



New Deal, New Game for Women in Africa

OPUS 3

Impulse, Implement, Impact

Women in Africa

Initiative

95 billion dollars per year is what the unequal treatment of women on the labor market cost to Sub-Saharan Africa between 2010 and 2014¹. Pan-African institutions as well as African regional economic commissions and the majority of African countries are currently implementing gender mainstreaming agendas in hope to tackle gender inequalities. These agendas require to be accompanied by strong endeavors working towards the implementation of concrete actions to close the gender gap.

Africa's ability to build sustainable growth depends greatly on its capacity to further and strengthen the involvement of women in the shaping of new prosperity models. Women in Africa is a global initiative which aims to deliver actionable solutions for the economic development of the African continent by way of three main activities:

- **WIA SUMMIT:** An annual global economic summit connecting women leaders from Africa and beyond in order to drive women's influence on change and innovation on the continent – WIA Summit answers the necessity to connect African women at the global level into an international network
- **WIA ACCELERATOR:** A non-profit structure, a foundation to support and fund businesses led or managed by women in Africa – WIA Accelerator intends to inspire a new generation by supporting groundbreaking ideas led by African women
- **WIA CAPITAL:** A global impact investment fund generated for and by women to finance Africa's sustainable development – WIA Capital intends to tap into the huge potential represented by women in Africa for a significant social and economic impact globally.

Through its summit, foundation and global investment fund, the Women in Africa Initiative aims to lead the sponsoring of new governance and new economic growth models that are powered by and empowering to women in African and beyond.

AMBITION

Women in Africa aims to create the first global network for women leaders and executives.

Women in Africa is determined to expand the role and influence of African women.

Women in Africa supports the emergence of innovative ideas that have a social and economic impact.

Women in Africa will offer a unique database on gender in Africa.

Women in Africa is a global, integrated, inclusive platform that will bring together 1,000 delegates – including some 50 leading speakers – from Africa and the rest of the world.

Women in Africa: a new deal and a new dawn for women in Africa.

GOALS

Identify and seek out innovative strategies to support growth in more challenging global economic conditions.

Pave the way for women to attain leadership roles in the business and political world.

Fund and support women entrepreneurs.

Leverage technology to bridge the gender gap.

Strengthen the role of women in conflict resolution and peace-building.

Improve access to education and healthcare.

1 UNDP - African Human Development Report 2016

Interview

Addressing challenges to African female empowerment in a fresh way



Wendy Luhabe
Chairman, Women in
Infrastructure & Energy (WINDE);
President of the Women in
Africa Summit

The African diversity (socio-economic, political, ethnic/religious, etc.) seems to be a double edged sword: how does it add complexity for those looking to help women contribute more to African development?

"The idea is not to look for people to help Women to contribute to Africa's Development, the idea is to change Africa's narrative from dependency to self – determination through a collaborative approach to find solutions that can respond to the challenges in our respective countries. We intend to share ideas, best practice and experience that enable Women Leaders to exercise their influence and leverage their power more effectively. People who want to help will have to fit into an agenda that we will define ourselves."

What conditions do you think are necessary for a sustainable change in Africa with regards to women's [economic] empowerment to take place?

"Women need to have access to resources, opportunities and knowledge to play a meaningful role in society. All three need a policy environment that is responsive to the systematic disadvantage that women inherit due to their gender e.g., ownership of Property, inheritance rights, marital rights etc."

In your opinion, what may lack in the existing initiatives that aim to empower African women?

"Many of the Programs are imposed by Organizations that assume they know what African Women need. Secondly, Women are historically not part of determining the best solutions to address their challenges. Thirdly, Women are not given an opportunity to manage these Programs to ensure there is ownership by the community. The irony is that Women in Africa know best what they need to empower themselves, but everyone assumes they don't, especially if they are not educated."

For organizations looking to positively empower African women, what benefits might a light footprint approach bring to them?

"This must be explored with the women at the Summit. I support the idea of enabling local Women to be agents of change and leverage partnerships. Again, I must emphasize, we are not looking for Organizations to positively empower African Women, we are looking for partners."

We are looking for groundbreaking solutions. The world is a different place, the majority of Africa's population is young people and we are shaping their future."

The Women in Africa Summit

The WIA Inaugural Summit will launch the WIA Initiative's innovative approach to sponsor women-led solutions for Africa's economic progress. Under the theme New Deal, New Game for Women in Africa, the WIA Summit will focus on African key economic sectors such as energy, ICT, agriculture, health etc. and will be organized around 5 axis allowing the fair representation of the diversity of opportunities and initiatives currently being led by women in Africa and for Africa.

RE-THINK GLOBAL ECONOMY

Economists, influencers, business leaders are reframing Africa's power & influence within the global economy. They will exchange ideas with those from the new economy.

TAKING THE LEAD

A generation of African women has already played a crucial role in the development of Africa. This axis will incite these African women leaders to share their stories and vision with the public.

AFRICA OF TOMORROW

A young generation of African women is building the future of Africa. This axis will bring to the stage young innovators and leaders that will present their vision and imagination for the Africa of tomorrow.

REVERSE INNOVATION

African women create more and more innovative businesses that can serve the rest of the world. This axis will promote growth and innovation models carried from Africa to the rest of the world.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

African cultures are at the heart of new industries contributing to the economic growth of the continent. This axis will allow innovation and the economic power from creative industries to be represented during the Summit.

The first edition of the WIA Summit is establish the WIA community whose role and commitment is to sponsor the influence of women in Africa and lead the pathway to promote women-led business and leadership initiatives in Africa.

An inclusive platform for interactive discussion, the WIA Summit is set to become the leading global network of decision-takers and change-makers committed for Africa's economic development. Under the theme **New Deal, New Game for Women in Africa**, the WIA Summit intends to deliver a fresh approach to the curation of a global economic event through its focus on the influence and actions taken by women in Africa.

Who is involved?

The WIA Summit will welcome 60 speakers and 800 delegates from over 50 countries to exchange and partner together to drive new solutions for Africa's economic development through women. Those invited include global leaders in politics, business and society, young innovators and change-makers in business, tech science and culture, influencers and bloggers, media and press.

The Women in Africa Initiative will kickoff the WIA Summit's inaugural edition in Africa's diplomatic capital, Addis-Ababa, from May 17th to 19th 2017. Home of the African Union, Addis Ababa is a vibrant city that has a burgeoning startup and creative scene combined with highly-developed transportation infrastructures and a rich cultural history.

Agenda

This first edition will respond to a series of determining objectives for WIA Initiative's sustainability and impact. The axes will be developed through a three-day event, each day's content being related to the following objectives.

DAY 1 INSPIRE : Design the Path to Growth

The first day will be dedicated to introduce our topics of discussion and for the attendees to meet.

DAY 2 EXCHANGE : Build the growth

The WIA Summit is set to build as a platform of exchange on innovative solutions leading to concrete actions to the sponsoring and promotion of these solutions. The second day will therefore aim to build the discussion and lead interactive conversations.

DAY 3 PARTNER : Accelerate the growth

The third and last day will consolidate the suggestions and decisions that have been formulated throughout the conference and ensure the continuity of the actions taken.

Women in Africa Initiative Summit

Entrepreneurs' Showcase & Awards

African women's involvement in the region's private sector is crucial to ensure sustainable growth and development. Today, Africa, and especially Sub-Saharan African, is the world region counting the largest number of female entrepreneurs; but many of these initiatives have yet to unlock their full potential.

WIA Initiative, through its WIA Summit, aims to create the largest network of influential women working towards the development and growth of the African continent. The necessity to promote African female entrepreneurs' endeavors stands as one of the core arguments behind the foundation of WIA Initiative, that is why Women in Africa decided, in partnership with Roland Berger, to implement two programs to promote and reward African middle-sized companies led or managed by African female entrepreneurs.

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ENTREPRENEURS' ARENA

Fifteen to twenty small and middle size enterprises, created and led by African women will be selected and invited to showcase in the "Entrepreneurs' Arena", a 300 square-meter exhibition space set to be located near the entrance of WIA Summit's Main Conference Hall. This location and the space allocated guarantees great exposure to the companies. Their visibility will also be increased thanks to promotion on WIA's communication medium. In addition, a series of tailor-made business meetings will be organized for the companies selected and present in the Entrepreneurs' Arena.

CHANGE-MAKERS AWARDS

The Change Makers Awards, which will be restituted on the second evening of the Summit constitutes in WIA Initiative's second endeavor to promote African-based women entrepreneurship through the summit. These awards are meant to celebrate and encourage the six most innovative, recent and groundbreaking initiatives carried by African-based women entrepreneurs in the key economic sectors in Africa, namely agriculture, energy, education, ICT and health. The prize of the Awards is double: it includes funding and mentoring throughout the year.

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For both programs a high-level jury composed of world leaders and African business women will get involved. Women in Africa and Roland Berger have set up a list of criteria to identify and select the potential companies that will be rewarded. **A call for projects will then be launched in early January 2017.**

Series synopsis

Reminder

Roland Berger and the Women in Africa organization see Africa in the process of creating its own unique development path toward greater growth. The multiple and fundamental roles African women play in the public and private spheres are key to lead Africa to this brighter future and we believe therefore women should be placed central to this new model. The question is: how can Africa empower women and allow a more inclusive and sustainable development? What could be the impact on the rest of the world?

We have looked to answer these questions in a series of points of view to be released in 6 episodes concluded by the inaugural Forum Women in Africa May, 17-19 May 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A short summary of each opus is below.

1 DEFINITION – WOMEN IN AFRICA: WHICH ROLES, WHICH MODELS?

As an introduction to this series, we will start by showing the multiple faces of African women, as well as their roles in the numerous circles they influence. Although Africa is a diverse continent, one commonality can be observed: women are the backbone of society, the fundamental basis that makes everything work. We will deep-dive into the **various roles and responsibilities women have in Africa**, and we will mirror it with the rest of the world. We will explain what women's empowerment stands for in our minds.



June 2016

2 CURRENT SITUATION: CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO AFRICA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Episode 2 of the series will emphasize the contribution of women to the economic growth and development of Africa in a more quantitative way. With different angles – demographics, formal and informal activity, representation in business institutions and civil society, social and cultural impacts – we will size the **enormous contribution of women to the African society**, outline its evolution throughout the past decades and try to determine how much greater it could be if we were to unleash their potential.



September 2016

3 CHALLENGES AND POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Helped by a conjunction of positive factors, African women have seen their situation improve over the past decades. However, to reveal their potential, there are still several hurdles to overcome. Our third part will identify the **key challenges** that continue to prevent women from contributing more to the development of Africa, and will suggest **potential solutions** to empower them, with practical actions on some key topics, from education to jobs and social structures.



November 2016

4 PORTRAITS: AFRICAN WOMEN'S PATHS

There are **great success stories of influential women** who have decided to take the power in Africa. These women must become role-models for all the young African girls who will soon have a decisive role to play. Cultural change must first come from the women themselves and from their confidence in their ability to become the leaders of tomorrow. They will be instrumental in the emergence of a new African development model. Thus, our fourth part will be dedicated to these inspiring African women, who have various backgrounds and very different profiles.



Launching in China, Beijing, January 2017

5 LEARNINGS FOR THE WORLD

In spite of all the imperfections mentioned before, some cases can be highlighted, where inspiring initiatives developed in Africa helped bringing women to the forefront of society. Our fifth episode will try to summarize all the **learnings and best practices** witnessed on the African continent that can be replicated elsewhere, and those which are very specific to the continent's culture and environment.



Launching for the international Woman Day on March 8th, 2017, simultaneously in France and Germany

6 FUTURE: WHAT ROADMAP FOR AFRICAN WOMEN?

As a conclusion to this study, we will propose a **roadmap** for the empowerment of women in Africa, giving the immediate next steps that must be taken to help Africans have a better life. During the annual forum, we will mobilize a taskforce that will lead the actions discussed.



Launching for the Women in Africa,
17-19th May 2017 in Addis Ababa

Women in Africa: what challenges prevent women from contributing more to African economic growth and development, and what can be done to solve them?

Helped by a conjunction of positive factors, African women have seen their situation improve over the past decades. However, to unleash their full potential, there are still several hurdles to overcome. The third part in our series will identify the key challenges that continue to prevent women from contributing more to the development of Africa, and will suggest a fresh approach for developing solutions to empower them, thereby driving sustainable change in the future.

PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THE EMPOWERMENT OF AFRICAN WOMEN – THERE IS STILL OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE

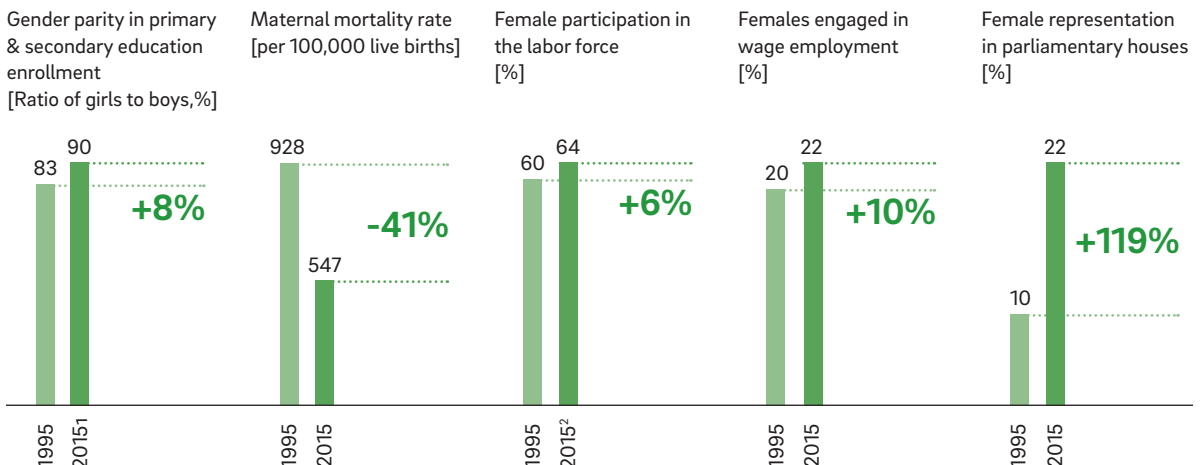
In Opus 2, we showed the significant contribution and impact African women have had on the economic and social development of the continent. We acknowledged that **women supply over half of the economic goods and food production**, contribute to the informal economy by acting in a plurality of roles, and influence decision-making through traditional central roles in families and communities. Whether recognized formally or not, African society is heavily dependent on contributions from women.

As we have argued, **much of this output is relegated to the informal sector as gender biases prevail in economic, social and political structures**, such that the true contribution of women is stunted. The **UN estimates the economic loss of gender disparity to Sub-Saharan Africa at around USD 95 billion per year, or approximately 6% of GDP**. Present-day leading indicators, however, show that progress is being made on women's empowerment and gender parity across Africa, granting them the freedom to make positive development impact. Over recent years, positive trends have continued across several key categories: education, health, employment and leadership.

An increasing number of girls are attending school due to policies and community initiatives encouraging awareness and mobilization of schools and provision of free schools, uniforms and meals. The primary education enrollment gender gap is nearly at parity, and positive progress has been seen in secondary and tertiary education as well. Access to healthcare has advanced, resulting in improved women's health. In the last 20 years, maternal mortality rates have dropped by 41% in sub-Saharan Africa and by 59% in Northern Africa. In Rwanda for example, the share of women to report lack of money as the main barrier to healthcare access has declined from 71% to 53% between 2005 and 2010.

Economically, more women are participating in the workforce and are moving out of the informal sector into salaried/wage jobs. General globalization and trade, as well as improvements in education, health and benefits have helped to open more opportunities for women. While informal work and agriculture still represent a large percentage of the type of jobs women hold, the International Labor Office reports a 10% increase in waged labor in Sub-Saharan Africa and 24% in northern Africa, mainly within service roles including clerks, retail shops and services.

A. 1995-2015: TWENTY YEARS OF PROGRESS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA



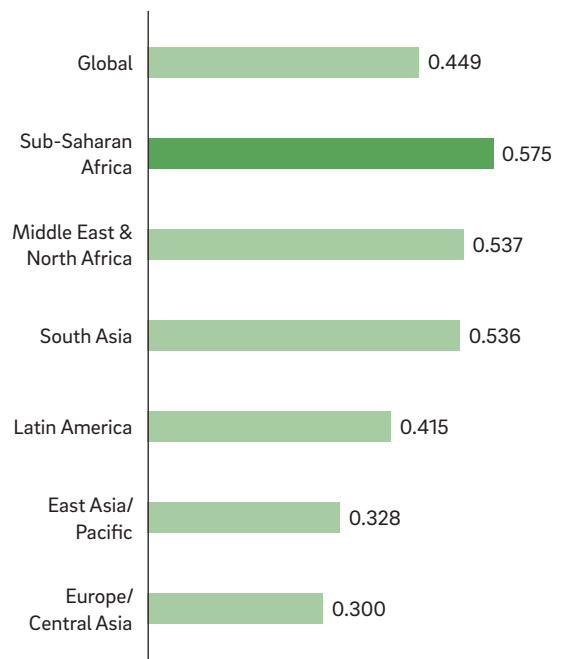
1 Most recent data from 2013; 2 Most recent data from 2014

Source: UNDP

African women are being recognized and are participating in an increased number of leadership roles. For example, due to quota targets and other programs, we see more women holding seats in government today than a decade ago. Between 1995 and 2015, the proportion of seats held by women in parliamentary positions increased in 24 countries. There is also a greater percentage of female shareholders and companies headed by women.

Despite such positive progress, additional opportunities to improve still exist, especially when we compare against similar developing countries. **Sub-Saharan Africa still has the highest UN Gender Inequality Index** figure, indicating greater disparity between males and females compared to all other regions in the world on metrics relating to reproductive health, empowerment and labor. Seven of the ten most unequal countries in the world are found in Africa (most in southern Africa).

B. UNITED NATIONS GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX [GII 2014]



Source: UNDP

THE CHALLENGES AREN'T NEW – WE HAVE KNOWN ABOUT THEM FOR YEARS

Women's empowerment has been on the African and global agenda for at least 35 years. The 1979 Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women has been signed by almost all African countries. More than half of African nations have ratified the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa and the African Union has declared 2010-2020 as the African Women's Decade. The challenges women face have been acknowledged, discussed and nations have committed to solving them for decades.

Ensuring educational quality, access and retention

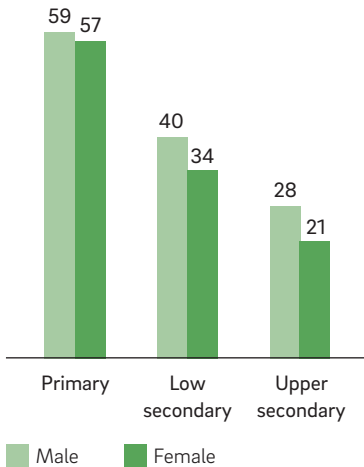
Despite earlier acknowledged improvements in enrollment, completion rates falter as these girls grow into women. In secondary education completion, there is little improvement in the gender bias due to issues stemming from poverty, social exclusion, geography, natural disasters, poor-quality education, and armed conflicts. When making decisions about who to send to school and/or who will remain, families will often pick male over female children if economics is a concern. In other instances, monthly menstrual cycles are enough to keep girls from school one week per month. As a result, less than four women for every ten men receive some secondary education. For those who do remain in school, the Brookings Institute estimates that 37% in Sub-Saharan Africa will not learn basic skills (that is, will not be able to read and write with fluency or successfully complete numeracy tasks). UNICEF reports that educated women are less likely to marry early and against their will; less likely to die in childbirth; more likely to have healthy babies; and are more likely to send their children to school. **Without consistent access to continued quality education, women are less likely to enter into this positive cycle** and will lack the skills necessary to take on higher-qualification and better-paid positions within the economy.

Guaranteeing quality healthcare and personal safety

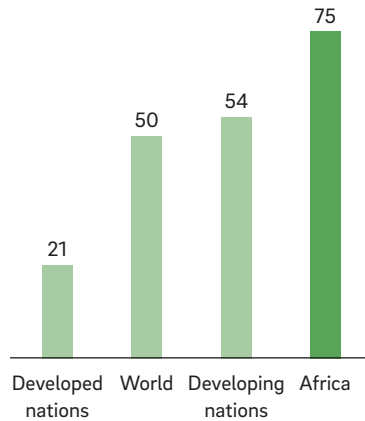
Africa has made great progress in improving women's health. Maternal mortality rates have dropped significantly, however, Africa is still home to sixteen of the top-20 countries with the highest maternal mortality rates per capita. Additionally, high rates of gender-based violence, child marriages, low family planning usage and HIV/AIDS remain key health concerns

C. OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN FEMALE EDUCATION, HEALTH & ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN AFRICA

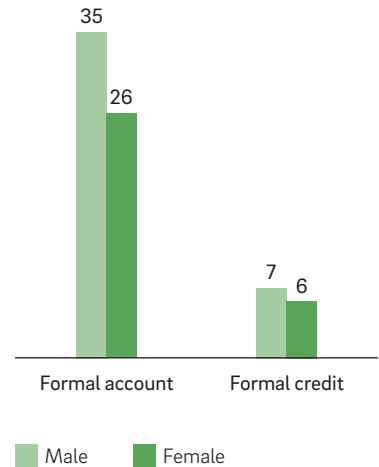
Sub-Saharan school completion rates
[2016, %]



Live births per 1,000 adolescent girls
aged 15-19 [2014]



Access to financial services by gender in
Sub-Saharan Africa [2015, %]



for women in Africa. A staggering 46% of African women experience some sort of sexual or physical violence in their lifetimes, including domestic rape and female genital mutilation. In some cultures this violence is considered socially and culturally acceptable. African adolescent girls age 15-19 still have one of the highest birth rates in the world. **Low birth rates are highly correlated with higher literacy and economic output**, but lack of access, education and practice around family planning in Africa makes it difficult for women and men to make informed family decisions. Furthermore, the rate of HIV has remained largely stagnant since the 1990's where of the 11.6 million people in sub-Saharan Africa with HIV/AIDS, 55% are women. As with many other social challenges, access to health resources and security puts African women, especially the poor, at greater risk of physical, mental and sexual health issues which ultimately keep them from developing to their full potential and contributing to their communities.

Economic and political inclusion

Though women may be the backbone of the family unit, the economy and food production, they face systemic issues in maintaining well-paid employment, attaining

land ownership and access to financial institutions and participating in political discourse. The female labor force participation rate is still roughly 50 percentage points below the male rate. Where data is available, the gender wage gap ranges from 17% to as high as 39%. One reason amongst many for lack of economic inclusion is that women often unevenly bear the burden of household work and child care, preventing them from participating actively in the workplace. In addition to employment gaps, women lack access to financial services. Only 1% of women own land, preventing them from using land collateral to gain access to formal financial services. They are also notably underrepresented in banking as they are 20% less likely to have an account when compared to men, largely due to restrictions that require a male family member's permission. With these barriers, women are often unable to invest in healthcare and education – further driving gender gaps in these areas – and perpetuating the current cycle.

While increased female presence in political discourse can help lead to greater prioritization of women's issues, many African states still lag behind the minimum Millennium Development Goal target of 30% of women in leadership or managerial positions

within the government. Without these higher power positions, women face challenges in bringing their beneficial policies to fruition and ensuring they have lasting impact.

Cultivation of self-confidence and positive self-image

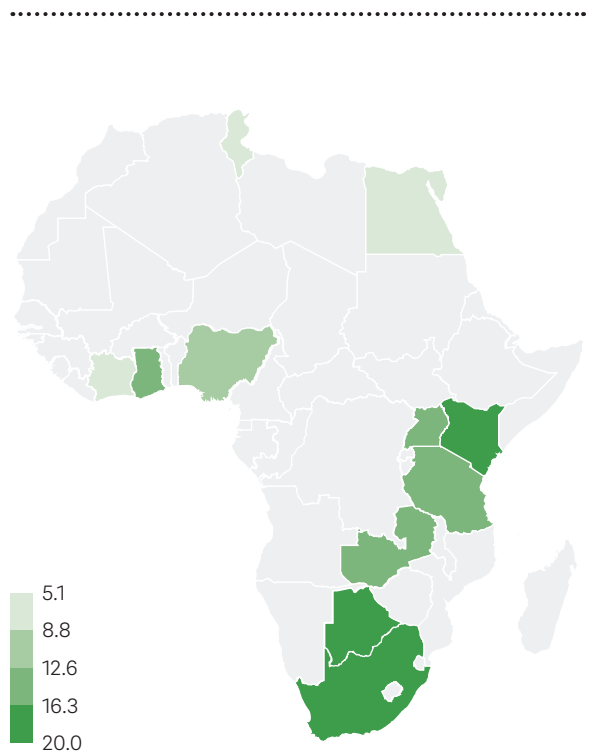
The other challenges mentioned can all be further perpetuated if women do not have the confidence or belief that they can do anything about them. As Cina Lawson, Minister of Post and Digital Economy in Togo, puts it: the "aberrant idea that certain areas of expertise, positions or promotions should be reserved for men" is a "major challenge to women empowerment;" and "it gets harder to beat the odds" as this pervasive mindset engenders in women a lack of confidence to stand up and make a change or speak up about issues as simple as the difficulty in finding work life balance for example. The lack of role models further solidifies these notions. Besides being underrepresented politically, women still struggle in business to obtain leadership positions. Today, according to the African Development Bank, the continental average of women sitting in boardrooms is estimated to be 4.6% lower than the global average (12.7% vs. 17.3%), though 32.9% of firms do not have female representation on their boards and 33.6% have only one. In addition, boardroom presence is concentrated in certain regions, making it difficult for women in other nations to benefit from these female role models.

CHANGE DEMANDS A NEW MINDSET WHICH IS DIFFICULT DUE TO REGIONAL DIVERSITY AND COMPLEXITY

Although the challenges are known, improvement can prove to be difficult, particularly when the challenges are reflections of an embedded belief system and mindset. With these hurdles rooted in the mentalities and cultural identities passed from generation to generation, gender biases and behaviors become entrenched in the political, economic, and social systems of each nation. These are not challenges that can be wiped away in a single generation. They demand sustained exposure to new thinking, ability and resources to change and intrinsic incentives for behavior change in both women and men.

Governments, NGOs and corporations looking to evolve how Africans think and act on gender issues

D. FEMALE BOARD DIRECTORS IN AFRICA [% of representation]



Source: African Development Bank

must deal with complex issues and diversity across the continent. In creating solutions, these issues are not single-sided; they are multi-faceted and interconnected. In many cases, they must be targeted in parallel in order to make real progress. For example, an improvement in economic opportunity may demand improvement in health and higher education as well as more liberal policies for financial credit; resulting in a need for significant coordination to create an environment for sustainable change. Another difficulty is that while challenges can be summarized at a high level, the diversity of the African continent – even within nations – creates different manifestations of the issues that must be targeted in order to have an impact.

ACKNOWLEDGING AFRICAN DIVERSITY IN SOLUTION SETTING

Diversity is a key issue when contemplating solutions regarding the empowerment of African women. Various plans have been suggested to improve women's abilities to contribute to African development, but many of them overlook the diverse nature of the continent. Africa is built upon countless cultures and backgrounds, a key reason why universal remedies cannot work, and why projects may find large disparities in application success.

For example, many organizations pointed to poor enrollment rates as the cause for lack of development in African female education. Yet, education needs vary from nation to nation and vary even further based on rural versus developed areas within each country. With these differences in local schooling systems, a program aimed at increasing enrollment rates in rural Zimbabwe will not be the same as one focused on Niger.

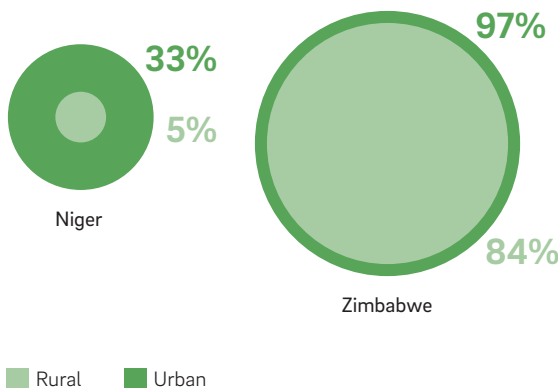
In rural regions like northwest Nigeria, girls are often removed from school to collect water or care for their siblings. Of the few girls that are lucky enough to attend, half of them cannot read by the time they complete grade six. This is due to a shortage of both educational supplies and qualified teachers. Additionally, two-thirds

of the students face problems like anemia, which prevent them from focusing on any learning altogether. In the city of Lagos, Nigeria, the situation is quite different, as most girls do not have to deal with such health or economic concerns. Thus, a solution to increase school completion rates by focusing on basic issues related to gender roles, educational resources, and health improvement may help in northwest Nigeria but may not result in the same efficacy in Lagos.

Developmental diversity is not the only type of variance that can affect how well solutions make an impact. Religion and ethnicity also play a great role in underlying how challenges manifest themselves across the continent. **Africa has the greatest mix of faiths in the world**, which results in disparities between fundamental beliefs and morals. Hundreds of ethnicities exist per country as well. In a country like Nigeria, there are over 250 ethnic African groups (including Hausa and Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Ibo 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, Tiv 2.5%). However, Chad, a neighboring nation, is made up of 200 different groups, with mostly Arabs in the North. Given the degree at which the empowerment of women relies on a change in mindset, it would require a very tailored approach for each region because of the multiple religions and cultures across the continent.

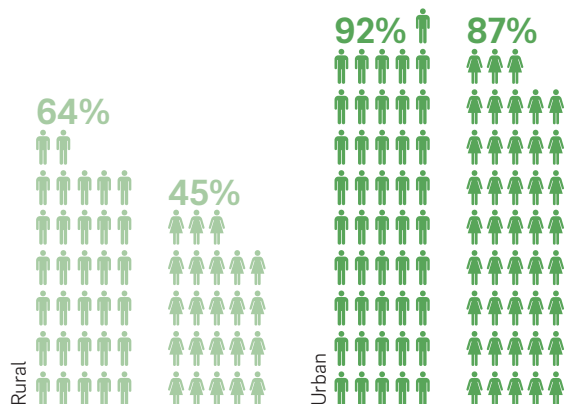
E. DIVERSITY OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BETWEEN & WITHIN COUNTRIES

Adult literate women in urban and rural areas
[% , latest census]



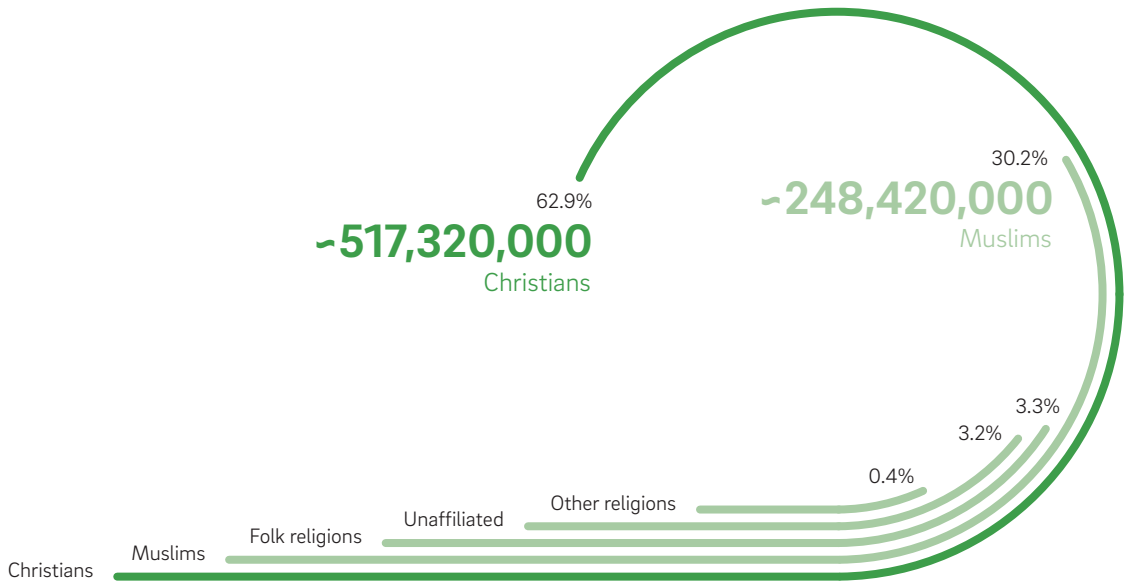
Source: United Nations, Demographic Yearbook data collections, 2009

Rate of completion of 6th Grade by 15-19 year olds in Nigeria
[2013, %]



Source: World Bank

F. MAJOR RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA [2010]



Source: pewforum.org

In addition to religion and ethnicity, the level of civil and political unrest varies from country to country. Conflict can invite as much opportunity for women as it can violence. There are many instances of rape, kidnapping and other violence against women in areas of civil unrest around Africa. And the need to protect the vulnerable is certainly a priority for these areas and may require more supervision and caution given the uncertainty of the environment. But, there are also examples in which women have had an opportunity to advance their positions politically and economically. In the Sierra Leone civil war in the 1990s, women took the opportunity to band together and form networks to promote peace, democracy and their inclusion into discussion. Women also were able to take on more economic responsibility while the men were at war. While results remain mixed post-war, Sierra Leone has seen a permanent increase in the number of local and international NGOs headed by women with the focus of empowerment for women. Similarly, Liberia presents another positive example in which unrest provided an opportunity to increase women's empowerment in the

political system. Tired of the violence, women's peace-building groups mobilized hundreds of rallies and peaceful protests that brought leaders to peace talks. The movement culminated in the first female, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, to be elected head of state. Countries at war present unique challenges and opportunities for women empowerment to be navigated.

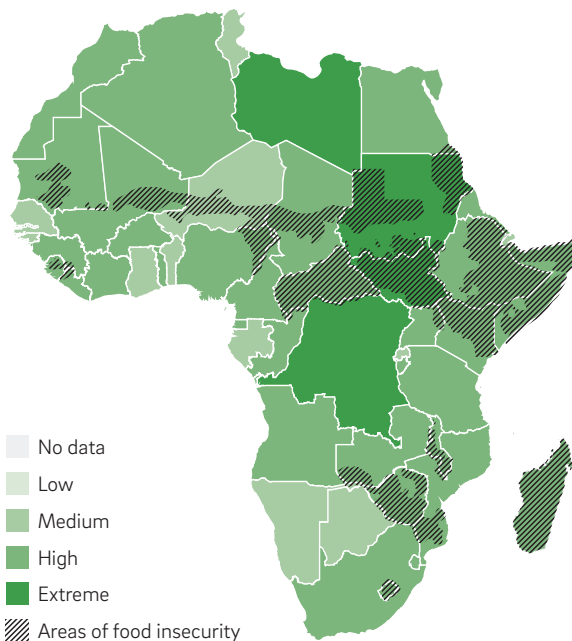
Given the aforementioned diversity, "one-size fits all" remedies will likely not aid women's plight in Africa. Customized solutions require additional planning, but are necessary to create the greatest positive impact for women on a continent as diverse as Africa. A targeted solution can add complexity and cost, so a pathway must be identified that balances broad impact and captures the nuances of each region. When approached in the right way, successful solutions would not look to trade empowerment for diversity, but to ultimately use diversity to unlock best practices to share across regions.

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS DEMAND A LIGHT FOOTPRINT APPROACH

In such a diverse and uncertain environment, there is neither a silver bullet that can be applicable to all situations nor is it realistic to outline all possible solutions for each context. Instead, we have developed a set of principles that, when applied, can aid in developing solutions to create a positive impact on African women development.

We believe one such sustainable and effective framework that could be used to guide solutions in Africa pertaining to women is a **light footprint approach**. Light footprint approaches have their roots in military tactics; while violence is not the recommendation, given the serious nature of the challenges in Africa, there is a parallel between a military-like approach ongoing battles, affecting dramatic shifts and creating lasting changes.

G. RISK OF FOOD AND CIVIL UNREST IN AFRICA [2016]



Source: UNICEF, 2016

Core to the approach, five central principles apply to creating new initiatives:

Create a flexible centralized/decentralized structure

To ensure coordination and broad application of initiatives, programs should have core aims and objectives driven centrally. However, to capture the nuances of each community, the design, operations and implementation can be done locally.

Enable local agents of change

Programs should be designed to harness local participants in affecting change in their communities. By inviting local people to participate, behaviors are modeled by members of the community and programs have a greater chance of continuation after sponsorship ends.

Leverage collaborations and partnerships rather than resource build-up

Building up resources across regions can be costly; it is more beneficial to leverage collaboration with partners, even local ones, that express similar goals to efficiently spread resources. Half the battle is knowing which groups are working in a certain geography or on a certain issue, but once common ground is found, partnerships can elevate the outcomes.

Have an element of surprise

The approach reminds its users to keep strategies fresh, looking at problems and solutions from unexpected angles. In a military or business context this can be equated to keeping a level of secrecy, but in terms of creating solutions for human development issues, creativity is what is needed. Creative solutions often come from first understanding issue root causes and developing ideas that serve to answer the real underlying needs of the audience.

Anticipate and plan to minimize negative reaction and collateral damage

Anticipating and minimizing negative reprise will ensure that solutions are more effective and efficient immediately. With culturally ingrained local biases against African women, many people may react severely to the suggestion of change.

LESSONS IN APPLICATION CAN BE LEARNED FROM BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Organizations looking to empower women in Africa can look to follow the light footprint approach by learning from successful examples put into practice. One example targeting education, health and self-confidence comes from rural Ghana where literacy is an issue. Lessons are instead given through Talking Book—an audio device that plays monthly programs on family planning, farming and economics. This creative, non-traditional method of communication presents content targeted at the audience it is residing in and presents it in various ways, paying attention to the dynamics of the culture and environment. For instance, its family planning advice is given through a soup opera drama, a format that gets a fairer hearing than a lecture for a conservative and sensitive audience. As a result, the area has seen an increase in women implementing family and farming techniques they have learned.

Or, one can look to the Google partnership in Togo to set up a digital boot camp to see how a light footprint approach can increase women's access and participation in business as well as helping instill a sense of confidence and leadership. The partnership is able to impact more women more efficiently and effectively to expose women to empowerment opportunities than either organization could do on its own. The government infrastructure helps to attract the participants, and Google provides the best-in-class quality of experience and education.

But, a light approach could be as simple as getting women together to exchange ideas. Organized centrally, it's an approach that can be adapted to whatever local environment and topics. It also empowers its audience to be agents of change in their communities at home expanding the reach of its resources exponentially. As Minister Lawson explains, just setting up an environment that allows for the exchange of knowledge, experience and ideas across Africa for women business leaders has led to quicker development, application of solutions locally and renewed self-confidence through meeting role models.

LIGHT FOOTPRINT APPROACH CASE STUDY

One powerful example of a light footprint approach at work is Tostan, an organization which started in Senegal

and looks to empower women in rural communities through establishing community networks of education. Tostan is a three-year non-formal education program that covers issues around human rights, democracy, health and hygiene, literacy and numeracy and income generation as well as sets up community management committees to help sustain progress. It looks to tackle each of the main challenges women face: education, health, economic and political empowerment and self-confidence, but its approach is what has led to its success.

Tostan leads with a central/decentralized approach. While the basic format and tenants of the program are the same across six African countries, the program is heavily adapted to the local conditions in the 450 communities in which it operates. Tostan looks to adapt its message using local language, customs, drama, song and music to gain acceptance by making the education on health and other topics more understandable.

The program targets both men and women in the education process to engage whole communities in developing a future vision. By targeting both men and women in a shared and collaborative model, Tostan looks to minimize any detraction man may feel about women being an emphasis. The program has been particularly successful in helping communities abandon female genital mutilation because of the collaborative model.

The program also leverages collaboration and engagement of local resources both as co-creators of their vision for the future as well as the agents of change. Women are further empowered and gain confidence by being able to lead and facilitate community management committees the program participants set up. Many have graduated to become community leaders, rights advocates, and role models for other women out of the program. These women have been empowered to educate others in their community on such topics as mobile phone use, health and hygiene and accessing child health services. By engaging local participants to continue the program after Tostan has moved on not only efficiently uses resources, but also affords empowerment opportunities and sustainable change to the women in the area.

Interview

Importance of developing leaders for greater female empowerment



Cina Lawson
Minister of Post and Digital
Economy, Togo

In your experience, how do we empower African women?

"It is clear that, in our African countries, strengthening women's leadership leads to female empowerment, just as it fosters access to decent work. It's time we promoted parity. I believe two requirements are crucial: Firstly, access to education is unavoidable, because it is the only way to access culture and knowledge; and secondly support through mentoring to encourage their free will and boost self-confidence. The development of professional women's networks help to increase visibility and achievement to positions of influence by helping women share their experiences and knowledge. Meeting and interacting with women leaders is a great way for younger women to model themselves after female role models."

You yourself are Western educated, do you think a Western experience helps women to be better equipped in terms of education and network?

"An international experience helps when you are trying to become successful, but it does not necessarily need to be in a Western country. For example, going to another African country will achieve a similar effect since learning from our neighbors is the easiest and the most efficient way to develop our skills. These kinds of experiences help women learn about new opportunities, and they also help them discover different approaches and mentalities. These tools and this openness can help to overcome obstacles more easily."

How are you educating and expanding the network of young potential female leaders in Togo?

"The Ministry of Posts and Digital Economy of Togo leads several projects to support young people, build capacity and reward great performance. We first look to identify these talents. We hold competitive events and scholarship programs. We sponsor a scholarship program targeting female students in the ICT field and co-organize an annual Young Entrepreneurs' Forum, to provide young Togolese entrepreneurs with theoretical and practical knowledge needed to create sustainable businesses.

Once identified, we look to train and support them. We have a project called "digital work environment" aimed at widespread use of ICT in high schools. Along the same lines, our young Google developers' community, the Women Techmakers, regularly organizes workshops and events. Other initiatives we've implemented include the "Female Techcamp," with the Embassy of the United States and the ICT Girl Day, run by our Telecom Regulatory Authority (ART&P). In addition, we also have a women-only incubator called "Innov'up" to support and assist women across many levels of entrepreneurship. We aim to reveal talent and high potential and encourage women to become leaders."

Women in Africa

INITIATIVE GOVERNANCE

The ambition of Women in Africa is the one of a whole generation of women asserting their ability to transcend the limits that are set against them.



Aude de Thuin,
President of the WIA Initiative

Aude de Thuin, a psychologist by training, is a French entrepreneur with a special knack for creating forums and exhibitions in response to emerging social trends. Over the last fifteen years, Ms. de Thuin has committed her activities to building recognition for the role of women in society. In 2016, she launched WOMEN IN AFRICA Ltd (WIA), a global initiative delivering actionable solutions for the economic development of Africa through women, supported by African and international women, members of the WIA Advisory Board or WIA Ambassadors. Aude is the author of several essays, a speaker at events around the world and a regular commentator in the media; she is regularly invited to participate in discussions on women's issues with governmental groups, private associations and think tanks.



Wendy Luhabe,
President of WIA Summit

Wendy Luhabe has been a pioneering social entrepreneur and economic activist for the past 20 years. She is known for developing the economic participation of women, through Wiphold, a portfolio investment company, and a venture capital equity fund for women. Ms. Luhabe has extensive Board experience in both the private and public sectors. She is on the Supervisory Board of the IMD Business School in Switzerland and Essec in France. She is an author, an accomplished public speaker and is deeply passionate about leadership, mentorship, women's development and building an ecosystem for entrepreneurship to flourish in Africa. Ms. Luhabe is a recipient of three Honorary Doctorates and is a member of the International Council of Business Women Leaders initiated by Hilary Clinton on the Economic Empowerment of Women. She was appointed to be an Honorary Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order by the Queen of England in December 2013.

ADVISORY BOARD

WIA is guided by a board of exceptional men and women who act as guardians of WIA's missions and values and contribute effectively to the success of WIA through advising WIA's President and Executive team. The Board is composed of representatives of the business community and leaders from international organizations. In their work on the Board, members do not represent any personal or professional interest.



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Co-Founder and Managing
Partner of Acosphere



Nigest Haile,
Director of Center for
Accelerated Women's
Economic Empowerment
(CAWEE)

WIA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

WIA is managed by its executive leadership. Led by Managing Director Anne-Sophie Cambay, the team comprises talented individuals from various backgrounds and representing various nationalities. The WIA Executive Committee is present internationally since its headquarters are located in Mauritius, a WIA representative office is based in Paris and several members of the executive committee are also based in Gabon and South Africa.

WIA AMBASSADORS

Local outstanding personalities commit to act as WIA Ambassadors to represent WIA in various events and act as local community coordinators, in partnership with WIA Community's Manager, Caroline Boudergue.

WIA CHAIRS

Theme-based communities are structured by WIA's Content Manager, Ndeye Diobaye, and Chaired by relevant experts. Sectorial communities enable members to delve into timely topics and current affairs with deeper focus.

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ABOUT US

Roland Berger, founded in 1967, is the only leading global consultancy of German heritage and European origin. With 2,400 employees working from 36 countries, we have successful operations in all major international markets. Our 50 offices are located in the key global business hubs. The consultancy is an independent partnership owned exclusively by 220 Partners.

Women in Africa (WIA) is a global initiative delivering actionable solutions for the economic development of Africa through women.

WIA aims at redefining the global economic governance through three ambitious activities that will bring together men and women from Africa and the rest of the world.

WIA SUMMIT, an annual global and economic forum to connect women leaders from Africa and beyond (17-19 May 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) ;

WIA ACCELERATOR, a foundation to support and fund businesses led or managed by women in Africa ;

WIA CAPITAL, a global impact investing fund, generated for and by women in Africa

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Why Addis Ababa?

As a turntable for African diplomacy and a symbol of the Ethiopian economic success, the town of Addis Ababa has been chosen to launch the inaugural edition of Women in Africa Forum.

The choice of Addis Ababa

The African Union, the UN Economic commission for Africa but also big international corporations are all headquartered in Addis Ababa, which has brought to light the Ethiopian capital on the pan African and international scene.

The presence of infrastructures combined with the diplomatic activities of Addis Ababa make it the perfect place to host big economic summits and political meetings. Ethiopian Airlines company's success and the performing hub airport also contribute to the international future of this capital in Eastern Africa.

Addis Ababa has benefited from the country's sustained growth which was the continent's most dynamic one until 2014. The capital's urbanisation perfectly reflects this dynamic economy driven by innovation and entrepreneurship, which partly rely on women.



WOMEN IN AFRICA
GLOBAL ECONOMIC FORUM

Initial partners



L'ORÉAL

