
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

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UN Global Compact Office



**EQUALITY
MEANS
BUSINESS**



Implementation guide of Women's Empowerment Principles

** This Guide has been developed by the United Nations Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women) in partnership with the Business Consulting Institute (BCI) and funded by Sweden.*

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WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES WORLDWIDE

The issue of gender equality was first discussed about 150 years ago, around the time the Feminist Movement expanded. Nowadays, constant efforts are being made to integrate this concept into everyday life.

The significance of gender equality in social development is widely recognized by a variety of actors, including international organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations and corporations. Civil society, political institutions, academia and the private sector are all putting forward the necessary efforts to promote gender equality. As for the private sector, an important indicator of the fulfillment of responsibilities with regard to gender equality are the **7 women empowerment principles**.*

UN Women and the UN Global Compact have developed the Women's Empowerment Principles to unify their forces in ensuring the inclusion of women in the economic life across all sectors and throughout all levels of economic activity. **Equality means business.**

This initiative encourages businesses of all sizes, in all countries, industries and sectors, to take decisive measures for gender equality. This initiative was pursued in order to align business operations and strategies with the ten universal principles of human rights and the labor, environment and anti-corruption standards.

The initiative is supported by over **7,000 signatories**, in over **135 countries**, this being the largest voluntary initiative of corporate responsibility in the world.

By including the women empowerment principles in the strategies of development, companies become models of attraction of human talent, entering new markets, by serving their communities, while improving the standard of living of population on the earth.

More than

7000

signatories in over 135 countries



*For more details go to: www.empowerwomen.org

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WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

In the Republic of Moldova this initiative started with the support of UN Women in partnership with ODIMM in 2015 through a large information campaign involving more than 250 local companies. A series of actions followed that were integrated into the government programs intended for the economic empowerment of women, such as the **National Platform for Women in Moldova, PARE 1 + 1, Women in Business, Start Up for Young People.**

In 2018 a new stage in WEP's implementation has been launched – a self-assessment instrument was developed and piloted to measure the degree of process adjustment in companies to the women's empowerment principles.

Over **30 companies** participated in the piloting exercise, that subsequently detailed their own specific action plan. Together with the company's representatives, a set of good local practices have been identified, as well as constraints and shortcomings that slow down the implementation of the WEP's. Constraints were addressed through a set of policies and proposals for modifying the normative framework.



UN Women, in partnership with the Government of Moldova, civil society organisations, academic environment and private sector is working to remove the barriers that are limiting women's economic empowerment, so that women enjoy the security of income, decent work and economic autonomy.

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OBJECTIVES OF WEP'S IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

The guide for implementing the **WEP's** aims to mobilize institutions and organizations from different sectors and levels to ensure women's empowerment in the workplace, in different fields of activity and in the social responsibility projects.



This guide includes detailed information on the steps required to implement the women's empowerment principles and some good practices that will inspire all companies in the Republic Moldova to be more actively involved.

There is no unique method for a company to incorporate these principles in its management model. Therefore, this guide was developed to assist companies in specifying and the implementation of their own model.

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THE 7 WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES ARE:



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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PRINCIPLE 1. ESTABLISH HIGH-LEVEL CORPORATE LEADERSHIP FOR GENDER EQUALITY

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

Local best practices



In order to attract, support and promote women in one of the underrepresented sectors, one of the communities of companies in the field has launched a platform where everyone can find a series of events on different topics: experience sharing, transfer of knowledge, mentoring programs, motivational conferences, educational activities, facilitating access to career opportunities, growth and professional affirmation etc.

01

Although most of the representatives of companies stated that the management of the company they work for are aware of the necessity to integrate women's empowerment principles, there could not be identified particular challenges and tools that companies undertake in this regard.

02

The perception of local companies on corporate culture and the extent to which it is egalitarian and inclusive is a positive one, although very few companies could state that management is taking actual steps to promote gender equality.

03

Companies involved in the piloting phase for evaluating the women empowerment principles show a low interest in prioritizing of these in the short-term period.

04

General interest on the subject and the perspective of implementing women empowerment principles in the internal processes of companies is considered somewhat emergent and is not necessarily a priority in comparison with the daily problems of the companies.

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PRINCIPLE 2. TREAT ALL WOMEN AND MEN FAIRLY AT WORK – RESPECT AND SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS AND NONDISCRIMINATION

- Ensure that workplace policies and practices are free from gender-based discrimination.
- 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.
- Offer flexible work options, leave and re-entry opportunities to positions of equal pay and status.
- Support access to child and dependent care by providing services, resources and information to both women and men.
- Assure sufficient participation of women – 30% or greater – in decision-making and governance at all levels and across all business areas.

Local best practices




One of the resident companies of the Digital Park has launched a financial compensation system, to reduce the discrepancy in the legislative loopholes on employees on childcare leave. This one initiative ensures the return of staff to work and encourages employees as parents and caregivers.




01

Mapping the business processes in several companies reveal that many of them implement already a large part of the actions that support the WEPs and are interested in deepening these processes in matters of recruitment, remuneration and social benefits packages.



02

Most companies do not have an internal data collection system disaggregated by sex, age, position etc.



The share of top managers that consider ensuring gender equality within the company a priority is fairly low, only a quarter of the companies consider it a priority.

Most local companies are of the opinion that the corporate culture can be considered as egalitarian and inclusive.



30%



74%

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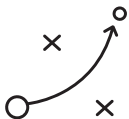
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PRINCIPLE 3. ENSURE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF ALL WOMEN AND MEN WORKERS

- 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.
- Establish a zero-tolerance policy towards all forms of violence at work, including verbal and/or physical abuse and prevent sexual harassment.
- Strive to offer health insurance or other needed services – including for survivors of domestic violence – and ensure equal access for all employees.
- Train security staff and managers to recognize signs of violence against women and understand laws and company policies on human trafficking, labor and sexual exploitation.
- In consultation with employees, identify and address security issues, including the safety of women traveling to and from work and on company-related business.
- Respect women and men workers' rights to time off for medical care and counseling for themselves and their dependents.

Local best practices




Given the type of operations involving multiple shifts, one of local companies in the automotive industry indicated the safety of travel at work as one of its priorities. To ensure employees' safety when traveling from work to home and vice versa, the company purchased a fleet of buses that provide transportation of their staff.




01

Safety and health at work within Moldovan companies are most often seen exclusively from the perspective of providing safe working conditions.



02

Although most companies declare zero tolerance for any kind of aggression or harassment, most do not have policies that provide protection for employees who have become the target of such treatments.



95%

Most companies have stated that there are policies in the company with reference to safe working conditions.

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PRINCIPLE 4. PROMOTE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN

- 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.
- Provide equal opportunities for formal and informal networking and mentoring.
- Ensure equal access to all company-supported education and training programmes, including literacy classes, vocational and information technology training.
- Articulate the company's business case for women's empowerment and the positive impact of inclusion for men as well as women.

Local best practices



The personal and professional development of the employees represents a priority for most of the companies in multiple industries.

To ensure the homogenous professional development of the employees, regardless of gender and the position held in the company hierarchy, they established an annual fixed amount for each employee, that one can use to attend professional development courses.



48% of the local companies stated that they usually collect and analyze data regarding the **number of employees, women and men, that have attended various trainings.**



86% of the local companies reported the potential of managing is promoted equally, about **1/3 consider that within the company- strategies to promote female leadership exist.** At the same time 3/4 of the representatives of the local companies consider it useful to implement measures to develop leadership skills for employed women.



30% of the companies apply strategies to **promote leadership among women** and generally support these initiatives in a practical way.

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PRINCIPLE 5. IMPLEMENT ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT, SUPPLY CHAIN AND MARKETING PRACTICES THAT EMPOWER WOMEN

- Ensure that the salaries, including bonuses, are the same for equal value of work, as well as undertake efforts to pay salaries that are higher than the minimum consumption basket of goods for all women and men.
- Support gender-sensitive solutions to credit and lending barriers.
- Ask business partners and peers to respect the company's commitment to advancing equality and inclusion.
- Ensure that company products, services and facilities are not used for human trafficking and/ or labour or sexual exploitation.

Local best practices



One of the local companies in the banking sector shared its practice designed to promote and increase the economic empowerment potential of women. This involves the provision of preferential banking services for companies run by women.



45%

Only 45% of companies realize the necessity to take in consideration the differential impact in its marketing policy, when making decisions of the company's development.

Most of the local companies still do not have internal policies that regulate the formulation of messages in a non-discriminatory language.

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PRINCIPLE 6. PROMOTE EQUALITY THROUGH COMMUNITY INITIATIVES AND ADVOCACY

- Promote and recognize women's leadership in, and contributions to, their communities and ensure sufficient representation of women in any community consultation.
- Leverage influence, alone or in partnership, to advocate for gender equality and collaborate with business partners, suppliers and community leaders to promote inclusion.
- Work with community stakeholders, officials and others to eliminate discrimination and exploitation and open opportunities for women and girls.
- Provide training to staff and managers regarding the recognition of signs of violence against women and understanding the laws and the company policy, related to human trafficking with the purpose of labor exploitation or sexual exploitation.
- Use philanthropy and grants programmes to support company commitment to inclusion, equality and human rights.
- Lead by example – showcase company commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Local best practices



A telecommunications company has decided to allocate annually a budget for girls and women empowerment programs in the field of information technologies. Thus, they motivate and encourage women to choose a career in this sector.

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PRINCIPLE 7. MEASURE AND PUBLICLY REPORT ON PROGRESS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY

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



Local best practices



Internal practices aimed at collecting, analyzing and subsequently reporting by gender, most of the companies that do have these practices in place are members of multinational networks. These companies own instructions aimed at evaluating disaggregated data by different instruments by gender and subsequently use it in decision-making processes of companies.

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RELEVANT INTERNAL AND BUSINESS PROCESSES WHEN IMPLEMENTING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

Recruitment

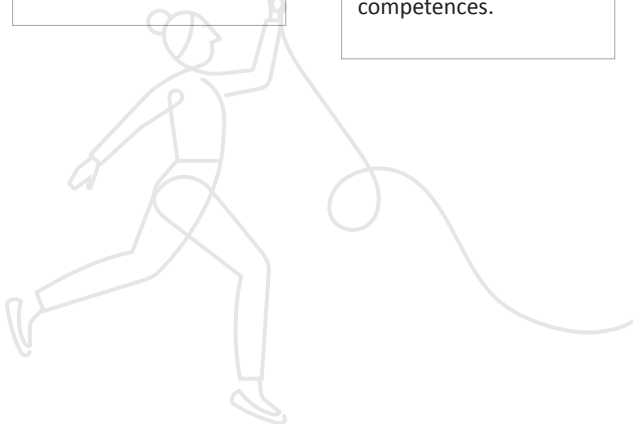
- Formulate recruitment announcements in a non-discrimination and equal opportunities matter.
- Elaboration of an internal protocol for organizing interviews.
- Develop a protocol for selecting candidates based on professional skills and competencies.

Employment

- Applying a standardized criterion for evaluating candidates and adjusting job descriptions to the standards / performance indicators.
- Adjusting the models of employment contracts to the women empowerment principles.
- Application of a transparent payroll based on competences.

Work relationships

- Set up a guide for staff that includes instructions, procedures and benefits for all employees.
- Adoption of a one-off mechanism.
- Ensuring decent working conditions according to the specific needs of men and women.
- Expanding the social benefits packages. Increasing staff awareness and promoting a healthy way of living.



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Career development

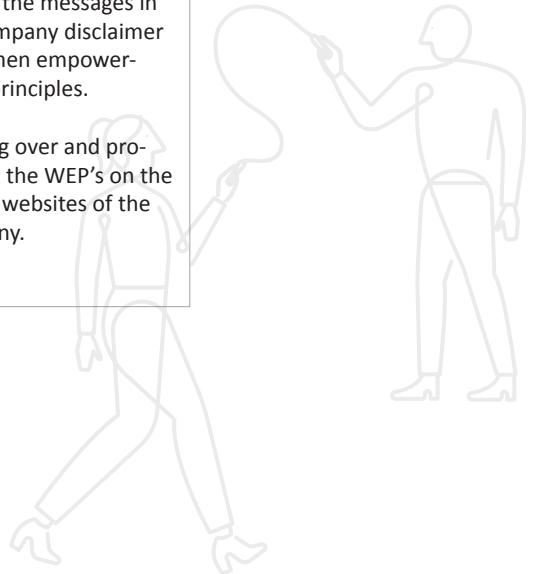
- Adoption of a strategy for the development of human resources centered on employees.
- Initiation of professional development programs for girls and women.
- Defining the career growth ladder.
- Implementation of fair staff performance evaluation policies.
- Establishing a program of leadership development among women.

Marketing

- Defining a set of norms and standards in the development of promotional materials used in internal communication, but also with suppliers and partners.
- Align the messages in the company disclaimer to women empowerment principles.
- Taking over and promoting the WEP's on the official websites of the company.

Social responsibility

- Integration of the principles of gender equality in the activities related to corporate social responsibility, philanthropy, advocacy and partnership.



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UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN Women) is a global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide. UN Women supports UN member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards.

UN Woman stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.

moldova.unwomen.org/ro