



REPORT



# LAUNCH OF THE GLOBAL EQUAL PAY PLATFORM OF CHAMPIONS

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On 13 March 2017, during the 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), UN Women, the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the Governments of Iceland, South Africa and Switzerland hosted the launch of the Global Equal Pay Platform of Champions. This event was a follow up to UN Women's global call to action for pay justice for women, announced during CSW60, and the culmination of the preparatory work aimed to galvanize multi-stakeholder commitment towards equal pay between men and women at global level.

The Global Equal Pay Platform of Champions is a group of high level representatives of civil society, celebrities, academic experts, trade union activists, government ministers and private sector leaders, who commit to developing together, advocacy strategies for Member-States and key stakeholders to adopt laws and policies that support equal pay for work of equal value. Through their engagement in high level advocacy work, the Champions will raise awareness on the issue of equal pay for work of equal value, and advocate for increased political support for concrete measures to reduce the global gender pay gap by 2030, with some key deliverables by 2020.

Despite ongoing advocacy for equal pay, at a global average women only earn 77 cents to every dollar a man makes. This lack of progress is due

to a combination of factors and country-specific challenges. These may include stereotypes and social norms that regard women as second-class citizens and are responsible for a disproportionate amount of household and care duties; occupational segregation where women are concentrated in undervalued sectors; and systematic gender discrimination in laws, policies and business practices.

Moderated by filmmaker and activist Kamala Lopez, the event included interventions from the Equal Pay Champions present, government representatives, UN leaders and representatives from civil society and the private sector. The speakers shared country experiences of bridging the gender pay gap, discussed best practices and laid out priority actions to accelerate progress.

UN Women @UN\_Women · Mar 18  
Worldwide, women only make 77 cents for every dollar earned by men.  
#Stoptherobbery and click here: [23percentrobbery.com](http://23percentrobbery.com) #CSW61

**23**  
THE 23% ROBBERY

77c

Globally, women are robbed of 23 cents for every dollar men earn for work of equal value.

The event also featured the launch of the new UN Women online campaign, [#StopTheRobbery](#), a pro bono creation of Grey Advertising. The campaign aims to raise awareness about pay inequality and its “robbery” of 23 percent of women’s salaries.

The event reiterated that the lack of equal pay is a manifestation of gender inequality. In achieving women’s economic empowerment, women’s work must be equally valued at all levels of employment, and policies must address the existing social and economic challenges stalling women’s advancement in the changing world of work.



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## What’s working?

### Best practices from different country contexts

Representatives from governments described effective policy actions and practices that reduced the gender pay gap in their respective countries. One such policy is that the national legal framework – particularly the federal constitution – guarantees men and women equal pay for work of equal value.

Other best practices include instruments to help companies monitor their pay practices and wage structures; implementing a national minimum wage; requiring employers to make regular payments towards employee pensions; offering paid parental leave to both men and women to encourage shared parenting; and outlawing gender and racial discrimination in the workplace.

The event also highlighted the intersection of pay inequality with other challenges facing women, such as violence, adolescent pregnancy and lack of economic opportunity. To achieve equal pay and promote women’s empowerment, stakeholders must develop a multi-pronged, holistic approach that addresses harmful practices and circumstances that perpetuate inequality between men and women.

## Beyond the Government

### The role of the private sector

The global gender pay gap is narrower in the public sector than in the private sector. This is partly due to government workers’ right to collective bargaining, which results in greater pay equality. To bridge this gap, private sector businesses should encourage employees to join trade unions while conducting due diligence on supply chains and examining women’s working conditions.

Likewise, private sector companies must ensure a minimum wage and social protection floors, including access to health care and basic income security. ILO conventions and recommendations on equal remuneration, minimum wage fixing, social protection and decent work can help advise both public and private sector companies in improving work conditions and clearing pathways for equal pay.



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## Recommendations and way forward

The Global Equal Pay Platform of Champions calls for collective action by governments, the private sector, civil society and trade unions. Developing a multifaceted response to the global gender pay gap must include:



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1. Legal and policy measures and mechanisms to close the wage gap with clear accountability for non-compliance in private and public sector:

- Laws that require equal pay for work of equal value, setting a national standard and backed by strong implementation
- Policies that recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, like parental leave, flexible schedules, provision of childcare services

2. Equal Pay for work of equal value certification programmes, to be adopted by all public and private enterprises:

- Greater transparency in company pay practices, including especially opaque areas such as provision of bonuses; routine pay monitoring and auditing
- Encouraging diversity and inclusion in the workplace

3. Pay gap reporting mechanisms to be made compulsory; These measures must apply across all public and private businesses and institutions and organizations;

- Minimum wage and social protection floors across sectors
  - Support for women's participation in trade unions and collective bargaining
  - Eliminating practices that perpetuate wage discrimination, such as salary history requirements
  - Addressing the multiple and intersecting factors that hold women workers back, such as race, disability and other social and economic challenges
4. Support to the Global Equal Pay Platform of Champions as an advocacy initiative

## Priority actions that the Global Equal Pay Platform of Champions will take:

Overall: drive the ask for countries to close the wage gap

Specifically:

- Regional advocacy initiatives featuring the Global Equal Pay Platform of Champions facilitating contextualized intersectoral discourse among key constituencies
- Communication activities by Champions on the issue including in their own social media platforms
- Key commitments by Champions, including government representatives, to actionable results on fostering the Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value Agenda by 2020.



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## ANNEX: LIST OF SPEAKERS AT THE GLOBAL EQUAL PAY PLATFORM OF CHAMPIONS LAUNCH EVENT

13 March 2017, General Assembly Hall, United Nations Headquarters New York

### EQUAL PAY CHAMPIONS PRESENT:

- Patricia Arquette, *Actress, Producer, and Academy Award winner*
- Anannya Bhattacharjee, *Society for Labour & Development, Founder and International Coordinator of the Asia Floor Wage Alliance, President of the Garment and Allied Workers Union - GAWU and member of the Executive Board of the New Trade Union Initiative - NTUI*
- Vera Jourová, *Commissioner, Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, European Commission (via video message)*
- Emma Kaliya, *Human rights and gender/women's rights activist, Chairperson, The African Women's Development and Communications Network (FEMNET)*
- Chidi King, *Director, Equality Department, International Trade Union Confederation*
- Kamala Lopez, *Actress, filmmaker, activist, and President of Heroica Films*
- Nomasonto Mazibuko, *Commissioner, Commission on Gender Equality, and Executive Director and Founder, Albinism Society of South Africa*
- Abigail (Abby) Wambach, *Retired soccer player, coach, two-time Olympic gold medalist and FIFA Women's World Cup champion.*

### GOVERNMENTS:

- Australia: Sharman Stone, *Australian Ambassador for Women and Girls*
- Belgium: Kris Peeters, *Deputy Prime Minister*
- Cambodia: Inga Khanta Pavi, *Minister of Women's Affairs*
- Germany: Elke Ferner, *Parliamentary Secretary of State, Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth*
- Iceland: Thorsteinn Víglundsson, *Minister of Social Affairs and Equality*
- New Zealand: Jo Goodhew, *Member of Parliament*
- Panama
- South Africa: Mildred Oliphant, *Minister of Labour*
- Switzerland: Benno Bättig, *Secretary-General, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs*
- United Kingdom: Caroline Waters, *Deputy Chair, UK Equality and Human Rights Commission*

### UNITED NATIONS:

- Kang Kyung-wha, *Senior Advisor in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, United Nations*
- Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, *UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women*
- Manuela Tomei, *Director, Conditions of Work and Equality Department, International Labour Organization*

### PRIVATE SECTOR:

- Paul Rawlinson, *Global Chair of Baker McKenzie*

### OTHER:

- Beverly Neufeld, *PowHER New York, and member, New York City Commission on Gender Equity*