

Chapter 5

Austria – Stanglwirt and Its Approach Towards Female Leadership and Role Models

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The Stanglwirt is an award winning 5-star green spa hotel including a wellness resort and its farm. It is located in the Austrian Alps near Kitzbühl. The hotel combines uniquely tradition and innovation and is well-known for hosting legendary parties. The company was founded in 1609. It is family-led and owned by the Hauser Family in the 10th generation.

Introduction

The Stanglwirt is a family-led and owned 5-star hotel in the Austrian Alps near Kitzbühl, Austria. [Fig. 1](#) shows the company's brand. The hotel is characterised by its traditional but at the same time innovative character according to the motto: tradition meets innovation. Arnold Schwarzenegger describes Balthasar Hauser, the current owner of the Stanglwirt, as a 'green visionary'. He is a pioneer in bringing the hotel in line with the organic philosophy, as the company is committed to significant issues such as environmental and climate protection. Moreover, the Stanglwirt successfully integrates Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG#5) on gender equality and empowerment. The history of the Stanglwirt displays a unique tradition in female leadership and role models. Thus, today, many managerial positions at Stanglwirt are taken by women. Importantly, this is not due to artificial efforts but a shared understanding building on mutual trust, teamwork and focusing on individuals' abilities rather than any other attribute,

Attaining the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal of Gender Equality, 57–71



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Fig. 1. Stanglwirt Brand.

such as kinship. The Stanglwirt constitutes a best practice example for a family business which aims at equality and balance (Stanglwirt GmbH, 2017).

Vision and Mission

We are an international, family-run 5-star luxury resort and a very proud host. At the same time, we are a very down-to-earth and cosy meeting place for young and young-at-heart people from all over the world. With us, you can and should feel comfortable without any restrictions. No matter whether you are on vacation or working.

Products and/or Services Offered by Stanglwirt

- Organic farm and five-star wellness and luxury hotel in one;
- A golf and tennis hotel;
- Offers leisure, sports and recreation facilities;
- 5-star spa on 12,000 square metres;
- Hotel's own riding and ski school;
- Event location (e.g. weddings, corporate events);
- Event organisation (Weißwurst Party).

Background to Stanglwirt

Internationally known celebrities have been guests at the Stanglwirt, which has led to an international reputation that reaches far beyond the country's borders. The hotel, founded in 1609, offers guests today a variety of different attractions, including a spa and wellness area and many various sports activities such as

tennis, golf or horse riding. The hotel also owns a Lipizzaner stud farm and over 12 hectares of agriculture. Milk, curd, butter, yoghurt, cheese and bread are produced in-house. The hotel stands out from the competition primarily through these different qualities since the Stanglwirt is the only organic farm with an integrated 5-star luxury hotel. Internationally, the hotel is also known for its various events, such as the legendary ‘Weisswurst’ parties during the Hahnenkamm race in which up to 2,500 guests participate, including famous personalities like Arnold Schwarzenegger. Balthasar Hauser who took the family business over from his sister in 1966 is specially accredited with the international fame that is associated with the Stanglwirt (Stanglwirt, 2022g).

The hotel can look back on a history of over 400 years and is managed by Balthasar and Madalena Hauser today along with their three children, who will be its 11th generation. Johannes Hauser, one of the children, describes the development of the company and the cooperation within the family as follows:

Then, of course, the company itself developed more, and in the past, of course, the whole family helped together. Everyone helped where (s)he showed a good fit, so everyone works, where (s)he was good at. One was better in agriculture, one in the business itself, but overall, all helped together.

(Interview Johannes Hauser, 2022)

In 1609, the hotel received the official innkeeper’s licence. In 1642, the inn was sold to Hans Stangl, who gave the inn its current name just one year later. In 1889, a new era begins at the Stanglwirt, with the first Stanglwirtin ‘Marie’ Schlechter (née Hauser). Under her father’s instructions, Marie runs a competing business to the Stanglwirt but married the Stanglwirt owner Balthasar Schlechter in 1889. At the end of the 19th century, the Stanglwirt got into an economic crisis. The young Marie nevertheless made the Stanglwirt enormously popular. However, Marie Schlechter’s private life did not run so positively, and she left her husband Balthasar. After he made her the co-owner of the inn, she returned. In 1912, he died, and Marie continued the inn. She proved herself to be a capable gastronome and farmer and had a livestock and timber trade talent. Due to her cheerful nature, the Stanglwirt became known throughout the country. Marie liked to play and sing; therefore, she organised the first singers’ meetings at the Stanglwirt and made the inn a place of conviviality. In 1944, the childless Marie Schlechter adopts her grandniece with her maiden name Hauser. Finally, she hands over the entire property with the wish to preserve the name Hauser for future generations.

In 1944, during the Second World War, Anna Hauser took over the Stanglwirt and stood out for many positive qualities. She also shared the joy of singing, and the same was true for her husband Alois. Alois was the son of the neighbouring farmer; he took care of his father’s farm after his illness and assisted in the Stanglwirt farm as well. Anna and Alois became a couple, and together they took care of the hospitality and entertainment of the guests and the agriculture that went with it as they were aiming at providing their guests with the feeling of being at home. Through the singers’ meeting, the Stanglwirt became known all over the

Alpine region. In 1944, Anna and Alois had a daughter Maria, and two years later, their son Balthasar Hauser was born. Due to its increasing popularity, the Stanglwirt needed to be expanded. This resulted in a window between the inn's parlour and the cowshed. But Alois saw excellent potential in this problem and left the window open.

It is quite funny, we have the cowshed directly in the hotel, so that the cowshed is in the inn. From the cowshed you can look into the guest room, meaning from the restaurant into the cowshed, while you're eating.

(Interview Johannes Hauser, 2022)

This unique feature developed into one of the greatest attractions of the Stanglwirt. By the end of the 1950s, the Stanglwirt already had a few guest rooms and offered all-day hot cuisine for the first time. In 1963, the Stanglwirt experienced some hard times again as the reconstruction of the kitchen exceeded the costs, and the tax authorities targeted the inn. At the same time, Anna's health deteriorated rapidly until she passed away in 1964 at the age of 49.

The eldest daughter, Maria, took over the business but only continued running the inn with difficulty. Two years later, Maria's brother Balthasar III took over the company; when his sister moved to Carinthia, he was left without support. Without capital, building materials or architects, he began the construction of today's main building. Wood waste was used as building materials, and farmers from the surrounding area supported him. The newly built house and the beautiful view made the Stanglwirt increasingly popular again, and the financial situation calmed down. This allowed Balthasar to construct the inn's second floor and put investment in tennis which was becoming a very popular sport. After the previously completed tennis courts fell victim to a flood, tennis courts were re-built a few years later in the flood-proofed area of the property and complemented by two indoor halls. The roofs were planted with greenery to integrate the indoor tennis courts into their surroundings. Balthasar Hauser received international recognition for this innovative idea (Stanglwirt, 2022b).

Once again, Balthasar Hauser was ahead of his time and invested in eco-tourism long before being organic became a trend and built an organic hotel. He remained true to his vision, and in the middle of the 1980s, he put Europe's first biomass power plant into operation. The organic hotel, the lived tradition of the Hauser family and the many innovative ideas led to the hotel's international reputation. The hotel, which always appeared to be one step ahead of the competition, established the first private Lipizzaner stud farm, which is a special horse breed, in Austria. Around this time, Balthasar and his wife Magdalena, whom he met at the traditional singers' meeting, became proud parents. The children Maria, Elisabeth and Johannes all continued their parents' path and, together with their parents, made Stanglwirt a recognised 5-star organic wellness hotel (Stanglwirt, 2022g).

The company's long history has made the hotel what it still stands out today: 'genuine and authentic Tirolean hospitality'. The family business has become one of Austria's top hotels and is among the top 20 in terms of revenue in Austria,

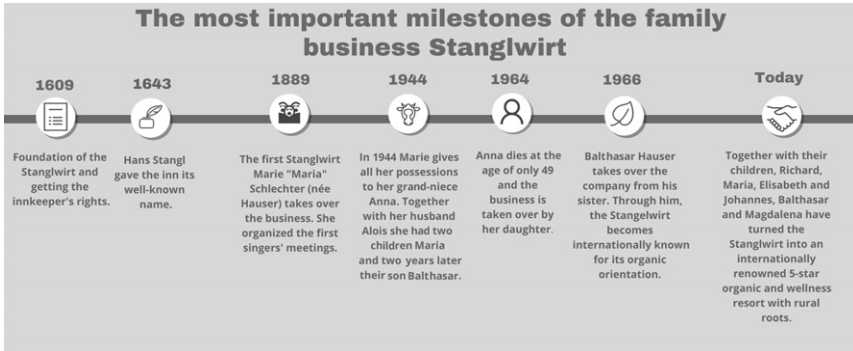


Fig. 2. The Most Important Milestones of the Family Business Stanglwirt (Own Illustration).

with up to 100,000 annual overnight stays. The number of employees has also risen to over 300 (Stanglwirt, 2022g). The innovative and visionary ideas of the entrepreneurial family allow the company to stand out from its competitors, as innovation is an essential driver for the growth and survival of companies in the hospitality sector (Gomezelj, 2016; Muskat et al., 2021; Pikkemaat & Zehrer, 2016). The most important milestones of the Stanglwirt's history are shown in Fig. 2.

Maria Hauser said about her grandma Anna Hauser and the brand Stanglwirt:

The name was already very, very good due to my grandmother, as she was a textbook example of a hostess. She could inspire people. She lived only for the guests and her inn. Unfortunately, I have not been allowed to know her personally, but I always have the feeling that her spirit is still represented in the whole house, because she was so vibrant.

(Interview M. Hauser, 2022)

SDG#5 Gender Equality and the Stanglwirt

SDG#5 aims at the overall target to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The awareness to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (SDG#5 Target 5.5.) as well as to undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws (SDG#5 Target 5.a) is not only a targeted objective at the Stanglwirt but a value that is

deeply integrated into the entrepreneurial family, the company and its vision. Today, at the Stanglwirt, the share of women in managerial positions is around 80% (Interview M. Hauser, 2022) which is exceeding the average percentage of women in managerial positions by far (United Nations, 2023a). Studies show that in Europe and North America, female managers amount to less than 40% on average (United Nations, 2023a). The Stanglwirt takes place as a leading family firm when it comes to the inclusion of female successors and managers.

The successful integration of SDG#5's objective at the Stanglwirt to provide equal opportunities for men and women is deeply rooted in the family business history. Throughout history, several role models showed that positions usually prescribed for men were successfully pursued by women, which formed the family's narrative that for work positions, it is only on a person's abilities and not on gender (Interview M. Hauser, 2022). Already in 1889, the Stanglwirt was led and co-owned by Balthasar Schlechter and his wife Marie Schlechter (Stanglwirt, 2022b). Even though Marie Schlechter joined her husband's company, she already had entrepreneurial experiences as she had previously taken over a competing business to the Stanglwirt from her father. When her ex-husband died, she owned, led and managed the Stanglwirt alone. Thus, she, her father and her ex-husband laid the foundation for the company's value of gender equality and women's empowerment as aimed for by SDG#5 targets to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership as well as to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources. The trust in her abilities by her father acknowledging her as a legitimate successor and her husband providing her with equal ownership rights delineates that gender equality is not a challenge only for women, but rather, the empowerment of girls and women can only succeed if gender equality is appraised and supported by all parties involved (Amore et al., 2014; Stanglwirt, 2022b). Especially in the business context, gender equality focuses on a person and their abilities without being concerned about gender (Amore et al., 2014).

In this tradition, the grandniece of Marie Schlechter took over and led the company together with her husband as equals. As she died early, her daughter took over, firstly leading the company alone and later co-leading with her brother, providing another role model that a position should be filled based on a person's abilities and interests (Stanglwirt, 2022b). The successful integration of gender equality into the company's ownership and leadership forms the perception of today's reality that at the Stanglwirt, all potential successors can join the company's leadership and a large part of managerial positions is occupied by women. For the successors of the Stanglwirt, who are currently running the company together with their father, their ancestors already proved that women and men were equally capable of taking on multiple roles in the business. Thus, today, there are no doubts that leadership and ownership are equally possible for daughters as well as sons. The professional careers of today's successors reflect the understanding that being part of the company is pursued by being qualified and actively contributing to the company's development. There was no gender-specific

difference concerning education or vocational training. The opportunities for all children were equal, but they had to choose their direction through self-determination. This shows again that at the Stanglwirt, the personal constitution and abilities are central. Hence, this is the thing that matters most. When the successors one by one joined the company, they were again confronted with the requirement to reach the best person-organization fit. Neither their status nor their gender predefined their position in the company. As the firm was already well-established and employees filled most positions, the successors had to bring in ideas about where they could position themselves and how they could contribute to the company's development. Thus, each child created his/her position in alignment with their abilities (Interview M. Hauser, 2022; Interview J. Hauser, 2022).

The internal as well as external communication about *SDG#5* is assimilated into the company's operations. More precisely, the focus is put on the person's abilities and fit with the working environment within the family instead of using gender as an anchor point. For every position, the Hauser family tries to find the best fit when it comes to abilities so that the team can complement each other in all relevant characteristics. There is no need to explicitly make gender equality a subject of discussion at the Stanglwirt as it is perceived as a natural component of the company's success. The Stanglwirt values confidence, trust and proactiveness, as put by one of the children. Hence today, the staff is naturally balanced according to their gender division (Interview M. Hauser, 2022; Interview J. Hauser, 2022).

Business Model and *SDG#5* Gender Equality

The Stanglwirt Hotel is located in a year-round tourism destination amid the Tirolean Alps, Austria, nestled around the Wilder Kaiser mountain range. With approximately 300 staff, 31 million in sales revenue and about 120,000 overnight stays, the business is flourishing. The hotel has 171 rooms (of which 75 are suites) which equates to approximately 350 beds. A speciality of the hotel is that it is not bookable via booking platforms but can only be booked directly via its homepage. The Stanglwirt was the first and only hotel in Austria to be included in the 'Gold List' of the 142 best hotels in the world, produced by the publishers of the renowned international travel bible, Condé Nast Traveler (Stanglwirt, 2022g).

The Stanglwirt was among the pioneers in sustainable hotel management using water as a sustainable energy source in the wellness worlds and for air-conditioning in the storerooms, offices and conference rooms. Every alteration, extension and new building project is done in accordance with the Stanglwirt's eco-friendly ethos and meets the highest sustainability standards. The Stanglwirt is, for instance, using wooden ceilings instead of steel; it disposes of its waste from its eco-farm and relies on several regional, quality partners. In their farm, natural resources are used sensibly, and it has always been a high priority for the family business and farming traditions have been maintained. The hotel has developed an amazing water park and sauna complex, covering a total area of

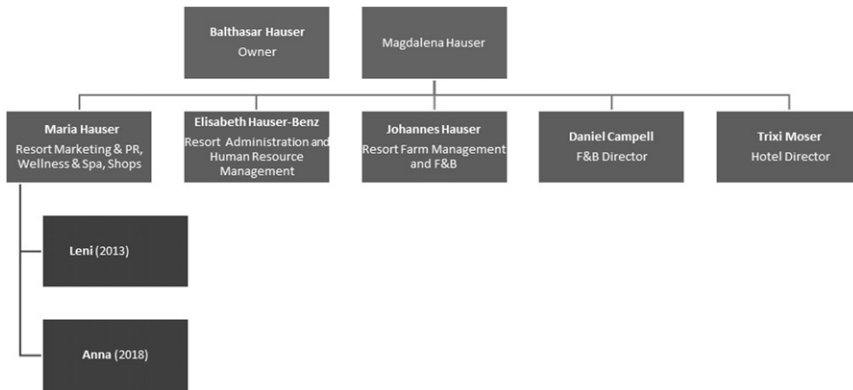


Fig. 3. Organizational Structure and Family Tree (Own Illustration).

more than 12,000 square metres including a newly developed children's water world with the first pool cinema at a hotel. At the hotel, guests also find powerful energy centres where one can gain new energy and sense the primal power of the elements – life-giving water, rejuvenating earth, invigorating air and inspiring fire (Stanglwirt, 2022g; Stanglwirt GmbH, 2022).

The organisational structure of the Stanglwirt is as follows: Balthasar Hauser is the current owner of the business. His three children, Maria Hauser, Elisabeth Hauser-Benz and Johannes Hauser, as well as the non-family employees Trixi Moser and Daniel Kempell are leading the specific resorts (see Fig. 3).

The 5-star hotel is an all-year round business and provides the following key business activities: hotel management, gastronomy, agriculture, marketing, janitor and floristry, carpentry, the Stanglshop as well as event planning. The added value is 100% reinvested into the business. The business can be regarded as self-sufficient with its farm, Lipizzaner farm stud, ski school, tennis and golf academy, a private fishing district, children's farm, as well as conference rooms. Altogether, the complex has six restaurants where the family pays attention to biological products from its own farm and regional products served with Tirolean hospitality in its rooms furnished in an Alpine style (Stanglwirt, 2022g).

Since its beginnings, the Stanglwirt resort has never been closed until the COVID-19 pandemic, which also hit the family business in 2020 and, due to national regulations, forced them to close their business for a certain period. Given the great experience of Balthasar Hauser with crises in the history of the Stanglwirt, as well as given the value-centred way of leading the business over generations, the family business managed well during this time and was confident to persevere.

SDG#5 Gender Equality and the Stanglwirt

Stanglwirt interacts with different stakeholder groups, customers, suppliers or employees influencing the company and shaping the corporate culture. Values

such as honesty, courage, fairness, respect for nature and tradition are essential values of the company. The same applies to the companies cooperating with the Stanglwirt, including old family businesses. For its cooperation with its suppliers, the Hauser family maintains long-term partnerships. The hotel has, for example, been supplied with vegetables by the Posch family for 60 years. The company also relies on organic, regional and sustainable food. Even if the SDG does not directly impact the cooperation with trading partners, it is crucial for Stanglwirt that their partners have similar values and guiding philosophies (Stanglwirt GmbH, 2022). The company is constantly trying to develop further and delight its guests with its innovative ideas. The drivers for those innovative ideas are not only the entrepreneurial family but also the employees and guests. These innovation drivers can positively incentivise growth and business development (Kallmuenzer, 2018).

In cooperation with corporate partners and employees, values such as sustainability play a significant role because they make the Stanglwirt attractive as an employer. Junior manager Elisabeth Hauser-Benz explains the advantages of the Stanglwirt as an employer:

In addition to the security of an established year-round business with regulated working hours, our commitment to environmental protection and social fairness is also attractive to many employees.
(Stanglwirt GmbH, 2022)

The company relies on long-term cooperation with suppliers and employees. Examples such as Trixi Moser or Anneliese Treichl show that these values are lived in the company. Both are already occupying higher managerial positions over decades at the company contributing to the large share of female managers at the company. Thus, the Hauser family values long-lasting working relationships and provides even family outsiders the opportunity to join the highest hierarchical levels whereby the main factor is the person's ability and not its gender. The family-like working atmosphere and the opportunity to develop within the company positively affect employee motivation. Gender equality has been an essential part of the company since the first female owner Marie Schlechter (Stanglwirt GmbH, 2022). Even today, 80% of management positions in the company are held by women. To reach a position, it is skills and not gender that counts. This gives female employees the chance to advance within the company and take on management positions (Interview with Hauser). The good corporate culture and positive cooperation are also reflected in the kununu ratings¹ of the employees:

Togetherness is lived and everyone is friendly, helpful. It really is a great team that works together. The management is also very

¹Kununu is an open platform for rating your employer: <https://www.kununu.com/at/bio-hotel-stanglwirt>.

cordial, and you are valued as an employee – this makes everything very familiar.

(Kununu, 2021)

The Stanglwirt ignores the gender of its employees and family members, in a positive sense. Still, a mix of different personalities and characters, suitable for their tasks, is the secret to the company's success. Above all, equality and initiative play a decisive role.

The general manager and current owner, Balthasar Hauser, credits his wife with playing an essential role in connecting the various stakeholder groups and creating a pleasant atmosphere. Guests also appreciate this, emphasising, for example, the friendliness of the team and the warmth that radiates from the entire house (Stanglwirt, 2022a). As Balthasar Hauser says:

One of the great secrets of success at the Stanglwirt is that we have an identity between guest, host, and staff. Our children played with the guests' children and the employees' children. Magdalena ensured that we were not a separate family living in our own house and not in the business. The beautiful atmosphere needs a strong personality, and Magdalena is exactly having that.

(Stanglwirt GmbH, 2022)

Overall, the focus on personality and corporate culture positively impacts the relationship across the stakeholder groups.

Challenges of Working With SDG#5 Gender Equality

The Stanglwirt is a well-established family business in its 10th generation. As for all family-led and owned enterprises, one of the main challenges for the Stanglwirt is to preserve the company over generations and manage the succession successfully (Leiß & Zehrer, 2018; Zehrer & Leiß, 2020). Both challenges are closely entangled in pursuing gender equality. The longevity of a family business consists of two components, the successful day-to-day operation, wherein all involved members of the family work hand in hand to fulfil the company's vision and the experience of gender equality, and the actual succession process, which is crucial concerning the availability of gender-equal chances for leader and ownership.

For successfully managing the day-to-day operations, the Stanglwirt values abilities, pro-activeness and person-organization fit. Thus, at the Stanglwirt, everyone is challenged to contribute to the organization. For family members, this is primarily about understanding how one can serve and enhance the status quo. However, being a child of the owner does not guarantee the opportunity to work in the company or a prescribed role according to their gender. Thus, today's successors, likewise as their ancestors before them, had to find their spot proactively and demonstrate their abilities.

Happiness means being needed according to one's abilities and interests, and that's real happiness when one's individual abilities and interests are used, and that's how we have always oriented ourselves in our roles.

(Interview M. Hauser, 2022)

This is especially challenging as Stanglwirt is already a well-established and diversified company. Until now, they managed well to fill in all positions according to the applicant's abilities and interests naturally attaining gender equality. Thus, their departments benefit from complementing each other. A great challenge is to maintain the balance and align multiple perspectives (Interviews M. Hauser, 2022; Interview J. Hauser, 2022).

It is great, that a lot has happened in emancipation and that there is now even the possibility to act on an equal footing, but I always say you shouldn't go to the other extreme and ignore men because I think it takes both. It's just the togetherness of the sexes.

(Interview M. Hauser, 2022 shown in Fig. 4)

Concerning the company's succession, this constitutes an upcoming challenge for the Stanglwirt family, as Balthasar Hauser and his three children currently work harmoniously together. Each of the successors manages a part of the company independently (Interviews M. Hauser, 2022; Interview J. Hauser, 2022). It becomes increasingly important to preserve equality and harmony when the



Fig. 4. Maria Hauser.

father retires. In history, the company has never had co-leadership by three successors, thus challenging the Hauser family to find a unique solution for collaboration in terms of leadership and ownership. In addition, the greater sharing of leadership and ownership also raises the challenge of today's 10th generation to make the transfer to the 11th generation possible, guaranteeing equality for the offspring of the successors.

Business and Greater Good

The family business Stanglwirt aligns its company with the values of honesty, appreciation, sustainability and being 'down-to-earth'. These values guide the daily actions of the family business. For example, this is reflected in focusing on abilities rather than other attributes such as gender. For the Hauser family, the connection with people has been central for more than 400 years. They show their sense of responsibility and commitment even beyond the organisation because the family business wants to create value for people living in the region and beyond. This is not just an essential concern in the current generation but starts much earlier in the company's history (Stanglwirt, 2022c). Sebastian and Marie Schlechter were already known as benefactors. Sebastian Schlechter, who ran the company from 1763 to 1826, donated a church organ to the village. The common good was also an essential concern for his successor Marie Schlechter; therefore, she donated a glass window to the parish church in 1935 (Stanglwirt, 2022b).

Today, the company continues to support charitable projects and associations and is committed to helping people in need worldwide. The Stanglwirt's social commitment ranges from regional activities such as support for the Kitzbühel Ski Club and the international Karlheinz Böhm Ethiopia Aid (Stanglwirt, 2022b). The Hauser family is committed to strengthening education, equality and infrastructure on a national and international level. A few examples of the company's projects include the charity golf tournament. Despite the pandemic, €410,000 were raised for social institutions in the region (Stanglwirt, 2022d). International projects are also supported by donations from the Stanglwirt, such as the association 'Future for Tshumbe'. The project tries to make a remote region in the DR Congo autonomous. One focus of the project is to promote the expansion of agriculture, and the construction of a regional centre is expected to impact the development of the region positively. The Stanglwirt supported the construction of the building foundation of a lower primary school with the donation of the proceeds from the sale of the hotel's own spring water. In the building, people in need are to find advice and solutions, be trained to help themselves, and exchanges between different groups are supported (Stanglwirt, 2022d). In Ethiopia, over 40% of all children do not have access to education – especially women – by building a school, the family business is trying to give people the opportunity to get access to education (which is in line with Target 5a. of SDG5) (United Nations, 2023b). Through this building, women in particular have been able to benefit, as they can now invest the time they would otherwise have spent fetching water in their education. In doing so, the company is trying to strengthen

equal rights and empower women across the company's boundaries (Stanglwirt GmbH, 2022). Locally, the Stanglwirt also tries to make vacations possible for families with children with disabilities through its partnership with 'Global Family Charity Resort' to ease parents' burdens and overcome discrimination (Target 5.1.) (United Nations, 2023b). Within the framework of this partnership, the Hotel Stanglwirt acts as one of several partner hotels to make a vacation and some carefree days possible for the families in their hotel (Stanglwirt, 2022e).

The Stanglwirt is not only at the forefront when it comes to social commitment but also when it comes to environmental protection and sustainability. The Stanglwirt became the first 5-star cooperation partner of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Organic farming, regional products and sustainable energy have always been part of the company's identity. After an examination phase, the Stanglwirt and the WWF have started cooperating to work together for a sustainable future. The various examples show that the company is committed to social projects and sustainable developments beyond its corporate boundaries (Stanglwirt, 2017, 2022f).

Reporting and Measurement

The successful implementation of SDG#5 by ensuring equal opportunities for potential successors to join the company's leadership and ownership as well as for employees to take on managerial positions and its impact can be measured by the share of female managers and the shared narrative of the Stanglwirt which outlines that for any work position, ability is the most important factor. The people-centric perspective on character and fit for a position is strengthened by the company's development story which is built upon the commitment of different female company leaders and owners. The entrepreneurial family of the Stanglwirt has not officially set itself the task of meeting the SDG targets, but this happens automatically out of their actions and the company history. As a medium-sized family business, the company focuses on measurable figures in the area of CO₂ emissions and heating oil savings and electricity generation, but no correct goals and achievements are set in the context of the SDGs. The future progress in the company with regard to the fulfilment of the SDGs – especially women's equality – is rather advanced by the company narrative. The Stanglwirt sees itself as a family business with strong ecological values, traditional and innovative. The company became what it is today, especially through the long company history. The strong personalities of the entrepreneurial family – employed where they can unfold their abilities – have shaped the company and are an important part of the corporate narrative. Even though the Stanglwirt emphasises this green side again and again on its website, in the company reports and also in the conducted interviews, no clear goals are named, and there are also no means for measuring the achievement of goals. In the future, the company could formulate their goals concretely so as not to leave everything to 'chance' (Stanglwirt, 2017).

What Next for Stanglwirt and Gender Equality

As the Stanglwirt is a company rich in tradition and continuously aiming at further development, new goals and directions must be defined as well as ways to maintain balance (Interview M. Hauser, 2022; Interview J. Hauser, 2022). Even though there currently is a great share of females in leadership positions, this does not mean that empowerment and gender equality are secured automatically. The successors realise the current societal changes and advocate embracing multiple perspectives: ‘There is great potential, that everyone complements each other so well and that you don’t have to exclude anyone and neither their talents are excluded’ (Interview M. Hauser, 2022). The daughter of Balthasar Hauser, Maria Hauser, points out further that this is a responsibility everyone must contribute to, especially since the Stanglwirt is a company rich in tradition. Thus, the company needs all sides to acknowledge equality and value even though the established perception might often be that certain positions or tasks are destined for men. Hence, it is necessary to promote openness and find new ways to bridge different perspectives.

On the other hand, there is a large part of management positions filled with females at the Stanglwirt which also implies challenges: ‘But now you just have to make sure that it is kept in balance and that it doesn’t tip over to extremes and because extremes are never good, it always has to be in balance’ (Interview M. Hauser). For creating a harmonious culture and gender-balanced staffing, two pillars must be strengthened. Firstly, individual responsibility is extremely important to find one’s path and abilities independently from social expectations and secondly, collective thought must be defined to determine future directions.

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