



GENDER EQUALITY IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Engaging men as allies to advance gender
equality across the value chain

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In collaboration with

ABInBev



Stanford | VMware Women's Leadership
Innovation Lab

INTRODUCTION

The global community has ten years to achieve the Sustainable Development goal 5 gender equality. Yet reports suggest that the target is unlikely to be met and estimates suggest it will take 257 years to achieve gender parity.

Achieving gender equality is often seen as a ‘women’s issue’. It is, of course, fundamentally important to ensure women’s rights. However, as UN Women have noted, for too long men have been seen as part of the problem. If we are to deliver systemic change to achieve gender equality,

they need to be part of the solution as well. Engaging men can play a role in leveraging power, preventing harm and accelerating progress to achieving gender equality.

Large companies offer unique opportunities to shape and influence gender norms, given the range of activities they undertake from source to consumption to deliver products or services.

Companies can embed men as allies in their gender equality policies and programs end to end across the value chain. (See full report for more examples and the additional case studies)

EXAMPLES OF ACTION ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN



Gap Inc.

In the supply chain, the clothing company **Gap Inc** have developed an approach to engage male supervisors to increase the numbers of women in management positions across their garment factories. An evaluation showed that in Cambodia, women who participated in the program were three times more likely to advance in their careers than non-participants.



AVIVA

At **Aviva**, 49% of those taking Equal Parental Leave are men, 23% of whom are in senior roles. Before the introduction of the policy men took an average of 2 weeks paternity leave and now they are taking on average 22 weeks. Success has been dependent on a strong leadership commitment to creating an inclusive family friendly workforce regardless of gender or sexual orientation.



CARLING

Through their ‘No Excuse’ advertising campaign, beer brand **Carling Black Label** aims to tackle violence against women and grow a national network of ‘male champions for change’. To date the campaign has reached 45 million people via social media and increased brand sentiment by 86%.

HOW TO ENGAGE MEN AS ALLIES?

Business can engage men as allies at three mutually reinforcing levels



INDIVIDUAL

Companies can support shifts in attitudes and behaviours

Examples of action:

- ⊕ **CREATE SPACES FOR SAFE AND OPEN CONVERSATIONS**, use gender networks to increase understanding about sexist language, male privilege and gender stereotyping.
- ⊕ **BUILD MEN'S CONFIDENCE TO ACT AND MAKE IT PERSONAL** with gender training that emphasizes self-reflection.
- ⊕ **HIGHLIGHT THE BENEFITS OF GENDER EQUALITY FOR MEN**, including more productive workplaces, less pressure to be primary breadwinners and improved mental and physical health.

ORGANIZATION

A company's organizational strategy, culture and policies can create an enabling environment for gender equality to thrive

- ⊕ **MAKE COMMITMENTS AND IDENTIFY GAPS**, for example by becoming a signatory to the UN's Women's Empowerment principles or becoming **EDGE** certified.
- ⊕ **CREATE AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE** by adopting formal mixed gender sponsorship and mentorship programs.
- ⊕ **ESTABLISH POLICIES** for gender-neutral parental leave and flexible working, and encourage uptake.

SOCIETY

A company's external influence can shape individual's wider experience

- ⊕ **END HARMFUL STEREOTYPES IN ADVERTISING** by participating in industry-wide or global initiatives such as UN Women's #UNStereotype Alliance and #SeeHER.
- ⊕ **ENGAGE SUPPLY CHAIN BUSINESS PARTNERS** in the company's gender equality efforts, encouraging the involvement of men as allies.
- ⊕ **ADVOCATE WITH BROADER STAKEHOLDERS**, with one example being the Paternity Leave Corporate Taskforce.

Engaging men as allies is by no means a panacea to achieving gender equality. Men must build on women's efforts and organizations, not replace them; they must find and act on their own motivations for achieving gender equality. But effectively engaging men as part of broader, intersectional approaches to creating more-inclusive workplaces gives businesses the opportunity to tackle entrenched power relations and create long term change.

It is hoped that the insights and suggested actions included in this report will inspire men and women in business to work together for gender equality bringing benefits to individuals, organizations and society as a whole.

AB InBev, CARE, VMware Women's Leadership Innovation Lab

CHECK OUT THE FULL REPORT

For more information and examples of action, access the full report here.

'This report reminds us again that the biggest transformations demand bold and unique collaborations and partnerships. The role of men in advancing gender equality, and in business specifically, is one example of this, and I applaud both the sharing of experience of this report and the energy and commitment reflected.'

Daniel Seymour Director of Strategic Partnerships, UN Women

