



# Women's Empowerment Principles

## Equality Means Business



United Nations Global Compact



## **Women's Empowerment Principles in Brief**

1. Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
2. Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and nondiscrimination.
3. Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers.
4. Promote education, training and professional development for women.
5. Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.
6. Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
7. Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

# Principle 1: Leadership Promotes Gender Equality



- a. Affirm high-level support and direct top-level policies for gender equality and human rights.
- b. Establish company-wide goals and targets for gender equality and include progress as a factor in managers' performance reviews.
- c. Engage internal and external stakeholders in the development of company policies, programmes and implementation plans that advance equality.
- d. Ensure that all policies are gender-sensitive – identifying factors that impact women and men differently – and that corporate culture advances equality and inclusion.

## **Principle 2:**

### **Equal Opportunity, Inclusion and Nondiscrimination**

- a. Pay equal remuneration, including benefits, for work of equal value and strive to pay a living wage to all women and men.**
- b. Ensure that workplace policies and practices are free from gender-based discrimination.**
- c. Implement gender-sensitive recruitment and retention practices and proactively recruit and appoint women to managerial and executive positions and to the corporate board of directors.**
- d. Assure sufficient participation of women – 30% or greater – in decision-making and governance at all levels and across all business areas.**
- e. Offer flexible work options, leave and re-entry opportunities to positions of equal pay and status.**
- f. Support access to child and dependent care by providing services, resources and information to both women and men.**

## Principle 3: Health, Safety and Freedom from Violence

- a. Taking into account differential impacts on women and men, provide safe working conditions and protection from exposure to hazardous materials and disclose potential risks, including to reproductive health.**
- b. Establish a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence at work, including verbal and/or physical abuse, and prevent sexual harassment.**
- c. Strive to offer health insurance or other needed services – including for survivors of domestic violence – and ensure equal access for all employees.**
- d. Respect women and men workers' rights to time off for medical care and counseling for themselves and their dependents.**
- e. In consultation with employees, identify and address security issues, including the safety of women traveling to and from work and on company-related business.**
- f. Train security staff and managers to recognize signs of violence against women and understand laws and company policies on human trafficking, labour and sexual exploitation.**

## Principle 4: Education and Training

- a. Invest in workplace policies and programmes that open avenues for advancement of women at all levels and across all business areas, and encourage women to enter nontraditional job fields.
- b. Ensure equal access to all company-supported education and training programmes, including literacy classes, vocational and information technology training.
- c. Provide equal opportunities for formal and informal networking and mentoring.
- d. Offer opportunities to promote the business case for women's empowerment and the positive impact of inclusion for men as well as women.

## Principle 5: Enterprise Development, Supply Chain and Marketing Practices



- a. Expand business relationships with women-owned enterprises, including small businesses, and women entrepreneurs.
- b. Support gender-sensitive solutions to credit and lending barriers.
- c. Ask business partners and peers to respect the company's commitment to advancing equality and inclusion.
- d. Respect the dignity of women in all marketing and other company materials.
- e. Ensure that company products, services and facilities are not used for human trafficking and/or labour or sexual exploitation.

## Principle 6: Community Leadership and Engagement

- a. Lead by example – showcase company commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment.
- b. Leverage influence, alone or in partnership, to advocate for gender equality and collaborate with business partners, suppliers and community leaders to promote inclusion.
- c. Work with community stakeholders, officials and others to eliminate discrimination and exploitation and open opportunities for women and girls.
- d. Promote and recognize women’s leadership in, and contributions to, their communities and ensure sufficient representation of women in any community consultation.
- e. Use philanthropy and grants programmes to support company commitment to inclusion, equality and human rights.



## Principle 7: Transparency, Measuring and Reporting

- a. Make public the company policies and implementation plan for promoting gender equality.
- b. Establish benchmarks that quantify inclusion of women at all levels.
- c. Measure and report on progress, both internally and externally, using data disaggregated by gender.
- d. Incorporate gender markers into ongoing reporting obligations.

# WEPs as a Tool



- ✓ Focusing on how to bring the private sector can play in to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment
- ✓ Take them into account in developing and revising public policies on gender equality and women's empowerment and corporate responsibility
- ✓ Use them when engaging in dialogue with the private sector about their role
- ✓ Consider corporate commitment the WEPs when making decisions about which businesses to partner with, procure from, or other such economic decisions.

# Materials and Resources



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Global Women Leadership Initiative for Women UNIFEM

A portrait of a woman with dark hair, wearing a patterned top, looking directly at the camera.

## Where Women Stand: Facts and Figures

### Women at Risk

- More people have been lifted out of poverty in the last 50 years than in the previous 500, yet more than 1.2 billion still subsist on less than \$1 per day. According to some estimates, women represent 70% of the world's poor.

The International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD) reports that in the developing world, the percentage of land owned by women is less than 2%.

According to U.S. Government-sponsored research completed in 2006, approximately 800,000 people are trafficked across national borders annually. Approximately 80% of transnational trafficking victims are women and girls and up to 50% are minors.

An estimated 72% of the world's 33 million refugees are women and children.

Every minute somewhere in the world a woman dies due to complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

### Violence against Women

- The most common form of violence experienced by women globally is physical violence inflicted by an intimate partner. On average, at least 1 out of 10 women are beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused by an intimate partner in the course of their lifetime.
- It is estimated that, worldwide, 1 in 5

women will become a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime.

Women experience sexual harassment throughout their lives. Between 40% and 50% of women in the European Union reported some form of sexual harassment in the workplace.

The cost of intimate partner violence in the United States alone exceeds US\$5.8 billion per year. US\$4.1 billion is for direct medical and health care services, while productivity losses account for nearly US\$1.8 billion.

In Canada, a 1996 study estimated the annual direct costs of violence against women to be approximately Cdn\$1.17 billion a year. A 2004 study in the United Kingdom estimated the total direct and indirect costs of domestic violence, including pain and suffering, to be 320 million per year or 8440 per person.

### Women and HIV/AIDS

- The AIDS epidemic has a unique impact on women, exacerbated by their role within society and their biological vulnerability to HIV infection – more than half of the estimated 33 million people living with HIV worldwide are women.
- The prevalence of violence and of HIV/AIDS is interrelated. Women's inability to negotiate safe sex and refuse unwanted sex is closely linked to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Women who are beaten by their partners are 48% more likely to be infected with HIV/AIDS.

### Spotlight on Women and Productivity

When women are afforded the equality of opportunity that is their basic human right, the results are striking. In 2006, The Economist estimated that over the past decade, women's work has contributed more to global growth than China's.

If Japan raised its share of working women to American levels, it would boost annual growth by 0.2% over 20 years, according to The Economist.

In 2007, Goldman Sachs reported that different countries and regions of the world could dramatically increase GDP simply by reducing the gap in employment rates between men and women: the Eurozone could increase GDP by 15%, Japan by 16%, the US by 9%.

### Women and Education

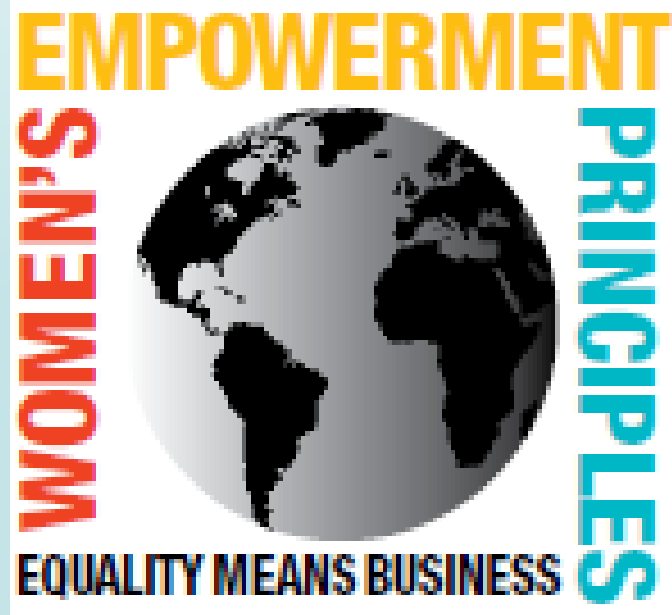
- About two-thirds of the estimated 776 million adults – or 16% of the world's adult population – who lack basic literacy skills are women.
- In developing countries, nearly 1 out of 5 girls who enroll in primary school does not complete her primary education.
- The Women's Learning Partnership (WLP) estimates that worldwide, for every year beyond fourth grade that girls attend school, wages rise 20%, child deaths drop 10% and family size drops 20%.

For more information, please visit:

[http://www.unglobalcompact.org/Issues/human\\_rights/equality\\_means\\_business.html](http://www.unglobalcompact.org/Issues/human_rights/equality_means_business.html)

Or

[http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/womens\\_empowerment\\_principles/](http://www.unifem.org/partnerships/womens_empowerment_principles/)



**THANK YOU**