

Women's Economic Empowerment Good Practice

BusinessNZ has for many years been actively involved in promoting women's employment, first (as the then New Zealand Employers' Federation) producing a guide to equal opportunity in the workplace as long ago as the mid-1980s. Following on from this initial guide, further guides were produced, with, as well, guides to the country's human rights legislation and to the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace. Under the Human Rights Act, discrimination on the ground of sex – the term also covers pregnancy and childbirth - is unlawful and BusinessNZ has always seen compliance with the legislation as one means of ensuring that women's rights in the employment field are recognised and respected.

BusinessNZ is a founder and long-time member of New Zealand's Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, an organisation focused on employment diversity established in 1992. BusinessNZ was part of a government Working Party on Equity in Employment and was a keen supporter of the Working Party's recommendation which resulted in the setting up of the Trust. Currently the Trust has taken over much of the advisory work in which BusinessNZ was formerly engaged but BusinessNZ 's regional organisations continue to provide their employer members with information and guidance on equal employment opportunities , both for women and for minority group members seen as possibly susceptible to employment discrimination and to whom the Human Rights Act also offers protection .

BusinessNZ is represented on New Zealand's National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women, a government advisory body to the Women's Minister on matters relating to women and employment, and as well subscribes to the UN's Women's Empowerment principles. The Principles offer guidance to businesses on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and the community and are the product of a collaboration between the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations Global Compact. New Zealand is one of the few countries, if not the only country, where an organisation such as BusinessNZ has been permitted to associate itself with the Principles which are more usually directed to commercial businesses.

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