



Workplace Gender Equality Impact Report 2018-2021



About this report & acknowledgements



BCGE is thrilled to release this Workplace Gender Equality Impact Report (*Thar Tu Nyi Hyma* – သာတူညီမျှ in Burmese).

As a centre of excellence and trusted advisor in workplace gender equality, diversity and inclusion in Myanmar's private sector, BCGE has taken the first step toward fostering an equitable and inclusive workplace with this inaugural report: it highlights our contribution and the various initiatives of our BCGE members in implementing workplace gender equality together between 2018 and 2021. We are deeply indebted to the commitment, dedication and invaluable contributions of our member companies who are part of this *Thar Tu Nyi Hyma* –သာတူညီမျ.

We express our deep gratitude to Investing in Women for their support since 2018, which has enabled BCGE to fulfill the mission of promoting workplace gender equality, facilitating equitable and inclusive workplaces, and empowering businesses to achieve sustainable objectives. We appreciate Investing in Women's guidance and assistance over the years. We would also like to extend our deepest gratitude to our Board of Directors for their strategic guidance, advice, and dedication to BCGE. We would like to acknowledge our partners' efforts, assistance and collaboration on WGE and the Diversity & Inclusion agenda throughout these years. Our heartfelt thanks go to the very hardworking and steadfast BCGE team, who have dedicated substantial time, knowledge, and effort to the completion of this publication. We also very much appreciate the Yever team, without whom the production of this report would not have been possible.

Note: The data information in this report cover the period from 2018 to 2021. We use Australia Fiscal Year in this report; it means the fiscal year starts on 1 July and ends on 30 June.



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Perspectives from BCGE's leadership



Gender equality is one of the essential issues of our time. When organisations are not inclusive and women are left behind, it is bad for people and ultimately for business as well. In a country like Myanmar, where society tends to favour men over women, it is becoming more complicated for women to work, according to recent data published by the ILO¹.

For us, fostering gender equality is not only the right thing to do. It makes a lot of sense from a business point of view. And indeed, since our inception in 2018, the Business Coalition for Gender Equality Association (BCGE) has been driven by its mission - building better organisations and workplaces where all people, regardless of their gender, age, educational background or religion, can thrive and enjoy fulfilling careers.

As a membership organisation, we are committed to serving and supporting our members in their workplace gender equality (WGE) journeys. We helped our founding members become EDGE-certified organisations, trained hundreds of people, and helped our members raise awareness and structure their roadmaps and action plans on gender equality to build better and more inclusive workplaces.

As the situation has become more complicated, and organisations in Myanmar have had to manage the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenging situations for their staff, our team has done its best to provide feedback, support and insights to ensure that our members develop gender-sensitive approaches.

This first report is a way for BCGE to be accountable and share our initiatives, progress, results and impact with our stakeholders. We still have a lot of work to do, and we know we can count on the expertise and professionalism of our employees. Their past contribution has been crucial, and we would not be where we are today without the passion and commitment of our team.

We hope you will find this document useful, and we look forward to receiving your feedback and suggestions to help us improve our next report.

Win Win Tint Chairperson of BCGE's Board



This first report is a way for BCGE to be accountable and share our initiatives, progress, results and impact with our stakeholders.



When BCGE introduced workplace gender equality in the private sector in 2018, we found that the concept was quite new and not well understood in the market. It was recognised only in terms of the proportion of women and men in an organisation, women's empowerment, and sexual harassment. While this understanding is not incorrect, it is not comprehensive or complete. Workplace gender equality goes far beyond that, and raising awareness to ensure that organisations in Myanmar understand what is at stake is essential in transforming, shaping and building better workplaces.

Since its inception, BCGE has strived to advocate for gender equality in workplaces throughout the private sector by providing many forms of service and support. It is not an easy journey, as workplace gender equality is often perceived as something interesting to have instead of something essential and foundational. However, we know we can count on corporate pioneers who understand that WGE is not optional: many have joined us as members, and they commit to, initiate and make progress in establishing more equal, diverse and inclusive workplaces.

With this first report, we want to highlight the stakes and share how responsible businesses care for their employees and work to build an equitable and inclusive culture despite significant challenges. You will see how BCGE members make every effort to integrate, adopt, initiate and implement gender equality, diversity and inclusion in their workplaces. Their commitment helps



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beside businesses in Myanmar
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regardless of their background
and origins.

them to outperform their peers, retain talent, and strengthen the resilience and sustainability of their business.

There is a long way to go; however, if we take a step today, we will gain a step for tomorrow. BCGE is here to walk beside businesses in Myanmar in cultivating equitable and inclusive workplaces and cultures where everybody feels safe, respected and valued regardless of their background and origins. Building this sense of belonging is essential to reshaping workplaces in Myanmar, and this is what drives us every day at BCGE.

Kyawt Kay Thi Win Country Director, BCGE



Since its inception, BCGE has been bringing together organisations in Myanmar to build more inclusive and gender equal workplaces, and support women's full participation and leadership in the economy. Together with BCGE, we have learnt so much along the way and are constantly reminded that gender equality is a journey - one that requires long-term vision, reflection, leadership and commitment, and often support from trusted partners and peers.

I thank BCGE's founding members for trusting us and partnering with Investing in Women in those early days around our shared vision of workplace gender equality. I am pleased that many others have since joined forces with BCGE and the growing network of BCGE members committed to this goal: companies and leaders who recognise the financial and other benefits that greater gender equality delivers to workplaces.

I acknowledge the tireless effort and commitment of BCGE staff and Board Members to ensure that their work on gender equality has continued through many challenges. We are here today because of your tenacity and unwavering dedication to BCGE's vision.

Beyond documenting and sharing BCGE's journey, this inaugural report is an important benchmark on WGE in Myanmar. The data shows that more work is needed to change societal norms and workplace practices that hold women back from equally participating in the economy and from leadership in Myanmar, as in other countries in the region and globally. Without this work,

companies and the economy will not capture the growth and innovation that more equal workplaces will deliver.

The data also shows where we have made gains. I celebrate with you the finding that BCGE members have better gender balance, particularly at board and management levels, and better management practices overall compared to the country average. BCGE member companies are also much more likely to have a policy on equal opportunity and anti-harassment, contributing to safer, more respectful and inclusive workplaces.

I hope the examples of company strategies outlined in the report will inspire and encourage many more Myanmar organisations to start their WGE journeys with BCGE. It has been a privilege to have been a part of this work.

Julia Newton-Howes CEO, Investing in Women



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About us



Key data



25 members are part of our network in 2021



common goal

of Workplace Gender Equality drives our members



40,000+

employees

work for our members (of which 50% are women)



14 Workplace

gender equality
certifications members
obtained (EDGE
certification)



12 members
carried out 220 actions
to enhance their
workplace



9,500+

managers

work for our members (of which **55%** are women)





team
working to advance
our cause

Our journey

Investing in Women (IW)

- Investing in Women (IW) is a regional initiative to improve women's economic participation, build markets for women and influence the private environment to promote women's economic empowerment in Southeast Asia.
- IW decides to start its operations in Myanmar and creates the Business Coalition for Gender Equality (BCGE) in Myanmar.

Building BCGE's core foundation

- Ayeyarwady Bank Limited (AYA Bank), City Mart Holding Company Limited (CMHL), First Myanmar Investment Public Company Limited (FMI), Kanbawza Bank Limited (KBZ Bank), Parami Energy Group of Companies, and Shwe Taung Development Company Limited joined forces with IW and became the six founding members of the Business Coalition for Gender Equality Association in Myanmar. Parami Energy stepped down from BCGE in 2021.
- The Country Director and first team members were hired to serve BCGE's members and provide advisory services in the market.
- BCGE was registered on 26 June 2018 as a Company Limited by Guarantee under number 113775262.

Empowering our founding members



Workshop organised in December 2018 to raise awareness on workplace sexual harassment. Photo by BCGE.

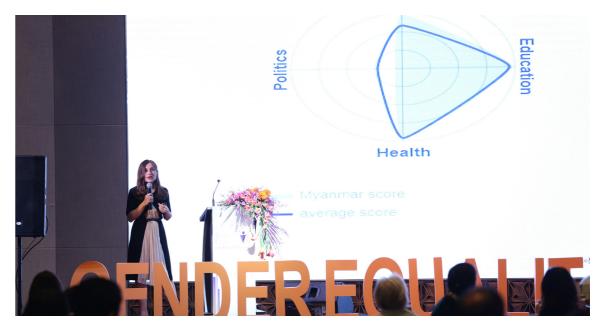
 In February, the first batch of our founding members obtained EDGE Certification, a leading global assessment methodology and business certification standard for gender equality, with the support of IW, IFC and BCGE.

Growing our membership base and tools to progress workplace gender equality

• In April, the second batch of founding members was awarded the EDGE certification.

2019

- BCGE welcomed 10 new members and had 18 members at the end of June 2020.
- The Gender Equality Assessment Results and Strategies (GEARS) tool is being developed together with IW for the Southeast Asian market and also for organisations who want to measure at a regional level.
- BCGE also develops Know Your WGE, an assessment tool specific for organisations who want to assess themselves with a local context.
- 83% of our members undertook WGE assessments: 72% are EDGE certified and 11% are certified by BCGE with our Know Your Workplace Gender Equality (KYWGE) assessment.
- BCGE team engaged with 34 organisations to raise awareness and build skills on gender equality.
- BCGE trained 600+ staff from member firms. The main focus was on tackling harassment and understanding gender equality in the workplace.



CEO Challenge Event on 19 May 2019. Sharing insights on EDGE Certification by Aniela Unguresan, Founder of EDGE Certified Foundation. Photo by BCGE

Delivering our mission despite adversity

- BCGE adjusts its operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic and focuses its efforts on supporting its members to cope with the consequences of the challenging situation and the pandemic.
- With 25 members at end of 2021, BCGE continues to engage with more companies despite the challenging times.
- At the end of 2020, BCGE members received 13 EDGE certifications, the highest number in the region. In 2021, Victoria Hospital became EDGE certified.
- The GEARS assessment, a regional-level workplace gender equality assessment, is launched. BCGE supports its members who want to measure at a regional level with this new assessment.
- BCGE signs MOUs with a range of organisations such as Akhaya Women, Colors Rainbow, Gender Equality Network Myanmar (GEN Myanmar), Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) and various Chambers of Commerce to jointly promote and advocate for WGE.
- From January 17th to 18th, Investing in Women (IW) hosted a Regional Business Summit in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. BCGE joined with members and exchanged experiences on workplace gender equality together with member businesses from other business coalitions from Vietnam, the Philippines and Indonesia.



BCGE Executive Team participated in a regional learning event in January 2020. Photo by BCGE.

Strategic vision and leadership

Established in 2018 and founded by six leading Myanmar businesses - Ayeyarwady Bank Limited (AYA Bank), City Mart Holding Company Limited (CMHL), First Myanmar Investment Public Company Limited (FMI), Kanbawza Bank Limited (KBZ Bank), Parami Energy Group of Companies, and Shwe Taung Development Company Limited - the Business Coalition for Gender Equality (BCGE) is a non-profit organisation that works with organisations committed to progressing gender equality in workplaces in Myanmar. Why? Because we believe that workplace gender equality is crucial to fostering equitable, respectful and inclusive workplaces, which are also essential in building a better society that benefits everyone.

BCGE is part of Investing in Women², a regional initiative that catalyses inclusive economic growth through women's economic empowerment in Southeast Asia. The program has established business coalitions in Indonesia, the Philippines, Myanmar and Vietnam.

BCGE's Board of Directors is responsible for validating BCGE's vision, mission, values and goals and safeguarding BCGE's sustainability. The executive team, led by its Country Director, reports to the Board and is responsible for delivering its strategic objectives.



BCGE's Board of Directors held the quarterly meeting on 29 September 2022.

Our vision

Businesses and organisations in Myanmar to achieve equitable and inclusive workplaces.

Our mission

A centre of excellence and trusted advisor for advocating and promoting workplace gender equality, diversity & inclusion, and women's participation in the private sector by delivering knowledge, training, services, and advice to foster equitable and inclusive workplaces.

Our values

Equity

We believe equity leads to equality. We practice equity by treating all persons based on what each person needs in order to adequately level the playing field, fairly with respect and dignity regardless of their differences.

Diversity & inclusion

We embrace diversity and practice inclusion by encouraging belonging and ensuring community belongingness.

Professionalism

For us, professionalism means a high standard of expertise and behaviour, which ensures excellent performance and results.

Integrity

Our uncompromising commitment to ethical principles and the highest standards of conduct guide our team's professional and personal behaviour.

Trust

We demonstrate trust as one of our core values in serving as the centre of excellence and trusted advisor in workplace gender equality, diversity and inclusion.

The business case for gender equality

Why should companies consider gender equality a critical component of their strategy? Simply put, it makes business sense, as it enables companies to get results:



Better innovation and increased market value

- 59% increase in creativity and innovation³
- Improvement in consumer demand by 37.9%.⁴
- Women make or influence 80% of buying decisions and control 20 trillion USD in global spending.⁵
- More diverse companies are 25% more likely to outperform their peers.⁶



Enhanced reputation

- Less employee turnover when employees feel both that they are included and that their employer supports diversity: a 10% increase in perceptions reduces absenteeism, adding nearly one day a year in work attendance per employee.⁷
- +58% likelihood of improving corporate reputation



Increased profitability and performance

- One more woman in senior management or on a corporate Board is associated with 8-13 basis points' higher return on assets.8
- Companies with women holding 20% or more management roles generate 2.04% higher cash flow returns.⁹
- In a 2019 study conducted by ILO, 69% of companies in the Asia Pacific region agree that Gender Diversity initiatives improve business outcomes.



More resilience and better ability to deal with shocks

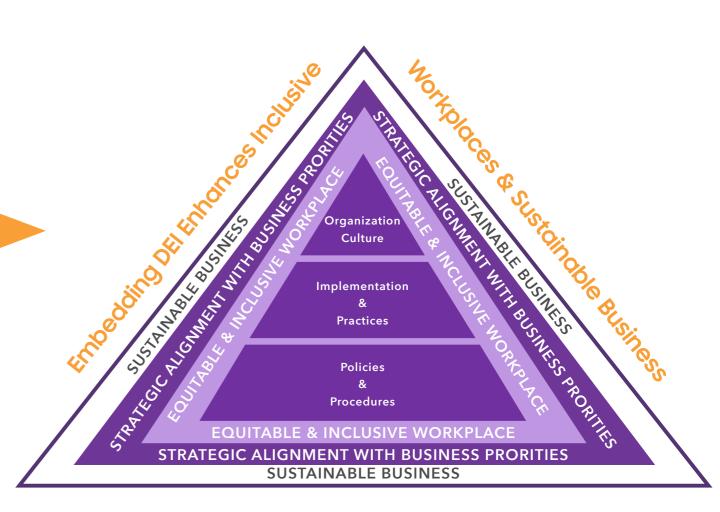
- Adding women to a board can improve investment efficiency, reduce groupthink, and enhance decision-making.¹⁰
- Sourcing from women-owned enterprises can strengthen and improve access to premium markets because of their un tapped potential.¹¹
- More than one in three private sector leaders report increased profits following efforts to empower women in emerging markets.¹²

Our workplace gender equality (WGE) approach

Our WGE Index & Model







WGE : Workplace Gender Equality

DEI: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Our strategic pillars

We aim to be the centre of excellence and act as a trusted advisor for our members whenever they need support to advance their WGE agendas. We focus on two strategic pillars to help enhance gender equality and diversity & inclusion in the workplaces in the private sector.







We build a community of like-minded members by recruiting businesses and organisations that commit to enhancing their WGE practices. Our team supports them during their journey and provides them with technical expertise and resources.



To help our members strengthen their practices, they can join our D&I Club, where HR professionals discuss challenges and exchange good practices. We have other programs for our members, such as the intesive Client Care Program, where we provide financial & technical support for committed activities, and Mother's Rooms, where we provide financial & technical support for members who want to have Mother's Rooms at their workplaces.



Awareness raising is critical: We publish our newsletter bi-monthly and organise events, workshops, campaigns, and panel discussions to share information, disseminate ideas and ignite change.



Women's participation is essential to value their experience: We have various Talks, Seminars, Workshops & Training etc., for Women's Empowerment & Participation where they can share their experience, etc.



We produce insights, reports, case studies, information, education materials (IEC), guides and data that enable its communications to monitor their progress and guide them to enhance their performance.





We are the only organisation in Myanmar that provides gender reports through different types of WGE Assessments: a regional level GEARS and a specific assessment with Myanmar context, Know Your WGE. We also work closely with EDGE, the global gender certification body and help certified companies in their journeys.



We conduct regular WGE, D&I training, webinars and workshops for our members and companies / organisations in the private sector. We cover multiple topics - from introduction modules like WGE 101 to advanced ones dealing with workplace harassment / bullying & discrimination, inclusive leadership, a workplace for all, norms & stereotypes, inclusive recruitment, inclusive communications, unconscious bias, etc.



We advice our members and help them revise & develop their WGE policies. We develop specific services that meet our members' requests and objectives. We have a full package on Anti-Harassment, Anti-Bullying & Non-Discrimination, Flexible Working Arrangements, guides to develop Diversity & Inclusion (D&I), Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies and guides.

Women in the Myanmar Economy



Why does WGE matter in Myanmar?

In Myanmar, women might be more exposed to various forms of harassment and may not be as respected as men when they are holding managerial positions. In 2019, the IFC published a study exploring the costs of bullying and sexual harassment to businesses in Myanmar.¹³

In the study, 956 participants were involved, and the findings are as follows: 21% of the respondents have witnessed somebody being sexually harassed, 76% witnessed body shaming, and 56% witnessed somebody being bullied in the workplace. The respondents also experienced sexual harassment, body shaming and bullying in their workplace, which is depicted in the visual below. The study also estimates the productivity loss induced by bullying and sexual harassment, respectively, at 9% and 4%.



15% of respondents have been sexually harassed.



66% of respondents experienced body shaming.



40% of respondents have directly experienced bullying in their workplace.

Myanmar employees have to deal frequently with bullying and sexual harassment, and the cost to businesses is not marginal. Building respectful workplaces makes business sense as it reduces productivity loss. Please refer to page 18 for more information on the business case.



- In their seminal 2015 report, GEN explains that in Myanmar, "a central feature of cultural and religious narratives is male spiritual superiority ... Fundamental to the idea of male superiority is the concept of hpon."
- The GEN concludes that this belief prevents women from holding positions of authority in social, economic and political institutions and realising their potential.

The UN Department of Economic

and Social Affairs released

population data for 2022.14

• They estimate the Myanmar

population at 53.8 million

women.

people, of whom 50.2% are

• Women live longer than men,

with women representing

62.5% of people over 45.



The Myanmar education system contributes to inequalities between women and men.

- According to the 2014 census, the literacy rate differed significantly between men (92.6%) and women (86.9%).
- However, women in the labour force are twice as likely to have completed higher education than men (12% of women and 6.3% of men).¹⁵



Social norms prevent women from working.

- Among the 36.4 million people composing the Myanmar working-age population, 54.3% are female and 45.7% male.¹⁶
- However, when we look at labour force participation, the gap is significant: 47% for women compared to 78% for men.¹⁷
- Among all ASEAN countries, the situation deteriorated the most for Myanmar workers between 2010 and 2019 in terms of labour participation for women, according to data published by ILO.¹⁸

See page 29 for more information.



Due to stereotypes and beliefs, women earn less than men.

- In 2017, the average monthly income for women totalled 165,800 MMK, compared to 224,600 MMK for men. Therefore, women earn 27% less than men.¹⁹ In other words, when men earn 1,000 MMK, women will receive 730 MMK.
- Women account for 60% of all unpaid family workers.²⁰



Employees prefer company culture over job content. According to the SNAP survey done by IW in 2019²¹:

- 59% of employees responded that they like a positive workplace culture;
- 56% of respondents (including a significant proportion of women) said that they prefer the opportunity of flexible hours;
- 54% of employees said that they like work with good prospects for promotion, all of which relate to company culture, which can enhance by initiating workplace gender equality in workplaces.



Violence is a threat to women within their households and in the workplace.

- 19% of women interviewed for a specific survey said they experience violence directly, and 53% know of women abused by relatives or neighbours.²²
- 40% of survey respondents conducted in 2019 have directly experienced bullying in their current workplace, and 56% said they had witnessed it.²³



Women have fewer opportunities to hold leadership and managerial positions.

- In 2020, 28% of managerial positions are held by women in Myanmar, and 72% by men.
 On average, women held 35% of the managerial positions in the ASEAN region in 2020: Myanmar is lagging behind its regional peers.²⁴
- 35% of firms have female participation in their ownership.²⁵

Understanding gender inequalities in Myanmar

Traditional gender roles and stereotypes continue to have a strong influence on the division of roles between women and men in the home, in the workplace, and in society at large, with women depicted as running the house and caring for children while men are depicted as wage-earners and protectors.

These traditional, social and cultural norms are prevalent within the ASEAN region, including in Myanmar. Why do we need to focus on these gender stereotypes and norms? Because gender stereotypes and social and cultural norms can limit women's and men's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue professional careers and interests, as well as affecting their ability make choices about their lives. They create inequalities between women and men in education, at home, in communities and in the workplace.

Inequalities happen throughout people's lives. They hinder progress and prospects for a better future for millions of girls and boys, and they hurt our economy. These differences are not because men and women are physically and biologically different but are the outcomes of social and cultural norms.

Women in Myanmar tend to have fewer economic opportunities. When they do have them, these are more focused on domestic work and will be paid, on average, significantly less than men. These inequalities undermine Myanmar's economic potential: the World Bank estimates that the total wealth of countries could increase by 14% on average around the globe and 29% in South Asia with gender equality in earnings.²⁶

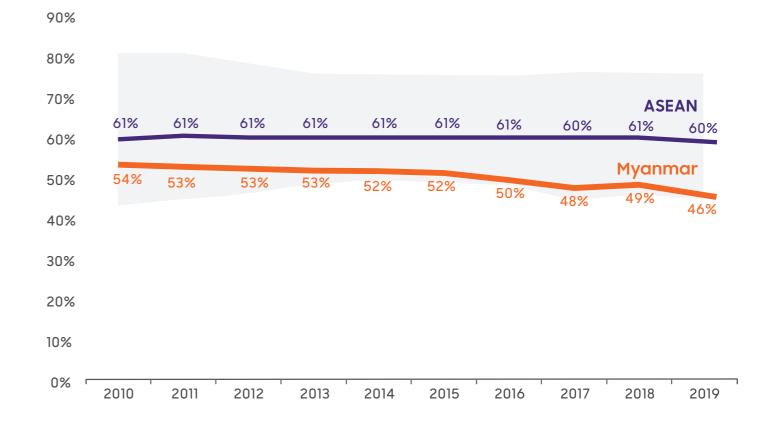
What does workplace gender equality mean?

Workplace Gender Equality (WGE) exists when everyone, regardless of gender, can equally access and benefit from the resources, opportunities, and support organisations provide to evolve, progress and thrive at all levels. Organisations committed to workplace gender equality hold themselves accountable for implementing mechanisms that eliminate direct and indirect discrimination and ensure an inclusive work environment and culture.²⁷

According to the ILO, women's labour workforce participation remained stable between 2010 and 2020: on average (see the **pupple line** in our chart below), 60% of women were working across the region during the last decade. Likewise, the grey band indicates the range between the highest and lowest rates observed among ASEAN countries regarding women's participation in the labour workforce.

The **orange line** represents Myanmar. Sadly, Myanmar is the only country in the region where women's labour participation deteriorated during the period (-14%), becoming in 2019 the ASEAN country with the lowest rate, with only 46% of women in the workforce. The ILO considers that "if more women were to enter the labour market, there would be a dramatic rise in the country's per capita income, enabling it to benefit from a gender dividend" 28.

Evolution of the labour force participation (women) in ASEAN

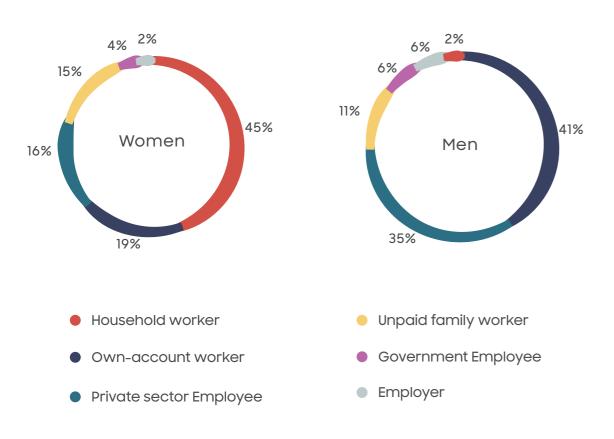


Women's work is more related to housework

An analysis of the Myanmar 2014 Census data reveals significant gaps between women and men in terms of activities, which reflect the social norms mentioned on page 26:

- 76% of men are either working for themselves (41%) or as private sector employees (35%), compared to 35% of women (19% of whom work for themselves and 16% in the private sector as employees)
- 45% of women do work as household workers, compared to 2% of men.
- 15% of women are unpaid family workers, versus 11% of men.

Labour force participation in Myanmar by type of activity and gender²⁹

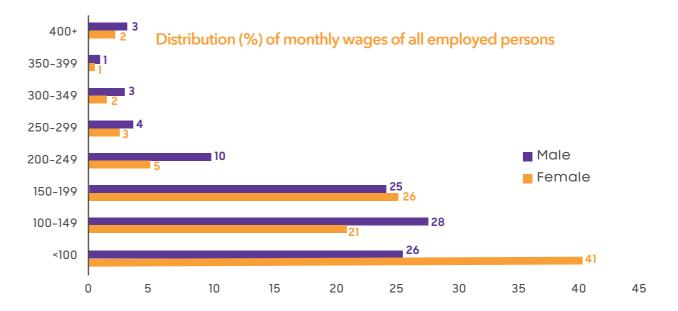


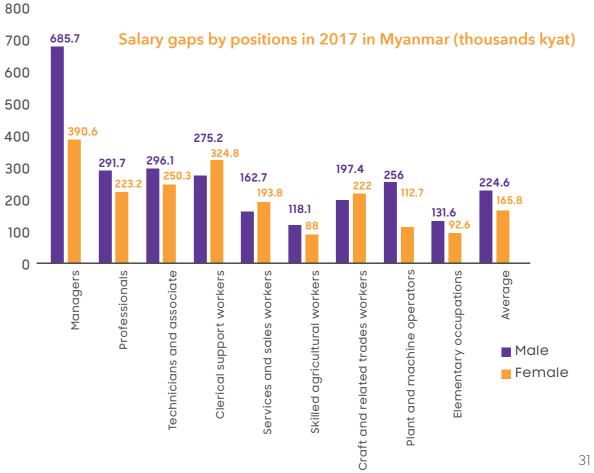
Note: The percentage of the labour force participation is rounded to the nearest number.

Women earn 27% less than men on average

In 2017, the Department of Labour published the results of its Annual Labour Force Survey³⁰. It covers in detail the differences in terms of salaries between men and women and indicates that:

- women are more likely to earn less than men: 41% of women make less than 100,000 MMK per month, compared to 26% of men.
- 21% of men make more than 200,000 MMK, and only 13% of women.





30 g

Fostering better practices for gender equality in Myanmar workplaces



BCGE Team provided Anti-Harassment Training to YEVER team on 3 Dec 2019

Since its inception, BCGE has been fully committed to supporting its members. We helped our members by:

- building a community of like-minded companies and professionals to exchange ideas and good practices;
- providing WGE assessments of regional and national levels as member benefits to understand gender composition, employee movement and policies and practices within organisations, as well as the gaps, opportunities and strengths of current strategies in relation to workplace gender equality;
- developing the capabilities of our members on gender equality to ensure they have the necessary skills and tools to implement and deliver results;
- supporting members who are keen to benchmark their practices against demanding standards;
- organising workshops to share and diffuse knowledge and actionable insights.

66

Since day one, we've aimed to create an inclusive, fair and transparent employee experience. We know there are always opportunities to improve, especially with a workforce of our size. We joined BCGE to ensure we have the support and systems to maintain and strengthen gender equality in our workplace, even during this new normal. We are proud to become a BCGE member and look forward to our partnership in coming months.

Yamin Myo Nyunt

Head of People's Operations, Proximity Designs July 2021



Our community of committed businesses

As BCGE is a member-based organisation, we exist to serve and support our members in developing and enhancing their gender equality practices.

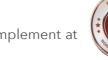
To facilitate our members' journeys, we have developed various tiers of membership:

• Leader members aim to become role models for other organisations. They develop policies and innovate to build a better workplace for all their employees - women and men - by implementing three WGE actions within 12 months of membership.



• Implementer members are organisations that have started to structure and implement their action plans related to workplace gender equality. They must complete two WGE actions within 12 months of the membership term.





• Initiator members are ready to start their journey. They must implement at least one WGE action within the first year of membership.



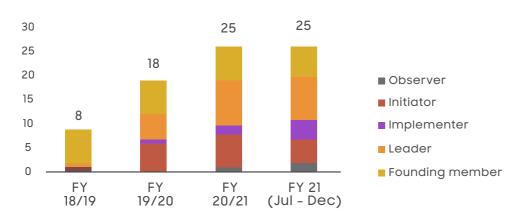
• Observer members can join even if they are not ready to undergo an assessment of their practices and start acting on workplace gender equality. They will be able to learn and understand how to structure their approach.

Since our inception in 2018, we have almost tripled the number of members who are part of BCGE - from 9 to 25 as of December 2021.

Since 2019, we have welcomed new members (observers and implementers): we are committed to supporting them in realising their commitment and structuring their approach.

In 2021, most members were highly committed: founding members and leader members represented 60% of our members.

Evolution of the number of members



Building capabilities across our members and beyond

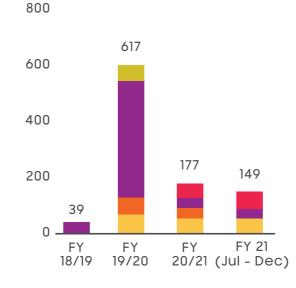
Between 2019 and 2021, we engaged with more than 90 companies and trained 940+ people, as shown in the graph below, of whom 95% work for our members.

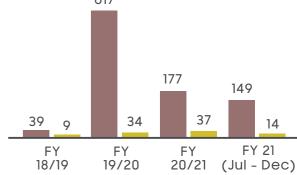
We also deliver customised training to reflect the specific challenges that particular industries face. For example, we developed a specific training module for KBZ Bank on WGE for their senior management to foster an inclusive workplace (see page 50 for more details).

BCGE started to offer workshops and training in 2019, covering five main topics. The chart below details their evolution between 2019 and 2020.

When we started our training, our members were very keen to train their staff to prevent harassment in the workplace and to ensure that employees of diverse backgrounds could feel safe and respected at work. In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenging situation affected our ability to deliver training.

Evolution of the number of people trained and topics covered Cumulative evolution of the people trained and companies involved





■ Understanding Gender, Diversity & inclusion in Workplace

Embracing inclusive Leadership

■ Tackling Harassement in Workplace

Combating Unconscious Bias in Workplace

Understanding Workplace Gender Equality

617

■ Number of people trained Number of companies involved

Structuring a WGE journey to deliver results

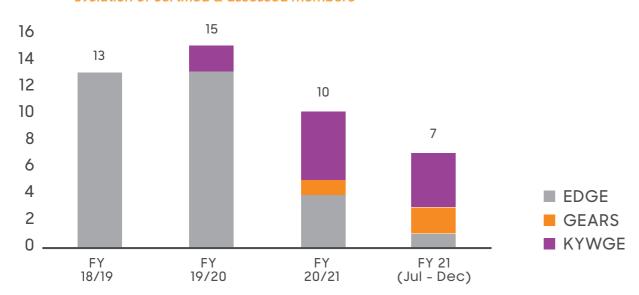
Using relevant assessments and standards in producing gender reports to foster better practices

We support workplace gender equality reporting by providing global, regional and national-level WGE assessments, tools and standards to assess the maturity and performance of our members and provide them with the required support. From 2018 to 2021, various WEG assessments were provided to members; members who want to reach the global level also took the global gender certification, EDGE. The below table shows various WGE assessments we provide to organisations.

After BCGE's inception, our founding members became EDGE-certified organisations. We have supported them on their journey. In October 2018, our founding members were awarded the EDGE certification, and the parent company of one of our members, Shwe Taung Group, managed to get certificates for all its Business Sectors.

From 2019 onwards, BCGE deployed new assessments for its members to reflect the Myanmar and regional context and practices respectively: Know Your WGE and GEARS. In 2020 and 2021, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenging situation impacted our members: they had to focus on securing their business' sustainability. However, despite this adversity, one of our members, Victoria Hospital, became EDGE-certified in January 2021.

Evolution of certified & assessed members



EDGE

GEARS

Know Your WGE



GEARS GENDER EQUALITY ASSESSMENT



Level	Global Certification	Regional Assessment	National Assessment
Goals	Measure where organisations stand in terms of representation, pay equity, and effectiveness of policies and practices to ensure equitable career flows as well as an inclusive culture.	Evaluate gender composition, employee movement and policies and practices within an organisation to identify the gaps, opportunities and strengths of the organisation's WGE strategies.	For organisitions that are not yet ready for GEARS and want to go with a local context. Analyse gender composition, employee movement, policies, and practices to highlight areas of improvement and foster an equal and inclusive workplace.
Assurance	By a third-party	N/A	N/A
Validity	2 years	2 years	2 years



Six businesses under the Shwe Taung Group received the EDGE Certification on 5 Oct 2018. Photo by BCGE.



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We at Victoria Hospital believe in putting "Quality Care" into action. This motivated us to commit to a better and healthier community - our customers and our employees. We hope the EDGE process and committed action plan will help us become a model and leading inclusive workplace in the healthcare industry in Myanmar.

Dr. Aye Aye San
CEO, Victoria Hospital
2021 January



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Achieving gender equality requires the commitment of both women and men. It is everyone's responsibility. But gender equality is more than a goal in itself: it is a prerequisite for building a successful organisation that also promotes inclusion and diversity.

At Canal+ Myanmar, we are convinced that gender equality and female leadership are major assets in achieving our ambition of becoming the leader in Pay-TV in Myanmar and overcoming the many challenges we face. **99**



CEO, Canal+ Myanmar June 2021



In 2020 and 2021, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenging situation impacted our members: they had to focus on securing their business' sustainability. However, despite this adversity, one of our members, Victoria Hospital, became EDGE-certified in January 2021.

Members' commitments on WGE

When joining BCGE, companies must commit to improving and enhancing their practices on gender equality, diversity and inclusion. Likewise, the members who have achieved the EDGE certification and have gone through regional-level GEARS and Know Your WGE assessments must develop, structure and implement action plans related to gender equality. Between 2018 and 2021, 222 actions were identified by our members.

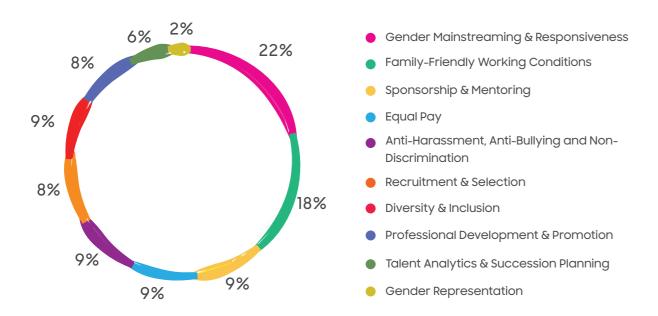
Among the 11 areas covered in structuring WGE journeys,³¹ members focused their efforts on two main areas: 'Gender Mainstreaming & Responsiveness' and 'Family-Friendly Working Conditions': 40% of the actions committed by our members pertained to these areas.

Family-Friendly Working Conditions' refers to providing staff with the support needed to achieve their work commitments and fulfil family obligations (see page 52 for more details).

After joining BCGE, members should develop, structure and implement sound WGE policies and procedures. We detail some of our members' actions on page 41.

Some members identified multiple actions under the same area. Therefore, we analysed how many of our members work in these areas between 2018 and 2021. The results are mentioned in the chart below.

Breakdown of the actions of BCGE's members

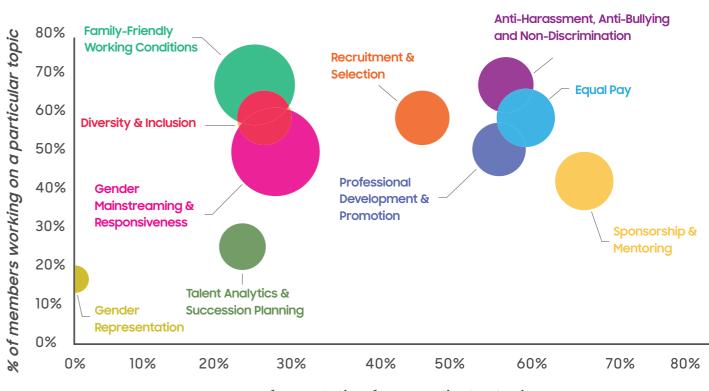


- A bubble represents each of the 11 WGE areas, and its size indicates the number of actions. The more actions, the bigger the bubble.
- The vertical axis indicates the percentage of BCGE members who have committed to work in this area.
- Each bubble is positioned to reflect the number of members committed to working on this issue and the average completion rate achieved.

Members have had to deal with the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenging situation in Myanmar. These have impacted their ability to implement their action plan. However, on average, BCGE's members delivered results on the following topics: 'Sponsorship & Mentoring', 'Equal Pay', 'Professional Development & Promotion' and 'Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment', with a completion rate of around 50%. This shows that they should continue their efforts on these topics. However, regarding 'Family-Friendly Working Conditions', 'Diversity & Inclusion' and 'Gender Mainstreaming', they should reinforce their efforts to deliver more results.

BCGE's team regularly follows up with its members. BCGE will focus on providing more support to members based on their specific needs.

Distribution of the actions committed by our members for each WGE area



% of completion for a particular topic

Assessing how Myanmar companies perform on gender equality



Respectful workplace awareness session to management of City Mart, 2019

Methodology

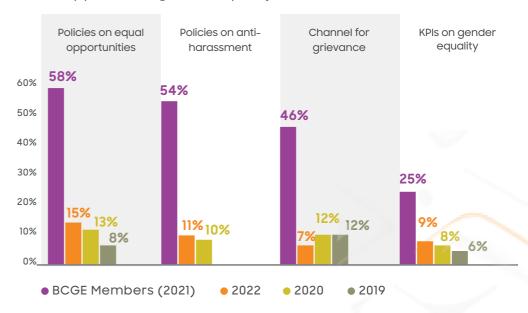
To compare the performance of BCGE's members with other companies in the market, BCGE worked with Yever, one of its members, who produce the *Pwint Thit Sa* (PTS) report in partnership with the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) using publicly available information.

BCGE developed a scorecard to assess companies' performance for each of the eleven areas of its Workplace Gender-Equality Index (WGEI), which includes 24 criteria. BCGE and Yever worked together to map some of the criteria for the PTS assessment with its scorecard. Then, a scoring system was agreed upon. Yever performed then the data collection, consolidation an analysis. BCGE reviewed and checked Yever's work to ensure the reliability and trustworthiness of the results.

Results

Myanmar companies are structuring their management systems slowly.

BCGE members are not only more gender-balanced: they also have better management practices. Indeed, according to the data collected by MCRB and Yever and used to produce *Pwint Thit Sa*, few Myanmar companies have a structured approach to gender equality in 2021, as shown in the chart below.



BCGE Members (2021) = data collected by Yever for BCGE's first impact report.

2022 = data collected by MCRB and Yever covering Myanmar companies for *Pwint Thit Sa* 2022 (first assessment)

2020 = data collected by MCRB and Yever covering Myanmar companies for Pwint Thit Sa 2020

2019 = data collected by MCRB and Yever covering Myanmar companies for Pwint Thit Sa 2019

The following overall results for Myanmar companies came from PTS data.

- 15% of companies have a policy on equal opportunities, and 11% on anti-harassment.
- 9% disclose data related to gender equality, such as headcount with a split between women and men, the percentage of women working as managers, career development and promotion with details by gender, etc.
 Overall, the number of companies in Myanmar with equal opportunities policies almost doubled between 2019 and 2021.
- 7% provide public information about their grievance mechanism, a significant drop from 2020.

BCGE's members' results show that:

- the likelihood of finding policies on equal opportunities and anti-harassment is respectively almost 4 and 5 times higher for BCGE members than for other Myanmar companies;
- 46% of BCGE members have a clear grievance channel, whereas the figure is only 7% on average for other Myanmar companies;
- 25% of BCGE members disclose some key performance indicators on gender equality, compared to 9% on average for other Myanmar companies.

BCGE members outperform their peers

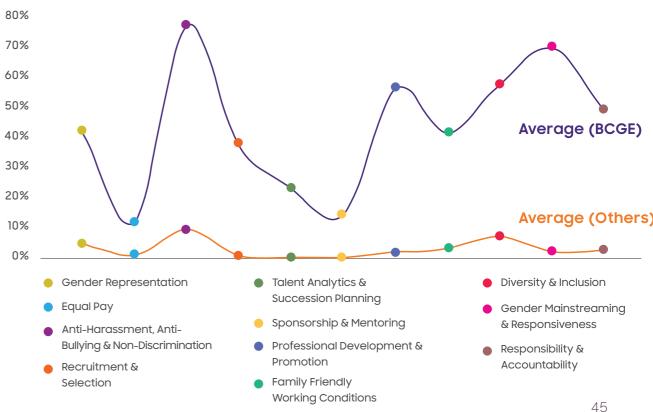
We also assessed the WGE performance of the companies analysed in PTS and BCGE members for each of the eleven areas on BCGE's scorecard. For each area, the maximum score possible was identical, and companies could the oretically hit the 100% mark. Yever calculated the following results for two groups of companies.

- The average score for the 260+ companies included in the first PTS assessment, the 2022 edition. The **orange line** in the chart represents their performance.
- The average score for BCGE members using the data collected by BCGE. The **purple line** in the chart represents their performance.

The results are shown in the chart below. Each line represents the performance of a specific set of companies: BCGE members and other Myanmar companies. We can see a significant gap between the performance of BCGE members and other Myanmar companies, which shows BCGE members outperform other Myanmar companies on each topic. Interestingly, BCGE members and other Myanmar companies, on average:

- tend to perform better on gender representation, non-discrimination and diversity and inclusion
- need to make improvements in the following areas:
- o Equal pay.
- o **Sponsorship and mentoring.** Companies do not necessarily encourage or implement activities on this topic. This could be probably because they do not necessarily link sponsorship and mentoring with gender equality concepts, such as equal opportunities regardless of gender or the entitlements that employees can enjoy.
- o **Talent analytics and recruitment.** Organisations rarely understand the movements of their talents, with a proportion of women and men across five levels of responsibilities within their organisation and do not connect these movements with recruitment and succession planning together with a gender pool.

However, all companies need to keep fostering better practices on gender equality, and BCGE members aim to inspire others to follow their leads. Ultimately, this confirms the relevance of BCGE's role and mission, and the private sector's responsibility for building enhanced workplaces.



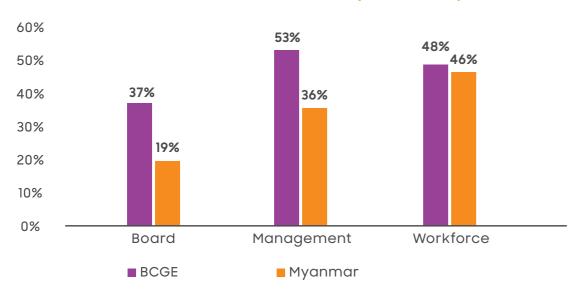
Women's representation in companies

ILO considers that "thirty per cent is the women's share considered in gender politics as the critical mass or tipping point at which the representation of women begins to influence an institution/enterprise and its decision-making, ensuring that gender diversification is diffused throughout the organisation."³² What about BCGE members and other Myanmar companies?

On average, BCGE members and other Myanmar companies tend to have a gender-balanced workforce: 48% of female for the former and 46% of female for the latter. However, we can observe that:

- The boards of BCGE members are more diverse, with 37% of women, compared to 19% on average for other Myanmar companies, according to the data collected by Yever.
- likewise, BCGE members tend to have more female managers (53% on average) compared to 36% for other Myanmar companies, according to data collected by the ILO.





In the Asia and Pacific Region, the ILO estimates that 71.5% of companies have diversity and inclusion policies.³³ In Myanmar, we can distinguish two groups of companies.

- According to the data collected for the first assessment of the 2022 *Pwint Thit Sa* report, 15% of the companies surveyed mentioned that they have a diversity policy, and 9% disclosed quantitative data about their headcount and the breakdown between women and men.
- The majority of BCGE's founding and leader members have developed WGE policies and principles.



Thirty per cent is the women's share considered in gender politics as the critical mass or tipping point at which the representation of women begins to influence an institution/enterprise and its decision-making.

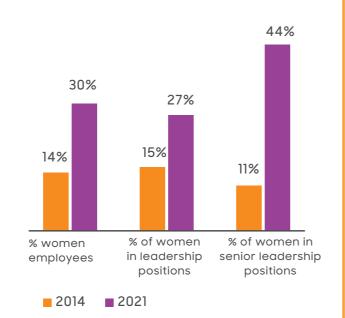
SUCCESS STORY

Boosting women's participation at Coca-Cola Pinya Beverages Myanmar Limited

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) is a critical component of Coca-Cola's People strategy. The main challenge for a multinational like Coca-Cola is to be able to contextualise its work - and this is where BCGE has supported Coca-Cola Pinya Beverages Myanmar Limited's HR team. Coca-Cola started to work in Myanmar in 2014; since then, they have increased the number of women in the workforce at every level, reflecting strong support from the leadership.

The results are telling: the percentage of women doubled in 7 years, and the share of women with senior leadership roles was multiplied by 4, as shown in the chart.





At Coca-Cola Pinya Beverages Myanmar Limited, there is no discrimination against gender: employees have equal opportunities to advance their careers regardless of gender. We are pleased to be part of BCGE's network; it is precious as we can share challenges and dilemmas, discuss solutions and access expertise to move forward more effectively.

Aye Mya Thida Country HR Director, Coca-Cola Pinya Beverages Myanmar Limited

Members' WGE Practices

Efforts on diversity and inclusion

Improving gender representation usually starts with the support of the top and senior leadership. FMI, one of BCGE's founding members, has established a Diversity and Inclusion Committee that focuses on four topics: building leaders, revealing and reducing unconscious biases, policy, and training. The Committee ensures that women are provided with equal opportunities across the Group to access higher positions.

Tackling lower women's participation in the workforce

Companies operating in STEM industries usually experience low female participation in the workforce and at the top management level. This is not because of companies' inability or lack of WGE understanding, but due to other related factors in the industry, like the education system. Two of our members are dealing with these issues: Alpha Power and Shwe Taung Development Company (through its engineering and construction arm). Increasing women's participation in the workplace is not only a challenge for Myanmar companies. It is relevant for all businesses operating in Myanmar. The results delivered by Coca-Cola Pinya Beverages Myanmar Limited, one of our members, are encouraging and demonstrate that it can transform the workplace for the better.

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Fostering gender equality is not about prioritising women over men; it is about building working conditions that will benefit everyone regardless of gender. As diversity is one of our core values, it made sense for us to join BCGE. Their training helped enable positive changes in our employees' mindset and build a more respectful workplace."

Thuzar Win

Executive Director, Alpha Power Engineering



Empowering women

AYA Bank relies on its branch managers and sales representatives to serve its clients. When interacting with customers, some customers have been known to behave inappropriately, especially with young working women. AYA Bank aims to increase the number of female branch managers from the current 26%, but needs to support their female staff who may be exposed to harassment. AYA Bank has developed training modules specifically for its most exposed employees. These training modules are regularly delivered by one of the Directors of the Board and encourage all staff to speak up when encountering bullying, harassment and discrimination, reflecting AYA Bank's commitment to empowering all its staff regardless of gender.

Building inclusive workplaces

KBZ Bank is fully committed to creating a workplace where all its staff can thrive and achieve their full potential. In December 2020, BCGE developed a specific training module, "Gender, diversity and inclusion – a workplace for ALL", to train all staff who interact with and serve KBZ Bank's clients through its 500+ branches across the country. In January 2021, KBZ Bank decided to join the Valuable 500 and committed to improving the inclusion of people with disabilities in Myanmar in its workplace. Today, there are 16 disabled employees currently working at KBZ Bank, and KBZ Bank is the only company in Myanmar disclosing such information.

Tackling unconscious bias

After joining BCGE, Victoria Hospital took the EDGE certification and participated in BCGE's WGE training as stipulated in EDGE action plans. Interestingly, employees' perceptions of gender equality started to change: they realised their biases could interfere when interacting with patients. For instance, nurses used to swaddle newborn babies with blue towels for the boys and pink ones for the girls. After joining the WGE training, they used only white towels regardless of gender. Likewise, when the employees received training on anti-harassment, the increased understanding contributed to creating a safer working environment, which we know from pre and post-test training assessments. Victoria Hospital created a hotline to ensure that employees could easily speak up, report any incident, and receive as quickly as possible the support they need.

Inclusive communications

Some of our members have decided to engage their clients with inclusive communications: for example, City Mart, who chose to develop gendersensitive communications to break common stereotypes within Myanmar society using their extensive outreach.

City Mart ran an inspiring commercial advertisement that portrayed modern families where the husband helps the wife actively with housework. This kind of gender-neutral communication can reduce gender stereotyping and discrimination in the workplace and in the family.



https://fb.watch/iBUr1Qkos1/?mibextid=NnVzG8



Family-friendly working conditions

Combining one's professional and family lives can sometimes be complicated. If you ask working parents and employees with care responsibilities how they want to work at your organisation, many will tell you of the challenges of juggling professional and family commitments and may request flexibility in their work arrangements.

While employees with care responsibilities value family-friendly working arrangements with flexible schedules to accommodate their work and family commitments, Myanmar has no legal requirement on flexible work. However, the Factory Act expects companies with more than 100 women employees to provide them with a childcare room.

When employers offer flexible working and family-friendly conditions, this can be a powerful enabler in enhancing the quality of life of people at work and promoting job satisfaction. Offering such conditions can be a means to attract, retain and motivate even more staff.

Within BCGE members, there have been practices and initiatives in this area to foster equitable and inclusive workplaces.

Building mother rooms

KBZ Bank, AYA Bank, CMHL, FMI and Victoria Hospital offer lactation rooms for their employees. To develop its mothers' room, AYA Bank decided to follow the guidelines provided by UNICEF: the room is cosy and comfortable, and women feel safe and secure. Victoria Hospital decided to go one step further by creating specific spaces not only for their employees but also for their customers.



Mother's Room at AYA Bank. Photo: Supplied

Enhancing the infrastructure

KBZ Bank issued an internal document stating that mothers with babies under six months old can take a break for two hours daily for breastfeeding. FMI decided to extend its maternity leave benefits proactively: whereas the law expects employers to provide 14 weeks of maternity leave, FMI's female employees can get 20 weeks with full salary, 40 weeks with half salary, and even 12 more weeks without pay. Mercy Corps Myanmar includes all caregivers, regardless of gender: they are all entitled to 14 weeks of paid leave.



Mother's Room at KBZ Bank. Photo: Supplied

Developing childcare centres

Shwe Taung Development established five childcare centres to support their employees: teachers welcome the children and take care of them while their parents work. Shwe Taung welcomes dozens of children daily, making the lives of its employees easier. KBZ Bank also embraces initiatives that promote gender equality and family-friendly working conditions by creating KBZ Day Care Center and Mother's Corners (breastfeeding/pumping facilities) at their corporate office.



One of the childcare centres opened by the Shwe Taung Group. Photo: Supplied

Appendix



Definitions of our 11 WGE areas

In this report, we will refer to 11 WGE areas, which are defined below. Each time we mention one, we will use the same symbol and colour to facilitate understanding.

Diversity & Inclusion

Diversity is recognising individual differences and similarities and understanding each individual is unique in their own ways.

Inclusion is a set of behaviours, attitudes and approaches (culture) that encourages groups or individuals having different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted and welcomed.

Equal Pay

Equal Pay means paying men and women equally for "similar work" rather than for "identical work". Equal pay includes all the components structuring the compensation, benefits and reward offered by an organisation.

Family-Friendly Working Conditions

Family-Friendly Working Conditions refers to work environments and schedules that take into account individuals' personal needs and allow employees to more easily balance family and work and fulfill both their family and work obligations.

Gender Mainstreaming & Responsiveness

Gender Mainstreaming refers to integrating a gender-equality perspective at all stages and levels of an organisation's policies, programs, projects, and activities. It takes into account the differences between females and males based on their diverse backgrounds when designing, implementing, and evaluating policies, programs, and projects so that they benefit both women and men and do not increase inequality but enhance gender equality.

Gender Responsiveness refers to paying attention to the unique needs of females and males, valuing their perspectives, respecting their experiences, understanding their differences, and levelling the playing field to foster more equitable results.

Gender Representation

Gender Representation at work concerns relative equality in terms of numbers and proportions of females and males in the workforce in all positions, and especially decision-making and managerial positions. It is often calculated as the ratio of females to males, or vice versa, as an indicator. Moreover, gender representation also refers to the representation of gender identities.

Anti-Harassment, Anti-Bullying and Non-Discrimination

Anti-Harassment means preventing any kind of harassment (non-verbal, written, verbal, sexual) that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses a person or a group due to his/her or their race, skin colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, or any other characteristic, and that a reasonable person or a group should have known would be unwelcome.

Anti-Bullying means preventing any kinds of repetitive, intentional hurt (physical, verbal or psychological) caused to one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Non-Discrimination means ensuring that no one is denied their rights, entitlements and opportunities because of their diverse backgrounds, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, marital status, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth or any other characteristics.

Professional Development & Promotion

Professional Development and Promotion in the workplace gender equality context means the provision of equal access to training, resources, workshops, and physical or online sessions regardless of the gender they identify with (or) family arrangements they have made, so that they can improve their skill level, and recognising their achievements with a (re)assignment to a higher position through promotion for their career advancement.

Recruitment & Selection

Recruitment & Selection in the workplace gender equality context means taking thoughtful consideration not to include the portrayal of gender stereotypes and unconscious biases in recruitment and selection processes. It also means having a pool of diverse and gender-balanced talents, and linking high-quality talents from this pool to the organisation's succession planning processes.

Responsibility & Accountability

Responsibility & Accountability in the workplace gender equality context means giving critical career assignments to talented employees for their respective positions irrespective of the gender they identify with (or) family arrangements they have taken, but on the abilities and performance each individual can achieve. The accountability of each individual must be respected regardless of the gender they identify with (or) their diverse backgrounds (or) family-friendly working arrangements they have made for their career and professional advancement.

Sponsorship & Mentoring

Sponsorship & Mentoring in the workplace gender equality context means providing equal access to sponsorship and mentoring programs and opportunities for top talents regardless of the gender they identify with (or) their diverse backgrounds (or) family-friendly working arrangements they have made for their career and professional advancement.

Talent Analytics & Succession Planning

Talent Analytics & Succession Planning in the workplace gender equality context means the organisation (especially top management) better understands where the top talents of females and males are within the organisation, from the potential hiring pool to existing employees at all levels, and considers their transition to new or different positions as succession planning and career advancement processes.

Acronyms and abbreviations

BCGE Business Coalition for Gender Equality Association

D&I Diversity and Inclusion

DEI Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

WGE Workplace Gender Equality

EDGE Economic Dividends for Gender Equality

GEARS Gender Equality Assessment Results and Strategies

PTS Pwint Thit Sa

IW Investing in Women

WGEI Workplace Gender-Equality Index

Know Your WGE Know Your Workplace Gender Equality

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