



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

# Global Trends Report 2018



United Nations  
Global Compact



empowerwomen

Planet 50-50 by 2030  
Step It Up for Gender Equality



Invest



Multilateral Investment Fund  
Member of the IDB Group

## Roadmap for Business on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality

There is growing evidence that women's empowerment and gender equality has a multiplier effect on families, communities, businesses and sustainable economies.

As the engine for jobs, innovation and investment, business has a critical role to play in advancing gender equality and empowering women to reach their full potential and has proven crucial to innovation, productivity and market growth.

To guide business on empowering women and advancing gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community, the UN Global Compact and UN Women developed the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), launched in 2010. The Seven Principles offer a holistic framework based on real-life practices for business to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. Beyond positive impacts for a company's direct operations, implementing the WEPs contributes to a range of targets under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To date, over 1,800 CEOs from around the world have signed the CEO Statement of Support and have committed to continuous leadership and improvement on gender equality and women's empowerment.

With the achievement of a critical mass of WEPs signatories, it became crucial to provide further guidance on what WEPs implementation looks like in practice. Rooted in good practices from around the world and real-life experience, the Women's Empowerment Principles Gap Analysis Tool (WEPs Tool) was developed to provide businesses with a free, user-friendly and confidential self-assessment of their performance on women's empowerment and gender equality. It was launched in March 2017 after consultations with over 190 companies and provides insights and data on the extent to which businesses are integrating gender into their policies, programs, metrics and reporting.

### The Principles

- 1 Leadership Promotes Gender Equality**
- 2 Equal Opportunity, Inclusion and Nondiscrimination**
- 3 Health, Safety and Freedom from Violence**
- 4 Education and Training**
- 5 Enterprise Development, Supply Chain and Marketing Practices**
- 6 Community Leadership and Engagement**
- 7 Transparency, Measuring and Reporting**

The WEPs Tool focuses across a wide spectrum of a company's activities, from within its workforce, through its value chain, to its customers, and more broadly in the wider community.

Since its launch, businesses have used the WEPs Tool to assess their policies and practices, enabling them to generate concrete steps for future action. This first trends report, developed by BSR in close collaboration with the Core Partners of the WEPs Tool, examines the aggregate results<sup>1</sup> of those businesses with an aim to:

- **Provide insights on global corporate performance on gender equality and women's empowerment aligned with the WEPs;**
- **Demonstrate the value of using the WEPs Tool and**
- **Showcase the efforts of partners and other stakeholders to drive gender equality around the world.**

### From Principles



**Launch of the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) in 2010**



**Over 1,800 CEOs from around the world have signed the CEO Statement of Support**

### To Practice



**190+**

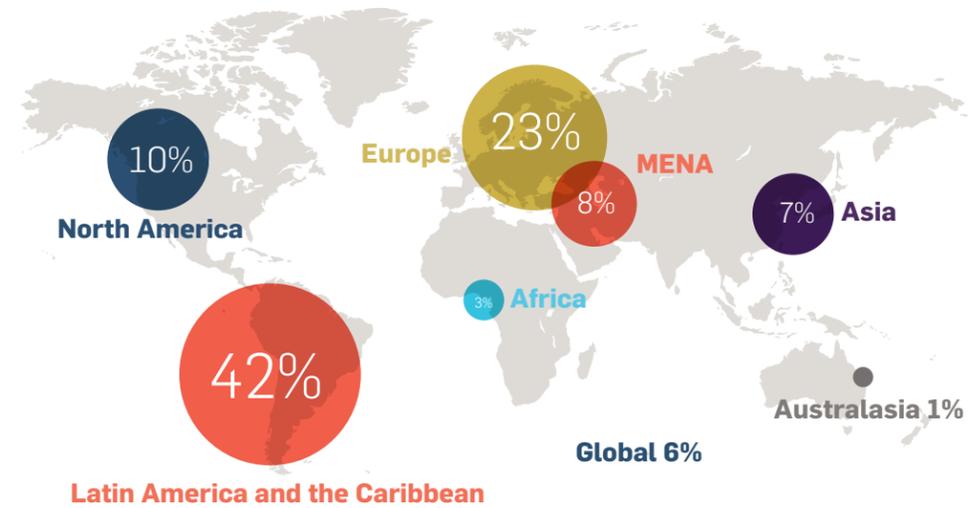
**The WEPs Tool was developed in consultation with more than 190 companies**



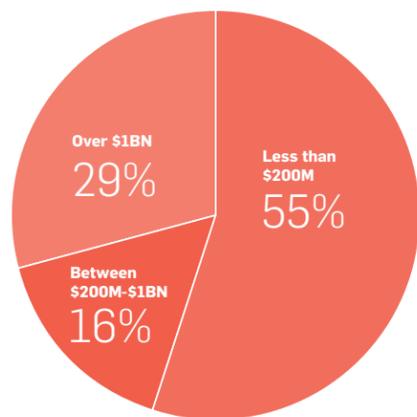
**The Women's Empowerment Principles Gender Gap Analysis Tool (WEPs Tool) launched in March 2017**

<sup>1</sup> The data presented in this report are the aggregate results of self-reported data that has not been verified or validated by any of the tool partners (United Nations Global Compact, UN Women, or any member of the Inter-American Development Bank Group). It represents a sample of 100 responses submitted by businesses between the tool's launch in March 2017 and January 2018.

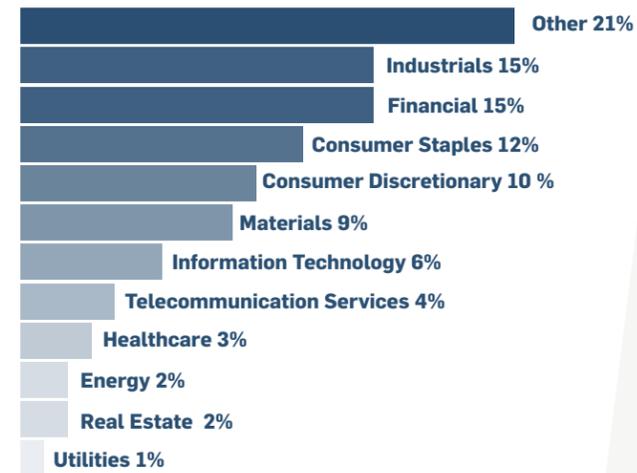
## Users by Region



## Users by Revenue



## Users by Industry



## Overall Score Performance

The WEPs Tool is composed of 18 multiple choice questions in the areas of leadership, workplace, marketplace and community. Each question is organized across four management stages—commitment, implementation, measurement and transparency—to ensure commitments are coupled with substantive action to implement the WEPs. Topics include company-wide gender equality strategies, equal pay, recruitment, supporting parents and caregivers, women’s health, prevention and response to violence and harassment, gender-responsive sourcing and advocacy for gender equality in communities of operation.

The WEPs Tool sets a high bar by encouraging business to consider a holistic approach to gender equality and women’s empowerment. A company achieves a higher score the further along it is in terms of the management stage, from commitment to transparency, for any given area. In this first year, the aggregate results show that the majority of users are still in the early stages of their journeys, with an average score of 26.6%, while less than 15% feature in the “Achiever” or “Leader” categories. This suggests that while companies may have isolated gender equality programs and policies, there is a need for integrated implementation in order for businesses to fully realize the positive impacts of empowering women and achieving gender equality.



**26.6%**  
Average Score

## A Closer Look

Analysis of the aggregate results indicates an increased level of effort in the leadership and workplace categories, notably on the specific indicators related to leadership commitment and maternity and paternity benefits. Beyond these, there are many opportunities for companies to increase their commitments, programmatic efforts and performance across all categories, especially those of marketplace and community.



At 69%, a majority of users of the WEPs Tool have committed to gender equality and women’s empowerment at the leadership level. However, far fewer have translated these commitments into actionable strategies coupled with specific goals and time-bound, measurable targets. Companies can achieve greater impact for women and gain additional business value by developing a strategic approach to women’s empowerment that considers their full value chains and sets targets for improved performance.

- 69%** Have a leadership commitment for gender equality and women’s empowerment
- 32%** Have an organization-wide gender equality strategy
- 30%** Set time-bound, measurable goals and targets in strategy



This category addresses issues in the workforce pertaining to women, including wages and benefits, training and mentoring, harassment and violence and health and safety. Despite a large gap globally in female representation at executive levels, few companies are setting goals and developing the pipeline of women for management positions. In addition, fewer than half the companies had a policy addressing equal pay, and while there is progress in paid leave programs, room for improvement remains. Given that research continues to show companies that attract, retain and promote women employees have been more innovative and are better long-term investments, these are key areas worth attention from businesses.

- 15%** Set goals to build the pipeline of women for management positions
- 45%** Have a policy addressing equal pay for equal work of equal value
- 87%** Offer paid maternity leave
- 65%** Offer paid paternity leave
- 49%** Provide confidential grievance, resolution and non-retaliation mechanisms to ensure an environment free of violence, harassment and sexual exploitation



Businesses should look at opportunities to invest in women’s empowerment and advance gender equality across their full value chains, from challenging restrictive gender stereotypes with marketing and advertising efforts to procuring from women-owned businesses and improving conditions for women workers in their value chains. The data from this first year of the WEPs Tool shows that few businesses are effectively implementing gender strategies across their businesses and value chains, creating additional opportunities for leadership through improved performance.

- 23%** Seek to challenge gender norms and promote positive images of women and girls in marketing
- 5%** Set procurement and/or percentage spend targets with women-owned businesses
- 12%** Include gender equality criteria in supply chain management tools



As per the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, all businesses have the fundamental responsibility to respect human rights, particularly as it relates to their impacts on minority or marginalized groups, such as women and girls. However, the data shows that very few companies are applying a gender perspective to their community engagement efforts, human rights impact assessments or due diligence. Ensuring women are sufficiently represented in such engagements is critical to make sure their rights are not violated and effective solutions are identified.

- 16%** Ensure equal participation of women and men in community consultations
- 10%** Assess differential impacts on men and women during human rights or social impact assessments
- 52%** Embed gender in CSR, philanthropy, advocacy and partnerships

## Solutions and Case Studies

### Empowering Refugee Women Project

Brazil is receiving increasing numbers of refugees from African and Middle Eastern countries. In response, Global Compact Network Brazil, in partnership with UNHCR and UN Women, has teamed up with local and foreign companies and NGOs to help women refugees navigate the job market. Over the course of the project, the partnership has succeeded in raising awareness about the issues women refugees face in Brazil, with more than 10 companies having offered employment and training opportunities to over 80 women refugees. As an example of the WEPs in action, this project is demonstrative of the collective action that can be taken to build an employment pipeline for marginalized women. For further information, please **watch this video**.

### Helping a fund management company in Brazil to take the first steps in improving gender equality

IDB Invest has worked with a fund management company—a Brazilian fund manager that has no more than 15 employees—on its gender equality strategy. In order to draft the strategy, the company was encouraged to take the WEPs Tool, demonstrating the ability for the WEPs tool to serve small companies in the very early stages of their gender equality journey. Its results showed the need to work on the formalization of its commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality as well as its policies and processes. IDB Invest has advised the fund on the definition of a gender action plan directed at establishing an equal opportunity policy, a clear policy on how to address sexual harassment and the establishment of a grievance mechanism and a recruitment policy that specifically prohibits inquiring about marriage, pregnancy and/or caring responsibilities. The Fund currently is working on the wording of these policies and ways of communicating effectively to all employees as well as reporting on the impact to the partners of the fund. IDB Invest hopes that by walking the client through this exercise, this fund manager will start using this tool to understand where its investee companies stand in the journey towards gender equality.

### Using the WEPs Tool to launch a women's empowerment strategy and roadmap

BSR works closely with its member companies to develop long-term women's empowerment strategies that maximize business success and deliver benefits to women. To accomplish this, BSR partners with its members to conduct assessments using the WEPs tool. The results help shape an action plan that responds to a company's specific opportunities for improved performance in line with its industry impacts, geographic considerations and business priorities. For example, recently, a major fashion company wanted to strategically expand and embed its commitment to women's empowerment across relevant business functions and to externally and internally establish the company as a leader in supporting women. BSR worked with this company to conduct a WEPs assessment, benchmark peers to identify white spaces for leadership, and conduct internal interviews to determine ambition. Based on these inputs, the company was able to direct resources to strategic areas where it could have the greatest impact for women, generate business benefits and earn the support and buy-in of senior leadership for the new strategy.



Being a signatory to WEPs enabled us to set the boundaries of our gender equality approach. And now with this Gap Analysis Tool, we are able to pinpoint where exactly we need improvement and explore innovative solutions to support women employees. I think one of the best aspects of this Tool is about questioning our strategic approach to gender equality. It doesn't only question the existence of a strategy, but it also asks whether we establish the link between gender issues and business outcomes. This is very important in terms of raising the awareness of companies about why they should invest in such issues. Gender equality should not be perceived as a CSR topic. It is purely about doing business.

#### Ebru Dildar Edin

Executive Vice President of Corporate Banking, Treasury and Project Finance  
**Garanti Bank**



I am proud that BLC Bank's endeavor to promote women in Lebanon has had national and international impact. Being a member of the WEPs Leadership Group and piloting the Gap Analysis Tool served to be rewarding experiences. Not only did the Tool highlight good practices, it also served as a guideline for actions to implement in our journey to achieving a holistic empowerment framework in a country like Lebanon where no such benchmark exists. Had we had access to such a tool when launching our We Initiative in 2012, our implementation time would have been shorter and more impactful. I invite my colleagues across the globe to embark on this journey of empowering women, and to do so with the structured approach this Tool presents.

#### Nadim Kassar

Deputy Chairman and General Manager  
**BLC Bank- Lebanon**



Sumitomo Chemical was an early user of the Gap Analysis Tool to complete a self-assessment of our gender equality performance. The tool not only helped us in identifying areas for further enhancement, but using the tool created the opportunity to engage different departments in our organization on the topic. The tool allowed us to raise awareness internally, shed light on key drivers and evaluate opportunities to improve our environment. We found the Gap Analysis Tool to be useful, and we encourage companies to utilize it regardless of size or location.

#### Mr. Yasuaki Sasaki

Executive Officer, Human Resources Department  
**Sumitomo Chemical Co., Ltd.**

## Why Use the WEPs Tool?

While many companies have one-off policies and programmes to advance gender equality within their organizations, very few companies are taking advantage of the full range of ways they can have positive impacts on women and girls.

As a free, user-friendly and confidential online platform, the WEPs Tool addresses this by supporting companies in adopting a holistic approach to gender equality and implementing the WEPs. Results are provided in a concise, clear format with links to related resources, allowing companies to easily identify areas where increased efforts can contribute to better conditions for women in the workplace, marketplace and community.

As business leaders scale-up efforts around women's empowerment to improve organizational performance and increase marketplace opportunities, the WEPs Tool provides a practical resource that companies can leverage to:

- Assess their strategic approach to gender equality
- Identify gaps and opportunities for continuous improvement
- Learn about best practices on gender equality globally
- Set concrete goals and targets and measure progress over time
- Benchmark against peers and industry standards
- Leverage global gender equality resources to guide future actions
- Contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals by investing in women and girls

Though the WEPs Tool provides information on how business is addressing women's empowerment and gender equality at an aggregate level, confidentiality of individual company information is a priority. The data entered into the self-assessment is strictly confidential, and the results cannot be linked back to an individual company or publicly divulged. Data, such as that presented in this report, are solely used in aggregate form to better understand gender equality trends and areas needing further support and resources.



[www.weps-gapanalysis.org](http://www.weps-gapanalysis.org)

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# Core Partners



**United Nations**  
Global Compact

**The United Nations Global Compact** is a call to companies everywhere to align their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of UN goals and issues embodied in the Sustainable Development Goals. The UN Global Compact is a leadership platform for the development, implementation and disclosure of responsible corporate practices. Launched in 2000, it is the largest corporate sustainability initiative in the world, with more than 9,500 companies and 3,000 non-business signatories based in over 160 countries, and more than 70 Local Networks. [unglobalcompact.org](http://unglobalcompact.org)



UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. 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 Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality. [unwomen.org](http://unwomen.org)



IDB Invest, the private sector institution of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Group, is a multilateral development bank committed to supporting the private sector in Latin America and the Caribbean. It finances sustainable enterprises and projects to achieve financial results that maximize economic, social and environmental development for the region. With a current portfolio of \$11.6 billion under management and 330 clients in 21 countries, IDB Invest works across sectors to provide innovative financial solutions and advisory services that meet the evolving demands of its clients. As of November 2017, IDB Invest is the trade name of the Inter-American Investment Corporation. [www.idbinvest.org](http://www.idbinvest.org)



The Multilateral Investment Fund serves as an IDBG innovation laboratory to promote development through the private sector by identifying, supporting, testing and piloting new solutions to development challenges and seeking to create opportunities for the poor and vulnerable populations in the LAC region. To fulfill its role, the MIF engages and inspires the private sector and works with the public sector when needed. [www.fomin.org](http://www.fomin.org)

# Supporters

