.un.org/docs/VAW.pdf>
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> UNICEF. 2009. *State of the World's Children: Maternal and Newborn Health*. Available from: <http://www.unicef.org/sowc09/>
- <sup>15</sup> *Economist*. 2006. The importance of sex (April 15). Retrieved 6 February 2009 from Academic Search Premier database.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> United Nations. 2008. UNite to End Violence against Women Fact Sheet. Available from: <http://endviolence.un.org/docs/VAW.pdf>. Also, UNIFEM 2008 'Violence against Women: facts and figures' [[http://www.unifem.org/attachments/gender\\_issues/violence\\_against\\_women/facts\\_figures\\_violence\\_against\\_women\\_2007.pdf](http://www.unifem.org/attachments/gender_issues/violence_against_women/facts_figures_violence_against_women_2007.pdf)].
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>22</sup> UNAIDS. 2008. Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic. [http://data.unaids.org/pub/GlobalReport/2008/jc1510\\_2008\\_global\\_report\\_pp29\\_62\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/GlobalReport/2008/jc1510_2008_global_report_pp29_62_en.pdf)
- <sup>23</sup> Global Coalition on Women and AIDS website, accessed 27 February 2009. <http://womenandaids.unaids.org/>; Also, UNAIDS 2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic: [http://data.unaids.org/pub/GlobalReport/2008/jc1510\\_2008\\_global\\_report\\_pp29\\_62\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/pub/GlobalReport/2008/jc1510_2008_global_report_pp29_62_en.pdf)
- <sup>24</sup> UNESCO 2008. Education for All, Global Monitoring Report 2009. Available from: <http://www.unesco.org/en/education/efareport/reports/2009-governance/>
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