THE NEW NOW

3.5 BILLION WAYS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

girls 20

Rising Women: the NewNow and G(irls)20 Global Report on Young Women in Leadership

FOREWORD

When the NewNow Leaders got together in 2018, all of us – males and females - expressed frustration at the growing inequality gap in our countries and the world. At the top of our concerns is the persistence of structural barriers that rob younger people of hope, limit our aspirations and hinder the leadership potential of rising generations. We are particularly shocked at how tough it remains for people who are both young and female to penetrate decision-making processes. Nowadays young female leaders are invited to important meetings and conferences, but all too often we are involved in parallel processes, not included as leaders in our own right, or our influence is moral, not decisive.

The barriers and issues to including women in decision processes are well documented. Despite recent progress, women are chronically underrepresented in every single sphere of power and influence. Yet we lack research and institutional know-how reflecting pathways to dismantle the barriers facing younger female leaders. With half of the world under 30 years old, it's a travesty that there are no clear, replicable models for younger women to assert their influence on decisions that impact future generations. That is why we were delighted to collaborate with G(irls)20 through our program, Rising Women at the Table. Together we have leveraged the power of nascent women leaders to identify a model for including younger women in decision making in a way that can be achieved by all institutions, in all countries.

As two women who have been lucky – and persistent – enough to break through in our fields of work, we agree that it should not be this hard for us; we should not have to break a mold. Women leaders should be commonplace, not exceptions, and whilst we enormously respect women who partner their male counterparts and facilitate leadership, this should not be the only pathway open to us. Our work would be much improved and made easier if there were many more women alongside us. Models for female leadership, especially those exemplified by younger women, have primarily been developed in rich countries, with a lack of evidence that they can be replicated or have lasting impact. Progress in achieving gender equality is hindered by culture, convention, education disparities and many other forms of injustice faced by girls and women in societies all around the world.

If we're going to change the trajectory of our socio-economic, environmental and political crises, girls need the same advantages as boys and the ability to build the same expectations of life outside the home. When young leaders are meaningfully integrated into decision making process – not through micro-grants, parallel conferences or small inspirational projects – but truly trusted and respected within power structures, we bring society-wide solutions, new ways of thinking and fresh voices to tackle our shared challenges. If we want societies to have a choice of vibrant leaders in future, then we need to invest capacity and resources in building young people, especially girls and young women, allowing this generation of leaders the chance to really lead.

It has been our privilege to get to know and mentor nine nascent women leaders, who we refer to collectively as Rising Women. Each of the women we worked with in 2019 was committed to tackling inequality in their communities, working with those most impacted by the challenges they see, and did so alongside their studies. These Rising Women led consultations with other women like themselves in their home communities and their rich discussions shed light on the systemic response we need to overcome the barriers preventing people like us being at the table in decision-making across sectors.

Four interconnected pathways are set out and supported in this position paper: making rising women visible, closing intergenerational gaps between women, building communities that value us, and changing practices in the education system and workplaces. Viewed as a systemic plan for inclusion, the implementation of these four pathways can be game-changing.

We hope you will agree.

Roya Mahboob
NewNow Leader &
Founder of Digital Citizen Fund

Jaha Dukureh
NewNow Leader &
Founder of Safe Hands for Girls

INTRODUCTION: RISING WOMEN AT THE TABLE

Around the world, young women are ready to be leaders in their communities. Their aspirations and confidence in their abilities are high and they are ambitious to lead in a positive and collaborative way. Despite a body of research reflecting young women's enthusiasm and drive to get involved in leadership, their participation remains constrained and younger women are largely excluded from decision-making spaces[1]. Globally, women make up 49.6%[2] of the population, yet only 24% of parliamentary seats in the world are held by women, with less than 2% held by women under 30[3]. In the private sector, women are slowly breaking through to senior management roles, but the numbers are still low with 29% of these positions being held by women [4] versus the 48.5%[5] of women making up the formal workforce.

With growing demand by young women to take part in decisions that impact their future comes the imperative for global leaders in all sectors to open pathways for participation. This position paper argues the case for closing the global female leadership gap with a focus on younger, rising women. It explores current challenges young women face and provides recommendations directly from young women on how to chart a viable and positive path to move forward.

G(irls)20 and the NewNow are standing alongside rising women and their communities to demonstrate a model that can be widely embraced for young women to enact change. The Rising Women program pairs nine inspiring women between 18 and 25 years of age ("Rising Women") with the global male and female leaders from the NewNow community. As former delegates of the G(irls)20's Summit, an international leadership program for young women running in parallel with the G20 Leaders Summits, each Rising Woman has launched a social impact initiative in her community, which is further developed through the one-on-one mentorship of the NewNow leaders and the opportunities provided to them as extended members of The NewNow community.

As part of developing the Rising Women's professional capabilities, each young woman organized and facilitated a community consultation with young women from their networks. In 2 months, over 100 young women in 8 countries were consulted, yielding a snapshot of the gaps preventing young women from occupying leadership positions. This position paper will cover 5 major issues: gender norms and bias, female role models and mentors, education, inclusion of boys and men, and space for dialogue.

MEET THE RISING WOMEN PARTICIPANTS

ANA CAROLINA PAIXAO DE QUEIROZ
Location: Brazil

Ana Carolina is an Afro-Brazilian young woman, born and raised in São Paulo. She is an undergraduate Economics student at Stanford University and took the past academic year taking a gap year from her studies to develop social projects in Alto Vale do Jequitinhonha, the area in Brazil where her maternal grandmother grew up. Ana is the founder of Ponciá, an initiative to improve and create civic engagement opportunities for children and youth from Vale do Jequitinhonha. She was the Brazilian Delegate for the 2016 G(irls)20 Summit in Beijing, and is the youngest member of "16 x 16", an initiative by UNDP Youth-GPS to support young leaders working to advance SDG16+ around the world.

Ana Carolina Paixao De Queiroz

ARABELA CHILWANE
Location: South Africa

Arabela Chilwane is a Chemical Engineering student at Wits University and was an Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls graduate. Through participating in United Nations based programs as well as science debates, Arabela developed an interest in international affairs with a particular focus on the role of science and technology in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Arabela was South Africa's Ambassador for the G(irls)20 Global Summit in 2018 and is also a candidate fellow of the Allan Gray Orbis Foundation. She is the founder of a social impact initiative aimed at exploring and providing a more holistic teaching approach for young girls to tackle psycho-social learning alongside academic progress.

Arabela Chilwane

DIANA VOUTYRAKOU
Location: Greece

Diana Voutyrakou is an Electrical and Computer Engineer studied at the National Technical University of Athens focusing on Biomedical Engineering and Computational Systems. She specializes in surgical robots and has already published a few scientific articles. Since 2013, she has worked as an educational robotics instructor for high school teams and recently created the first girls robotic team in Greece. Diana is also the Founder and General Manager of Unique Minds, a non-profit organization aiming to fill the gap between high school and university by providing academic orientation. All the above has led her to earn the Greek International Women Award, a Distinction as "Young Greek Woman of the year" and to win the European Campaign "Women doing Businesses for Good". In 2019, she won the Education Leader Award and was included in Forbes 30Under20 Greek List.

Diana Voutryakou

HYOJEONG KIM
Location: Korea

Hyojeong is a CEO and Founder of NomadHer, the app for female globetrotters to encourage (solo) traveling safely. Travelling to 40 countries solo, including a Trans-Siberian train journey from Paris to South Korea, gave her the inspiration to start NomadHer. She is a current ambassador for G(irls)20, where one woman from each of the G20 countries gather to discuss women's empowerment issues. Huffington Post published her article on gender equality in South Korea in 2015. Hyojeong presented as a female entrepreneur at Women's Forum in Paris 2018 @Daring Hub, to deliver her message on inspiring more female youth entrepreneurs. Born and raised in Busan, Hyojeong's favorite food in the world is Tteokbboki (떡볶이). She will be always happy to discuss on women empowerment, traveling and social entrepreneruship.

Hyojeong Kim

İLAYDA ESKITAŞÇIOĞLU
Location: Turkey

İlayda Eskitaşçıoğlu is a human rights lawyer and a Ph.D. student from Turkey. She is an attorney at law and a research fellow at the UNESCO Chair for Gender Equality and Sustainable Development, specializing in international human rights law. As a passionate women's rights advocate, she founded an NGO called We Need to Talk in 2016, aiming to empower rural women in Turkey by providing them access to sanitary materials and to destroy the stigma around menstruation. She was chosen to represent Turkey at the 2016 G(irls)20 Summit in Beijing and is still an active ambassador, leading working groups on youth empowerment. She was recently chosen as a member of the Beijing+25 Global Youth Task Force for UN Women.

İlayda Eskitaşçıoğlu

LOVE NYAABA
Location: Ghana

Love Nyaaba is an aspiring Development Economist from Ghana. She is pursuing an undergraduate programme in Integrated Community Development at the University for Development Studies. As a firm believer in grassroots-led approaches to development issues, Love has volunteered on many community-based projects focused especially on women, girls and youth. She is currently an intern at International Justice Mission, and associate trainer with Global Platform Ghana. She is working on a personal development mentorship programme for teenagers in rural communities called Baha Ti'Bange. Love was the 2018 African Union Delegate for the G(irls)20 summit and the Spirit award winner for that year.

Love Nyaaba

LUNGELWA MAMBESI GOJE
Location: South Africa

Lungelwa Mambesi Goje was born in Stellenbosch. She is a feminist and upcoming entrepreneur owning a hair business. In 2016 she was chosen to be part of the Top 30 South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) Student Leadership Summit. She won an essay competition for women in Accounting held at her University and was one of the top 10 in GradStar Awards. She was the South African delegate at the G(irls)20 Summit in Germany in 2017 and was invited to the Women's Leadership Summit in Lithuania the following year. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting from the University of the Western Cape and is currently studying toward a Post Graduate Diploma in Accounting. In 2018 Lungelwa launched Sakha Iimbokodo bringing female mentors to support teeneaged girls on their learning journeys.

Lungelwa Mambesi Goje

MARINA CASTELLINO
Location: Argentina

Marina Castellino is 24 years old and lives in Argentina where she is studying Chemical Engineering at the National Technological University. She was elected student counselor until 2020. She was a delegate at the G(irls)20 Summit in 2016 in Beijing, China and participates in the G(irls)20 Global Steering Committee. She is also the President of the Leaders of Ansenuza Foundation, which empowers young women to become active leaders in their communities. Marina is committed to education and gender equality, and actively participates as a mentor in national programs. She has been a speaker in motivational events, volunteers regularly in social programs and is a member of the Global Changemakers community.

Marina Castellino

ZHILIN XIAO
Location: China

Zhilin holds a degree in Business and Global Studies from the University of Hong Kong. She worked in the office of Economic Adviser in the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva for a year after graduation and is currently working at United Nations Environment Finance Initiative on sustainable financing. With a business background and multiple internship experience in consulting firm, government agency, and social enterprise, she is dedicated to becoming a female pioneer in bridging the public and private sector to create positive social impact. Her interests span women's empowermentand international development. Zhilin is the founder of Change-Makers Network in Hong Kong which incubated more than 50 young female change makers in various fields. She was the Chinese delegate for G(irls)20 in 2018 and led the working group on digital inclusion for girls and women.

Zhilin Xiao

THE UNDERPINNING STUDY METHODOLOGY

Ten community consultations were held in 8 countries[6] led and facilitated by the Rising Women with on-hand support from volunteers for note-taking, photography, and videography. A total of 115[7] young women aged 18-30 were consulted during this process. Participants were drawn from a range of sectors including the private sector, civil society, education, health, and academia; and importantly, a large proportion were students.

In the planning and implementation stages of the community consultations, each Rising Woman followed a common structure to ensure the results would be comparable. They were provided with pre-agreed discussion questions and submitted their findings using a common debrief template.

The key discussion questions the study set out to address were:

1 What barriers do young women face in participating equally in decision-making?

2 What barriers are young women facing in their communities?

3 What models for engaging young women in decision-making processes have you experienced that are working?

4 How would life be different if the balance of power was more equal?

5 What can we do to promote the case for an equal balance of power? How do we make this ideal into a reality?

To supplement and explore the findings of the community consultations, G(irls)20 administered an online survey targeting the G(irls)20 community, including former G(irls)20 Summit delegates and all applicants to the 2018 and 2019 G(irls)20 Summits. 196 young women between the ages of 18-30 participated in this survey, of whom 75% were students. About half of respondents were employed and mainly worked in the private and non-profit sectors and academia.

ANALYSIS LIMITATIONS

GENERALIZING FINDINGS

This underpinning research study does not claim to be representative of the global population. Rather, it supports the study's intention to gather qualitative views and recommendations for overcoming well-documented barriers to young women's participation in decision-making spaces. Community consultation respondents participated on a voluntary basis and were recruited based on issue proximity and local access criteria. The findings of the supplementary online survey were not weighted to national populations.

GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The geographic distribution of the nine Rising Women and their community consultations cover around 40% of G20 countries. Consultation participants were contacted through the Rising Women's personal and professional networks using a variety of mediums to conduct outreach: Facebook, emails, posters, or through other non-governmental organizations.

Young African women constituted the largest group of respondents to the supplementary online survey.

Context is important and influences barriers young women face - and their resulting recommendations on addressing leadership gaps – reflecting local social norms, state legislation, policy, and programming in regards to prevalent gender roles for women.

FINDINGS: CLOSING THE LEADERSHIP GAP

GENDER NORMS & BIAS

There is significant research[8] to suggest how gender norms dictate attitudes, behaviour, roles, and capabilities of men and women. While studies[9] have found that normative frameworks are slowly changing, progress on all indicators of gender equality are lagging behind in global and national efforts, as shown by the latest data on gender progress in the Sustainable Development Goals. Women's participation in the global labour force during their most productive years (aged 25-54) is over 40% lower than men's participation, with young women more than twice as likely as young men to be excluded from labour, education or training.

The primary role of women as homemakers is still strong around much of the world, with married women half as likely as their husbands to be included in the labour force[10]. Economic and social conditions often determine how labour is divided between men and women, yet in almost all communities the burden of unpaid care work is still delegated to women and is intrinsically linked to what it means to be a woman[11].

Gender Norms: In the Household and School

As these gender norms regulate all aspects of a woman's life, particularly outside the household, barriers disproportionately affecting young women emerge at all levels of society. One community consultation noted how the culture of respect in Turkish households diverts decision-making to the eldest male relative; consequently, young women are then led to believe that their ideas are insignificant. When presented with leadership opportunities in these environments, young women frequently tend to shy away from them. Other consultations discussed how these biases are further reinforced in the school system, where teachers focus more on boys' achievements, particularly in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Gender Norms and Bias: Access to Leadership Roles

The Rising Women found the predominant perception of a woman's role in society is defined in terms of her household responsibilities and social pressure to become a good mother. This leaves young women with less time and little encouragement to pursue their professional ambitions. It also makes it difficult for young women to enter and navigate spaces as decision-makers in politics, corporate environments, finance, entrepreneurship, or local government. When young women strive to enter these higher and more influential spaces, they experience backlash for going against a woman's role in society. Those who are successful in these spaces and rise to a position of seniority and influence are often judged more harshly than men in both a professional and personal capacity. Since it is expected that men are the primary decision-makers and leaders of the community, young women's skills and qualifications are dismissed and they are not taken seriously as potential leaders.

Gender Norms and Bias: In the Workplace
Boys and men are traditionally given the space and permission to develop their leadership skills. This translates to greater opportunities in the workplace and clearer paths for career progression than their female counterparts. In comparison, young women are given less time and intentional training for building the necessary skills necessary for advancement, such as confidence, decision-making, and offering constructive opinions[12]. Instead, consultation participants stated they are often asked about their plans to get married, their age, and relationship status. Almost 85% of survey respondents supported this claim, believing that young women were more likely to get asked about their intentions for marriage and having children than young men[13]. These deeply embedded views of a woman's role in society is a significant barrier preventing younger women from developing leadership skills. It is also and is the major cause of gender discrimination in the hiring process and all pathways to economic inclusion.

MENTORSHIP AND ROLE MODELS
The need for role models and mentors
Many studies on young female leadership have underlined the importance of female role models[14], yet, consultation participants felt they have few role models to learn from and admire.

As young women get older, they will be confronted with the knowledge that entering male-dominated leadership spaces will be difficult. They will have to contend with blatant sexism and harassment or will experience first-hand the bleak statistics of female representation in senior leadership positions. Globally, women account for less than a quarter of senior roles and only 4.8% of Fortune 500 companies have female CEOs[15].

Visible female role models are one way to counteract this cultural barrier, break gender stereotypes, and allow younger women to assert the right to have a seat at the table[16]. They allow young women to see what is possible and can be a source of inspiration for those with high aspirations and confidence[17].

Consultation participants find authentically committed mentors to be in short supply. Young women want to be coached by established women in their field of work to help navigate career paths and nurture their ambitions[18]. Survey data underlines the personal importance of mentorship, with the 43% respondents believing it is very important to have a mentor to support with their career. Indeed, studies view mentors as a critical component or pathway in developing a young woman's networks and confidence levels, and for changing their own perception of what a young woman's role can be in society[19]. A mentor's willingness to share her experiences as a female leader can be used by the mentee to better understand how to overcome systemic barriers.

INTERGENERATIONAL GAP BETWEEN YOUNGER AND OLDER WOMEN

While there is a desire for greater mentorship opportunities, consultation participants felt that an intergenerational gap often exists between younger and older generations of women. Our survey data differs in this respect, with a majority of respondents claiming positive interactions with older female colleagues in the workplace and a smaller number experiencing distance between themselves and older women.

Both consultation participants and survey respondents who highlighted the intergenerational gap believe its primary cause is due to the limited number of senior positions available to women, particularly in male-dominated sectors such as business, politics, and technology. Community consultation participants and survey respondents both agreed that competition between women for any role is high and they believe older women are simply trying to look out for their own careers. They suggest that due to the belief that only a few women can hold positions of power, older women in such positions will be more inclined to hold onto influence instead of coaching a younger woman.

Although 84% of survey respondents believe that older generations of women should help them at work, the research also reflected the significant impacts of history and social norms on interpersonal dynamics between older and younger women. Oftentimes younger women find these factors cause miscommunication in place of mutual support. For example, the community consultations in South Africa noted the significant struggle older black women, especially those who emerged from life under Apartheid, overcame in order to enter the formal workforce and how this may influence their attitudes to younger women when in a position of influence. Having to work harder in the face of injustice to achieve their current position at work, these older women may believe their younger counterparts need to pay their dues and view their ambition and expectations negatively.

Young women seeking career support and a desire to create a network of women in the work-place may interpret these unspoken rules as a form of bullying. As one Rising Woman insight-fully commented, younger generations need to strike a delicate balance between pursuing their professional ambitions and navigating cultural norms. Young women need to approach older women in a sensitive manner. Older women, too, could be more open to accepting different value sets and roles for women in society. However, very little of the conversation on the barriers facing younger women focuses on helping women across the generations to overcome these nuances.
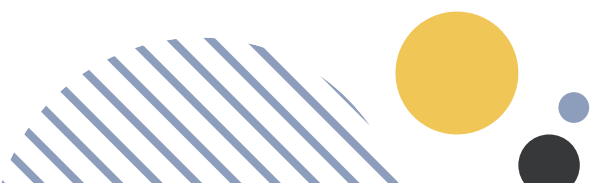
EDUCATION

Community consultations found that educational materials can be an effective way to challenge gender stereotypes before they are fully formed. The language used to describe women and men, the types of examples used to illustrate leadership, and even teacher training can perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes for both women and men. By addressing gender roles, power differentials, and masculinity, education can be a critical tool in actively challenging gender norms within a community.

Studies have shown that gender-sensitive pedagogy can lead to a change in teacher attitudes resulting in girls and boys being equally engaged in the learning process[20]. In doing so, girls have the opportunity to share their ideas and opinions, practice thinking through problems, and develop arguments – all of which builds their personal leadership capabilities[21]. This is especially significant as studies have found embedded social factors cause girls to lose the ambition to become involved in decision-making processes as they get older[22].

Self-development

The community consultations turned inwards and discussed the importance of women continuing to educate themselves. They felt women should have the tools and awareness to engage in an active learning process. To learn, unlearn, and relearn is important for challenging their own assumptions, biases, goals, solutions, and language.

INCLUSION OF BOYS AND MEN

All community consultations believed it was imperative to include boys and men as allies and stakeholders in closing the female leadership gap.

Boys and men hold both informal and formal leadership roles in a society, and as such, are well positioned to act as role models and agents of change to support young female leadership in the government, workplace, and households[23].

Aligned with current gender theory for creating transformative change, young men should be engaged as critical stakeholders when changing the landscape of leadership[24]. As both perpetrators and victims of gender inequality, there has traditionally been less emphasis on the effects of gender roles on boys and men, such as health, risk behaviours and mental health; however there is a growing movement to build on current gender research, policy, and programming with boys/men as relevant stakeholders.

Space for Dialogue and Engagement

Community consultation participants in all countries identified the need for more influential platforms where young women can share their opinions, problems, perspectives and knowledge. Whether in the household, politics, media, academic institutions, or workplace, young women do not have a space to debate and discuss women's inclusion at decision-making levels[25].

Evidence shows that informal spaces are critical in developing a young woman's decision-making skills. Like boys and men, young women need environments that allow them to practice forming and asserting opinions, making connections, and increasing confidence in their abilities[26]. While these informal spaces provide young women the opportunity to challenge gender norms, equal importance is placed on how well young women understand informal processes[27].

Community consultation participants recognize that in most cases, young women are completely excluded from key conversations between decision-makers which typically take place in male-dominated spaces. This is particularly important as a young woman's ability to access, negotiate, and create alliances in privileged spaces, as well as open fora, marks the extent to which their position can influence societal norms[28]. Without opening space for the voices of young women in decision-making, we will find that women's inclusion in civic and political action continues to be constrained during their lifetimes.

A NEW FUTURE

"Fewer wars, better family support. A bit more humanity perhaps."
– Survey respondent, Pakistan

We asked young women how the world would be different if unequal power dynamics between women and men were no longer an issue. Their vision of a gender equal world was full of hope and optimism, however also brought to light the simple freedoms that many young women do not have.

How would life be different if the balance of power was more equal?

If the world had an equal number of female world leaders and male world leaders, how would life be different?

When we asked survey respondents how they feel life would differ with equal global representation, their answers reflected a world where they would be treated equally and given the same opportunities as men and boys. They expressed high confidence in a woman's ability to positively impact the world, as was their commitment to ensure inclusive representation in our communities. **The main takeaways touched on:**

1. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND CIVIL IMPROVEMENTS WORLDWIDE

"In the world of today where women are greatly underrepresented especially in leadership roles and politics, having an equal number of female and male world leaders could very possibly change the course of the future, most likely for the better. If half the world is not left out of decision-making, all perspective would be taken into consideration while making decisions and that would help the world become more globalized and united." **– Survey Respondent, Pakistan**

I think the world would be more progressive, peaceful and industrious. Women are more likely to have society in mind when making decisions and they will try to choose solutions that benefit everyone. They are also less likely to be inclined to go to war, prioritizing education, health etc. and will probably be more focused on increasing their countries GDP and economy and improving citizen livelihoods. **– Survey Respondent, African Union**

2. AN INCREASE IN WOMEN'S SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS

"Women would be actually seen. When we have equitable public representation, young people finally have an example to follow." **– Survey Respondent, U.S.A.**

"The opinion of women would be valued at all tables where important decisions are made." **– Survey Respondent, South Africa**

"People would understand women more and it would give women an equal playing field. We'd have more opportunities to further our goals with less barriers." **– Survey Respondent, Canada**

3. GREATER FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS TO GENDER-RELATED ISSUES, INCLUDING CHANGES TO INSTITUTIONAL DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES, POLICIES, AND LEGISLATION

"There would be a system where gender issues can be discussed more fairly with an equal number of women and men leaders. Today, women are trying to defend their rights in a male-dominant system and to convince leaders about their rights, most of which are males. It is quite difficult to take a fair decision since a large part of the decision-makers are male. So decisions are taken mostly by those who are not the subject of the issue and sometimes are not even capable of comprehending the problem."
– Survey Respondent, Turkey

"The well-being and development of women would be equally important to that of men and the working culture/institutional processes/outcomes might be based on different premises and values."
– Survey Respondent, Europe

4. INCLUSIVE AND INTERSECTIONAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN TO PROVIDE A BALANCE OF PERSPECTIVES AND DIVERSITY OF LEADERSHIP STYLES

"Equal representation helps to get the diverse voices heard and represented in making policies which have widely varied impacts on different communities in the world. Life would be more inclusive, just and open in the world for everyone."
– Survey Respondent, India

"We might have more diversity of backgrounds. The female experience is different and by incorporating more women into the decision-making process, we are considering more viewpoints."**- Survey Respondent, Canada**

"Equity and empathy could be more present in our decision-making places and this would affect a whole generation."
– Survey Respondent, Brazil

RECOMMENDATIONS: GETTING RISING WOMEN TO THE TABLE

If we are serious about advancing the role of rising, younger women in leadership positions and in decision-making platforms across sectors, we need to think systemically. The findings of the community consultations consistently pointed to challenges along the systems change spectrum. The following recommendations cannot work in isolation or along a continuum of priorities. Systemic change requires governments, companies, civil society, and all institutions demonstrate real commitment to all of the proposed solutions. In undertaking this commitment, rising women and the value they offer for creating a more peaceful, prosperous and fair society, will be represented when decisions are made.

GIVE RISING WOMEN VISIBILITY
The challenges young women face in asserting their leadership are rarely openly discussed and remain largely invisible. Their challenges are everyone's challenges. Until we recognize young women's value, society will continue to miss out on their critical contributions. All institutions would benefit from giving greater visibility to rising women as leaders and as equal participants who are invested in the future:

· Design spaces where rising women are encouraged to host debates, lead discussions on key decisions being taken in their communities, and connect with their peers;
· Facilitate knowledge sharing about the challenges and successes of rising generations of women across workplaces; and
· Support media and social media initiatives that highlight inspiring younger women, showing their leadership and celebrating the movements they build.

INVEST IN CLOSING INTERGENERATIONAL GAPS BETWEEN WOMEN
Women who have overcome systemic barriers and established themselves in work and community life should be the most open constituency for young women. It is important for the intergenerational exchange of knowledge and mentoring young women as they enter leadership and decision-making spaces. To close this intergenerational gap, it is recommended all government, academic, corporate, and civil society organizations:
· Commit to open discussion and measurement of intergenerational cooperation between women in workplaces across all sectors; and
· Invest in improving the effectiveness of intergenerational coaching and mentoring programs, emphasizing female coaches and mentors, and including measurement of the impact of non-financial incentives for established female leaders to support younger counterparts in being heard and in career advancement.

BUILD COMMUNITIES THAT VALUE RISING WOMEN

Society has tended to discount gender related issues - none more so than the challenges of rising women. The barriers young women face in asserting their agency is perceived as their own problem and not one that requires the attention of existing imbalanced power structures. Those most accountable for the problems must become part of the solution and collaborate with the millions of rising women who want to see a future that includes them. The Rising Women recommend several practical solutions to support building communities that value them:

· Create community spaces where younger and older women work together to spearhead discussions on issues and barriers to women entering leadership spaces, reflecting on past struggles and acknowledging contemporary ones;
· Incentivize and encourage boys and men to become active stakeholders and allies in initiatives to increase the prevalence of women in leadership positions; and
· Companies, governments and the media, in partnership with civil society, should invest in creating greater visibility for younger women in leadership positions explicitly, across sectors.

IMPLEMENT SECTOR SPECIFIC PRACTICES TO LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD EDUCATION REFORMS

School curricula and pedagogy at all levels (pre-primary, primary, secondary, and higher education) should:

· Openly address gender norms and stereotypes in an age appropriate context;
· Commit to research and prepare education materials that highlight female leaders, including young women, and create opportunities to reflect on their unique challenges, for use across subject curricula at all levels of the education system;
· Include boys and men alongside girls and women in the development of gender -responsive curriculum materials;
· Ensure boys and men are taught about gender inequality alongside girls and women; and
· Promote career paths based on economy-wide benefits, in a gender-neutral way, explicitly encouraging young women to consider science, technology, engineering, and mathematics career paths.

Schools should systematically provide opportunities for:

· Young women to participate in and lead student decision making;
· Demonstrating gender equality in their interactions with students and management of teachers, with published standards;
· Financial and digital literacy training;
· Sexual and reproductive health education; and
· Learning self-reflection as a proactive approach to understanding biases and privileges.

WORKPLACE MECHANISMS AND REFORMS

Although many rising women remain outside of institutions of employment, public and private sector entities can use their significant resources and capacity to lead change in communities and entire countries. Below are some practical solutions and investment opportunities that would go a long way to getting rising women to take their place in decision making spaces within a generation.

Public and private sector entities should implement policies that:
- Provide flexible hours for parents;
- Achieve burden sharing for unpaid care work, such as maternity and paternity leave;
- Require greater transparency and education to remove discriminatory hiring practices; and
- Ensure HR departments are safe spaces where harassment complaints are taken seriously and acted upon swiftly.

Public and private sector entities should invest in:
- Intentional programs to help young women progress in their careers;
- Education to ensure senior directors and managers in organization are treating rising women equally to men and older female employees;
- Coaching programs to connect young women with older established women; and
- Facilities and practices that allow working mothers to remain employed.

CONCLUSION

Opportunities to become recognized as leaders are limited for women, let alone younger women. The community consultations findings offer a better sense of the challenges young female leaders are currently facing in their communities, as well as important areas that require a greater focus, including research and measurement. There is a significant literature gap on the effectiveness of leadership programs for young women and the different pathways they need to develop their leadership qualities. Whilst much has been said by researchers about the male-female dynamic, there is a distinct lack of research on the intergenerational gaps reported by Rising Women between women of different age cohorts and the profound impact this phenomenon has on the ability of young women to create networks and demand age- and gender-equitable leadership policies.

One unanticipated benefit of the design of the study underpinning this paper is the safe space the community consultations offered. In many cases for the first time, participants were able to speak freely and exercise their voice on the challenges and nuances facing rising women in asserting their agency and leadership. This highlighted how under-represented 50% of all younger people are, since many expressed relief in being fully heard and supported by their peers on these issues. The consultations themselves created the framework for an empowering experiential tool and presented a valuable lesson for creating spaces led by young female leaders and their peers, where their ideas can flourish.

As we move forward to better understand what is needed to fill the vacuum of moral leadership around the world, it is vital that we include young women in these discussions. The diversity of young women's experiences, their continued marginalization and their role in building the future they will need to adapt to places them in an ideal position to discuss systemic challenges and offer innovative and workable pathways to remove the barriers of structural inequality.

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