

Progress on Workplace Gender Equality at DDB

DDB Group Philippines, the country's first integrated marketing communications and services network, participated in a case study commissioned by Investing in Women (IW), an initiative of the Australian Government, to demonstrate results in bringing about change in workplace gender equality (WGE). The case study examines the company's efforts as part of their engagement with the Philippine Business Coalition for Women Empowerment (PBCWE).

The GEARS Assessment Process

DDB became a member of PBCWE so the company could benefit from their assistance in assessing its status on WGE. A key part of the process centered on the Gender Equality Assessment Results and Strategies (GEARS) assessment process.

The GEARS assessment collects and analyses data on company policies and human resources such as the composition of men and women in the workplace, employee progression, and policies and practices that support and promote WGE.

The results of the GEARS assessment were finalised in December 2021 and shared with staff. The assessment found:

- DDB had leading practice on WGE in 9 out of 10 focus areas in the GEARS assessment.
- The one area where DDB scored lower (75/100) was the provision of workplace gender equality training for staff. (Training was not mandatory for all staff).



- DDB's board and mid-level management composition was gender equal at 50:50 and at other levels the ratio shows more women than men.
- Broadly more women than men are recruited and promoted at nearly all levels.
- For women, retention rates were lower, particularly at the supervisory level at 67 percent compared to 78 percent for men

The GEARS assessment scores were utilized by DDB and PBCWE to prioritize the following three areas for improving WGE and drafting an action plan with measurable targets:

1. Workplace Gender Equality/Diversity and Inclusion Training for all staff: This would now cover the total workforce including leaders and decision-makers.
2. Review of human resource communications and procedures including setting targets for gender balance (equal ration of men and women) at all levels of employees at DDB.
3. Developing a campaign under "Talent Has No Gender" to promote DDB as a leading advocate for gender equality.

WGE Progress at DDB

DDB had most of the building blocks that support workplace gender equality, diversity and inclusion before their engagement with PBCWE and the completion of the GEARS assessment. However, there has been further progress. With insights from GEARS and support from PBCWE, DDB has:

- **Increased staff awareness of why WGE and inclusion matter.** As one staff member put it:

In DDB 'inclusion is about creating and having a culture that nurtures talents and provides [staff] with a healthy working atmosphere...Inclusion ensure everyone feels valued and adds value. (Administrative and Compliance Officer).

- **Reinforced company policies and values.** GEARS has helped enhanced staff knowledge on WGE through training and communication materials. Further, as an empirical process, "[GEARS] scrutinized the written policies... it's like undergoing an audit, it's a validation of the work that we do." (Chief Culture Officer)

- **Encouraged its clients to act on WGE.** DDB is actively extending its organisation culture and values around WGE and inclusion. Staff consider this to be an important and radical change because the media communications industry has tended to portray women and men in stereotypical roles.

DDB [is being] braver about their communications with clients. [The company] is making efforts to stop unconscious bias. (Chief Culture Officer).

- **Further enhanced its reputation.** DDB is known amongst its peers and clients as a company that pioneers a more gender sensitive approach to advertising, marketing, and client engagement and has been recognized through awards for its work on anti-sexual harassment advertisements.
- Some DDB staff also reported that the company's **inclusive and diverse culture has had a positive impact on their family life.**

DDB's engagement with PBCWE resulted in further improvements to WGE. The company's aspirations to influence their clients' workplaces and the way they market, is potentially ground-breaking.

DDB's Drivers of Change

The case study highlights the following factors that underscore DDB's progress:



Sustained leadership, commitment and accountability:

DDB has a crucial mass of women at the executive level who along with male counterparts drive change forward.



The company also considers itself accountable to the Philippine's legal framework on gender equality which also helps drive commitment.



Company values and culture promote decency and fairness which helps support and sustain WGE



Gender equality company strategy: Tools were provided by PBCWE to track progress on the company's WGE action plan and progress. These tools include Gender equality data, insights and analytics.



Gender equality communications and transparency: DDB's communication products promoted transparency about DDB's WGE mission and vision and the Anti-sexual harassment and WGE training provided by PBCWE further helped advance this mission.

Sector	Advertising
Market	Philippines
Employees (male/female)	64% women
Mid and Senior Management	50% women
PBCWE Membership	Since March 2021
Clients include	NutriAsia Philippines, MVP Group of Companies (PLDT, Smart and Meralco), Johnson & Johnson's, PepsiCo – Gatorade, Mang Inasal, Jollibee and Light Rail Manila Corporation