

# The Business of Social Norms

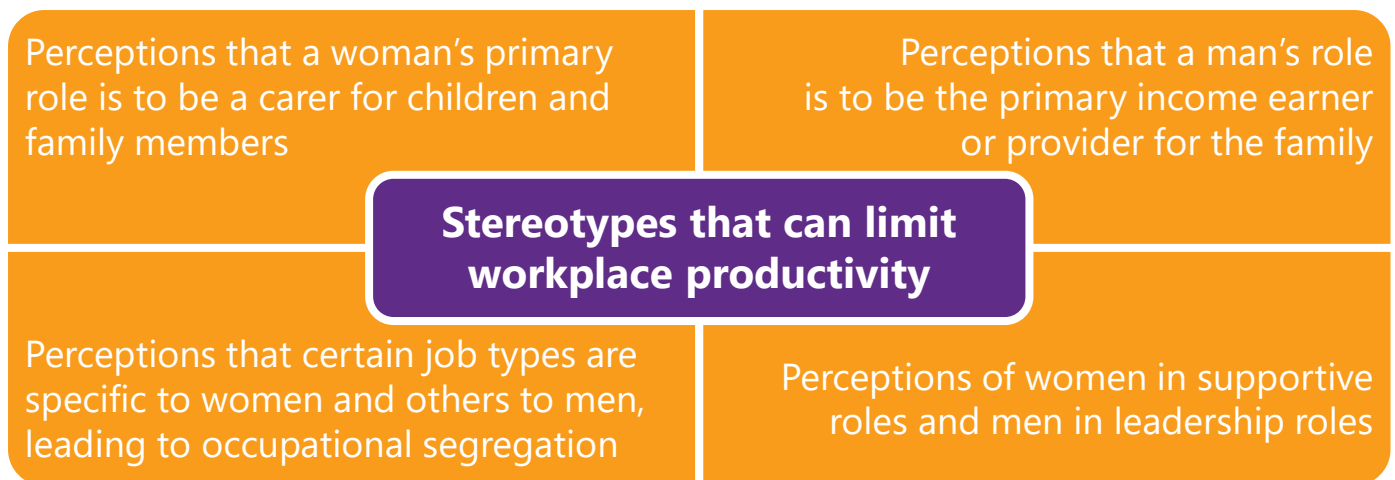
We are all affected by society's expectations on our behaviour. Conforming to these expectations can help society run smoothly, but it can also limit people's choices, and the happiness and success of families, companies and communities.

For example, many women feel forced to decide between family and career. They may not return to the workforce after childbirth or may move to informal work. Men are often judged for their ability to provide financially for the family, and they feel pressured to be the main breadwinner. Women might not be regarded as suitable for technical roles or leadership positions and may be discouraged by their families or workplaces from pursuing some career opportunities. Men might be discouraged by their families or workplaces from taking time off work to look after their children and help with domestic responsibilities.

These stereotypes affect both the workforce and decision-makers within companies. Decision-makers may have a fixed idea of what women or men's capabilities are or what roles women and men are suitable for, and based on this stereotyping, only appoint them to certain jobs. There may also be unconscious bias affecting recruitment or promotion decisions, which often limits women's career progression.

It also limits business growth and the economy.

The good news is that these stereotypes and expectations are not fixed and do change. For example, [urban millennials across Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines increasingly aspire to share childcare responsibilities](#) with their partners.



Companies that think about how societal expectations impact women and men, and address stereotypes in the workplace, can help create a more productive business environment and promote positive change. This can be done by making changes to management behaviours and supporting positive examples at all levels of the workforce.

For example, companies that provide flexible work arrangements for all employees, have childcare facilities at work or have policies to prevent workplace harassment can attract and retain a wider talent pool of women and men into the workforce. Learning more about how unconscious bias affects recruitment decisions can ensure talent is not overlooked because of assumptions about what women or men can or cannot do.

See the next page for examples.

For more information on how your company can harness the benefits of workplace gender equality, [please contact your local Business Coalition](#):

INDONESIA:



MYANMAR:



PHILIPPINES:



VIETNAM:



# What companies can do

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## SHOW LEADERSHIP



Company executives develop and model a workplace culture that supports women as leaders and men as caregivers and parents.

- ★ Deloitte's ALL IN: Accelerating gender and inclusion strategy emphasises gender diversity across the talent management cycle. Nearly 40% of senior management and more than 30% of top management positions are held by women at Deloitte Vietnam.

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## DEVELOP GENDER-EQUAL WORK POLICIES



Develop parental leave and flexible work policies that encourage men and women to share caring roles and encourage parents to return to work.

- ★ L'Oreal Indonesia provides 10 days of paternity leave, eight more than the government-regulated two days of paternity leave.
- ★ Shwe Taung Group in Myanmar seeks to retain 100 percent of employees who take parental leave and has established five childcare centres as a free service for employees.
- ★ Tyre Manufacturer PT Gajah Tunggal in Indonesia provides breastfeeding rooms and a daycare center for its employees.



Set up workplace policies and practices to prevent harassment and support employees facing harassment.

- ★ Unilever engages male employees as champions who advocate for women's voices to be heard, take a stand against harassment and violence, and model men and women sharing household and family care duties more equally.

Eliminate gender bias in promotion and recruitment through policies and training

- ★ Coca Cola Pinya Beverage Myanmar Limited implements a Female Forklift Driver Training Program as part of its efforts to improve gender balance in the workplace and envisions a diverse workforce of 50/50 men and women at all levels by 2020.



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## SHINE A LIGHT ON POSITIVE CHANGES

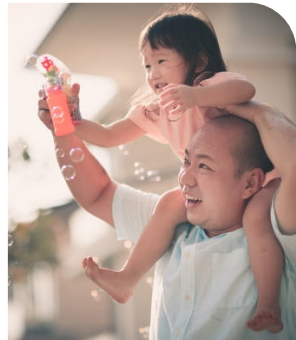


Communicate to all staff about your company's parent-friendly policies and gender-equal recruitment and promotion processes.

- ★ In the Philippines, SGV & Co showcases gender balance at all levels of the company and 97% of both women and men in SGV's workforce believe that they were given the same opportunity to be hired by the firm.

Publicly celebrate women and men who take advantage of flexible workplace arrangements or parental leave.

- ★ Uptake of paternity leave increased after Traphaco committed to providing an extra week beyond the government regulated paternity leave and communicated the changes to all staff.



Highlight women leaders as role models and communicate this throughout the company.

- ★ Danone Indonesia highlights the benefits of equal caring for the mother, father and the child; supports parents through flexible work, extended parental leave and job protection for mothers; and more. They want to be known as a parent-friendly company committed to creating conditions where employees can balance their lives, both as employees and as parents.

While COVID-19 presents individuals and business with extraordinary challenges, the disruption has also provided opportunities to pursue needed change. For example, companies with flexible work policies could more easily adapt to the demands of COVID-19. Research has shown that companies that value and promote workplace gender equality are more dynamic, innovative and productive. This puts them in a better position to navigate any crisis, including managing and adapting to the "new normal."