



BPW International 1930 - 2011

The International Federation of Business and Professional Women

fact sheet 6:

CONSULTATIONS AND WEPS EVENTS

Highlighting the Women's Empowerment Principles — Equality Means Business (WEPs), a partnership initiative of UN Women and UN Global Compact, is a great opportunity to brand BPW as the leading organization advancing the status of women in the workplace and a terrific way of attracting potential members and new partners.

As well as an opportunity to increase our profile, WEP events or consultations are also an avenue for attracting new partners including those recommended through the UN Women and UN Global Compact Networks. New contacts can also lead to improved working relationships with other business networks for clubs and federations.

There are two ways you might highlight WEPs - through an event or via a consultation meeting.

A WEPs event could be a seminar, symposium, part of a BPW Conference or as a separate event run in conjunction with another partner eg Gender Bureau or Office for Women in the Government, UN Women, Global Compact, University or another NGO. An event would have many attendees and planning

needs to start approximately six months before the date.

The other option, a WEPs consultation, would tend to involve 10-20 attendees, facilitated by a BPW leader or appointee, and more akin to a conversation. A discussion around gender equity in the workplace.

If you are planning a WEPs event or would like to make the WEPs part of your next conference or event please contact the Presidents Office.

“GENDER EQUALITY
MUST BECOME
A LIVED REALITY.”
—MICHELLE BACHELET



RIGHT: Senator Leticia Ramos-Shahani delivers the key note address at the *Women's Principles and Womenomics Forum*, at the Philippine Women's University, Philippines; Senator Shahani was Secretary-General of the World Conference on the UN Decade of Women in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985

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Planning

1 Set up a WEPs working group:

Whether you are intending to run a consultation or seminar you will need the support from members. We suggest that at least five members may be required to take on the following roles:

Secretary 1

(external) - coordinates invitations; prepare Press Releases and other PR; liaises with all external stakeholders;

Secretary 2

(internal) - takes minutes of working group meetings; collects and evaluates Evaluation Forms from participants; co-ordinates the preparation of the report after the event and reporting back to BPW International;

Treasurer

co-ordinates any funding needed for the day; prepares budget; in partnership with secretary 1, liaises with external stakeholders; in partnership with hostess, welcomes attendees and oversees registration requirements;

Chair

co-ordinates working group; responsible for the meeting on the day; responsible for agenda;

Hostess

co-ordinates the venue, date, time of event; welcomes and liaises with all attendees on the day;

2 Contact local UN offices:

The UN Global Compact and UN Women have national and regional offices around the world.

There are either UN Women offices or UN Women National Committees (NCs) and over 100 UNGC local network representatives or focal points throughout the world. Representation is not in all countries but make sure you contact your local UN Women liaison/national office /and or UN Global Compact focal point to discuss working cooperatively. If there is no UN office in your country, please contact the BPW International President's Office stating your intentions.

Consider inviting local UN representatives to join your WEPs working group....

26th October 2009: Participants at the *Women's Principles and Womenomics Forum*, organised by the National Council of Women of the Philippines (NCWP) and the Philippine Federation of Business and Professional Women (PFBPW) in partnership with the Development Institute for Women in the Asia Pacific (DIWA); held at the Philippine Women's University, Philippines following the Asia Pacific NGO Forum on Beijing +15.

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The working group needs to organise the event or consultation, and the following items need to be considered:

Goals

Prepare in advance what you want to achieve and therefore whether you hold a consultation meeting or event

Timeline

Plan out what you need to do and by when, allocating responsibilities if possible

Speakers

Contact people who have a role to play early, such as speakers

Marketing

Focus on how you will market your event, such as press releases, media partners, flyers, posters and WEPs brochures

Budget

Plan your budget, and know everything that you are spending money on. If it is a community event, actively empower the community in planning and delivery to create ownership.

Agenda

Consultations can run for up to two to three hours while an event can go for half a day or longer - over one or two days. Closer to the time, draft up a running sheet and make it as complete as possible and available to members of the WEPs working group. Have a programme of what's happening where and when.

Volunteers

To help at the event or consultation

Food

Do you need to provide food and if so, have you planned for dietary requirements and budget?

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Venue

Book venues early and make sure your event is accessible to everyone, with good parking, bathroom facilities and easy access.

Consultation: a small venue is ideal - Does a member or someone you know have access to a professional boardroom? A supportive company should make one available. Can you run your consultation in a community hall? Venue: Consider lighting, and technical support for presentations.

Facilitation

Well-developed facilitation skills are very important for WEPs consultations and events as success relies on frank and open expression of views and opinions. An independent chair may be appropriate (see Case Study:1). The facilitator must ensure that everyone has the opportunity to express their views, thoughts and opinions, that dominate personalities do not prevail and that the meeting/event is kept to time. This can be challenging when discussing gender diversity within organisations especially if attendees are passionate about the subject.

Consultations tend to involve between 10-20 people usually led by a BPW leader or appointee (facilitator). A consultation aims to bring together the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and experiences of different people and discover best practices that are being used by companies and how these fit with the WEPs. Invited guests generally will feel comfortable talking about good practices already being used and this is a good way to initiate general discussion. Ask if participants are comfortable speaking openly about company policies and programmes and if they are not please ensure that the meeting runs under Chatham House rules to ensure a level of comfort and for frank, open, discussion. Meetings can last for two to three hours, but can be shorter.

If you are not facilitating, contact the chair. Be clear on what you want to achieve from the meeting. Meet with the chair at least once before the meeting.

Invitations

Identify how you will select participants to attend the consultation. If there are local offices of the UN Global Compact or UN Women and you are working together on the event then you might be able to use their database. Consult widely with BPW members and other women's networks. Tell all your friends, family and colleagues - they might know someone who could be a suitable participants.

Give plenty of time to notify people and for them to decide. Good practice is to send invitations at least four weeks before the event and then follow up with a phone call about a week after sending the invitation.

Consultations: Invitations might be sent to large corporations, SMEs, or a combination, clearly identifying what will be involved in being a part of the consultation.

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Photographs

Remember to take photos. Group photo and photos with key people to be included in your report to BPW International and your local federation or club. The photos can also be used in media and promotion (eg websites and social networks) post event. Make sure you have permission to use photographs of people attending your consultation or event.

Reports

Please ensure that notes are taken (if not Chatham house rules) and that a report is compiled. Ensure a copy of the report gets sent to participants and BPW International Presidents Office. You may find that participants take the opportunity to advise you about some of their own developments with regard to gender policies, internal targets or action plans. If you come across any 'good practices' relating to gender (good analysis, programs that have incorporated a gender perspective, specific programs successfully targeting women or gender equality issues) report these back to the President's Office. In its ongoing work, UN Women is compiling the practices that companies may already be doing that advance women and would like to add to this.

On The Day

- Introduce participants
- Outline the agenda and presentations - determine any ground rules for the conduct of the meeting - whether the meeting will run under the Chatham House rules
- Depending on the level of information provided, an overview of the WEPs should be given
- A simple evaluation sheet provided to all participants is a good way of finding out how the meeting was viewed
- Keep to the time

Tip:

Gaining feedback on the WEPs and hearing about corporate success stories is an easy way to start the meeting. Depending on the numbers at your meeting and the time available, all participants may not be able to discuss their experiences, so keep time. Capture stories from companies already doing well in terms of gender equality and develop an understanding of how this was achieved, what the process was, what worked in their organisation, etc. Mention to participants the importance for gathering best practices to share with others, and that BPW International is reporting these back to the UN; ask them to share experiences with the meeting. It is important to carefully plan the approach that you will use. Ongoing communication to participants of latest developments or follow up meetings keep people informed of outcomes.

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After the consultation

- Ensure that the person(s) responsible for follow up writes up all your feedback, clearly and concisely.
- Maintain a dialogue with those who participated and encourage them to invite their CEO to sign the CEO Statement of Support.
- Evaluate and review: Set up a process to evaluate your consultation. Plan to meet with members of the WEPs working group soon after to discuss follow up and reporting to answer such questions as "What worked and what did not?" "How could it be improved in the future?"
- Follow-up: Inform participants about what will happen after the consultation and who they are likely to hear from and how (eg. Email or phone). Good practice is to arrange face-to-face meetings to develop a relationship or invite participants to a BPW meeting [where appropriate]?
- Set up a clear line of open communication. Be available to answer questions on the WEPs or BPW after the meeting.



BPW Leaders sharing ideas from the WEPs breakout session during the 2nd BPW Leaders Summit at the Harmonie Club, New York, March 2010.

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FAQs about WEPs consultations

1.

This is a corporate initiative not for small business owners. I am a small business owner so can I become a WEPs signatory?

Yes you can.

2.

There is no UNGC focal point in my country nor is there a UN Women liaison or national office, what can I do?

If there are no focal points or office contacts in your area make sure that you advise your Regional Coordinator, WEPs taskforce member and BPW International. At the very least, we can arrange to have UN Women Headquarters send you copies of the WEPs brochures [these are available in over 5 UN languages] to make sure that your meeting is a success. There may be other options available to you also.

3.

I have arranged many BPW meetings in the past I do not need to form a WEPs working group.

Yes you do. Running a consultation or meeting is a great way of getting our BPW brand out to the corporate, academic, private and government sectors. It's a great opportunity for your club/federation as it will bring new contacts that will need to be followed up professionally. You will need members to help with preparing for the meeting, set up on the day and follow up with - thank yous to participants; report of discussion and

4.

Is my work finished once I have run the consultation?

No - your work begins! Successful consultations show that it is the ongoing contact with participants that allows clubs/federations to build a good rapport. There are opportunities for potential membership or sponsorship of events and the opportunity to meet with potential speakers that you can invite to our meetings. This is an opportunity that is limited only by your imagination and the real work for your club in fact begins after the consultation.

5.

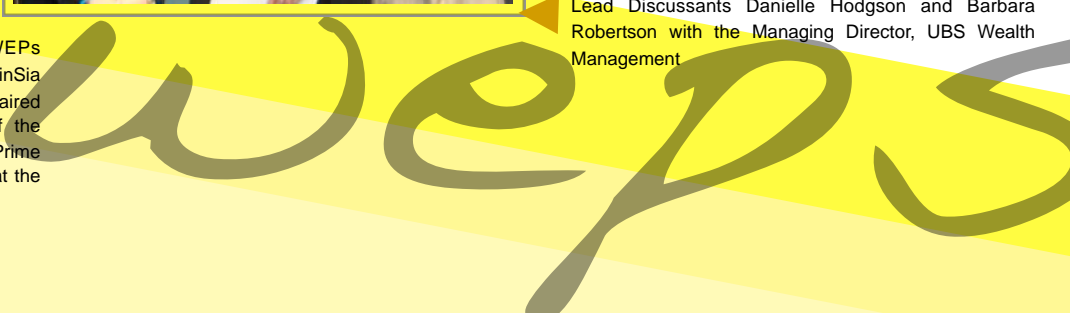
Do I still report details of the meeting, if it was held under Chatham House rules?

If you choose to run your consultation along these lines, commentary in the meeting stays within the meeting. The comments can be reported but not identified to an individual or organisation. Participants in the session cannot be identified publicly without their permission. In most cases, as an outcome of the sessions, in the report or media release, most companies or sponsors are happy to approve public comments. This will need to be confirmed and approved with participants following the session.



16th September 2009: The second Australian WEPs consultation organized in conjunction with Women in FinSia [Financial Services Institute of Australasia] committee; chaired by Kathleen Townsend - former Executive Director of the Office of the Status of Women in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and head of Australian delegation at the Fourth Women's Conference in 1995

Lead Discussants Danielle Hodgson and Barbara Robertson with the Managing Director, UBS Wealth Management



Resources WEPs consultations

The following resources will help you in run your consultation and can be used by federations/ and or clubs:

[How to set up Consultation](#)

[What needs to be done to prepare for a consultation](#)

[What needs to happen after consultation](#)

[Reporting back to BPW International](#)

[Sample agenda](#) - to guide discussions in the sessions; you may wish to change some of the questions as you feel necessary

[Sample invitation](#) - has been developed to email out to participants

[WEPs brochure](#) - to be emailed with invitation

[Sample invitation guest list](#) - for club records and to ensure ongoing follow up and communication

[Sample BPW powerpoint presentation](#) - to be used during the presentation

[Sample UN Women powerpoint presentation](#)

Handouts:

[Evaluation Form for participants of the consultation](#) - Feedback Form to be filled out after meeting (for club benefit)

[Report Form: Good Practices](#) - Encourage participants to report back any of their company's best practices. We are particularly interested in detailed examples of actions and policies that have been implemented.

[Sample Report](#) - report outline of the consultation

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IMPORTANT NOTE:

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REPORT FORM FOR “BEST PRACTICES”

WEP 1: Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality

WEP 2: Treat all women and men fairly at work – respect and support human rights and non-discrimination

WEP 3: Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers

WEP 4: Promote education, training and professional development for women

WEP 5: Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women

WEP 6: Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy

WEP 7: Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality

1. COMPANY DETAILS

Company Name:	
Website:	
Headquarters:	
Employees:	
Products/Services:	

2. WEP Issue Area (1-7)

Which WEPS have been adopted in your company? Describe all relevant company policies/programs ?	
When did the policy/program start?	
How is the policies/programs empowering women?	
How is the policy/program monitored?	
How is the policy/program measured?	
What financial and/or social value is attributed to the policy/program? (e.g.,increase in company turnover, female board members, retention of female staff	
Company Contact Name & Details for further information	
What assistance, if any, do you require to implement the WEPs in your company?	





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Evaluation Form for Participants to the Consultations

Thank you for your participation and input into this BPW consultation on the Women's Empowerment Principles. This evaluation form is to provide valuable feedback to us on the consultation and the areas you thought were effective and productive, and to tell us where we can improve.

1. What part of the information supplied as part of the Consultation was most/ least useful?	
2. What additional information on the WEPs do you/ or your organisation require to contribute and support the WEPs?	
3. What changes would you suggest in the case that the WEPs Consultation is run again?	
4. Do you have suggestions about other ways that the WEPs could be promoted and to support adoption and implementation?	
5. Do you wish to continue to receive information about the WEPs progress and future events?	If yes, please provide your contact details: full names, phone contact, email address

All evaluation forms should be returned to:

[BPW Affiliate Details]
[Postal Address]
[Email address:]

