

Women's Empowerment Principles

Established by UN Women and the
UN Global Compact Office

September 2020

Issue 3 | 2020

WEPs Bulletin: Launch of #WeCommit Campaign

**WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT
PRINCIPLES**
Established by UN Women and the
UN Global Compact Office

#WeCommit

Join the WEPs community at weps.org.

weempower

International Labour Organization
European Union
UN WOMEN

We are excited to update you about our new **#WeCommit campaign**. It is a call to action for all companies – private companies, enterprises and employers' organizations, stock exchanges, pension funds and wealth management funds, among others – to sign and deepen the implementation of the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs). We would like to invite you to become an ally by encouraging your partners and networks to join and sign the WEPs too! See the campaign's [Action Guide](#) and [Ally Package](#) to learn more about how you can get involved.

Tomorrow (September 22) we will have two events during the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, **Uniting Business LIVE**, "**Supporting women-owned businesses in COVID-19 recovery**" at 12:00-1:30 pm EDT and a fireside chat on "**Fighting domestic violence and everyday sexism in the workplace**" with the participation of L'Oréal at 2:30-3:00 pm EDT. More info and how to register below!

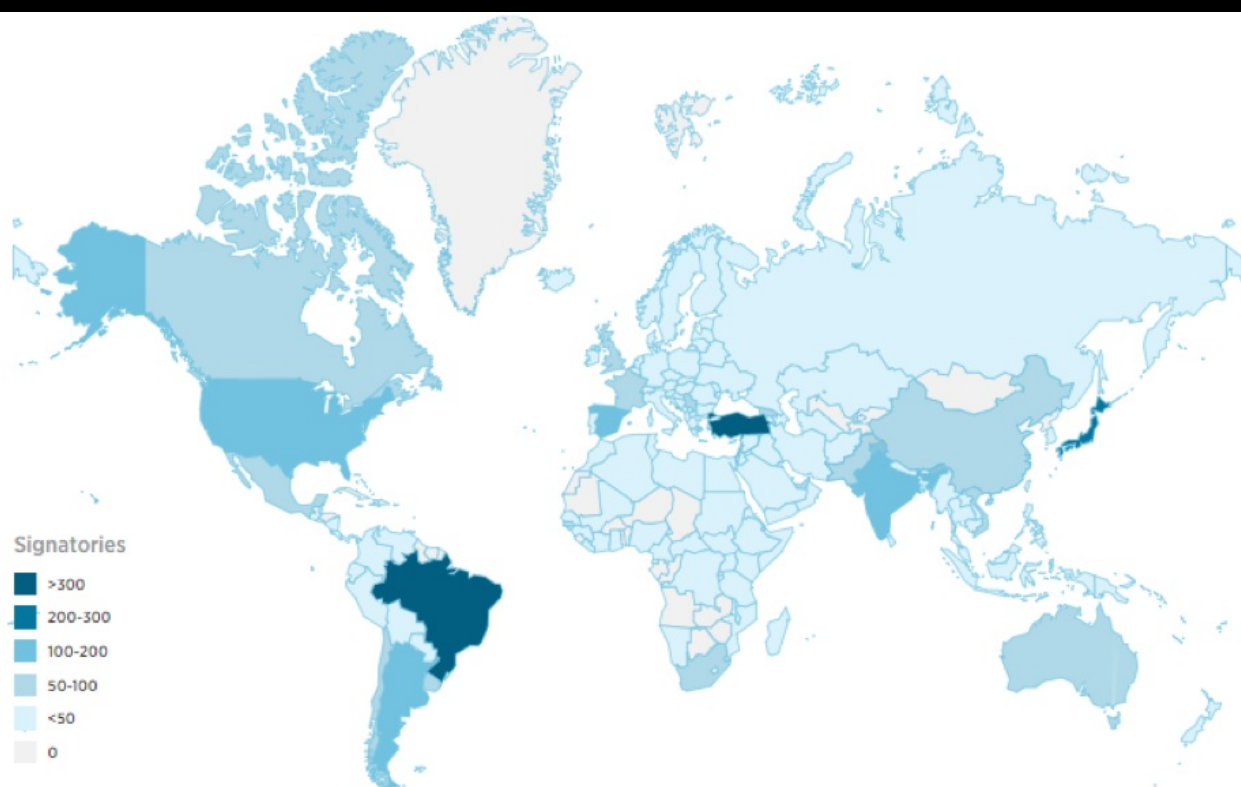
The aftermath of COVID-19 continues to hit women entrepreneurs hard. As we respond and recover from the crisis, we have an opportunity to build back better – with a globally coordinated multi-stakeholder approach to build an eco-system that fosters gender equality, growth sustainability, and resilience for women-led businesses. We are proud to

present our new [*Advocacy Tool – Strengthening Support for Women Entrepreneurs during COVID-19*](#). The Tool aims to drive support from stakeholders within the women’s entrepreneurship ecosystem amid COVID-19. It features key recommendations for the public sector, private sector, and civil society in supporting women entrepreneurs along five key themes: creating an enabling environment, access to information, skills and knowledge, access to markets, access to networks, and access to knowledge. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all our partners and stakeholders, particularly the European Union, for having supported the preparation of the tool.

In this Bulletin we would also like to present our most recent category of resources [WEPs Leaders](#), which include interviews with inspiring women entrepreneurs and heads of companies sharing lessons learned and perspectives of successfully embarking on the WEPs journey.

If you have not already done so, take a few minutes to create your [Company Profile Page](#)”. [By doing so your company will be featured on our website](#), showcasing your commitment to gender equality and women’s empowerment publicly. Completing the profile page also allows you access to the [WEPs Welcome Package](#) providing you with communication tools and templates. Read on for more exciting updates!

Global WEPs Signatories



Globally, over 3,600 organizations have joined our WEPs community to advance gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community.

The top 5 countries with the most WEPs signatories are Brazil, Turkey, Japan, Spain and the United States.

The largest interest is coming from companies in support services, financial services, software and computer services.



**UNITING
BUSINESS
LIVE**



Uniting business for a better world

Target Gender Equality Lounge

UNGA Side Event
September 22, 2020

REGISTER NOW

**WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT
PRINCIPLES**

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**TARGET
GENDER
EQUALITY**



Photo: UN Photo/Ryan Brown

#UnitingBusiness

To mark the opening of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, Uniting Business LIVE will convene leaders from business, Government and civil society to showcase their commitment to the UN's mission. Uniting Business LIVE will include the Private Sector Forum (Monday 21 September), the Global Impact Forum (Tuesday 22 September) and the SDG Business Forum (Wednesday 23 September).

Join us at the following events within the Global Impact Forum on 22 September:

- The dialogue on “**Supporting women-owned businesses in COVID-19 recovery**” will take place at 12:00-1:30 pm EDT with the aim to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on women-owned SMEs. The winners of the WE Empower UN SDG Challenge will also be announced and presented.

[Register here!](#)

- A fireside chat on “**Fighting domestic violence and everyday sexism in the workplace**” will take place with the participation of L'Oréal at 2:30-3:00 pm EDT to discuss the responsibility of the companies in addressing everyday sexist behaviour and domestic violence and mitigating its effects.

[Register here!](#)



The **2020 Asia-Pacific WEPS Awards** launched in August 2020 and seeks to encourage, value and recognize the efforts of individuals and businesses that promote gender-inclusive business cultures and the achievement of gender equality. Award categories include: Leadership Commitment, Youth Leadership, Gender-inclusive Workplace, Gender-responsive Marketplace, Community and Industry Engagement and COVID-19 Action. Application closes on this Friday the 25 September.

Learn more about the award [here](#). Qualified companies can apply directly to the [Awards website](#) until the end of September.

Wednesday, 23 September 2020
11:00 am – 12:00 pm EDT

– FINANCIAL FUNDAMENTALS –
learning session

 |  Funded by the European Union |  International Labour Organization | 

Join us for our second #WeLearn learning session on Wednesday, 23 September 2020 at 11 am EDT. During the upcoming session, the trainer, Laura Didyk, Vice President and National Lead Women Entrepreneurs, Business Development Bank of Canada will share

the basic financial knowledge and skills you need to manage your business's finances. [Register here!](#)

WEPs SATISFACTION SURVEY

Dear CEO's and Focal Points of all WEPs Signatories, as COVID-19 has drastically changed the way we live and work, we are reaching out to ensure the WEPs continue to support your company's commitment to gender. To complete the survey please click the button below.

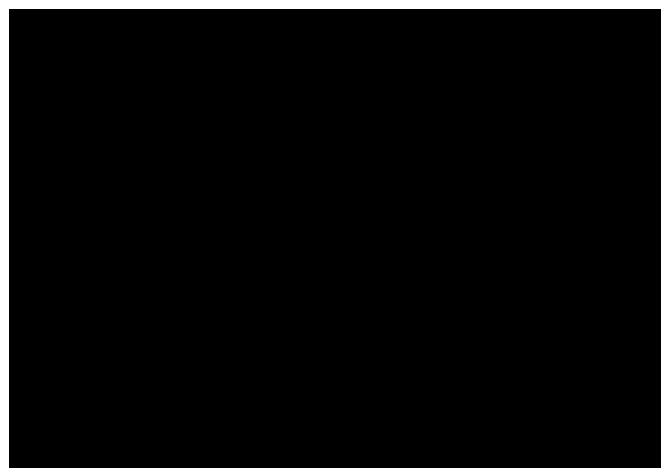
We look forward to hearing from you!

GO TO SURVEY

WEPs LEADERS



We have introduced a new category of resources: WEPs Leaders. This series include interviews with women entrepreneurs and head of companies to showcase lessons learned and perspectives of the individuals behind the innovative and successful WEPs signatories. Please find the Leaders in Action interviews to learn the inspiring stories of women founders and how they overcame challenges in their chosen field. Our Leaders Insights interviews reflect opinions from company leaders on different themes of gender equality and women's empowerment.



OPINION

Amanda Ellis

ASU Julie Ann Wrigley Global
Futures Laboratory

Opinion: As we enter the United Nations Decade for Action and deal with the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, many women entrepreneurs have responded to the incredible challenges with both grit and innovation, pivoting rapidly to cope with the impact of the crisis and help create better futures. ASU Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory, Global Partnerships Director Amanda Ellis explains the critical role the women entrepreneurs play in guiding genuine progress for the benefit of both society and business.

[Read more here](#)



INTERVIEW

Bessie Schwarz

Cloud to Street

Interview: In times of environmental crisis, all existing social vulnerabilities are heightened. When environmental crises strike, women and girls feel the brunt of the impact because of displacement, poverty, hunger, and the loss of life, income and property. Bessie Schwarz, the CEO and co-founder of flood-mapping platform Cloud to Street, explains the challenges she and her co-founder faced to establish a social business whose mission is to remove barriers to life-saving information.

[Read more here](#)

RESOURCES

Strengthening Support for Women Entrepreneurs During COVID-19

Advocacy Tool Launch & Consultation on the Definition of Women-Owned Businesses

9 September 2020

9:00 - 10:00 AM EDT: Advocacy Tool Launch

10:00 - 11:30 AM EDT: Consultation on developing a standardized definition of 'Woman-Owned Business' and Guidance on Its Use



We have launched a new Advocacy Tool, designed to drive increased support from the Public Sector, Private Sector and Civil Society for women's entrepreneurship amid COVID-19. The tool launched on September 9th and came out of the virtual café consultation and online discussion.

We wish to thank all those who joined and let you know that the tool is available [here](#)!



Guidance Note | Principle 3

THE ISSUE

The private sector plays a key role in tackling gender-based violence in the world of work. Within this context, this guidance note focuses on preventing and addressing harassment in the workplace.

Despite global recognition of the scale and impact of the problem and a widespread commitment to tackle it, sexual harassment at work is a persistent and pervasive problem that disproportionately affects women in all jobs, occupations and sectors of the economy in all countries across the world.¹ Taking into account the varying definitions, estimates suggest that globally as many as 75 per cent of women over 16 – at least two billion women – have experienced sexual harassment.²

Sexual harassment can be more prevalent in certain sectors, occupations and work arrangements, especially where individuals are exposed to particular risks that increase the likelihood of violence and harassment. These include working in contact with the public, working in environments where alcohol is served, working non-standard hours, working with people in distress, working in intimate spaces and private homes, or working alone in relative isolation or in remote locations.³ The care sector, for instance, has a predominantly female workforce and is one of the worst affected. Health-care workers also report some of the highest levels of violence compared to other industries and sectors, and violence in the

domestic work sector is ubiquitous.⁴ The number of women experiencing sexual harassment is higher in sectors which primarily pay piece-rates compared to those where women are paid by the hour.⁵

Box 1 | WEPs Tool Kit

This guidance note forms part of a toolkit to guide gender-responsive business conduct in the private sector in line with the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) and ILO international labour standards. It highlights the high costs of sexual harassment in the workplace for workers, companies and economies alike. It also shows how creating a culture of safety, respect and equality and tackling sexual harassment at work makes business sense and benefits both employers and employees. It specifically aims to support WEPs signatories in prioritizing, establishing and implementing robust sexual harassment policies and practices which promote the physical and emotional health, safety and wellbeing of all employees (Principle 3).

The Guidance Note: “Tackling Sexual harassment in the World of Work” focuses on preventing and addressing harassment in the workplace. It forms part of a toolkit to guide gender-responsive business conduct in the private sector in line with the WEPs and ILO international labour standards. It highlights the high costs of sexual harassment in the workplace for workers, companies and economies alike. The note provides concrete recommendations for how companies can tackle sexual harassment head on by developing and enforcing training, policy, procedure and a culture based on dignity and respect.

Download the guidance note [here](#).



We have gathered perspectives on how the pandemic has affected businesses and women through 65 semi-structured interviews with private sector CEOs and leaders in the Asia-Pacific and in Europe. This report summarizes key findings and recommendations on how organizations steered their responses, safeguarded women employees and maintained business continuity.

Full report is available [here](#).



As part of the “Win-Win Programme: Gender equality means good business” programme, a study about the Gender Pay Gap in Uruguay was launched. The study aims to contribute to the analysis and awareness of the measures adopted by different countries in Latin America and Caribbean between 1990-2018, and explains the correlation between maternity leave and the gender pay gap. It also describes policies introduced for the mitigation of the gender pay gap. The study was presented during a webinar with the participation of the Vice President of Uruguay, Beatriz Argimón, Minister of Labour Pablo Mieres and authorities from the partner implementers: ECLAC, UN Women and European Union.

Download the study [here](#).

OPPORTUNITIES

The applications for the **Industry Disruptor European Chapter** is now open. This unique incubation and mentorship programme that provides European entrepreneurs the opportunity to learn from leading industry experts, scale solutions

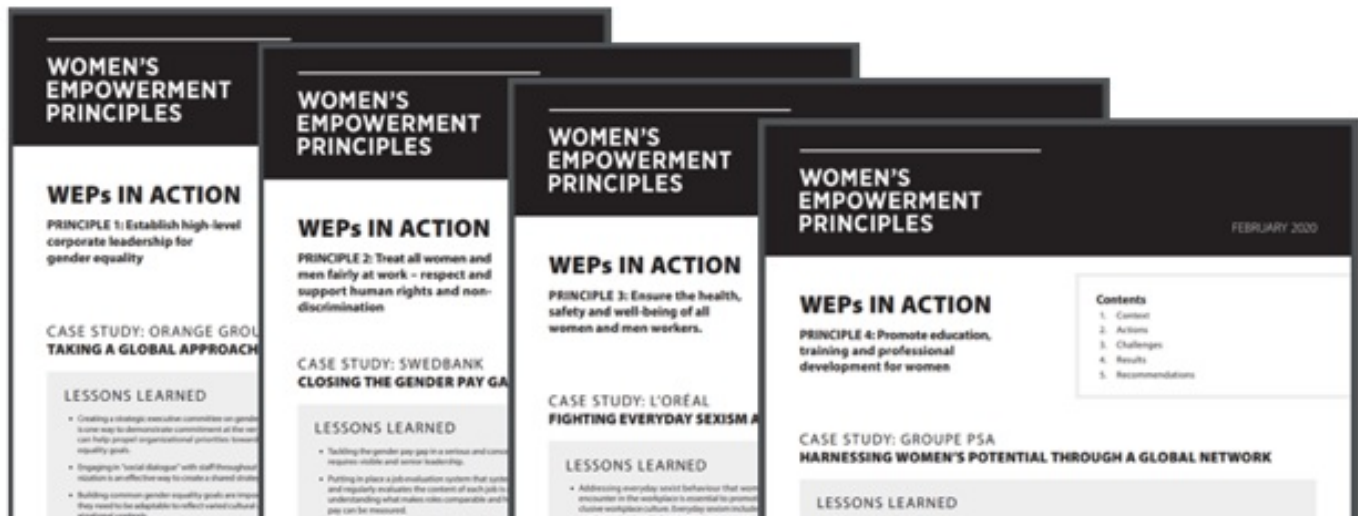


sustainably, access international supply chains and be part of a global network committed to social change.

Apply [here](#).

CASE STUDIES

We continue to gather information from our WEPs signatories who have implemented successful and innovative measures for gender equality and women's empowerment.



In this newsletter, you can read more about [Enel Group](#), an Italian multinational energy company, that shares with us how creating a culture of inclusion and diversity calls for a range of initiatives and actions.

Find one of our previous case studies with [Groupe PSA](#) and make sure to fill out [this form](#) if you are interested in sharing your success story!

PAST EVENTS



Last week we organized a webinar on "Leveraging Women's Networks to Advance Gender Equality" available [here](#). Make sure to keep an eye out on our website where the recording and Q & A from the webinar will be published shortly.

If you are interested in learning more about our resources on the WEPs and COVID-19, you might be interested in our webinar “Empowering Women Entrepreneurs to Drive Economic Growth” Virtual Café that took place in July [here](#).



WE EMPOWER: Empowering Women Entrepreneurs to Drive Economic Growth

8 Jul '20 Wed 16:30 CEST > 14 Jul '20 Tue 23:00 CEST

ADD TO CALENDAR ▾

● Past

Areas of Interest:

Care | Digital Agenda | Economy & Finance | Education & Training | Employment | Enterprise and Industry | Entrepreneurship | Gender Mainstreaming Methods & Tools | Men & Gender Equality

Facilitated by: Nancy Mitchell | Madison Bailey | Magali Gay-Berthomieu

Following the Virtual Café, we kicked off a week-long online discussion in partnership with the European Institute for Gender Equality. Engaging discussions took place on topics such as leveraging civil society networks, building inclusive supply chains, innovative financial instruments and financial literacy, social protection and care, the digital economy and e-commerce. You can find more information and additional resources [here](#).

In August, our Uruguay team co-organized a webinar on “Shared Co-responsibility” with the Inter-American Development Bank to promote equitable business models within the region.

Find the presentations [here](#).

See the webinar recording [here](#).



Twenty-one business leaders in Viet Nam signed the WEPs during the “Equality Means Business” Forum on 18 August 2020. The Forum was organized by UN Women, the EU Delegation in Viet Nam and the Viet Nam Women Entrepreneur Council (VWEC) under the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and



Industry. [Read more here](#) and [watch the forum opening video](#).

Read more on the [CEO's committing to WEPs](#) here.



In Asia, we launched a unique incubation and mentorship programme that provides entrepreneurs with women-benefitting enterprises in India and Viet Nam the chance to tackle key sustainability challenges in the fashion industry in collaboration with the DO School, H&M and Tchibo. The programme kicked off with over 70 women entrepreneurs and continued over five weeks. [Learn more here](#).

Thank you for reading and see you soon again!

The Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) guide businesses on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community. Jointly established by the UN Global Compact and UN Women, the WEPs are underpinned by international labour standards and human rights and by the recognition that businesses have an important role in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Adopting the seven principles is the best way that businesses can deliver on the ambitions for gender equality and women's empowerment as outlined in the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and in the 17 SDGs.

If you know someone who would also like to receive the Bulletin please refer them to sign up [here](#).

Questions? E-mail us at weps@unwomen.org | www.weps.org