

# WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

NOVEMBER 2020

## WEPs IN ACTION



PRINCIPLE 5

**Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.**

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## CASE STUDY: GANNI CREATING GENDER EQUALITY IN FASHION

### CONTEXT

GANNI is a fashion brand based in Copenhagen, Denmark, with offices in the United Kingdom and the United States. The company is owned and operated by Creative Director Ditte Reffstrup and her husband Nicolaj Reffstrup, the company's founder. GANNI is represented in more than 600 global retailers, as well as through 23 concept stores across Europe, and has its flagship stores in New York and Los Angeles.

The company believes that good design does not need to come at a cost – for the customer or the planet. While GANNI is a luxury brand, it focuses on affordability and sustainable practices.

### ACTIONS

GANNI made a firm commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in August 2020 when it signed the WEPs. With support from GANNI's CEO Andrea Baldo and founder Nicolaj Reffstrup, the company plans to focus on ensuring social responsibility throughout its supply chain.

It's a complex task – fashion supply chains are historically long and convoluted, and many fashion brands including GANNI do not own the factories they work with. Lauren Bartley, Head of Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility said: "There could be upward of 10 suppliers per garment produced. Therefore we need to have a complete understanding of our supply chain, the communities it

GANNI is dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment. Nicolaj said: "We have a moral obligation to use our platform to advocate for women's rights. Over the past 10 years, we've taken a start-up mentality to growing our business. Our fast and flexible tech approach has meant we've sometimes been guilty of making statements before fully embodying them."

The company's 150 employees are 90 per cent women and the majority of its customer base is also women. Gender equality and women's empowerment is vital to the company's internal brand values, as well as to its external marketing practices.

affects and the people that directly and indirectly work for us if we want to drive structural and meaningful change."

GANNI aims to have 100 per cent traceability across the first three stages of its supply chain (garment manufacturing, printing/dyeing and fabric mills) by 2021. It currently has more than 200 suppliers within this category.

On social responsibility, GANNI knows that third party audits are not very efficient and that these do not help to build equal partnerships with suppliers, as there is often an imbalance of power and a feeling of distrust.

Through signing the WEPs, GANNI hopes to first explore its own internal corporate practices to see how it can influence its supply chain and how the WEPs could be applied to its suppliers.

Lauren added: “We already know one of our suppliers, Sutek in Turkey, has been a WEPs signatory since 2012 and clearly demonstrates through its policy and advocacy work, not only in its offices but also its factories, that the WEPs are highly applicable to fashion supply chains and can create a huge impact when it comes to advancing women’s empowerment, and rights for women.”

“(We need to know] how we can apply the lessons to our supply chain; what difference we can make and generate, and [how far this goes] to creating equal partnerships between brands and suppliers through common goals and shared experience.”

GANNI discovered that it cannot truly achieve gender equality without first acknowledging intersectionality. The company founded an internal diversity and inclusion working group to create concrete objectives and measurable change within the company.

In September 2020, the company published 10 internal actions for diversity, gender equality and inclusion. A gender equality working group, comprising the Responsibility team, Human Resources, Marketing and Communications, the CEO and the Founder are overseeing the introduction of these measures to:

- Sign a public charter on diversity and inclusion by 2021.
- Define language and terms surrounding diversity and inclusion for internal and external communication, to ensure alignment within the company and to create awareness around potential micro aggressions.
- Implement policies and procedures to accelerate diversity and inclusion.



PRINCIPLE 1

- Ensure data capture and reporting on BIPOC and gender equality within GANNI’s HQ to see where improvements could be made and to measure progress.
- Increase hiring of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) employees across GANNI’s global offices.
- Represent a balanced and diverse mix of people across marketing and PR content projects.
- Implement new All Voices tool to ensure employee voices are heard frequently and anonymously.
- Set up GANNI resource libraries across all offices (physical and digital, through audiobooks) for employees to continue educating themselves on anti-racism and to understand the concept of intersectionality in gender equality.



PRINCIPLE 2

- Ensure that employees responsible for management, hiring and communication will attend anti-racism, unconscious bias and inclusive communication training (organized by The Other Box, from October 2020 to February 2021).



PRINCIPLE 4

- Create an external Responsibility Advisory Board, made up of industry experts, to support the company’s People, Planet, Product and Prosperity strategy.



PRINCIPLE 6

Lauren added: “It was extremely important for us to set up an internal working group, that tackles both gender equality and diversity and inclusion, to align key stakeholders internally and ensure a diverse range of voices. With this, the sharing of knowledge and progress in these areas can happen at a much quicker pace.”

In April 2020, GANNI formed a partnership with UN Women UK to further women’s empowerment worldwide. GANNI collected funds from their GANNI POSTMODERN archive pop-up to support UN Women UK’s solidarity fund and will continue to contribute through the sales of GANNI face masks. The partnership with the solidarity fund supports women on the frontlines fighting the COVID-19 pandemic and women around the world most affected by the pandemic.

Lauren said: “As well as a health crisis, the (COVID-19) pandemic is a human rights crisis, with marginalized groups set to bear the brunt of so many aspects, magnifying existing inequalities and reversing the hard-won gains of the past 10 years.”

Through this newly formed partnership, GANNI hopes to provide services where they are most needed, whether in refugee camps, in urban areas or in remote rural locations.



## GOALS

- Aligning internal brand values and behaviours both internally and externally on women's empowerment.
- Adding credibility to its work on social responsibility.
- Adding structure and focus to its work on gender equality.



PRINCIPLE 2

- Obtaining gender-split information from more than 200 suppliers (GANNI wants to increase its response rate from 30 per cent to 100 per cent)
- Partnering with a framework that can be applied throughout the fashion supply chain.

## TARGETS

- Commit to a minimum of three initiatives per year to raise awareness of issues around gender equality, by 2021.



PRINCIPLE 6

- Define and embed its social responsibility strategy in its supply chain by 2021.

## KPIs

Progress will be monitored by the Head of Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility every eight weeks through the gender equality working group. GANNI also reports on progress each April in its responsibility report.

### How the WEPs Secretariat can support

GANNI is hopeful that signing up to the seven WEPs will provide them with a framework to advance their internal work on gender equality, and also provide a framework for scaling this through their supply chains.

Nicolaj said: "This year, 2020, we signed the WEPs, in part to hold ourselves accountable, but also to provide a framework that ensures our work becomes concrete, legitimate and progressive. By becoming a signatory we ensure that our steps towards gender equality become tangible. On a practical level, taking part in the commitment also means measuring our gender split – and keeps us focused on achieving progress."

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

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