WEPs

Women's Empowerment Principles

ESSENTIALS

Connecting your commitment to action

UN WOMEN | FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS | WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

Welcome to the WEPs community

Congratulations on signing and adopting the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs): the first step on a journey to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through concrete action.

By adopting the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) you are not only investing in your commitment to gender equality but also investing in your business.

You are joining a community of over 12,000 like-minded CEOs across the world who have adopted the WEPs as a blueprint for integrating gender equality throughout their companies.

This WEPs Essentials provides an overview of the WEPs and core actions you can take when joining and activating your WEPs commitment.

Part 1

"CONNECT"
provides an overview of the WEPs structure and support mechanisms.

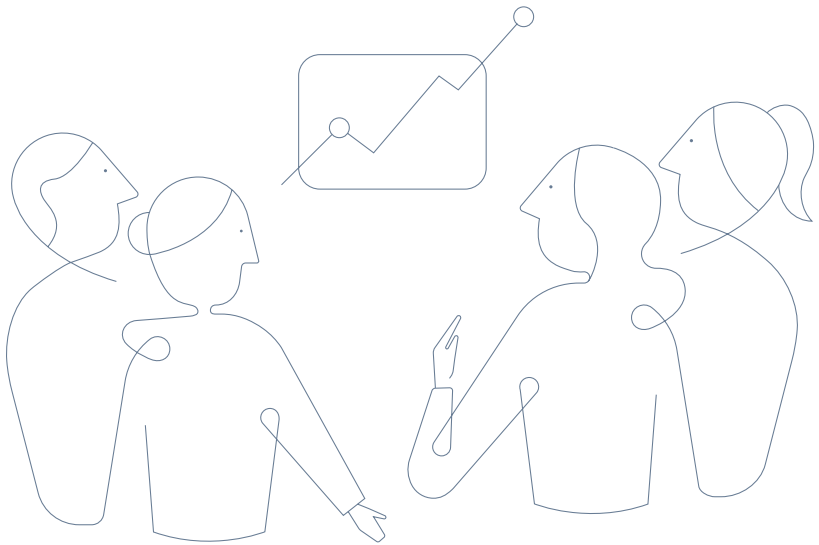
Part 2

"TAKE ACTION"
guides you through the WEPs Journey with immediate action points and related resources.

Part 3

"COMMUNICATE"
provides ready-to-use communication assets, information on the joint WEPs logo as well as key messages.

GENDER EQUALITY IS BETTER BUSINESS



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Part 1
CONNECT

Women's Empowerment Principles

The Women's Empowerment Principles

- **Seven Principles** offering guidance on how to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through governance and leadership, in the workplace, marketplace and community, and through transparency and accountability. They align company policies and practices with global labour and human rights standards.
- WEPs is the only framework for private sector action that addresses gender equality across the entire value chain.
- The largest **global platform** for private sector action on gender equality, bringing together over 12,000 participating companies (as of February 2026) in a continuously growing global community.
- The **primary vehicle for corporate delivery on gender equality** dimensions of the 2030 Agenda and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment.

By endorsing the WEPs, business leaders are publicly showing their commitment to fostering gender equality within their organizations. This commitment extends beyond internal policies to the full spectrum of corporate operations, including adopting gender-responsive supply chain and marketing practices, and taking sector specific actions to advance, for example, women's digital and financial inclusion.

7 PRINCIPLES

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 non-discrimination
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

The WEPs Secretariat

The WEPs were established jointly by UN Women and the UN Global Compact in 2010 with the objective to foster gender-responsive business conduct by and with the private sector. Since 2017, the WEPs Secretariat has been led by UN Women as its primary platform for engaging the private sector.

The Global WEPs Secretariat leads the overall coordination, development and expansion of the Women's Empowerment Principles initiative. It provides tools, resources and learning opportunities to support companies at every stage of their gender-equality journey.

WEPs signatories can connect with the global Secretariat through various channels:

- Email (weps@unwomen.org) at any time during your WEPs journey, whether to just get to know us, to seek advice or guidance or to propose collaborative activities.
- Visit the WEPs website to access updates, over 300 resources, tools and templates to facilitate action, or report on your progress through your through your WEPs company profile.
- Subscribe to the global newsletter for updates and opportunities.
- Join the global WEPs LinkedIn community and share your updates with us.

In addition to the global WEPs Secretariat, **regional and national WEPs Focal Points** at UN Women are present in approximately 50 countries.

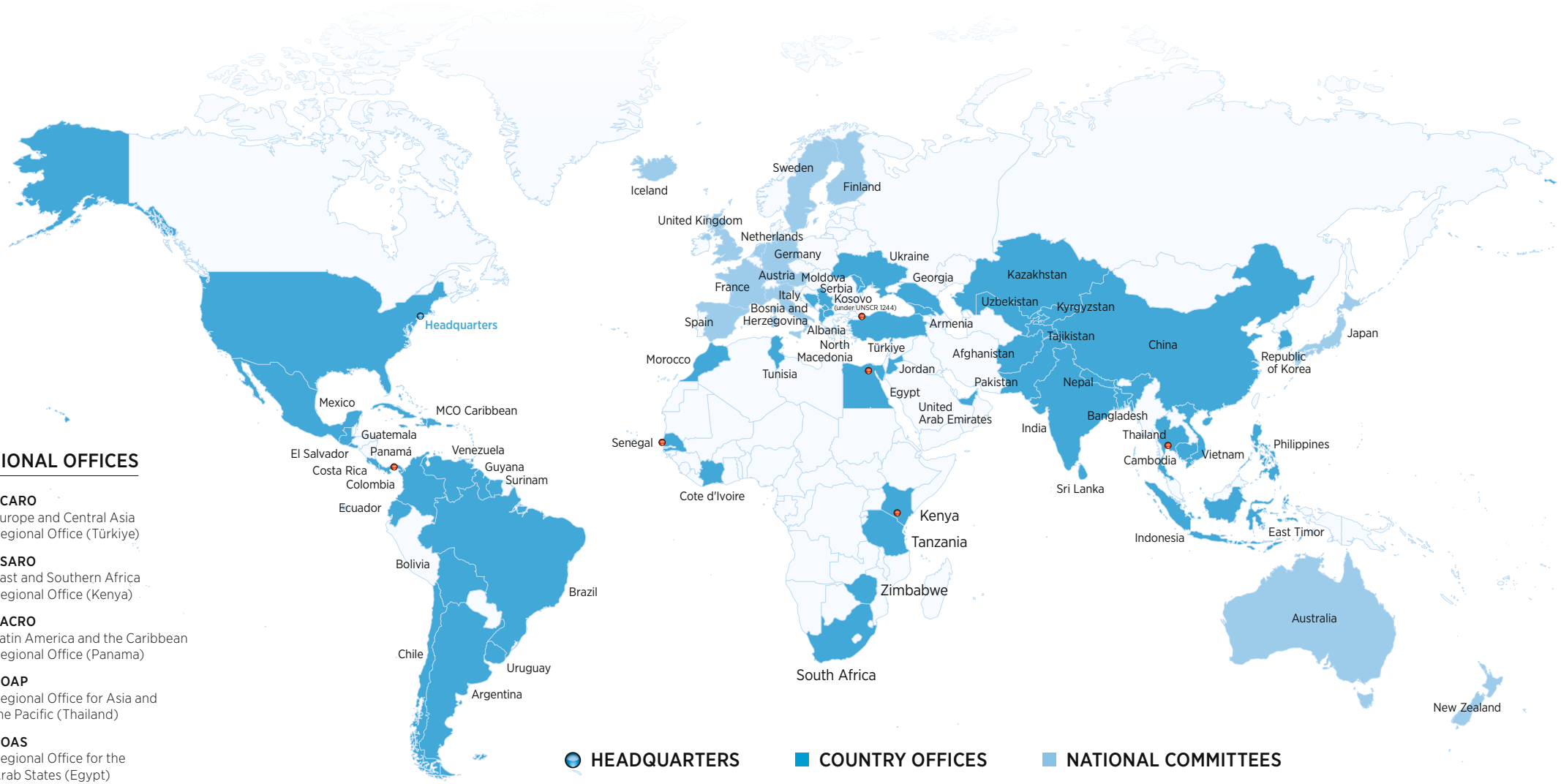
They provide orientation and connect companies to relevant resources, networks and opportunities for engagement.

The WEPs serve as an entry point for deeper collaboration — enabling UN Women and the private sector to collaborate on joint programmes and initiatives that advance gender equality at scale.

The WEPs Secretariat also works closely with **13 UN Women National Committees**, which are independent local non-profit, non-governmental organizations that support the mission of UN Women. Many of them play an important role in engaging companies at country level.

Contact information for the UN Women National Committees can be found at:
https://www.unwomen.org/en/partnerships/national-committees

Together, this global, regional and national UN Women network ensures that every signatory has access to the information needed to translate commitment into action and can connect with likeminded peers *(please see the map below)*.



REGIONAL OFFICES

- **ECARO**
  Europe and Central Asia
  Regional Office (Türkiye)
- **ESARO**
  East and Southern Africa
  Regional Office (Kenya)
- **LACRO**
  Latin America and the Caribbean
  Regional Office (Panama)
- **ROAP**
  Regional Office for Asia and
  the Pacific (Thailand)
- **ROAS**
  Regional Office for the
  Arab States (Egypt)
- **WCARO**
  West and Central Africa
  Regional Office (Senegal)

The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Part 2

TAKE ACTION

Women's Empowerment Principles

The WEPs Journey

WEPs implementation is an ongoing journey. Each company starts from a different point, shaped by its industry, size and context, and progresses at its own pace.

Most important is a commitment to take consistent steps that drive progress toward gender equality. Along the way, WEPs signatories learn, adapt and innovate, embedding gender equality deeper into their strategies, operations and culture.

The following pages outline key actions for each step of the WEPs journey.

Start with the basics

For companies getting started, we recommend prioritizing a few foundational actions first — while keeping sight of the full journey to ensure holistic and lasting impact.

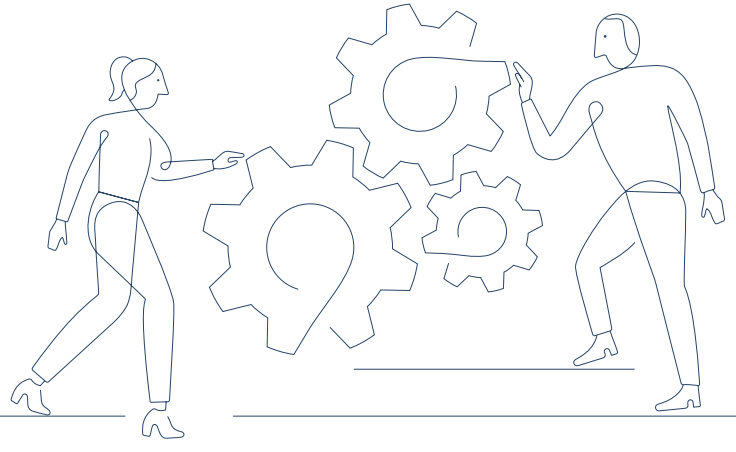
1. Communicate your commitment.
2. Assess your WEPs maturity by taking the WEPs Gender Gap Analysis Tool.
3. Develop a Gender Action Plan and Report Progress on weps.org

1. CONSIDER

By building awareness of the WEPs and securing internal support from leadership, executives and key stakeholders, the foundation is laid to sustain momentum and enable progress in your WEPs journey. As a WEPs Signatory, you have already completed this step!

Actions

- **Learn about the WEPs:** You can gather relevant information by joining or accessing the quarterly WEPs 101 Webinars, the WEPs Brochure or finding other relevant information on www.weps.org.



2. SIGN

Signing the WEPs is a pivotal milestone in your journey. By making this public commitment, your company is signaling a clear and transparent intention to advance gender equality.

Actions

- **Create an account:** Companies' primary and secondary contact persons need to create a user account to manage, update and report progress on the WEPs Company Profile, and access exclusive WEPs tools and resources. See the Guidance Note for more information.
- **Communicate your commitment:** Share your company's WEPs commitment with both internal and external stakeholders, highlighting the actions you plan to take and the impact you intend to make. To support you, we provide practical communication assets to guide your communication (see Part 3).
- **Connect:** Staying connected with UN Women helps you make the most of the WEPs community and continue driving progress together. Ensure your company's primary and secondary contacts stay engaged by receiving WEPs newsletters and invitations to events. We welcome all your employees to sign up to such updates.

3. ACTIVATE

Activation is where commitment becomes action and impact. It begins with reflections, assessments and consultations to understand your strengths and identify areas for growth and action to address gaps.

Actions

- **Assess your WEPs maturity:** The WEPs Gender Gap Analysis Tool (GAT) is an easy online self-assessment that helps set the baseline for WEPs implementation and identify priority areas for action planning in areas of leadership, workplace, marketplace and community. Additional tools, such as the Checklist for Gender-Responsive Recruitment and the WEPs Gender-Responsive Procurement Assessment Tool (GRP) are available through your company profile page. Upon completing the GAT and GRP tools, you will receive individual scorecards.
- **Outline your priorities:** Using your scorecards, define your company's priorities in a whole-of-organization WEPs Gender Action Plan. The WEPs Brochure provides an overview of potential actions, the WEPs Gender Action Plan Template and the WEPs Learning module provides step-by-step guidance, while the WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework helps identify key performance indicators for your WEPs implementation. This approach ensures your efforts are strategic, measurable and sustainable.

Actions

- **Engage and consult internal stakeholders:** Engaging stakeholders strengthens your initiatives and also ensures they are relevant, inclusive and sustainable. Listen to your employees, managers, board members and other stakeholders to gain diverse perspectives, foster buy-in and develop solutions with them. For guidance and examples, you can refer to the WEPs Brochure.
- **Set yourself up for success:** Dedicating a team and budget and aligning policies and practices is essential for an effective and sustainable action plan. Resource allocations demonstrate that gender equality is a business priority. It strengthens internal accountability and external credibility.
- **Invest in capacity building and training:** To bring your WEPs commitment to life, ensure that gender equality is understood, embraced and championed across your organization. Provide awareness-raising campaigns, workshops and trainings, and include gender equality as a regular agenda item in team meetings to activate and engage all employees. See the WEPs Toolkit for useful resources, or consider partnering with UN Women to take your journey to the next level of action, commitment and impact.

4. ENGAGE

As part of the WEPs community, you have the influence to involve your employees, business partners, clients and customers in building a gender-inclusive ecosystem and value chain. Dialogue and collaboration drive change that is collective, sustainable and transformative.

Actions

- **Engage your business partners:** Foster a more inclusive business ecosystem by engaging suppliers, clients and other partners in advancing gender equality. Encourage your suppliers to sign on to the WEPs and join the community, build a responsible, gender-inclusive value chain that amplifies impact across industries and societies.
- **Partner and consult with communities:** Partner with women entrepreneurs, women's rights organizations, academia and associations, and community organizations that are driving gender equality to inform your initiatives, strengthen impact and build inclusive, community-driven solutions. If you do not know where to start, reach out to your WEPs focal point to explore partners.

5. SUSTAIN

Sustaining progress means keeping up the initial momentum by tracking and demonstrating the progress that is being made and adapting approaches as your company matures and evolves. The assessment and action planning tools can be revisited periodically.

Actions

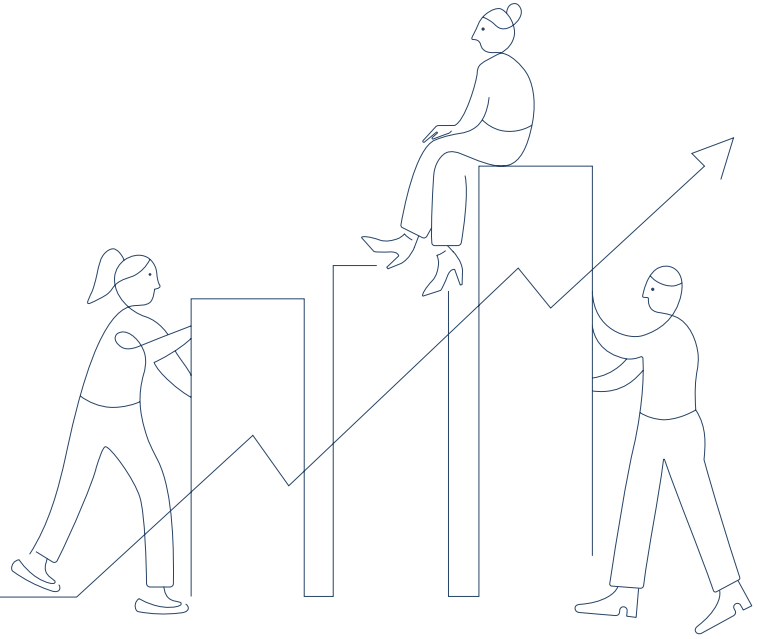
- **Engage in the WEPs Community and beyond:** Communicating progress, sharing experiences, and reflecting on lessons learned reinforces your company's long-term commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment—while encouraging others to advance their own efforts.
- **Collaborate wit:** Collaboration multiplies impact. Connect with us to explore opportunities for joint projects and campaigns at global, regional and country levels. Companies and organizations are encouraged to engage directly with their national or regional WEPs focal point to initiate collaborations. You can also contribute directly to the WEPs Secretariat, helping us expand resources, tools and initiatives that drive gender equality worldwide.

6. REPORT

Transparency and accountability help sustain progress, demonstrate your company's impact and strengthen trust among stakeholders. As you lead by example and scale your efforts, you will inspire peers across industries and geographies to take action.

Actions

- **Report annually:** Accountability drives progress. Each year, report on your WEPs implementation plan through your company profile page on weps.org. Sharing annual reports not only strengthens transparency but also inspires peers and builds trust with stakeholders. For step-by-step instructions, consult the WEPs Guidance Note: How to Report Progress.
- **Systematize your experience:** Share substantive achievements, challenges, impacts and returns on investment, and any adjustments made along the way with the WEPs Community (for example through WEPs Community Insights, WEPs Leaders, or Case Studies).



Key Resources

The WEPs website offers over 300 curated resources—including tools, templates, guides, case studies and training materials—to help signatories strengthen gender equality practices across their workplace, marketplace and community. Below is a selection of core resources that every new WEPs signatory should explore to get started.

- 10 Action Points of a WEPs Signatory | WEPs
  - A practical checklist that outlines the ten priority actions every WEPs signatory can take to begin implementing gender-responsive policies and practices.
- The WEPs Gender Gap Analysis Tool | WEPs
  - An online self-assessment that helps your company identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities to advance gender equality across all areas of your business.
- WEPs Gender Action Plan Template | WEPs*
  - A ready-to-use template to help you translate your GGAT results into a structured and achievable plan for improving gender equality in your company.
- Course: Creating a Gender Action Plan*
  - An online course that guides you step-by-step in developing an organization-wide WEPs Action Plan that advances gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Equality Means Business: WEPs Brochure
  - A comprehensive overview of the WEPs and how your company can use each principle to drive gender equality across workplace, marketplace, and community.
- WEPs Transparency and Accountability Framework – A Reference Guide
  - An overview of key WEPs performance indicators classified as baseline, essential, complementary, input and support measures, and additional indicators.
- WEPs Guidance Note: How to report progress
  - A step-by-step guide on how to report on annual progress against the eight WEPs essential indicators - a core value of the WEPs initiative.
- Gender Responsive Procurement Assessment Tool*
  - A self-assessment tool helping companies advance gender-responsive procurement practices and impact.

* Resources only available for WEPs Signatories.

Part 3

COMMUNICATE

Women's Empowerment Principles

Communication assets

Communicating your commitment to gender equality shows that you mean business and can inspire others.

Internally, it is important to let your teams know that you have signed on to the WEPs, and why. Externally you can lead the way among peers and competitors alike.

You can find all our editable templates (Canva) on our Trello board, to add your company logo and personalized messages: CEO Quote cards, Signing Announcement cards and Key messages cards.

Please tag the WEPs and use #WEPs in your communications to help amplify visibility and connect your efforts to the global community.

QUOTE CARD

ANNOUNCEMENT CARD

KEY MESSAGE CARD

Using the "IN SUPPORT OF" logo

We encourage all our partners and stakeholders to communicate their commitment and promote the WEPs throughout the world, by using the "**In Support of**" logo.

The "In Support of" logo may be used by the WEPs signatories for any promotional activity aimed at increasing awareness of the WEPs, provided they adhere to the Logo use Policy and Guidelines.

Use of the WEPs logo is intended to highlight your commitment to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, and to support and amplify the mandate of UN Women, the UN Global Compact, and the Women's Empowerment Principles.

When using the logo, the primary focus should remain on the WEPs—raising awareness, **promoting the 7 Principles** and encouraging other companies to join—rather than to generate favorable publicity to your commercial activities. Used appropriately, the logo serves as a tool to promote collective action for gender equality and to strengthen the visibility and impact of the WEPs.

To use the "In Support of" logo, the signatories must agree to the Terms and Conditions and complete and sign the Agreement Form. Once the agreement is completed, a high-resolution PNG and AI files will automatically be provided.

The WEPs signatory status does not constitute a partnership with or endorsement by UN Women or the UN Global Compact. Companies may not use the UN Women or UN Global Compact logos, nor imply any formal partnership, sponsorship or endorsement in their communications.

In support of:

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

Established by UN Women and the UN Global Compact Office

In support of:

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

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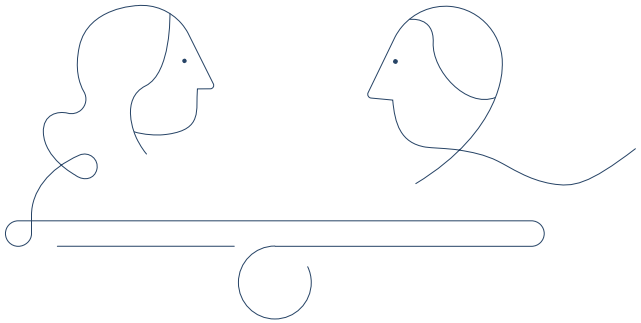
Key messages

Why gender equality means better business

This chapter brings together key data and messages that WEPs signatories can use to clearly communicate why gender equality is good for business - helping you build internal buy-in, inspire team members, and engage partners in their commitment. It provides select global evidence, noting that there is a wealth of national and regional research available.

1 PRINCIPLE	2 PRINCIPLE	3 PRINCIPLE	4 PRINCIPLE	5 PRINCIPLE	6 PRINCIPLE	7 PRINCIPLE
High-level corporate leadership	Treat all women and men fairly at work without discrimination	Employee health, well-being and safety	Education and training for career advancement	Enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices	Community initiatives and advocacy	Measurement and reporting



GENDER EQUALITY IS BETTER BUSINESS

Principle 1

To improve corporate performance

Gender equality practices that foster women's equal participation at every level of the company lead to better financial performance, and raise returns on investment, market share and stocks.

- In 2024, women occupied 30 per cent of managerial positions globally.[1]
- Companies with high board-gender diversity are 27 per cent more likely to financially outperform companies with low diversity.[2]

Principle 1

To attract investments

Many investors know that companies that advance gender equality are more productive, more profitable and maintain a positive reputation. They are holding companies to more rigorous standards and choosing to invest in sustainable companies that balance purpose and profit and meet the needs of both shareholder and stakeholders.

- More than 80 per cent of global asset owners require asset managers to offer sustainable investments, with 75 per cent saying this is a key factor in manager selection/retention.[3]

Principle 2

To increase innovation capacity

A diverse workforce fosters diverse ideas and generates dynamics that encourage creativity and leads to innovation.

- Companies with above-average diversity produce 19 per cent higher innovation revenues.[4]

Principle 2

Principle 4

To attract and retain talent

Companies with fair HR systems that respond to both women's and men's needs lead to improved retention rates, reduced absenteeism and turnover rates, and an equitable promotion system.

- Some 94 per cent of employees say they would stay longer at workplaces that invest in their development.[5]
- In 2021, men were 33 per cent more likely to receive an internal leadership promotion than women.[6]

Principle 2

Principle 3

To uphold human rights and be inclusive, just and fair

It really is that simple. Gender equality is integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It is good for society; it is good for the economy; and it benefits everyone.

- Achieving gender equality can add $4 trillion to the global economy by 2030 and $342 trillion cumulatively by 2050.[7]
- Women earn, on average, globally, 20 cents less for every dollar men do —a gap that has not meaningfully budged for over two decades.[8]
- Unequal care responsibilities keep 708 million women outside the labour force globally.[9]
- About 8.2 per cent of women in employment had experienced sexual violence and harassment over their working life, compared to 5.0 per cent of men, which creates costs and reputational risks for companies.

Principle 5

To diversify the supplier base

A diversified pool of suppliers enhances supplier availability and security; promotes innovation through the entrance of new products, services and solutions; drives competition; and increases market penetration and access to new markets. Investing in and engaging with women-owned businesses in corporate supply chains also boosts the reputation of companies among their stakeholders and shareholders.

- Some 34 per cent of companies that diversified their supplier base engaging with women-owned businesses report a positive impact on their profitability.[10]

Principle 5

To meet the needs and demands of consumers

Increasingly, consumers are demanding products and services from companies with transparent, responsible business practices that advance gender equality. A diverse workforce and supplier base, representing the composition of its consumer base, can help a company meet the product and service needs of their consumers.

- Women managed an estimated USD 32 trillion of global spending in 2024 and, within five years, are expected to control 75 per cent of discretionary spending worldwide.[11]

Principle 5

To end harmful stereotypes in advertising and the media

Businesses which portray people in non-stereotypical gender roles and depict them as inclusive, authentic and multi-dimensional characters in advertisement and branding win.

- Brands with higher average scores on inclusive advertising see 16.26 per cent greater sales performance, 54 per cent higher pricing power and 15 per cent higher loyalty.[12]

Principle 6

To fully integrate into communities

Companies that undertake community consultations with local women and men leaders establish strong ties and programmes that benefit all community members and advance gender equality and sustainable development.

- 12% of WEPs signatories assess impacts on men and women during human rights or social impact assessments.[13]

Principle 7

To strengthen performance through transparency and reporting

Businesses that systematically measure and publicly report on their gender equality commitments build credibility, improve governance and accelerate implementation.

- 37% of WEPs Signatories report publicly on progress and outcomes towards gender equality.[14]

Endnotes

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