



BPW International 1930 - 2011

The International Federation of Business and Professional Women

fact sheet 4:

THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY:

ENGAGED AND ENGAGING

Chief executives from all regions of the world and representing diverse global and national companies are expressing their commitment to advancing equality between men and women, the cornerstone of the Women's Empowerment Principles – Equality Means Business, a partnership initiative of UN Women and UN Global Compact.

More than 180 CEOs have already signed *The CEO Statement of Support*. They include CEOs from the following companies:

- Accenture, Global
- Açovisa
- Indústria e Comércio De Aços Especiais Ltda.
- Brazil; Aitken Spence PLC, Sri Lanka
- Alcatel-Lucent, France
- Avon Products, Inc., Global
- Calvert Group, Ltd., US
- Carlson, US

- Carnival Australia, Australia
- CINQ Technologies, Brazil
- Copel – Companhia Paranaense de Energia, Brazil
- Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Global
- Endesa, S.A., Spain
- Ernst & Young, Global
- Infosys Technologies Limited,
- Informática de Franca Ltda.
- Novartis International AG, Switzerland
- Orascom Telecom Holding S.A.E., Egypt
- Pax World Management LLC, US
- Petrobras, Brazil
- Sungjoo Group/MCM, South Korea
- Yves Saint Laurent, Global

[Principles](#) encourages business leaders to use the seven principles as guide posts for actions that advance and empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community, and communicate progress through the use of sex-disaggregated data and other benchmarks.

CEOs who sign the Statement underscore that equal treatment of women and men is not just the right thing to do, it is also good for business and needs to be a priority. The principles offer a practical approach to advance women and point the way to a business and social environment that is both fairer and more prosperous for everyone. By signing the Statement, CEOs demonstrate leadership on gender equality and women's empowerment and will encourage fellow business leaders to do the same.

The CEO Statement of Support

The [CEO Statement of Support for the Women's Empowerment](#)



Engaging more companies to support the WEPs - Where can we start?

Business leaders who recognize the business case for women's empowerment and gender equality are likely targets to sign the CEO Statement of Support.

Their corporate commitment is reflected through the company's mission statement and supported through public reporting on policies and practices, attests to the growing realization of how important these values are to business and their communities.

BPW advocates around the world have been effective in bringing persistent, discriminatory practices to the attention of government and raising awareness about these in communities. The WEPs are a tool that Affiliates can use to engage effectively with another key stakeholder group: the private sector.

Government should be regularly updated about the progress made with companies as this can assist with the preparation of the country CEDAW report especially when reporting against Article 11 where government can show how the private sector is using the WEPs and civil society engaged in raising awareness about them.

The private sector is an essential engine for economic growth and for the improvement of individual wellbeing. There are tangible benefits that companies gain from increasing their hiring and advancement of women. A new leadership model to help women along their career journeys is needed and the WEPs are a means to achieving that.

[CEO Statement of Support for the Women's Empowerment Principles](#)

[What Leaders are Saying about the Women's Empowerment Principle](#)

[Press Release: Chief Executives Worldwide Support Women's Empowerment Principles](#)



Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Achievements

International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated each year on the 8th of March. It is a global day celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future.

The first International Women's Day events were run in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland in 1911 and attended by over one million people. 100 years on, International Women's Day has become a global mainstream phenomena celebrated across many countries and is an official holiday in approximately 25 countries including Afghanistan, Russia, Ukraine, Vietnam and Zambia.

In some places like China, Russia, Vietnam and Bulgaria, International Women's Day is a national holiday. Why: Suffragettes campaigned for women's right to vote. The word 'Suffragette' is derived from the word "suffrage" meaning the right to vote. International Women's Day honours the work of the Suffragettes, celebrates women's success, and reminds of inequities still to be redressed. The [first](#) International Women's Day event was run in 1911. 2011 is the Global Centenary Year.



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The IWD Challenge

100 companies for 100 years...

To mark the significance of the International Women's Day (IWD) Centenary, 1911-2011, and our commitment to the Women's Empowerment Principles, BPW International launched the IWD Challenge to BPW Affiliates and Associate Clubs in over 96 countries around the world.

To meet the challenge, each region needs to produce 20 signatories to achieve the 100 signatures. So run a WEPs consultation or event and influence a CEO to sign the Ceo Statement of Support for the WEPs. Let's reinvent the opportunity for working women everywhere and join us by taking up the IWD Challenge today!

A Call to Action: The IWD Challenge

The IWD Challenge is a call to action to the five regions of BPW International to obtain 20 CEOs to sign the WEPs CEO Statement of Support, reaching a combined number of 100 CEO signatories in 2011 and annually thereafter. The Challenge was launched in the year of the IWD centenary.

BPW Affiliates supporting the WEPs will be officially

acknowledged at the XVII BPW International Congress in Helsinki, Finland, 17-21 June 2011.

To qualify, BPW Federations or clubs are required to have run a WEPs consultation or event or have participated in the IWD Challenge by supporting their region to meet the 20 CEOs signing the [CEO Statement of Support for the Women's Empowerment Principles](#).

Use your sphere of influence to qualify diverse companies representing multinationals, national and SMEs that are tailoring existing policies and practices or establishing much-needed new ones and have them show their support for the WEPs.

Contact your Regional Representative on the WEPs Taskforce and find out how to get started today!

BPW International
is thinking globally
allowing our
Affiliates to act
locally...

Be a WEPs Champion!

Throughout February and June 2011, BPW International will acknowledge Affiliates achieving the highest number of CEO pledges and those that have organized successful WEPs consultations and events around the world.

Keep planning WEPs events or consultations for 2011 because BPW Federations and Clubs that have made the greatest impact will be acknowledged at the XVII BPW International Congress in Helsinki, Finland 2011. Make sure you have much to celebrate!



BPW INTERNATIONAL
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