



ADVOCACY BRIEF

PROCUREMENT'S STRATEGIC VALUE

Why gender-responsive procurement makes business sense

WOMEN'S
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
ACCELERATOR

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ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT SECTION

UN WOMEN

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The ultimate goal of the initiative is to maximize the development impact of women's entrepreneurship in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by creating an enabling ecosystem for women entrepreneurs around the world.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

B2B	Business-to-business
B2C	Business-to-consumer
BCG	Boston Consulting Group
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPO	Chief Procurement Officer
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DE&I	Diversity, equity and inclusion
ESG	Environmental, social and governance
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GRP	Gender-responsive procurement
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre
MCB	Marketing and consumer business
PPE	Personal protective equipment
RFPs	Request for proposals
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
WBENC	Women's Business Enterprise National Council
WEA	Women's Entrepreneurship Accelerator
WEPs	Women's Empowerment Principles

KEY DEFINITIONS

Gender-responsive procurement (GRP): The sustainable selection of services, goods or public works from women-owned or women-led enterprises and/or those having gender-responsive policies and practices for employees and supply chains.

Gender-responsive businesses: Businesses that meet criteria for integrating gender equality and women's empowerment tenets in their policies and practices that are in alignment with international norms and standards. To be considered gender-responsive, comprehensive compliance with the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) and International Labour Organization (ILO) labour standards would be required.

Supplier diversity: A formal programme which promotes procurement from businesses that are at least 51 per cent owned and operated by a traditionally underrepresented or underserved individual or group.¹

Supply chains: The direct sequence of activities to produce goods, often from the perspective of buyers.

Tier 1 suppliers: Directly contracted suppliers that provide services, goods or public works to the business.

Tier 2 suppliers: A business' indirect suppliers, who are contracted by their direct, Tier 1 suppliers.

Value chains: "[T]he full range of activities that are required to bring a product or service from conception, through the intermediary phases of production (involving a combination of physical transformation and the input of various producer services), delivery to final customers, and final disposal after use".²

Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs): The Women's Empowerment Principles are a set of principles offering guidance to businesses on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community.

Women-owned business:³ A legal entity, that at a minimum: 1) is at least 51 per cent owned by one or more women; 2) is unconditionally controlled by one or more women over both long-term decision-making and the day-to-day management and administration of the business operations; and 3) is independent from non-women-owned businesses.

Women-led business: A legal entity in any field that has a minimum of 50 per cent women-identified representation in management with senior-level, strategic decision-making abilities.

1. Bateman, Barrington and Date 2020; Worthington 2009.

2. Kaplinsky 2004.

3. While various organizations have their own definitions of women-owned businesses, this publication uses the UN system's standard definition.

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