



# **ACTION STRATEGIES TOOLKIT:**

INCREASING THE  
PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN  
NON-TRADITIONAL SECTORS



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**



**APEC**  
CHILE 2019

# Acknowledgments

This publication is part of Chile's 2019 APEC deliverables under the Women, SMEs and Inclusive Growth Priority.

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# Action Strategies Toolkit at a Glance

## **Rationale**

Gender occupational segregation has a large impact on economic growth “as it depresses labor force participation, and productivity, by limiting the economically optimal matching of workers’ skills with jobs” (Glynn, 2018). It is also considered as one of the major contributors to the gender wage gap.

The mining, transport and energy sectors have struggled to attract and retain greater numbers of women. In 2017, women accounted for 8,5% of the mining workforce in Chile and 19.6% in Canada. While the Transportation sector represents an average of 20% of jobs in each of the APEC economies, women account for less than 20% of them (APEC, 2017a). According to McKinsey Global Institute (2018), if women were to participate in the economy identically to men, they could add as much as \$28 trillion or 26% to the annual global GDP by 2025.

## **What is the purpose of this toolkit?**

This Toolkit is designed to assist economies in the development and implementation of effective gender diversity strategies, with the purpose of attracting, retaining and promoting talented women in traditionally male-dominated sectors of the economy.

## **Who Should use this Toolkit?**

The primary beneficiaries are policy makers, advisors and anyone involved in policy making and implementation. This toolkit would also be useful for businesses and industries where women are underrepresented, helping them to both improve recruitment practices and retaining women in their sector. This toolkit may also be useful for academics, non-governmental organizations, as well as women’s organizations.

### **What are Non-Traditional Sectors?**

While the scope of what constitutes a non-traditional sector, industry or occupation differs across economies according to its culture and customs, for research purposes a non-traditional sector is understood as one in which 25% or less of those employed across the field are women (US Department of Labor, 2019). This toolkit focuses particularly in the mining, transportation, and energy sectors.

### **How was the Toolkit Developed?**

The research considered literature review, in-depth interviews with relevant actors and the assessment of initiatives and policies that allow women to join, prosper and succeed in non-traditional sectors of the economy. The analysis identified a list of best practices and recommendations, related to certain stages of an employee's life cycle - Attraction, Retention and Development - that should be followed to overcome the underrepresentation of women in those industries.

# Chapter One: Women's Participation in Mining, Transportation and Energy Sectors Within APEC Economies

Across APEC economies and at a global level, women continue to be underrepresented in traditionally male-dominated sectors of the economy. Several occupations are still segregated by gender, with men being disproportionately distributed in jobs that tend to have higher salaries, while women are concentrated in lower paid, feminized jobs<sup>1</sup>. (Smith, 2013)

APEC is aware of the unequal distribution of women in these industries and is committed to tackle the several obstacles that limit women's economic empowerment in non-traditional sectors. Women's participation in male-dominated industries is hindered by "low expectations, insufficient awareness, limited access to critical skills, inadequate advancement opportunities, and unequal policy structures" (APEC, 2015, p. 1)

Even though significant efforts have been made over the last decades to increase the participation of women in non-traditional sectors of the economy, female employees still face numerous barriers when it comes to access, career development and retainment.

Below, a panoramic overview is systematized, illustrating the multifaceted challenges that women across the APEC region face in non-traditional sectors, specifically in Mining, Energy and Transportation. It is important to note that not all APEC economies collect data about women's participation in these sectors, which underpins the importance of collecting and reporting sex disaggregated to ensure visibility of these issues.

## *Mining*

- The estimated economic participation of women in all APEC economies in the mining industry is less than 20% (Rodriguez and Lay, 2018, as cited in Campero et.al, 2019 )
- In Chile, women in mining account for 8,5% of the workforce (Sernageomin, 2018).

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<sup>1</sup> Feminized jobs are the occupations in which the number of women exceeds the number of men. Examples of feminized occupational areas are services, clerical roles, personal care, among others.

- While women account for the 42% of the workforce in Australia, in the mining sector they account for 16.1% (Connell & Claughton, 2018)
- Interestingly, whereas women are underrepresented in mining at a global scale (15%), in illegal and informal mining women account for over 50% of the workforce (Lahiri-Dutt, 2012)

### *Energy*

- Women represent almost a third of the workforce in the renewable energy sector (32%), and they are mostly concentrated in administrative roles rather than in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) related jobs. (IRENA, 2019)
- The gap is even wider in the global oil and gas industry, where women account for the 22% of the workforce. Women represent 27% of the entry level roles in the sector, while they comprise only 17% of senior and executive positions. Furthermore, only one out of 100 CEOs in the oil and gas industry are women. (Rick et al 2017 as cited in IRENA 2019)
- In Japan, women represent only 13.8% of the total employment at the electricity, gas, heat supply, and water industry (Statistical Handbook of Japan 2018 (2018): p. 126)
- Women account for 9% of senior management in the power and utilities industry in the Asia-Pacific region (EY Global, 2019)

### *Transport*

- Transportation jobs represent between 10-20% of APEC economies' workforce, while women occupy less than 25% of the roles in this sector. (DevTech Systems 2012 as cited in APEC 2015)
- As an example of women's underrepresentation in Transportation, in the United States women account for 13% of the workforce in this area. (APEC, 2015)
- In addition to women's low participation in this sector, gender inequality is also present in transportation systems throughout APEC economies. Problems such as public transport coverage, high costs and safety issues hinder women's equal access to transportation. (APEC, 2015)
- In Peru, women's participation in the Transportation Industry accounts for 9% (IADB, 2016),

and starting in 2021, women in Russia will be allowed to become professional truck and bus drivers (IRU, 2019)

Despite women's access to non-traditional sectors having increased over the years in most APEC member economies, there are still several practices that discourage women's entry to these industries. More than a half of the economies of the region impede women's participation in mining (13), construction (16) and in occupations that are physically demanding (16). (APEC, 2015)

When it comes to conditions for career advancement, progress is still insufficient within APEC economies. Efforts to ensure women's return to work after taking a career break or maternity leave are still limited, with fewer than half economies of the region dictating laws that "guarantee a woman's return to an equivalent position after maternity leave; mandate equal pay for men and women doing work of equal value; and grant paid or unpaid parental leave and tax deductions for childcare payments." (APEC, 2019, p. i)

There are significant gaps in work legislation, which ultimately prevent women in non-traditional sectors of the economy to reach their full potential. Across APEC economies, one of the main barriers that persist are the insufficient support systems that guarantee women's reconciliation of domestic and care work with their careers. (APEC, 2015)

In male dominated industries, a predominantly masculine and uninviting environment deter women to access and continue a career in areas such as Mining, Transportation and Energy. Even though conditions are changing across the world, including in APEC economies, women usually feel rejected and discriminated in male-dominated sectors (APEC, 2015)

In the following chapters, this Toolkit aims to describe these challenges in depth, and at the same time, identify relevant examples of good practices across the region. This exercise intends to provide a basis for further research development, as well as serving as a catalyst to take actions to promote gender equality in non-traditional sectors of the economy.

## Chapter Two: Attracting Talented Women in Non-Traditional Sectors

Attracting female talent in traditionally male-dominated industries requires overcoming cultural barriers, unconscious gender bias, and practices that have created invisible barriers that limit women's participation in the workforce. Despite efforts over the last decades, women are still underrepresented in non-traditional occupations.

To overcome the challenges in these work settings, evidence has identified several strategies, such as ensuring recruiting processes are free of gender bias, promoting female role models at career fairs, implementing gender quotas, pairing young women with mentors, and approaching colleges for recruitment joint actions, among others.

Recommendations and best practices:

### *I. Challenging gender stereotypes*

In order to attract more women to male dominated sectors, it is vital to conduct research to understand the underlying causes and factors that influence women's decisions and career choices. Examining what affects women decision making processes can shed light on why women continue to be severely underrepresented among certain careers fields such as STEM.

Additionally, intersectionality studies on occupational segregation are still underdeveloped. Tessa Wright's book (Ms. Wright is a senior lecturer in Human Resource Management at the Centre for Research in Equality and Diversity at Queen Mary University of London) "Gender and Sexuality in Male-Dominated Occupations", provides an original contribution to women's experiences in the Transportation and Construction sectors, which could be followed in order to explore the possible intersections of gender, socio-economic class and sexuality in male-dominated industries.

Pairing young women with mentors, specially undergraduates, offset their concerns about perceived skills and myths about women in non-traditional roles. Studies have proven that female mentors have a positive impact in promoting aspirations to pursue engineering careers by increasing women's sense of belonging and boosting their confidence. (Fort, 2005)

Including female role models at career fairs gives them visibility, in sectors where women experiences and stories tend to be concealed by their overwhelming low participation. Most male-dominated work environments maintain male models of career progression, and giving more space for women to share their stories has the potential to inspire young girls who had never been exposed to women working in non-traditional sectors.

Examples include:

- The Alberta Government in Canada issued different materials under the Stories to Inspire initiative, which seeks to advise women interested in joining non-traditional careers. The publication debunked myths and preconceptions swirling around working in these occupations, and provides practical advice and helpful resources through the lens of different women who share their stories of working in non-traditional occupations.
- The non-profit Women in Aviation International celebrates a 'Girls in Aviation Day'. The worldwide initiative, which targets girls age 8 through 17, hold events in Australia and the United States, among others, to introduce them to the career and lifestyle possibilities in the aviation world. Familiarizing young girls with aviation is absolutely crucial, not just to inspire future female pilots but to debunk common myths and stereotypes.

## ***II. Implementing gender-sensitive processes and instruments to actively attract women to work in these industries.***

Revising recruitment and appointment policies to ensure they are gender-sensitive is key to foster gender equality in male dominated sectors of the economy. Gender mainstreaming in human resources policies, which includes, for example, training in unconscious bias and promoting the use of standardized structured interviews, contributes to ensure that those involved in the recruiting

process (advertisement, candidate sourcing, selection criteria and selection committees) are equipped with skills on gender analysis.

Establishing gender diversity recruitment targets and/or quotas has proven to have positive results. Companies are going public about having quantifiable goals, and are actively targeting women in job openings. For example, taking diversity into account when drafting role descriptions contributes to attract diverse talent and increase the entry of women to non-traditional sectors.

Examples include:

- In 2016, the Australian mining company BHP made a pledge to achieve gender balance in their workforce by 2025. To accomplish the **'50:50 goal'**, BHP has worked with its suppliers, re-designed their production processes to make jobs less physically demanding and implemented flexible working conditions. In addition, the company has hosted open debates to respond to concerns about their parity goal which allows workers to feel comfortable with the company's aspirations. Since the pledge's announcement, the number of female employees has increased from 17.6 to 22.4 %.
- The Victorian Government in Australia developed the **'Recruit Smarter'** project to develop inclusive recruitment practices and address unconscious bias in recruitment. The initiative runs different pilot interventions, involving a total of 3,341 applicants. The exercise included two trials of targeted recruitment via modified language use in job advertisements, a CV de-identification program (approach to reducing this potential bias is to remove personal information that is unrelated to an applicant's capacity to fulfil the role), and the provision of training to address unconscious bias. As a result women were 8% more likely to be shortlisted and hired after.

### ***III. Collaborating with key stakeholders***

Strengthening relationships between key stakeholders in order to develop and implement initiatives that both: a) increase the visibility and exposure of inspiring women working in male dominated industries, and b) encourage young women to pursue non-traditional careers; are crucial to attract

more women into these industries. For instance, approaching high schools and colleges for recruitment joint actions.

Examples include:

- In Indonesia, the **‘Women in Mining and Energy (WIME)’** strategic hub was created with the purpose of establishing strategic partnerships with companies, government and other relevant stakeholders “through education and knowledge management to benefit advocacy efforts on gender in the mining and energy sectors” (WIME, 2019). The organization offers a female graduate mentorship program to encourage young women to enter a career in these sectors. Additionally, they host public discussions to raise awareness about the problems faced by women in mining and energy.
- **‘Women in Trucking’**, an NGO that works to support women in the trucking industry, joined a regional chapter of the Girl Scouts of America (Chicago and Northern Indiana) to sponsor a Transportation Patch, awarded to scouts who fulfil a specially designed curriculum oriented toward careers for women in transportation. The purpose of the Transportation Patch is to expose young girls to the field and for them to learn about careers as drivers, managers and other roles in transportation.

## Successful cases to highlight

***Case 1: Pedagogical Toolkit:*** Finning South America’s ‘Juan José Latorre Benavente Educational Complex’ in Antofagasta, Chile, and the women’s NGO ComunidadMujer implemented a pilot program to increase the number of women pursuing STEM related careers. After 3 years of collaborative work with students, parents, educators and government representatives, they published a **‘Toolkit’** with suggestions on activities on how to initiate conversations about gender inequality in all school subjects, from mathematics to physical education. The activities helped students to become aware of inequalities within the household, as well as gender biases when opting for a career. The intervention also proved successful in increasing the number of women choosing electricity and mechanics related careers from 18 to 40% (Finning, 2018).

**Case 2: *Girls Experiencing Engineering (GEE)***: (University of Memphis, United States) It is an interactive **‘summer program’** focused on middle and high school students that seeks to boost young women’s confidence and increase their interest and awareness of the wide range of job opportunities that STEM fields offer. Girls can choose from a variety of engineering sessions as well as discipline specific classes. Since its creation in 2004, the GEE program has engaged 1,501 students (including 1,016 unique participants, as nearly 1/3 are repeat attendees), nearly 750 teachers, and over 300 peer mentors. Of the tracked former participants who have graduated high school, 98% are attending college and 35% are majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math. The project has been recognized by INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine as one of 2018's top Inspiring Programs in STEM. (The University of Memphis, 2019).

# Chapter Three: Retaining Talented Women in Non-Traditional Sectors

The reconciliation between work, personal and/or family life is a challenge for governments and businesses. Juggling work, domestic and care responsibilities, and personal commitments is usually arduous for all workers, but especially for women, who carry out the bulk of unpaid work. Accordingly, the fact that women have a greater workload than men when considering unpaid work “represents a major barrier to women’s equal participation in the formal workforce” (Smee & Martin, 2016, p.2)

Evidence has shown that the different strategies and actions implemented by private companies and governments to successfully retain women in their organizations are related to one or a combination of the following factors: 1) Promoting an inclusive work culture, 2) promoting balance between work and personal life, and 3) facilitating flexible work patterns.

Recommendations and best practices:

## ***I. Promoting an inclusive work culture.***

Promoting diversity brings opportunities to private companies and governments to improve their performance as well as increasing employees’ work satisfaction and engagement. Research shows that diverse teams enrich and widen common approaches to problem solving. Diverse and inclusive organizations, in terms of gender, age, sexual orientation, background and culture, are more successful in retaining workers (Ali, Metz and Kulik, 2015); boost productivity and maximize talent (Sabharwal, 2014), and are more innovative (Lorenzo et al., 2017).

Evidence shows that diverse teams offer better and more creative solutions, which ultimately benefits companies (Larson, 2017) (Tadmor, Satterstrom, Jang & Polzer, 2012). For the functioning of a diverse workforce, it is also key to foster an inclusive workplace culture that supports women’s career advancement providing flexibility to manage their different life stages.

Examples include:

- Male-dominated industries have been designed to accommodate men. Recognizing that women and men face different safety risks, is crucial to improve women's working conditions in non-traditional sectors. The '**Gender Smart Safety Solutions**' program by Papua New Guinea Business Coalition for Women offers a variety of tools to help business make its workplaces safer for women, thus increasing their retention. Through training and consultancy, the program offers guidance on creating a gender smart safety strategy model through risk assessments tools, information documents, toolbox talks, and a tailored framework and standards.
- The Chilean CODELCO state-owned company has established a '**Gender Working Group**' within the company which has designed several strategies that aim to create a more gender inclusive culture. In this line, they have created guidelines and protocols to prevent sexual harassment, such as gender-appropriate bathrooms, changing rooms, appropriate work gear, (PPE), as well as rooms for nursing and storing breastmilk.
- Tackling sexual harassment in male-dominated industries has proven to be pivotal for the retention of female workers. In this line, The '**Ship Operations Cooperative Program**' from the U.S Merchant's Marines, created a best practices guide to promote an inclusive work culture and prevent sexual harassment. This guide, targeted at workers, aims to raise awareness on sexual misconduct and shares examples on how to achieve a welcoming environment for women. The guide uses direct and simple language to address key definitions, 'do's and don'ts', as well as report and response mechanisms.

## *II. Promoting balance between work and personal life*

Some initiatives that have proven to be effective in facilitating the retention of women in the workplace are related to implementing mechanisms which stand as key facilitators, such as paid parental leave and childcare.

Encouraging the creation of networks to share experiences and to learn about maternity, has proven to strengthen the permanence and ensure the rapid return to work of employees after taking maternity leave.

Examples include:

- The Japanese petroleum company JAPEX, has implemented initiatives focused on '**work-life balance**'. The company offers childcare support programs and a flex-time system which

includes setting specific days to leave early. JAPEX also has set a KPI on reducing overtime in all departments.

- **‘Daimler Trucks North America’** has been recognized by Women in Trucking as one of the top companies for women to work at. The company promotes work-life balance by offering flexible working schedules and paid maternity leave. Additionally, they champion gender equality with mentorship programs and a variety of training opportunities for women, and they actively recruit women to compensate the lack of female talent in the industry.
- The Australian gold mine ‘St Barbara’, has put in place advanced practices around paid parental leave, such as the ‘Parental Support Network’ initiative, where employees that have taken parental leave provide support and information to other employees relating to pregnancy, community programs, childcare and information on tips about returning to work. The company has seen an increase in the proportion of women returning to work after a period of parental leave, from 50% between 2007 and 2009, to 100% between 2009 and 2016.

### ***III. Facilitating flexible working conditions***

Flexible working arrangements give employees the ability to have control over when, where and how work required by their employer is carried out. Some common examples of flexible working arrangements include: flexible work hours, reduced work week, job sharing, part-time work, purchased leave, and remote work or working from home; which are correlated with increased productivity and employee retention.

Examples include:

- The Workplace Gender Equality Agency is an Australian Government statutory agency which works directly with employers promoting and improving gender equality in their workplaces. It has developed a comprehensive set of resources to help employers to take a strategic approach to workplace flexibility. The AWGEA created a **‘toolkit for managers’** that are willing to implement flexible working in their companies. The document contains details on different flexible working arrangements and steps to successfully navigate the

challenges that managers and employees may face during the transition from traditional to flexible working.

- In Malaysia, the **'TalentCorp Career Recovery Program'** (CCP) aims to increase the participation of women in the workforce by encouraging employers to recruit and retain women after taking a career break. The Back to Career Program scholarship is structured for employers to attract and retain Malaysian women who have been in professional breaks for more than six months. In addition, in 2018, TalentCorp launched the inaugural Career Comeback Reignite award to recognize employers in Malaysia who actively recruit returning women to their careers. Since its launch, 820 women returned to work under the CCP.
- Going back to work after taking a career break has proved to be challenging for returners. In light of this, General Motors (USA), with the initiative **'Take 2'** created a reentry program in partnership with the Society of Women Engineers and iRelaunch. The program consists of a 12-week internship for women, as well as men, with technical backgrounds in vehicle engineering, manufacturing engineering, manufacturing operations, finance and IT. The program targets applicants that have taken career breaks for two or more years. Interns receive training, professional development and networking opportunities while working on GM engineering programs. The program has a high placement rate after interns finish their 12 week course.
- MAERSK (International) is committed to promoting talented women, taking into consideration the different roles women play, particularly their role in relation to family and parenting. The company promotes **'work flexibility initiatives'** to assume personal and family responsibilities. Since 2016 the company has offered a global minimum of 18 weeks full paid maternity leave and the option to work 20% less hours at full pay for up to six months within the first year of childbirth or adoption.

# Successful cases to highlight

**Case 1: Viva Energy Company (Australia):** The energy company has implemented a variety of **‘ground-breaking initiatives’** to increase female representation across the organization, especially in non-traditional areas. The company’s Geelong Refinery operation set and achieved a 50/50 male/female intake goal for the first time in 2017. It offers family-friendly and flexible working arrangements such as job share, time in lieu, telecommuting, career’s leave, purchased leave, domestic violence leave and unpaid leave. The company also stands out for its superannuation policy to help improve the retirement balances of working parents. “Whilst on parental leave (unpaid, paid or half pay leave) employer superannuation contributions will be paid at the full time equivalent base salary for the full period. In addition, part time employees will receive employer superannuation contributions at the full time equivalent base salary for a period of 5 years after the birth date of their child” (Viva Energy).

**Case 2: Certification on Chilean Norm 3262: Gender Equality and work, life balance (NCh3262), Government (Chile):** In 2012, Chile issued a national standard on **‘Gender equality and work, life balance’** to guide companies interested in promoting gender equality and an inclusive workplace. It describes what a gender equality and work life balance management system should look like, based on co-responsibility (a shared responsibility between men and women). The volunteer certification, that follows the norm, shows a formal effort to start changing the organizational culture and to manage behaviors that have been normalized in the past. Once the certification takes place, enterprises receive a specific distinction, the Equality Conciliation Seal, which certifies that the company conforms to gender equality standards. Codelco has certified all of its work centers under this norm, becoming the only mining company in Chile to do so. Each division has developed tailored action plans to reduce the gender gap, with the ultimate goal of increasing women's labor participation from 9,7% to 11% by 2025

## Chapter Four: Developing Talented Women in Non-Traditional Sectors

The development of talented women in industries traditionally dominated by men is a challenge, not only because women are under-represented in these sectors, but also because they have to overcome other gendered dynamics within the organizational culture, such as assumptions, behaviors and perceptions, which limits them reaching to the top.

What shapes women's leadership experiences? While the root causes that explain what affects women's advancement in the workplace have been widely researched and debated, there are other critical factors that still need to be fully addressed. These include, the lack of social network or inner circles within the organization, competing priorities related to work-life balance, and misperceptions of a woman's ability to lead.

Measuring, tracking, and communicating progress on gender diversity statistics in top positions and its impact on business outcomes contributes to the argument of diversity and to push for organizational reforms

Recommendations and best practices:

### ***1. Promoting networking instances***

When developing programs to help women reach senior executive positions it is crucial to take into consideration the lack of networking opportunities that women face, especially in male dominated industries. By ensuring access to networking opportunities, women develop and maintain relationships with peers who may provide information or support resources, and it also contributes to create a sense of group and to develop a common identity and collaboration.

Examples include:

- Founded in 2006, **‘Women in Mining’** (WiM) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the employment, retention and advancement of women in the mining industry. With more than 10,000 members in over 100 economies and 50 local Chapters, WiM conducts research on women and women’s contribution to the mining sector, as well as offering a global mentoring program. The organization also carries out efforts to increase the number and visibility of women at mining conferences around the world through their **‘IWIMSpeakUp’** project, which works with major mining conferences and companies. It also helps women with travel and registration costs.
- **‘Women’s International Shipping & Trading Association’** (WISTA) is an international organization that works to build a global network and attract and support women that work in the maritime trading and logistics industry. Members have access to a vast network of women from over 50 economies around the world. WISTA works to promote gender leadership in the maritime sector through different events, workshops and also by facilitating professional development instances. Since 2017 WISTA International and the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers (ICS) offers seven annual scholarships for women who are interested in specializing in topics such as dry cargo, port agency, logistics, liner trades, among others.
- The Women’s Energy Council (Global) is an informal networking group focused on enhancing women’s careers by sharing their experiences and lessons learned. The Council concentrates on women’s education and career development, promoting mentoring and peer-to-peer networking opportunities. It is based on the belief that a more inclusive workforce not only enhances business performance but can also serve as an integral part of business strategy and planning. (Women’s Energy Council, 2019)

## ***2. Training for leadership***

Women still face several barriers to access leadership positions in the workplace. In order to break this glass ceiling, both private and public companies are taking steps to help women employees advance their careers via leadership training. The purpose of this kind of training is

to empower women, boost their self-confidence and enhance their management capabilities and leadership skills.

Examples include:

- The International Women in Mining Community (WiM) offers a **‘Women on Boards’ webinar program** to increase the number of women in leadership positions. The program, specifically tailored to the mining industry, allows participants to view its contents with unlimited replays. The Webinar topics range from a general introduction to boards and gender diversity to legal issues in mining. It also offers practical guidance on how to write a board CV and prepare for meetings.
- In 2018, The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), in alliance with Peru’s Ministry of Energy and Mining (MINEM) and the National Society of Mining, Petroleum and Energy, launched the **‘Program for Emerging Women Leaders of the Extractive Sector’**. The program, which lasted six months, was designed to strengthen female talent by enhancing the leadership skills of women with the potential to move into managerial positions. A total of 30 women from both the public (Ministry of Mining and its regulatory agencies) and the private sector (national and international mining and oil companies) participated.
- The **‘Promociona Project’** in Chile (which began in 2013 in Spain) is a one year program, which in addition to offering formal training includes cross-mentoring of female participants. Cross-mentoring means that managers that have a participant in the program will mentor another woman that works in a different company. Various mining and energy companies have registered to participate in the program. In Chile, results show that since its implementation, the program has had 96 participants and 44 companies, of which 30% of women participants that have been promoted to management positions.

### *3. From Mentorship to sponsorship: ascendant commitments*

Mentorship has been widely recognized as a great opportunity for women to get ahead in their careers. Having a mentor that provides coaching, valuable insights, support and sound career advice is seen as a driver for women's professional advancement. However, mentoring programs are not a first priority for most employers, even when they could be considered a core initiative to strengthen women's skills and career advancement. Studies have shown that women beneficiaries of mentorship programs consider these opportunities as a vital step in their careers, nonetheless, mentoring alone is still insufficient to close the gender gap in leadership positions. (Carter & Silva, 2010).

According to the Harvard Business Review (Ibarra, 2019) and Catalyst (Carter & Silva, 2010), sponsorships could reap more concrete benefits for women, as they are a more committed relationship in which a senior level staff member uses their influence to promote a junior employee by connecting them to their networks, facilitating opportunities for promotion and access to career-changing experiences. Sponsorship draws on high level executives that have a voice in decision making and can actively promote their protégés within the organization. (Carter & Silva, 2010).

Examples include:

- Amous International, Inc. is a technology company that works with Transportation Management systems. The company, alongside the **'Women in Trucking Association'**, established a program that aims to create opportunities for women in the supply chain, particularly in technology related roles. The program targets women from disadvantaged backgrounds, encouraging them to become logistics professionals by providing them with training and partnering them with high profile mentors.
- In 2009, Deutsche Bank launched a sponsorship program called **'Accomplished Top Leaders Advancement Strategy (ATLAS)'** with the aim of closing the gender gap in senior roles. ATLAS pairs promising women employees with members of the Bank's Executive Committee. The sponsors are expected to advocate for them and support them to fill senior level positions. Women protégés have reported boosting their confidence and enhancing their

capabilities, and the results show that the program has been effective: 45% of ATLAS women have been promoted to new or expanded roles.

## Successful Cases to Highlight

**Case 1: The Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power Company (Korea)** provides female employees with the opportunity to enroll in career management and skills development training through their Women's Leadership Program. From the inception of this program in 2005, the number of female managers has increased from 99 to 130 in 2017. In addition, the company has created a Gender Equality Committee to guarantee the settling of a corporate gender equality culture. Made up of 34 corporate members and 101 business site members, the Committee "provides on-site feedback while proposing policy for the improvement of the working environment for female employees and their utilization as valued team members". (Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power CO., LTD, 2018).

**Case 2: AGL Energy Limited (Australia)**, offers leadership **'development programs'** for emerging female leaders. The program combines different modalities such as group work, one-on-one coaching and workshops, which has resulted in reports of increased confidence and resilience from participants and promotions within 12 months of participating in the program. The company also offers specific programs, such as training for leaders involved in remuneration decisions, initiatives to address the drivers behind the gender pay equity gap including improvements to hiring practices and gender inclusion strategies such as talent programs to support the retention and career progression of women" (WGEA, 2019). Ground-breaking initiatives include career breaks for eligible employees, study leave and the establishment of a gender diversity employee network called, AGL Equality, which gives members access to educational workshops and events. An extension of this network has been created in operational sites to increase the representation of women. In 2018, the company achieved their proposed target of 30% of AGL non-executive Directors to be female.

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