

Meeting Report

The Business for Goals Platform convened with the Goal 5 “Gender” agenda in Istanbul on February 28, 2020. This meeting will embody the steps that B4G will take regarding the gender equality and the empowerment of women which has been determined as one of its priority areas. The meeting was planned as the first of a series of meetings and was aimed to create a road map to be followed in the following process.

Following the first session in which the participants listened to keynote speeches and Assoc. Dr. Cagla Unluturk Ulutas, the participants grouped and discussed the empowerment of women in business life and ensuring gender equality under 5 headings. In working groups, detailed discussions were conducted on (1) policies to increase women employment, (2) professional development and career development, (3) work-life balance, (4) present situation in the fields of gender-based violence and harassment, and (5) communication and advocacy for gender equality, and the needs, potential steps and the impact that the B4G Platform can produce. Please find attached the detailed notes on the outcomes of these discussions, which were conducted within small groups at first and then by all participants.

In this first meeting, B4G highlighted the following suggestions regarding the agenda and action plan for the upcoming period:

1. *Our Mission and Vision!*

B4G works with the mission of improving the role of the business world and increasing its effectiveness in achieving sustainable development goals, and with the purpose of increasing the efficiency and collective impact of the efforts in the business world accordingly. It emphasizes human development based on the fundamental human rights and rights-based work values, which are also intrinsic to Sustainable Development Goals. Accordingly, it is based on the idea that the role of the business world in sustainable development should go beyond corporate social responsibility efforts and be grounded on a transformative vision.

2. *Platform to INCREASE COLLECTIVE IMPACT!*

Almost all collective works and general reviews show that the business world in Turkey introduced many initiatives for gender equality and the empowerment of women, and in this context, many projects, programs and platforms emerged. As a platform established with the main goal of increasing the contribution of the business world to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, B4G should position itself to be a roof organization aimed to increase the effects of all these initiatives. In line with this vision, B4G should undertake the COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY mission for Goal 5 and all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3. *MAPPING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION for Advocacy!*

Within the working groups and during the general discussions, emphasis was often laid on mapping, monitoring and evaluation strategies. In this context, the suggestions made by the participants to the Platform include but are not limited to:

- a. It is necessary to map the ongoing practice in the business world for gender equality and the empowerment of women. This will allow for revealing the repetitions and deficiencies, and good practices, and lead to the emergence of strategic planning and collective learning opportunities.
- b. Mapping, monitoring and evaluation of the practices in the field will allow for developing and disseminating **principles and standards** for necessary tools and practices to create inclusive business models based on gender equality. Tools such as mainstreaming gender equality in the workplace, gender training, and women's leadership programs are offered at standards that are far from uniform. Mapping of good practices and impact assessment will allow for identifying the basic principles and standards to be followed in the use of all these tools. These principles and standards will be documented and shared.
- c. Legal and structural monitoring should also be among the main areas of activity of the Platform. The regulations regarding the status of women in the business world, their participation in work life, the current practice regarding these regulations and their effects should be monitored and made a subject of advocacy.

4. *COMMUNICATION for Equality!*

Participants agreed that B4G should use its strong communication capacity to make a change towards equality. Below are listed the recommendations developed within the scope of communication activities:

- a. B4G should undertake to function as a learning platform that shares the information it produces as a result of mapping, monitoring and evaluation activities with business and other equality initiatives in the business world.
- b. B4G should share, announce and support the blueprint applications identified as a result of mapping and monitoring good examples. In this context, methods such as regular reporting and rewarding may also be used.
- c. It should organize advocacy activities for the government and business world for policy and implementation suggestions developed at the end of legal and structural monitoring activities. To this end, campaign and lobbying tools may be developed.
- d. Similarly to the practices of some credit institutions, campaigns should be carried out in order to ensure that the creditors and purchasers make sure that the other party will meet the gender equality criterion in business and partnership relations, that is, to develop equality criterion. Predicating government supports and incentives on this criterion, and giving priority to women-owned and/or women-employing companies will help rapid development of gender equality in the business world.

5. *Tools and Methods for Recent Studies*

The participants developed the following suggestions on the tools and methods that can be used in the near future for realization of the vision and goals set for B4G:

- a. *Working Groups*: It was recommended to establish working groups to elaborate suggestions, make and implement an activity plan in the thematic areas such as parental and paternity leave, care benefits and supports, business relations, and the use of equality criteria in government incentives and supports.
- b. *Annual Campaigns*: Campaigns should be organized annually in a chosen area and/or theme to develop a focused and scheduled work.
- c. *Writing Workshops*: Joint workshops should be organized to meet collective learning needs and to develop tools that can be communized and mainstreamed. For example, writing workshops should be organized for non-discriminatory job posting writing and job interview principles as well as egalitarian code of conduct in the workplace.

The participants decided to create an agenda and a program based on the aforementioned recommendations at the next B4G meeting to be held for Goal 5.