



# We Initiative

## SME Conference

### May 8, 2013

### Dubai



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# Business Opportunity / Background

## Why SMEs?

1. Diversified risk
2. Higher profit margin
3. Cross selling opportunity

## Why Women in Business ?

1. Specific attributes : loyalty, risk profile, referrals
2. Different behavioral patterns
3. They outnumber men in Lebanon and are highly educated
4. They account for over 36 % of all entrepreneurial activity in Lebanon



# We Initiative step by step

1. Recognizing the strategic opportunity
  - GBA Conference in 2010
2. Assessing Lebanese market potential and building an internal BP
3. Signing an advisory contract with IFC
4. Learning best practices
  - GBA member, UN WEPs, international conferences
5. Understanding our market
  - Market research in collaboration with IFC
6. Setting the strategy
  - Customer Value Proposition going beyond regular banking to offer non-financial services
7. Introducing internal cultural change
  - Constant training to employees to serve the market
8. Launching of We Initiative in March 2012



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# We Initiative – Overview

## What is We Initiative?

- 1st and only program dedicated to the **economic empowerment of women** in the MENA Region.
- **2 objectives :**
  - the Bank of Reference and
  - the Employer Of Choice for Women
- **2 pillars :**
  - financial
  - non-financial products and services
- **1 segment :** women (mothers, employees, professionals and entrepreneurs)



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## Internal Program : Employees

BLC Bank committed to **UN Women empowerment principles**. This translated into tangible actions :

- ✓ **Maternity leave**: additional 2-month part-time schedule
- ✓ **Flexible working hours** to be implemented soon
- ✓ Promotion of **gender equality** : remuneration and positions
- ✓ **Staff Awards Program** to recognize high achievers
- ✓ Employee **satisfaction surveys** and Net Promoter Score (NPS) to encourage feedback, dialogue and enhance employee motivation and loyalty
- ✓ Internal/external **trainings** to promote the personal & professional growth of our employees
- ✓ **Tuition** assistance for employees to pursue academic development



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## Internal Program : Employees

- **Initial** intensive training focusing on understanding women behavior and conscious vs unconscious bias
  - Sales teams
  - Middle Management
  - Top Management
  - Train the trainer
  - Part of the induction program for new comers
- Subsequent **ongoing** trainings
  - Gender related
  - Technical for advisory purposes

## Internal Program : Part of DNA

- Mission, Vision, Values
  - 5<sup>th</sup> value “We Promote **Gender Equality**”
- **Procurement** Policy
  - Ex : end of year gifts
- **CSR** strategy fully aligned
- **Humanization** of communication, more women friendly
- **Brand** management
- **BLC Club**

... in a nutshell full mainstreaming



# CVP : Financial Services

Of course all the existing product range

- Loans
- Deposits

Two new products to increase access to financial services:

- The Collateral-free Loan
- Mother's Fiduciary Account

BLC Cloud

- Key value added services via ATM's, web, and a mobile application



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# CVP : Non Financial Services

## Training and learning

- Financial, managerial, technical seminars and workshops
- SME toolkit (very soon)

## Networking

- Organization and sponsorships of events, including in remote areas
- Dedicated platform: [www.we-initiative.com](http://www.we-initiative.com)
- Promotion of mentoring via experts on the website and NGO's
- Digital and social media presence

## Advisory

- Access to high end experts for free or at lower cost via website
- Financial advice from internally trained champions and ambassadors



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# CVP : Non Financial Services

## Recognition of achievements

- First Lebanese banking award for SME's
- 2 categories :
  - “Women Entrepreneur of the Year” and
  - “Business of the Year”
- 30 000 USD price each
- A 3<sup>rd</sup> category : “People’s Choice” via facebook
- High level, diversified and independent Jury
- 4 key criteria : Creativity, Profitability, Sustainability, Social Responsibility
- Second edition (2013) has started



- A successful and sustainable program is a **profitable** one
- Hence need for **measurable KPIs**
  - Quantitative and qualitative
  - For both financial and non financial services
  - For digital footprint : website and social media
  - For the awards



## Results so far : financial

**BLC has outperformed the market for the past 5 years**

### **SME / Women in Business (since March 2012)**

- Women Loans portfolio increased by 9.5% YTD and SME Women Loans portfolio by 52% YTD.
- Women deposits increased by 17% YTD.
- SME Packaged Account's portfolio grew 228% YTD.

### **From 02/2012 to 02/2013:**

- Outstanding Small business loans to women increased by 62%
- Number of Small Business loan women clients increased by 34.2%
- Medium business loans disbursed to Women increased by 92%
- Outstanding Medium business loans to women increased by 66%



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## Results so far : non financial

- Reference Bank for Women In Lebanon
- Notoriety
- International and local conferences
- Study tours for sharing our expertise
- Awards



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