

INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN MYANMAR

KEY FACTS AND CHALLENGES

COUNTRY OVERVIEW



53 million
people

Fragile and Conflict Affected (FCS)

country with significant long-term growth potential

6.4% GDP growth rate, one of the fastest growing economies in East Asia and the Pacific¹

GENDER INEQUALITY



Only **51%** of women participate in the labor force, compared to

80% of men²

Only **1 in 4** small and medium firms are owned by women³

Only **3 out of the 100** largest Myanmar companies are run by **female CEOs**⁴

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN



71% of Myanmar people believe that men make better business executives than women⁴

More than half of working women experience sexual harassment in the workplace,

81% of them do not take any formal actions⁵

Zero laws on domestic violence or anti-sexual harassment⁶

HOW IFC MOBILIZES PRIVATE SECTOR SOLUTIONS

I. PROVIDING EVIDENCE ON THE BUSINESS CASE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

IFC demonstrates how gender equality in the workplace leads to a greater pool of talent, stronger performance, higher profits, better reputation and increased innovation. We provide related research, reports, and recommendations that can be used by the private and public sectors for policy and institutional development. Our research efforts include:

- ▶ **Research on Respectful Workplaces** to measure the costs of bullying and sexual harassment in workplaces of critical growth sectors: agribusiness, retail, banking, tourism, and garments.
- ▶ **Gender Analysis of the Tourism Value Chain** to explore opportunities for women in the tourism industry in Inle.
- ▶ **Gender Analysis of the World Bank Enterprise Survey** to identify gaps in women's entrepreneurship and make recommendations.
- ▶ **Survey of Women Entrepreneurs** to guide regulatory reforms and inform women on business processes.

“Women can accomplish as impressive business feats as men. But lack of self-confidence often makes it harder for them to get promotions and reach the most senior management levels.”

—DAW WIN WIN TINT,
CEO, CITY MART HOLDINGS,
MYANMAR'S LARGEST
RETAILER

II. CREATING PRIVATE SECTOR PEER LEARNING PLATFORMS AND PARTNERSHIPS



Powered by Women was launched in 2017 and is a time-bound initiative which aims to increase

opportunities for women in the hydropower sector, where women are underrepresented in technical and senior management positions.

To date, **5 companies** have signed up. IFC runs various workshops (e.g., on **effective policies** and **mechanisms to prevent and address bullying and harassment in the workplace**).



Inle Professional Women's Network (IPNET) was formed in 2017 and is an IFC-led initiative which aims to

support women's businesses in Myanmar's Inle region by educating and empowering women as individuals and leaders and building supportive professional relationships.

IFC has designed a **7-module leadership development program** which is delivered to more than **50 members** of IPNET on topics including **financial management** and **marketing**.

“Supporting women’s businesses goes hand in hand with supporting communities. Educating, empowering and connecting women leaders is key to their development and paves the way for high business, economic, and social returns. But no one can do it alone: building meaningful partnerships and networks is the only way forward.”

—AUNTYANN, CHAIRWOMAN OF INLE PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S NETWORK (IPNET)

III. ADVISING COMPANIES HOW TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY

IFC helps companies close gaps between men and women in their operations by assessing related policies and practices and advising them how to adopt global standards, establish respectful workplaces, and recruit, retain and promote women. IFC is helping some of Myanmar's leading corporations to:

- ▶ Build **respectful workplaces** by implementing policies and mechanisms for preventing and addressing bullying and sexual harassment.
- ▶ Establish or improve employer-supported **childcare** services.
- ▶ Include more women in the workforce of **male dominated sectors** such as energy.
- ▶ Receive **EDGE (Economic Dividends for Gender Equality)**, the leading global business certification for gender equality, in partnership with the Myanmar Business Coalition for Gender Equality.

IV. INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ACROSS THE PRIVATE SECTOR

IFC projects in Myanmar aim to create markets and drive sustainable and inclusive growth.

- ▶ Our **corporate governance** work includes launching a local Women Corporate Directors chapter, training potential women board members, and raising awareness about the business case for board diversity.
- ▶ Through our **Lighting Myanmar** program, we seek to involve women entrepreneurs as distributors of solar products.
- ▶ Our interventions to improve productivity and sustainability in **agribusiness** include the mapping of gender roles in farming to ensure that training on best practices and related benefits are equally shared by women and men.
- ▶ Our training of senior **Customs** Department officials includes curriculum on gender equality and respectful workplaces.

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