

RESPONSIBLE  
JEWELLERY  
COUNCIL

# GENDER EQUALITY REPORT

The time is now to accelerate SDG 5, achieve gender equality, and empower all women and girls.

This report is a result of the collaboration between RJC, BSR and CIBJO.

SEPTEMBER 2021

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# Responsible Jewellery Council

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Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) is a not-for-profit standard-setting and certification organisation founded in 2005.

Our vision is a responsible world-wide supply chain that promotes trust in the global jewellery and watch industry.

## ABOUT RJC

Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) is the leading standards organisation of the global jewellery and watch industry. It has more than 1,400 member companies that span the jewellery supply chain from mine to retail. RJC Members commit to and are independently audited against the RJC Code of Practices – an international standard on responsible business practices for diamonds, coloured gemstones, silver, gold and platinum group metals. The Code of Practices (COP) addresses human rights, labour rights, environmental impact, mining practices, product disclosure and many more important topics in the jewellery supply chain. RJC also works with multi-stakeholder initiatives on responsible sourcing and supply chain due diligence. The RJC's Chain-of-Custody Certification (CoC) for precious metals supports these initiatives and can be used as a tool to deliver broader Member and stakeholder benefit. Through the implementation of the COP and CoC members contribute towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations 2030 agenda.

RJC is a Full Member of the ISEAL Alliance – the global association for sustainability standards and RJC is a member of the United Nations Global Compact since 2009. For more information on RJC Members, Certification, and Standards please visit [www.responsiblejewellery.com](http://www.responsiblejewellery.com) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

## ABOUT BSR

BSR™ is an organization of sustainable business experts that works with its global network of the world's leading companies to build a just and sustainable world. BSR™ provides insight, advice, and collaborative initiatives to help you see a changing world more clearly, create long-term business value, and scale impact. BSR's Consumer Sectors team works with member companies in the luxury, jewellery, fashion and retail industries, across the spectrum of sustainable business issues, including diversity, equity and inclusion and women's empowerment. The BSR team collaborates regularly with the RJC and its member companies and, in 2018, BSR published a white paper: [Women in the Jewellery Supply Chain: Landscape Review of Barriers to Women's Economic Empowerment](#).

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## CHAPTER 1

# Welcome

### **WELCOME TO THE FIRST RJC REPORT ON GENDER EQUALITY, THE TIME IS NOW - SDG 5 IN ACTION.**

In 2015 the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Global Goals, were created. The 2030 agenda is about leaving no one behind. SDG 5 aims to achieve political, economic, and social equality for all women and is presented as a necessary milestone to achieving all 17 SDGs. We should not forget in our industry that women drive 90% of the jewellery demand globally and that women are present across the entire jewellery value chain.

The reality is that we can do more. In fact, according to the World Economic Forum's 2020 Global Gender Gap report, it will take 257 years to close the economic gender gap. The progress has been far too slow. The year 2020, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action<sup>1</sup> and culminating in the Generation Equality Forum, was intended to be ground-breaking for gender equality. However, with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic even the gains made in the past decades are at risk of being rolled back. The pandemic is deepening pre-existing inequalities, exposing vulnerabilities in social, political, and economic systems. Across every sphere, from health to the economy, security to social protection, the impacts of COVID-19 are exacerbated for women and girls<sup>2</sup>.

We strongly believe the time is now to accelerate action on the ground to advance gender equality. That is why the RJC have started the 'Generation Equality SDG 5 in Action' Dialogue in collaboration with CIBJO. This report shares the results of this stakeholder engagement and makes recommendations for next steps.

1. <https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/about>

2. UN Policy Brief – The Impact of COVID-19 on Women

As we start to build a global partnership of gender equality pioneers in our industry, we have the opportunity to benefit from the leadership of several organisations already doing important work to raise awareness in the area and motivate leaders to act.

A special thank you to so many different voices around the table who have embarked on this journey in preparing this first report, UN WOMEN, United Nations Global Compact, IMPACT, World Diamond Council, Women’s Jewelry Association, BSR and many of our RJC members. We cannot wait. We must already plan how we can ‘build back better’ for women and girls across the world. We are counting on your leadership and support.

All suggestions are welcome at [generationequality@responsiblejewellery.com](mailto:generationequality@responsiblejewellery.com)



Iris Van der Veken  
Executive Director,  
RJC



David Bouffard  
Chair, RJC



Dr Gaetano Cavalieri  
President, CIBJO

## Introductory words

There is little debate that gender balanced companies lead to improved business performance, productivity and sustainability, and yet the mining sector is woefully under-represented by women.

According to a recent Wall Street Journal article, “in the U.S. 14.3% of people employed in mining in 2020 were women” which was just 0.3% higher than in 2015. The article goes on to say, “figures are similar in Australia, Canada and Europe with little progress boosting female participation in recent years.”

However, the challenge is not only the numbers, but gender equality and the complexities that exist around the attraction, retention and promotion of women in the industry across different cultures, countries, regions and religions.

Women in Mining (UK) welcomes this first report on gender equality by the Responsible Jewellery Council which exposes the challenges across the jewellery value chain, explains what RJC are doing, and identifies useful tips and resources. 39% of RJC members surveyed in the report said they wanted practical guidance and recommendations on diversity and inclusion and this report is the first response.

There is no simple fix to tackle systemic challenges like gender equality but to make real progress on achieving SDG 5 – political, economic and social equality for all women – it is vital that we collaborate and form partnerships like this one between RJC and Women in Mining (UK).

We look forward to continuing to work together.



Carole Cable,  
Chair, Women  
in Mining (UK)

# Our Leadership Team



Agathe Bukasa



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Wumba Akapo

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## CHAPTER 2

# RJC's commitment to gender equality

### RJC AND THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

RJC is the leading standards organisation for the global jewellery and watch industry. RJC have always believed in multi-stakeholder engagement that include government, business, and civil society. Our partnership with United Nations Global Compact, ISEAL membership since 2011 and active participation in the Multi-Stakeholder Group of the OECD (since 2012) reflects our vision on inclusion and transparency.

Over the last 15 years, RJC has established a truly global community of leaders on responsible business practices, launched our first base-line Code of Practices (COP) in 2009, increased our standards portfolio with a Chain of Custody model and a three-times revised Code of Practices. Our latest version of the COP launched at the OECD in Paris in April 2019 is aligned with the OECD due diligence guidance, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights and has an increased scope into coloured stones and silver.

Our membership has grown from 14 founding members to almost 1470 members today of which 60% are small enterprises spread over 70 countries and has continued to grow despite the pandemic. We see this as a step change in proving that responsible sourcing and sustainable supply chains are a critical ingredient for resilience and survival.

**The moment is now – this is the decade of action.**



In 2015, 193 countries committed to prioritise progress for those who are furthest behind, with the development of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs are a roadmap for humanity on PEOPLE, PLANET, PEACE, PROSPERITY AND PARTNERSHIPS. It is about leaving no one behind and is a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The SDGs are a crucial framework for any company to use to develop its sustainability strategy. RJC has also used this framework to develop a **Roadmap for the Global Jewellery and Watch Industry**. We are focusing on SDG 5 Gender Equality, SDG 8 Decent Labour, SDG 12 Responsible Production, SDG 13 Climate and SDG 17 Partnerships. RJC has launched a partnership with the United Nations Global Compact in New York focusing on education and training for smaller enterprises. We have recently set up an expert SDG Taskforce to develop reporting metrics based on international reporting standards to help our companies report on progress. It takes CEO leadership commitment and SDG Advocates to drive this 2030 agenda across supply chains.

Gender equality is presented as a necessary milestone to achieving all 17 SDGs, it is considered a multiplier. We should not forget in our industry that women drive 90% of the jewellery demand globally and that women are present across the entire jewellery value chain. RJC believes all stakeholders have a shared responsibility to create more empowerment opportunities for women as gender equality cannot be achieved when women do not have the resources needed to empower themselves. We are actively involved in promoting women empowerment as part of our commitment to the UN's Sustainable Development goals.



## GENDER EQUALITY UNDERPINS MULTIPLE SDGS

Within the SDG Agenda, gender equality is both a standalone goal, and a cross-cutting priority for other goals. For example, gender equality is crucial for advancing education, sanitation and climate action. Within Goal 5 – Gender Equality there are key areas that are important for businesses to focus and contribute, including: equal remuneration for women and men, diversity and equal opportunity, access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, elimination of workplace violence and harassment, women in leadership, and childcare services and benefits.

## RJC ON GENDER EQUALITY

RJC acknowledges that issues on gender equality are complex and deeply rooted, but strongly believe business can play a critical role in changing attitudes, building responsible practices throughout the supply chain, and creating inclusive and safe work environments for everyone. RJC has signed the **UN's Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)** as part of its commitment to promoting gender equality and women empowerment in the workplace, marketplace, and community. The WEPs are underpinned by international labour standards and human rights, as well as the recognition that all organisations have an important role to play.

The RJC code of practices has integrated a gender lens to various provisions – some which directly address gender equality (such as non-discrimination) and others that may not be necessarily so obvious as to why women are in more vulnerable situations, such as working hours, where the right to paid maternity leave and flexible working hours and arrangements is highlighted. In the Appendix, you will find a thorough outline on where in the COP these gender dimensions are present, and how we address women as belonging to a vulnerable group throughout.

Additionally, RJC hosts a series of SDG-related events, of which SDG 5 Gender Equality has featured twice in collaboration with the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC).<sup>1</sup> The Gender Equality special edition RJC newsletter was shared with over 4,500 stakeholders to promote the role all businesses can play in achieving gender equality.<sup>2</sup> **The RJC progress report** launched in July provides clear findings on the progress made by RJC and its 1,466 member organisations across global markets. It also demonstrates drive for continuous improvement through promotion and practical guidance for organisations worldwide on how to integrate responsible business practices directly related to Agenda 2030, the SDGs and specifically SDG 5 on Gender Equality.



1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScGFywXHovo>

2. <https://mailchi.mp/responsiblejewellery/special-edition-happy-international-womens-day>  
<https://mailchi.mp/responsiblejewellery/international-day-of-the-girl-2020>  
<https://mailchi.mp/responsiblejewellery/newsletter-march-2021>

## RJC'S 'GENERATION EQUALITY – SDG 5 IN ACTION' CAMPAIGN

RJC has an opportunity to lead in partnership with all stakeholders and enable a positive shift in the corporate sector towards delivering SDG 5. RJC has further chosen to commit to UN Women's multi-generational campaign "Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future"<sup>3</sup>. In October 2020 RJC launched a working group dedicated to enabling all stakeholders in the global watch and jewellery industry to commit to gender equality. The working group is a platform that aims to contribute to RJC's overall standards compliance. It is an engagement and co-ordination forum established to identify opportunities to accelerating action in the global watch and jewellery industry, by mobilising the private sector and motivating all stakeholders to integrate gender equality at the heart of their business culture.

Since the creation of the working group, RJC has initiated a series of roundtables and workshops - 'Generation Equality – SDG 5 in Action' - with the aim of promoting gender equality and mobilising the industry by initiating dialogue and promoting action. A clear priority is to understand better the challenges and opportunities on the ground, and to listen to the different important voices in the jewellery and watch industry.

RJC wants to create a platform that allows members and stakeholders to share how they are addressing gender equality within their organisation as well as throughout the impacted communities of their operations. The purpose is to get a better view on what companies are doing, and to build strategic partnerships both on education and training. **The aim is to explore collaboration and partnerships for future progress on the RJC action platform to discuss and share best practices, and to support companies with practical tools and resources supporting them in their journey.**

In March and April 2021 RJC hosted four virtual Regional Roundtables in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, as well as conducted a survey of RJC members on Diversity and Inclusion progress and challenges. This report will reflect on the findings from both the roundtable discussions and the survey results and is intended to provide a snapshot of the industry's status on gender equality.

**To watch the recordings of the roundtables, click the links below:**

**[European Roundtable](#)**

**[Asia Roundtable](#)**

**[North America Roundtable](#)**

**[Africa Roundtable](#)**

3. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/get-involved/beijing-plus-25/about>

## OUR VISION:

Realising women’s rights in the global watch and jewellery industry for an equal future

## OUR MISSION:

We re-envision the future and drive positive impact across the value chain from mining to retail



### MOBILISE

- RJC Members & Supporters
- Trade Associations
- Standard & Industry Organisations
- Governments
- The Wider Industry

### CATALYSE

Collective awareness & action, sparking global dialogue among different parts of the supply chain and generations

### DELIVER

- Partnerships for positive impact
- Action on the ground
- Deliver education

Source: UN Women

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPACT

### ASSESS

Develop a baseline of what the key barriers are, and what the opportunities to act are, ensuring a process of continuous improvement.

### AWARENESS:

Nurture partnerships to provide ongoing trainings to continue raising awareness and fostering the creation of truly inclusive cultures.

### COMMITMENT:

Motivate stakeholders in the industry to commit to action on gender equality and women empowerment, and to report on progress.

### ACTION

Build partnerships to support industry stakeholders in embedding gender equality at the core of their business strategy and supply chain management systems.

### COLLABORATION:

Motivate multi-stakeholder collaboration to accelerate positive impact on the ground.

### ADVOCATE:

Amplify the voices of the industry in advocating for progress and change towards gender equality across the value chain.

## ENABLERS

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION SURVEY

WORKSHOPS

TRAINING

REPORTING



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## CHAPTER 3

# Why is advancing Gender Equality relevant for the jewellery sector?

### DISRUPTIONS TO THE JEWELLERY INDUSTRY

The jewellery industry is undergoing major changes thanks to changing consumer behaviour and preferences, the global rise of smaller local and national brands, new technology transforming industrial processes and products, and the global COVID-19 pandemic.

More and more, consumers are opting to purchase from brands that align to their values. The rapidly growing ethical consumer movement, driven in part by younger consumers, is not only pushing for increased traceability and transparency of products but proof that their purchase decisions are benefiting people in the supply chain.<sup>5</sup> However, this is not always easy as the jewellery supply chain is complex and vast. While there are some large-scale actors at certain parts of the supply chain, there are also a host of small-scale actors, from artisanal miners and home-based gemstone cutting shops to boutique jewellers that all need to be considered in supply chain initiatives.

The digitalisation and automation of the industry is adding another layer of complexity to the industry and increasing the urgency to address gender equality. While there is still some desire to protect some of the traditional, artisanal methods in cutting and polishing in the industry, technological changes, such as laser-based techniques for processing, decoration, and fitting and computer-aided design for modelling and prototype development are being implemented across the industry. These technologies are shifting the skill requirements and creating an added challenge to advancing gender equality in the industry.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has upended many industries and their supply chains globally, halting demand, disrupting supply, and forcing business models to pivot in an instance. The jewellery retail has been one of the hardest hit consumer goods categories which has only exacerbated existing structural inequalities and challenges towards achieving gender equality in the industry and its supply chain. At the same time, the pandemic has made it clear that responsible, inclusive, and sustainable business provides a path towards more resilient businesses and supply chains in the future.

5. [https://www.bsr.org/reports/BSR\\_Women\\_in\\_the\\_Jewelry\\_Supply\\_Chain.pdf](https://www.bsr.org/reports/BSR_Women_in_the_Jewelry_Supply_Chain.pdf)

## THE URGENCY AND OPPORTUNITY OF THIS MOMENT

In recent years, we have seen a significant acceleration in social movements calling for greater inclusion and equitable systems with specific issues such as gender equality and overall protection for the most impacted communities rising in importance. Demographic shifts, cultural change, rising income inequality, new business models and work arrangements were already starting to expose the disparities felt by the most vulnerable communities. Over the past year, COVID-19 has amplified the urgency to address these disparities at all levels to deliver on the promise of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and build more resilient societies and inclusive economies. To meet this moment, companies will need to take actions that substantively create pathways towards greater opportunities to advance gender equality.

It must be acknowledged that gender, and other forms of discrimination, is underpinned by deliberate government policy in many countries. The protection of human rights is primarily the responsibility of national governments, which must be held accountable wherever possible.

Companies are key members within communities and throughout society. Whilst a company cannot be a government, it must accept a level of responsibility to respect and advance human rights within its sphere of influence. This is especially the case with respect to employees and the communities within the purview of a company's operations.



## WOMEN IN THE JEWELLERY INDUSTRY

Women drive demand for more than 90 percent of the world's jewellery and make up a large portion of the industry's value chain. However, women's roles in the jewellery supply chain are conditioned by gender inequalities (gender norms, practices, and institutions) that serve as barriers to entering and advancing within the industry. Gender norms and stereotypes create environments where sexual harassment is deemed normal, women are expected to do more housework than men, women are paid less than men or expected to do 'women's work' when formally employed, among others.

GENDER NORMS AND STEREOTYPES ARE DEEPLY ENGRAINED IN OUR SOCIETIES AND ARE OFTEN CULTURALLY DRIVEN, DIFFERING GREATLY BETWEEN REGIONS, RELIGIONS, COUNTRIES, AND CULTURES. NONETHELESS, ACROSS THE GLOBE, HARMFUL AND RESTRICTIVE GENDER NORMS AND STEREOTYPES LEAD TO DISCRIMINATION AND DEFINE WHAT WOMEN AND MEN CAN AND CANNOT DO IN A SOCIETY, AND WORKPLACE.

When women are present in the jewellery value-chain, they are typically found in informal and precarious activities or engaged in lower value and lower skilled activities, where they are not fully recognised or rewarded and are at greater risk of exploitation. For example, women and girls in developing countries, where much of the industries mining takes place, often face limited opportunities for education limiting them from taking part in higher value-added activities and leaving them vulnerable to insecurity. In particular, Artisanal Scale Mining (ASM) needs our urgent attention as it can have many positive impacts including rural employment opportunities, income for women who work as miners or in the surrounding mining communities, as well as mining being an economic activity that supports millions of families. Accessing Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) skills is also of growing importance as the industry moves to more automated and digitalised processes. In addition, for parents, particularly women, lack of social protection and childcare can limit their ability to engage in formal work as it increases the unpaid care burden, as well as enhance the risk of child labour as older children accompany their mothers to work or work independently.





## INSIGHTS OF THE JEWELLERY INDUSTRY

- Globally, in manufacturing, women make up on average 70 percent of the workforce but they are often represented in lower-skilled, lower-paid roles.<sup>1</sup>
- In many countries, mining is a heavily male dominated industry with strong patriarchal values. Women still have limited representation in decision-making positions, and hold only 11.5 percent of executive management positions in the top 100 mining companies.<sup>2</sup> In Africa, women make up 50 percent of the workforce in artisanal and small-scale mining but resource ownership and gender norms still limit their roles in the industry.<sup>3</sup>
- In some Asian countries, gender stereotypes limit women to informal and supporting roles in cutting and polishing. For example, women are more likely found in informal factories or home-based operations dealing with lower-quality stones.<sup>4</sup>

1. BSR, 2018

2. Women in Mining (UK) and PWC

3. Hinton et al. 2003

4. BSR, 2018

Companies, both upstream and downstream in the supply chain of the jewellery sector, acknowledge that the industry can and should do more to support gender equality and advance women's empowerment. Many of the larger companies have made commitments to advancing gender equality in their activities, including increasing the number of women in executive-level positions across major jewellery brands. The focus of public commitments from companies to date has largely been related to women in retail-facing operations with much less attention being devoted to addressing the challenges facing women and minority groups in the supply chain. Progress on women's empowerment in the industry needs to extend across the entire value chain and take into account that women in upstream operations experience business-related human rights abuses in unique ways and are often affected disproportionately.

Furthermore, the jewellery industry is deeply rooted in family relationships and traditions, with many jewellers and cutting and polishing businesses still bearing the name of the original family founders. Traditionally, these family-run businesses and organisations have been male-dominated in line with local customs and gender norms, where issues such as gender disparities have been historically less considered or addressed. However, recently family-owned organisations are beginning to embrace more women in leadership roles and increase their overall diversity.

# Taking an Intersectional Approach

Different dimensions of identity can create layers of discrimination for an individual and can result in unique experience for each person as some people may face double or even triple discrimination based on factors beyond their gender. This can increase their levels of vulnerability in workplaces and across society. This means that not all women have the experienced the same level of progress towards gender equality in recent years. The individual workplace experience of a black woman, lesbian woman, or woman from a minority ethnic group or religion, among others, are all different as each dimension of identity creates a unique set of challenges. This phenomenon requires companies to take an intersectional approach to gender equality and understand how different dimensions of identity intersect with one another.

Across companies, gender equality strategies and initiatives have for too often focused on only gender with other dimensions of identity such as race, sexual orientation or disability, addressed separately, or not at all. These approaches risk potentially leaving out or unintentionally harming certain individuals.



## DIMENSIONS OF IDENTITIES

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Religion
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Health Status
- Disabilities
- Education
- Experience & Skill Sets
- Personality
- Background

In France,  
Black, Arab, and  
Asian women are

# 25%

more likely to experience  
employment discrimination  
than white women.<sup>1</sup>

1. Defenseurdesdroits, 2020

In the U.K.

# 54%

of lesbian, bisexual and trans  
Black and minority ethnic  
women reported sexual  
harassment and assault  
compared to only 31 percent  
of white women.<sup>2</sup>

2. TUC, 2019

In the U.S.

# 33%

of management positions  
were held by white women  
in 2020, women of color  
held a much smaller share,  
ranging from 4.5 percent  
for Hispanic women to 2.2  
percent for Asian women.<sup>3</sup>

3. Catalyst, 2020

# ASM: Gender Equality in Artisanal Mining

Artisanal mining is a crucial source of revenue for women and their families. The sector can drive gender equality and women's economic empowerment in artisanal mining communities.

## **IMPACT's research has found that:**

- Women are a significant part of the artisanal mining sector workforce
- Many women find it a good job and seek improved working conditions and training in the sector
- Women economically and socially benefit from working in ASM
- Income helps to meet household needs
- ASM roles provide women with increased status in the community.

Women are an essential part of artisanal mining, taking on roles from panning and processing, to trading goods and services. They rely on the income from this sector to meet the needs of their households: pay for food, medical care, schooling, clothing, and in some cases, housing.

At the same time however, women are most likely to work in the lowest-paying jobs in the ASM sector. Cultural taboos and stigma often preventing them from advancing to higher-paid positions. They are often paid less than their male counterparts for the same work.

Women are disadvantaged in that they often lack the knowledge, skills, networks, or capital to access and participate in local mining associations and cooperatives. Previous research has shown women lack the access and skills to perform more remunerated and status enhancing tasks in mine sites, which would increase their participation in decision making and leadership roles.

At the most basic level—women's diverse and active participation in the artisanal sector, and the gendered experience of artisanal mining, is often ignored by policymakers. The lack of gender sensitive approaches across the sector leaves women vulnerable, particularly in areas where security and human rights are at risk. Well-intentioned processes to improve how natural resources are managed often lead to unintended negative consequences for women and amplify the existing inequalities that current laws fail to acknowledge.

Companies can take action to support gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the artisanal mining sector.

**Any gender equality initiatives related to artisanal mining around the world can be evaluated by using IMPACT's Toolkit: Gender Impact Assessments for Projects and Policies Related to Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining. Available in Spanish, French and English, this is the first Gender Impact Assessment specifically tailored to the ASM sector.**

The toolkit guides project developers and policymakers to ask women artisanal miners' permission to walk in their shoes in order to better understand the day-to-day barriers they face, which can then be more meaningfully considered in any projects and policies. Any companies embarking on responsible sourcing projects should ensure they fully integrate gender equality by undertaking a Gender Impact Assessment.

IMPACT strongly recommends all companies follow the five steps of the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas. The Guidance calls on private sector actors to know the origin of the resource they are buying, as well as the conditions under which that resource has been produced and traded. This provides basic data as to whether artisanal miners are participating in the supply chain and how.

IMPACT encourages companies sourcing responsibly from artisanal mining communities to take their analysis further, by collecting and analyzing data gender-disaggregated data against the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They should also require this type of information from their suppliers. This type of analysis can provide valuable evidence-based insight into how specific responsible sourcing actions affect gender equality and women's empowerment at the mine site and wider community over time. When coupled with an economic analysis of the supply chain, we start to understand the barriers and disincentives to responsible production and trade. Knowing the facts is the first step to supporting systemic change for a more inclusive sector that contributes to the SDGs.

Most importantly, companies can choose to engage and source from artisanal miners in a transparent and responsible manner, supporting livelihoods of women and men in those communities.



Joanne Lebert,  
Executive Director,  
IMPACT



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## CHAPTER 4

# The time is now: Taking stock and scaling action on SDG 5

Business is key to advancing the SDGs agenda by creating quality jobs and supporting social structures that improve livelihoods and create economic security for all. To unlock the full potential of individuals and communities, businesses need to adopt a value-chain approach to gender equality, diversity, and inclusion to ensure that all individuals including under-represented or marginalised groups are actively participating in and benefiting from their activities across their workplace, marketplace and community.

The jewellery industry and the gemstone supply chain is an important source of jobs and economic advancement for people in mining and manufacturing across the globe. Each stage of the supply chain provides a ladder of opportunities for the economic inclusion of previously disadvantaged or excluded groups including women, black and people of colour, indigenous people, minority groups and ethnicities across different regions. However, there are numerous challenges and barriers to overcome for these communities including local culture and traditions, gender norms, access to capital and skills development, and the unpaid care burden to access this economic opportunity. For example, in many organisations in the industry, women already make up 50 percent of the workforce. However, it would be amiss to consider this representation as women's economic empowerment. Women still need to increase representation across all levels and types of roles and need to be ensured of being in inclusive and safe work environments.

The role of women in the jewellery industry is changing, across corporates, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and family-owned organisations. For example, there are increasingly more women in roles such as cutting, merchandising and production, previously male held jobs and functions, and more women graduates emerging to enter the industry in new roles. Nonetheless, there is still progress to be made.

Taking strategic action on gender equality (SDG 5), means understanding your organisation's current performance and gaps, identifying opportunities to both minimize risks and maximize opportunities, and developing strategies that embed gender equality across your workplace. This includes making high-level commitments, establishing formal policies in support of gender equality, and taking steps to address talent attraction, retention, and development as a business, but also collectively as an industry. Additionally, although some organisations may be performing well internally, there are numerous challenges in the value chain that still exist within the overall industry. Procurement practices, supplier engagement, and community engagements can all help to enable women across the value chain.

There are multiple approaches across RJC member companies with programmes and initiatives aimed at advancing women in the workforce, as well as women in impacted communities. Approaches include setting gender-balanced leadership and workforce goals, assessing potential gender pay gaps, promoting safe working environments free of gender-based violence and sexual harassment, raising awareness; as well as promoting the employment of women workers in the local impacted and/or sourcing communities, supporting women-oriented programmes, providing necessary trainings and support. These approaches have been highlighted as case studies throughout the following sections.

Advancing gender equality, as well as the wider diversity and inclusion agenda, is crucial to creating a responsible value chain for the jewellery sector. As such, RJC aims to raise awareness amongst its members of the importance of addressing these issues and to understand the industry's progress, challenges, gaps, and future needs to advance gender equality in the industry, as well as start the conversation on broader diversity and inclusion efforts. To this end, during March and April 2021 the RJC hosted four virtual Regional Roundtables in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, as well as conducted a survey of RJC members on Gender, Diversity and Inclusion progress and challenges. The survey was intended for RJC members, and the roundtable discussions were open to the industry at large. Across the four roundtable discussions 100 people attended, and 112 organisations completed the survey from across the jewellery value chain. The following section reflects on the findings from both the roundtable discussions and the survey results and is intended to provide a snapshot of the industry's status on gender equality, and where possible, broader diversity and inclusion efforts.



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US OR LEARN MORE ABOUT RJC CERTIFICATION AND OUR CODE OF PRACTICES – CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT MORE:

[www.responsiblejewellery.com/membership/how-to-join](https://www.responsiblejewellery.com/membership/how-to-join)



## COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES

High level leadership commitments and business policies set the pace for integrating gender equality across business value chains and teams. Through policies such as equal employment, anti-discrimination, flexible work, paid parental leave, or additional support for parents, businesses can cement an inclusive workplace, address potential discrimination, and eliminate unconscious bias.

Commitments and policies cement the importance of inclusivity to employees and create a structure by which employees can understand parameters around issues such as discrimination and harassment. Commitments can include internal or external vision or commitment statements towards gender equality or signing on to external commitments and initiatives such as the UN Women's Empowerment Principles or CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion.

One of the biggest barriers towards commitments and policies across the industry is the size of organisations, with many small to medium enterprises making internal commitments or informal policies. As many as 35 percent of RJC member companies surveyed do not have external commitments or vision statements as they are small to medium enterprises. However, 42 percent and 44 percent have anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies, respectively. In addition, 21 percent of RJC member companies said that as an SME, policies were limited but inclusivity is promoted in other ways such as company charters that are used daily or by embedding these considerations into company values.

Other policies, such as parental leave and flexible work also allow for an overall culture of inclusion by enabling all individuals to balance personal and professional aspirations. In addition, caregiving policies can help to encourage sharing care responsibilities regardless of gender. For example, gender-neutral parental leave increases the retention of women as well as help balance of the care burden in a household. These policies also encourage active engagement of fathers in parenting which contributes to their personal and family wellbeing. Furthermore, in a study of over 250 US companies, comprehensive maternity and paternity leave policies improved employee retention rates, attracted more talent, and increased employee productivity.<sup>6</sup> However, globally across RJC member companies surveyed, only 29 percent offered paid primary caregiver leave (maternity leave), and only 22 percent offered paid non-primary caregiver leave (paternity). In fact, the maternal bias has led some employers in the industry to not hire too many women for fear of having them take maternity leave. Furthermore, flexible work also enables more diverse talent to engage in the workplace be it parents, older people, or people with disabilities.

6. <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2017/human-resources-people-organization-why-paid-family-leave-is-good-business.aspx>

In addition, violence against women (VAW) was recognized as one of the major barriers to women's participation in the jewellery industry, and their overall economic empowerment. For example, in one particular lab in Madagascar, the majority of women cutting stones had experienced violence against women or were child brides. While employment helped to empower them, the lack of legal and physical protection against violence and harassment continues to impact women's productivity in the workplace. Committing to zero tolerance of violence against women and sexual harassment are crucial to creating a safe and enabling environments for all. Of RJC member companies, a total of 44 percent of RJC member companies have anti-harassment policies. Furthermore, companies should consider providing support to victims of domestic violence.

Finally, grievance mechanisms, which include non-retaliation policies, are an important process to provide employees with trust and confidence to report harassment and discrimination in a safe way without fear of retaliation. 31 percent of RJC member companies have established grievance mechanisms for discrimination or harassment. Importantly, grievance mechanisms should be accompanied with remediation mechanisms, which only 14 percent of surveyed companies had in place.





## TIPS FROM THE INDUSTRY

### COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES:

- ✓ Connect diversity and equity agenda to the Sustainable Development Goals.
- ✓ Set organisation-wide goals on gender parity.
- ✓ Join the Women's Empowerment Principles and/or access WEPEs toolkits for enabling gender equity.
- ✓ Small and Medium Enterprises can establish basic policies and commitment statements.
- ✓ Embed diversity and equity in the company overall values or create a charter with an area that discusses inclusion.
- ✓ Establish a grievance mechanism specific to harassment and discrimination.
- ✓ Consider partnerships with organisations that address gender-based violence in your operations or supplier communities, or ways to support community outreach on gender-based violence through community engagement, hiring, or procurement.

### RJC CERTIFICATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

The certification process to the Code of Practices (COP) is a practical way for RJC members to start their sustainability journey and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). RJC advocate that their members implement the COP with additional guidance on gender and implementing the women empowerment principles, highlight the importance of measuring impacts and data, and emphasize the need to enhance partnerships through multi-stakeholder collaboration.

You can find more about the Code of Practices in our website

[www.responsiblejewellery.com/standards/code-of-practices-2019/](http://www.responsiblejewellery.com/standards/code-of-practices-2019/)

Details on the gender dimensions present in the COP provisions are also provided in the Appendix.



## SDG 5 in Action

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### **Jewellery Retailer, member since October 2007**

In addition to supporting women's empowerment in diamond producing countries, Day's Jewelers have policies and business practices to support women's empowerment internally including:

- A gender equality programme led by senior management. Currently 59% of its management staff are women.
  - Gender pay gap review panel includes the company president and senior executives.
  - Evaluate gender ratios in leadership positions to ensure equal opportunities are provided to women.
- 

## DE BEERS

### **Mining company, RJC founding member (2005)**

De Beers has a vision to create a workforce with equal gender representation, actions include:

- Committing to a diverse gender-balanced workforce, including a commitment to parity (between 40 - 60%).
- Running employee networks, reciprocal mentoring programmes and establishing recruitment guidelines.
- Challenging stereotypes and create cultural change, for example by engaging men across the Group and rolling out inclusive leadership training.

## NORTH AMERICA ROUNDTABLE

“The RJC North America Roundtable underscored the increased importance and rise of diversity, equity, and inclusion training among participant companies, and revealed important regional considerations such as age as a diversity challenge. Even within a single region we uncovered multiple regional diversity and cultural distinctions.

It was a wonderful forum for starting a discussion and investigating the opportunities and misconceptions of the issue of Gender Equality and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Several important issues requiring serious attention were brought to the fore including the importance of defining terms, such as “gender” and “inclusion”, to arrive at a shared vocabulary and purpose. It is also critical we continue to have representation from colleagues throughout participating organizations so that the full breadth of responsibilities and varied configurations of work life are considered.

This is a defining moment for luxury— and it’s good to know RJC is on the front lines of the conversation across all aspects affecting our businesses. Thanks to RJC, our industry is able to discover and share opportunities regarding this important subject so that we can collectively progress toward gender equality and greater diversity, up and down the supply chain.”

### North America Roundtable Moderators



Jennifer Markas,  
Executive Director,  
Women’s Jewelry  
Association



Doug Melville,  
VP, Head of D&I,  
Richemont Americas



Phyllis Bergman,  
CEO, Phyllis  
Bergman Consults



Lisa Koenigsberg,  
Founder and President,  
Initiatives in Art  
and Culture

## AFRICA ROUNDTABLE

“The roundtable begun an important dialogue probing questions on diversity and inclusion as experienced in the jewellery sector in Africa and provided an opportunity to share perspectives on the realities on the ground. The session was thought provoking and a unique opportunity to engage with minerals sector players from across the continent. It was encouraging to hear from several young jewellers speaking on their experiences, which talks into the future of the sector as youth is our future industry leaders. It was eye-opening to listen to the reflections shared including the need for more funding, access to machinery, education, particularly in STEM, and collaboration to grow small and medium businesses. During these changing and challenging times, these types of dialogues provide an important platform to understand the challenges as well as opportunities to support new markets within Africa”

### Africa Roundtable Moderators



Wumba Kapo,  
Managing  
Director,  
Akapo Jewels



Patricia Inonge  
Mweene, Founder  
and Creative  
Director, Inonge  
Zita Jewellery



Sibongile Shongwe,  
CEO, The Platinum  
Incubator



Agathe Bukasa,  
International Relations  
Manager, De Beers  
Group

## TALENT ATTRACTION, RETENTION AND TRAINING

Efforts to advance gender equality and create a more diverse workforce also include looking at the barriers that diverse talent experience in accessing, participating and advancing in the workplace. For example, women face gendered challenges throughout their lives, from differences in education at the school to reaching leadership roles in the workplace. Women frequently face barriers when entering the workplace and are often in lower management levels given structural factors within corporations as well as from social and cultural constraints. There is also often an occupational segregation where women tend to be concentrated in certain roles, even when in management, such as business support functions. In such roles, women have limited decision-making power or strategic input, and therefore limited opportunities to rise in the company. In the jewellery sector, we see a higher concentration of women in entry-level retail roles or having limited roles in mining or logistics. This is also the case for other minority or under-represented groups.

### THE IMPACT OF GENDER NORMS AND STEREOTYPES IN ACCESSING TALENT

Across Africa and Asia, industry stakeholders reported that gender norms were one of the main barriers to women working in the industry. For example, in Mumbai, working women are the norm, while in Jaipur women are still expected to stay home. In Africa, it is more difficult to get married women to work in the jewellery industry long-term due to their husband's expectations for them to stay home. In mining in Africa, cultural norms regarding landownership and 'appropriate roles' for women, limit women's roles ability to advance in the industry. Land is often owned by and passed down to men, and it is difficult for women to access financial resources to invest in land, or other capital assets. There is a need to build awareness of the benefits of women working in the industry and breakdown gender norms and stereotypes. However, addressing gender norms and stereotypes, must take into account cultural sensitivities and any strategy or messaging needs to be culturally sensitive.

Companies can implement recruitment, hiring and retention practices that advance the participation of under-represented groups by taking actions such as reviewing job descriptions to remove potential bias, undertaking unconscious bias training for hiring teams, establishing targets for recruitment and promotion of under-represented groups, and creating targeted development and learning opportunities for under-represented groups. Based on the survey, many organisations in the industry do not have specific practices in their talent attraction and retention approaches to drive gender equality and ensure increased diversity in the workforce, and instead focus on 'hiring the best person for the job'.

## ASIA ROUNDTABLE

“Cultural context is a key factor in any conversation about diversity and inclusion. Within the Asia context, considerations about gender equality are not always at the forefront of decision-making, with men and women occupying more traditional gender-based roles within society. Participants acknowledged the importance of formal policies to support diversity aspirations, that workplaces need to be conducive to the needs of both women and men, and the need for targeted education and training programmes that can empower women to occupy roles within the industry that may not have been considered previously.

In the jewellery industry, women participation has been growing steadily. There are designers, marketing, human resources, and finance professionals taking up more responsibilities. We need to accelerate this momentum, as we all benefit from greater diversity within the diamond and jewellery sector.”

Asia Roundtable Moderators



Ferial Zerouki,  
Senior Vice-  
President of  
Corporate Affairs,  
De Beers



Nirupa Bhatt,  
Gem and Jewellery  
value chain expert  
& Empowerment  
Coach



However, some companies have begun to address some of the barriers to hiring diverse talent, with 24 percent of RJC member companies reviewing their job positions and requirements to remove potential biases. In addition, 9 percent of RJC member companies had programmes to recruit women, and 6 percent had programmes to recruit other under-represented groups based on race, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation.

Across the roundtable discussion, there was a shared sentiment that accessing diverse talent, particularly women, is more challenging in particular regions and roles. For example, participants expressed the difficulty to hire women in more technical and STEM-based roles. In addition, it was noted that hiring women into production and gemstone processing roles in Nigeria was a challenge and that, in North America, the industry is also struggling to attract younger talent, among others. Furthermore, some roles in the industry are inherently exclusive given the nature of the role as they require extensive travel or time offshore, have longer working hours and limited flexibility, or require skills for which women may be currently less prepared. Logistics firms noted that attracting women outside of administration roles is very difficult given that the roles require night shifts, overtime or delivery of particular goods, and women have to juggle with additional care responsibilities in their personal lives. Furthermore, limited access to basic hygiene and decent washrooms also limits women taking on roles that require them to travel to and or work in such facilities.

Overall, there is need for the industry and education and training institutions to work together to empower and train women in the industry and ensure a diverse pipeline of talent for current and future roles. One-on-one or group mentorship, sponsorship, and coaching programmes can also help under-represented employees build strong relationships, establish career goals, and navigate their careers.



The policy environment and public-private partnerships play an important role in addressing industry-wide talent gaps. For example, in South Africa, progressive diversity and inclusion policies have created an impetus for the jewellery industry to train and hire diverse talent and report on diversity including race, gender and disability. Government programmes also support recent graduates in attaining industry experience through practical skills development programs. In other regions, it is worth exploring the role of government partnerships and policy advocacy to enable diversity and inclusion.

Without adequate efforts to train and/or recruit diverse profiles to the industry in new roles, or remove additional barriers to fulfilling these roles, it is likely that hiring 'the best person for the job' will not increase diversity in an organisation. It is important to address these barriers through recruitment, hiring and promotion practices, training and career developments, and benefits and pay to improve the gender balance in an organisation, similarly for any other aspect of diversity beyond gender. Beyond talent development, organisations also need to ensure that their workplace and roles are attractive for women and diverse talent which is a key focus in attracting and retaining diverse talent.



## TIPS FROM THE INDUSTRY

### **TALENT ATTRACTION, RETENTIONS, AND TRAINING:**

- ✓ Establish inclusive hiring policies, across all regions.
- ✓ Create learnership, apprenticeships and intern positions to encourage women in STEM and other non-conventional roles in the industry.
- ✓ Establish flexible work arrangements to encourage more women to join specific roles and/or teams.



## SDG 5 in Action

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### DIMEXON. FUTURE PERFECT

#### **Diamond Trader Cutter Polisher, member since February 2006**

DIMEXON creates employment opportunities for women, resulting in talent retention and very low staff turnover rates. Founder Pankaj Mehta recognised the limited employment options for women, and so DIMEXON:

- Developed a programme to integrate women in the workforce to become diamond cutters and polishers – including upskilling and retention.
  - Focuses on creating safe working environments, and addressing and eliminating violence and harassment.
- 

### LVMH BVLGARI

#### **Jewellery manufacturer, member since August 2006**

LVMH and Bulgari have developed several programmes to promote more diverse and gender-balanced workforces and leadership teams. Examples include:

- Setting women in leadership goals;
- Professional development of women at all levels through training and coaching;
- Training recruitment teams on diversity and inclusion.



# SDG 5 in Action



**Diamonds, coloured gemstones and precious metals miner, member since September 2016**

ALROSA is committed to providing equal opportunities to all its employees. The share of women among its employees exceeds 30% for both management and overall personnel which is the industry’s largest share among mining companies. The legislation in Russia officially bars women from some arduous and potentially dangerous occupations, such as underground miners, etc. At the same time the Company promotes gender parity and equality of opportunities in all areas possible, where women self-actualize in almost any profession, such as drivers, scientists, welders and many others.

One of them, and not that obvious to choose, is geology. ALROSA boast unique gender heritage here, as Zarnitsa pipe, the first ever primary diamond deposit in the Soviet Union was discovered in 1954 by the two women geologists – Natalya Sarsadskikh and Larisa Popugayeva. From that point, Russian diamonds made their way into world markets. The tradition of women joining ALROSA’s geological service has always been preserved since then, with young talents continuing to come in pursuit of their own diamond dream.



“ALROSA is very committed to the 17 SDGs. Achieving SDG 5 is everyone’s responsibility. When women are empowered, communities and companies thrive. We are here to support the global jewellery and watch industry to achieve this goal in the decade of action.”

Peter Karakchiev  
Head of International Relations, ALROSA



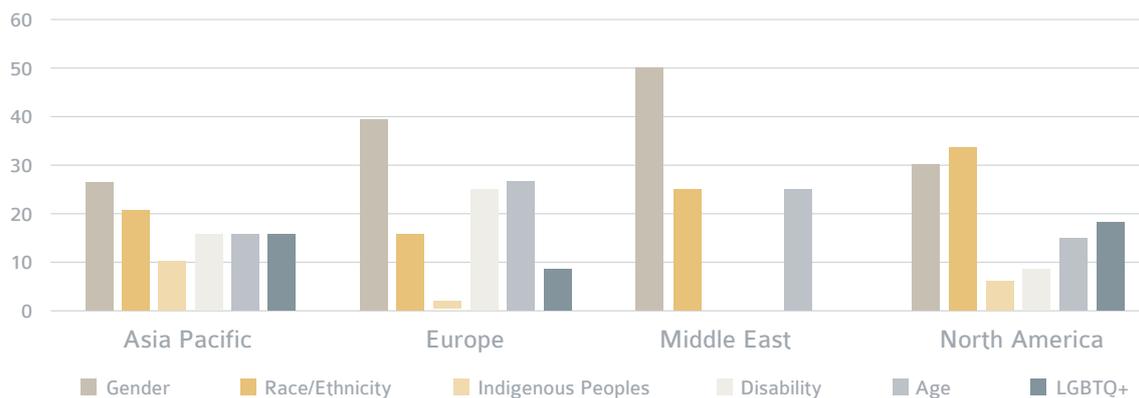
## CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION

Inclusion extends beyond the composition and representation of people in a group but ensures that there is a culture of belonging where all people, regardless of identity, are respected, recognised and invited to contribute. An inclusive culture can increase employee engagement and productivity and reduce turnover rates of all employees.

Many companies often begin their diversity and inclusion journey by focusing on gender equality and women in the workplace. While starting with gender is a good focus, companies need to expand the focus to broader potential discrimination grounds to ensure that all women, and ultimately all people are empowered. A common challenge for many companies is not knowing where or how to start when addressing challenges faced by identities beyond gender equality as these are highly culturally sensitive and the regional context is critical to understanding the issues and opportunities.

Based on the survey results, RJC companies focus on different aspects of diversity and inclusion initiatives across regions. Much of this is expected given the historical contexts, legal requirements, and cultural and social norms that exist across different regions. For example, companies in North America are primarily focused on racial and ethnic diversity given demographic shifts and the recent racial justice reckoning. Outside of North America, gender is the primary focus area for all other regions. Secondary focus areas differ greatly with companies prioritising regional issues.<sup>7</sup>

DISTRIBUTION OF DIVERSITY FOCUS AREAS EFFORTS ACROSS REGIONS



7. Africa is not included as a region as data was collected based on company headquarters, and no data was available for Africa.

For companies, raising awareness of the experiences of all people across different cultures, ethnicities, races, sexual orientation, and ability is a crucial first step. Ensuring people in organisations have a basic understanding of the importance of respect and inclusion can start the conversation and enable progress. Raising awareness across employees of the experiences people face based on their identities and helping them to uncover their own unconscious biases can lay the groundwork for a culture of inclusion. However, of the RJC member companies surveyed, only 8 percent had mandatory diversity trainings related to any area of diversity (gender, race, ethnicity, LGBTQI etc.) with a further 2 percent having non-mandatory training sessions. Additionally, 12 percent had mandatory unconscious bias trainings, and a further 6 percent had non-mandatory trainings.

Furthermore, creating employee resource groups is another tactic companies are implementing to foster inclusive and safe work environments. Only 3 percent of RJC member companies surveyed had employee resource groups. While these focused conversations and groups are important, it is critical that these include allies and do not just take place within the minority groups alone. For example, for gender equality it is important to include people of all genders in the conversation.



## TIPS FROM THE INDUSTRY

### CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION:

- ✓ Raise awareness and educating employees on diversity and inclusion issues and how to start addressing them.
- ✓ Frame the conversation in terms of broader inclusivity and a need to treat everyone with respect.
- ✓ Emphasize the business case for diversity to encourage support.
- ✓ Embrace allyship, for example organisations such as [HeForShe](#) enable organisations to promote male allies for gender equality.
- ✓ Establish employee resource groups to encourage dialogue, learning and safe spaces to discuss sensitive topics.
- ✓ Provide training on unconscious bias for multiple dimensions of diversity.

## VALUE-CHAIN INITIATIVES

Beyond the workplace, there are opportunities to advance gender equality as well as the broader diversity and inclusion agenda all along the value chain from suppliers, entrepreneurs, contractors, distributors, and consumers. Businesses can enable more diversity in their value-chains by taking a range of actions including actively sourcing from entities that are led and/or owned by women or other under-represented groups, focusing on worker well-being throughout their supply chains, and using their marketing practices to challenge stereotypes.

For example, women entrepreneurs often have to compete with male dominated networks to gain access to markets while lacking the combination of educational, vocational, technical skills and prior experience to develop a highly productive business. Women entrepreneurs also face barriers in terms of limited knowledge on business planning, financial management, working capital management, input/raw material purchase and market linkages. Private sector companies' procurement policies and processes are often gender-neutral and make no allowances to women-run businesses lack of access to networks, information and knowledge of corporate norms and procedures. This therefore requires specific programmes or strategies to advance the inclusion of women-owned business, or other minority-owned business, as business partners and suppliers. In the African roundtable discussion, smaller and newer businesses noted overall market access as a challenge to diversity in the industry. In particular, women-owned gemstone or production businesses struggle to compete with those established businesses historically owned by men. In response, there were calls for a platform to enable market access for smaller more diverse companies. Across the RJC member companies surveyed, only 2 percent had commitments to procure from women-owned or minority-owned businesses.



Worker well-being programmes enable capacity-building or awareness-raising for workers in global supply chains. These can range in topic from health and wellbeing, digital and financial literacy, and management and leadership development, among other topics. In this matter, 6 percent of RJC member companies had worker empowerment programmes that included women's empowerment.

Value-chain initiatives also include the marketplace, ensuring that the values promoted in marketing campaigns are free from discrimination and harmful gender stereotypes. For example, the Unstereotype Alliance is an action platform dedicated to the elimination of harmful gender-based stereotypes in all media and advertising and provide useful resources and tools for companies to do so. However, only 7 percent of RJC member companies surveyed have diversity embedded in their marketing strategies.



## TIPS FROM THE INDUSTRY

### VALUE CHAIN INITIATIVES:

- ✓ Consider supplier partnerships and conducting worker empowerment programmes or supporting organisations with on-going worker empowerment programmes.
- ✓ Seek out local community partnerships that respond to specific regional challenges. For example, to address gender equality in ASM and to engage women miners, companies have worked with PACT Tanzania.
- ✓ Conduct webinars for female entrepreneurs and small businesswomen to better engage them in your organisation and supply chain.



# SDG 5 in Action

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## MAKAL

### Jewellery Retailer, member since March 2019

MAKAL founder and CEO, Daniela Colaiacovo focused on empowering women in the mining sector to make mining a positive force for community development.

- Supporting women to become legal miners, acting as the link with the authorities, helping them obtain operating licenses and authorisations.
- Providing training and tools to increase women miners' efficiency and yield.
- Helping the women to organize themselves and form independent cooperatives of women, run by women.
- Training women to be responsible entrepreneurs, and raising awareness to risks of operating illegally.



FTJCo.

### Jewellery retailer, member since February 2010

Fair Trade Jewellery has also taken action both internally as well as externally. Its value-chain initiatives include:

- Sourcing responsible ASM gold through IMPACT's Just Gold programme in the DRC. IMPACT's programme conducts training for women in mining communities. Results include increased literacy, empowering women to access mine sites to mine them, whereas previously they held peripheral jobs. Women are now more knowledgeable about how to trade the gold they mine, and they have greater decision-making power in their households. This all leads to greater female economic empowerment and leadership.



# SDG 5 in Action

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## DE BEERS

### Mining company, RJC founding member (2005)

De Beers has a vision to create equal access to opportunity for all, including women and girls in their host communities and producer companies. As part of its value-chain initiatives, De Beers, an RJC founding member:

- Announced their partnership with UN Women in 2017, together launching their AWOME (Accelerating Women Owned Micro-Enterprises) programme in southern Africa, alongside local government. This programme provides mentoring, networks, business and life skills training, with the aim of supporting women entrepreneurs to build their businesses, create jobs and generate a more secure income. In March 2021, De Beers announced a further \$3 million to expand the programme as part of their Building Forever goal to support 10,000 female entrepreneurs by 2030.
- Continues to invest in opportunities for women and girls in producer countries, to access excellent education and training, with a particular focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects and leadership skills. To date over 1,000 girls from Namibia, South Africa and Botswana have taken part in STEM workshops and programmes run as part of De Beers' partnership with the award-winning NGO- WomEng.

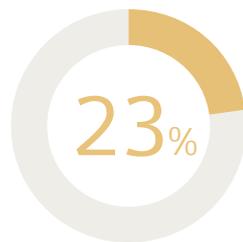
## OVERARCHING NEEDS TO ADVANCE THE AGENDA FORWARD IN THE INDUSTRY

Industry stakeholders are looking to established industry organisations such as RJC and the World Jewellery Confederation to help lead the way in demonstrating commitment and actions and to enable alignment and progress in creating a more equal and inclusive industry. The dialogue initiated by RJC through the Generation Equality Regional Roundtables has enabled instances of peer learning and the sharing of mutual challenges and workable solutions. This dialogue is considered an important first step that should be continued and broadened to a wider set of stakeholders to further enact change. Furthermore, there is a need for establishing industry-level guidelines, policies and resources on gender equality, with some stakeholders suggesting a standard of gender equality targets attached to RJC membership. Ensuring guidelines, policies and resources are readily available is also needed to enhance access to knowledge and particularly for smaller businesses who often lack the resources internally.

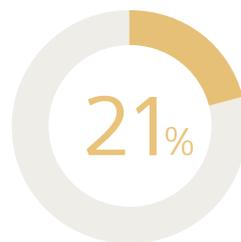
### OF RJC-MEMBER COMPANIES SURVEYED:



sought practical guidance and recommendations on gender, diversity, and inclusion from RJC.



sought resource sharing.



sought awareness-raising workshops and training.



sought regional roundtables for cross-learning and sharing.

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## CHAPTER 5

# Recommendations

Organisations can consider the following ideas and resources to kick start their action across the four key themes from the Generation Equality – SDG 5 in Action dialogue. Further details, including tips gathered from industry members on how to progress each area and case studies can be found in the individual sections.

### **POLICY AND COMMITMENTS**

High level leadership commitments and business policies set the pace for integrating gender equality across business value chains and teams. Commitments and policies cement the importance of inclusivity to employees and create a structure by which employees can understand parameters around issues such as discrimination and harassment.

#### **The challenge**

Much of the industry is made up of smaller organisations that are less likely to form commitments and policies. However, committing to gender, diversity and inclusion is beneficial for organisations of all sizes. The lack of commitments and policies can enable discrimination and bias. For example, in some cases the maternal bias has led some employers in the industry to not hire too many women for fear of having them take maternity leave.

#### **How to get started**

- Show high-level support for gender equality, diversity and inclusion by committing to international standards and principles on gender equality and non-discrimination.
- Embed diversity and equity in the company overall values or create a charter with an area that discusses inclusion.
- Set organisation-wide goals on gender parity.
- Establish a non-discrimination policy and grievance mechanism.
- Establish gender-sensitive policies and programs e.g. flexible work, child-care programs, and equal pay and benefits.

## Resources

- [Online Form to join the Women’s Empowerment Principles \(WEPs\)](#)
- [WEPs Gender Gap Analysis Tool](#)
- [UN Women Gender Equality Glossary](#)
- [HeForShe Movement](#)
- [UN Global Compact Target Gender Equality](#)
- [Understanding Gender, Reimagine Gender](#)
- [Understanding Unconscious Bias](#)
- [European Institute for Gender Equality Thesaurus](#)
- [The effects of gender roles, implicit bias, and stereotype threat on the lives of women and girls, Perception Institute](#)
- [Interrupting Sexism at Work, Catalyst](#)
- [Could gendered language be responsible for excluding women from power? World Economic Forum](#)
- [How diverse leadership teams boost innovation, Boston Consulting Group](#)
- [Glassdoor report: How to analyze your gender pay gap: an employer’s guide](#)
- [UN Women: Unpaid care work interactive tool](#)
- [ILO Convention 183: Maternity Protection](#)
- [ILO Convention 156: Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention](#)
- [Oxfam and Unilever: Business Briefing on Unpaid Care and Domestic Work](#)
- [UN Women’s Diagnosis for Equal Remuneration](#)
- [UN Women guidance note Closing Gender Pay Gaps to Achieve Gender Equality at Work](#)
- [WEPs Action Card – Closing Gender Pay Gaps](#)
- [Addressing Gender-Based Violence and Harassment: Emerging Good Practice for the Private Sector](#)
- [What Works? Preventing & Responding to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, CARE International](#)
- [Handbook – Addressing violence and harassment against women in the world of work, UN Women](#)

## TALENT ATTRACTION, RETENTION AND TRAINING

Efforts to advance gender equality and create a more diverse workforce include looking at the barriers that diverse talent may experience in accessing, participating and advancing in the workplace. In the jewellery industry, these barriers exist for certain roles and within certain regions. For example, there is a higher concentration of women in entry-level and/or retail roles compared to leadership roles in the organisation, and women often have limited roles in mining or logistics organisations.

### The challenge

Many organisations in the industry do not have specific practices in their talent attraction and retention approaches to drive gender equality and ensure increased diversity in the workforce. Furthermore, occupational stereotypes can create gender-segregation into certain roles and often limit women's options in the workplace.

### How to get started

- Establish gender-sensitive recruitment and retention policies and practices.
- Ensure equal access to education and training programmes.
- Provide networking and mentoring opportunities for diverse talent.
- Promote gender diversity in nontraditional jobs across the organisation such as cutting and polishing, logistics, finance and STEM-based roles.

### Resources

- [UN Women guidance note Attracting and Retaining Talent through Inclusive Family-Friendly Policies](#)
- [UN Women's guidance note Mentoring in the Workplace](#)
- [How Business Can Build a 'Future of Work' That Works for Women \(BSR, 2019\)](#)
- [Creating Successful Mentoring Programs: A Catalyst Guide \(Catalyst, 2003\)](#)
- [Lean In: Building Effective Networks \(video and discussion guide\)](#)

## CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION

Inclusion extends beyond the composition and representation of people in a group but ensures that there is a culture of belonging where all people, regardless of identity, are respected, recognized and invited to contribute. Raising awareness of the experiences of all people across different cultures, ethnicities, races, sexual orientation, and ability is a crucial first step. Different dimensions of identity can create layers of discrimination for an individual and can result in unique experience for each person as some people may face double or even triple discrimination based on factors beyond their gender.

### The challenge

Many companies often begin their diversity and inclusion journey by focusing on gender equality and women in the workplace. Companies need to expand the focus to broader potential discrimination grounds to ensure that all women, and ultimately all people are empowered. However, a common challenge for many companies is not knowing where or how to start when addressing challenges faced by identities beyond gender equality as these are highly culturally sensitive and the regional context is critical to understanding the issues and opportunities.

### How to get started

- Understand the local context and challenges by looking at both intersectional data for employees, and hearing their experiences through meaningful employee engagement.
- Enhance employee understanding of diversity through awareness-raising, and diversity and unconscious bias trainings that frame the conversation in terms of broader inclusivity and a need to treat everyone with respect.
- Establish employee resource groups to encourage dialogue, learning and safe spaces to discuss sensitive topics.
- Set targets that look at the intersectionality of individuals, such as gender and race, disability, sexual orientation, among others

### Resources

- [United Nations Gender-Inclusive Language Guidelines](#)
- [Call to Action: Leveraging the WEPs Framework to Target Racism and Discrimination in the World of Work](#)
- [What company leaders can learn from J.K. Rowling's missteps on gender, Fortune](#)
- [Why Company Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Programs Need Intersectional Approaches, BSR](#)

## VALUE-CHAIN INITIATIVES

### Value-chain initiatives

There are opportunities to advance gender equality as well as the broader diversity and inclusion agenda all along the value chain from suppliers, entrepreneurs, contractors, distributors, and consumers. This requires specific programmes or strategies to advance the inclusion of women-owned business, or other minority-owned business, as business partners and suppliers, as well as embedding gender equality in marketing strategies. Furthermore, worker well-being programmes that enable capacity-building or awareness-raising for women workers are another means to empower women in supply chains.

### The challenge

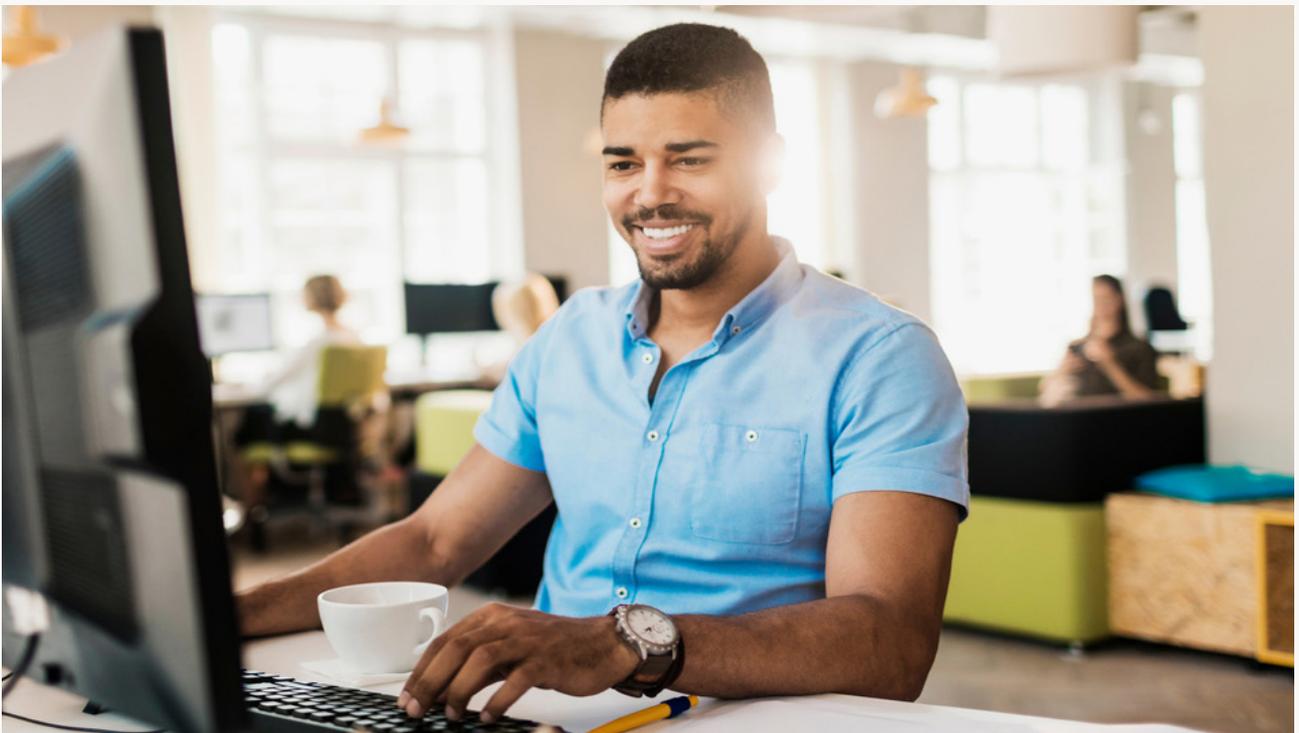
Value-chain initiatives in the jewellery industry are still largely limited and market access for smaller and/or women-owned businesses is a barrier to value-chain diversity. Women business owners often lack the combination of educational, vocational, technical skills and prior experience to develop a highly productive business and have limited access to markets, since women have to compete with male dominated networks in getting a foothold and accessing supply chains.

### How to get started

- Establish gender-sensitive procurement policies to promote procurement from women-owned/led enterprises.
- Explore ways to address the barriers women-owned/led enterprises face e.g. access to credit or visibility in the supply chain.
- Ensure gender-responsive media and advertising.
- Consider supplier partnerships and conducting worker empowerment programmes or supporting organisations with on-going worker empowerment programmes.
- Work with community stakeholders, officials and others to eliminate discrimination and exploitation and open opportunities for women and girls in supply-chain communities, particularly for ASM communities.

## Resources

- [We Connect International: a global network to connect women-owned businesses to global buyers.](#)
- [Women Win Gender Responsive Procurement Course and Playbook](#)
- [Gender Impact Assessments for Projects and Policies Related to Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining](#)
- [Human Rights Watch report on buying practices](#)
- [IFC toolkit to source from women-owned businesses](#)
- [BSR Gender Data and Impact Framework](#)
- [BSR Gender Equality in Codes of Conduct Guidance](#)
- [UN Women report: how to source from women-owned businesses](#)
- [UN Women's guidance note Gender-Responsive Procurement](#)
- [Making Women Workers Count, A Framework for Conducting Gender-Responsive Due Diligence in Supply Chains, BSR](#)
- [Gender-based violence in global supply chains: Resource Kit, ILO](#)
- [Unstereotype Alliance](#)



# TIPS FROM THE INDUSTRY

## How to address gender equality within the corporate world

Many studies and data sets are available on why it becomes crucial for organisations to address gender equality topics. Although the business case has since long been established, organisations still struggle to pragmatically implement actions that bring about long lasting and sustainable change. This is mainly because there is probably no “one-size fits all solution” but that every organisation needs to identify the best approach within its own corporate culture.

What is evident, is that there a multitude of concrete actions that can support and drive towards the achievement of the Goal 5 within the SDG Agenda and that can be addressed in any corporate strategy.

### **A few things are important to keep in mind as a start:**

- A. Women and men do not navigate the corporate world in the same way and their expectations, skill sets might be different while complementary. It is crucial to understand and keep these differences in mind when defining a gender equality strategy.
- B. It is very difficult to change human behaviours and perspectives. It is therefore key to start changing processes instead. Through targeted and conscious process interventions, the systemic change is created that is needed to evolve corporate cultures.

### **Pre-Hiring**

- **Review the job ad content:** words are not neutral and many adjectives imply bias. Online tools such as [TEXTIO](#) can help recruitment teams write gender-neutral job ads and thus attract a more diverse range of candidates.
- **Target your sourcing efforts:** instead of just publishing ads on your website, make sure they are visible in women networks, specialized communities etc.
- **Eliminate CVs from the first screening process:** use anonymous applications that focus on the skill sets and competencies that are required for the position. Use online screening and gaming for example. Technology can support this process and make it more objective and fun.

- **Impose diverse shortlists of minimum 2 women per shortlist: A Harvard Business Review study** in 2016 showed that “When there was only one woman or minority candidate in a pool of four finalists, their odds of being hired were statistically zero.”
- **Use structured interview questions:** this will allow for comparing answers and avoiding unconscious biases and perceptions.
- **Use diverse interview panels:** bring in people from different backgrounds and genders within the interview process and ask them to rate the candidate on a defined grid.

### In the Workplace

- **Eliminate the pay gap by running Equal Pay Certifications:** these certifications give objective insights and data around how the organisation embraces gender equality and can help identify priorities for change. Moreover, these certifications are a great external recognition and will resonate well with customers, candidates, investors and other external stakeholders.
- **Set management goals that allow for up to maximum 60% of one gender within a team:** by defining your goals this way, men and women will feel they have equal chance and that gender equality is not driven by positive discrimination.
- **Ensure that people managers are rewarded for inclusive behaviours:** it is important to recognize inclusive management practices and to not tolerate misconduct. This will send a clear signal to the organisation of what is valued.
- **Encourage leaders to stay connected with junior people:** talented women are often hidden in the organisational hierarchy and do not make themselves visible enough. As a result, they are often under-represented when it comes to promotions and internal mobility.
- **Define a strong and sustainable sponsorship programme:** sponsorship is not mentoring. While mentoring is important and focuses on improving specific skill sets or competencies, sponsorship helps women navigate the hierarchy, be aware of opportunities and encourages them to take risks for their career development.
- **Create 50/50 career committees:** ensure that promotions and talent assessment is reviewed by a gender balanced committee or team.
- **Allow for flexible benefits:** not everybody needs the same benefit, and different life stages may require different support. Flexible benefits schemes allow women and men to better deal with their private and professional balance.

- **Show open support for parental leave:** offer same parental leave for all couples and encourage men to take the leave. Show it is accepted and is not detrimental to future career decisions.
- **Run regular listening surveys and look at the results through the gender lens:** by giving space for the voice of the employees, the organisation will gain more knowledge around what has real impact.
- **Appoint women into the Non-Executive Board:** Diversity needs to start at the top.
- **Celebrate successes and recognize female role models:** Representation is important and communicating on it will raise awareness.

There are certainly many more actions that can be taken but one thing is clear: getting towards more gender equality is a journey and there is no “quick fix” to achieve it. But now it is time for the corporate world to take responsibility and avoid that it will take another 267.6 years to eliminate the gender gap (World Economic Forums’ Global Gender Gap Index, 2021).



Marina Corti,  
Group Diversity,  
Equity & Inclusion Director,  
Richemont

#### Additional References:

- **Why Men Win at Work (Gill Whitty-Collins)**
- **Invisible Women: Data bias in a world designed for Men (Caroline Criado Perez)**
- **[Global Gender Gap Report 2021 | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2021/)**

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## CHAPTER 6

# Leading the way to advancing the Gender Equality Agenda in the jewellery sector

Industry-wide collaboration is essential to tackle systemic challenges including gender equality. Increased collaboration between businesses and other relevant stakeholders in the ecosystem is good for societies, who benefit from the collective reach, resources, and voice of businesses working towards collective impact. Collaboration is also good for businesses, who can build more resilient supply chains, reduce costs, improve productivity, overcome systemic barriers, and enhance brand value.

Given the current context on gender imbalances and inequalities and the need for different stakeholders to advance on gender equality to achieve the SDGs, RJC sees this moment as a great opportunity to act as an industry, act as a company, act as a partner, to put forward the women's empowerment agenda and promote gender equality. Companies in the jewellery industry, both upstream and downstream in the supply chain, have different opportunities to engage and support gender equality and advance women's empowerment.

Looking ahead, RJC will continue to build awareness on gender equality across the industry by hosting more multi-stakeholder roundtables and expanding the regional scope. This enables us not only to create awareness but also to hear from the stakeholders across the industry on the issues and challenges they face regarding gender equality.

We will continue to focus on education with our 'SDG 5 in Action' training module focused on building a culture of Gender Equality will be launched in October 2021. We will further launch a pilot project in 2022 to measure progress within RJC membership. We acknowledge there is progress to be made, and we look forward to working closely together with civil society, the academic world, our members, and the industry at large to advance SDG 5.

A comprehensive and pragmatic approach to SDG 5 that leverages synergies between SDG 5 and other goals and promotes systematic mainstreaming of gender perspectives in implementing the 2030 Agenda will contribute both to realising gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as well as ensure progress across all goals and targets.

## EUROPE ROUNDTABLE

“The roundtable discussion included larger companies that already have CSR teams with strategies and action plans to SMEs and even entrepreneurs that were already on this journey but more in an intuitive way. This mix of experiences, people and ideas created a unique opportunity for learning.

We felt exhilarated by the will and energy of many people in our industry to address these issues to the best of their abilities, understanding that nothing will be done in a day and also only through collective action. We are proud and honoured to walk among the people ready to make change happen.

As Europeans, it became clear to us that different areas in the world have very distinct challenges and there is no “one size fits” all when it comes to tackling Gender Equality. Therefore, we feel it is necessary to address them, both locally and from a global perspective.

This experience and specifically the next steps we will take as an industry as a whole are crucial. We need to take action as equal access to women is still far from where it should be. Action has to be taken now.”

### Europe Roundtable Moderators



Elodie Daguzan,  
Executive Director,  
World Diamond  
Council



Lita Asscher,  
Co-President,  
Royal Asscher  
Diamond Company

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# APPENDIX

## Outline on the gender dimensions present in the RJC Code of Practices (COP):

RJC has integrated a gender lens to various provisions in its COP, and the key provisions where RJC include specific gender dimensions are those on:

- Policy and implementation
- Community Development
- Working Hours
- Harassment and grievance procedures
- Non-discrimination

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### Provision

### Gender Dimension

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## COP 2

### POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

COP 2 on Policy and Implementation addresses the importance of documenting commitments of responsible business practices. Although the SDGs and COP are already aligned in a number of areas members should embed the SDGs into organizational goals and policies and suggest steps to be taken to start incorporating the SDGs into strategic goals and company policies. COP 2 also includes the need for policy implementation review to assess ongoing suitability and adequacy of business practices in achieving the goals and policies.

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## COP 10

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COP 10 on Community Development defines community development as a process that creates conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community, and requires members to support social, economic and institutional development of the communities in which they operate and support community initiatives. Meaningful community development takes an inclusive approach, considering the priorities of all parts of a community and paying particular attention to the needs and participation of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups—for example, creating opportunities for women to participate more meaningfully in decision-making.

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## COP 15

### GENERAL EMPLOYMENT TERMS

COP 15 on General Employment terms addresses gender by highlighting the prevalence of gender pay gaps. Gender pay gaps in the United Kingdom is highlighted, and provides that across the world, and across various sectors, women are paid less than men. In 2017, the United Kingdom introduced mandatory gender pay gap reporting for the first time, and under the new legislation, UK-based organisations with 250 or more employees must publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap.

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**Provision****Gender Dimension**

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## COP 16

### WORKING HOURS

COP 16 on Working Hours requires members to comply with applicable laws on working hours. The ILO convention standards on working hours are stated, highlighting access to maternity leave for women following childbirth. Concerning overtime work, the COP addresses actions to be taken, including trying to make allowances for personal and domestic circumstances of individual workers when requesting overtime, and make provision for the needs of pregnant or nursing women. Special leave or working-time arrangements for employees with family responsibilities shall apply regardless of gender.

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## COP 17

### POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

COP 17 on Remuneration addresses actions to be taken in order to comply with wage standards, and further highlights that under the 1966 international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights women and men are to be paid equally for the same work and that both should be able to make a decent living for themselves and their families. Many workers not earning this 'living wage' are vulnerable to exploitation.

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## COP 18

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COP 18 on Harassment and Grievance procedures addresses preventing harassment in the workplace, and that harassment comes in many different forms, acknowledging that gender is often the subject of such harassment. While men and boys can experience sexual violence and harassment, the vast majority of victims are women and girls. Creating harassment-free workplaces is critical to achieving decent work for all and gender equality. Members are to provide that doctors, nurses and key personnel among security staff, managers or others shall be regularly trained to recognise signs of gender-based violence and understand relevant laws and organisational policies. The selection of individuals to manage and assess the grievances shall be sensitive to the situation and strive to ensure gender balance.

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## COP 22

### GENERAL EMPLOYMENT TERMS

COP 22 on Non-discrimination highlights that discrimination is not tolerated across the entire employment cycle, such as hiring, continued employment, remuneration, professional development, termination, and also expands on the discrimination grounds to include marital, parental and pregnancy status. Globally, women suffer some of the most discrimination, in terms of the jobs available to them, their remuneration, benefits and working conditions, and access to decision-making positions.

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It is worth noting that while the above provisions make explicit reference to SDG 5 and gender, various additional provisions in the COP continue to acknowledge women as belonging to vulnerable groups. For example:

- COP 20 on Forced Labour acknowledges that among the 24.9 million men, women, and children in forced labour around the world today, 16 million are exploited in the private economy, with women and girls disproportionately affected.
- With regards to Health & Safety under COP 23, members are to provide and maintain workplaces, and on-site housing where relevant, with suitable conditions for pregnant or nursing women, or alternative working arrangements to avoid unsuitable workplaces.
- COP 32 on Stakeholder Engagement highlights that members must consider the full range of stakeholders in their approach. This includes engaging affected communities including women.
- COP 35 on Artisanal and small-scale mining and large-scale mining also acknowledges that there are many different ways for members to establish a collaborative, inclusive initiative that can help organise, formalise, professionalise, and legalise ASM, one of which includes supporting gender awareness and empowerment programmes to improve women's conditions in ASM communities.
- Finally, COP 41 on Mercury requires members to take steps to prevent vulnerable groups being exposed to mercury, particularly children, women of childbearing age and pregnant women.

# With special thanks to:

- Akapo Jewels
- ALROSA
- Business for Social Responsibility
- De Beers Group
- IMPACT
- Initiatives in Art and Culture
- Phyllis Bergman Consults
- Richemont
- Royal Asscher Diamond Company
- The Platinum Incubator
- World Jewellery Confederation CIBJO
- World Diamond Council
- Women's Jewelry Association
- Women in Mining (UK)
- Inonge Zita Jewellery
- UN Women
- United Nations Global Compact

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