



Business for Goals Platform – Gender Equality Meet-Up

The Business for Goals Platform was established as the results of intentions that gained strength through collaborations and go beyond the corporate and social responsibility of institutions working for a better world in economic, social, and environmental terms. Business for Goals conducts collaborations in the framework of the human-development approach and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to build a bridge between the business community and the SDGs and to strengthen the role of businesses in sustainable development.

The human-development approach and sustainability, in line with the basic human rights, emphasize everybody's equal and fair access to resources and opportunities regardless of their race, language, religion, social status, level of income, physical capacity, age, sexual orientation, sexual identity, and gender. In line with this principle of inclusion, the platform invites all large-, medium- and small-sized enterprises willing to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into their corporate policies and strategies, all public agencies interested in public-private partnerships, local governments, academia, international organizations, and the non-governmental sector to think, learn, and work together.

The Platform's work focuses on three areas:

1. **Climate change and disaster resilience:** Enabling enterprises to be prepared for possible disasters and crises and to strengthen their contributions in the fight against climate change.
2. **Future-Fit:** Contributing to businesses to enable them to meet today's needs, as well as to be prepared for the future's economic conditions.
3. **Inclusive growth:** Realizing economic models that can foster the participation of disadvantaged groups in the economy.

Why is gender equality important for the private sector?

Gender equality is indispensable to basic human rights and freedom, as well as to development. Abolishing any kind of discrimination against women and girls is guaranteed as a basic human right by many international institutions including the CEDAW and in its conventions. Besides being a basic human right, equality is also one of the main components of inclusive growth and sustainable development.¹ As it is disclosed in the Beijing Declaration, the "eradication of poverty based on sustained economic growth, social development, environmental protection and social justice requires the involvement of women in economic and social development, equal opportunities and the full and equal participation of women and men as agents and beneficiaries of people-centered sustainable development".²

The perspective of gender equality entails the equal and visible inclusion of women and men in all processes³ and its priority is to act to ensure the conditions under which women and men can realize their full potential. Ensuring gender equality and increasing female employment are also subjects of top priority on a global level. The Agenda 2030 emphasizes gender equality as a common basis for all 17 SDGs and defines the 5th goal as to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". This framework reminds the world that gender equality is related to all processes and areas of work, as well as that it is a topic in its own right, which should specifically be focused on.

As much as it contributes to gender equality and inclusive growth, female employment and equal participation of women and men in the workforce positively impact businesses in terms of having a more productive and innovative structure and of ensuring economic growth. In the report entitled "Women in business and

¹ Ibid.

² <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/declar.htm>

³ Bayrakçeken Tüzel, Gökçe (2018) Sustainable Development Goals and Total Factor Productivity, UNDP, Ankara. <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/turkey/S%3%bcrd%3%bcr%3%bclebilir-Kalk%4%b1nma-Hedefleri-Uzun-Versiyon.pdf>



management”, published by the ILO, it is revealed that firms who pursue gender equality and variety also increase their productivity and profits.⁴

In a report prepared in 2010 for the G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting, it is stated that a full convergence in the participation rate between men and women could increase the GDP of the OECD countries by 12.0% by 2030.⁵

A report titled “The power of parity: How advancing women’s equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth”, published in 2015, highlights that in a scenario, where full-potential is realized and where the labor-force participation rates between women and men are the same, an economic structure in which an increase in women’s working hours (i), labor-force participation rates (ii), representation within the high productive sectors (iii) would be crucial.⁶

The third volume of the report “Women in the Business World”, prepared by TÜRKNÖFED, revealed that in women and family-friendly workplaces, the motivation of female employees and their commitment to the business would increase, while their labour turnover and absence due to family responsibilities would decrease.⁷

While this kind of business approach contributes to an increase in profitability, gender inequality appears in different manners and on different levels as a challenging feature for a sustainable and inclusive life. Gender inequality appears and defines the daily life and can be found in many areas, including gender roles attributed to men and women, their power relations in which one is dependent on the other, occupational segregation by gender, and in the hierarchies in the productive and reproductive activities.

Many areas related to employment and production, such as those sectors mainly occupied by women, types of work women are mostly involved, their style of entrepreneurship, occupational preferences, the way they participate in occupational organizations, and their activities in these structures are shaped by gender stereotypes and social perceptions. For example, in Turkey women tend to work in sectors such as service, agriculture and entrepreneurship. That female entrepreneurs own small or medium-sized enterprises is not a coincidence or a preference, but a reflection of a social order based upon the gender roles in work life and the business world. The global gender pay gap reaches 20% and the female share in decision making positions such as leadership and management is lower. Globally, only %27,1 of managers and leaders are women.⁸

The private sector comes together for gender equality

Gender equality is a roadmap and a common principle for all countries that adopted the sustainable development goals as their agenda 2030. Therefore, it is a main responsibility of all segments working towards the achievement of the goals to shape their steps according to this principle.

For us, as the Business for the Goals Platform, it is very important to pursue gender equality in every step we take, in terms of showing our respect to universal values as well as to become ourselves a good example for society. With this responsibility, as Business for Goals, we invite our stakeholders to think and act together upon strengthening the steps we take to ensure ideal conditions for gender equality in the private sector.

⁴ ILO, Women in Business and Management, Page 15.

(https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_700953/lang--en/index.htm)

⁵ Achieving stronger growth by promoting a more gender-balanced economy, report prepared for the G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Meeting Melbourne, Australia, 10-11 September 2014

⁶ “The power of parity: how advancing women’s equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth”, McKinsey Global Institute, 2015.

⁷ Karadeniz, O.& H.H. Yılmaz (2018) Women in Business, Volume 3, Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation (TÜRKNÖFED), İstanbul. Page 21.

⁸ A quantum leap for gender equality: For a better future of work for all



There has been and continues to be a lot of work to empower women's position in the business world. In this process, we aim to share and spread knowledge and experience accumulated in the business world by realizing the practice of learning and thinking together.

We start with the fact that within the favorable conditions and environment created by the Business for Goals Platform, ensuring gender equality is only possible when acting together in a determined way and with a holistic approach. It is your valuable contributions that will point towards this way and determines the direction our steps should take.

BUSINESS FOR GOALS PLATFORM GENDER EQUALITY MEET-UP PROGRAM Date: February 28, 2020 Time: 1:30pm – 5:30pm Location: UNDR IRH, KEY PLAZA, ŞİŞLİ 10th floor, Assembly Hall		
13:30 – 13:50	Registration	
13:50 – 14:00	Opening Remarks: Business for Goals	Speaker Pelin Kihtir Öztürk
14:00 – 14:10	Opening Remarks: Why gender equality in the business world?	Speaker Prof.Dr. Yasemin Açık
14:10-14:20	From Corporate Social Responsibility to Collective Action	Speaker Hansin Doğan
14:20 – 14:40	Introduction and acquaintance	Moderator Dr. Aslı Çoban
14:40 – 15:10	Women friendly workplace practices	Speaker Doç. Dr. Çağla Ünlütürk
15:10 – 15:30	Coffee break / Gathering at the round tables	
15:30 – 17:00	Round Table Discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work-life balance• Workplace practices against violence against women and sexual harassment• Politics and approaches to increase female employment• Professional development and equality in leadership• Communication and advocacy based on gender equality	
17:00 – 17:30	Closure and Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group Presentations• Defining action areas• Suggestions for the next meet-up• General evaluation and closure	

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