



BPW International President's Message

BPW Presidents, Members and Distinguished Guests,

It's a pleasure for me to address presidents and members of BPW in Europe today. The conference theme "Women Making the difference – for both Women and Men" illustrate the strong support for BPW International's aim "to develop professional and leadership potentials for women at all levels."

In fact I would like to point out how member countries of BPW make a difference in enabling over 45,000 women to help themselves in the past decade – based on evidence of projects from "Beyond 2000: Helping Women Help Themselves" competition.

This is nice, but if we want to be known as one of the most influential women organization in the world for decades to come, we need to accomplish something that demonstrate our influence globally and "differentiate" BPW from other women organizations.

To attain this, we need to define a big picture of our "Ambition". Then we divide this picture into pieces to work on. It's critical not to keep on duplicate the effort by working on the pieces that are already there. Instead, we need to identify the "missing gaps" and focus on bridging these gaps to complete the picture.

The topic that is very relevant as the Ambition of BPW is "**Equal participation of women and men in Power and Decision Making**".

To attain this, we need to convince companies with evidences on "Return on Investment when more women became top executives". The basic, which is to collect case studies to illustrate how decisions of women executives turn around the companies, is necessary – but not sufficient. Men can always claim that such women are exceptional ones instead of seeing the positive impact of having more women at executive level in general. What we need is statistical evidences!

The "missing gap" here is the lack of gender disaggregated data on women and men executives in the private sector. This is what BPW in each country should lobby on this TOGETHER world-wide. The easiest target is to lobby for the public listed companies to disclose statistics of the number of women and men at executive level. This seems like such a little thing, but it's the little thing that will make possible the bigger tasks like analyzing performance of companies to show it's financially beneficial to have more women at executive level.

So BPW members, let's act on this. Let BPW make a difference in increasing women participation in power and decision making roles world-wide!

Chonchanok Viravan
BPW International President

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