THE KIP INDEX AND THE LIVED EXPERIENCE INDEX

A Roadmap for Inclusive Business and Leadership (#RIBLeffect)

From the region, for the region

The Recruitment, Retention, and Promotion of Women in Arab MENA Organizations.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
The Center for Inclusive Business and Leadership (CIBL) for women would like to thank all our partners, advisors, and community members who have worked tirelessly over the course of the development of the KIP Index. We are thankful for their efforts and collaboration. It has been a pleasure to be on this journey with such a great group of individuals and organizations, all committed to women’s economic inclusion and to building more inclusive and dignified Human Resource Systems in the Arab MENA region.

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Research Fellow, Consultants and Friends at CIBL for Women: Lina Dacouk, Sean McWhinney, Mohammed Hemayed, Lina Abou Habib, and Jennifer Olmsted.

Other Experts: Ziad Dagher, Ghina Tabsh, Ceem Haidar, and the staff at the European Institute for Gender Equality

The Roadmap for Inclusive Business and Leadership (#RIBLeffect) would not have been the same without you.

From the region, for the region
The KIP Index
ABOUT

The KIP Index and Lived Experience Index

The KIP Index is the first Arab MENA sector-based measure of women-inclusive policies and practices in local organizations produced by the Center for Inclusive Business and Leadership (CIBL) for Women. It includes both quantitative and qualitative data from 11 countries that surveyed over 1790 formal employers and 523 interviews conducted to capture employer trends and the lived experiences of women across 6 sectors in the region.

The KIP Index tracks local employer policies and practices regarding the recruitment, retention and promotion of women across sectors.

The Lived Experience Index tracks female citizen experiences of recruitment, retention, and promotion in the sectors within which they are currently employed.

Tackling the data deficit of the Arab MENA region

Historically, across the Arab MENA, there is a dire data deficit. Local, gender-disaggregated, accessible data is largely absent. In terms of women’s economic participation, this has forced employers and other decision makers to rely on data measured and computed on international indices. More efforts are needed to capture the local and nuanced realities that exist in regional workplaces and across economic sectors. With the KIP Index and Lived Experience Index, CIBL for Women begins to tackle this regional data deficit, by tracking the recruitment, retention and promotion of women at work in the formal economies of the region. Progress toward dignified work for women and toward more inclusive human resources systems requires data. Strategic change necessitates data from the region, for the region.

On this note, women’s economic participation in the formal economies of the Arab MENA requires our urgent attention. Stakeholders from different sectors must work together to bring about sustainable change. CIBL for Women and its 11 country partners seek to work alongside employers to mobilize human resource efforts, to strengthen mechanisms that recruit, retain, and promote women. This joint effort is presented through the KIP Index, the Lived Experience Index, and the Roadmap for Inclusive Business and Leadership (#RIILeffect).

The intention is to track human resource management practices/policies and the lived realities of formally employed female citizens, in order to provide concrete sector-based recommendations for local employers that will result in more strategic HR mechanisms that increase wellbeing. Our work is participatory, action-oriented, and evidence-based, which in turn produces tailored recommendations that are grounded in specific regional socio-economic, cultural, and legal contextual realities of the region.
ON METHOD

Sector-Based Employers and Women’s Lived Experiences
On Method

Sector-Based Employers and Women’s Lived Experiences

These data are grounded in a sector-based analysis, which includes a primary focus on collecting survey data from employers as well as interview data from women working in each of the following sectors:

- Education
- Financial Services
- STEM
- Healthcare
- Professional Services
- Other Services

Although the sector-based approach to the analysis is key to interpreting the KIP Index and its accompanying Lived Experience Index, included is a secondary analysis that allows for nuance of the specific recommendations by Country-Groupings. The groupings are based on the work of Diop, Marotta, and de Melo (2012)¹ for The World Bank.

Both indices have three core dimensions that match the Human Resource (HR) cycle - Recruitment, Retention and Promotion (RRP).

The KIP Index tracks local employer trends on practices and policies regarding the recruitment, retention and promotion of women across sectors.

The Lived Experience Index tracks female citizen experiences of recruitment, retention, and promotion in the sectors within which they are currently employed.

Each index captures three key types of gender-significant indicators:

- GAP: Differences between women and men.
- LEVEL: Differentiates men and women in terms of concrete achievements.
- STRUCTURE: Measures of the presence or absence of gender-inclusive policies or norms of practice.

The KIP Index

A Roadmap for Inclusive Business and Leadership (#RiBLEffect)

From the region, for the region

GENERAL FINDINGS FROM THE KIP INDEX

Covering six sectors, across 11 Arab MENA countries, survey data on HR structures were collected and analyzed in order to create a first iteration of a roadmap for systemic change.

Here are the key findings from the KIP Index:

- Women do have the opportunity to work and want to work, but their career trajectory is hindered.

Recruitment policies and practices in the Arab MENA region rank highest (41.72), followed by Promotion (38.27), while Retention ranks the lowest in the region (34.28).

Healthcare ranks highest in the region, followed by education.

However, given that the future of careers is in STEM, there is a prevalent absence of women in leadership positions today.

STEM is the lowest ranking sector across the Arab MENA in terms of the overall KIP Index score. The lowest performing sector across the region is STEM, which consistently ranks the lowest across all three dimensions of the index. This ranking was most notable when it came to retention practices and policies (34.28) specifically in STEM and Other Services.

Below average rankings, in numerous sectors.

Professional Services, STEM and Other Services rank below average in Recruitment and Promotion, while STEM and Financial Services rank below average for Promotion.

What did women have to say about their workplace experience?

The Lived Experience Index shows that women’s Recruitment and Retention fare relatively higher than Promotion, especially in Healthcare and Other Services.

GENERAL FINDINGS FROM THE LIVED EXPERIENCE INDEX

Capturing over 523 voices of women across 11 Arab MENA countries, interviews were conducted and analyzed to provide an insider perspective and depth to the structural trends within the roadmap for change.

Employee perspectives are important and central to understanding various elements within an organization as they are understood and experienced. Thus, it is not only important for employers to devise better recruitment, retention, and promotion policies and practices, but for women to experience the workplace in a more inclusive and dignified manner. Hence, the creation of the Lived Experience Index.

The recruitment, retention and promotion dimensions are comprehensive and show nuanced insights concerning the work experiences of women across the different sectors. Taken together, the Lived Experience Index focuses on the woman’s journey through the human resource (HR) cycle as it sheds light on how organizational structures are experienced and how they impact women within the sectors. These data help better understand, explain and explore information from an employee perspective, and they supplement the KIP Index results, which focused on employer data on practices and policies.

Here are the key findings from the Lived Experiences Index:

Mirroring the findings of the KIP Index, women report having access to work, but are neither retained nor promoted to the same degree.

Similar to the KIP Index, on the Lived Experience Index recruitment policies and practices in the Arab MENA region rank the highest (65.36), followed by Retention (60.35) and Promotion (60.19), which both rank similarly.

In which sectors do women report relatively better work experiences? And which are the sectors where women report experiencing relatively more discrimination?

The Lived Experience Index shows that women’s Recruitment and Retention fare relatively higher than Promotion, especially in Healthcare and Other Services. The sector with the highest Lived Experience Index score across the region is Other Services (65.14) followed by Healthcare (64.34), both scoring well above the Arab MENA average (62.16); STEM and Education are the lowest ranking sectors (60.87, 60.86, respectively) across the Arab MENA.

The lowest rankings appear in Promotion practices (60.19) especially in Financial Services and Professional Services sectors.

A closer look at the overall Arab MENA-level rankings shows that Healthcare has the highest ranking on Recruitment and Retention (68.11, 64.77, respectively) within all sectors, while Other Services has the highest ranking on the Promotion dimension (64.56).
No pattern emerged in terms of the lowest performing sector on the Lived Experience Index at the regional level. STEM ranked the lowest on Recruitment (61.15), Education on Retention (57.71), and Financial Services on Promotion (58.11).

The KIP Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Other Services</th>
<th>STEM</th>
<th>Professional Services</th>
<th>Financial Services</th>
<th>Healthcare</th>
<th>Education</th>
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The Lived Experience Index

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COUNTRY-GROUPING KEY FINDINGS

The regional KIP Index Score is 39: Out of the three country-groupings, the Resource-Poor, Labor-Abundant group (G2) is relatively ranked the highest with a score of 43, where the Healthcare and Education sectors contribute to the higher relative score.

The Resource-Rich, Labor-Importing group (G3) ranks the lowest with a score of 31, with STEM, Other Services and Education contributing to the lower relative score.

The regional Lived Experience Index Score is 62: Out of the three country-groupings, the Resource-Rich, Labor-Importing group (G3) is relatively ranked the highest with a score of 66, with the Other Services and Healthcare sectors contributing to the higher relative score.

The Resource-Rich, Labor-Abundant group (G1) is ranked the lowest with a score of 60, with Professional Services and Education contributing to the lower relative score.

Greater insights: The findings from the two indices, although not directly comparable, tell two sides of the story about women’s experiences with regional HR systems. The main takeaway is that women’s work experiences could be significantly improved across sectors in the region, and that the thrust of the need for change is in the employer structures and in the hands of human resource decision makers. Employers must do more to put in place more gender-inclusive recruitment, retention, and promotion practices and policies. Note that the table illustrates ranking order based on overall scores for country-groupings for both The KIP Index and the Lived Experience Index. Broadly speaking, the country group overall score points to sector performance and whether they fall below or above that of the Arab MENA average.

For instance, taken together, the indices illustrate a case of the Resource-Rich, Labor-Importing (G3) group. On the one hand, the KIP Index data reveals that this group is the lowest ranked country-grouping overall in terms of employer trends on RRP practices and processes with an overall KIP Index score of 30.78. This score is compared to a regional average of 38.67 and a top score of 42.77 for the Resource-Poor, Labor-Abundant (G2) group. Although the scores for both the highest and lowest ranked country-groupings indicate that employers need to do more to increase their KIP Index score, the Resource-Poor, Labor-Abundant (G2) group is leading the way in overall employer reporting on RRP practices across the three groups.

On the other hand, the Lived Experience Index data reveals that women working in the Resource-Rich, Labor-Importing (G3) group perceive their experience of RRP in the workplace as relatively more positive than female nationals’ RRP experiences in the other two country-groupings, with a Lived Experience Index score of 65.62, compared to a regional average of 62.16 and a lower score for the Resource-Poor, Labor-Abundant (G1) group at 60.18. Although the scores for both the highest and lowest ranked countries indicate once again that the experiences of women could be significantly advanced toward the possible top Lived Experiences Index score of 100, the Resource-Rich, Labor-Importing (G3) group is leading the way on overall women’s experiences of RRP.

With the recent advancements in the Resource-Rich, Labor-Importing (G3) group in terms of women’s entry and integration into workplaces, a key takeaway is that women are equipped to take on positions in the workplace; it is the structure that needs to change. Having more gender-inclusive mechanisms provide women with that opportunity. Thus, changes at the organizational level have significant impacts for women’s experiences in the workplace across sectors.
SECTOR-SPECIFIC FINDINGS

Financial Services and Professional Services sectors

Across the Financial Services and Professional Services sectors, there is a lack of anti-discrimination and anti-sexual harassment policies in the workplace. The absence of these policies is impacting the advancement of women in the workplace.

In these sectors, there is prevalent discrimination in the policies and practices of Recruitment (selection bias, low number of applications), Retention (lack of guidance and lack of support for work/life balance) and Promotion (underrepresentation at every level that becomes more apparent as the position becomes more senior).

The main challenges in these sectors are mainly the lack of representation at the executive and board levels. This is where the most change is needed, as women are almost absent from leadership positions. This can be tackled by putting in place proper HR policies and practices to achieve gender equality.

In addition, women perceive that they do not have access to promotion opportunities despite perceiving transparency in criteria in some countries.

Education Sector

On the MENA level, KIP Index scores within the Education sector are the second highest after Healthcare. However, in the Lived Experience Index, scores within the Education sector are the lowest across all sectors in recruitment, retention and promotion.
When comparing based on country groupings, the G3 group scores lowest on attracting and hiring female nationals on the KIP Index.

In the KIP Index women report a quasi-absence of policies that protect them from discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace, which impacts the retention levels of women.

The Lived Experience Index shows that while women reported being formally selected to a greater extent, more efforts are needed from decision makers to improve equitable treatment in the recruitment and selection process.

Other Services Sector
All dimension scores (RRPs) are low for the Other Services sector on the KIP Index. The data suggests that organizations in the Other Services sector seem to be struggling to attract female nationals as reflected in the low number of applicants to this sector. However, it can be noted that the scores in the Other Services sector are relatively better in recruitment and retention on this index.

Women’s experiences tell a different story. The Lived Experience Index shows that Other Services scores highest in women’s lived experiences across all sectors. Yet, it must be noted, that women on the Lived Experience Index report an absence of work-life balance which affects their retention.

Although women receive career development opportunities (and at higher rates than men) there are structural barriers that significantly keep women from advancing to decision-making roles that are granted to their male counterparts.

The Lived Experience Index also shows that women in this sector express a lack of training opportunities which may be related to women being underrepresented in decision making roles compared to other sectors.

The KIP Index score for this sector suggests the existence of anti-harassment policies, and there is evidence that these are effective in that, on the Lived Experience Index, women expressed feeling protected with high willingness to report harassment.

STEM Sector
The regional scores for the KIP Index show that STEM ranks the lowest among all sectors (36.44) below the Arab MENA average of 38.67.

The Retention dimension ranked the lowest in this sector, indicating a dire need for organizations to implement strategies that can help to retain women. This is alarming given the fact that most jobs of the future will involve a high level of Information Technology and other STEM related fields.

Across all groupings, the Retention score is low suggesting that women are less likely to assume positions of power (i.e. CEOs, board members, etc.). Based on this, HR managers would do well to continue to make leadership positions available to women in the years to come, and keep on providing developmental opportunities for women in order to increase the representation of women in leadership in STEM in the years to come.

So where is urgent change needed?
There is still a lot more to be done by regional employers, policymakers and official governing bodies to achieve a higher KIP Index score. Indeed, the findings show that there is an urgent need to devise and implement HR policies and practices that are more inclusive of female nationals across all sectors, but particularly in STEM.

HR decision makers should focus on retention strategies that foster workplaces free from discrimination and sexual harassment. In sum, no sector, country grouping, or country is doing best or worst, per se. The ranking system illustrates that there is room to learn from each other in different areas of Retention, Recruitment, and Promotion.

We ask all employers to join our effort to devise an indigenous Arab MENA roadmap for the way forward.
Roadmap for Inclusive Business and Leadership (#RIBLeffect)

Regional recommendations
Given the data that we have at hand, how can we move forward and devise an achievable Roadmap for Inclusive Business and Leadership (#RIBLeffect) for systemic change across the Arab MENA region? Here are CIBL for Women’s recommendations that need to be addressed urgently by employers, HR managers, policymakers and governments:

- Close the data deficit – there is still a growing need to collect and analyze gender-disaggregated data across all dimensions of RRP. Conducting focus groups with potential applicants, former employees, and customers to understand gaps will also prove to be valuable.
- Structured conversations – We must encourage open and transparent dialogue internally around gender biases across RRP.
- Internal reporting mechanisms – Build internal capacity to recognize bias, discrimination, and workplace violence. This entails implementing structures to report discrimination and revise all corporate literature to remove gender-bias terminology.
- Regional movements – Launch campaigns with like-minded employers in the sector for gender-inclusive workplaces.
- Mentoring to the top – Mentoring programs and networking opportunities need to be developed as part of corporate agendas, to increase the retention and promotion of women in the workplace.

RECOMMENDATIONS PER SECTOR

EDUCATION SECTOR

On Recruitment:
More formally written and explicitly stated recruitment processes are need by HR managers to encourage women to apply for positions in this sector.
- Greater efforts by HR managers to encourage women applicants drives up women’s positive experience of recruitment.
- HR managers should make conscious efforts to avoid gender-congruence in recruitment in this sector.

On Retention:
- HR managers need to collect data to understand negative experiences of women retained in this sector.
- HR managers need to develop, implement and monitor workplace policies to protect women from harassment and discrimination.
- HR managers need to create safe spaces for dialogue around what women perceive are motivating factors for retention in this sector.
- Campaign with employers across the region to prioritize work-life balance at the heart of retention strategies for this sector.

On Promotion:
- HR managers need to dedicate time and effort to help women with their career development and prospects for upward mobility.
- Greater formalization and clear communication about promotion opportunities and criteria are needed for women in this sector.
- Open up leadership positions for women in this sector to create female role models and overcome congruence in gender roles.

FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

On Recruitment:
- More efforts to partner with local institutions (universities, chambers of commerce, NGOs) to attract more female nationals to apply.
- Greater efforts by HR managers to showcase how educational experience related to employability in this sector.
- HR managers should implement strategies to avoid differential treatment and gender-congruent bias in recruitment and perceptions of selection in this sector.

On Retention:
- HR managers need to collect data to understand negative experiences of women retained in this sector.
- HR managers need to develop, implement and monitor workplace policies to protect women from harassment and discrimination.
- HR managers need to create safe spaces for dialogue around what women perceive are motivating factors for retention in this sector.
- Campaign with employers across the region to prioritize work-life balance at the heart of retention strategies for this sector.

On Promotion:
- HR managers need to dedicate time and effort to help women with their career development and prospects for upward mobility.
- Overcome selection biases for top positions using targeted efforts to promote or recruit women into higher level positions.
- Greater formalization and clear communication about promotion opportunities and criteria are needed for women in this sector.
- Promote women in top leadership positions as mentors and role models for other women in this sector.

- Anti-discrimination and harassment policies are a driving force behind women’s willingness to remain in their job in this sector, and require enforcement mechanisms.
- Place work-life balance at the heart of retention strategies for this sector.
HEALTHCARE SECTOR

On recruitment:
- More formally written and explicitly stated recruitment processes are need
- Greater efforts by HR managers to encourage women applicants will drive up women's positive experience of recruitment.
- HR managers should develop and implement policies for equal treatment and avoid bias in recruitment and selection.
- HR managers should communicate that selection criteria include education-job match to encourage women to apply for positions.

On Retention:
- HR managers need to provide women with upward mobility opportunities and not consider that retention alone is equal to wellbeing and personal development.
- HR managers need to create safe spaces for dialogue between women and senior management on quality of their experience across various positions.
- The existence of anti-discrimination and harassment policies positively contributes to women's willingness to report, and should be explicitly communicated to women.
- HR managers should make efforts to provide beneficial organizational mechanisms to help improve women's work-life balance in this sector.

On Promotion:
- HR managers need to assign mentors and supervisors to help women with their career development and prospects for upward mobility.
- Greater formalization and clear communication about promotion opportunities and criteria are needed for women in this sector.
- Open up leadership positions for women in this sector to create female role models and overcome congruence in gender roles.

OTHER SERVICES SECTOR

On Recruitment:
- HR managers need to collect data to understand why not enough women are applying to this sector.
- HR managers must be trained on gender-inclusive recruitment and retention practices.
- A wider net must be cast when advertising vacancies in this sector.

On Retention:
- Clearly written and unbiased job vacancy advertisements can be one way to attract more female nationals into this sector.
- HR managers should collect and analyze data about what may be pushing women out of this sector.
- Low rates of retention need to be measured against compensation and benefit packages currently offered to women.
- Immediate enactment and enforcement of policies to protect women are needed for women to increase their willingness to stay on the job.
- HR managers should design and implement organization-wide training on GBV-free workplaces and anti-harassment protections.

On Promotion:
- HR managers need to collect data to understand the reasons for low rates of promotion in this sector.
- HR managers can partner with employers in this sector to campaign for more women in leadership positions.
- HR managers should partner with universities to attract more female nationals into this sector.
- HR managers should recruit more women into top positions and celebrate their achievements to inspire other women to apply for promotion.
- Immediate revision and announcement of clear promotion criteria, transparent processes, and equitable opportunities can support women's upward mobility in this sector.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SECTOR

On Recruitment:
- HR managers need to collect data to understand why not enough women are applying to this sector.
- HR managers must apply more formal and transparent recruitment and selection processes.
- HR managers should adopt merit-based and gender-inclusive recruitment to avoid negative differential treatment of women applicants.

On Retention:
- HR managers should collect and analyze data about what may be pushing women out of this sector.
- Long tenure and retention should not be taken as an indicator of women's quality of experience in this sector. HR managers need to collect more data on women's experiences.
• Immediate enactment and enforcement of policies to protect women are needed for women to increase their willingness to stay on the job.
• HR managers should design and implement organization-wide training on anti-discrimination policies and anti-harassment protections.
• Provide better work-life balance options and mechanisms to support women's retention in this sector.

On Promotion:
• HR managers need to better support women occupying top positions in this sector through better policies and benefits.
• HR managers should recognize the role of women in top decision-making positions in inspiring and supporting other women in this sector.
• HR managers should head-hunt and target qualified women to lead top positions in this sector.

On Promotion:
• HR managers need to better support women occupying top positions in this sector through better policies and benefits.
• HR managers should recognize the role of women in top decision-making positions in inspiring and supporting other women in this sector.
• HR managers should head-hunt and target qualified women to lead top positions in this sector.
• Training and development opportunities should be directly linked to opportunities and requirements for promotion and upward mobility prospects.

STEM SECTOR

On Recruitment:
• HR managers need to collect data to understand why not enough women are applying to this sector.
• HR managers need to push for the implementation of gender-inclusive recruitment and retention across this sector.
• Partnering with universities, NGOs, other employers can help widen the pool of applicants for more female nationals.
• Showcasing successful role models for women in this sector can inspire and encourage more women to apply.
• Devising and communicating gender-inclusive benefits packages to support women will better encourage women to apply.

On Retention:
• HR managers should collect and analyze data about what may be pushing women out of this sector.
• For women with high tenure, HR needs to collect data to understand whether tenure is linked to quality of experience.
• Revise compensation and benefits to ensure gender-inclusive policies supporting women employed in this sector.
• Train staff and decision-makers on supporting women through GBV-free workplaces and dignified treatment of women.
EMPLOYERS IN ACTION
Employers and decision-makers play a pivotal role in changing policies, practices, and workplace cultures. Across the world and in the Arab region particularly, economies have suffered devastating economic and socio-political blows, coupled with the stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic, and women have had to bear the brunt of the economic recession. Rising rates of unemployment disproportionately affect women and so designing inclusive policies is crucial to economic recovery, social development, and gender equality.

The KIP Index and Lived Experiences Index constitute the basis for our call to action at CIBL for Women. Our team of academics and practitioners is dedicated to partnering with employers across key sectors in the Arab MENA economies to improve recruitment, retention, and promotion policies and practices for women.

If you are a decision-maker willing to begin designing and implementing gender-inclusive policies and practices, then CIBL for Women is ready to assist and provide the knowledge and expertise needed to move the women of this region forward, with dignity, security, and upward career trajectories. CIBL for Women’s latest initiative entitled the Support to Accelerate Women’s Inclusion (SAWI) program constitutes a six-year plan to identify employers across the region and co-design policies to improve women’s recruitment, retention, and promotion.

The #RIBLeffect, starts with us. Employers in action today will make tomorrow’s workplaces more inclusive for secure and dignified recruitment, retention, and promotion of women.

Join the movement for change in the region
From the region, for the region
(#RIBLeffect)
GENERAL DISCLAIMER: The Policy Templates and materials related to the SAWI Project are intended to assist employers, HR managers, and other decision-makers as they strive to improve workplace policies and practices related to more inclusive recruitment, retention, and promotion (RRP) within their organization. While we have made every attempt to provide templates relating to HR policies that are accurate and draw from a broad range of regional and international standards, it is not possible to include the technical detailing nor the discussion of everything necessary to ensure a gender-inclusive RRP working environment in a presentation of this nature. Thus, the information provided by the SAWI Project, its staff, and partners must be understood as a tool for addressing workplace policies, rather than an exhaustive statement of an employer’s legal obligations, which are defined by statute, regulations, and standards of their local industry standards, and national legislative landscape. Likewise, to the extent that this information references practices or procedures that may enhance inclusive RRP but which are not required by a statute, regulation, or standard, it cannot, and does not, create additional legal obligations. Finally, over time, regulators may modify rules and interpretations in light of new technology, information, or circumstances; to keep apprised of such developments, or to review information on a wide range of inclusive HR topics. All information, toolkits, templates, and other related material under the SAWI project is provided therefore as a free of charge guide, and is, therefore «as is» without warranty of any kind of risk."