

# Generation Equality Forum: Stepping Up for Women and Girls

An Overview of Business' Commitments to Generation Equality

March 2022



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## Acknowledgments

This report was written by BSR in partnership with Women Win and The B Team, and with funding from the UN Foundation. The authors wish to thank UN Women, as well as Cartier, GSMA, Kering, Mars Incorporated, PVH and TikTok for their inputs.



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# Executive Summary

To mark the anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action and to propel action on gender equality, UN Women, in partnership with civil society organizations, launched Generation Equality to set a new agenda for global action on gender equality. The private sector has the opportunity and responsibility to drive transformative progress for women and girls around the world, and through the Generation Equality Forum in 2021, companies stepped up to take concrete action.

Twenty-five years after government leaders and civil society advocates gathered at the Beijing Conference on Women and pledged to end gender-based discrimination, gender equality is still far from reality. The urgency of gender equality has never been more apparent: The COVID-19 pandemic has set progress back four decades.<sup>1</sup> Ambitious and coordinated action must be taken to guarantee women and girls have equal access to health, education, jobs, and income, and to create environments free from gender-based violence.

In 2021, the governments of France and Mexico each co-hosted a Generation Equality Forum (GEF): in Mexico City in March and in Paris in June. These forums brought together nearly 50,000 stakeholders, including representatives from the public sector, civil society, youth, and philanthropies, and the forums included the private sector for the first time.

The GEF called for all stakeholders to make clear, measurable, and funded commitments across six Action Coalitions, that highlighted issues critical to the advancement of gender equality and the creation of a world free from gender biases and discrimination. The forums resulted in a record US\$40 billion in pledged commitments and new investments in gender equality over the next five years. Alongside governments and civil society, 48 private sector actors made commitments and pledged a total of US\$17.5 billion.

This report provides an overview of private sector commitments, highlighting exciting new investments and remaining gaps in efforts needed to achieve gender equality. The term “private sector” used in this report includes companies, corporate foundations, industry organizations, and media platforms.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [UNCTAD](#)

<sup>2</sup> The data in this report are based on publicly available information and/or information shared by the company or organization making the commitment. Certain company commitments were made as part of a broader consortium or through another organization or partnership.

## The Six GEF Action Coalitions

GEF established six Action Coalitions to address key issues crucial to the advancement of gender equality. Each Action Coalition brings together governments, feminist and youth organizations, international organizations, foundations, and business around transformative ambitions.

Each Action Coalition includes a blueprint defining a powerful vision for success, along with priority actions and targets. Together, these blueprints form a Global Acceleration Plan for gender equality. For the plan to succeed, all actors, including business, need to join the movement with strong commitments, resources, and concrete actions. Below are summaries of commitments made across each Action Coalition.

- ➔ **Gender-Based Violence**
- ➔ **Economic Justice and Rights**
- ➔ **Bodily Autonomy and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)**
- ➔ **Feminist Action for Climate Justice**
- ➔ **Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality**
- ➔ **Feminist Movements and Leadership**



## Key GEF Takeaways

### The forum mobilized diverse sectors.

Actors from a wide range of industries, from tech to apparel, made commitments ensuring a broad scope of action to foster gender equality.

### Companies committed to acting throughout the entire value chain.

Commitments to advance gender equality were made in the workplace, marketplace, and community, enabling actors to widen their reach.

### Few private sector actors from the Global South made commitments.

Most of the private sector actors making commitments came from the Global North, particularly from the U.S. Coordinated global action is needed to truly eliminate all gender barriers.

### Few private sector actors made commitments to Feminist Action for Climate Justice.

Despite the urgent need to act on climate change, few actors made commitments to address the intersection between women and climate justice. Strong action must be taken to mitigate the impacts of climate change on women and girls and to guarantee their full participation in the green transition.

While mobilization during the GEF is cause for hope, significant gaps remain to advance gender equality. For meaningful change, more companies from all sectors and all regions must engage across the Action Coalitions, to address six issues crucial to the advancement of gender equality. Private sector actors also should focus on important areas that received less corporate attention, such as Feminist Action for Climate Justice.

“

The forum really succeeded in securing sets of concrete commitments for gender equality from diverse participants, who had regular and inclusive conversations with the objective of breaking silos, listening to each other's views, and taking a long-term perspective. To make an effective and transformative change for women and girls in all their diversity, it is also important to monitor how these commitments will live over the five years and how accountability will be managed.”

—Kering

Gender-Based Violence Action  
Coalition Lead

“

Even in the middle of this pandemic, committed leaders from the private sector, governments, and foundations come together to make progress for **#genderequality**. While the forum is now over, we begin our work of harnessing the momentum built and the commitments made to drive real change. Alongside hundreds of multistakeholder commitment-makers, we are dedicated to action, accountability, and creating a better future for women and girls.”

—Tunay S. Firat

Head of Strategic Partnerships,  
Generation Equality Action Coalitions

# Stepping Up to the Challenge

Business has a pivotal role to play in building a world where all women and girls can thrive. Due to its unique position at the crossroads of workplaces, supply chains, and communities, business has multiple entry points to drive positive change at scale. Additionally, business has recognized that promoting gender equality is both a business and social imperative: By advancing gender equality, companies can improve their corporate performance, attract investments, enhance innovation, retain talent, and meet the needs of their consumers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> [How Business Can Build a 'Future of Work' That Works for Women, BSR, 2019](#)

## Who Made Commitments?

- ➔ Private sector commitment-makers are headquartered across 16 countries, with almost 40 percent located in the U.S. (see figure 1).
- ➔ More than 86 percent of private sector actors are multinational corporations.
- ➔ Sectors with the most commitment-makers are fashion and apparel, technology, fragrance and beauty, and finance (see figure 2).

Fig. 1 Private Sector Commitment-Makers' Headquarters Location

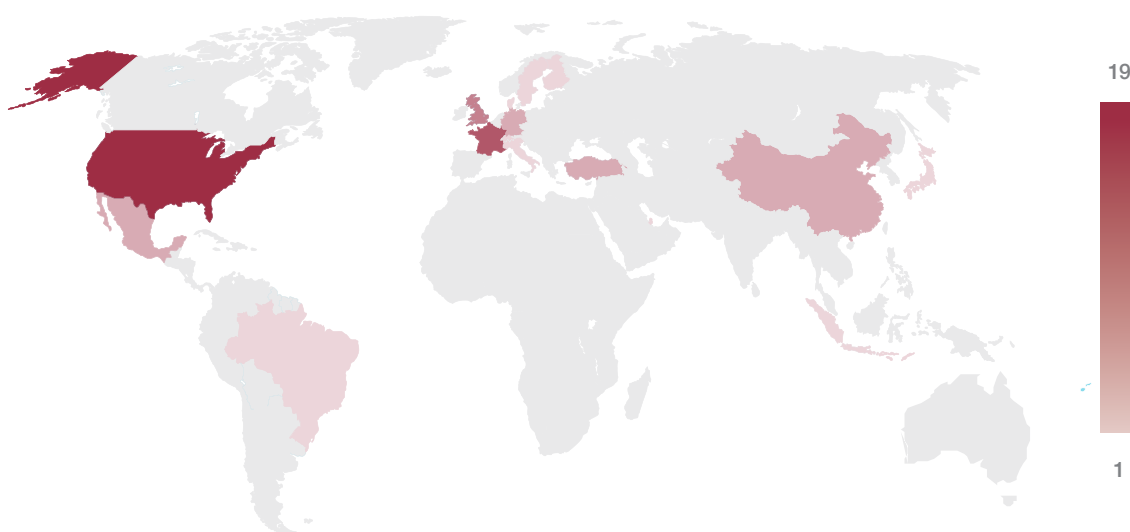
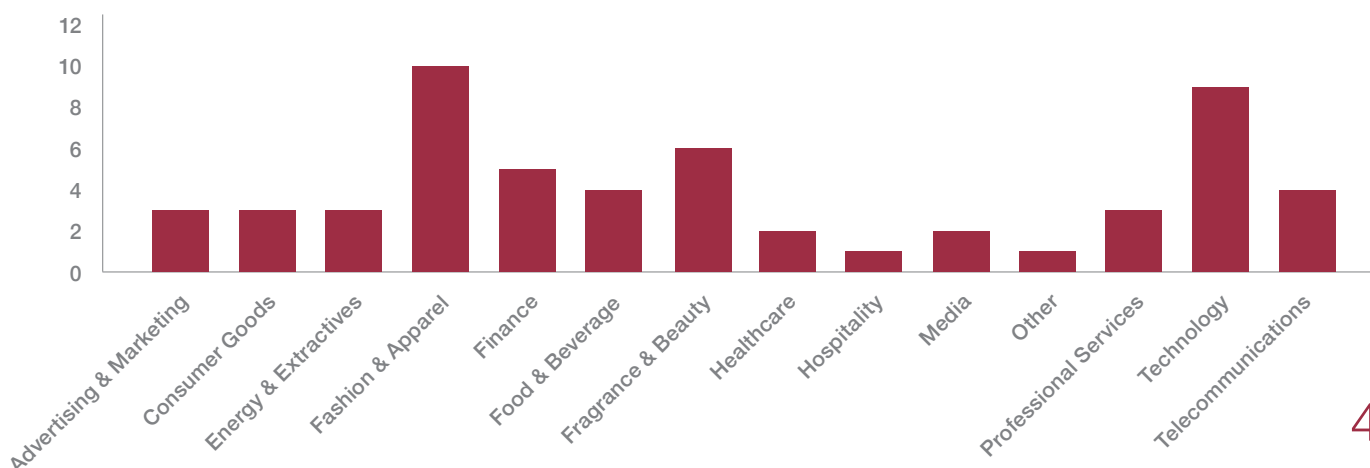


Fig. 2 Private Sector Commitment-Makers' Sector











## What Kind of Commitments Did the Private Sector Make?







Companies made commitments across their entire value chain: Over 70 percent of commitments address gender equality in the community, almost 40 percent focus on the workplace, just over 20 percent address marketplace issues, and 36 percent of companies made commitments in more than one area.

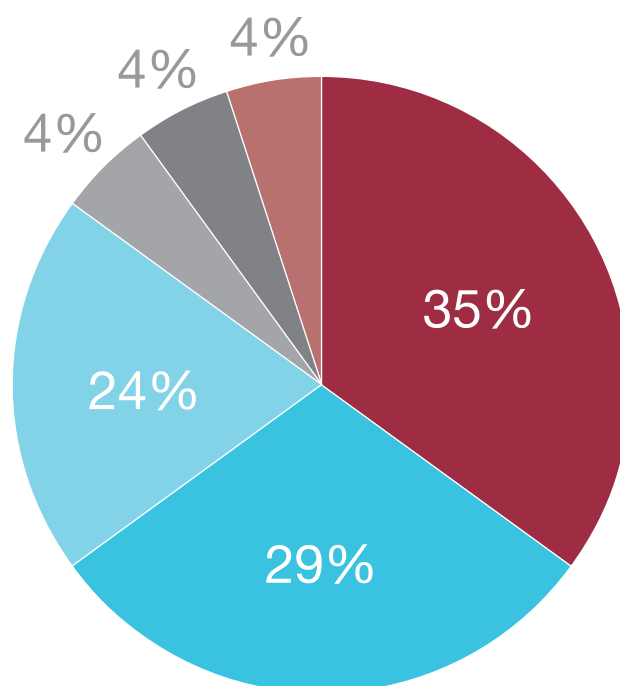
### More than 60 percent of commitments include quantitative targets:

 <p>Number of women and girls who will benefit from the actions.</p>	 <p>Proportion of women represented in decision-making functions.</p>	 <p>Number of organizations working to foster gender equality.</p>
 <p>BNP Paribas commits to empower 30,000 women in climate-resilient rice agriculture.</p>	 <p>By 2030, women will hold 50 percent of leadership roles at Diageo.</p>	 <p>The 1in3Women Network commits to engage 50 private sector organizations to adopt and implement internal policies to combat violence against women by 2026.</p>

## Which Action Coalitions Do the Commitments Support?

### Commitments to Action Coalitions:

-  Technology & Innovation
-  Economic Justice & Rights
-  Gender-Based Violence
-  Bodily Autonomy/SRHR
-  Feminist Movements & Leadership
-  Feminist Action for Climate Justice





## Bodily Autonomy and SRHR

Companies have pledged to ensure that women and girls are empowered to make informed choices about their body and are guaranteed access to affordable and quality sexual and reproductive health services. They have committed to financially supporting access to contraception, safe abortion, and post-abortion care, and to strengthening family planning and improving sexual and reproductive health literacy through awareness-raising and educational content. Company commitments to the Bodily Autonomy and SRHR Action Coalition include [Clue](#) and [PVH](#).

## Economic Justice and Rights

With the ambition to provide women throughout the entire value chain with equal professional and economic opportunities, companies have committed to supporting economic justice and rights. Companies do so by increasing the number of women in leadership positions, providing loans and mentorship to women entrepreneurs, providing financial support for women's advocacy groups, and supporting educational opportunities for young women. Company commitments to the Economic Justice and Rights Action Coalition include [PayPal](#) and [Procter & Gamble \(P&G\)](#).

## Feminist Action for Climate Justice

Recognizing that women are disproportionately impacted by climate change and that they can play a major role in leading the transition to a green economy, companies can work at the nexus of gender and climate in several ways. For example, they can fund women's empowerment initiatives focused on climate action and green jobs, increase women's leadership, and engage feminist and grassroots groups in climate action. [Mary Kay Inc.](#) is one company that committed to the Feminist Action for Climate Justice Action Coalition.

## Feminist Movements and Leadership

Ensuring women's equal representation in leadership is essential to achieve gender equality, and companies can support this in two arenas: in communities through supporting feminist organizations, and in the workplace by increasing the number of women in decision-making roles. Through the Action Coalition, companies committed to advancing women's leadership by setting targets for representation in their own operations, and by financially supporting women-led organizations and initiatives. Company commitments to the Feminist Movements and Leadership Action Coalition include [Gucci](#) and [Schneider Electric](#).



## Gender-Based Violence

In line with ILO C190 Convention on Violence and Harassment, companies have taken a strong stance to create a world and workplaces free from gender-based violence. As part of their pledges, companies have committed to partnering to identify solutions for systemic change and providing funding to organizations seeking to scale their support for survivors of gender-based violence. Company commitments to the Gender-Based Violence Action Coalition include the [Kering Foundation](#), [Accor](#), and others.

## Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality

While there is a gender gap in the access to digital skills and resources, there are major opportunities for women to pioneer tech innovation. Technology can also help prevent and eliminate gender-based discrimination. Companies have committed to supporting women in technology by fostering tech education and entrepreneurship, addressing the digital accessibility gap, increasing access to gender-related data, and accelerating digital and financial inclusion for girls and women. Company commitments to the Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality Action Coalition include [Microsoft](#), [Globesight](#), and others.

## Cartier

“The vision of the Cartier Women’s Initiative is a world in which every woman impact entrepreneur can reach her full potential. Since our inception in 2006, we have accompanied more than 250 women impact entrepreneurs on their journeys in creating social and environmental change. We are honored to join the Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality Action Coalition to support the Scale Program, a program aimed at preparing women entrepreneurs to succeed in raising venture capital for their early-stage businesses. We are grateful for the opportunity to join GEF in building a more inclusive ecosystem for women and girls in all areas of technology and innovation.”



At PVH we believe in working together to create a positive global impact. We are proud to have joined the Generation Equality Forum. Our collaborative investment in The Resilience Fund for Women in Global Value Chains supports locally driven solutions to build women’s resilience in response to crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This fund will help drive systemic change, strengthen women’s health, safety, and economic resilience, and support the advancement of gender equality.”

—PVH Corp.

Smruti Govan, Director, Corporate Responsibility



When women thrive online, we all thrive too. We’re proud of the commitments we have made through the Generational Equality Forum to address the priorities that women have identified as critical to their online safety. These commitments are part of our ongoing work to make TikTok an ever safer space for women, and our community as a whole.”

—TikTok

Julie de Baillencourt, Head of Product Policy



## Schneider Electric

Schneider Electric commits to building a diverse organization at every level, with a workforce that reflects the diverse markets in which it operates. Its end of 2022 ambition is to have women representing 45 percent of new hires, 29 percent of frontline managers, and 26 percent



# Driving Collective, Sector-Wide Change

Peer-to-peer collaboration allows companies to increase their impact, pool resources, and engage in collective action to tackle barriers to gender equality. Where possible, collective action should seek guidance and input from civil society, women's groups, feminist leaders, and community leaders to ensure efforts meet the needs of those impacted.

In addition to individual commitments, companies are also coming together to drive sector-wide change. For example, Facebook, Google, TikTok, and Twitter announced their [joint commitment](#) to tackle gender-based violence and abuse online and to improve women's safety on social media platforms.

Additionally, through The Unstereotype Alliance, companies, including AVE, Fundación Chedraui, Diageo, Mars, PepsiCo, Publicis Groupe, Sony Music, Unilever, and WPP, came together with commitments to combat harmful stereotypes in advertising and media.



**GSMA** has been at the forefront of the sustainable development agenda as we led the mobile industry to become the first to commit to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). [Committing to the Generation Equality process](#) and the Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality Action Coalition is an important part of this pledge. GSMA recognizes the power that the mobile industry has to bridge the digital gender divide, which is why we established the Connected Women program in 2010 and co-founded the EQUALS Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age in 2016. Through our commitments to accelerate digital and financial inclusion for women, design and provide access to gender-transformative digital skills-training and e-mentoring for 1 million women and girls through EQUALS Her Digital Skills, and achieve a 50/50 gender balance across our executive leadership and leadership teams, GSMA aims to lead by example.”

—GSMA

Mats Granryd, Director General, GSMA



At Mars, we believe that in the world we want tomorrow, society is inclusive and women are reaching their full potential. And we know that to catalyze meaningful and sustainable change toward SDG 5, we need to work with peers, civil society organizations, governments, and youth. That's why we joined GEF: Our commitment, [Full Potential](#), captures our action on gender equality across our workplaces, marketplaces, and communities where we source raw materials. Our actions are informed by our [#HereToBeHeard](#) global listening campaign. Over the next five years, we hope that GEF drives focused, coordinated action where it matters most. Collectively, we can make faster progress to close the gender gap everywhere it exists.

—Mars, Inc.

Lisa Manley, Vice President, Thriving People, Global Sustainability

# More Action Needed

This is only the start of the five-year GEF journey. To achieve real success, the private sector needs accountability measures against commitments, and more companies must join this movement. Businesses should consider actions across their value chain in one or more of the six Action Coalitions.

Industry and collaborative initiatives across sectors are critical for driving change at scale. Below is a list of select partnerships and networks businesses can consider joining. Companies willing to act on gender equality can join any of the GEF Action Coalitions.



## Opportunities for Companies

Building on the progress made through the Mexico City and Paris GEF events, business should leverage other moments to continue to push for investments and change needed for women and girls.

### Upcoming Events

Ensure gender equality is on the agenda at key international events:

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 03.08 | <b><u>International Women's Day</u></b><br>March 8, 2022   |
| 06.07 | <b><u>Responsible Business Europe 2022</u></b><br>June 7–8, 2022, London                                 |
| 11.07 | <b><u>UN Climate Change Conference 2022</u></b><br>(UNFCCC COP 27), November 7–18, 2022,<br>Location TBA |

Action on gender equality is urgent. Business has a critical role to play in securing the health, rights, and equality of girls and women everywhere. GEF is a five-year journey consisting of ongoing efforts to consult stakeholders, expand on commitments made, and involve new commitment-makers across the Action Coalitions. With greater commitments and tangible action, business can drive positive change at scale.

While additional commitments will be needed across all six Action Coalitions, the three Coalitions below received the least amount of support from the private sector and require additional attention going forward.

## Feminist Action for Climate Justice

Despite the essential role women play in building climate-resilient communities, few businesses made commitments to the Feminist Action for Climate Justice Action Coalition. Given the speed and scale at which climate change is impacting communities including women and girls, this is a stark gap. Companies should consider commitments that provide solutions for a climate transition that puts women and girls at their core. There are a number of actions business can take to support this:

- ➔ Commit to training women to ensure qualification and reskilling for workers impacted by the transition to green energy.
- ➔ Commit to empowering women and girls to lead a just transition by establishing a recruitment plan for women workers in green jobs that uses apprenticeships to ensure knowledge transfer.
- ➔ Work with women in supply chains to increase their resilience to impacts, disaster risks, loss, and damage.
- ➔ Fund feminist groups working on climate justice, including Women's Funds, grassroots women's rights organizations, support services, etc.

## Feminist Movements and Leadership

Female leadership is essential to building a world free from gender biases and discrimination. Businesses must prioritize and support feminist movements and leadership to encourage women-led, systemic change toward gender equality. Business can commit to:

- ➔ Fund Women's Funds, women-led organizations, grassroots organizations, and women activists.
- ➔ Make time-bound and public commitments to gender-balanced leadership, with a focus on the C-suite and boardroom.

## Bodily Autonomy and SRHR

Access to sexual and reproductive health is a human right. When women can't access essential healthcare services, it can result in reduced productivity or the loss of women in the workplace, which has significant implications for gender equality in business and society. Business can support access to SRHR through the following commitments:

- ➔ Ensure employee health benefits include access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care and services.
- ➔ Provide training and resources to direct employees and workers along the value chain on SRHR (e.g., free menstrual products).
- ➔ Fund local groups working to advance SRHR, including Women's Funds, grassroots women's rights organizations, support services, and others.

# Commitments

## Individual Private Sector Commitment-Makers

Commitment-Maker	Keywords	Commitment-Maker	Keywords
<a href="#"><u>37 Interactive Entertainment</u></a>	Education	<a href="#"><u>Logitech</u></a>	N/A
<a href="#"><u>Accor</u></a>	Workplace Leadership	<a href="#"><u>Mary Kay</u></a>	Leadership
<a href="#"><u>Amartha</u></a>	Access to Finance	<a href="#"><u>Mastercard</u></a>	Feminist Leadership, Finance
<a href="#"><u>APICAP</u></a>	Workplace Leadership	<a href="#"><u>Microsoft</u></a>	Digital Divide
<a href="#"><u>BNP Paribas</u></a>	Food Security, Workplace Leadership	<a href="#"><u>Milliyet Newspaper</u></a>	Girls in the Social and Economic Life
<a href="#"><u>Clue</u></a>	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	<a href="#"><u>Natura</u></a>	Leadership
<a href="#"><u>Diageo</u></a>	Workplace Leadership, Feminist Leadership	<a href="#"><u>Nokia</u></a>	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, STEM
<a href="#"><u>ENGIE</u></a>	Adolescent Girls and Technology and Innovation	<a href="#"><u>Not Just a Jewel</u></a>	Gender-Based Violence
<a href="#"><u>Estée Lauder</u></a>	Workplace Leadership, Feminist Leadership	<a href="#"><u>Orange</u></a>	Technology
<a href="#"><u>EY</u></a>	Technology	<a href="#"><u>P&amp;G</u></a>	Women-Led Businesses, Gender-Based Violence
<a href="#"><u>Facebook</u></a>	Tech, Women-Owned Businesses, Gender Data	<a href="#"><u>PayPal</u></a>	Women-Led Businesses, Gender Data

Commitment-Maker	Keywords	Commitment-Maker	Keywords
<a href="#"><u>Globesight</u></a>	Technology	<a href="#"><u>Responsible Jewellery Council</u></a>	Supporting Women in the Jewelry Supply Chain
<a href="#"><u>GSMA</u></a>	Technology	<a href="#"><u>Salesforce</u></a>	Technology
<a href="#"><u>Gucci</u></a>	Feminist Leadership	<a href="#"><u>Schneider Electric</u></a>	Women in the Energy Sector
<a href="#"><u>Kering Foundation</u></a>	Gender-Based Violence	<a href="#"><u>The Cartier Women's Initiative</u></a>	Technology
<a href="#"><u>Koç Holding</u></a>	Technology	<a href="#"><u>The Female Quotient</u></a>	Workplace Leadership

# Partnerships

## Private Sector Commitments Made through Partnerships

Partnership	Commitment-makers	Keywords
<a href="#"><u>1in3Women Network</u></a>	Kering Foundation	Gender-Based Violence
	Korian	
	L'Oréal	
<a href="#"><u>Resilience Fund for Women in Global Value Chains</u></a>	Gap Foundation	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, Economic Empowerment
	H&M Foundation	
	PVH Foundation	
	Ralph Lauren Corporate Foundation	
	The VF Foundation	
<a href="#"><u>UNICEF commitment</u></a>	Chloé	Digital Inclusion, Gender Digital Divide, Gender-Based Violence
	Clé de Peau Beauté	
	Dove	
	Pandora	
	Vodafone Americas Foundation	
	Volta Capital	



<b><u>Unstereotype Alliance</u></b>	AVE	Addressing Negative Gender Roles and Stereotypes
	Fundación Chedraui	
	Mars	
	PepsiCo	
	Publicis Group	
	Unilever	
	WPP	
<b><u>WomenEntrepreneurs4Good initiative</u></b>	HEC Paris	Women-Led Businesses
	P&G	
	Women's Forum for the Economy and Society	
<b><u>World Wide Web Foundation</u></b>	Google	Women's Access and Safety Using Technology
	TikTok	
	Twitter	
	Facebook	

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