

UN Women's Empowerment Principles Gender-Responsive Procurement Assessment Tool

Guidance Note

The UN Women's Empowerment Principles – Gender-Responsive Procurement (GRP) Assessment Tool allows companies to assess progress on their GRP policies and practices on gender-responsive procurement. This self-assessment tool is available to all WEPs signatories.

Consisting of 31 questions, the tool identifies gaps and areas for improvement based on inputs provided by the company.

The tool – guiding companies to work towards implementing WEPs Principle #5: *Enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices* – was developed in consultation with companies from Asia and the Pacific and the European Union to ensure that the questions reflect real-life company practice and adhere to international standards and indicators.

The questions cover five main themes, namely:

1. Gender equality commitments
2. Procurement policy and strategy
3. Internal procurement and supply chain management department
4. Supplier database and data reporting
5. Supplier engagement and diversification.

You will be assigned a specific score based on each response to the questions. All the questions are weighted equally.

Once you complete the assessment, you will receive numerical scores for each of the five themes along with the highest possible score for reference. You will also receive an overall score with an indicator of your progress as being a Beginner, Improver, Achiever or Leader. The highest possible numerical score is 78. The following are the ranges for each score level: Beginner (0 – 20), Improver (21-40), Achiever (41-50), Leader (51-78).

Gender-responsive procurement (GRP) is the sustainable selection of services, goods or civil works that takes into account the impact on gender equality and women's empowerment. It is founded on international standards, agreements and principles relevant to improving gender-responsive working conditions and essential for upholding women's basic rights in the supply chain.[1]

Sourcing from Women Owned Business

GRP involves sourcing from women-owned businesses (WOBs) and from gender-responsive enterprises (GREs). Currently, only one per cent of corporate worldwide purchasing goes to women's businesses [2], and to date little systematic data have been collected on what proportion of procurement spending is on gender-responsive enterprises.

A business qualifies as a woman-owned business if it meets the following criteria: [IFC Definition]

(A) ≥ 51 per cent owned by a woman or women.

OR

(B) ≥ 20 per cent owned by a woman or women; AND (i) has ≥ one woman as CEO, COO, President, Vice President; AND (ii) has ≥ 30 per cent of the board of directors composed of women, where a board exists.[3]

Sourcing from Gender-Responsive Enterprises

A gender-responsive enterprise would meet rigorous criteria for integrating gender equality and women's empowerment principles in policies and practices in the workplace, marketplace and community to have systemic impacts.[4] As a starting point, this means: working towards gender balance in terms of employees, senior management and board members; closing the gender pay gap; incorporating gender equality into recruitment, promotion and career opportunities; retaining both women and men full-time employees who take parental leave; and having a confidential grievance, resolution, reporting and non-retaliation mechanism and procedure to address and respond to incidents of violence and harassment.

This tool will benefit your company by:

- ✓ Enhancing brand reputation, customer and staff loyalty
- ✓ Increasing innovation, resilience and productivity in supply chains
- ✓ Providing a positive impact in communities where you do business by including competitive women-owned businesses in all bid opportunities
- ✓ Reducing costs through increased competition with gender inclusive sourcing efforts
- ✓ Demonstrating compliance to reporting commitments, such as ESG measures and legislation on due diligence in supply chains.

This Tool can be used by any business or company seeking to assess the gender-responsiveness of its procurement mechanisms and supply chain, and to develop a clear Action Plan on how to implement GRP. This Tool also helps companies to implement the Women's Empowerment Principles [5] – specifically Principle 5 on enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices.[6]

How to use the Tool:

Step 0: Sign up to the WEPs if you haven't done so already at www.weps.org/join

Step 1: Familiarize yourself with the questions contained in the GRP Assessment Tool.

Step 2: Assemble a team of assessors, ideally procurement staff with full access to information on suppliers and corporate policies and practices

Step 3: Gather relevant documents (e.g., procurement policies, supplier database, corporate gender equality policies or commitments, if available)

Step 4: Fill the Assessment Tool

Step 5: Review the score

Step 6: Develop a tailored Action Plan based on the results of the Tool

Endnotes

[1] UN Global Marketplace, UN Women, Gender Responsive Procurement, www.ungm.org/Shared/KnowledgeCenter/Pages/PT_GRP (accessed 3 February 2023) See also, UN Women, 2020. Guidance Note on Gender-responsive Procurement. www.weps.org/resource/gender-responsive-procurement (accessed 3 February 2023).

[2] E. Vazquez and A. Sherman, 2013. Buying for Impact: How to Buy from Women and Change Our World.

[3] In March 2021, the International Standardization Organization (ISO) published a new standard on definitions and criteria of women's entrepreneurship adding clarity and detailed information on the issues of management, control and independence. ISO, 2021. Women's entrepreneurship — Key definitions and general criteria, IWA 34:2021(en), www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso:iwa:34:ed-1:v1:en (accessed 3 February 2023)

[4] ILO-UN WOMEN brief, 2021. Rethinking Gender-Responsive Procurement: Enabling An Ecosystem For Women's Economic Empowerment, p.9. www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/07/rethinking-gender-responsive-procurement (accessed 3 February 2023).

[5] The Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPS) are a set of Principles offering guidance to business on how to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community. Established by UN Global Compact and UN Women, the WEPS are informed by international labour and human rights standards and grounded in the recognition that businesses have a stake in, and a responsibility for, gender equality and women's empowerment. Learn more about the WEPS at www.weps.org

[6] UN Women, Women's Empowerment Principles, Principle 5 on Enterprise Development, supply chain and marketing practices. www.weps.org/principle/enterprise-development-supply-chain-and-marketing-practices