

Equality Means Business Bulletin

November 2011

Greetings:

The UN Women and UN Global Compact Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) team is pleased to provide you this Equality Means Business Bulletin. In less than two years since the WEPs launch, thanks to you, there is a lot to report.

We welcome any feedback about the WEPs and look forward to being in touch. If your company CEO has signed the WEPs, we want to hear about that experience and subsequent efforts to use the seven Principles as a gender lens on practices. We ask other stakeholders from business, civil society, the UN and government to also tell us what they are doing and how they think the WEPs add value. Please, let us know if we can help in any way.

WEPs Secretariat



SAVE THE DATE

Gender Equality Means Sustainable Business: 4th Annual Women's Empowerment Principles Event

On 6 March 2012, companies that have signed the CEO Statement of Support for the Women's Empowerment Principles, as well as other businesses and stakeholders, will convene in NYC to discuss how corporate behaviour and practices are being transformed to align with the WEPs and encourage gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community. Participants will share their experiences in implementing the WEPs, including best practices, challenges and lessons-learned. The meeting will also provide an opportunity for discussion on key topics and themes related to the Women's Empowerment Principles, including how gender equality fits into the agendas of corporate sustainability and sustainable development.

Please note: Participation at this event is by invitation only. Priority will be given to companies that have signed the CEO Statement of Support for the Women's Empowerment Principles.

The Principles in Brief:

The **Women's Empowerment Principles** were launched on 9 March 2010 in celebration of International Women's Day at a day-long conference in New York for business, civil society, Government academia and the UN to explore the application of the Principles in various contexts. In brief, the Principles are:

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.

Growing Global Uptake

In just over a year since the UN Women and UN Global Compact partnership released the CEO Statement of Support for the Women's Empowerment Principles, over 250 companies have signalled their commitment to integrate and work to implement the seven Principles. Recent signers include: The Coca Cola Company (global), Sabancı Holding A.Ş (Turkey), Swiss Post (Switzerland) and First Rand Bank (South Africa).

Moreover, civil society organizations, UN agencies and women's organizations and associations around the world have demonstrated support for the WEPs through outreach, promotion and by aligning their own efforts and programmes with the WEPs. Governments and other international organizations have also indicated that they consider the WEPs a valuable tool to help companies implement commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment and enhance partnerships with the private sector.



Mrs. Guler Sabanci, Chairman and Managing Director of Sabanci Holding A.Ş presenting the signed CEO Statement of Support to Mme. Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women at a WEPs event in Turkey (May 2011)

WEPs Launches, Events and Activities at the Local Level

Working in partnership with UN Women and the UN Global Compact at the global level, WEPs supporters and collaborators – in business, civil society, Government, academia and the UN – have organized national launches of the WEPs and awareness raising events. In 2011 these include: Switzerland (March); Turkey (May); South Africa (July); Paraguay (September); NYC (October) - joining earlier launches (in 2010) in Iceland, Brazil, Spain, Australia and Japan.



South Africa Minister Rob Davies launches the dti / BPW partnership to promote the WEPs

In many of these countries partners are developing concrete programmes and projects aimed at furthering implementation and action under one or more of the seven Principles. For instance, UN Women's office in Brazil is facilitating the work and dialogue of a company-led WEPs "Alliance" aimed at developing a shared framework of indicators and action steps for WEPs implementation. In South Africa, the South African Chapter of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW) is collaborating with the South African Ministry of Trade and Industry to develop programmatic responses to the WEPs to spur implementation, including initiatives focused on increasing women's representation on boards and opening pathways for women-owned businesses. In addition, Principles for

Responsible Management Education (PRME), a sister initiative of the UN Global Compact, has launched a working group comprised of academics, students and employers with the aim of providing support and resources for integrating gender issues and awareness into business school curricula and research to facilitate support for the WEPs.

Measuring and Reporting Progress

Some companies have already started to report against the WEPs framework and to use the Principles as a 'gender scorecard.' As companies have indicated particular interest in receiving further guidance and suggestions on how to track and report on progress towards implementation, the WEPs partnership team in New York is currently working to produce reporting guidance that takes into consideration the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards and the UN Global Compact Communication on Progress (COP) approach.

For further information, please contact:

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