

# Catalyzing Women's Economic Empowerment through Gender-Responsive Public Procurement (GRPP)



## Why is gender-responsive public procurement important?

Procurement is a process that virtually all organizations must undertake to secure inputs that they do not produce themselves. Government procurement alone contributes as much as 12% of the world's annual GDP. For example, Businesses around the world supply governments with goods and services required to run schools, hospitals, all other government institutions and functions. Yet women do not benefit equally from this plethora of contract opportunities. In fact, women-led enterprises are only awarded an average of 1% these contracts, demonstrating massive gender-gaps in procurement systems. Transforming these systems and making them more equitable can catalyze gender equality, women's empowerment and sustainable development.

Gender-responsive public procurement leverages government procurement to unlock more opportunities for women's businesses and ultimately improve both social and economic outcomes for all. In practice, GRPP can include affirmative selection criteria, award criteria and tie-breaker provisions, contract performance conditions and target and quotas for sourcing from women-led and gender-responsive businesses. It also involves supporting enterprise development to better position women for procurement opportunities, as well as setting standards to encourage all suppliers to be gender responsive.

## Key barriers faced by women when accessing government contracts:

- Limited tender opportunities;
- Insufficient time to compete in a public tender;
- Inaccessible digital technologies;
- Complex administrative requirements for tenders;
- Lack of tendering skills and insufficient networks;
- Biases on capacity and capability of women entrepreneurs.



## INEQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Global Gross  
Domestic  
Product

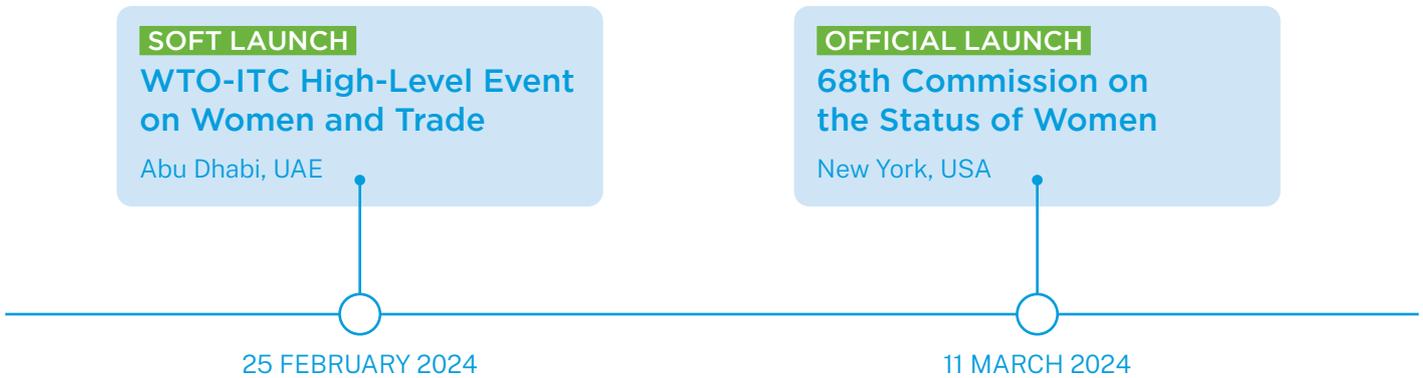
**12%** of total  
global GDP spent  
on government  
procurement

**1%** government  
contracts awarded  
to women- led /  
owned businesses

Realizing the transformative potential of GRPP requires that governments take on a proactive role as duty bearers, buyers, and contracting parties. This could involve them designing targeted assistance strategies, implementing measures that effectively lower the barriers that women entrepreneurs face when applying and competing for public tenders, and increasing suppliers' compliance with gender-equality standards.

# Make a commitment, move the needle!

ITC and UN Women launched a global GRPP campaign at two high-level global events in 2024:

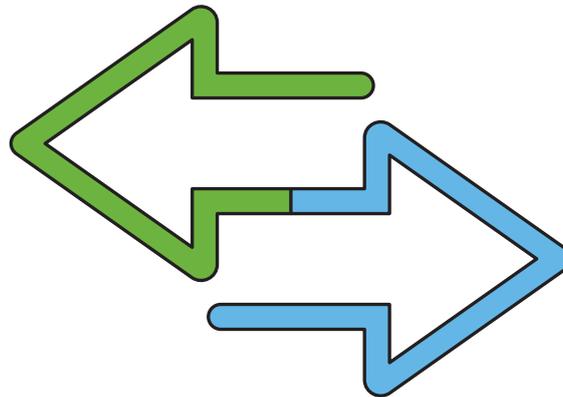


## SHOW YOUR SUPPORT IN TWO WAYS!

### Statements of Support

We welcome statements of support (in the form of quotes) from:

- International or multilateral organizations
- Governments (countries)



### Country Pledges

We invite country pledges from:

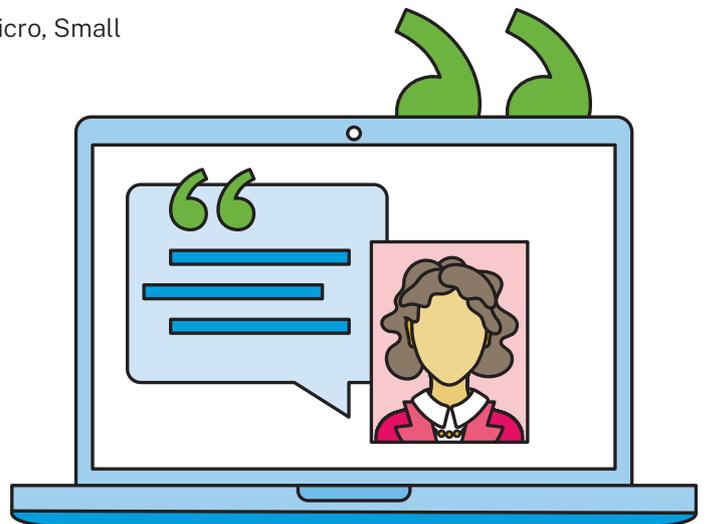
- governments with established GRPP programmes
- governments who are keen to make their foray into GRPP

## How can countries and organizations provide statements of support?

Statements of support from Ministers of Finance, Gender, Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) and Trade, heads of public procurement agencies, and international or regional organizations are crucial in galvanizing this global movement.

Lend your voice to our global campaign by submitting the following:

- A 30- to 40-word quote in English, French or Spanish about your country's or organization's commitment to implementing GRPP in its policies and promoting women's participation in public tenders, as well as a call to action to other countries and organizations to do the same.
- A high-resolution photograph of the Minister or head of organization.



# How can countries make their pledges?

Countries can express pledges to GRPP by taking the following suggested actions:

- Designating a focal person in your ministry or organization to be responsible for gender-responsive public procurement.
- Implementing one or two of the below country-specific actions by 2025:

<p><b>1.</b> Adopting a national definition of women-led/-owned businesses</p> 	<p><b>2.</b> Collecting gender-disaggregated data through public procurement database</p> 	<p><b>3.</b> Providing training to ministry staff on GRPP strategies</p> 
<p><b>4.</b> Launching communication campaigns to encourage the participation of women-led and gender-responsive businesses</p> 	<p><b>5.</b> Conducting training sessions to enhance the competitiveness of bids from women-led and gender-responsive businesses</p> 	<p><b>6.</b> Establishing a target percentage of government spending to be allocated to women-led and gender-responsive businesses</p> 
<p><b>7.</b> Introducing standards for procurement from gender-responsive businesses to enable decent work for women</p> 	<p><b>8.</b> Implementing targeted assistance strategies for GRPP</p> 	<p><b>9.</b> Introducing reporting requirements for sourcing from women-led and gender-responsive businesses</p> 

**SUBMISSION PROCESS**

Submissions of statements of support and country pledges are accepted on a rolling basis.

Kindly email quotes, photographs and/or country pledges at [womenandtrade@intracen.org](mailto:womenandtrade@intracen.org).



# Tools to help your GRPP journey...



## ITC's Gender Moonshot 2022-2025

Moonshots embody ITC's innovative solutions to empower small businesses in developing countries to participate in global trade. The Gender Moonshot underscores ITC's intensified commitment on gender-related initiatives and represents our bold and groundbreaking solutions to confront gender-related challenges experienced by small businesses in developing countries.



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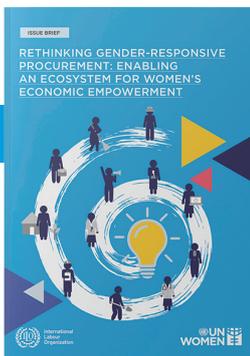
## ITC TOOLS

## ITC's Making Public Procurement Work for Women

This ITC guide provides policymakers, statistical offices and procurement officers with a clear action plan for GRPP. Learn how to design a GRPP roadmap, implement preferential policies and other measures, and monitor progress, drawing on case studies for best practices.



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## Rethinking Gender-Responsive Procurement

In practice GRPP usually takes the form of affirmative policies that target women-owned businesses as suppliers. However, as UN Women and ILO articulate, policies that strive for decent work at all levels of supply chains should be an objective of GRPP. This implies that social impact can come from sourcing from women's enterprises, but also from sourcing from gender-responsive enterprises.



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## UN WOMEN TOOLS

## Legal Frameworks for Gender-Responsive Procurement

UN Women's research on legal frameworks supporting GRPP documents existing laws and policies, such as quotas for sourcing from women's enterprises and establishing award criteria for companies demonstrating commitment and progress to gender-equality. This means that governments can enhance gender-responsive procurement by creating and strengthening enabling legal and policy environments for the public and private sectors to source from both women's enterprises and gender-responsive enterprises.



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