

Powered by Women Nepal

Progress Update

December 2020 - March 2022

Nineteen hydropower companies signed up for IFC's **Powered by Women Nepal** (PbW Nepal) initiative in September 2020 to promote gender equality and diversity at the workplace. The initiative encourages peer-to-peer learning and supports companies to develop and achieve time-bound actions in at least one of the four PbW commitment areas (see end of flyer for details).



Rajmi Aryal, Manager at IDI Hydropower Company, during a factory inspection.

Figure 1: Key Entry Points of Powered By Women



Progress on Commitment Areas

So far, companies have reported:

- Increased engagement by senior management in support of the PbW initiative
- Increased confidence of focal points following completion of communications trainings by IFC
- Improved confidence among female staff to visit project sites after their company adopts respectful workplace programs and occupational health and safety measures
- More women-only community consultations to address the needs of women affected by hydropower projects

16% of PbW focal points are men who advocate for a more gender-balanced workforce.

Commitment 1: Women in Leadership

7 companies have committed to promoting women in leadership positions



By appointing women to senior management
- 1 company



By investing in leadership trainings for women
- 5 companies

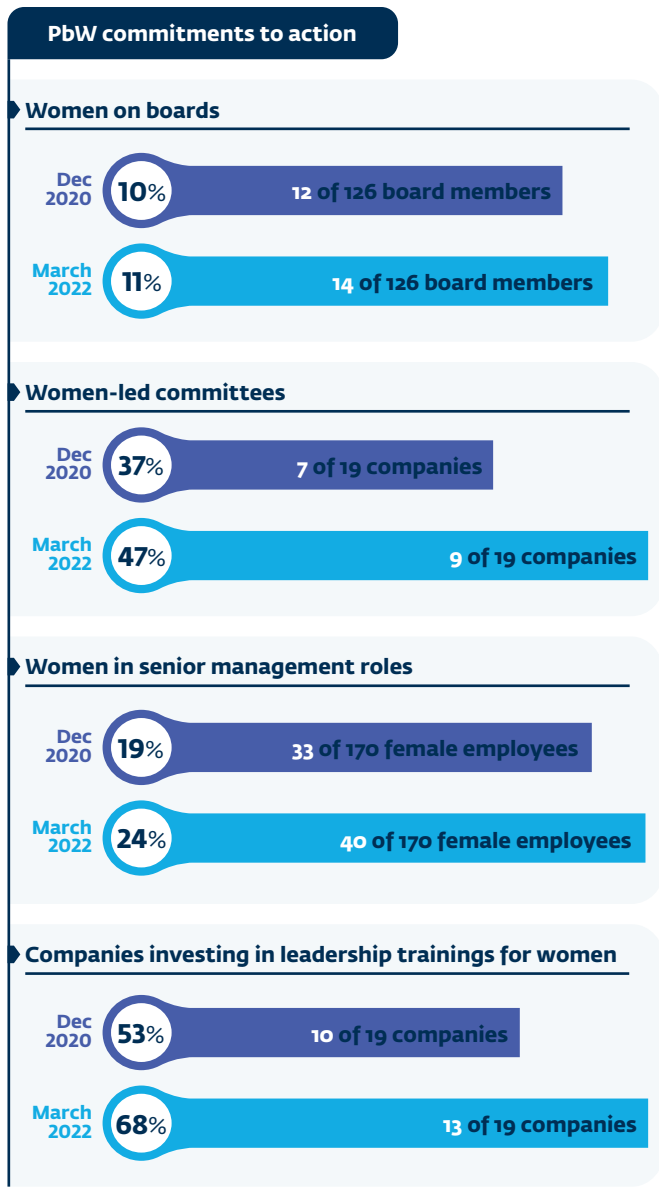


By setting up women-led committees
- 6 companies



By recruiting more female directors
- 5 companies

Figure 2: Baseline and Progress Results for the Women in Leadership Commitment



"I was a shy person until I participated in the PbW webinars. With my involvement as a focal person in PbW, I have become a better communicator and gained more confidence in corporate dealings."

– Resha Shrestha, Finance Manager, Solu Hydropower Private Limited



Signing of MoU between IFC and Independent Power Producers Association Nepal (IPPAN), Power Summit 2019, Kathmandu

"It is essential to debunk the myth surrounding women and work if we are to promote women in the roles traditionally dominated by men. Often it is the mindset, perception, cultural norms, and structural barriers that prevent women's entry into distinct fields despite their potential."

– Yuvraj Shrivastava, Powered Series Speaker, Chief of Human Resources (HR) and Administrative Officer, Ncell Axiata, Nepal

Commitment 2: Respectful Workplaces

Companies report that unsafe or disrespectful workplace behaviors have resulted in greater absenteeism, lack of trust in management, and productivity loss.

15 companies have committed to promoting a respectful workplace



By developing and reviewing existing policies
- **12** companies



By setting up gender-inclusive hiring panels
- **5** companies



By appointing respectful workplace advisors
- **4** companies



By formalizing a grievance redress mechanism
- **5** companies



By adopting respectful workplace guidelines
- **4** companies



By integrating gender-based violence (GBV) within a grievance mechanism
- **5** companies



By adopting a code of conduct to prevent workplace bullying and sexual harassment
- **7** companies

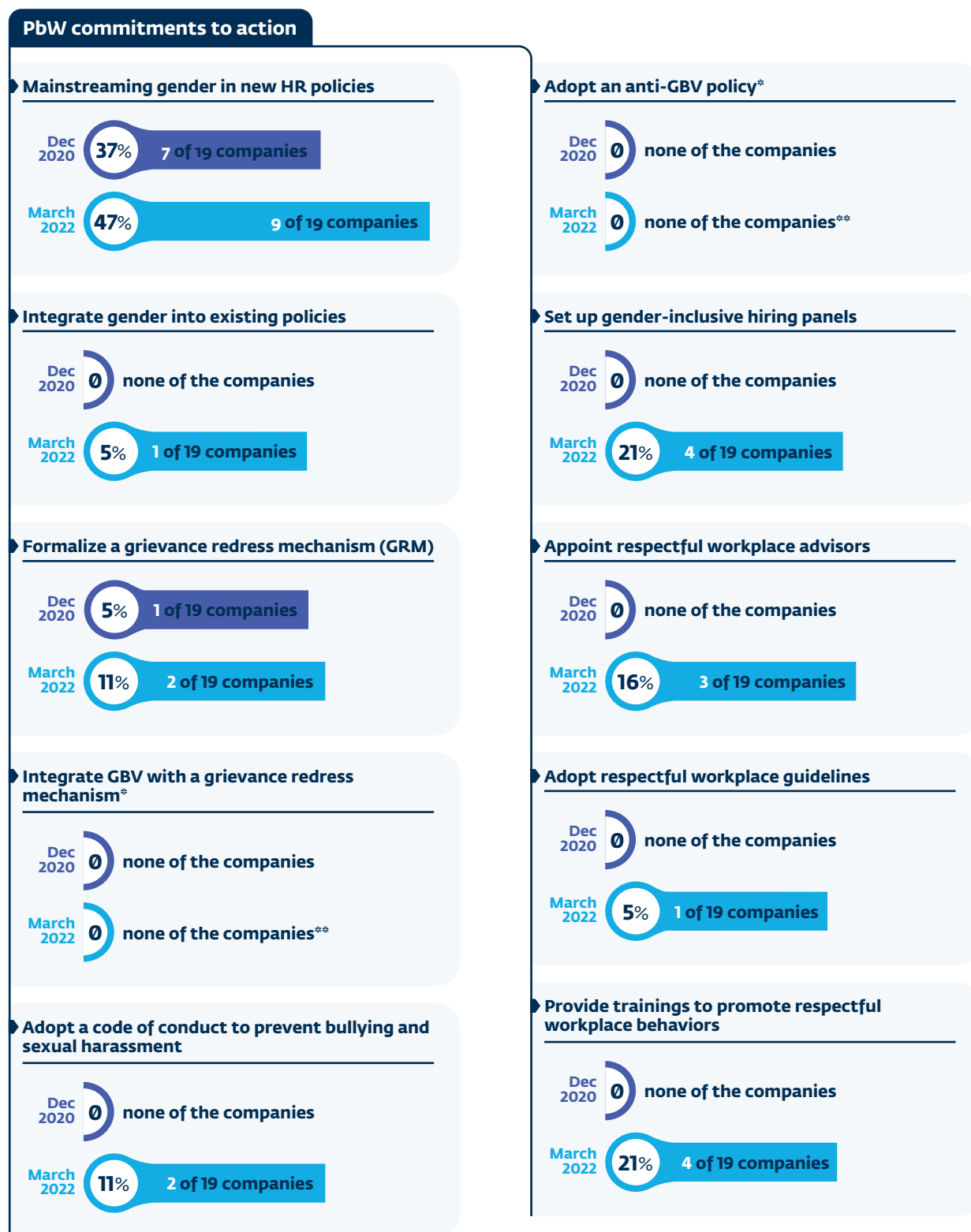


By providing trainings on respectful behaviors
- **7** companies

"Men's engagement in the Powered by Women initiative is crucial to creating a gender-diverse workforce within the hydropower sector."

– Shailesh Mishra, CEO, Independent Power Producers Association Nepal (IPPAN)

Figure 3: Baseline and Progress Results for the Respectful Workplace Commitment



Note: The above captures baseline and progress results for participating companies.

* At the start of the initiative, none of the 19 companies had such a policy and as of March 2022, all five participating companies were still working on developing their policies.

** Following a request for support from the companies, a bespoke advisory is being set up by IFC ESG to help companies set up their corporate and project level grievance redress mechanisms and strengthen their respectful workplaces policies, including those related to GBV.

Commitment 3: Women as Community Stakeholders

5 companies have committed to enhancing the role of women as community stakeholders



By disaggregating data by gender in community consultations
- 5 companies



By organizing women-only consultations
- 5 companies

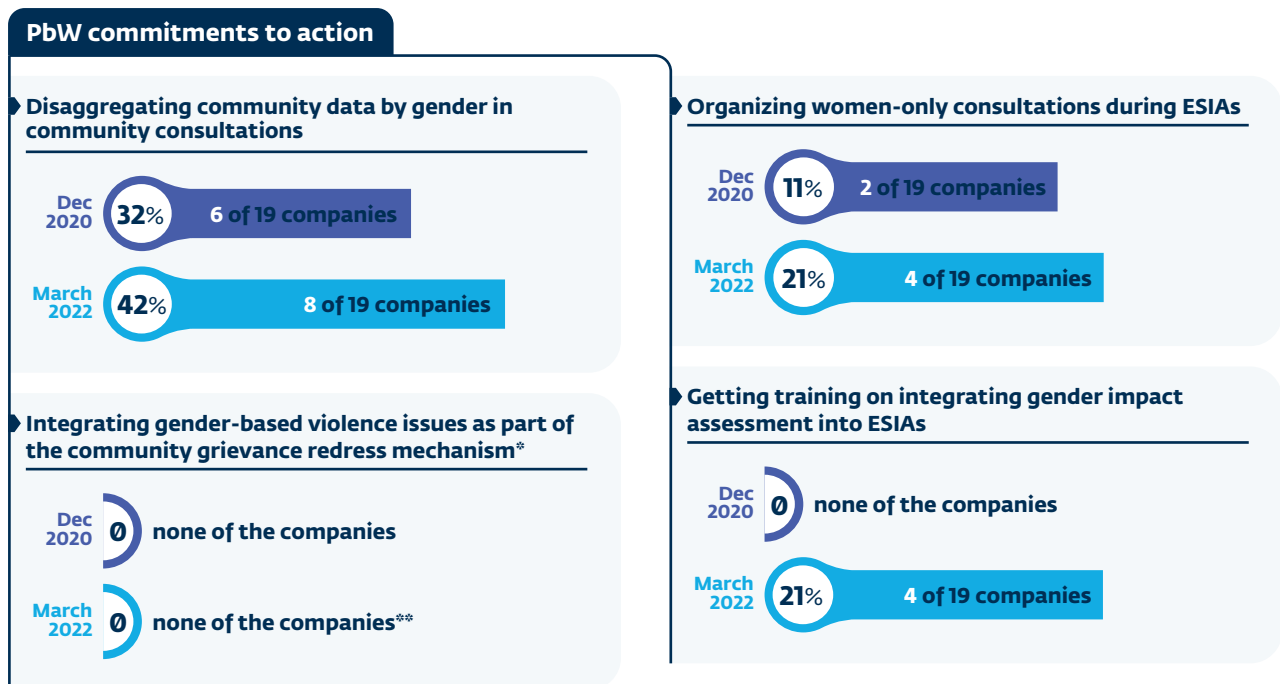


By integrating gender impacts into environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs)
- 5 companies



By integrating gender-based violence risks into community grievance mechanisms
- 5 companies

Figure 4: Baseline and Progress Results for the Commitment to Ensure Women as Community Stakeholders



Note: The above captures baseline and progress results for participating companies.

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"I have realized that reaching out to project-affected women requires working with them, understanding them, and being sensitive to their needs."

– Rajmi Aryal, Stakeholder Engagement Officer and Manager, IDI Hydropower Company Private Ltd.

Commitment 4: Women in Non-Traditional Roles

9 companies have committed to enhancing the role of women in non-traditional roles- which include positions like engineers, geologists, site-managers, heavy equipment operators, security guards, etc that are not typically occupied by women in the hydropower sector

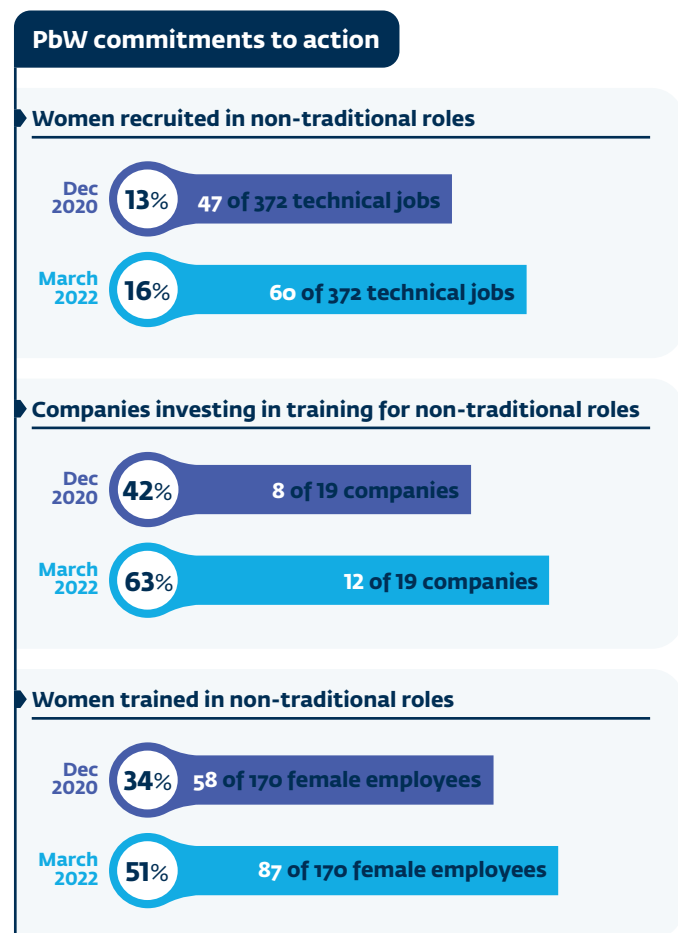


By hiring and promoting more women to these roles
- 7 companies



By training more women in these roles
- 6 companies

Figure 5: Baseline and Progress Results for the Women in Non-Traditional Roles Commitment



Note: The above captures baseline and progress results for participating companies.

"Gender stereotypes, childcare, and mobility keep women from accessing and successfully completing their training needs. We are ensuring that our technical trainings are women centric and are not blind to these constraints in our design."

- Kabita Pokhrel, Executive Director, Ruby Valley Hydropower Limited

"We need to work with schools, colleges, and universities to motivate more females to enter Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) roles. This is one way we can bridge gender gaps in the STEM fields and in non-traditional roles across sectors."

- Manohar Shrestha, CEO, Hydro-Consult Engineering Limited

Capacity Building Trainings

3 tailored trainings for PbW members in 2021

73 company representatives

47 women  **26** men 

Gender in Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs)

IFC and the International Centre for Hydropower (ICH) organized a three-day training on **ESIAs** as part of PbW Nepal to increase women's engagement as community stakeholders. The virtual training took place from February 10 to 12, 2021, attracting 21 participants, including nine women and 12 men.

Gender and Hydropower Development Training II

IFC and ICH also organized "**Gender and Hydropower Development Training Part II**" from November 23 to 26 in 2021 as a follow-up to the first training held in Nepal in 2019. Twenty-seven hydropower company representatives (22 women and five men) attended the virtual training from Nepal and Bangladesh. They said the training allowed them to learn from global experts and hone their skills in mainstreaming gender within hydropower projects.

Communications Workshop and Coaching Program

Twenty-five participants, including 16 women and nine men, attended a six-week course held from August 25 to October 5 in 2021. Women leaders and focal points said the course improved their confidence in public speaking. Nine in 10 participants said they are better equipped to represent their companies in public forums after the training.

Powered Series Webinars

11 Powered Series Webinars

389 company representatives

205 women  **184** men 

- IFC organized the Powered Series monthly webinars to help PbW member companies build knowledge and achieve their commitments to gender equality and diversity.
- So far, 11 webinars have been organized for 389 participants on topics linked to the four PbW commitment areas. PbW has also organized special sessions for national banks and financial institutions because of their requests.

Business Roundtables

5 Roundtable Meetings

94 company representatives

69 women  **25** men 

PbW business roundtables for the focal points and management of member companies are held quarterly. The two-hour meeting provides a platform for companies to share progress on their action plans, discuss challenges, and exchange lessons learned.

"The trainings have opened up my mind. I never considered gender to be so relevant in assessing hydropower and construction projects until I attended the PbW trainings."

– Swasti Aryal, Senior Planning and Monitoring Officer, Butwal Power Company

Companies Participating in the Four PbW Commitment Areas of the PbW Nepal Initiative

Women in leadership	Respectful workplaces	Women as community stakeholders	Women in non-traditional roles
Butwal Power Company Ltd. (BPC)	BPC	IDI	CG
Chaudhary Group Energy Infrastructure Private Ltd. (CG)	CG	Sanima Hydro (Sanima)	3HC
IDI Hydropower Company Private Limited (IDI)	High Himalaya Hydro Construction Private Ltd. (3HC)	Solu	HCEL
Independent Power Producers' Association, Nepal (IPPAN)	Hydro-Consult Engineering Ltd. (HCEL)	Urja	NHPC/Lower Erkuwa
Kalinchock Hydropower Private Ltd. (Kalinchock)	IPPAN	White Lotus Power Private Ltd. (White Lotus)	NWEDC
NRN Infrastructure and Development Ltd. (NRN Infrastructure)	Kalinchock		Ruby Valley
Solu Hydropower Private Ltd. (Solu)	National Hydro Power Co. Ltd. (NHPC)/ Lower Erkuwa Hydropower Co. Ltd. (Lower Erkuwa)*		Solu
	Nepal Water and Energy Development Company Private Ltd. (NWEDC)		Urja
	Nilgiri Khola Hydropower Co. Ltd. (Nilgiri Khola)		White Lotus
	NRN Infrastructure		
	Rairang Hydropower Development Co. Ltd. (Rairang)		
	Ruby Valley Hydropower Ltd. (Ruby Valley)		
	Sanjen Jalavidhyut Co. Ltd. (Sanjen)		
	Solu		
	Urja Developers Private Ltd. (Urja)		

* NHPC and Lower Erkuwa are subsidiary companies sharing common resources and are thus reflected as one company.

ABOUT POWERED BY WOMEN NEPAL



Powered by Women Nepal works with companies to promote business growth, efficiency, and sustainability through greater gender equality and diversity. The initiative was launched in September 2020 following an IFC study that found women are disproportionately represented throughout the workforce and life cycle of hydropower projects in Nepal. The program gives participating companies a unique opportunity to take the lead in closing gender gaps within the power sector.

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