WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

WHY BUSINESS SHOULD CARE?

care®

Our Vision

We seek a world of hope, tolerance and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and people live in dignity and security.

CARE International will be a global force and a partner of choice within a worldwide movement dedicated to ending poverty.We will be known everywhere for our unshakable commitment to the dignity of people.

In India we seek a society which celebrates diversity, where rights are secured, citizenship realised, and human potential fulfilled for all.

Our Mission

A shared understanding of the organisation's mission is also critical to lead everyone's work towards a common purpose. Our mission statement is:
We fight poverty and exclusion by empowering women and girls from the poor and marginalised communities.

Our Programme Goal

Five million women and girls from the most marginalised communities in India have the power to realise choices in personal and public spheres to advance their positions.

CARE India will accomplish this goal by working with 50 million people to help them meet their health, education and livelihoods entitlements.
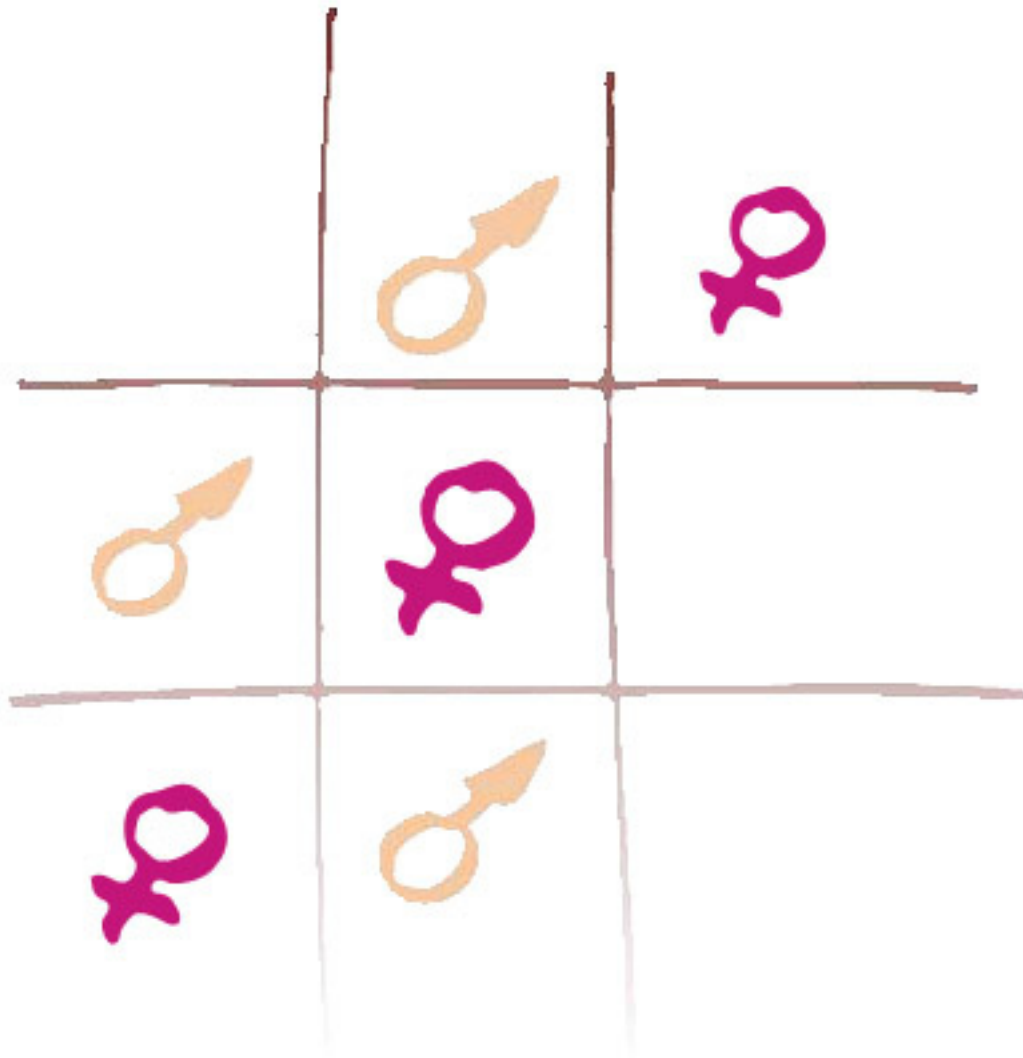
Gaining an Edge

Through Gender Equality

A Practical Guide to Making the Women's Empowerment Principles Possible

ABOUT THE SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

GLOBAL COMPACT NETWORK, INDIA

The Global Compact Network (GCN), India (formerly known as Global Compact society), was formed in November 2003 and registered as a non-profit Society to function as the Indian Local Network of the Global Compact Programme. Today there are more than 80 Global Compact Local Networks in key markets across the world. The Networks provide an opportunity for members to share experiences, innovative practices and to collaborate for furtherance of responsible business values within country specific contexts. GCN India is the first Local Network in the world to be established with full legal recognition. Functioning within a globally recognised and established initiative, with a pan-India membership base, GCN provides an extremely relevant vehicle for Indian business, academic institutions and civil society organisations to join hands towards strengthening Responsible Business initiatives in India and internationally.

CARE INDIA

CARE is a leading development organisation with an extensive global network working to address poverty in India for more than 60 years. Through its programmes in the areas of health, education, livelihoods and disaster response, CARE has impacted on extreme poverty and social injustice in India by reaching out to more than 16 million women and girls from the most disadvantaged communities. Women and girls are at the heart of CARE's community-based efforts because, equipped with the proper resources, women have the power to help families and entire communities escape poverty. CARE partners with public and private sector agencies, local partners and communities, designing and implementing models that help poor people to access their rights and entitlements. CARE also collaborates with national and state governments to ensure maximum effectiveness of programmes.

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Most readers are likely to agree that our society should be gender equal. Yet, as the evidence clearly illustrates, the real situation in our country does not resonate well for our collective aspiration of becoming a powerhouse of the global economy. Our record, in the case of many indices related to gender, is at par with, or worse than, some of the least developed nations in the world. Of course, things are changing for the better, in our boardrooms, offices, on factory floors, in colleges, schools and most importantly, in our families. While addressing gender stereotypes, biases and discrimination, we as individuals should be under no illusion and acknowledge that none of us are free of gendered perceptions. Gender stereotyping is systemic in all societies. It is there in varying degrees in each of us and hence in all the institutions that we operate in. What we have to be aware of is that our socialisation often makes us blind to many of our gender biases.

As businesses, we are known for our innovation, resourcefulness and ability to get things done. We can potentially be an important game changer for women's empowerment. The Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP) launched by the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and UN for Women on 8th March, 2010, on International Women's Day, is an important point of departure for all of us who would like business to play a crucial role in ushering in a gender equal society. The task at hand, once we are committed to the cause, is not easy, and there is no 'one size fits all' solution. As part of our leadership commitment, we need to take a hard and comprehensive look at how we – as individuals, companies and sectors – impact the lives of women within our spheres of influence, both with internal and external stakeholders. We need to then put in place conscious systems that foster equality between men and women.

Such actions cannot be considered altruistic efforts. They are driven by self-interest and would be increasingly imperative in a company's effort to remain at the top. In a business environment steeped in a sense of crisis and uncertainty, old ways of working are increasingly being revaluated. Actively promoting a gender just society is one of the ways for companies to make a mark and have increased stakeholder confidence. I hope that this Primer will instill in the minds of business leaders and managers a sense of the urgency, the extent of the challenge, and also the exciting nature of the work that has already been taken up by companies around the world.

Vinita Bali
CARE India
Board member

Acknowledgements

ABOUT THE PRACTICAL GUIDE

This Primer is an introductory resource providing examples of translating the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) within the business context in India. It pools in some initial self assessment tools, examples and practical cases of initiatives and strategies on diverse aspects that would support your company in initiating the implementation of the Women Empowerment Principles with WEPs, marketplace and the community.

The Primer is an easy to understand document highlighting issues specific to India that can be used by professionals at diverse levels of a company (Managers, HR Managers, Team Leaders, Senior Leaders, and Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR] professionals). Stakeholders utilising the Primer would primarily be looking at:

• Starting a dialogue on women's empowerment within a company
• Self assessment of ability to create empowering environments within the company
• Points of departure to begin working towards women's empowerment

As a preliminary learning document the Primer aims to:

• Introduce the WEPs
• Establishes why women's empowerment is important
• Discusses the business case for women's empowerment
• Provides some examples of how to integrate the WEPs into business practices

The Primer, as is the case with any such document, has its limitations. It just touches the tip of the proverbial iceberg and provides a simplified introduction to the complex issue at hand. It gives the reader a heads up on the issues, debates and leads that s/he can follow. Any effort towards addressing dilemmas and dimensions associated with women's empowerment, as well as for ensuring positive corporate roles and accountability on the same, would need sustained leadership commitment and dedicated resources. Since the guide initiates a beginning to the dialogue on the WEPs in India for the first time, it is assumed that as more minds get together, many more perspectives and ideas would enrich what is discussed herein in future.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

Equality Means Business

A joint initiative of UN Women and UN Global Compact

Women's Empowerment Principles in Brief

1. Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality
2. Treat all women and men fairly at work–respect and support human rights and nondiscrimination
3. Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers
4. Promote education, training and professional development for women
5. Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women
6. Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy
7. Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality

The Women's Empowerment Principles – Equality Means Business is a partnership initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact (UNGC) that encourages engagement with business, civil society, the United Nations and Governments to advance and empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. While designed as a tool for business to strengthen and create company policies and programmes to achieve gender equality, these seven Principles provide a platform for all stakeholders to move their commitments to gender equality closer to implementation. The Principles emphasise the business case for corporate action to promote gender equality and women's empowerment and are informed by real-life business practices and input gathered from across the globe.The Global Compact Network, India and CARE India support the WEPs and have made their promotion and realisation an organisational priority.The principles were launched on 8th March, 2010, by UN Women and UNGC, to help companies make tangible commitments; champion the issues related to gender equality; and make gender transformation a reality in their context.

The WEPs seek ways in which best practices may be adopted by the business community and a gender dimension may be incorporated into corporate citizenship. They are guided by international instruments such as the Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the International Covenant on Economic and Social Cultural Rights. They also provide more clarity to a number of the UNGC Principles.While all the ten UNGC principles need to have a gender perspective incorporated, the WEPs offer a gender roadmap for companies and can be considered to be closely related to the first UNGC principle which states that 'Businesses should support and respect the potentials of internationally proclaimed human rights', the second which states that 'Businesses need to make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses' and the sixth principle which calls for the 'Elimination in discrimination in respect of employment and occupation'.[1]

Implementing the WEPs means internalising them at various levels within the company. In order to bring about a transformation, the principles need to be integrated with the various systems and structures that govern business practices and policies. All of the principles depend on both individual business decisions and broader shifts in culture and policy.

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[1]*Maureen Kilgour, The UN Global Compact and Substantive Equality for Women*

THE WEPs ARE APPLICABLE TO INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS DECISIONS AND BROADER SHIFTS IN CULTURE AND POLICY FOR COMPANIES/ORGANISATIONS

Upgrading skills and encouraging women to enter into non-traditional fields

Dignity of women in all marketing and company materials

Promotion of women's enterprises

Equal access to all company supported training programmes

APPLYING WEPs: INDIVIDUAL DECISIONS AND POLICIES

Health and Safety of workers and community

Establish benchmarks to quantify inclusion

Gender sensitive recruitment and promotions

Safe working conditions

Flexible work options, leave and re-entry opportunities

Workplace policies and practices discrimination free

Spheres of Influence

Inner spaces

What are the core background documents for the WEPs partnership?

1. Women Empowerment Principles (detailed version) http://www.unifem.org/attachments/stories/WomensEmpowermentPrinciples.pdf
2. Women's Empowerment Principles Booklet, 2nd Edition (July 2011) http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/human_rights/Resources/WEP_EMB_Booklet.pdf
3. Current List of Signatories to the CEO Statement of Support (updated regularly) http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/human_rights/WEPs_CEO_Statement_of_Support_Signatories.pdf
4. Companies Leading the Way: Putting Principles into Practice (updated July 2011) http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/human_rights/Resources/Companies_Leading_the_Way.pdf
5. Meeting Report – Equality Means Business: Putting Principles into Practice (9-10 March 2011) http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/human_rights/WEPs/2011/Meeting_Report_Mar11.pdf

The business case for women's empowerment and gender equality

It is well known that diversity in company boards bring dramatic results in comparison to homogenous boards. Besides the fact that women are a growing consumer force, there is also serious competition for talent in the labour market. We have had to change our gender biases so more talented women can be brought within the fold of the company. **Jaspal Bindra, Standard Chartered.**

Many companies have already begun to recognise that ensuring women's empowerment and gender equality is not a philanthropic initiative, but integral to organisational culture, good economics and accountability. The evidence for this includes Mckinsey's Women Matter Series (2007 onwards); reports by Catalyst (a research group that has studied companies in India and internationally); regular debates on establishing the need to recognise gender equality and women's leadership in business forums; and the process of tracking progress in bridging the gender gap by the World Economic Forum; all instances of how powerful arguments have emerged making the business case for gender equality.

The following points give a summarised version of these key arguments. They provide an idea of why business has begun to take women's empowerment seriously.

Women consumers are an important market

1. Women are an emerging market and an important consumer segment particularly in the post-crisis economy. Some studies have predicted that targeting women consumers would mean larger markets than reaching out to India and China[2]

2. A study by the Global Markets Institute, Goldman Sachs looks at spending patterns as key drivers of growth in the post crisis economy. It predicts that closing the gender gap also means shifts in spending patterns and the choices of women in these spending patterns

3. Some management experts predict that women above the age of 65 in Europe and the US comprise a large number of potential investors

[2]*Silverstein and Sayre, The Female Economy, Harvard Business Review http://news.curves.com/images/20003/HBR%20The%20Female%20Economy.pdf*

Equality in the workplace can make businesses more profitable

4. Inclusion of women in boards of companies and leadership positions, have improved company performance and finances[3]

5. Companies with highest representation of women on their top management teams experienced better financial performance than companies with the lowest women's representation[4]

Women's equality on a national level can help build wealth for society, and thus business

6. High growth sectors, such as the information technology sector, have had a huge number of women workers enabling their performance levels. Inclusion of diversity perspectives and gender perspectives into the organisational culture and practices helped with bringing on board innovation and phased work on diversity by IBM. IBM now employs the most skilled women in technology

7. Investing in women creates virtuous cycles of progress. This belief has encouraged corporate philanthropic activity focused on women which would lead to a wider impact of poverty reduction termed the 'economic case for gender equality'. The World Development Report 2012 by the World Bank traces out these virtuous cycles of progress

8. Studies on women cultivators and producers state that productivity in agriculture can increase manifold if women were given more ownership of resources and there was an elimination of barriers to the same[5]

Other Findings

• Nine Indian companies run by the most prominent women managers outperformed the 30 leading listed firms on the Bombay Stock Exchange. (Economic Times Report, 2009)

• Companies with the highest representation of women on their top management teams experienced better financial performance than companies with the lowest representation of women. This finding holds for both financial measures analysed: Return on Equity (ROE), which was 35 percent higher, and Total Return to Shareholders (TRS), which was 34 percent higher. (The Bottomline Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity, Catalyst, January 2004)

Hindustan Unilever: Focus on Rural Women

With a long record of market leadership in India, Hindustan Unilever has market shares of nearly 60 percent in categories including soap, detergent, and shampoos. But the liberalisation of India's economy and the opening of markets to foreign multinationals such as Procter & Gamble increased the pressure to improve revenues and profits. By the late 1990s, the company was looking for the next big opportunity: to reach the really small villages that were not part of their distribution network.

The business case for focusing on rural Indian markets was clear. India has the world's second-largest population after China, and more than 70 percent of its 1.2 billion people living in rural areas.

While the business reason was clear, setting up a distribution channel to reach remote parts of India was less straightforward. Hindustan Unilever had been tapping into some of the rural populations through such tools as van road shows, but a large share remained outside its reach. It came up with an interesting solution: build a distribution system through a network of women micro entrepreneurs to get the product directly to consumers.

It designed Shakti, a direct-to-consumer sales distribution network that relies on 45,000 female micro entrepreneurs and has tapped into 3 million homes across 135,000 villages in remote rural markets. The programme has brought a new competitive advantage and increased profits while increasing women's incomes.

Source: World Development Report 2011, World Bank

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[3]Mckinsey and Company, Gender Diversity: A Corporate Performance Driver, http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/swiss/news_publications/pdf/women_matter_english.pdfhttp://www.fao.org/docrep/X0198E/x0198e03.htm
[4]Catalyst, The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity, January 2004 http://www.catalyst.org/publication/82/the-bottom-line-connecting-corporate-performance-and-gender-diversity
[5]Food and Agricultural Organisation, Factors And Constraints Affecting Women's Roles In Food Security, http://www.fao.org/docrep/X0198E/x0198e03.htm

How have different companies established the business case for women's empowerment and gender equality so far?

1. Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment :The Learning Journey of Standard Chartered Bank http://pslforum.worldbankgroup.org/casestudies/standardchartered/casestudy_standardchartered.pdf

2. Mckinsey and Company. Gender Diversity: A Corporate Performance Driver http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/swiss/news_publications/pdf/women_matter_english.pdf

3. Mckinsey and Company . WOMEN MATTER 2007. http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/paris/home/womenmatter/pdfs/Women_matter_oct2007_english.pdf

4. Deloitte.The Gender Dividend. http://www.deloitte.com/assets/DcomGreece/dttl_ps_genderdividend_130111.pdf

5. Mckinsey and Company. Female Leadership a Competitive Edge for the Future. http://www.mckinsey.de/downloads/publikation/women_matter/Women_Matter_2_brochure.pdf

6. FOCUS: Women on Boards, Conversations with Male Directors http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/cgf.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/Focus9/$FILE/Focus9_Women_on_Boards.pdf

7. Mckinsey and Company. Women in leadership. http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/equalsharing/Indira%20Hirway.pdf

8. Vinnova. Innovation and Gender http://www.vinnova.se/upload/EPiStorePDF/vi-11-03.pdf

9. VIDEO: CNBC The Gender Agenda :Putting Parity into Practice' http://video.cnbc.com/gallery/?video=1407973482

The RED FLAGS IN THE BUSINESS CASE

In spite of this growing positive scenario there is a need to be cautious. The challenge in developing the business case is on how to focus on women to give a company a market edge - 'gender dividend' or 'diversity premium', without reinforcing stereotypes and inequalities. These are the red flags in a business case. Some of them have been pointed out through the following questions and examples.

A.Is the case taking advantage of or mitigating gender biases and discrimination for a market edge?

Example 1: A study by the Harvard Business School explores how multinational companies took advantage of the gender divide that exists in South Korea and started hiring unemployed women who comprised half the talent pool in the country. This resulted in the companies having a competitive advantage over the local employers who had avoided hiring women due to discrimination.[6] While those working with less gender bias took advantage of this situation, a red flag could be raised on whether the companies that were hiring women were paying them equal pay for equal work.

Gender discrimination sometimes provides a competitive advantage for employers specifically because women agree to work for lower wages. This has been the reason for

the competitive success of labour intensive industries such as garment industries and plantations in parts of South Asia, where women agreed to work for longer hours with lesser pay in comparison to men.

Example 2: Several advertising campaigns tend to portray women through traditional gender stereotypes. For example, in many advertisements in India women were shown doing household chores or as being confined to the kitchen, while men were shown judging the quality of food cooked, cleanliness of the kitchen, clothes and home. Some advertisements used gender biased humour to create that market edge on selling products to men. To enhance women's empowerment, corporate advertisements need to be modified to portray sensitive and cooperative men who can be become role models.

Experience demonstrates that advertisements working towards the positive reinforcement of women's identities and self esteem, have worked. This is evinced by the changing nature of advertisements for women's cosmetic products. In many cases companies selling fairness cream products with strong gender or racial bias had to rethink the stereotypes that they have produced through their advertising campaigns in India. Competitive alternatives such as 'natural cosmetics' enhancing the natural skin colour have alternatively begun to flood the market showing the possibility of a new set of emerging

dynamics and wars on how 'beauty is defined'. These dynamic processes also show that businesses are finding the need to build adequate knowledge on the changing attitudes of women towards themselves and of society towards women.

Gender and class biases shown in the negative stereotyping of domestic workers in an advertisement by a telecom company in India raised public outcry. The presence of a strong association of workers, the Domestic Workers Association in India, resulted in a legal case against the company for the negative stereotyping of workers. Rising consumer awareness, associations and campaigns and codes of conduct are external regulations that have had businesses feeling the growing need to be accountable.

B. Are we looking at women's empowerment or just focusing on women?

There is already a huge shift towards working with women in a positive way. However women's empowerment also means changing existing gender relations or hierarchies.

Example 1: A corporate philanthropic foundation proposes that women and girls are key drivers of powerful social and economic change. The foundation suggests that investing in girls will unlock their largely untapped economic potential, since girls are more likely to reinvest their income in the prosperity of their families, leading to improved education and health outcomes for their children. While the focus on investing in women is welcome, the business case gives an instrumentalist view of gender equality and undermines the point that gender equality is an end in itself. Such statements can also exacerbate existing gender norms or women as mothers, care givers and people who act only in the domestic sphere.
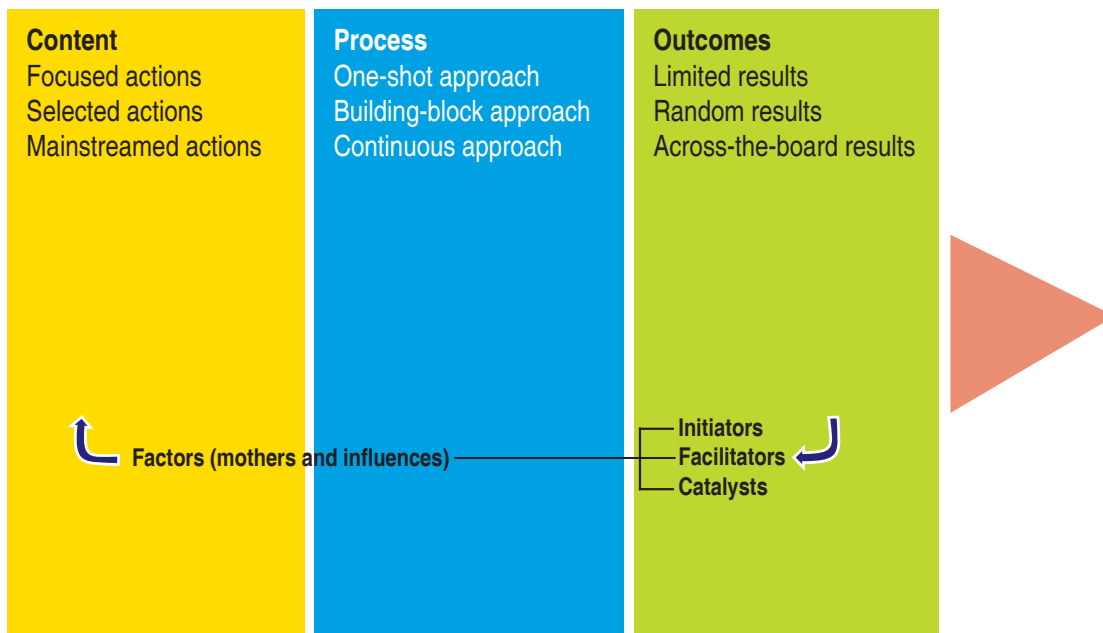
Example 1: A large healthcare company specialising in life saving medicines and vaccines has committed to work on maternal health issues. This also has a close alignment with its core business strategies. It has thus focused on the Women's Empowerment Principal which talks of promoting gender equality in the community by announcing collaboration with partners to develop game-changing maternal health technologies for widespread use in resource-poor settings. This is important, given the problems of maternal health in such settings. It also indicates a long term commitment to the issue, and specifically focuses on three innovations that address specific complications related to maternal mortality and family planning.

While this is a very clear gender specific strategy it is not clear on whether the company will incorporate the understanding of gender equality on all aspects of its work. The red flags raised in gender specific interventions by companies actually question the motive towards cultural change, are these interventions 'tokenistic' or are they directed towards a long term and embedded commitment which the company sees as beneficial for its business as well.

A study conducted on Nordic companies, tracked corporate gender equality strategies and the directions they took along a dynamic model. It made a distinction between those companies that included gender equal strategies based on short term goals and those that found a close affirmation of the same in its business case with long term impacts.

Refer to the Dynamic Model used to track corporate gender equality strategies at Innovation and Gender, Vinnova

Content
Focused actions
Selected actions
Mainstreamed actions

Process
One-shot approach
Building-block approach
Continuous approach

Outcomes
Limited results
Random results
Across-the-board results

Factors (mothers and influences)

Initiators
Facilitators
Catalysts

http://www.vinnova.se/upload/EPiStorePDF/vi-11-03.pdf

The study observed that different kinds of strategies give rise to different results. Those companies with focused actions tended to see limited results or were characterised by short-term or one-shot approach. Companies looking for a wider impact of their actions often had a medium-term outlook and building-block approach for continued efforts towards specific goals. A long-term perspective and a continuous approach featured in companies where the business case for gender equality was constantly affirmed and actions were integrated at every step with overall strategic planning. The medium and long term approaches on many occasions led to across the board results of shifting organisational and cultural changes towards innovation within, mainstreaming gender dimension in all policies and promotion of gender equality. While the Dynamic model focused on using gender equality strategies to promote innovation in companies, a similar model may be built to look at how companies make that overall change to gain that edge through gender equality.

Key Points to Consider on the Business Case for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality

1. Avoid taking a competitive advantage due to pre-existing gender discrimination
2. While a lack of focus on women is a business problem, build in the case for women's empowerment
3. Keep reaffirming the business case while building strategies from gender specific commitments to overall policy shifts which are women friendly
4. Look at broadening the gender specific case to the overall business case for the company

For a detailed guide on the positive business outcomes of gender diversity refer to The Business Case for Women: Quantifying the Economic Value for Diversity by Council of Women Leaders, http://www.cwwl.org/media/BusinessCaseforWomen.pdf

Some directions from the WEPs that could be used while building the business case

1. Establish company-wide goals and targets for gender equality and include progress as a factor in managers' performance reviews
2. Ensure that all policies are gender sensitive – identifying factors that impact women and men differently – and that corporate culture advances equality and inclusion
3. 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 non-traditional job fields
4. Offer opportunities to promote the business case for women's empowerment and the positive impact of inclusion for men as well as women
5. Ask business partners and peers to respect the company's commitment to advancing equality and inclusion
6. Respect the dignity of women in all marketing and other company materials
7. Lead by example: showcase company commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment
8. Make public the company policies and implementation plan for promoting gender equality

WHY EMPOWER WOMEN?

Women's empowerment and gender equality is closely linked with the reduction of poverty and achievement of global targets in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For India to achieve a virtuous growth path, tackling poverty and reaching the MDGs is crucial. Gender inequality is a major obstruction in meeting these goals. Businesses too, are recognising that their non-financial performance is interlinked to their financial performance, and in turn have realised that managing their social impacts present risks, but also importantly opportunities for business. It is in this context that they are considering and acknowledging the impact of gender on their business as well.

The demand for women's empowerment within the business context is increasing. Global market expansion and economic growth has increased the number of women in the workforce. In India, women's work participation has grown from 19.7% in 1981, 25.7% in 2001 to 32.2% in 2004-05.[7] Informally, women are also acknowledged as representing the major bulk of the agricultural workforce in the food producing regions of the world, however, they are often the lowest paid and work under the worst conditions.

Today a much larger number of young women have a higher education status in comparison to the previous generation, and in turn have been entering the workforce in larger numbers than ever before. A study conducted by the Harvard Business Review on the 'Battle for Female Talent in the Emerging Markets' observes that in spite of the presence of many qualified and ambitious women in the BRIC (Brazil,

Russia, India and China) countries and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), female talent is underleveraged in emerging markets, suggesting - "...the inducements to languish or leave reflect both entrenched cultural perspectives and modern complexities."[8] Among other issues, unfair discrimination at the work place and care giving responsibilities of women are some of the reasons why women are pulled back from the workforce. If they do manage to stay in work once they have married and have children, most stay in mid-level jobs. The trend of placing qualified young women to lower entry positions in comparison to their male counterparts with the same qualifications is very much a reality.

Female employees tend to be concentrated in entry or middle level positions, that is, the more senior the position, the lower the percentage of women. Women occupy a very small minority of the senior professional managerial or leadership positions.[9] While the India Gap Review Report has shown 0% of women on company boards or as CEOs, a 2010 study by Mckinsey puts this at 5% in India[10]. There are other issues too, related to forms of discrimination, problems of sexual harassment, and in some extreme cases even violence at the workplace. Despite legislative measures requiring men and women to have the same pay for the same work in many countries, unequal pay for equal work

done by women is a reality even in the comparatively more advanced economies of Western Europe. Besides, women also carry the double burden of unpaid work at home which remains unrecognised in national economies. Women by virtue of their child bearing roles lose out on a whole host of opportunities in the workplace which are often modeled around 'gender stereotypes'. Over 57% of women respondents in the survey conducted by Mckinsey shared that women found the double burden of work and domestic responsibilities the biggest barrier .[11] Assessing gender gaps in labour force participation of women has shown that the gaps are minimal in the twenties and the widest gap is found in the 30-34 age group upto 50-54 age group.[12]

The Women's Empowerment Principles therefore ask for a rebalancing of the situation. They call for deliberate policies to ensure that women are given opportunities to enter into leadership positions, for training and education to improve their status in comparison to men, have better work conditions with ensured health, safety and well being, and are free from discrimination. It calls for institutions and companies to become better advocates of gender equality within their sphere of influence, in their supply chains and in communities. The interesting part is that the WEPs are not restricted to women alone but also include men in pushing for such changes in the workplace, marketplace and community.

[7]Ministry of Women and Child, Handbook of Statistical Indicators for Women in India, Government of India, 2007

[8]Sylvia Ann Hewlett and Ripa Rashid, The Battle for Female Talent in Emerging Markets http://www.persiangendernetwork.org/upload/HBR_Battle_4_Female_Talent_in_Emerging_Markets.pdf

[9]India's Country Profile in Corporate Gender Gap Report, 2010, P 56 and 57. Zahidi. S and Ibarra. H. World Economic Forum. "The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010." http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_CorporateReport_2010.pdf

[10]Mckinsey and Company. "Women at the Top of Corporations: Making it Happen." http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/swiss/news_publications/pdf/women_matter_2010_4.pdf.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Department of Economic and Social Affairs(DESA), The World's Women 2010: Trends and Statistics, United Nations, New York, 2010 http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/WW_full%20report_color.pdf

Making Individual Gender Aware Decisions

Being gender aware starts with the language we use, the interactions we have, and the choices we make. Given the fact that gender stereotypes are entrenched deeply in our cultures, we may not be conscious of acting out gender biases that have been handed down to us through generations, through numerous cultural codes and social attitudes.

You could start by asking yourself, ''Do I follow gendered roles?' Many of us without realising it perform roles and responsibilities that are ideally expected or socially prescribed or imposed and may not be something we want to do. In the same way, we also begin to build perceptions on others based on these expectations. Instead of discussing whether we are right or wrong, let's suspend judgement and explore how our behaviours and beliefs reinforce or challenge existing gender norms in our society.

Decision making is an integral part of life for all of us. Sometimes our decisions get mired in the gender stereotypes we construct. These are also moments when we become the most gender aware as we interrogate a complex mesh of roles we play in our lives. Being gender aware raises questions which require us to challenge conventional norms. For example, as an employer we might decide not to employ a woman of reproductive age assuming that she will need to take maternity leave. This may or may not be the case, but even so, and her taking time to have children might positively affect the business (or not); but even so, the decision making was informed by a gender stereotype.

In today's business context, we increasingly need to have the ability to occupy shared spaces, and be aware of diversity. Struggles of being gender aware come in handy here. We also see more women and men breaking the boundaries of gender or defying stereotypes in their own ways. Are we able to deal with such changes?

What are the working questions that I could start with for a discussion on gender?

Inner Spaces Outer Faces Initiative Tool Kit prepared by CARE contains simple tools and exercises for preliminary discussions on gender, sexuality and gender and culture: http://www.care.org/careswork/whatwedo/health/downloads/isofi_toolkit.pdf

How is Women's Empowerment connected to Business and Human Rights?

Kathryn Dovey, Putting Gender on the Business Human Rights Agenda.
http://www.realizingrights.org/pdf/Gender_and_Business_and_HR_Scoping_Paper_Draft_for_circulation_June_2009.pdf

What are some of the decisions we take related to WEPs on a daily basis at the workplace? Try this Quiz.

Much more work is required to build a compass for individual decisions that we take which have a direct impact on gender. The following questions taken from a sample management tool gives an idea of what elements these could combine.[13]

1. *We should focus on Gender Equality because:*
   a. *Employing women has become imperative for lucrative business operations and employment*
   b. *Women's differential and traditional skills add a competitive advantage to the company's operations*
   c. *We need to dispel norms in society which have brought about inequality and barriers for women and companies may also run into legal risks of discrimination*

We need to dispel norms in society which have brought about inequality and barriers for women in society as a whole and companies may also run into legal risks regarding discrimination. Though it is true that women are bringing in a competitive edge to business and are also a major section of the consumer segment, gender equality essentially aims at removing those barriers and norms which create unequal impacts on men and women due to their gendered roles or due to gender biases.

2. *Gender Equal policies would promote:*
   a. *Equal numbers of men and women*
   b. *Equal opportunities for men and women*
   c. *Introduction of child care and maternity benefits*
   d. *Shift in organisational practices that are women friendly*

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[13]*Rapid Learning Institute. "The Manager's Guide to Preventing Discrimination Lawsuits" www.rapidlearninginstitute.com*

Gender Equal policies would involve a whole architecture involving shifts in organisational policies and practice that are women friendly. While introducing equal opportunity policies, child care and maternity benefit services are important and specific measures, but to do away with inequalities, practices need to change so, results and benefits are realised.

3. *True or false: To be on the safe side, you should treat pregnant employees with more sensitivity and tact than you do for other workers.*

Employees should not be discriminated against because they are pregnant. However, keeping in mind the health and safety of pregnant employees is necessary and not discrimination. These measures include making exceptions on particular tasks a pregnant woman should not undertake because they may pose a health risk; and providing areas to enable women to breastfeed at work.

4. *Which of the following is NOT one of the four common pitfalls in dealing with pregnant employees and job applicants?*
    a. *The appearance of bias*
    b. *Commenting on the fact that an employee is pregnant*
    c. *Changing a pregnant employee's job duties without her consent*
    d. *Denying a pregnant employee or applicant an opportunity based on her pregnancy*

Commenting on the fact that an employee is pregnant. It's okay to acknowledge that an employee is pregnant, as long as you don't take any actions that would affect their pay or opportunities due to the pregnacy itself.

5. *True or false: When interviewing a pregnant job applicant, you should avoid discussing her pregnancy unless she brings it up*

True. The pregnancy must not affect her chances of being employed by you.

6. *The performance of an employee with new or increased family responsibilities:*
    a. *Probably will decline*
    b. *Probably will stay the same*
    c. *Probably will improve*
    d. *Can't and shouldn't be predicted ahead of time*

Can't and shouldn't be predicted ahead of time.

7. *True or false: You can't demote an employee solely because of his/ her care giving responsibilities, but you can postpone a promotion until you see if he or she is up to the job.*

False. The pregnancy must not affect her chances of being employed by you.

What are the kind of questions I could ask on the gender situation in my own company context?
An ILO Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators chalks out a methodology of assessing the situation of gender within different organizational contexts
International Labour Office. "A Manual For Gender Audit Facilitators."
http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_093425.pdf

Is my company ready for a certification on gender equality?
Do a self assessment on gender equality certification under http://www.genderequalityproject.com/
Develop a WEP matrix for self assessment http://www.humanrights-matrix.net/

Are there others talking about practical implementation?
GenderLink Best Practice Guidelines for Creating a Culture of Gender Equality in the Private Sector http://www.workinfo.com/free/Downloads/genderlink.htm

The Gender Equality Principles initiative is a groundbreaking initiative that helps companies with practical solutions http://www.genderprinciples.org/

The Reality for Women in India

1. **The Global Gender Gap Report 2010 reveals that India:**
   a. Is in the bottom half of the global rankings and holds the 114th position out of 134 economies in terms of the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) (2009).
   b. Is in the four highest-ranking countries for gender inequality
   c. Is in 120th position
   d. Is in the top 25 countries

India is in the bottom half of the global rankings and holds the 112th position out of 134 economies in terms of the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI2010). The four highest-ranking countries –Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden –have closed a little over 80% of their gender gaps, while the lowest ranking country –Yemen –has closed only around 46% of its gender gap. However, no country has as yet been able to close the gender gap entirely.

> India was placed in the bottom half of the global rankings holding the 114th position out of 134 economies in terms of the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) (2009).
>
> India's performance in the health and survival sub index was particularly low where it ranked the lowest among all the economies at 134th position.
>
> However India is among the top 25 countries in terms of the political empowerment sub index, particularly because of the progressive laws related to women's participation in Panchayats.
>
> *Global Gender Gap Report 2010*

2. **Gender Gap trends in South Asia and BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) show that:**
   a. Gender inequalities are improving over the years in these countries
   b. India is lagging behind

The South Asian countries continue to be ranked among the bottom half in global assessments. A plotting of the GGI (Gender Gap Index) shows that we are discussing gender inequality in a context where the gap is closing and increasingly so, though India is lagging behind. The following graphs show the comparative trends in South Asia and BRIC countries.

Changes in Gender Gap-BRIC Countries
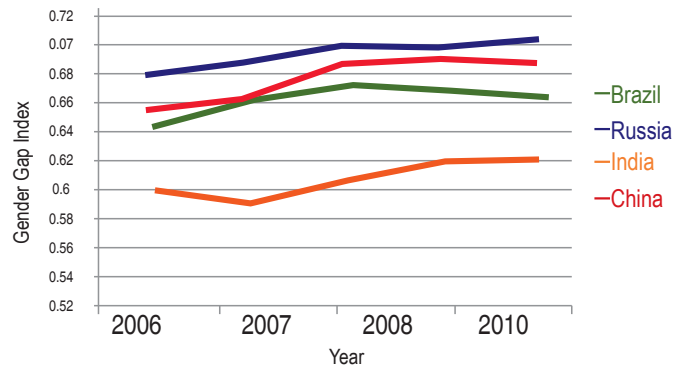
Changes in Gender Gap-South Aisa
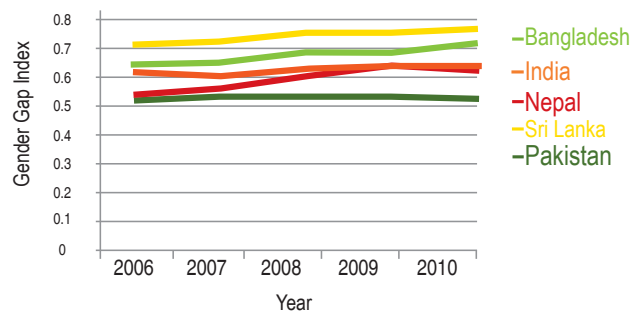
3. **The biggest challenge for women and girls in India is:**
   e. Political Empowerment of women
   f. Economic Empowerment of women
   g. Health and Survival of women
   h. Education of women

Health and Survival. Though on the whole India is in the bottom half of ranked countries in terms of gender gap, India is in the lowest position in terms of health and survival of women and girls.

4. **The 0-6 age group sex ratio in India in 2011:**
   i. Has shown a marked improvement since Independence
   j. 927 girls to 1000 boys
   k. 914 girls to 1000 boys
   l. None of the above

The sex ratio at 0-6 age groups recorded in the 2011 census results saw a drop from 927 to 914 since 2001. This is the lowest since India's Independence in 1947, showing an abnormal trend in birth patterns or acute discrimination against girl children at birth.

5. **The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010, shows that global trends in maximum female employment is in:**
   a. Agriculture
   b. Mining
   c. Financial Services and Insurance

Percentage of Female Employment across Industry Type Globally (Sample Size=100 Biggest Employers)

Financial services and insurance. The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010 comprehensively focused on the current representation of female employees, in some of the largest companies in the world's biggest economies.

6. **The majority of women in the workforce in India are engaged in:**
   a. Agriculture
   b. Manufacturing
   c. Services

Distribution of Women Workers 2004-05
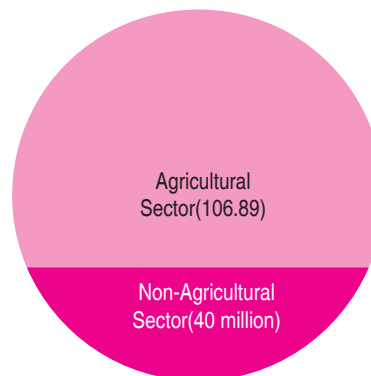
Source: NSS 61st Round Survey on Employment and Unemployment

The majority of women in the workforce in India are engaged in agriculture. For Asia as a whole, 48.2 per cent of women worked in the agricultural sector in 2009, compared to 38.9 per cent of men[14].

7. **Broad trends suggest that majority of the workforce in India is part of the**
   a. Unorganised sector or are informal workers
   b. About 72% of women and 68.4% of men in the workforce are informal workers
   c. Women are heavily concentrated in those sectors which are more informal in terms of work conditions
   d. All of the above

All of the above. A large number of women have shifted from family workers into income earners but this has mainly been in casual, home-based work in India. Interestingly the trend has been very different in Bangladesh which has seen relatively more women assuming the role of factory workers. A large number of women specifically in the manufacturing sector in Asia indicate the inflow of a female workforce in labour intensive manufacturing where global supply chains have preferred to hire women. Manufacturing is the second industry group after agriculture which has drawn a lot of women, most of these are in labour intensive manufacturing industries and usually as casual, temporary, contract workers and home-based workers. Studies have found that women as

[14] *Asian Development Bank and Indian Labour Organisation. ""Rebalancing for Gender Equality, Women's Labour Markets in South Asia." http://www.adb.org/documents/reports/women-labor-markets/women-labor-markets.pdf*

a 'buffer workforce' for global supply chains to accommodate just-in-time ordering, fluctuations in orders and prices, and stiff competition among suppliers, while a smaller core of regular, permanent workers (male or more highly educated women) ensure quality and stability.'[15]

Studies on employment status in the labour market in Asia reflecting working conditions and the arrangements for work show less than a third of male and female workers are engaged in regular wage and salaried employment in Asia which is a strong indication of weak labour market institutions and a large informal economy. It also indicates that non-paid work in a family establishment is very much a female domain while men dominate the own-account (self employment with no employees) and employer statuses. Only one% of all women workers in Asia were running their own business with paid employees; the entrepreneurial capabilities of Asian women are far from being tapped.[16]

The private sector employs about 41.77 percent women while the public sector employs 58.23% are in public sector and 41.77% are in the private sector. Looking specifically at senior positions in government for instance shows that only 7.53 percent women are engaged as Central Government employees.[17],clearly showing that there is a drop in the percentage of women as we move to better and more permanent and secure jobs with higher demands on decision making.

8. **The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010 showed that maximum percentage of female employees were found in:**
    a. India
    b. United States of America
    c. Finland

United States. India has the lowest percentage of female employees (23%), followed by Japan (24%), Turkey (26%) and Austria (29%). The United States (52%), Spain (48%), Canada (46%) and Finland (44%) display the highest percentage of total female employees from the sample. Across the entire sample, 2% of companies still do not measure this information.

9. **The Corporate Gender Gap Report 2010 establishes that:**
    a. Female employees tend to be concentrated in entry or middle level positions
    b. In senior positions
    c. In leadership positions and entry positions

Female employees tend to be concentrated in entry or middle level positions, that is, the more senior the position, the lower the percentage of women. A major exception to this trend is Norway, due to a government regulation that mandated

Source: E- Atlas on Gender, World Bank, http://www.app.collinsindicate.com/worldbankatlas-gender/en

a minimum of 40% reservation for women on the boards of public companies. This shows that legislative action may be useful on the issue.

10. **In high income countries in Europe, gender pay gap:**
    e. Does not exist
    f. Exists but is usually only about 10%
    g. Is more than 25%

The E Atlas prepared by the World Bank cites gender pay gaps in the private sector only in the European countries, highlighting the need for greater reporting of information at the global level. The following map clearly establishes that a gender pay gap of more than 25 percent in the private sector exists even in high income countries such as Europe.

E-Atlas on Gender, World Bank, http://www.app.collinsindicate.com/worldbankatlas-gender/en

12. **The India Gap Review Report, surveying 100 of the biggest employers in India showed that:**
    a. None of the companies surveyed had a female CEO
    b. Had 60 percent female employees
    c. Were tracking wage differentials

None of the above. Only 10% of the companies that responded (59% responded) had 50% or more female employees and a majority (40%) had female employees under 10%. None of the companies surveyed had female CEOs. Only 4% of the companies monitored or tracked wage gaps or differentials between male and female employees. General norms and cultural practices, lack of work-life balance policies and lack of flexible work solutions were identified as the most problematic barriers for women to rise to senior leadership positions in the company.

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[15]Ibid.
[16] Ibid
[17]Ministry of Women and Child, Handbook of Statistical Indicators for Women in India, Government of India, 2007

Integrating the
Women Empowerment Principles
into Business Practices

Internal Spaces

Companies usually report the translation of gender equal policies through gender specific policies adopted by them which include maternity leave and benefits, child care facilities for working mothers, grievance and complaint systems in case of harassment at the workplace etc. The WEPs propagate a set of holistic processes and cultural shifts that need to be initiated while adopting the same. The following are some examples of how work may be initiated around the WEPs.

A. Ensuring visible CEO commitment:

For organisations to take the first step in internalisation a visible commitment needs to be made by the leadership in organisations.

Some visible actions by high level corporate leaders on gender equality:
1. Signing the CEO Statement on Women Empowerment Principles
2. Ensuring inclusion and discussion of the principles in different internal and external platforms especially at the corporate leadership level
3. Presence in Learning Networks and Forums on the issue

B. Diagnosing the Problem:

I have been a leader in this Company for the last twenty years, however we are unable to find leaders who keenly apply and take forward strategies which incorporate Gender Equality. We have to train the new leaders every time they come on board.

Company A has very few women employees. It also has no women in leadership positions. Since the Company comprises predominantly men in the first place, is there really a need to talk about gender?

Introducing quotas in leadership may not help as this can become tokenistic. Genuine attempts need to be made on nurturing women's leadership. Furthermore women in leadership need to spend more time with young women workers socially mentoring them and sharing their stories of how they overcame the obstacles.

Some perceptions are deeply rooted in the gender culture of organisations, to initiate change; the first step is to understand these perceptions and what they indicate.

Statistics show that females are outpacing males at almost every level during their education. Yet, women drop off the career path in their early 30s in startling numbers. The result is that only about 15-18% of leadership roles are held by women. Why are large numbers of women not being able to make it to the top of the leadership pyramid?

Company Y faced a serious discrimination law suit from its association of workers filed by middle and senior management women workers who found discrimination in promotion. What systems do you think were missing in the Company?

We have a lot of women leaders in our Company. In fact the majority in the top rung of management includes women. The middle management however is mostly made up of men and lower management of women and young men. I'm not sure if gender parity alone ensures a gender equal environment.
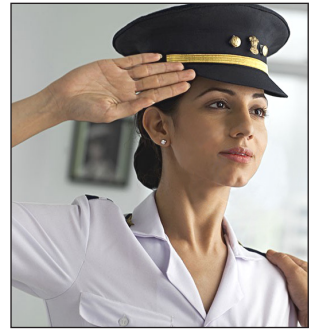
C. Assess the stage of change needed in the company?

In some companies the organic culture may have emerged to be more gender equal. Changes may have been initiated or the company may be in the mid stage of its gender equality strategies. In both these cases less intense programmes are needed. Sometimes companies may be trying out certain gender specific strategies and may still be in the process of bringing in change across levels. This may mean an inclusion of women's leadership at the board level but a slow transition at other levels. Thus it is crucial to identify which stage of gender change the organisation is at, and how deeply embedded the gender policies are.

What are some of the Gender Audit Methodologies that can be used for this?
A ILO Manual for Gender Audit Facilitators chalks out a methodology of assessing the situation of gender within different organisational contexts.
International Labour Office. "A Manual For Gender Audit Facilitators." 2007. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_093425.pdf

Can I develop some diagnostic tools based on the WEPs?
The WEPs may be used creatively to develop assessment and diagnostic tools to plot the stages a company is in. An example is given below.

WEP 1 and 2: Promotes leadership/ Treats all men and women fairly at work

Leadership focused/ Market oriented
• Company C
• Company F

Pro-Egalitarian
• Company A

• Company D
• Company B

Non-Interventionist

Gender specific/Worker oriented

WEP 3 & 4: Health and safety all men and women/ Promote Education training and professional development of all men and women workers

Example of a matrix that may be used to assess stage of change

The matrix is an illustrated example of how the first four principles may be plotted to understand the gender climate in a company. Company A which adopts all the four principles is moving towards a pro egalitarian climate in comparison to Company E which is yet to bring in any changes on either of the policies. Company C and F are bringing in leadership oriented changes while Company B is closer to bringing in worker oriented policies. The sub criteria of each of the principles could be developed for tracking, plotting and assessing what directions companies need to take to move towards a pro-egalitarian direction.

D. Address Knowledge Gaps.

Some problems reflect a lack of systems and a lack of putting systems into practice. Often companies simply lack the knowledge and skills to address gender issues. It is crucial to build in the case for relevance here. The relevance could flow from:

a. National and international legal frameworks (discussion on worker and anti-discrimination laws)
b. Business imperatives (or the economic argument)
c. Mapping of risks
d. Presence and participation in learning networks and forums and learning from peers
e. Measuring, tracking data and maintaining reporting standards
f. Creating spaces for dialogue
g. Locating the advantages: e.g. Companies have tried to locate the different values that women bring in to leadership and also assess the kind of issues or barriers that impact women
h. Assess and deal with barriers

Having women in leadership positions is not enough and does not remove the everyday discrimination that women face due to gender inequality. Besides, women leaders have not been able to always change gender dynamics or hierarchies and instead been co-opted into the culture. The real reason behind gender equality is fundamentally related to upholding 'masculine' traits over 'feminine' traits as superior. As a result, leadership styles, ways of working and organisational contexts are continuously built around values of masculine superiority which need to be countered to ensure equal gender relations.

Identifying Barriers

It is important to identify and build measures around each barrier. This is an example of achieving barriers to women's leadership. Mckinsey and Company identifies some of these as:

1. The double burden syndrome where women are burdened with duties at home and in the workplace
2. Lack of CEO commitment
3. Lack of a proper promotion and hiring system
4. Women's own perception of themselves
5. Lack of role models and demonstrable examples building a case for change in attitudes
6. Tendency of women to lower their ambitions in comparison to men
7. Many women drop out voluntarily from the workforce

- **Deal with Barriers with Diversity Measures:** The report gives 13 diversity measures that can be adopted by companies to ensure women's leadership which entail flexible work options, skill building, social mentoring, opportunities to women for networking to name a few and also places a business case for leadership.

Source: Mckinsey and Company. "Women at the Top of Corporations: Making it Happen." http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/swiss/news_publications/pdf/women_matter_2010_4.pdf

What are the diverse perspectives on women's leadership?
Leadership Development Tools, Rutgers http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cwgl/wgli/resources.html#LeadershipDevelopmentTools
Rao Aruna and Kelleher David. Leadership For Social Transformation: Some Ideas and Questions on Institutions and Feminist Leadership, Gender and Development, Vol. 8, No. 3, November 2000..
Rao Aruna and Kelleher David. Unravelling Institutionalized Gender Inequality. Gender at Work Occasional Paper, 2008 www.genderatwork.org/learning
Mckinsey and Company. "Female Leadership a Competitive Edge for the Future" http://www.mckinsey.de/downloads/publikation/women_matter/Women_Matter_2_brochure.pdf
Batliwala Srilatha. CREA. "Feminist leadership for Social Transformation, Clearing the Conceptual Cloud." http://web.creaworld.org/files/f1.pdf

What are some creative ways and policies to deal with work-life balance?
Hewllette and Bucklace. Off Ramps and On Ramps, Keeping Talented Women on the Road to Success, Harvard Business School Press, 2007

E. Introduce a diversity strategy:

Some companies have opted for a broad gender equity and diversity strategy for organisations. As mentioned in the earlier section, diversity strategies need an emphasis on the softer dimensions as well. Research results show that companies with a Gender Equity Strategy in their list of priorities managed to have more women in senior positions.[18]

Companies have increasingly been adopting diversity strategies into their core business strategies. Such inclusive policies have also given them a diversity edge. A global management consulting firm made a case for this through a fact-based study on a range of experiences of different companies, establishing that gender diversity is a corporate performance driver. While the study could not locate causal links, it identified a direct correlation between the presence of women in decision making positions on boards with better organisational and financial performance. It observed that companies with three or more women in the top management scored higher for each organisational dimension than companies with no women on top. These organisational dimensions included work environment values, direction, coordination and control, external orientation, motivation, capability, accountability and innovation. Companies with a higher proportion of women in their top management have a higher financial performance. It concludes that some of the gender diversity best practices include:

- Tracking inclusion of women and benefits to women in recruitments, promotions, pay levels, turnovers, training, and satisfaction levels
- Supportive measures which include work time flexibility and career flexibility for women
- Adoption of HR management processes that ensure tracking of recruitment, neutrality in appraisal systems, inclusion of women in promotion shortlists etc
- Support women's leadership through mentoring, coaching and training and role models

CARE USA carried out a Benchmarking Survey on GED practices in other companies and not for profits. The survey provided several lessons on the various diversity programmes pursued by for-profit and not-for-profit organisations. The process led to the development of CARE's own Gender Equity and Diversity (GED) strategy which is now being translated across CARE's global network. CARE affirmed the business case for a Gender Equity and Diversity framework and the connection with its mission and goals in the strategy. The strategy places emphasis on representation, trust learning and accountability- trust is a vital 'soft' side to increasing gender equity and diversity in an organisation

because increased levels of trust indicate improvements in relationships and engagement of employees. Though tangible measures are important, the GED strategy emphasises the need to focus on the deeper intangible issues affecting organisations or institutional environments. CARE's strategy had some important processes through which change has been initiated in the organisation:

1. The formation of a collaboration and learning network or forum
2. Linking the gender equality goal with the vision and mission of the organisation
3. Introducing discrimination proof interview systems that relate to how and where jobs are advertised. Women should be able to access them, using taglines which encourage women to apply, and including commitments to gender equity and diversity within job descriptions, use of gender and ethnicity blinding during short listing of candidates so all biases are removed, reducing qualification levels and increasing the value of competencies so those from minority communities who have not been able to go through higher education may be able to apply, and using demonstrative techniques and alternative methods to interviews in the recruiting process which test for the demonstration of competencies.[19]

Some questions that CARE's GED Benchmarking Survey asked were:

1. How are organisations defining diversity?
2. How far have diversity initiatives adopted by organisations led to an increase in representation of those from minority groups? How are these explained to staff?
3. The break up of gender and ethnic backgrounds of senior management positions in offices in the US
4. How are decision making processes designed to include perspectives of diverse and multi level staff?
5. How often and for whom do organisations offer capacity building to staff?
6. How well are these diversity initiatives standardised across the organisation?
7. Whether roles focusing on gender and diversity exist in the organisation.

[18]Mckinsey and Company. "Women at the Top of Corporations: Making it Happen." http://www.mckinsey.com/locations/swiss/news_publications/pdf/women_matter_2010_4.pdf

[19]Evans Christina, Glover Judith, Guerrier Yvonne and Wilson Cornelia. "Implementing Diversity Policies Guiding Principles (in science, technology and engineering fields)." http://www.equalitec.com/downloads/Implementing_Diversity_Policies-Guiding_Principles.pdf

F. Engage Men in Gender Initiatives

Men have a critical role to play as gender change agents. Catalyst, in its study titled 'Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives', found that men who tended to defy the masculine norms within the organisation grew aware of gender biases. For instance, men who had enhanced care giving responsibilities in the family and sought more time off from work or chose more flexible work-life options, received a greater backlash from male colleagues in the workplace. These are important circumstances or experiences where men grow aware of gender biases and these are motivations that lead men to support initiatives on gender equality and specific techniques and practices to enlist men's support. Volvo's Walk the Talk initiative and Ernst and Young's Cultivating Men as Allies are some initiatives involving men in the inclusive agenda.[20]

What are some of the resources available on engaging Men in Gender Initiatives?

- Catalyst. "Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives: What Change Agents Need to Know". http://www.catalyst.org/file/283/mdc-web.pdf
- Catalyst. " Actions Men Take." http://catalyst.org/etc/Virtual_Roundtable_PDFs/Actions_Men_Can_Take_Final_120910.pdf\ Actions Men Take, Catalyst
- Guy Laurence Marie and others. "FOCUS: Women on Boards, Conversations with Male Director, International Finance Corporation and Global Corporate Governance Forum." http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/cgf.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/Focus9/$FILE/Focus9_Women_on_Boards.pdf

G. Address biases in policy making

A crucial part of the 'women empowerment' agenda would be to look at how gender equality policies flow down to the last woman in the value chain. It is this that is crucially embedded in the need for high corporate leadership towards gender equality. While a lot of innovative work life policy options, care giving and social security measures are adopted by companies, these have been mainly clustered around manager positions. The challenge is to find path breaking initiatives along the same lines across levels. Removing barriers would also mean mapping the different contexts of 'care giving roles and responsibilities' and building in inclusive policies customised for each situation.

"I am an Asian who wears the headdress; I know what it's like to be in the minority on boards. I believe that being a minority in a position of importance is a privilege, and not a burden." Jaspal Bindra, Executive and Group Member of the Board of Standard Chartered PLC, Hong Kong

Gender Change Agents: Can you spot them and support them?

The Swedish International Development Agency identified different roles for gender agents:

The Lone Pioneer: *Stigmatised. Needs support base. Primary support comes from outside.*

The Fighter: *Charismatic, fast moving risk taker. Not afraid of conflict. Has a small internal support base.*

The Bureaucratic Entrepreneur: *Analyses institutional opportunities and obstacles*

The Player: *Plays the organisation. Recognises opportunities. Negotiates and is diplomatic.*

The Catalyst: *Rather than implementing, seeks to help others implement.*

Source: Vinnov. Innovations & Gender.

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[20]Catalyst. "Engaging Men in Gender Initiatives: What Change Agents Need to Know". http://www.catalyst.org/file/283/mdc-web.pdf

My name is Moni and I am 35 years old. I am married and have a 15 year old son. After the death of my father, and in need of money to feed my family, I was forced to leave school and work at Giant Garments Ltd. I was only 14 years old at the time. I am still currently working here as a sewing machine operator. I am paid on average BDT 4059 per month (59 USD) which is determined by my production capacity. When I started at the factory my salary was only BDT 1650 per month (24 USD). I am now a senior operator. I work 8 hours per day on quieter months but when there are more orders, I work 12 to 18 hour shifts. In total, including weekends and days of leave, I work 11 months of the year. I am a permanent laborer however the company has yet to issue me with an appointment letter. My entire salary goes towards feeding and raising my family. However, the amount I earn does not cover all of my monthly expenses.

On an average day I wake up at 5:00am as I need to cook for my family, fetch water, shower, and do laundry. I leave for work at 7:00am. From 1:00-2:00pm I have lunch, which I bring from home. After work I make my way to the shops to buy vegetables, rice to cook for dinner.and help my sone with his homework. The women at my factory are entitled maternity leave but I couldn't enjoy this leave myself. Workers are also entitled to sick leave but this right is also not respected most of time. Most the time workers are not treated with respect and the workload is unfair. I was discriminated against when I tried to form a union with my coworkers. Management mentally harassed me by giving me more production loads than I could handle. I was verbally harassed at the time of my pregnancy and have witnessed many workers being harassed in a similar manner. During the first four months of my pregnancy, management would shout at me for needing to use the bathroom. They used obscene language and threatened to fire me.

Women in my factory do not have the same opportunity for promotion as men do. The only promotion I have been offered in 16 years was as an incentive to not form a trade union, which I turned down. I have managed to successfully form a registered union with my coworkers. In the process many workers were laid off and many had to find other factories to work for in order to survive. Every day I fight for union rights and legal rights in the workplace. However, the constant fear that the factory will be shut down by the company, still haunts me.

Since the global economic crisis, my factory has had fewer orders and thus less work hours. However, the result is late pay and I am often left fighting for my salary at the end of every month. Like me, many other women in my factory are treated without dignity. If I could make a change I would establish individual and union/collective bargaining rights and urge buyers and international workers rights groups to keep orders coming into the factory so that we may stay out of fear of the factory closing down.[21]

Some steps to avoid class or caste biases are:

1. Include representation from all levels in policy formulation
2. Include special voices from caste, religion, and gender backgrounds
3. Build customised frameworks for application of the policy for each context or setting e.g. in the office, factory setting, community outreach and supply chain
4. Create spaces for dialogue and discussion on engagements in the workplace at different levels
5. Place clear operational guidelines for the policy for each context or setting and level of decision making

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[21]*www.labourrights.org, http://www.laborrights.org/rights-for-working-women/moni-bangladeshi-mother-poor-wages-and-harassment-in-the-workplace*

In Spheres of Influence

There are a whole host of initiatives that need to be taken on by companies to ensure that WEPs are implemented within their spheres of influence. This not only includes those engaged with the supply chain but also members of the communities within their spheres of influence. Companies need to take up initiatives related to health and safety, women's leadership, education and training. This section provides some examples of how to incorporate the WEPs through internal policies and practically through creative initiatives with women in the supply chain or in the community.

A. Health programmes at the Workplace: Highlighting Health and Safety programmes which have helped raise the productivity levels of workers in factories, the HerProject builds a case to work with health programmes in the workplace. Garment and sportswear companies hiring women in India and supplying goods to global markets have begun to finance and invest in workplace health programmes. They see a key benefit in this as they recognise that improvements in the health and well being of workers leads to an increase in productivity. Columbia Sportswear and Levis Strauss Co. have begun to invest in women's workplace health programmes in partnership with NGOs. The programme reports a reduced absenteeism and attrition in workers after the intervention. Some key processes involved here were:

1. Changing the mindsets of factory managers on health issues and the intervention programme
2. Making time within the production processes for sessions at factory clinics
3. Encouraging leadership and peer education among the women workers on health issues

B. Promote Education and Training for overall empowerment. There have been several small and large collaborative initiatives which companies may learn from in order to promote education and training of women within the business context. Most businesses have realised that in order to thrive within their areas of operation they also need to work in contexts which comprise of economically vibrant communities. Cargill an international producer and marketer of food, agricultural, financial and industrial products and services specifically specialised in oil seeds, animal nutrition etc has initiated a collaborative initiative with CARE called K-LEAP (Kutch Learning Education and Advancement Project) which is a partnership initiative between CARE and Cargill in the dry regions of Kutch which is also within Cargill's area of operation. The overarching goal of K-LEAP is to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable rural families in the Kutch district in Gujarat. Aimed at integrating economic and educational opportunities the K-LEAP collaboration looks to include economic development for rural families in Gujarat for a period of five years. It hopes to address the intergeneration cycle of extreme poverty, through a multi-pronged strategy to bring in economic sustainability to the older generation and education to younger generation. This strategy is aimed at improvement in quality of life of extremely disadvantaged communities, through improved livelihood options and enhanced access to quality, and equitable education.The initiative aims at reaching 9000 households in 205 villages to enable them to gain from income generating opportunities. In addition the project seeks to improve quality and accessibility of education for 43, 518 children at 168 primary schools across the Kutch district.

The Multi-Pronged Strategy of K-LEAP: A CARGILL CARE COLLABORATION

Enhancing Women's role in Entrepreneurship

Building Economically Vibrant Communities

Milestones for Economic Development

- Formation of woman collectives of savings and credit groups
- Cluster formation 7 strengthening
- Provison of revoling loan fund
- Bank linkages
- Road map for Federation Building

- Formation of animals husbandn groups
- Increasing productivity -throught improving the quality of breed
- Fodder Bank/ grass plot
- Cattle feed center
- Animal Health- vaccination
- Market linkages for dairy

- Formation of Agriculture group
- Land Based planning
- Agriculture input supply
- Improved agriculture implements
- Soil and water testing
- salinity pervention
- SWC measures
- Two products as demonstration model

Financial Access

Dairy as Sub sector vValue chain

Value chain in Agriculture

Community Based Federations

Milk Producers' group company

Agriculture Service Centers

Institutionalization- Community based Micro Finance as fulcrum

Older Generation

Younger Generation

Education Initiatives with

Formal Schools: On site support given to government run primary schools focused on quality education and reduction of gender disparity

Alternative non traditional learning centres : for adolescent girls who are drop outs or out of school providing life skills, functional literacy, social learning and analytical skills

Occupational and women collectives: These collectives are also encouraged to participate in promoting the value of education

The K-LEAP Programme

The K-LEAP programme has also empowered women members of self-help groups to generate viable economic assets for themselves. Tejbai, 60 years old, belonged to the lowest caste strata of Charodopadi Moti village and had no means of getting her family out of the endemic poverty. She lacked financial access, technical guidance and other required skills that would enable her to increase her families assets.

The K-LEAP programme provided a breakthrough in terms of enhancing her family's asset ownership. The family, being solely dependent on agriculture, were in penury given the erratic and unpredictable monsoons in Kutch. Harvesting one crop a year hardly fetched the family more than INR 3500-4000 per month, hardly enough to sustain a family of 8 members. Intense community mobilisation activity of CARE under K-LEAP microfinance programme for women provided Tejbai who was a member of the group Chamunda Ma Mahila Bachat Mandal, had the courage to take up entrepreneurial activity to uplift her socio-economic status.

After a lot of brain-storming and planning, Tejbai set up a flour mill under the K-LEAP programme. As the majority of people in her community consumed flour based food, she felt this business would create local demands. Tejbai received the amount of INR 36,000 as loan from the group to establish a flour mill in the village. Today Tejbai is looking after the business along with her sons' support. She is now the proud owner of an income generating asset in the form of a mill. Tejbai informs that this enterprise is bringing an additional income of INR 3,000 to INR 4000 per month to her family and has considerably improved the economic status of her family. Her story reinforces the effectiveness of removal of credit and lending barriers faced by disadvantaged women.

The story of Deepa Ben shows how platforms may be created to open opportunities for women and girls through different programmes and initiatives. Deepa Ben, who is 52 years old, belongs to a landless community in Abdara block, Kutch district in Gujarat. Though she was very good at traditional craft work, she had not been able to find an adequate platform to use her skills to make a living. She joined the Ashapura women's group under the Cargill supported CARE K-LEAP project. CARE facilitators recognising her skills provided her with training in embroidery work where she soon became a master trainer for other women in her community. Today, she is responsible for training 50 women, helping them gain economic independence. Having discovered an avenue of opportunities for her latent skills and leadership potential, Deepa Ben brims with confidence as her status in her community and family has substantially improved.

Making a Regular Income: Banumathi at the Cashew Processing Unit

Banumathi used to work tirelessly each day to make ends meet as her husband was bedridden and unable to work. In addition to household expenses, she also needed money for his medicines. Her sons contributed to household income by working as laborers in the construction and poultry industries but it still left her as the main breadwinner of the family. She also worked as an agricultural laborer and earned about INR 80 a day. But this amount was irregular. She spent her days feeling upset and defeated. Then one day, Banumathi heard about a cashew processing unit nearby, which was owned and operated by women like her. It was a turning point in her life.

Soon after, she joined a self-help group and saved INR 50every month along with her 12 sisters. The facilitator at the learning center informed them about cashew processing and that learning new skills could improve their livelihoods. Banumathi decided to go on an exposure trip to Panruti to see what this was all about. She found it interesting and attended 10 days of skill training at the 'Samiyam' cashew processing center in Puthur, 3 kilometers away from her village. She was able to begin working there immediately and is now earning a steady income. An excited Banumathi adds, "I have skills in cutting, peeling and grading cashew nuts. Peeling gives me an income of INR 50 rupees per day if I peel 5 tokens worth of kernels. I expect my income to increase as I improve my skill and efficiency."
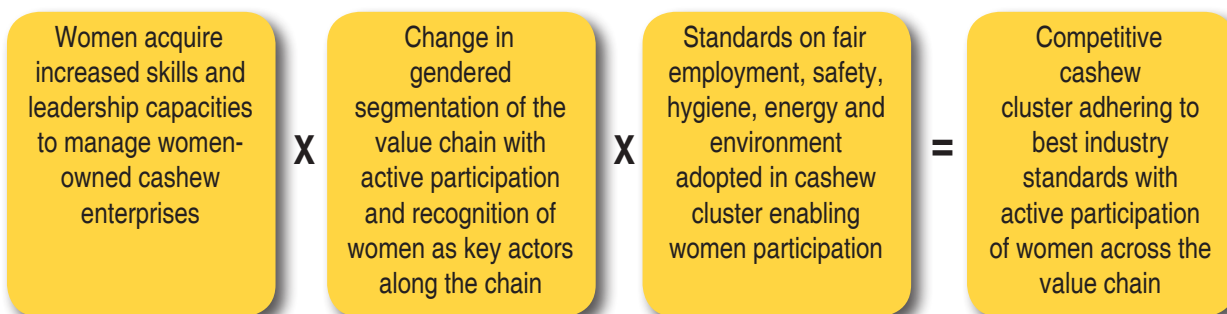
C. Promote Clusters of Small Women's Enterprises through partnerships

A Wal-Mart-CARE partnership initiative has been enabling women to derive greater benefits for themselves and their families in the two disaster-prone districts (Cuddalore and Nagapattinam) of Tamil Nadu by facilitating the process of creating competitive cashew cluster initiatives adhering to best industry standards with active participation of women across the value chain.

The project targeted the small processors segment as the entry point in the cashew value chain as it traditionally involved women.

After two years of intervention, the project is looking at scalability and sustainability in improving exchange relations for the women in the network of trading at Panruti which is the hub of the cashew trade .The approach emphasises:

- Building skills to negotiate better and change the structural relations they face at home, the market and the value chain
- Working with the family of women cashew processors
- Working closely with men in the households of these women and in the value chain to ensure that there is enough space and encouragement for women to take up new roles within the value chain
- Focusing on the other aspects of women's empowerment

Women acquire increased skills and leadership capacities to manage women-owned cashew enterprises

X

Change in gendered segmentation of the value chain with active participation and recognition of women as key actors along the chain

X

Standards on fair employment, safety, hygiene, energy and environment adopted in cashew cluster enabling women participation

=

Competitive cashew cluster adhering to best industry standards with active participation of women across the value chain

Support service providers

D. Locate potentials for Women's Empowerment in the Community

If companies are able to locate the potentials and changing dynamics in communities, they can bring in path breaking initiatives on women's empowerment within their spheres of influence. This means identifying the journeys of women, their difficulties and their enterprise in overcoming these difficulties and locating the various ways in which a company's initiatives could assist in their road to individual empowerment. The following case study highlights how a company's work in promotion of women's micro-enterprise can also work hand in hand with the dynamics related to their empowerment.

A Positive Influence for Women's Leadership: Wal-Mart in Tamil Nadu
In the coastal areas of the South of India, the traditional Panchayat system controls the social decisions of local communities. However, the system excludes the involvement of women, depriving them of the opportunity to participate in decision making processes or distribution of benefits. As a result, women-headed households are the worst affected as they are automatically isolated and forced to live without assistance from the local community.

One such household was Ms. Selvi's. After her husband's death five years ago, 38 year old Ms. Selvi left his family and returned to live with her mother and brother at Velankanni in Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu. Keen on resuming a normal life and becoming economically independent she started a small eatery at Velankanni beach where she sold fried fish to tourists. She nurtured a desire to help other widowed or impoverished women like her who were struggling to improve their livelihood This phase in Ms. Selvi's life coincided with

the beginning of Wal-Mart's interventions in partnership with CARE in Tamil Nadu that were aimed at supporting vulnerable women in fishing communities. The interventions mobilised women, provided financial assistance to strengthen their livelihoods and established a federation to build social support systems. The federation gave women a variety of community-based experiences which include starting collective enterprises, accessing financial services and improving the social and structural conditions which are detrimental to their growth. Ms. Selvi was enrolled as a member and was promoted as the animator of the group because of her active participation in group activities. Several such groups were merged to form a Vidivelli (meaning morning star in Tamil) federation and she was elected as the president in charge of managing the cashew processing unit.

Today, the federation has 753 members who manage a Cashew Processing Unit in Nagapattinam district. The federation provides regular employment opportunities to poor marginalised women. Ms. Selvi plays an important role in enlightening members of the federation about the importance of starting regular income guaranteeing activities to support women headed households as they have no other option to increase their household income. She encourages members to set up satellite centers (supporting units for the main cashew processing centre) in their villages to decentralise the production processes. Now, four such centers have been established to help members process cashews in their own villages and market their produce through the centralised unit. This arrangement helps women save time and travel expenditure besides giving adequate attention to the family.

E. Bring in policies to ensure that the WEPs are implemented by your company in their spheres of influence:

Policy related initiatives may be brought in to ensure that the WEPs are implemented by companies when engaging within their spheres of influence. Some of the strategies could include:

What are the strategies to assess gender practices of vendors and business partners?

- The Gender Equality Principles Initiative has developed a detailed checklist of possible ways to begin assessing gender practices in the supply chain. Explore its indicators on gender assessment for Business, Supply Chain and Marketing Practices. Source: http://www.genderprinciples.org/assess.php?elem=55

- Some companies have a supplier 'diversity and inclusion' policy, targetedat minority and women entrepreneurs. For instance Accenture aims at targeting minority owned and women owned businesses. Accenture declares "Helping small, women-owned and minority-owned companies transform into high performance businesses is the cornerstone of what we do." http://www.accenture.com/us-en/company/citizenship/pages/making-supplier-diversity-priority.aspx

- A UK-based initiative, Enterprise for Coalition for All, has prepared a document on the various guidelines on how to target business support to disadvantaged sections. For the report look up: http://www.genderprinciples.org/resource_files/EnterpriseforAllCoalitionReportFinal.pdf

How can companies build in internal and public accountability on the WEPs?

Companies are currently measuring and reporting different indicators dependent on subjective priorities within the organisation. Key resources to develop reporting standards are:

- The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is an international NGO and collaborating centre of the United Nations Environment Programme that has developed the world's most widely used framework for sustainability reporting. This sustainability reporting framework sets out the Principles and indicators that organisations can use to measure and report their economic, environmental and social performance. The third generation of this framework, launched in 2006, is called the GRI G3 Guidelines and is available online as a free public good.

  http://wikigender.org/index.php/The_Global_Reporting_Initiative

  http://www.globalreporting.org/LearningAndSupport/GRIPublications/ResearchPublications and a framework

  http://www.globalreporting.org/ReportingFramework/ReportingFrameworkDownloads/

- GENDER EQUALITY PROJECT gives an idea for self assessment for certification

  http://www.genderequalityproject.com/

- Nike has some elaborate methods to look at Health and Safety in its environment and a detailed transparent profile of workers in factories: Look up: http://www.nikebiz.com/crreport/content/workers-and-factories

Conclusion

By highlighting some practical examples and ways of ensuring women's empowerment within the workplace, marketplace and community, this Primer is intended to give a deeper perspective on the WEPs, and to initiate a grounded discussion within our own contexts. The goal of the guide was not to provide ready-made solutions but rather food for thought for those interested in advancing the WEPs. It begins to deconstruct and understand what translating the WEPs within our contexts would mean and hopes that this process would be taken up by companies within their own contexts. It also envisages encouraging a sustained commitment towards implementing the WEPs and fostering committed work around gender equality in the business context and acting as a support for recognised or unrecognised gender change agents.

At this starting point we intend that this work assists in initiating a debate around the WEPs within teams, organisations, unions and among collaboration networks. The examples and data bring into focus the gaps in available structures, measuring and reporting, and documentation on the issue. The reflections on past experiences and initiatives, around working on women's empowerment in the business context, hopes to facilitate further discussion. It does not claim to be a sole authority on how the WEPs may be effectual in different settings, but advocates for more discussions, translated commitment and building of opportunities for collaboration and action on the WEPs in future. Businesses must start working together to strengthen their commitment to the WEPs and improve the quality of life for women and girls in India.

Abbreviations

GCN	Global Compact Network
WEPs	Women's Empowerment Principles
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
UN	United Nations
IT	Information Technology
GGGI	Global Gender Gap Index
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination
WID	Women in Development
GAD	Gender and Development
K-LEAP	Kutch Livelihood Education Advancement Programme

Glossary & Terms

Sex: The biological or physiological reality of being male or female.

Gender: The socialised identity ascribed to roles, responsibilities, characteristics and behaviours attributed to boys, girls, men and women. These vary from one context to another, and over time.

Gender Equality: Women and men have equal conditions, treatment and opportunities for realising their fullest potential, human rights and dignity and for contributing to and benefiting from economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and differences of men and women and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners, in home, community and society.

Substantive Equality: Substantive equality focuses on the outcomes and impacts of laws and policies. Substantive equality goes far beyond creating formal legal equality for women (where all are equal under the law) and means that governments and institutions are responsible for the impact of laws. This requires governments and institutions to tailor legislation to respond to the realities of women's lives. Striving for substantive equality also places a responsibility on governments to implement laws, through gender responsive governance and functioning justice systems that meet women's needs. Substantive equality is a concept expressed in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It recognises that as a result of historic discrimination, women are not on an equal footing with men.

Gender Mainstreaming: Unlike having a stand-alone policy on gender, gender mainstreaming focuses on inclusion of the gender perspective in all policies and practices in the organisation. However some pitfalls to the approach is early gender mainstreaming may actually lead to no focus on gender at all.

Gender Equity: Is the process of being fair. To ensure fairness, special temporary measures may be needed to be taken to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. Gender Equity is a means of achieving Gender Equality.

Gender Dynamics: Refers to the relationships and interactions between and among boys, girls, women and men. Gender dynamics are informed by socio-cultural ideas about gender and the power relationships that define them. Depending on how they are manifested gender dynamics and reinforce or challenge existing norms.

The Global Gender Gap Index: The Global Gender Gap Index introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006, is a framework for capturing the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress. The Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health based criteria, and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups, and over time.

Women in Development (WID): The Women in Development Approach is the older school of thought which believed in focusing primarily on women's specific and practical needs.

Gender and Development (GAD): GAD came into being as a response to the perceived shortcomings of women in development (WID) programmes. GAD-centered approaches are essentially based on three premises:
1) Gender relations are fundamentally power relations.
2) Gender is a socio-cultural construction rather than a biological given.
3) Structural changes in gender roles and relations are possible.

Central to GAD is the belief that transforming unequal power relations between men and women is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable improvements in women's lives. The onus is on women and men to address and re-shape the problematic aspects of gender relations. The conceptual shift from "women" to "gender" created an opportunity to include a focus on men and boys.

Gender Bias: Is prejudice of one gender over the other. Gender bias is acted out in the differences created between men and women in the interactions between men and women, between women and between men.

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The WEPs Partnership

The Women's Empowerment Principles –
Equality Means Business is a partnership initiative
of UN Women and the UN Global Compact that
encourages engagement with business, civil
society, the United Nations and Governments to
advance and empower women in the workplace,
marketplace and community. While designed
as a tool for business to strengthen and create
company policies and programmes to achieve
gender equality, these seven Principles provide
a platform for all stakeholders to move their
commitments to gender equality closer to
implementation. The Principles emphasise the
business case for corporate action to promote
gender equality and women's empowerment and
are informed by real-life business practices and
input gathered from across the globe. The Global
Compact Network, India and CARE India support
the WEPs and have made their promotion and
realisation an organisational priority.

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