

## II DEVELOPING FEMALE TALENT

Gender inequity remains the greatest concern in all of the countries we examined. The greatest barrier to women's advancement continues to be family demands.

Best practices include:

- **Mandatory diverse slates:** One company in the United Kingdom insists that all executive short lists have 30 percent women candidates. Another company in the United Kingdom insists that its headhunters must include at least one credible female on the short list for all major selections.
- **Finding women in tech industries and non-traditional roles:** Increasingly, every company views itself as a technology company, and more are working with girls in schools to raise awareness in interest in STEM careers.
- **Looking at talent-development initiatives carefully.** A company in the United Kingdom says its high-potential development programs must be 50 percent female. These programs include two-day meetings focused on driving innovation, with the high-potentials developing new products, custom relationships, and improving diversity and employee engagement.
- **Emphasis on workplace flexibility.** Also in the United Kingdom, one company has recruiters partner with hiring managers to determine whether a new role is conducive to a flexible schedule.
- **Understanding need for role models.** Multinationals help lead and support country efforts to mandate more female representation on boards of directors.

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#### Discussion Questions for Employees

##### » How cognizant are you of the cultural differences in your different regions—and countries—for women?

Some [best practices](#) involve sensitivity to local cultural values, such as the needs of mothers-in-law in India and women appearing in public or in mixed gender groups in Saudi Arabia.

##### » Do your local HR people have specific efforts in place to recruit women?

Our research shows less than 20 percent of multinationals have actual recruitment plans in place in most countries, especially in Asia. Those plans would include dedicated recruiters working with women's organizations and schools, and specific training programs for girls and women.

##### » Do you have a women's employee resource group in most countries?

Our research also indicates more than 90 percent of global employee resource groups are still based on gender, yet most U.S.-based companies have not started global resource groups yet. If you aren't ready to start them in a country, try a region or a grouping of companies. Use virtual tools to get them going and ensure they communicate with each other about best practices as well as with your D&I staff.