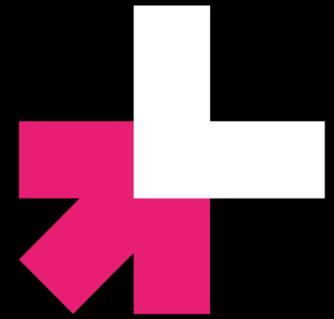


**Proven  
Solution**

Equal Representation At Leadership



**HeForShe**

# **Unilever** Achieving gender balance in management



## Global Context

**Unilever is a consumer goods company with more than 400 brands and a presence in 190 countries. We have around 149,000 employees, of whom about 10,000 work in management roles.**

**It's important to us that we reflect the people we serve and the communities in which we operate, as well as having an inclusive organisation.**

Improving gender equality is therefore a fundamental part of ensuring the company is in tune with the social environment. The visibility of our brands also gives us an opportunity – and even a responsibility – to show active leadership in the movement for gender equality.

We therefore set ourselves a target of building a gender-balanced organisation, focusing on our management. From 38% of women in management in 2010, we reached our 50:50 target in 2019, a year ahead of schedule. We maintained this balance in 2020.

While we still have more to do in other areas of our business, this was an important milestone. We've made significant progress over many years through our commitments to empowering women, to achieving gender balance, and to fair workplace practices that aim to tackle discrimination and bias.

"I am proud of the work we have done within the organisation, across our extended value chain and through our brands to create greater equality for women. But there is much more to do and as CEO I am committed to driving progress further and faster throughout our business and in the industry."

**Alan Jope, CEO  
Unilever**



50%

50% of Unilever management positions in 2020 are held by women

## Key Stages of Implementation



### Step 1 Achieving commitment from top leaders

We established a Global Diversity Board (GDB) which includes senior leaders who set the tone for the rest of the organisation to follow. Most members of the GDB are also on the Unilever Leadership Executive (ULE), which is our most senior body of leaders. The GDB is accountable for setting the D&I strategy, giving direction and acting as a catalyst to achieve the agreed vision and goals. The CEO, Alan Jope, chairs the GDB.

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### Step 2 Taking data-driven action with a focus on inclusive culture

We set targets for the totality of the company and for markets and functions. Looking at historical data, current situations and challenges, we set stretching but achievable targets for every part of the business. For example, Supply Chain is an area that was known for having a lower female representation, had specific targets and focused plans. Monthly reports on progress are shared with the ULE who take action on an ongoing basis to make course corrections as needed. The GDB reviews progress three times a year. The deep connection between an inclusive culture and a thriving diverse workforce is always at the forefront of conversations on metrics.

**Meaningful targets enable progress to be measured while providing objective evidence about which actions are effective. Targets must be realistic and suited to the organisation's unique circumstances.**



### Step 3: Having business leaders drive change

D&I at Unilever is not isolated from the business. Our business is led by our brands and our brands are not only shaping cultures externally but also policies internally. The Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Unilever, Aline Santos, is also the Executive Vice President of Global Marketing. This has been an important step in integrating the gender balance lens throughout the business and in elevating the conversations in leadership meetings beyond the human resources (HR) function.

**Seeing diversity and inclusion as integral aspects of the business means that any inequalities are more obvious in every aspect of the organisation's work – and more readily challenged. This perspective also helps in the development of the organisation's products and services, making sure they are reaching their potential markets and being valued by customers.**

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### Step 4 Committing to flexible working

We committed to promoting agile or flexible working throughout the business, giving employees more control over how, when and where they work.

Agile working includes an array of flexible working programmes including: Working part-time (fewer than five full days a week, a reduced shift pattern or term-time working), alternative start and finish times or varied work patterns, a commitment to work from home for a specified number of days per week, job share (splitting a role with a partner, where both partners work part-time) and the ability for people to vary their working locations depending on where they need to be and what they need to achieve. All employees are encouraged to discuss their flexible working arrangements with their line managers. This has been especially helpful for women who need to balance their responsibilities at home and work.

**The experience of the global coronavirus pandemic suggests that pre-existing trends towards flexible working will be reinforced and even accelerated. This is a key opportunity to develop innovative working options which can contribute to greater gender equality.**

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### Step 5 Amplifying impact through a dedicated network

With a worldwide presence and many variations across markets, any meaningful activation of D&I initiatives needs a close-knit network of dedicated people. We have this with our network of D&I Champions – nearly 100 employees around the world who have set the benchmark for how a global community can really power our agenda.

**Active networks provide motivation and a sense of community while acting as a vital means of sharing ideas. Organisations should see time spent on networks as an investment in organisational development and an important source of support for gender equality programmes.**

### How to set targets for your organisation

Hotspot	Accountable Leader	2020 HC	2020 Female HC	Target Female HC	Current	Target	Delta	Gap to target
Location	Leader	The ending headcount of your organization	The ending number of women in your organization	The number of women you organization will reach after meeting target	The ending % of women in your organization	The % of women in your organization once target is met	The number of women needed to meet your target	The % increase needed to meet your target

### Contact

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