THE FULL PARTICIPATION REPORT: HIGHLIGHTS

March 2015



There has never been a better time to be born female. Today, women and girls have a much greater chance to live healthy and secure lives, and their fundamental human rights are now protected by law in many countries throughout the world. Women and girls have access to educational and work opportunities that were previously unimaginable. More and more, their needs and contributions are being considered and measured, and more and more they are getting a seat at the table, able to act as full participants in determining our collective future.

The historic United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 was a critical turning point in this progress. In Beijing, delegates from 189 nations agreed to a Platform for Action that called for the "full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life." Since that time, the status of women and girls has improved, but there is still much work to be done. We need to pass additional laws to promote full equality and to implement the ones already on the books. We must continue to combat pervasive gender bias and ensure that the benefits seen by many women and girls around the world are shared by all.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of that historic event in Beijing, as well as the culmination of negotiations over a new set of development goals. It is a time to measure progress, celebrate accomplishments, examine challenges, and set a course for the future. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the *No Ceilings* initiative of the Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation have joined forces with The Economist Intelligence Unit and the WORLD Policy Analysis Center at UCLA to gather and analyze data and with Fathom Information Design to visualize key trends. The findings are presented in a written report and at **www.noceilings.org**.

We found that headway has been made in the areas of health, education, and legal rights, and these gains demonstrate that real, transformative change is possible. In the areas of security, economic opportunity, and leadership, the pace of change has been far too slow. And even where there has been progress, the gains are not shared by all; geography, income, age, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and cultural norms, among other factors, remain powerful determinants of a woman's chance at equal rights and opportunities.

In 1995, the world spoke with one voice to declare: "Women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights." Those who have championed women's rights over the past 20 years have much to be proud of—but the work is unfinished. We stand at a moment of great promise. The imperative to act has never been greater. Today, we have strong evidence that when women and girls participate fully, economies grow and nations are more secure. Awareness of women's rights has spread from the streets to state capitals. Powerful tools, such as technology, and a broad range of partners—from the private sector to the faith community—offer the opportunity to accelerate the full participation of women and girls. Now is the time to continue that work so we can ensure a promising future for the next generation of women and girls, along with their families, communities, and countries.

More constitutions and laws protect women's rights...

Constitutional change has coincided with an increase in legislation protecting women's rights. More than 95 percent of the 56 national constitutions adopted after 1995 guarantee gender equality, compared with 79 percent of those enacted in 1995 or earlier.¹ Today, more than four out of five constitutions have some mechanism to guarantee gender equality.² In many countries, laws



¹ WORLD Policy Analysis Center, "Equal Rights for Women and Girls in the World's Constitutions," WORLD Constitutions Database, 2015. http://www.worldpolicyforum.org

² Ibid.

that once permitted unequal treatment of women and girls have been replaced with laws that recognize their equality.

...but rights on paper often go unenforced—and many legal barriers remain

In too many places, women's rights in family, civic, and economic life are limited. The share of national constitutions that address women's rights in marriage has changed little over the past two decades.³ Nine countries legally restrict women's freedom of movement.⁴ More than 150 countries lack protections critical to ensuring women's economic participation—including access to capital, property ownership, and caregiving leave.⁵ Even where strong laws exist, implementation and enforcement are often weak.

Women's and girls' health has improved significantly...

Globally, women and girls are living longer and healthier lives, and the rate of maternal mortality has nearly halved. Girls born today can expect to live almost 73 years, on average, about four years more than in 1995.⁶ The global rate of maternal mortality has decreased by 42 percent since 1995. South Asia made the biggest gain, with a maternal mortality rate that has fallen by nearly 60 percent since 1995.⁷ Furthermore, the global under-5 mortality rate for girls has fallen by half from 1990 to 2013, and the rate of adolescent births has fallen by almost a third since 1995.⁸ Death rates from strokes, heart ailments, and infectious diseases have dropped since 1995, including among women.⁹

...yet health care progress is uneven

Women and girls in certain regions and communities confront high rates of HIV, poor care during pregnancy and childbirth, and limited access to family planning. Women's life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa is only 57 years, on average, due in part to the

3 Ibid.

rise of HIV/AIDS.¹⁰ In 2013, 16 million women globally were estimated to be living with HIV—almost twice as many as in 1995.¹¹ Although new HIV infections are declining, women aged 15 to 24 have infection rates twice as high as young men.¹² Every day, 800 women die from largely preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, and 99 percent of these deaths occur in developing countries.¹³ More than 220 million women around the world want to prevent pregnancy but do not use modern methods of contraception for many reasons, including lack of access.¹⁴ Even in high-income countries, poor women have less access to health care services than wealthier women.¹⁵

Many significant gender gaps in education have closed...

The gender gap in access to primary education has virtually closed globally. Girls and boys enroll in primary school at nearly equal rates worldwide—a major achievement.¹⁶ Primary school is now tuition-free in almost 90 percent of low-income countries and in all high-income nations, which is good for girls, as fees affect girls' enrollment.¹⁷

...but gaps remain and marginalized girls lag farthest behind

Poor, rural, minority, and conflict-affected girls are significantly less likely to be educated. Among primary school-age children, 43 percent of those out of school are girls from the poorest household quintile, and only 9 percent are boys from the richest household quintile.¹⁸ Almost two-thirds of the world's illiterate adults—496 million—are women, many of whom are disadvantaged.¹⁹

Despite a narrowing of the gender gap in secondary education, many girls remain out of school. Although more girls are attending secondary school, and the gap between the sexes has narrowed from 92 girls per 100 boys enrolled in 1998 to 96 girls today,

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⁴ WORLD Policy Analysis Center, "Are States Parties to CEDAW Living up to Their Commitments to Women and Girls? A Globally Comparative Analysis of National Action," 2015. http://www.worldpolicyforum.org; World Bank, Women, Business and the Law Database.

⁵ To determine how many countries lack protections, data from the World Bank on legal differences restricting women's opportunities were supplemented with data from the WORLD Policy Analysis Center on whether leave is available to meet family caregiving needs. World Bank, "Women, Business and the Law 2014: Key Findings," 2013. http://wbl.worldbank.org/~/media/FPDKM/WBL/Documents/Reports/2014/ Women-Business-and-the-Law-2014-Key-Findings.pdf; WORLD Policy Analysis Center, "Are States Parties to CEDAW Living up to Their Commitments to Women and Girls? A Globally Comparative Analysis of National Action," 2015. http://worldpolicy.forum.org

⁶ World Bank; derived from female life expectancy at birth from sources such as: United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), statistics on World Population Prospects; United Nations Statistical Division, "Population and Vital Statistics Report"; Eurostat, demographic statistics; Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Statistics and Demography Programme; U.S. Census Bureau, International Database; and census reports and other statistical publications from national statistical offices. http:// data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.FE.IN, accessed January 2015.

⁷ World Bank, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Population Division. "Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2013," WHO, 2014. http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2013/en/

⁸ Under-5 mortality data from World Bank, based on estimates developed by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, UN DESA Population Division), available at www.childmortality.org: World Bank, adolescent fertility rate data, accessed May 2014. http://data. worldbank.org/indicator/SP.ADO.TFRT

⁹ From 1995 to 2010, female deaths globally from cerebrovascular disease, ischemic heart disease, and tuberculosis fell by 26.1 percent, 21.5 percent, and 39.7 percent, respectively. Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), "Global Burden of Disease 2010," 2013. See *No Ceilings* database, www. noceilings.org

¹⁰ Global Health Observatory, WHO, life expectancy commentary. http://www.who.int/gho/mortality_ burden_disease/life_tables/situation_trends_text/en/

¹¹ UNAIDS Spectrum Estimates data measuring the total number of people living with HIV. http://www unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/datatools/spectrumepp2013

¹² P. Idele, A. Gillespie, T. Porth, C. Suzuki, M. Mahy, S. Kasedde, and C. Luo, "Epidemiology of HIV and AIDS among adolescents: current status, inequities, and data gaps," Lippincott Williams & Wilkins 2014, using data from UNICEF analysis of unpublished 2012 HIV and AIDS estimates from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). http://data.unicef.org/corecode/uploads/document6/uploaded_pdfs/ corecode/Epidemiology_of_HIV_and_AIDS_Among_Adolescents_169.pdf; UNAIDS World Aids Day Report 2011, * 2011. http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/er/media/unaids/contentassets/ documents/unaidspublication/2011/JC2216_WorldAIDSday_report_2011_en.pdf

¹³ World Bank, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Population Division. "Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2013," WHO, 2014. http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/monitoring/maternal-mortality-2013/en/

WHO Fact Sheet: "Family Planning," May 2013. http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs351/en/
OECD/European Union, "Health at a Glance: Europe 2014," 2014. http://www.oecd.org/health/

inequalities-in-health-and-access-to-quality-care-persist-in-europe-shows-a-new-oecd-ec-report.htm Globally, the net enrollment rate in primary school for boys in 2012 was 91.9 percent compared with 90.3 percent for girls. The gap was 7.4 percentage points in 1995. See No Cellings database, www. nocellings.org; original source was UNESCO Institute for Statistics accessed May 2014. http://www.uis. unesco.org/

¹⁷ WORLD Policy Analysis Center, "Facilitating Girls' Access to Quality Education: Global Findings on Tuition-Free and Compulsory Education," WORLD Education Database, 2015. http://www. worldpolicyforum.org

¹⁸ UNESCO, "Reaching Out-of-school Children is Crucial for Development," Education for All (EFA) Monitoring Report, Policy Paper 04, June 2012. http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ images/0021/002165/216519E.pdf

¹⁹ UNESCO Institute for Statistics, International Literacy Data, 2014. http://www.uis.unesco.org/literacy/ Pages/literacy-data-release-2014.aspx

in some regions too many girls are still out of secondary school.²⁰ Less than a third of girls in Sub-Saharan Africa and fewer than half in South Asia are enrolled in secondary school.²¹ These are also the regions most likely to charge tuition fees at the secondary level.²²

Although women now outnumber men in universities, inequality in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) studies persists. Globally, slightly more women than men participate in tertiary education, but this progress is not universal. For example, as few as six women for every 10 men are enrolled in Sub-Saharan Africa.²³ And around the world, there are still fewer girls and women in STEM education—fields with many of the best-paying jobs—and the situation has not improved. In 2010, women earned approximately 18 percent of all computer science bachelor degrees in the United States, down from a high of 37 percent in 1984.²⁴

Girls still face unique obstacles and discriminatory treatment

More than 1 million girls are "missing" at birth each year. Son preference and discrimination against girls, mainly in China and India, have resulted in an estimated 1.4 million girls who are never born every year, largely due to gender-biased sex selection.²⁵

Child marriage undermines girls' health, education, and economic opportunities, and increases their risk of experiencing violence. The practice of child marriage is deeply embedded and endemic. While prevalence of this practice is declining, change remains far too slow. In 2010, there were more than 67 million women aged 20 to 24 years old worldwide who had been married when they were under the age of 18.²⁶ Although legal protections against child marriage have increased since 1995, significant loopholes remain. About one-third of countries allow girls to be married younger than boys with parental permission.²⁷

Awareness of violence against women and girls has grown, but the epidemic continues

Violence against women remains a global epidemic. Awareness of violence against women and girls has grown, but the epidemic continues. One in three women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual violence, the vast majority at the hands of her husband or partner.²⁸ The estimated share of girls among the total number of detected trafficking victims has doubled, from 10 percent in 2004 to 21 percent in 2011.²⁹

Legal prohibitions against domestic violence are more extensive than in 1995, but again, gaps remain. By 2013, 76 of 100 countries had passed legislation outlawing domestic violence, up from 13 in 1995.³⁰ However, in Sub-Saharan Africa, nine of the 26 countries studied had not enacted any legal protections against domestic violence, and only two of 10 countries in the Middle East and North Africa had done so. Sixty-two of the 100 countries studied had no specific laws or provisions explicitly criminalizing marital rape and sexual assault within marriage.³¹ And even where laws exist, reporting rates are low, and enforcement often remains a problem.

In conflict zones, women face a heightened risk of sexual violence and trafficking. During conflict, post-conflict periods, and natural disasters, women and children face increased security risks, including sexual violence. Recent statistical analysis of the determinants of intimate partner violence (IPV) in 22 developing countries found that living in a fragile or conflict-affected state increased the likelihood that a woman will experience IPV by one-third.³²

Critical barriers to full economic participation remain

Women's participation in the labor force has stagnated for two decades—and they still earn less than men. Globally, around 55 percent of women are part of the labor force, compared with 82 percent of men, and the gap between men and women has not changed significantly since 1995.³³ Overall, women in almost every

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²⁰ This is based on the net enrollment rate in lower and upper secondary school, and is the ratio of children of the official secondary school age who are enrolled in secondary school to the population of the official secondary school age; see "net enrollment rate in secondary school" data in the *No Ceilings* database at www.noceilings.org; original source was UNESCO Institute for Statistics accessed May 2014. http://www.uis.unesco.org/

²¹ See "net enrollment rate in secondary school" data in the No Ceilings database at www.noceilings.org; original source was UNESCO Institute for Statistics accessed May 2014. http://www.uis.unesco.org/

²² Only around a third of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and half of countries in South Asia have made secondary education tuition-free through completion. Among those countries with available expenditure data, 43 percent that charge tuition before the completion of secondary school spend less than 4 percent of their gross domestic product on education. WORLD Policy Analysis Center, "Facilitating Girls" Access to Quality Education: Global Findings on Tuition-Free and Compulsory Education," WORLD Education Database and expenditure data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015. http:// worldpolicyforum.org

²³ Gross enrollment rate in tertiary school (used here) is the ratio of women enrolled in tertiary school, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the total population in the 5-year age group, following on after secondary school; see "gross enrollment rate in tertiary school" data on *No Ceilings* database at www.noceilings.org; original source was UNESCO Institute for Statistics accessed May 2014. http://www.uis.unesco.org/

²⁴ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), "Degrees and Other Formal Awards Conferred" surveys, and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Completions" surveys (table prepared June 2000), available at http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d00/dt283.asp; National Science Foundation, "Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering: 2013," 2013. http://www.nsf.gov/ statistics/wmpd/2013/pdf/nsf13304_full.pdf

²⁵ World Bank, "Four Million Missing Women," World Development Report on Gender Equality and Development, 2012. http://go.worldbank.org/GPLFFB9PQ0

²⁶ UNFPA, "Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage," 2012. http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/ pub-pdf/MarryingTooYoung.pdf

²⁷ WORLD Policy Analysis Center and MACHEquity, "Legal Protections Against Child Marriage Around the World," WORLD and MACHEquity Child Marriage Database, 2015. http://www.worldpolicyforum.org

²⁸ World Health Organization, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and South African Medical Research Council, "Global and Regional Estimates of Violence against Women Prevalence and Health Effects of Intimate Partner Violence and Non-Partner Sexual Violence," 2013. http://apps.who.int/iris/ bitstream/10665/85239/1/9789241564625_eng.pdf

²⁹ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "Global Report on Trafficking in Persons: 2014," 2014. http:// www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP_2014_full_report.pdf

³⁰ World Bank and International Finance Corporation, "Women, Business and the Law 2014," 2013. http:// wbl.worldbank.org/~/media/FPDKM/WBL/Documents/Reports/2014/Women-Business-and-the-Law-2014-FullReport.pdf

³¹ J. Klugman, L. Hanmer, S. Twigg, T. Hasan, J. McCleary-Sills, and J. Santamaria, "Voice and Agency: Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity," World Bank Open Knowledge Repository, 2014.

³² J. Klugman and L. Hanmer, "Expanding Women's Agency: Where Do We Stand?" *Feminist Economics*, unpublished at press time.

³³ International Labour Organization (ILO), Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM), labor force participation rates, male and female, percentage of population aged 15-64, modeled ILO estimate, accessed January 2015. As defined by the ILO, the labor force participation rate is the proportion of the population that is economically active—meaning all people who supply labor for the production of goods and services during a specified period.

country earn less than men.³⁴ Women are more likely to work in the agriculture and service sectors, which pay less than sectors like manufacturing. Even so, fewer than three in 10 countries have prohibited gender discrimination in both hiring and pay.³⁵ In high-income economies, the pay gap averages 15 percent, going as high as 37 percent in South Korea.³⁶ Progress in closing this gap has been slow. Since 1995, in 70 countries that include about one-third of the world's population, the average gender wage gap narrowed, from 28 percent to 20 percent.³⁷

Women do a disproportionate share of unpaid work. Women do the majority of domestic and unpaid work, from housekeeping and caring for children, the sick, and the elderly to household food production. In advanced economies, women spend twice as much time on unpaid work as men; in India, women do seven times as much unpaid work.³⁸

Paid maternal leave has increased since 1995 and is now almost universal, but many countries lack other support for caregiving responsibilities. Laws in all countries but the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Suriname, Tonga, and the United States provide for paid leave for mothers of infants.³⁹ Since 1995, eight countries have enacted paid maternal leave, more than 50 increased the duration of leave, and 20 raised the amount paid. However, less than half of countries provide leave for new fathers, and 46 percent guarantee no leave for mothers and fathers to address children's health needs.⁴⁰ In many countries, quality child care and early childhood education remain unavailable or unaffordable.

As use of technology has proliferated since 1995, a gender gap remains. An estimated 200 million fewer women than men are online in the developing world, and 300 million fewer women own a

mobile phone.⁴¹ This matters, because when women in the developing world get online, 30 percent report earning additional income, 45 percent report searching for jobs, and 80 percent report improving their education.⁴²

Women remain underrepresented in leadership positions

Almost twice as many women hold political office today compared with 20 years ago, but they are still very much a minority. Women occupy 22 percent of seats in national legislatures, up from 12 percent in 1997.⁴³ Surveys in many countries show that people still believe men make better political leaders than women.⁴⁴

Women are not adequately represented in the peace talks that end conflicts. Despite the passage of UN resolutions calling for women's involvement in peace and security processes since 1995, fewer than 10 percent of peace negotiators are women.⁴⁵ In the few cases where women were involved, social issues were more likely to be addressed, increasing the chances of stability.⁴⁶

While women's leadership in the private sector has increased, women remain vastly underrepresented in senior management positions. The share of women CEOs in Fortune 500 companies was zero in 1995; now it is 5 percent.⁴⁷ Women's share of board seats varies—ranging from 8 percent in Portugal to 36 percent in Norway—but falls well short of parity.⁴⁸

CONCLUSION

A review of the status of women and girls over the past 20 years reveals that there is much to be done to realize the goal set in 1995 to achieve the "full and equal participation of women." But the data also reveal remarkable progress over the past two decades—and show us that with sufficient commitment, resources, and accountability, progress is possible. To learn more and join our effort, visit **www.noceilings.org**.

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³⁴ EIU calculations based on data from "ILO Global Wage Report 2012/13: Wages and Equitable Growth," 2012. Figures cited are gaps between average nominal monthly wages for women and average nominal monthly wages for men, comparing the periods 1995-1999 and 2007-2011, taking simple averages of all available country wage gaps during those two periods. http://www.ilo.org/global/research/ global-reports/global-wage-report/2012/lang-enr/index.htm

³⁵ WORLD Policy Analysis Center, "Are States Parties to CEDAW Living up to Their Commitments to Women and Girls? A Globally Comparative Analysis of National Action," 2015. http://www.worldpolicyforum.org; World Bank, Women, Business and the Law Database

³⁶ OECD, information on gender wage gap, Gender Equality Database, accessed January 2015. http://www. oecd.org/gender/data/genderwagegap.htm

³⁷ EIU calculations based on data from "ILO Global Wage Report 2012/13: Wages and Equitable Growth," 2012, Figures cited are gaps between average nominal monthly wages for women and average nominal monthly wages for men, comparing the periods 1995-1999 and 2007-2011, taking simple averages of all available country wage gaps during those two periods. http://www.ilo.org/global/research/ global-reports/global-wage-report/2012/lang--en/index.htm

³⁸ OECD, "Closing the Gender Gap—Act Now," 2012. According to the OECD, women in advanced economies spend around 277 minutes a day on work in the home, men about 140 minutes. http://www.oecd.org/ gender/closingthegap.htm

³⁹ WORLD Policy Analysis Center and MACHEquity, "Labor Policies to Promote Equity at Work and at Home: Findings from 197 Countries," WORLD Adult Labor Database, 2015. http://www.wordpdolicyforum.org; ILO, "Maternity and Paternity at Work: Law and Practice across the World," 2014. http://www.worsp5/ groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_242617.pdf. Of the 185 countries and territories surveyed, the ILO found only two countries (the United States and Papua New Guinea) that do not guarantee workers paid maternity leave. Because the WORLD Policy Analysis Center conducted a review of 197 countries, they found an additional seven countries (Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Suriname, and Tonga) that do not guarantee such paid leave. Of note, five of the nine countries without universal paid maternity leave do include coverage for public sector workers (Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Suriname, and Tonga).

⁴⁰ WORLD Policy Analysis Center and MACHEquity, "Labor Policies to Promote Equity at Work and at Home: Findings from 197 Countries," WORLD and MACHEquity Adult Labor Database, 2015. http:// worldpolicyforum.org

⁴¹ Women and the Web: Bridging the Internet Gap and Creating New Global Opportunities in Low and Middle-Income Countries (Santa Clara, CA: Intel, Dalberg, 2012). http://www.intel.com/content/dam/ www/public/us/en/documents/pdf/women-and-the-web.pdf, Women & Mobile: A Clobal Opportunity (United Kingdom: GSMA mWomen, Cherie Blair Foundation for Women, January 2013). http://www.gsma. com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/GSMA_Women_and_Mobile-A_Global_ Opportunity.pdf

⁴² According to women surveyed in four countries: Egypt, India, Mexico, and Uganda. Women and the Web: Bridging the Internet Gap and Creating New Global Opportunities in Low and Middle-Income Countries (Santa Clara, CA: Intel, Dalberg, 2012). http://www.intel.com/content/dam/www/public/us/en/documents/ pdf/women-and-the-web.pdf

⁴³ Female representation in national parliaments (lower chamber), percentage of parliaments. Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU) Database, world and regional, as of December 2014. http://www.ipu.org/ wmn-e/classif.htm

⁴⁴ Only 10 percent of men in Egypt, more than half in Rwanda, and more than half in Colombia disagree that men make better political leaders than women. Almost 20 percent of women in Egypt, more than half in Rwanda, and almost three quarters in Colombia disagree that men make better political leaders than women. World Values Survey, 2010. www.worldvaluessurvey.org

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⁴⁷ Catalyst, Women in U.S. Management and Labor Force, 2014. http://www.catalyst.org/knowledge/ women-united-states

⁴⁸ Catalyst, "2014 Catalyst Census: Women Board Directors," 2015. http://www.catalyst.org/ knowledge/2014-catalyst-census-women-board-directors; http://www.catalyst.org/system/ files/2006%20Census.wbd_.pdf