



## BPW Australia

Affiliated with BPW International

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His Excellency Ban Ki-moon  
Secretary-General of the United Nations  
760 United Nations Plaza  
New York NY 10017 USA

Dear Secretary-General

BPW Australia is committed to the UN Global Compact (UNGC) Principles with respect to human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. It is our intent to continue to participate in the activities of the UNGC and to advance its principles through ongoing communication with our members, and advocacy to government and in the community. We will do this in the following ways:

- The aims and objectives of BPW Australia align with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
- We educate our members about the UNGC and engage their commitment to the implementation of the UNGC Principles. Their cooperation is demonstrated in their response to our survey on relevant aspects of the management of BPW clubs across Australia.
- We partner with UN Global Compact Network and actively participate in forums held in Sydney and Melbourne.
- We actively engage with organisations that are aligned with the UNGC Principles and CEDAW.
- BPW Australia is a community partner with the White Ribbon Foundation, Australia's national male-led campaign to end men's violence against women.
- UNGC Principle 6 is the foundation for BPW Australia's annual campaign to raise awareness in Australia about equal pay for women and men. This campaign is sustainable and has identified BPW Australia as a leading advocate for gender equality in Australia.

We recognise that a key requirement for participation in the Global Compact is our commitment to the biennial submission of a Communication on Engagement that describes our efforts to implement the UNGC Principles and to engage with the Global Compact Network. We will undertake this commitment in an accountable and transparent manner.

Yours sincerely

Janis Shaw PhD (ANU) FAIM MAICD

National President BPW Australia

5 October 2015

***Taking action for women's equality: at work, on boards, in leadership***

# BPW Aims

## Our Purpose

BPW Australia takes action for women's equality – at work, on boards, in leadership.

## Our Mission

BPW supports and actively promotes personal development, provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, knowledge and experience and lobbies on issues affecting women.

## Our Aims

BPW Australia aims to unite business, professional and other working women across Australia

1. to work for women's:
  - economic independence
  - equal opportunity and representation in economic, civil and political life
2. to encourage and support women and girls to:
  - develop their professional and leadership potential
  - undertake lifelong education and training
  - use their abilities for the benefit of others, locally, nationally and internationally
3. to advocate:
  - for the elimination of all discrimination against women
  - for human rights and the use of gender-sensitive perspectives
4. to undertake:
  - national and international networking and co-operation
  - non-profit projects that help women gain economic independence
  - to present the views of Australian women to BPW International, responsible Australian authorities, governments, business and civil society.

## BPW Australia responses to UNGC club survey

In 2015 a survey was conducted for Clubs to match their activities to the ten principles of the UNGC. Four clubs responded.

| UNGC Principle  |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 1               | <i>Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights</i>  |
| BPW Joondalup   | Active support for International Women's Day; Port Moresby Education Fund; La Paz Nursing School; and Domestic Violence-White Ribbon Campaign   |
| BPW Strathfield | <p>The Club holds annual events including International Women's Day, Domestic Violence &amp; White Ribbon Day.</p> <p>We have carried the 2015 theme #makeithappen –a series of workshops focused on assisting women and girls to be better prepared to enter and/or participate more effectively in the workforce. The series have been run at all of our meetings since IWD this year. The final series of #makeithappen will be in September 2015.</p> <p>The Club supports the Day for Girls Program that enables girls to participate in education - attend school during their periods.</p> |
| BPW Melbourne   | Club seeks collaboration with Businesses that have committed to the UN Global Compact and Women's Empowerment Principles and that adhere to strict human rights policies and processes. Annually convenes an event to celebrate International Women's Day (in the last two years these have been supported by the Queen Victoria Women's Centre Trust in Melbourne's CBD). Annually convenes as event to commemorate White Ribbon Day observing the International Day of Elimination of Violence against Women on November 25.  |
| BPW Cessnock    | Club supports International Women's Day and the Domestic Violence & White Ribbon Campaigns, and works towards a quota for women to be on decision -making entities.   |
| 2               | <i>Make sure that businesses are not complicit in human rights abuses.</i>  |
| BPW Joondalup   | Involved with a taskforce for Principle 7 <i>Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;</i>  |
| BPW Strathfield | The Club upholds the policies and procedures of BPWA and the UN Principles in its internal operation and external participation.  |
| BPW Melbourne   | Performs due diligence on all potential strategic partners and sponsors, based on information available in the public domain. Does not engage with businesses which have been proven or alleged to be complicit in human rights abuse, through their own actions or through their supply chains.  |

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| BPW Cessnock    | The Club upholds the principles of human rights and supports companies and organisations that uphold these values. Club membership is open, welcoming and reflective of or to the Australian society.  |
| 3               | <i>Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;</i>  |
| BPW Joondalup   | The club has open member meetings and input in participation in organising programs for the club   |
| BPW Strathfield | The club has open member meetings and input in participation in organising programs for the club   |
| BPW Melbourne   | Membership of BPW Melbourne is open and inclusive, welcoming all women who uphold the values of BPW Australia, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or political viewpoints. BPW Melbourne holds open and transparent elections for all Executive positions and club members are invited to, and participate in, all monthly Executive meetings. BPW Melbourne provides personal and professional development opportunities to all club members equally. All BPW Melbourne members have the opportunity to provide input into the development of the club's calendar of events and programs for the club, as well as opportunities to organise events and implement programs. |
| BPW Cessnock    | All members have an input in participation in organising club meetings, programs and events.   |
| 4               | <i>The elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour</i>  |
| BPW Joondalup   | No member is coerced into activities that they do not want to. Clubs hold democratic elections for Executive positions.  |
| BPW Strathfield | Follows the standards as outlined by BPW Australia and the UN Principles in interactions internal and external.  |
| BPW Melbourne   | Performs due diligence on all potential strategic partners and sponsors, based on information available in the public domain. Does not engage with businesses which have been proven or alleged to be complicit in any form of forced and compulsory labour, through their own actions or through their supply chains/   |
| BPW Cessnock    | No member is coerced into activities that they do not want to. The club holds democratic elections for Executive positions.  |
| 5               | <i>The effective abolition of child labour</i>   |
| BPW Joondalup   | The Club upholds the right of children including the abolition of child labour in internal and external interactions.  |
| BPW Strathfield | The Club upholds the right of children including the abolition of child labour   |
| BPW Melbourne   | Performs due diligence on all potential strategic partners and sponsors, based on information available in the public domain. Does not engage with businesses which have been proven or alleged to be complicit in any form of child labour, through their own actions or through their supply chain.  |

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| BPW Cessnock    | The club ensures that workers and volunteers are treated equally and compensated appropriately. It does not engage in or with companies or organisations that are known to be violating the rights of children.  |
| 6               | <i>The elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.</i>  |
| BPW Joondalup   | Club runs Equal Pay Day event each year  |
| BPW Strathfield | Club runs Equal Pay Day event each year  |
| BPW Melbourne   | Annually convenes an event to commemorate Equal Pay Day, marking the period of extra days in the current year which women in Australia (and specifically Victoria) need to work to achieve the same wages that men earned during the previous financial year. The event typically occurs in August or September each year, to highlight the current pay gap across all industries based on full time base and total remuneration. Actively promotes businesses that have signed up to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles and encouraging businesses to become signatories. Supported UN Women Australia and the Global Compact Local Network Australia to convene a re-launch event for the Women's Empowerment Principles in Sydney in July 2014. Advocates for gender balance and diversity on corporate, government and NGO Boards and other decision-making entities. Supports WEConnect International, and international Not for Profit initiative that helps women-owned businesses succeed in global value chains. WEConnect identifies, educates, registers, and certifies women's business enterprises based outside of the US that are at least 51% owned, managed, and controlled by women, and connects them with multinational corporate buyers. |
| BPW Cessnock    | The Club holds Equal Pay Day events annually to raises awareness and to work towards closing the current gap in pay for women across the sectors.  |
| 7               | <i>Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges</i>  |
| BPW Joondalup   | Our club uses electronic emails to send out information, minutes etc   |
| BPW Melbourne   | Advocates in support of UN environmental issues, especially those endorsed by UN Women. Actively seeks partnerships and collaborations with businesses which have a demonstrated track record in supporting a precautionary approach to environmental challenges and promote environmental innovation through their own operations and their supply chains.  |
| BPW Cessnock    | The Club uses electronic mediums to communicate and distribute information to support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.  |
| 8               | <i>Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility</i>   |
| BPW Joondalup   | The Club supports local initiatives that promote community environmental projects  |
| BPW Strathfield | Speakers have covered this subject   |

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| BPW Melbourne   | BPW Melbourne minimises paper use by utilising electronic communications with members and stakeholders. The President of BPW Melbourne, who took office as of January 2015, has an extensive background in environmental sustainability and advocacy on climate change action. The Club itinerary for 2016 will include invitations to high profile speakers to address members and guests on topic issues of environmental policy, responsibility and action on the part of government, industry and community stakeholders.                           |
| BPW Cessnock    | The Club has invited speakers who have covered subjects on our environmental responsibilities.  |
| 9               | <i>Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.</i>  |
| BPW Joondalup   | Involved in programmes using collected products not needed to donate to others who can use it-for BPW ORMOC in Philippines and Days for Girls Program   |
| BPW Strathfield | Environmental issues will continue to be included in the program  |
| BPW Melbourne   | The Club is reaching out to potential members who have experience and expertise in environmental and climate change policy and action. The Club intends to explore future programs and activities with partners demonstrating leadership in environmental innovation, in technology, policy or cultural change.   |
| BPW Cessnock    | The Club continues to encourage and support members to review how they can be environmental warriors.   |
| 10              | <i>Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.</i>   |
| BPW Joondalup   | Club follows BPW constitution and rules and regulations.  |
| BPW Strathfield | BPW Strathfield follows BPW constitution and rules and regulations.   |
| BPW Melbourne   | The Club performs due diligence on all potential strategic partners and sponsors, based on information available in public domain, and does not engage with businesses which have been proven or alleged to be complicit in corruption in Australia or overseas, through their own actions or through their supply chains.<br><br>Holds open and transparent elections for all Executive positions. Records formal minutes of all meetings of the club Executive. Invites all club members to attend and participate in all monthly Executive meetings. |
| BPW Cessnock    | BPW Cessnock adheres to the BPW Australia Constitution and Rules and Regulations.   |

#### Contributors :

- Irene Ross, BPW Australia Global Compact Coordinator 2011 – 2016
- Marilyn Forsythe, Past President BPW Australia 2007-2013
- Freda Miriklis, Past BPW International President

## **BPW Australia – Report on Sustainability 2011 to 2015**

In the period 2011 to 2013 BPW Australia and its members have had a focus on the economic empowerment of women from the grassroots to Executive Boards. All of the programs have succeeded in some measure by raising public awareness or changing government legislation.

Our programs and projects are aligned to the WEPS 1, 2 and 6. The Global Compact Principles 1 and 6

The following is a summary of our work for women in Australia and other countries.

### **Paid Parental Leave Legislation**

- ✓ On the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 Paid Parental Leave became law for all women in Australia so since then BPW Australia has maintained a watching brief to ensure the Australian Government did not try to minimise the benefits available to women and men under the scheme
- ✓ A BPW Australia Paid Parental Leave Policy Statement was developed as a basis for lobbying in 2000 and has been updated several times since
- ✓ The BPW Australia Statement many speeches and reports, and BPW made submissions to inquiries. Legislation finally passed Parliament but it was 2011 before Australian women had access to paid parental leave – and it was in line with our policy statement.
- ✓ A revised paid parental leave scheme has been proposed by the current Australian Government, so the BPW Australia policy statement is being reviewed and updated to ensure the views of our members can again influence policy that impacts on women's working lives

### **Equal Pay**

- ✓ In 2009 BPW Australia founded the Equal Pay Alliance, a national lobby group of over 150 academic and not for profit organisations [www.equalpayday.com.au/edp-alliance](http://www.equalpayday.com.au/edp-alliance)
- ✓ The Alliance has continued to grow and now represents over one hundred thousand women
- ✓ BPW members hold Equal Pay Day events each year to raise awareness of the 18% pay gap that persists in Australia

### **UN Global Compact**

- ✓ The UN Global Compact is focussed on engaging effectively with enlightened global business. Until 2012 the UN Global Compact Network in Australia did not have any NGO representation amongst its membership, when BPW Australia was invited to join
- ✓ BPW Australia is a signatory to the UN Global Compact and through our intervention with the local network we were able to change the focus of human rights from international to the rights of Australian women

### **International**

- ✓ Australian members support financially the La Paz Nursing School in Mexico and the BPW Australia Port Moresby Education Fund for students in Papua.
- ✓ Australian clubs supported the start of BPW Ormoc in the Philippines and supplied equipment and funding for a Sewing Project to help local women.