

## New report sets out Unilever's ambition to tackle harmful social norms and stereotypes

The report, entitled 'Opportunities for Women: challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotypes to unlock women's potential,' builds on Unilever's [#Unstereotype](#) commitment, launched last year, which pledged Unilever to changing the way it portrays women and men in its advertising. Today's report outlines the work Unilever is doing to support women in its workplace, in its supply chain and customer development network, through its brands and, through partnerships and advocacy, in broader society.

The company is making good progress on its 2014 target of empowering five million women by 2020 through its three-fold approach: by promoting rights and safety, building skills and capabilities, and creating economic opportunities through job and livelihoods. By making a commitment to challenge norms and gender stereotypes that hold women back, Unilever aims to enable many more women to participate more fully in the economy, to the benefit of human development and economic growth and to Unilever's sustained business success.

Through the report, Unilever is calling on business to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment in the private sector by:

- **Being gender aware**, by ensuring they have the right information and disaggregated data in place to inform policies
- **Being gender active**, by having the right policies and practices in place that respect women's rights and empower professional and personal development
- **Being the new norm**, by ensuring that harmful norms are not perpetuated through outdated business practices, while actively promoting more positive portrayals of women along the value chain to challenge stereotypes.

Adverse social norms were identified in the report by the UN High level panel on Women's Economic Empowerment, who concluded that "changing norms should be at the top of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to expand women's economic opportunities."

The report was launched at a panel discussion co-hosted with UN Women at the Commission on the Status of Women which this year focuses on Women's Economic Empowerment. The panel features Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women; Gwen Hines, Director for International Relations at the Department for International Development; Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of Oxfam International and Alan Jope, President of Personal Care, Unilever discussing how to address social norms and stereotypes through the private sector.

Alan Jope, Unilever President of Personal Care, said: "Empowering women and girls offers the single biggest opportunity for human development and economic growth. However, harmful social norms and stereotypes hold back women from fully participating in society.

"We are already making a difference to the lives of women, through the work of brands like Dove, with campaigns like 'My Beauty My Say' and partnerships like [Surf's work](#) with Oxfam to alleviate the burden of unpaid care work on women.

"Together with others, we want to be at the vanguard of challenging these outdated stereotypes and help make gender equality a reality for our business and across wider society.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women: "Confronting and changing stereotypes is central to evolving how both women and men are able to operate and progress in society and in the economy. Powerful cultural and social norms are currently limiting that potential. Everyone has a role in shaping - and positively re-shaping - those stereotypes as part of the essential

progress towards equality. This is a shared goal, whose success impacts us all.”

**Languages:** English

**Primary Identifiers:** ULVR-GB

**Regions:** Europe - Western

**Related Identifiers:** ULVR-GB

**Source:** <https://www.unilever.com/news/press-releases/2017/new-report-sets-out-unilevers-ambition-to-tackle-harmful-social-norms-and-stereotypes.html>

**Source List:** <https://www.unilever.com/investor-relations/investor-news/press-releases/>

**Subjects:** Company Announcements and Releases