

Media Update

20 December 2017

UN Women

Press Release

14 CEOs strengthen their commitment to promote gender equality at workplace by signing the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEP)

Sialkot, December 19, 2017: Fourteen CEOs from private sector companies in Pakistan have signed the CEO Statement of Support for the [Women's Empowerment Principles](#), at an event on 19 December 2017 in Sialkot, organized by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women Pakistan) and Baidarie (a non-government organization established by rural women). The Women's Empowerment Principles is a partnership initiative of UN Women and the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and provides a set of considerations to help the private sector focus on key elements integral to promoting gender equality in the workplace, marketplace and community, through policy and action.

The launching ceremony, hosted by Baidarie and UN Women Pakistan, aimed at encouraging high-level leadership to promote gender diversity and inclusive work force within the corporate sector.

These fourteen CEOs, by signing the seven steps of the Women's Empowerment Principles take on a global approach to four key areas: promoting economic development through women entrepreneurship, championing gender diversity in business and at corporate level, public-private partnerships for advancing women's economic opportunities and providing potential business and investment opportunities to women through supplier diversity and marketing practices.

The private sector champions were identified through a series of consultations by UN Women Pakistan and Baidarie. They are: Force 5 (Pvt) Limited; Leather Ware (Pvt.) Limited; Madrigal Sports (Pvt.) Limited; XPRO



(Pvt.) Limited; Spry Sports Corporation; Ali Trading Co. Pvt Limited; Peak Garments (Pvt) Limited; MUTA Industries (Pvt.) Limited; Nazran (Pvt.) Limited; Brothers Production (Pvt.) Limited; Atrox Industries; Masood Textile Mills Limited; Raja Industries (Pvt.) Limited; Interloop Limited Limited. This is the second batch of WEPs signatories in Sialkot, following the commitment of 17 leading export-oriented companies in 2015 who became pioneers in offering employment to women and girls in a gender responsive atmosphere. UN Women also supported seven of these companies in developing gender-responsive policies and procedures and provided them with a road map for continuous improvement. This includes developing mechanisms to encourage and recruit women to enter the industry; strengthening women's presence, position and role in management; strengthening employee trainings and the implementation of harassment of women at Workplace Act 2012 & 2015; promoting literacy and basic education for employees.

Through UN Women's programme for the Empowerment of Women Garment Workers, more than eight hundred women workers already got a formal employment in industrial units of the textile/garment sector. During the launch event, Ms. Gul-e-Sehar, a home-based woman worker, voiced that: "We are 4 brothers and 5 sister and were economically very weak. Through the project [UN Women funded project] my sister and I have joined a company from where I am now able to support my family. My younger sister and brothers are now able to acquire education. I am more confident and now able to active part in family decision making process".

Ms. Sangeeta Thapa, Deputy Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan, congratulated the fourteen CEOs on signing the Women's Empowerment Principles. "Partnerships between UN Women and the private sector bring together essential skills and resources that are complementary and mutually reinforcing. At UN Women, we recognize the key role of the private sector in advancing development, and we do our best to support private sector companies in their genuine endeavors and initiatives to empower women. By adopting the seven Principles, industrialists of Sialkot and Faisalabad have acknowledged the rights of the female workforce", she said. As part of their responsibility, she reminded the CEOs that their commitments must now translate into visible and measurable actions.

Mr. Irfan Mufti, Chairperson, Baidarie Board, speaking at the launching ceremony shared, "I am convinced that this new private sector commitment will mark the beginning of an era of transformation of the industrial culture to

provide spaces and options to women and girls as equal and fully respected stakeholders in the mainstream social and economic development phenomenon”.

Ms. Mariam Nauman, CEO, MUTA Industries (Pvt.) Limited. Talon Sports (Pvt) Limited reminded guests that the Women’s Empowerment Principles is a “Government needs to play a vital role in providing up-to-date training to the women who wishes to take jobs in a factory. Currently women are not fully trained and factories require a lot of efforts to improve their skills relevant to the industries. ”. She added, “Women play a key role in enhancing organizational innovation, effectiveness, productivity, creativity and problem-solving in the corporate sector. Signing WEP would support us to increase our female ratio in our factories.”

Dr. Farah Masood, Secretary Labor and Human Resources Department, Govt. of Punjab, shared: “As far the law is concerned, in Punjab, legally and through legislation men and women have equal wages. We need to pledge as whole, public and private sector alike, to promote these practices in our spheres. Being a woman and a government servant, Government of Punjab pledges its full support to this movement.”

The economic participation of women is recognized globally as essential for the progress of a nation and growth of its economy. Around the world 1667 companies have already signed on the Women’s Empowerment Principles. To date, 39 companies in Pakistan have made a public commitment of support by signing onto the Women’s Empowerment Principles. About the Women’s Empowerment Principles.

The Women's Empowerment Principles – *Equality Means Business* is a joint initiative of UN Women and the UN Global Compact. The Principles outline seven steps for business on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. The Principles highlight that empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors and throughout all levels of economic activity is essential to build strong economies; establish more stable and just societies; achieve internationally agreed goals for development, sustainability, and human rights; improve quality of life for women, men, families and communities; and propel business' operations and goals.

Learn more: www.weprinciples.org



Download photos of the event here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1coAhkkmHnWhgGzO4hM9fcBwP_BDyfoYr?usp=sharing

- Picture 1: Signatories of Women Empowerment Principles pose for a group photo with UN Women Pakistan's team
- Picture 2: Sangeeta Thapa, Deputy Representative presenting Statement of Support for Women Empowerment Principles to CEOs
- Picture 3: Final Remarks by honorable guests

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