

In addition, through this partnership, ANN was instrumental in designing and implementing a new iteration of the HERproject platform, the “HERnetwork” methodology, implemented by “HERtoolkit.” HERnetwork and HERtoolkit were created to train local NGOs on the HERproject, allowing them to implement HERproject programs independently. Through the HERtoolkit, we were able to increase the reach of the trainings to women that would not have otherwise had access to these programs, and work toward sustaining the program as another resource for factories to use to reach the women. Importantly, ANN became the first U.S. women’s specialty retailer to commit to the UN Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs)—seven principles that provide a holistic framework to empower women in the workplace, marketplace, and community. ANN committed to integrating these principles into its responsible sourcing practices to ensure its supply chain supports women. In 2018 ANN, under the umbrella of the ascena retail group, launched a revised Code of Conduct for suppliers that incorporates a gender lens, which ensures that specific obstacles that women workers face are incorporated into the company’s expectations of suppliers.