

REPORT
Second Vice President
United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)
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One of the top priorities of our term was establishing and developing new partnerships that would bring BPW International closer to UN Agencies and uniting affiliates through common focus in relation to our aims and objectives.

We were able to achieve this goal by becoming a participant of the UN Global Compact (UNGC) during 2010. BPW International worked closely with UNIFEM and the UN GC during 2009 and was invited to join an informal advisory group set up to guide the formation of the WEPs, largely due to our consultations with the private sector in Australia and the feedback provided by BPW International. During this time we set up a working relationship with the UN GC and conducted our due diligence. The Executive Board unanimously approved the recommendation with our application considered and accepted by the UNGC in April 2010.

As a UN GC participant, BPW International pledges to support the ten principles within our organisation and through our sphere of influence. There are no reporting requirements for BPW International, however there are clear benefits that our association brings to our affiliates. BPW Affiliates can explore participation in UN GC Country (Local) Networks that are established in more than 80 Country Networks throughout the world. These autonomous, business-led networks are designed as multi-stakeholder "chapters" to advance the UN GC at the local level, through the implementation of the ten principles and partnership projects. Affiliates are encouraged to work through the President's Office to contact the focal points of the relevant Country Network(s) to explore participation.

One of the two goals of the UN GC is to catalyze partnership projects in support of broad development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Affiliates are encouraged to forge partnership projects with business participants and other supporting stakeholders of the UN GC, including UN agencies and programs. BPW Affiliates in Australia, Austria, Korea, Japan, South Africa, North America have already reported clear benefits and strengthened associations at the national level.

In addition, affiliates are encouraged to invite companies within their federations to join partnership projects - existing/new/proposed. The UN GC also has a number of topical initiatives and specialized workstreams that may be of interest to affiliates. These cover a spectrum of issues including: climate change, water, human rights, transparency and anti-corruption, responsible investment, zones of conflict, and management education. Opportunities may exist for enhanced civil society engagement in these initiatives and workstreams offering affiliates the opportunity to bring the gender perspective forward and leading discussions in this regard.

Where permissible, we encourage affiliates to register as stakeholders in their national UN GC, a supporting BPW Affiliate will receive regular communications on global, regional and local events. Affiliates are encouraged, where possible and feasible, to participate in these activities — bringing their unique gender perspectives, expertise, and capacities.

The framework is now in place to allow members to grow clubs through increased associations and opportunities. These credible associations will allow our organisation to grow to new levels bringing new relationships along with them. While BPW Affiliates are encouraged to facilitate WEPs consultations and events, or specific BPW International initiatives designed to unify the voice of BPW worldwide.

RECOMMENDATION:

That BPW Affiliates and Associate clubs establish links through the GC Country Networks (where permissible) to explore grassroots participation of activities. The UN GC has a number of topical initiatives and specialized workstreams that may be of interest in such areas as: climate change, water, human rights, transparency and anti-corruption, responsible investment, zones of conflict, and management education. Affiliates can contribute to these areas of interest by bringing a specialized approach or gender perspective and leading discussions in this regard.

That it be imperative that the President's Office is fully aware of communications so that BPW experiences can be shared and strengthened on the new BPW International electronic platform.