

# A global snapshot: Women leaders and managers in employers' organizations





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## Women leaders and managers in employers' organizations

May, 2017

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Finally, we thank the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency-ILO Partnership Programme that provided funds to produce this report.

# Preface

In 2013, the Bureau for Employers' Activities of the ILO (ACT/EMP) embarked on a global initiative to collect data on women in business and management that resulted in the publication of a global report, *Women in business and management: Gaining momentum*. The report highlighted that women have been an engine for global economic growth but also pinpointed the remaining challenges and gaps to achieving gender equality in the workplace. It described the challenges faced by employers' organizations (EOs) in advocating the business case for gender equality to their member companies and providing advice, tools and good practices on why and how to promote women in management. The report also emphasized the need for EOs to undertake extra efforts to reach and support women-owned and led businesses. As a follow-up to the global report, regional reports were prepared for Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East and North Africa region. The reports were presented to the respective regional conferences held in Singapore (July 2015) and in Oman (February 2016). In May 2017, a report for Latin America and the Caribbean will be presented in Peru.

To build on this initiative, ACT/EMP sought to fill the data gap on the status quo and the representation of women in governance, leadership and management roles. EOs that improve gender diversity internally are better positioned to serve the needs of their members. EOs can also expand their membership base and network circles by attracting women business owners as members. Working to promote gender diversity offers an opportunity to enhance the image of the EO in the public arena and win the support of women business owners and leaders. Ultimately, advocacy for external change needs to be supported by internal change.

This survey report is coupled with another publication, *Promoting women in business and management: A handbook for national employers' organizations*, produced to provide practical guidance on what EOs can do to advance women's leadership in the world of business.

We hope this survey report will help to promote women in management and leadership positions across EO boards and secretariats and assist EOs in expanding their gender-related services to their membership and driving forward change.



**Deborah France-Massin**  
**Director**  
**Bureau for Employers' Activities**  
**International Labour Office**

# Highlights of survey findings

## *Women leaders and managers are gaining ground in EO secretariats. Women account for:*

- 46 per cent of employees in EOs
- 34 per cent of top management positions (e.g. chief executive officer)
- 38 per cent of deputy executive management positions
- 34 per cent of the responding EOs indicate gender equality or diversity statements are included in their human resource or other management policies.

## *Representation of women in EO governance structures remains a challenge*

- Only 7.5 per cent of responding EOs have women chairing the board.
- The majority of EOs have 10 per cent or fewer women on the board of directors.
- Only 8 per cent of EOs surveyed had gender-balanced boards.
- 42 per cent of EOs do not have funding mechanisms to support gender equality on boards and standing committees (30 per cent fund from their core budget while 21 per cent rely on external funds).
- Having official targets for gender balance on the EO's board of directors (the sixth most common mechanism cited by EOs) is used by three of the top five performing EOs in terms of ensuring representation of women on the board.

## *EOs are working to represent the voice of women*

- 37 per cent of EOs have organizations that represent the interests of women in apex decision-making body meetings.
- Only 7.5 per cent of EOs have a woman leading the apex decision-making body and women make up 82 per cent of deputy or vice positions.

## *Working towards gender equality among EO members*

- More data is necessary; 55 per cent of surveyed EOs did not know the gender of their enterprise members' chief executive officer.
- 8 EOs have a dedicated person responsible for working on gender equality among EO members.
- 78 per cent of EOs feel they could improve their gender-related services to members.
- Most EOs have established funding mechanisms for their activities that promote gender equality, with member companies using both their core budget and external funding.

# About the survey

An online survey of 108 EOs was conducted in English, French and Spanish between November 2016 and January 2017. This survey was initiated by ACT/EMP to ascertain the status quo and representation of women in governance, leadership and management roles within EOs and identify the challenges they face in promoting women within their own structures. This survey report adds to the research carried out for *Promoting women in business and management: A handbook for national employers' organizations*, which builds on policies and practices of EOs globally.

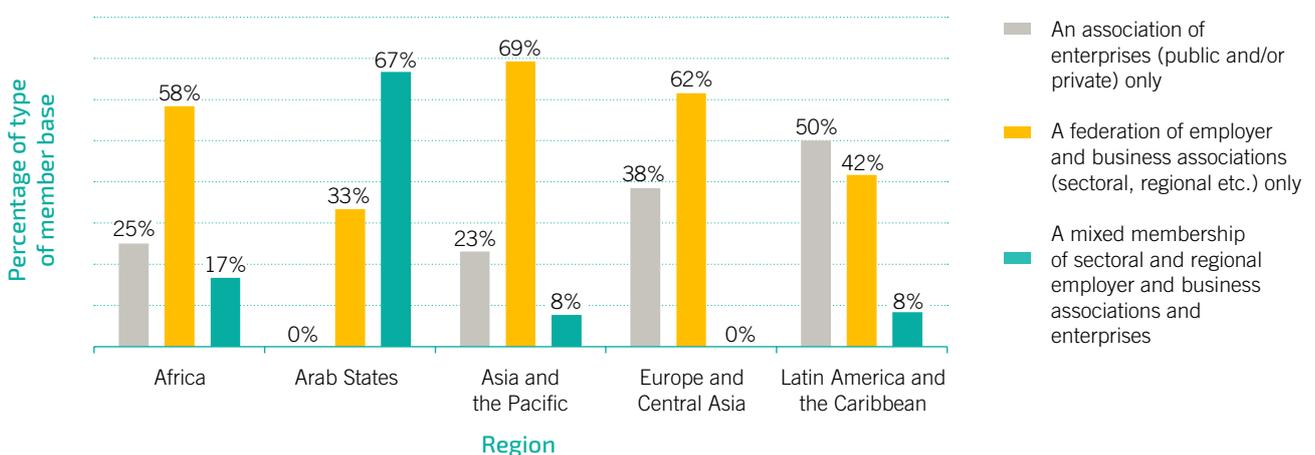
The survey assesses the participation of women in EO decision-making structures through questions on the gender composition of the following areas of the organization:

- the membership structure;
- the apex decision-making body;
- the board of directors and board committee structure;
- the secretariat (including executive management);
- services to members to promote women's leadership; and
- possible capacity limitations to promoting gender equality in its leadership and management.

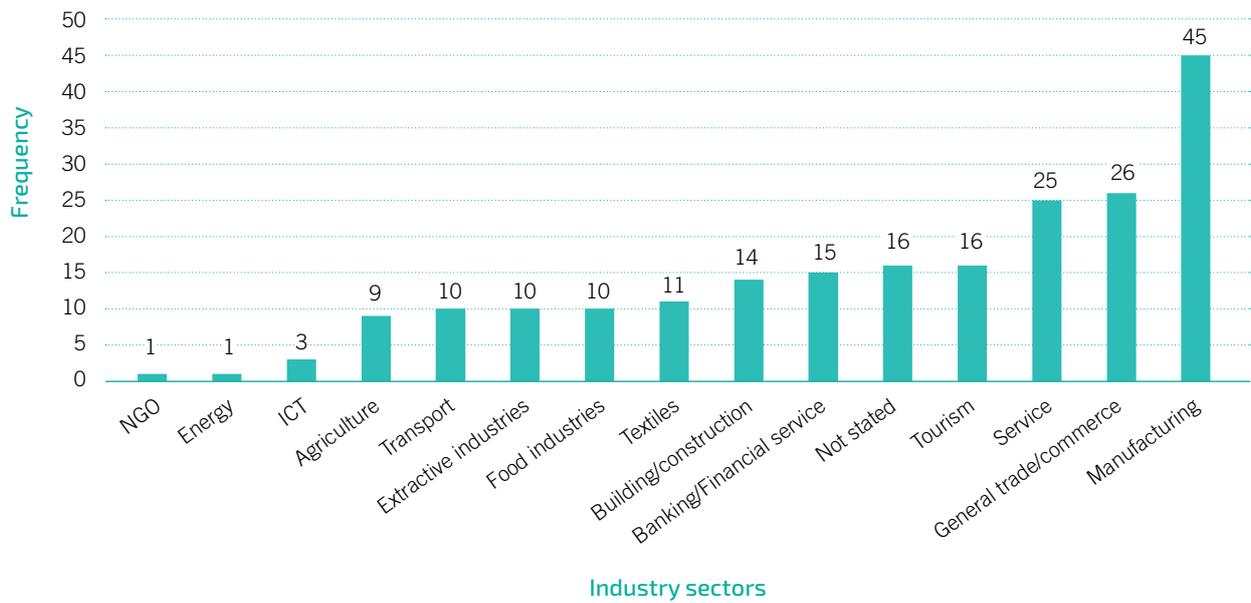
## About the sample

- 108 EOs were invited to anonymously respond.
- The response rate to the survey was 72 per cent (78 responses). However, of total survey respondents, 68 per cent (53 responses) were considered and analyzed in this study due to data gaps of incomplete survey responses.
- Geographical distribution of responses was as follows: Africa 12, Arab States 3, Asia and the Pacific 13, Europe and Central Asia 13, and Latin America and the Caribbean 12.
- Respondents included chief executive officers, presidents, directors, senior managers and advisors of EOs.
- Respondents from the Arab States were more likely to be made up of a mixed membership of sectoral and regional employer and business organizations as well as individual enterprises. The Latin America and the Caribbean region was more likely to have EOs that represent enterprises only. These differences may be due to national legislation, the structure of the private sector, the history of the establishment or the development of the EO (see Figure 1).
- The top three sectors represented by the EOs were manufacturing, including light industry; trade and commerce; and the service sector (see Figure 2).
- Over 90 per cent of the surveyed EOs represent medium-sized enterprises and 87 per cent represent large-sized enterprises. At the other end of the spectrum, micro-enterprises are represented by 62 per cent of the EOs surveyed.

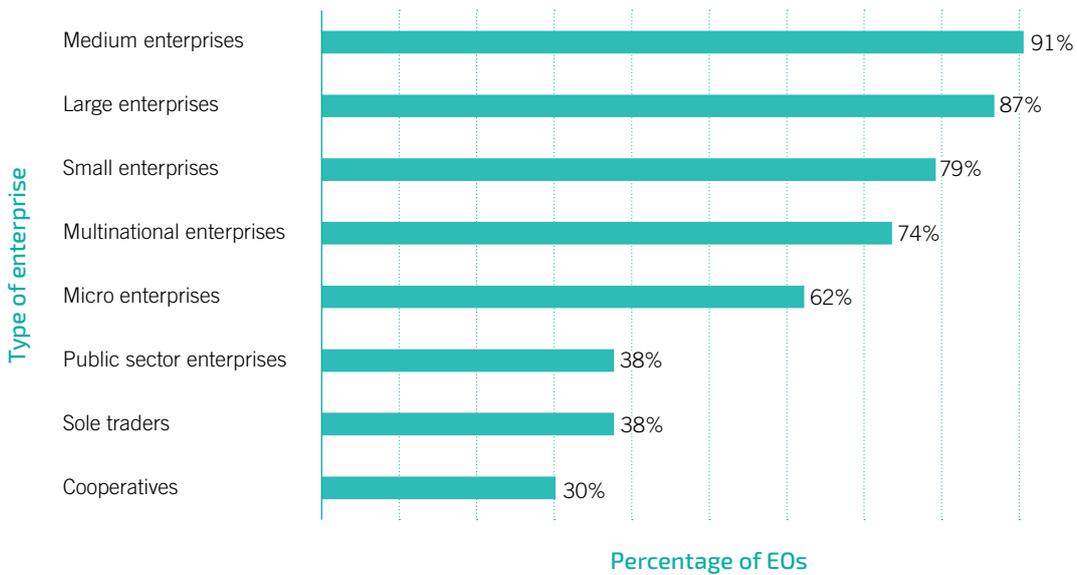
**Figure 1. Description of organization (by region)**



**Figure 2. The four largest industry sectors by number of EO members**



**Figure 3. Types of enterprises represented by the EOs**





# 01

## Gender equality in EO governance and internal structures

### 1.1 Women in EO leadership: How are they faring?

*Women leaders are gaining ground in EO secretariats*

On average, 46 per cent of employees in EOs are women. An encouraging 34 per cent of top management (e.g. chief executive officer) positions and 38 per cent of deputy executive management positions are held by women.<sup>1</sup> However, only 18.7 per cent of the top two positions in EO executive committees that manage the day-to-day implementation of the organization's strategic plans are held by women.

While these results are similar to those found more broadly in the private sector – where women tend to be concentrated in junior and middle management – the percentage of women in top management positions in EOs exceeds that found in enterprises where women account for around 21 per cent of all chief executive officers (ILO, 2015).

*EOs are taking initiatives to promote gender diversity internally*

Thirty-four per cent of the responding EOs reported having a gender equality or diversity statement in their human resource or other management policies. Some 78 per cent of the EOs have at least one mechanism extending beyond national legislation aimed at supporting work-life balance and greater equality in leadership and management for staff. These include flexible working arrangements, mentoring and training for staff on gender diversity. Table 1 summarizes the top five mechanisms.

However, more could be done. EOs suggest including child-friendly policies, positive discrimination, addressing male-dominated cultures and encouraging more dialogue around gender diversity to promote further internal change (see Table 2).

<sup>1</sup> Top management positions are normally the chief executive officer and deputy chief executive officer or chief financial officer.

**Table 1. Top five mechanisms/programmes/policies/initiatives that go beyond national legislation aimed at supporting work-family balance and greater equality in leadership and management for EO staff**

Type of mechanism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexible working hours for staff</li> <li>• Informal mentoring activities that include junior and senior staff</li> <li>• A sexual harassment policy and respective grievance procedure</li> <li>• Training for all staff in gender equality/diversity in the workplace</li> <li>• External promotion of the EO as an employer of choice for suitably qualified women</li> </ul>

**Table 2. Mechanisms suggested by EOs aimed at supporting work-family balance and greater equality in leadership and management for their staff**

EO suggested initiatives <sup>2</sup>						
<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Policies and practices</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement child and family-friendly policies (e.g. breastfeeding and childcare facilities)</li> <li>• Develop human resource policies that support flexible working arrangements (e.g. teleworking or working from home)</li> <li>• Ensure wage equality</li> <li>• Extend maternity leave beyond legal requirements</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Recruitment and retention</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use positive discrimination in recruitment and promotion to create gender balance</li> <li>• Promote professional development of individual employees</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;">Capacity building and awareness raising</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create dialogue around gender equality challenges</li> <li>• Promote a culture of equality that encourages the participation of women in management and leadership</li> <li>• Create family days when children can be brought to work to see the organization in action</li> <li>• Promote and report on gender equality and non-discrimination organization-wide</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	Policies and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement child and family-friendly policies (e.g. breastfeeding and childcare facilities)</li> <li>• Develop human resource policies that support flexible working arrangements (e.g. teleworking or working from home)</li> <li>• Ensure wage equality</li> <li>• Extend maternity leave beyond legal requirements</li> </ul>	Recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use positive discrimination in recruitment and promotion to create gender balance</li> <li>• Promote professional development of individual employees</li> </ul>	Capacity building and awareness raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create dialogue around gender equality challenges</li> <li>• Promote a culture of equality that encourages the participation of women in management and leadership</li> <li>• Create family days when children can be brought to work to see the organization in action</li> <li>• Promote and report on gender equality and non-discrimination organization-wide</li> </ul>
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## 1.2 Women on the board of directors of EOs

*A different picture at board level: Only 7.5 per cent of responding EOs have women chairing the board.*

In general, women are under-represented on company boards. EO board composition appears to differ little from that of their member companies. The ILO global report on Women in business and management found that roughly one third (30 per cent) of companies surveyed had no women on their boards, two-thirds had less than 30 per cent and only 13 per cent had gender-

balanced boards (with between 40 to 60 per cent women). Furthermore, only 13 per cent of companies had a woman as the chairperson of the board (ILO, 2015).

These findings are echoed by the EO survey where only 7.5 per cent of EOs had women chairpersons (see Table 3). Table 4 shows that EO boards of directors in the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean do not have any women chairpersons. Only 8 per cent of EOs surveyed had gender-balanced boards. The majority had 10 per cent or fewer women on the board of directors, while 11 per cent were all-male boards (see Figure 4).

<sup>2</sup> Entries may have been altered by the author to improve understanding, summarize and remove duplication.

Women are slightly better represented in board vice chairperson positions. While on average women hold 19.2 per cent of these positions, the survey found that the Arab States, and Europe and Central Asia lag behind with 11 per cent and 10 per cent of women in board vice chairperson positions respectively.

*EOs need more mechanisms to promote women's representation on boards*

All but three of the EOs indicated that they have at least one mechanism aimed at promoting women's representation on their board of directors. The most common mechanism is that all members of the EO can put forward nominations for board membership, creating opportunities for diverse nominations. The second most common is that the EO allows board nominations from other levels (beyond the CEO level) of membership management. While these mechanisms are often built into constitutions to promote democratic processes and expand the pool of candidates, few other measures exist to specifically promote gender diversity on boards.

Having official targets for gender balance on the EO's board of directors (the sixth most common mechanism cited by EOs) is used by three of the top five performing EOs in terms of representation of women on the board.

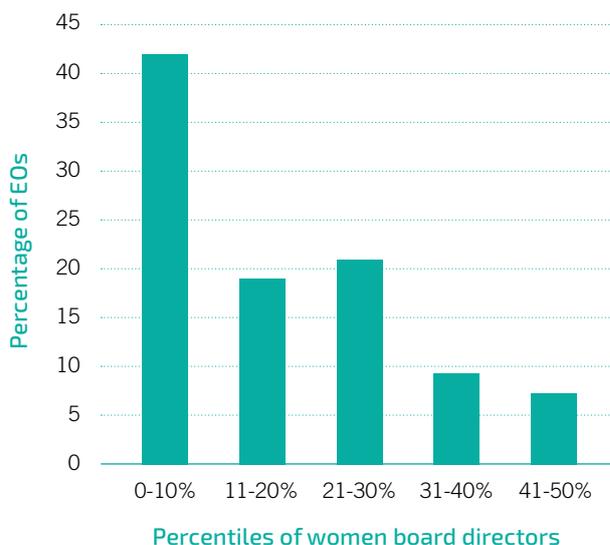
**Table 3. Representation of men and women in the leadership of EO boards of directors**

	Chairperson	Vice Chairperson (or equivalent)
	% of total	% of total
Women	7.5	19.2
Men	92.4	80.8

**Table 4. Representation of men and women in the leadership of boards of directors (by region)**

	Women (%)	Men (%)
Africa	17	83
Arab States	0	100
Asia and the Pacific	0	100
Europe and Central Asia	15	85
Latin America and the Caribbean	0	100

**Figure 4. Number of board members who are women**



**Table 5. Representation of men and women in vice chairperson or equivalent positions on boards of directors by region**

	Women (%)	Men (%)
Africa	19	83
Arab States	11	89
Asia and the Pacific	21	79
Europe and Central Asia	10	90
Latin America and the Caribbean	24	76

**Table 6. Top five mechanisms aimed at promoting women's representation on EO boards of directors.**

Type of mechanism
• All members of the EO can put forward nominations for board membership
• The EO allows board nominations from other levels of member's management beyond CEO level
• The EO facilitates training in leadership and board-readiness for women leaders
• The EO lobbies its members to nominate suitably qualified women for board membership

### 1.3 Women on EOs' standing committees or councils

#### *Women remain concentrated in lower level leadership positions in EOs*

The EO survey looked at the number of women-headed standing committees (i.e. committees/councils that are official, permanent and meet regularly) and found a significantly higher representation of women. Women account for 18 per cent of chairpersons and 26 per cent of vice chairpersons, a finding that is indicative of the increase in women's participation in lower level leadership positions. Standing committees are often charged with implementing already existing strategies or decisions, suggesting that women play a greater role

in implementation but not yet in decision-making. Only 9 per cent of the EOs have a standing committee that looks specifically at gender equality issues.

#### *What EOs are doing to promote women's representation on standing committees*

As with board representation, some EOs are taking deliberate actions beyond normal democratic processes to ensure that gender diversity is promoted within EO standing committees (see Table 7). Several capacity-building, strategic and policy initiatives are suggested by EOs to increase women's representation on boards and standing committees (Table 8). However, these initiatives need to be translated into practice to promote gender diversity and strengthen decision-making processes within the EO.

**Table 7. Top five mechanisms aimed at promoting women's representation on the EO's standing committees**

Type of mechanism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All members of the EO can put forward nominations for standing committees</li> <li>The EO allows standing committee nominations from other levels of members' management beyond CEO level</li> <li>The EO lobbies members to nominate suitably qualified women for standing committee membership</li> <li>The EO provides gender equality orientation for new standing committee members</li> <li>The EO has specific support for suitably qualified women to navigate procedures for membership of standing committees</li> </ul>

**Table 8. EO suggested initiatives for increasing and maintaining women's representation on boards of directors and standing committees**

Category	
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities for women CEOs to learn about the role of an EO board member.</li> <li>Hold workshops, training and coaching events to promote the gender equality of boards and standing committees.</li> <li>Provide training for EO members on gender equality to change mind-sets.</li> <li>Educate current EO management on gender equality and gender discrimination.</li> <li>Ask women to represent the EO at external events.</li> </ul>
Strategies and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a standing committee to focus on gender equality in the EO.</li> <li>Encourage and lobby membership to nominate women to participate in standing committees.</li> <li>Encourage women to apply for and accept leadership positions.</li> <li>Engage women's business associations.</li> </ul>
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop human resource processes that promote gender equality and measure progress.</li> <li>Develop internal strategies, action plans and results indicators to promote gender equality.</li> <li>Set quotas and targets for women's representation on the EO boards and committees.</li> </ul>



# 02

## Creating external change: Promoting gender equality among EO members

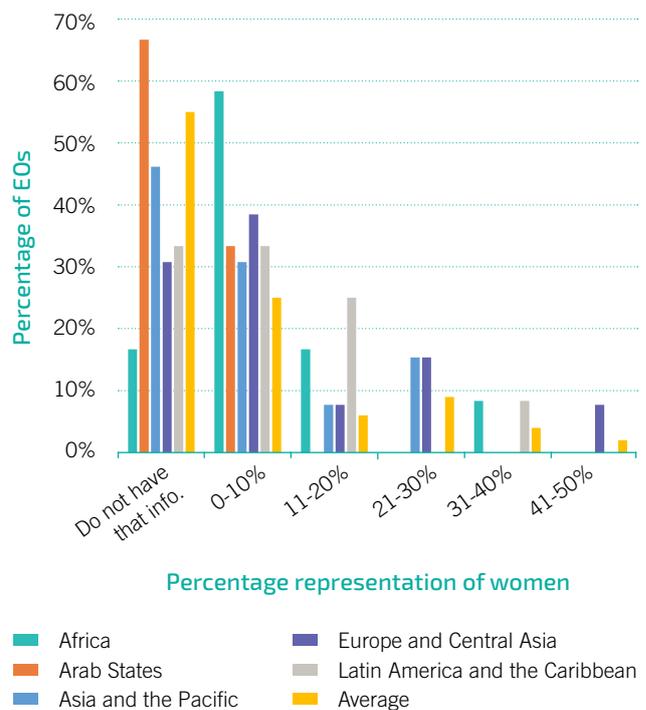
### 2.1 Are EOs reaching women-owned/run businesses?

#### Lack of data

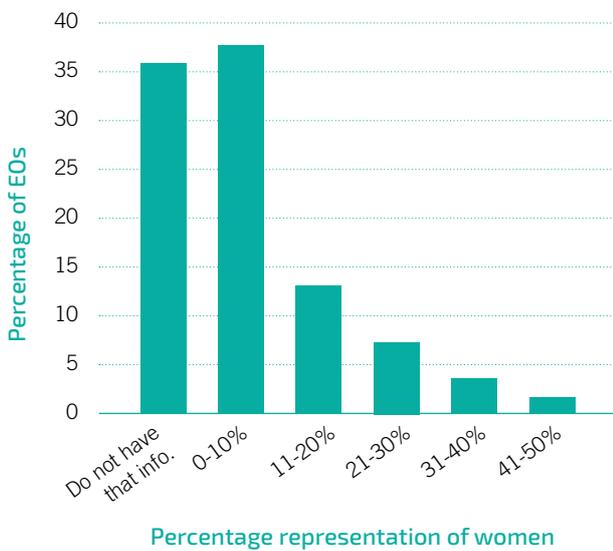
EOs can play a pivotal role in helping women leaders and business owners overcome gender barriers and promote gender diversity in leadership and management. Thus, it is critical to understand the gender breakdown of the management of EO members. Figure 5 shows that more than half (55 per cent) of surveyed EOs did not know whether their enterprise members were led by women. While in the Africa region, 83 per cent of EOs could report what percentage of enterprise members were headed by women, only 33 per cent of EOs in the Arab States had this information. Larger EOs were more likely to know the percentage of member enterprises headed by women, possibly due to greater capacity human resource capacity.

EOs whose members included sectoral and regional employer and business associations were more likely to know how many of those associations were led by women than how many enterprise members were led by women (Figure 6). Just over one-third (36 per cent) of EOs had no information about their sectoral and regional employer and business associations members.

Figure 5. Percentage of EO private/public sector enterprise members headed/led by women (by region)



**Figure 6. Percentage of sectoral, regional employer and business associations members headed/led by women**



## 2.2 Are the voices of women-owned/run businesses represented in EOs?

*Thirty-seven per cent of EOs have organizations that represent the interests of women during apex decision-making body meetings.*

While EOs may have limited access to women business owners or leaders, they are striving to represent the interests of women in EO apex decision-making bodies (such as general assemblies or annual general meetings). Thirty-seven per cent of EOs have designated organizations such as women’s professional or entrepreneur member-based organizations that represent the interests of women during the meetings of apex decision-making bodies.

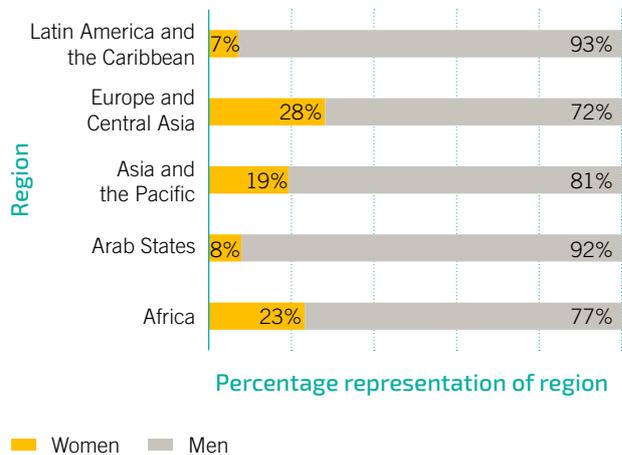
Consistent with earlier findings, only 7.5 per cent of EOs have a woman leading the apex decision-making body while women make up 18 per cent of deputy or vice positions (Figure 7).

Representation does not necessarily translate to voting power or influence over decisions for women-led and owned businesses.

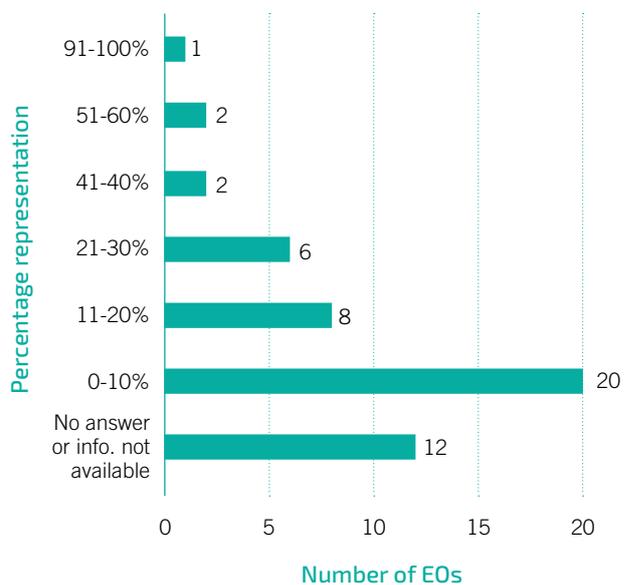
In addition, there is relatively low representation of organizations that are women-owned or led who can vote at the apex decision-making bodies of the responding EOs. Of the EOs that answered this question, or knew the representation of women entitled to vote, only 19 have over 11 per cent of women-led or owned member organizations and/or enterprises that are entitled to vote (Figure 8). This low representation is likely to reinforce

limited gender diversity in EO governance structures and perhaps hinder EO efforts to represent the voice of women-owned and led businesses.

**Figure 7. Representation of male and female deputy (or vice) positions within the apex decision-making body (by region).**



**Figure 8. Percentage of member organizations/enterprises represented or owned by women that are entitled to vote in apex decision-making bodies**



## 2.3 EO member services that promote gender equality

*Opportunities for women’s leadership and management in EOs are inextricably linked to the situation of female leaders and managers in member organizations and enterprises*

As well as having dedicated mechanisms to promote women in leadership and management positions, it

is important to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge required.

The survey shows that eight EOs have a dedicated person responsible for working on gender equality in the organization and another five EOs have a person who has dual responsibility for gender and another role. Only three EOs have a full team working on gender, while eight EOs indicate that it is considered everyone's responsibility. Nineteen EOs stated that no one was responsible for working on gender equality in the organization. Interestingly, EOs that do not have any human resources devoted to the promotion of gender equality are more than twice as likely to have a male chief executive officer (ratio of 11:5).

### *Members services on gender equality: a pivotal starting point*

Member services related to promoting gender equality not only play an important role in creating change in the private sector, but also within EOs themselves.

Supporting associations of business women to participate in EO programmes and networks is the most common initiative and activity that EOs regularly conduct to promote gender equality. The second most common initiative is social dialogue events on gender equality in leadership and management positions, and the third is to undertake research in this area (Table 9). These three initiatives are all linked to advocacy, which is commonly a core function for EOs.

### *Seventy-eight per cent of EOs feel they could improve their gender-related services to members*

Most EOs provided insightful and practical suggestions on how to improve their gender-related services to members (Table 10). These include:

- encouraging and supporting women leaders in member companies to become involved in the governance of the EO;
- advocating for role models in promoting women to management and leadership positions among member companies;
- increasing women's leadership and management skills through training and awareness raising events on gender equality; and
- generating and disseminating different types of research and information on the status quo of women in management and leadership positions in the private sector.

External member-targeted gender activities are more likely to be funded than those that are focused on promoting women into the ranks of management within EOs.

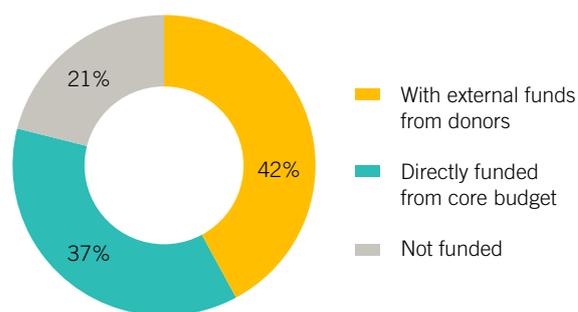
Forty-two per cent of EOs do not have funding mechanisms to support gender equality initiatives on boards of directors and standing committees (30 per cent fund from their core budget while 21 per cent rely on external funds). It might be that EOs that use their core budgets to fund gender equality initiatives use gender budgeting techniques and view such investments as a longer-term initiative.

In contrast, EOs have more established funding mechanisms for (using both core budget and external funding) activities that promote gender equality among their member companies (Figure 10). Given that one of the primary functions of EOs is to offer services to their members, it is not surprising that a core budget is allocated for gender activities with an external focus of providing member assistance rather than to promote internal change.

**Table 9. Top five initiatives and activities that take place on a regular basis (i.e. a minimum of once a year) that target members and are aimed at promoting gender equality**

Type of initiative/activity
• The EO supports associations of business women to participate in EO programmes and networks
• Social dialogue events around issues of gender equality in leadership and management positions
• Research of issues around gender equality in leadership and management positions
• Lobbying around legislation that promotes gender equality in leadership and management positions
• Promotional events to encourage women's membership of the EO

**Figure 9. Funding of initiatives to promote gender equality among EO members**



**Table 10. EO suggested initiatives to improve member targeted activities that promote women in management and leadership positions**

EO suggested initiatives <sup>3</sup>	
Policy and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a standing committee to discuss issues of gender equality and support to members.</li> </ul>
Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer capacity building on women in management and gender mainstreaming strategy advice to EO membership.</li> <li>• Conduct a training of trainers in the EO on gender equality promotion.</li> <li>• Support women with leadership and management potential (e.g. through gender equality workshops, training for effective leadership and mentoring).</li> </ul>
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicize good practices for promoting women in management and leadership and the benefits of gender equality.</li> <li>• Seek donor funding among EO members for initiatives to support promotion of women to management.</li> <li>• Partner with members and other stakeholders to promote and advocate for gender equality.</li> <li>• Liaise and partner with academia (e.g. carry out gender studies) to provide EOs with better information and data.</li> <li>• Collaborate with other EOs in the region to build a platform promoting gender equality.</li> <li>• Encourage women to run for and accept more managerial positions in the EO.</li> <li>• Encourage EO networking and dialogue on gender equality.</li> <li>• Reward companies who have good practices in promoting women in management and leadership.</li> </ul>
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight the work of women who have excelled in leadership and management.</li> <li>• Encourage the inclusion of gender dialogue into policies of member companies/ organizations.</li> <li>• Persuade more member companies to adopt and implement policies against sexual harassment.</li> <li>• Lobby for laws that support gender equality and fair employment practices.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Entries may have been altered by the author to improve understanding, summarize and remove duplication.



# 03

## Challenges and gaps to promoting gender equality

Figure 10 summarizes the survey findings of a series of statements aimed at assessing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of EOs towards promoting gender equality in their leadership and management. The EOs were asked whether they somewhat agreed, strongly agreed, disagreed or strongly disagreed to the following statements:

- The EO has staff or members with specific knowledge about gender-based discrimination
- The EO has information resources available to its staff on gender equality in leadership and management
- The EO has people with skills in gender analysis to identify gender issues in the EO's operations and projects
- The EO has people with the skills to develop mechanisms that promote gender equality in leadership and management within the organization
- The EO collects data from member organizations that it can use to promote gender equality in its leadership and management structures
- The EO has the skills and channels to be able to communicate effectively about gender issues
- The EO has previous experience in running programmes in promoting gender equality in leadership and management
- The EO exchanges information regularly (at least once every year) with other organizations to improve knowledge and/or skills to promote gender equality in leadership and management
- The EO holds regular (at least once a year) training for its staff in gender equality and or diversity in the workplace
- The EO has the mandate to promote gender equality in the leadership and management of the organization
- The EO has allocated adequate financial resources to fulfil its mandate in promoting gender equality in leadership and management

### *EOs have the skills, knowledge and resources to promote gender equality among their members*

Most EOs (82 per cent) said they have the skills and mechanisms to promote gender equality in their organizations and the experience of doing so. However, fewer felt they had the mandate to promote gender equality (only 58 per cent agreed or strongly agreed). Most EOs said they had staff or members with specific knowledge about gender-based discrimination and information resources available on gender equality in leadership and management (just over 72 per cent of the EOs somewhat agreed and strongly agreed).

A lack of funding and training were reported as barriers to change:

- Over half (54 per cent) of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that the organization had sufficient financial resources to fulfil their mandate to promote gender equality; and
- Seventy-two per cent disagreed with the statement that the EO holds regular training (at least once a year) in gender equality and/or diversity in the workplace.

*EOs are confident in their internal capacity to promote women for leadership and management roles with their members*

EOs reported feeling confident in their capacity to develop and communicate on the issue of women in leadership and management. However, some of the main measures for promoting gender equality in leadership and management, such as gender training, information exchanges, gender budgeting and data collection are not extensively used.

Information, cultural norms and unconducive environments are other barriers to promoting gender equality as part of EO services to their members.

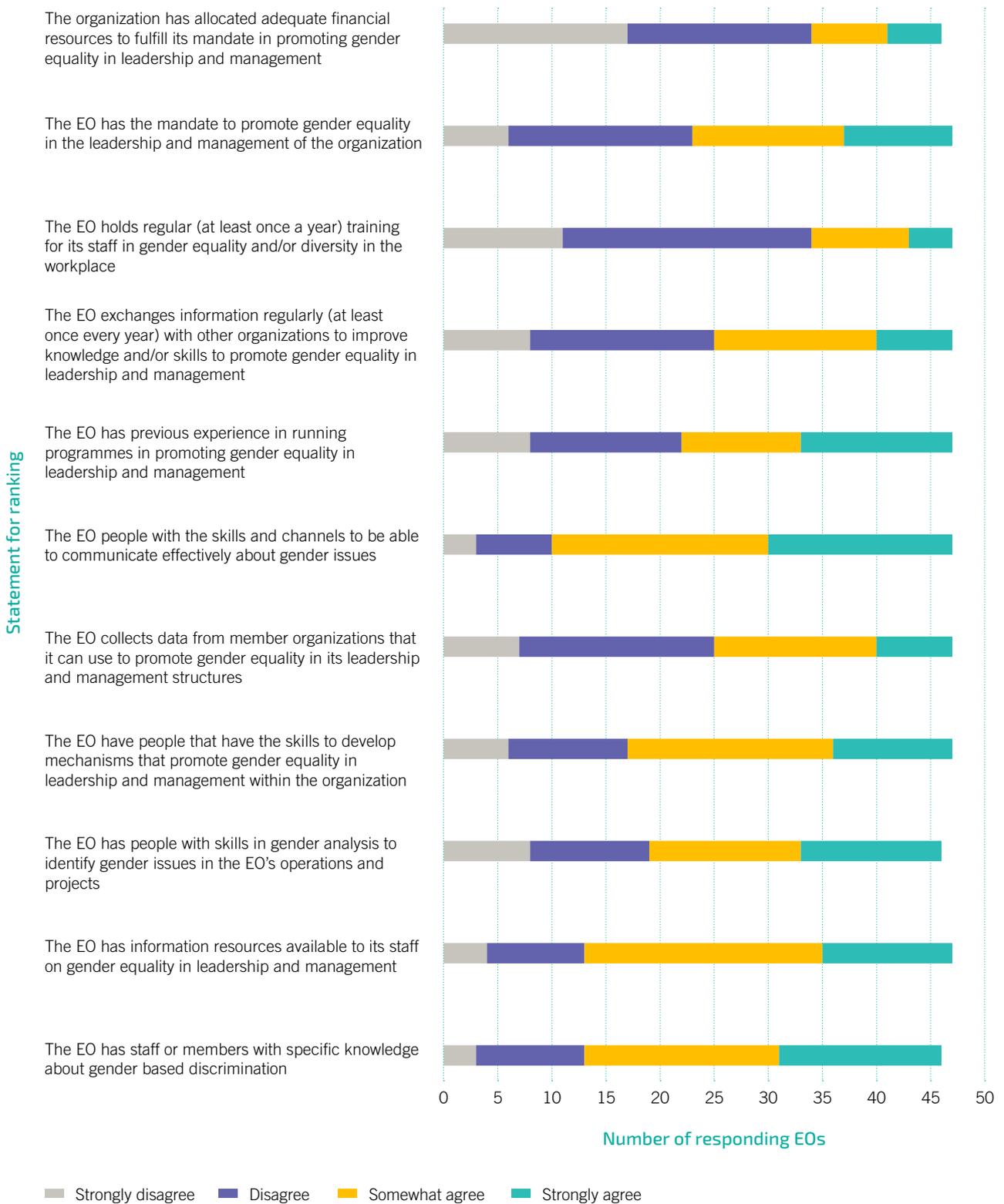
- Half of respondents reported a lack of information collection and dissemination as a challenge.
- Cultural norms were reported as a challenge to promoting gender equality by 38 per cent of respondents.
- Also highlighted (by 30 per cent) was the capacity of women to engage with the EO and to be able to take up leadership posts. Additional comments indicated: (1) a perception that women need encouragement to apply for and accept nominations to EO governance bodies; and (2) that women may need extra support in building their networks and skills as preparation for leadership positions.
- Fifteen per cent of EOs also mentioned the absence of explicit strategies and capacities to promote women in management and leadership.

In an open-ended question, EOs reported the following challenges to promoting gender equality in the EO:

- not enough data on women in member organizations and/or enterprises;
- a scarcity of financial resources;
- limiting organizational cultures and structures that do not support gender equality;
- a perception that gender equality is not relevant or important today;
- not enough dialogue around the subject;

- an over-reliance on meritocracy without addressing gender bias;
- reluctance on the part of women to take up more senior roles;
- difficulty in identifying women candidates with leadership ability;
- gender equality is not seen as a core function of the EO;
- not enough effort or emphasis on changing board composition; and
- a lack of training on gender.

**Figure 10. EOs' knowledge and attitudes to women in leadership and management: ranked statements**





## 04 Looking forward: What EOs can do

The results of the survey provide insights on the status quo of women in leadership and management in EOs as well as the challenges EOs face. Ultimately, the more gender diverse the members of the EO, the greater the pool of women able to lead, represent and/or participate in decision-making within EO governance structures. EOs need to address the barriers they themselves face in creating internal gender parity as well as use the capacity they have, to continue to drive change among their members. This report concludes with a number of recommendations on what EOs can do to build on their successes and strengths to achieve gender diversity internally and among their members.

### **Recommendations for promoting internal change:**

- Identify good practices and capacity constraints faced by the EO in promoting women in management internally by conducting gender audits.
- Use the gender audit or other research to support staff and members in training and raising awareness. Include senior management and board members.
- Develop policies, supporting strategies and indicators of achievement to promote women in management (internally and externally) and draw on examples from other EOs.

- Leadership should support and reward those who act as champions for change within the EO.
- Explore different funding models to promote gender equality more effectively and sustainably within EOs.
- Establish mechanisms that ensure enterprises/ organizations that represent women in management and leadership have voting rights at apex decision-making events.

### **Recommendations for further support and services to members:**

- Adopt technologies that allow the EO to collect and manage data about their members more effectively and efficiently.
- Engage in advocacy and lobbying with members and policy-makers on promoting women in leadership and management in the private sector.
- Use technology to engage and exchange experiences with other business association members and individual enterprises
- Support and reward members who act as champions for change in gender equality in the membership and beyond.

## Appendix 1: Countries that responded to the survey (according to ILO regional groupings)

Region	Sub-region – broad	Countries <sup>4</sup>
Africa	Northern Africa	Algeria
	Sub-Saharan Africa	Benin, Burundi, Comoros, The Gambia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles and Sudan
Americas	Latin America and the Caribbean	Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
Arab States	Arab States	Lebanon and Yemen
Asia and the Pacific	Eastern Asia	Japan
	South-Eastern Asia and the Pacific	Fiji, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Samoa, Singapore and Thailand
	Southern Asia	Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka
Europe and Central Asia	Northern, Southern and Western Europe	Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, Montenegro, Netherlands, Portugal and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
	Eastern Europe	Bulgaria and Hungary
	Central and Western Asia	Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan

<sup>4</sup> Note two responses were received from Bulgaria and Lebanon

# Annex 1: Survey questionnaire

## ACT/EMP global survey: Women in leadership and management positions in employers' organizations.

We thank you for taking the time to complete the survey and contributing to this important work. The survey is designed to take around 30 minutes if all the required data is at hand. The information collected through the questionnaire is anonymous and the person responding will not be individually identified in any ILO report featuring this data. The information may be represented by country only with the permission of the employers' organization.

---

### General information questions:

---

1. What is the full name of your Employers' Organization (EO)?
2. What is your name?
3. What is your current position/title at the EO?
4. What is your contact email?

---

### Membership structure and composition of the EO:

---

5. Which description best portrays the membership base of the EO?
  - a. A federation of employer and business associations (sectoral, regional, etc.) only
  - b. An association of enterprises (public and/or private) only
  - c. A mixed membership of sectoral and regional employer and business associations and enterprises (public and/or private).
  - d. Other (please specify)
6. How many members are there currently in the EO?
7. What percentage of the EO's private/public sector enterprises members are headed/led by women?
  - a. 0-10%
  - b. 11-20%
  - c. 21-30%
  - d. 31-40%
  - e. 41-50%
  - f. 51-60%
  - g. 61-70%
  - h. 71-80%
  - i. 81-90%
  - j. 91-100%

- k. The organization does not have this information
  - l. Other (please specify)
8. What percentage of the sectoral and regional employer and business associations members are headed/led by women?
  - a. 0-10%
  - b. 11-20%
  - c. 21-30%
  - d. 31-40%
  - e. 41-50%
  - f. 51-60%
  - g. 61-70%
  - h. 71-80%
  - i. 81-90%
  - j. 91-100%
  - k. The EO does not have this information
  - l. Other (please specify)
9. Please list the four largest industry sectors in terms of the number of members
  - a. Industry sector 1
  - b. Industry sector 2
  - c. Industry sector 3
  - d. Industry sector 4
10. What percentage of the EO's private/public sector enterprises members are headed/led by women?
  - a. 0-10%
  - b. 11-20%
  - c. 21-30%
  - d. 31-40%
  - e. 41-50%
  - f. 51-60%
  - g. 61-70%
  - h. 71-80%
  - i. 81-90%
  - j. 91-100%
  - k. The EO does not have this information
  - l. Other (please specify)
11. What types of enterprises does the EO represent? (Tick as many as necessary.)
  - a. Sole traders
  - b. Micro enterprises
  - c. Small enterprises
  - d. Medium enterprises
  - e. Large enterprises
  - f. Multinational enterprises
  - g. Cooperatives
  - h. Public sector enterprises
  - i. Other types:

12. How are the EO's operations funded? (Tick as many as are relevant.)
  - a. Through EO membership fees
  - b. Through direct services to businesses
  - c. Government subsidy and/or donor funds
  - d. Other sources (please specify)

---

#### The EO's apex decision-making body:

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13. How often does the General Assembly/Annual General Meeting (AGM) or equivalent apex decision-making body convene? (The General Assembly is a meeting of all the members of an organization.)
  - a. Once per year
  - b. Once every two years
  - c. Ad hoc when needed
  - d. We do not have an apex decision-making body
14. Within your General Assembly/AGM, what percentage of member organizations/enterprises that are entitled to vote are represented/owned by women?
  - a. 0-10%
  - b. 11-20%
  - c. 21-30%
  - d. 31-40%
  - e. 41-50%
  - f. 51-60%
  - g. 61-70%
  - h. 71-80%
  - i. 81-90%
  - j. 91-100%
  - k. The EO does not have this information
  - l. Other (please specify)
15. Is your current top leadership position (president/ chairperson) within the General Assembly/AGM a man or woman?
  - a. Man
  - b. Woman
16. How many of the EO's current second leadership positions (vice presidents/vice chairpeople) within the General Assembly/AGM are men or women?
  - a. Men:
  - b. Women:
17. Do you have any organizations in the General Assembly/AGM that specifically represent the interests of women? (For example: a woman's entrepreneurship association or an organization of professional women.)
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

18. What are the names of the organizations mentioned that specifically represent the interests of women?
19. How many of the named organizations that specifically represent the interests of women have voting rights at the General Assembly/AGM?
  - a. 0-10%
  - b. 11-20%
  - c. 21-30%
  - d. 31-40%
  - e. 41-50%
  - f. 51-60%
  - g. 61-70%
  - h. 71-80%
  - i. 81-90%
  - j. 91-100%
  - k. The organization does not have this information
  - l. Other (please specify)

---

#### The EO's board of directors and standing committee structure

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20. How many people are on the board of directors of your EO?
21. How many members of your EO's board of directors are women?
22. Is the EO's current Chairperson/President of the board of directors a man or woman?
  - a. Man
  - b. Woman
23. Has your EO had a woman Chairperson/President in the past?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
24. How many of the EO's current second leadership positions on the board of directors (vice presidents/vice chairpeople) are men or women?
  - a. Men
  - b. Women
25. Does the EO use any of the following mechanisms aimed at promoting women's representation on the EO's board of directors? (Tick as many as are relevant.)
  - a. The EO has an explicit organizational policy or strategy for gender balance on the EO's board of directors
  - b. The EO has official targets for gender balance on the EO's board of directors
  - c. The EO has a reserved voting position on the board of directors for suitably qualified women entrepreneurs/employers/associations

- d. The EO facilitates training in leadership and board readiness for women leaders
  - e. The EO allows nominations for the board of directors from other levels of members' management beyond chief executive officer level (for example, from the chief financial officer or human resources director).
  - f. The EO has specific support for suitably qualified women to navigate procedures for Board of Directors nominations
  - g. The EO lobbies its members to nominate suitably qualified women for board of directors membership
  - h. All members of the EO can put forward nominations for membership of the board of directors
  - i. The EO provides gender equality orientation for new members of the board of directors
  - j. The EO does not have any mechanisms aimed at promoting women's representation on the board of directors
  - k. Other mechanisms (please specify)
26. How many standing committees/councils/ regional committees or equivalent are there in the EO (i.e. committees/councils that are official, permanent and that meet regularly)?
27. How many of these standing committees/ councils/regional committees are chaired by women?
28. How many of these standing committees/ councils/regional committees have a woman in the second leadership position (e.g. the vice/ deputy chairperson)?
29. Does the EO use any of the following mechanisms aimed at promoting women's representation on the EO's standing committees? (Tick as many as are relevant.)
- a. The EO has an explicit organizational policy or strategy for gender balance on its standing committees
  - b. The EO has targets for gender balance on its standing committees
  - c. The EO has reserved positions on standing committees for suitably qualified women entrepreneurs/employers
  - d. The EO allows standing committee nominations from other levels of members' management beyond chief executive officer level (e.g. a human resources director)
  - e. The EO has specific support for suitably qualified women to navigate procedures for membership of standing committees
  - f. The EO lobbies members to nominate suitably qualified women for standing committee membership.
  - g. The EO has a standing committee that looks specifically at gender equality issues
  - h. All members of the EO can put forward nominations for standing committees
  - i. The EO provides gender equality orientation for new standing committee members
  - j. We do not have any mechanisms to promote women's representation on the EO's standing committees
  - k. Other mechanisms (please specify)
30. In general, how are the initiatives aimed at increasing and maintaining women's representation on the EO's board of directors and standing committees funded? (Tick as many as are relevant.)
- a. With external funds from donors (ILO/donor funds/national government funds)
  - b. Directly funded from the EO's core budget
  - c. Not funded
  - d. Other sources (please specify)
31. In general, how successful do you think these initiatives are?
- a. Excellent, we are leading women's empowerment internally
  - b. Good but we could do more...
  - c. Not so good, we know we should do more
  - d. I do not know
32. Briefly mention what additional three things the EO could do to increase and maintain women's representation on the EO's board of directors and standing committees.
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

---

**The EO's secretariat (including executive management):**

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33. How many staff does the EO directly employ?
34. How many of the EO staff are women?
35. Is your current top management position (chief executive officer) held by a men or women?
- a. Men
  - b. Women
36. How many second top leadership positions (deputy chief executive officers) are held by men and women?
- a. Men
  - b. Women

37. Does your EO have a management/executive committee?
- Yes
  - No
38. How many people are on your EO's management/executive committee?
39. How many of the management/executive committee staff are women?
40. How many staff are in management positions within the EO (i.e. positions that have supervisory and budgetary responsibilities)?
41. How many management positions within the EO are filled by women?
42. Does the EO include any gender equality or other diversity statements in its own human resources or other management policies?
- No
  - Yes
  - I do not know
43. Please copy and paste below what that statement says about gender equality in the staffing of the EO.
44. Does the EO have any of the following mechanisms/programmes/policies/initiatives that go beyond national legislation aimed at supporting work-family balance and greater equality in leadership and management for staff? (Tick as many as are relevant.)
- Extended (beyond the national legal requirements) maternity or paternity leave for staff
  - Flexible working hours for staff
  - Teleworking opportunities are offered to staff
  - Formal mentoring activities that include junior and senior staff
  - Informal mentoring activities that include junior and senior staff
  - A sexual harassment policy and respective grievance procedure
  - Training for all staff in gender equality/diversity in the workplace
  - A positive discrimination policy favouring suitably qualified women/men candidates in recruiting new staff
  - Formal leadership training initiatives for women within the EO
  - Internal (to the EO) dialogue about gender equality in the workplace
  - External promotion of the EO as an employer of choice for suitably qualified women
- We do not have any mechanisms aimed at supporting work-family balance and greater equality in leadership and management for staff
  - Other mechanisms (please specify)
45. In general, how are the human resources initiatives you have listed to promote gender equality funded? (Tick as many as are relevant.)
- With external funds from donors (ILO/donor funds/national government funds)
  - Directly funded from the EO's core budget
  - Not funded
  - Other funds (please specify)
  - Please use this space to explain your answer.
46. In general, how successful do you think these initiatives are?
- Excellent, we are leading women's empowerment internally
  - Good but we could do more...
  - Not so good, we know we should do more
  - I do not know
47. Briefly mention what additional three things the EO could do to support work-family balance and greater equality in leadership and management for staff.
- - 
  -
48. Who in the EO is responsible for working on gender equality in the organization?
- An allocated gender focal person
  - An official gender team/department
  - Everyone
  - No one
  - Other (please specify)

---

**Services to members to promote women's participation in leadership and management:**

---

49. Are there any initiatives and activities that take place on a regular basis (i.e. a minimum of once a year) that target members and are aimed at promoting gender equality?
- Social dialogue events on issues around gender equality in leadership and management positions
  - Promotional events to encourage women's membership of the EO
  - Promotional pricing that encourages women's membership of the EO

- d. Research on issues around gender equality in leadership and management positions
  - e. Lobbying around legislation that promotes gender equality in leadership and management
  - f. Publicly recognizing EO members for good practices in promoting gender equality in the workplace
  - g. Provision of training for EO members to promote gender equality in the workplace
  - h. The EO facilitates training in leadership and board readiness for women leaders/managers in member organizations
  - i. The EO supports associations of business women to participate in EO programmes and networks
  - j. We do not have any initiatives targeted at members that are aimed at promoting gender equality
  - k. Other initiatives (please specify)
50. In general, how successful do you think these initiatives are? Please use this space to explain your answer.
- a. Excellent, we are leading women's empowerment internally
  - b. Good but we could do more...
  - c. Not so good, we know we should do more
  - d. I do not know
51. In general, how are the initiatives you have listed with members to promote gender equality funded? (Please tick as many as are relevant.)
- a. With external funds from donors (ILO/donor funds/national government funds)
  - b. Directly funded from the EO's core budget
  - c. Not funded
  - d. Other funds (please specify)
52. Briefly report up to three additional things the EO could do to promote gender equality in member organizations.
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

---

**Identifying possible gaps in the capacity to promote gender equality in the leadership and management of EOs:**

---

53. Please read the following statements and rank them in order of agreement from strongly disagree to strongly agree.
- a. The EO has staff or members with specific knowledge about gender-based discrimination

- b. The EO has information resources available to its staff on gender equality in leadership and management
  - c. The EO has staff with skills in gender analysis to identify gender issues in the EO's operations and projects
  - d. The EO has staff with the skills to develop mechanisms that promote gender equality in leadership and management within the organization
  - e. The EO collects data from member organizations that it can use to promote gender equality in its leadership and management structures
  - f. The EO has people with the skills and channels to be able to communicate effectively about gender issues
  - g. The EO has previous experience in running programmes in promoting gender equality in leadership and management
  - h. The EO exchanges information regularly (at least once every year) with other organizations to improve knowledge and/or skills to promote gender equality in leadership and management
  - i. The EO holds regular (at least once a year) training for its staff in gender equality and/or diversity in the workplace
  - j. The EO has the mandate to promote gender equality in the leadership and management of the organization
  - k. The EO has allocated adequate financial resources to fulfil its mandate in promoting gender equality in leadership and management
54. Please briefly outline a maximum of three challenges the EO faces in promoting gender equality in leadership and management within the organization.
- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

---

**Permission regarding identification of the EO in the survey report:**

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55. If you do not want the ILO to identify the EO in the internal report please indicate in the dropdown box below.

Thank you for your participation.

*A global snapshot: Women leaders and managers in employers' organizations* presents the data collected from a recent global survey of national employers' organizations. The survey aimed to determine the status quo and representation of women in governance, leadership and management roles within EOs around the world and identify the challenges they face in promoting gender diversity within their own structures and with their membership. Women are currently under-represented in EO management and governance. For example, 34 per cent of top management positions among the EOs surveyed are currently held by women and only 8 per cent have gender balanced boards. The report highlights the important role EOs play in promoting gender diversity with their membership. While EOs report having the capacity to drive change within their own structures and with their membership, many face challenges in the form of funding, and cultural and structural barriers. Creating greater gender diversity within the membership of EOs needs to go hand in hand with change in their own internal structures. The report emphasizes the need for ongoing efforts to improve such diversity. More gender diverse EOs are better positioned to serve the needs of their members.



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