

# Powered by Women Nepal

## Progress Update

MARCH 2021

Nineteen\* hydropower companies signed up for IFC's "Powered by Women Nepal" Initiative in September 2020 to promote gender equality and diversity at the workplace.

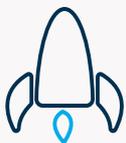
Under the initiative, member companies had to commit to at least one of the following four objectives and develop time-bound action plans to promote:

- Women in leadership
- Respectful workplaces
- Women as stakeholders
- Women in non-traditional roles



- \* 1. Butwal Hydropower Company Limited (BPC)  
2. Chaudhary Group Energy Infrastructure Private Limited (CG)  
3. High Himalaya Hydro Construction Private Limited (3HC)  
4. Hydro-Consult Engineering Limited (HCEL)  
5. IDI Hydropower Company Private Limited (IDI)  
6. Independent Power Producers' Association, Nepal (IPPAN)  
7. Lower Erkuwa Hydropower Company Private Limited (Lower Erkuwa)  
8. Kalinchowk Hydropower Company Private Limited (Kalinchowk Hydropower)  
9. National Hydro Power Company Limited (NHPC)  
10. Nepal Water and Energy Development Company Private Limited (NWEDC)  
11. Nilgiri Khola Hydropower Company Limited (Nilgiri Khola)  
12. NRN Infrastructure and Development Limited (NRN)  
13. Rairang Hydropower Development Company Limited (Rairang)  
14. Ruby Valley Hydropower Limited (Ruby Valley)  
15. Sanima Group of Companies (Sanima)  
16. Sanjen Jalavidhyut Company Limited (Sanjen Jalavidhyut)  
17. Solu Hydropower Pvt Ltd (Solu Hydropower)  
18. Urja Developers Private Limited (Urja Developers)  
19. White Lotus Power Private Limited (White Lotus)

## “POWERED BY WOMEN NEPAL” TIMELINE



**Signing of commitments; launch of the “Powered by Women Nepal” Initiative and Report**

Sept 22, 2020



**Baseline survey of companies including data collection, validation, and analysis**

Oct 1 - Dec 16, 2020



**Support companies in preparing action plans**

Oct 1 - Nov 31, 2020



**Three Powered Series webinars**

Nov 25, 2020 - Women in Leadership

Jan 20, 2021 - Human Resources and Women in Non-Traditional Roles

March 4, 2021 - Building Respectful Workplaces



**Two quarterly roundtable meetings with Focal points and management**



Dec 16, 2020 Mar 24, 2021



**Support companies in finalizing action plans**



Jan 4, 2021



**Training on “Gender in Environmental and Social Impact Assessments”**

Feb 10-12, 2021



Ongoing

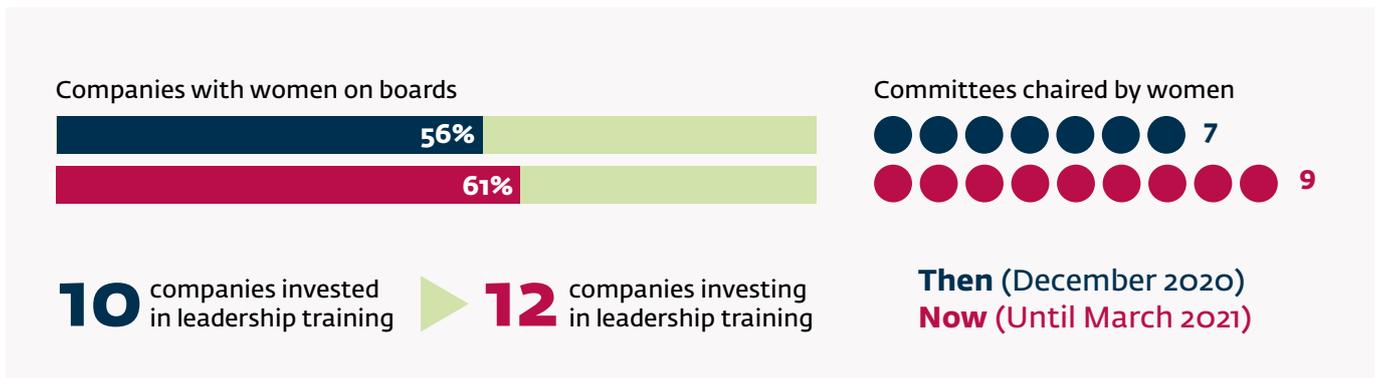


## PROGRESS ON COMMITMENT AREAS

Companies have been making considerable progress in each of the four commitment areas.

### ENCOURAGING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

#### HIGHLIGHTS



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

**7 companies**, namely BPC, CG, IDI, IPPAN, Kalinchowk Hydropower, Solu Hydropower and NRN Infrastructure **have committed to encouraging women in leadership:**

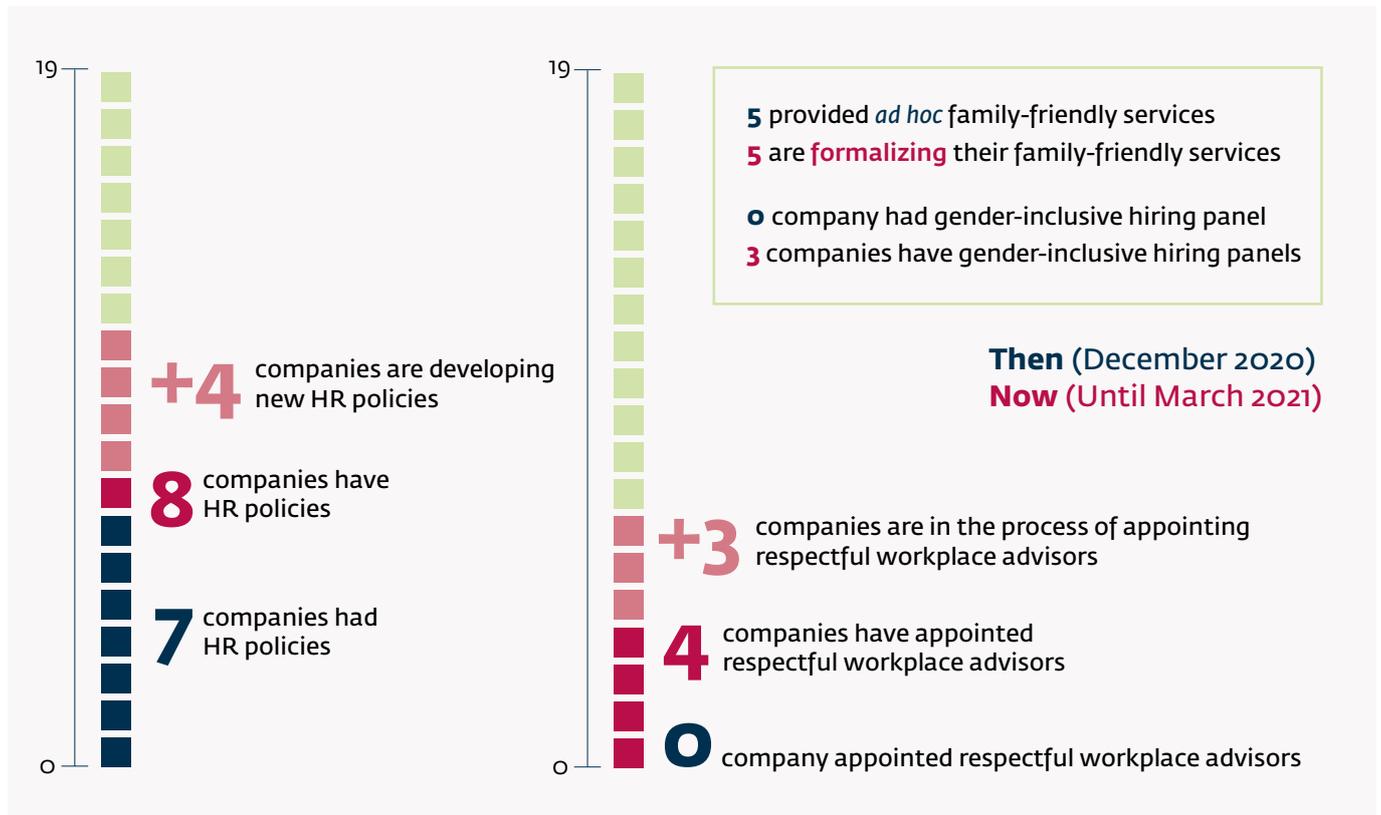
- **6** are setting up new committees chaired by women.
- **5** are increasing female representation in boards and senior management positions.
- **5** are introducing training programs for women.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS

- NRN Infrastructure elected a woman to its board of directors in February 2021.

## PROMOTING RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES

### HIGHLIGHTS



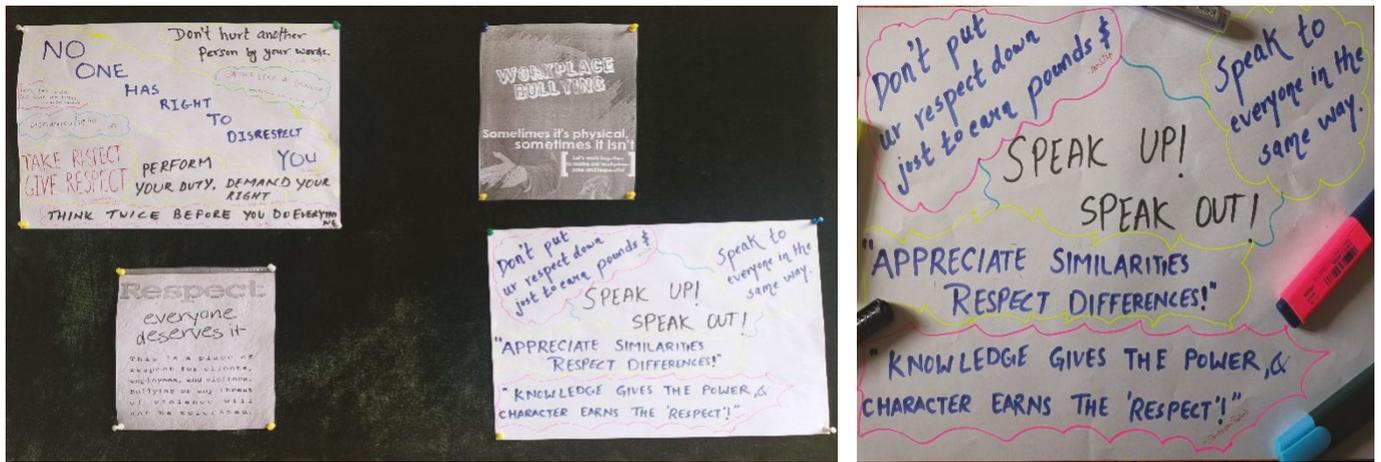
Note: The above captures baseline and progress results for participating companies.

**14** companies, namely BPC, CG, 3HC, HCEL, IPPAN, Kalinchowk Hydropower, Solu Hydropower, NWEDC, Nilgiri Khola, NRN Infrastructure, Rairang, Ruby Valley, Sanjen Jalavidhyut and Urja Developers **have committed to promoting respectful workplaces:**

- **11** are developing family-friendly policies and guidelines.
- **7** are launching codes of conduct against bullying and sexual harassment.
- **7** are appointing respectful workplace advisors.
- **7** are investing in training, awareness-raising, and capacity-building programs.
- **3** are carrying out staff surveys and assessing employees' satisfaction and policy gaps.
- **2** are creating gender-inclusive hiring panels.
- **5** are setting up grievance-redress mechanisms.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

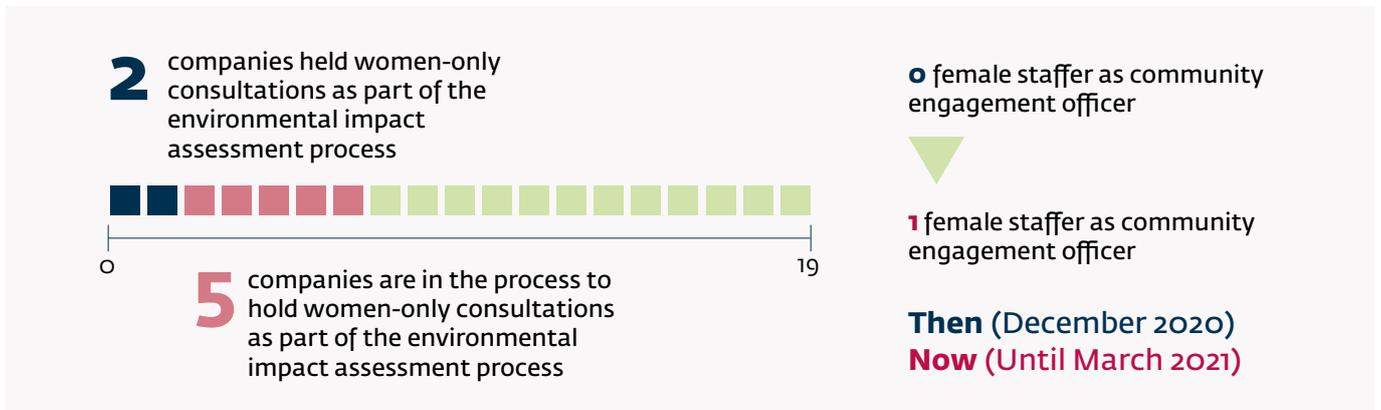
- Kalinchowk Hydropower developed a new HR policy, which received board approval in February 2021.
- 3HC set up a formal grievance mechanism, which was endorsed by its board in February 2021.
- 3HC, Sanjen Jalavidhyut, HCEL, and Kalinchowk Hydropower recruited respectful workplace advisors.
- BPC appointed a woman staff as the Grievance Handling Officer in March 2021.



Anti-bullying and anti-sexual harassment messages are displayed on the notice boards of 3HC offices.

## ENHANCING THE ROLE OF WOMEN AS STAKEHOLDERS

### HIGHLIGHTS



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

**5** companies namely IDI, Sanima, Solu Hydropower, Urja Developers, and White Lotus **have committed to enhancing the role of women as stakeholders:**

- **5** are planning to undertake gender impact assessments as part of their environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs) for projects.
- **5** are disaggregating community data by gender.
- **2** are revising their community-engagement guidelines.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- 21** participants from IDI, Sanima Group, Solu Hydropower, and Urja Developers, including 7 females, attended a three-day training on “Gender in ESIAs” organized by IFC and International Centre for Hydropower in February 2021.
- IDI has appointed a female stakeholder-engagement officer to lead women-only community consultations.
  - Solu Hydropower’s women-only consultation with families affected by a hydropower project in October 2020 led to a change in the design of its livelihood restoration plan.

## ENCOURAGING WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL ROLES

### HIGHLIGHTS



**47** women were **employed** in non-traditional roles  
**53** women are **employed** in non-traditional roles

**58** women were **trained** in non-traditional roles  
**69** women are **trained** in non-traditional roles

**Then** (December 2020)  
**Now** (Until March 2021)

**8** companies invested in technical training for staff  
**11** companies are investing in technical training for staff

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

**10** companies, namely CG, 3HC, HCEL, Lower Erkuwa, NHPC, Solu Hydropower, NWEDC, Ruby Valley, Urja Developers, and White Lotus have committed to encouraging women in non-traditional roles:

- **2** have initiated partnerships with technical and educational institutions to recruit women in non-traditional roles.
- **1** is setting up a technical school in their project area to train women in non-traditional roles.
- **5** are investing in technical capacity-building programs aimed at women from project-affected communities.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

IDI, 3HC, HCEL, and Urja Developers have recruited women in non-traditional roles:

- **7** women have been hired in civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, security, and procurement positions.

Urja Developers has invested in the following training programs:

- **30** employees from the company, including 4 women, participated in the "Operation and Maintenance Training" organized by IFC in March 2021.
- **33** participants from the company, including 6 women, attended the "Hydropower Project Management and the Practical Use of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Conditions of Contract" in March 2021.

### EMERGING CHALLENGES

- Retention of female staff in site-based positions remains a major challenge for companies who prioritize female recruitment in non-traditional roles. Many women cited family issues, remote locations of duty stations, and inadequate capacity and mental preparedness to handle the roles, as reasons for leaving their jobs.
- Turnover rate among women in non-traditional roles is seen to be high this quarter, with 2 newly recruited women leaving.
- The pace of recruitment to find new staff in senior positions is still slow.
- Due to COVID-19, personnel mobility at project sites is still restricted. This can further delay or affect planned actions to build more inclusive communities.

## TESTIMONIES FROM MEMBER COMPANIES



**“IFC’s Powered Webinar series not only enhances our knowledge and skills in planning and implementation but also boosts our confidence to speak up in meetings on various topics and present our views.”**

—Rajmi Aryal, Manager-IDI, Prabha Panta, Admin Officer- Kanlinchowk Hydropower, Ruchi Joshi, Assistant Manager HR/Admin- Sanima, and Chetan Ghimire, Admin Officer-Sanjen Jalavidhyut.

**“Women representing various sectors other than hydropower are also able to reap benefits and enhance their knowledge by participating in the Powered Webinar series. This can help spread the momentum and work of the Powered by Women Nepal Initiative beyond the participating companies to a wider energy sector.”**

—Kabita Pokhrel, Executive Member, IPPAN

**“The Powered by Women Initiative has reminded us of our responsibility to achieve our vision of creating a respectful workplace.”**

—Abhigya Malla, Vice President, 3HC

**Ensuring women’s representation in our existing grievance redressal mechanism and on hiring panels has been initiated at BPC since the company’s participation in the Powered by Women Initiative.”**

—Priyanka Rauniyar, Financial Analyst, BPC

## ABOUT POWERED BY WOMEN NEPAL



**Powered by Women Nepal** works with renewable-energy companies to promote business growth, efficiency, and sustainability through greater gender equality and diversity. Nineteen companies have joined the initiative and committed to actions to promote gender equality. The initiative was launched in September 2020 following an [IFC study](#) that surveyed 20 hydropower companies in Nepal between 2019 and 2020 to understand the role of women and their contribution to business productivity, opportunities, and challenges in the sector. The program gives participating companies a unique opportunity to take the lead in initiating positive changes in the broader economy.



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