

ITC International Trade Center:

Global Platform for Action on Sourcing from Women Vendors

The International Trade Centre (ITC) was formed in 1964 pursuant to a joint mandate from the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the United Nations. ITC's mission is to implement and deliver practical 'Trade Related Technical Assistance Projects'. Along with its United Nations family and partner organizations, ITC continues to connect its projects and programmes with global efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the Aid for Trade agenda. Having identified the need for a specific focus on the inclusion of women in business and trade initiatives across the developing world, ITC has built and resourced a specific Women and Trade Programme'. The Women and Trade Programme works with governments, the private sector and trade support institutions to bring greater economic benefit to women through increased participation in export trade. A central aspect of ITC's Women and Trade Programme is the Global Platform for Action on Sourcing from Women Vendors (GPASWV). The aim of the initiative is to encourage greater participation of women-owned businesses (WoBs) in the global supply chain.. to increase the amount of purchases made by large corporations and governments across the world, from WoBs. To put the intentions of the GPASWV into action, ITC along with its partners, hosted the inaugural Women Vendors' Exhibition and Trade Forum (WVEF). WVEF is a forum where WoBs are provided direct contact with the procuring entities of major corporations with the ability to secure real contracts and/or gain further knowledge about the needs of these corporate buyers and how to better do business with them. BPW International needs to increase its involvement and the involvement of its members in this incredibly important initiative.

What can you do?

1. Facilitate the engagement of WoBs in your area with the Global Platform for Action on Sourcing from Women Vendors.
2. Get your WoBs to register and attend for WVEF.
3. Do some research. Look at where your own business (or your employers' business) sources its goods and services, or ask your local or national levels of government whether they have considered adopting a preferential procurement policy for their expenditure. Advocate for change!
4. Report back to us about your initiatives via the (soon to be launched!) BPW Reporting Matrix.