

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY ON **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY** AND EVERY OTHER DAY



by Dina Saadi in Brooklyn, NY, 6/17 (Knickerbocker & Troutman) (LP)

Every year on 8 March, many companies take the occasion of International Women's Day (IWD) to celebrate women in their workforce. This document aims to provide recommendations on how to meaningfully leverage IWD to advance gender equality and move the needle for women and girls. These recommendations are applicable for every day.

INTERNAL ACTIONS

Use the [WEPs Gender Gap Analysis Tool](#) to assess gaps and identify areas for improvement on gender equality.

Take the time to review and improve your company's policies and procedures, for example, your [parental leave](#) or [flexibility work options](#) to support working parents, or your [procurement practices](#) to identify opportunities to build relationships with other [WEPs signatories](#), including women-owned businesses.

Encourage your teams to spend time reviewing the [WEPs toolkit](#) to fully understand the resources available to your company.

Create or strengthen a gender equality council, working group or employee resource group to take gender equality issues forward.

Organize internal trainings, such as [inclusive language](#), or workshops specifically focusing on [engagement of men employees](#).

Encourage executives to dedicate time to meet with and listen to young women in your organization. If resources exist, pilot a [mentorship](#) or sponsorship programme or liaise with existing programmes by external organizations encouraging colleagues to participate.

Hold internal consultations to discuss your company's results from the [WEPs Gender Gap Analysis Tool](#) to help you prioritize actions and develop a [gender action plan](#).

Help understand experiences and realities of women in your workforce by conducting surveys and/or interviews.

Invest in upskilling teams on topics related to gender equality or personal skills development—for example by sharing this free 30-minute [e-learning course](#) or modules on the [WEPs Learning platform](#).

Give visibility and shoutouts to individual women across levels in your company, for example by showcasing their accomplishments and impact on the company in newsletters.

Allocate work hours for career reflection, encouraging especially the women on your team to articulate their passions and forward-looking plans.

EXTERNAL ACTIONS

Make your commitment to gender equality public by signing and adopting the [Women's Empowerment Principles](#).

Reach out to your business partners, including suppliers and vendors, to encourage them to sign on to the [WEPs](#) too.

Report back on past targets and plans, be [transparent](#), and lay out challenges and learnings.

Announce a new target for gender equality such as appointing a percentage of women into leadership positions by 2025 or concrete plans such as launching a [childcare](#) facility or undertaking an [equal pay diagnostic](#) or audit.

Commit to gender data, implement the “no to all-men” [panel pledge](#), become a [HeForShe champion](#) or a member of the [Unstereotype Alliance](#) or the [Equal Pay International Coalition](#).

Write public articles or op-eds such as on the [WEPs Blog](#), raising awareness for gender equality by integrating some of the below key messages.

Make a donation to support the gender equality agenda.

Explore new partnerships with organizations with relevant expertise that could, for example, support internal training or join forces to raise awareness.

Innovate your marketing material to eliminate harmful stereotypes and organize photo campaigns showcasing women in roles where they tend to be underrepresented.

Partner with local universities allowing young women to “shadow” company leaders for a day and learn from them.

Key messages for newsletters, articles, press releases or social media:

Note: All messages are examples that need to be adapted and tailored depending on the company's gaps and forward-looking priorities.



“

Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right but also contributes to financial performance, productivity, innovation and corporate sustainability. To double down on our commitment to gender equality and holding ourselves accountable, we are committing to achieve gender balance on our board by 2025.

“

We can only move the needle for gender equality if women are empowered in the workplace, marketplace and community. That is why we are excited to share that we are signing the Women's Empowerment Principles to guide our gender equality plan going forward. We are especially excited to join the WEPs community as [WEPs signatories generally perform better on gender equality than non-WEPs signatories](#).

“

According to the [WEPs Gender Gap Analysis Tool](#), our company specifically lags behind in the area of communication. That is why we are committing to include [sex-disaggregated workforce breakdowns](#) in all our sustainability reports going forward.

“

Attempts to ensure lasting climate solutions without including the voices of half of the world's population are doomed to fail. Yet, women are still underrepresented in climate-related decision-making, resulting in processes that overlook their specific needs and crucial contributions. Women's expertise, innovations and leadership at all levels are key to tackle the climate crisis. This is why this International Women's Day, we are committing to increase the female workforce and leadership, particularly in STEM positions.

“

When women are empowered, everybody benefits. As we build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic, the urgency to support women entrepreneurs has never been clearer. We will start to analyze our procurement data to ensure women owned businesses are included throughout our entire supply chain.

“

Gender equality is not a women's issue. Everyone needs to speak up and become an ally. For this reason, we have identified three male leaders within the company that will specifically focus on organizing workshops for male employees creating a safe space to share experiences and unpack fears and stereotypes.

“

We simply cannot wait for 267 years to close the economic gender gap which is the current estimate by the [World Economic Forum](#). This International Women's Day, we are conducting interviews with women employees from across departments to better understand their realities and needs. This way, we will be able to revise our policies and practices and ensure they are inclusive of all genders in our company.



TARGET GENDER EQUALITY



Further examples for key messaging can be found in the [WPS Welcome Package here](#)

Social media assets

- [WEPs Welcome Package](#)
- [United Nations Global Compact](#)
- [UN Women](#)
- [HeforShe](#)
- [Women's Entrepreneurship Accelerator](#)