



Fifty percent.

The world population is divided almost equally into men and women (actually, there are slightly more women). And yet there are currently only 18 female world leaders among 142 nations.*

Today, on International Women's Day, when we celebrate the advancements in gender equity and workplace parity, we cannot help but think how far we have to go. Not just here at home, but around the world. Women whose physical safety is threatened by civil war and regional conflicts. Girls who never get the opportunity to go to school, let alone finish school. Corporations whose leadership and boards remain overwhelmingly male.

When we live in a world where women and girls face the horrors of sex and labor trafficking and child marriages, we have far to go.

When we live in a world where domestic violence is legal in some countries and not considered grounds for divorce in others, we have far to go.

At JWI, we are far too aware of this reality from our work at the United Nations and the State Department, as well as our efforts on the ground here in the U.S. But, when we think about the work that still needs to be done, when we think about the journey ahead, we remember that when the Israelites were packing to escape slavery in Egypt, Miriam went from door to door and instructed the women to pack their timbrels. With their musical bells, timbrels were necessary because while the journey ahead was arduous, there would come a time for joy and celebration.

So today, on International Women's Day, we reaffirm our commitment to creating a world that is truly safe and equitable for all women and girls. A world where women thrive and therefore families and communities and countries flourish.

And we are packing our instruments of joy.

We thank you for everything you do to support our work.

In sisterhood,

Vivian G. Bass,
Chair, Board of
Trustees

Lori Weinstein, CEO



*Pew Research Center