

# Advancing Women's Employment

Economies across the world need the equal participation of women and men to achieve their full potential. Women face persistent barriers in labor markets, but if they participated in the global economy at the same rate as men, [economic output could rise by as much as 35 percent](#), according to the IMF.

Companies that invest in women's employment can gain an important competitive advantage by reaching a wider talent pool, realize enhanced productivity, and improve staff retention. Better jobs for women lead to higher income levels for them as well as more agency and influence in household decision-making.

## Gender-Smart Business Solutions

As more women enter the labor market and exert influence as consumers, savvy companies recognize the need to attract and retain more female employees and purchase from women-led companies. IFC's Gender-Smart Business Solutions program provides clients with the tools and resources to strengthen gender inclusion within their operations, resolve labor issues, increase employee engagement, benefit from inclusive sourcing, and enhance company performance.\*

## Why IFC?

IFC is the preferred partner for global private sector entities that are at the forefront of leveraging the business case for gender equality. Learn more:

- Companies can benefit from investing in women as leaders, employees, entrepreneurs, customers, and community partners. Read the full report: [Investing in Women: New Evidence for the Business Case](#)
- Equal access to work, as well as investing in better jobs and working conditions for women, can have a positive impact on the bottom line. Read the full report: [The Business Case for Women's Employment in Agribusiness](#)
- Women make up 90 percent of nurses, pharmacists and other medical personnel, but are underrepresented in leadership. Greater equality through mentorship and other techniques can benefit healthcare businesses. Read the full report: [Women's Leadership in Private Health Care](#)

### The business case is compelling:

Companies that invest in internal gender equality measures have better business performance and stronger financial returns.





Photo: Dominic Chavez/IFC

## Company Case Study

### Maxport

IFC client Maxport, a garment manufacturing company in Vietnam, had gone through re-structuring prior to IFC's gender advisory, and was now rebuilding its operations, looking to scale production and win back key accounts with global brands.

Maxport was on a growth trajectory and aimed to double its workforce by the end of 2020 but faced fierce competition for labor from other factories in Vietnam. To support its growth strategy, Maxport established a [partnership with IFC](#) to explore gender-smart solutions.

In 2019, Maxport became one of the first companies in Vietnam to receive the EDGE Gender Certification. Maxport is currently working with IFC's Corporate Governance team to establish a gender-inclusive board and the company also signed an agreement with IFC to explore long-term financing. Nike featured Maxport on its Purpose website to highlight a valuable case of gender inclusion in the company's supply chain.

## More Information

@IFC\_org and @WBG\_Gender  
[www.ifc.org/womensememployment](http://www.ifc.org/womensememployment)  
[www.ifc.org/gender](http://www.ifc.org/gender)

*\*This program is offered by IFC's Manufacturing, Agribusiness, and Services (MAS) department and is possible thanks to support from the Government of Canada.*

## Better for Employees, Better for Business



**Women-friendly policies and practices for employment and procurement**



**Employee Outcomes**

- Commitment
- Motivation
- Satisfaction
- Work-life balance
- Skills upgrading



**Workforce Performance**

- Reduced absenteeism & staff turnover
- Higher productivity
- Improved employee relations



**Organizational Performance**

- Access to new products & services
- New talent & markets
- High caliber staff

## IFC Services

### Preliminary Gender Workforce Assessment

This diagnostic examines human resource data, policies, employee experience, and company operations. Clients receive a report with recommendations and suggested action plan.

### EDGE Gender Certification

Clients selecting this service will receive access to the EDGE Diagnostic Tool as well as a diagnostic report, benchmarking, and recommendations for a gender action plan. These clients have the option to obtain the internationally recognized EDGE gender certification.

### In-Depth Customized Advisory

IFC has a suite of gender advisory products which can be customized to the client's needs. These include training and leadership development solutions including the Gender Equality and Returns (GEAR) program, childcare assessments, and gender-based violence programs.

### Women-Owned Companies in Supply Chains

IFC provides solutions to increase the inclusion of women entrepreneurs into global supply chains through the [Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative \(We-Fi\)](#).

### Support to Business Networks

IFC supports industry associations and national business councils to educate members on gender-smart solutions and make company-specific commitments to implement gender actions.

## Contacts

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