



# New Deal, New Game for Women in Africa

OPUS 2

## Impulse, Implement, Impact

# Women in Africa

## A global forum and a new dawn for women

Africa has experienced strong, sustained economic growth since the early 2000s, spurring an undercurrent of changes, including a continuing decline in poverty, the emergence of a middle class, massive urbanisation, technological and industrial developments, and increasing receptiveness to public opinion. These improvements have made Africa the “last frontier” of globalisation, but for a transformation to truly take root on the continent, women will have to play a leading role.

“After coming to that realisation and given my experience, I decided to launch the Women in Africa forum”, explains Aude de Thuin. “This will be the first global forum for women’s causes held in Africa. The Women’s Forum established in Deauville in 2005 convinced me that a forum for dialogue and discussion can make a difference, by shining the spotlight on powerful, principled women.” A huge challenge with critical economic implications lies ahead. Achieving gender equality would result in a \$12 billion increase in global GDP by 2025, representing 11% growth worldwide and 12% in sub-Saharan Africa<sup>1</sup>.

Women in Africa (WIA) is the first international economic forum dedicated to women in Africa. The inaugural edition will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in May 2017.

Women and men at the forefront of their field will travel from across the world to take part in the series of conferences on the agenda. The goals of the event are to showcase women’s successes and achievements; promote economic governance that incorporates women; and bring about solutions for the emancipation and empowerment of women, with a special focus on the economy and youth.

“Supporting African women is one of the keys to success for the continent. The time has come to tap into the huge potential and impetus represented by women’s governance. Women make up half of the African population and produce 61.9% of economic goods, but only account for 8.5% of wage-earning employees”, explains Aude de Thuin.

<sup>1</sup> McKinsey Global Institute study

### 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.

# Inspiring with charisma

## Aude de Thuin and Charles-Edouard Bouée

Women in Africa is growing and taking shape. In the past few weeks we took decisive steps for the implementation of the project. We are proud to announce that Wendy Luhabe is joining as President of the Women in Africa Forum and that a global Advisory Board has been selected.

Wendy has been fighting for the economic emancipation of young women in her country, South Africa, since the end of the Apartheid. She has been one of the pioneers of social entrepreneurship while helping African women to invest and develop new ventures. She is a role model for every woman.

The Advisory Board, composed of 12 women with outstanding careers, aims at providing food for thought before the forum towards practical solutions in order to highlight the essential role of women. Beyond the forum, these women are the faces and voices of Women in Africa.

Coming from all continents, the Advisory Board members are animated by the same energy and strongly believe in the founding idea of Women in Africa – an initiative made by and for women as a way of development. Together, we will go further and faster.

Our ambition for Women in Africa will realize itself thanks to the talent of all the personalities involved in the project. They are our role models, ready to inspire others who will later become role models themselves. That is why we are now pleased to introduce the first five women who joined us.



**Wendy Luhabe**  
Présidente de Women in Africa  
Forum



**Aude de Thuin,**  
Fondatrice de Women in Africa

The African economic landscape has been evolving so fast that it needs every talent, and particularly the ones coming from women. They are a true source of inspiration and creation, and we are convinced that they guarantee stability and security which are the cornerstones of any economic development.

With this second opus, we re-affirm our willingness to keep on contributing to the launching of Women in Africa by analysing, this time, women's potential and responsibility in the economic arena. From their necessary roles in traditional structures to their emergence among political and economic elites, we want to show how central their roles are but above all why it would be so beneficial to pursue this emancipation movement and to reveal their collective potential. It's time for action!



**Charles-Edouard Bouée,**  
CEO de Roland Berger

# Women in Africa

## ADVISORY BOARD

**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.**

**The Advisory Board is a global consultative council designed to guide the action of Women in Africa in its mission of encouraging the rise of the African continent.**

**This rise will materialize thanks to women.**

**The Advisory Board members, all drivers of change in Africa, are betting on their experience of development issues to address the topic of gender for Women in Africa.**

"The continent has to face multiple challenges including the economic, political and societal emancipation of women. Women in Africa takes part in this effort from the private sector and the civil society to let African women control their own destiny. Joining Women in Africa means contributing to reducing the economic inequalities that far too many women are still suffering from today."



**Charlotte Aubin,**  
Founder of GreenWish  
Partners

"African women own the keys to the future of the African continent. Supporting an initiative like Women in Africa boils down to providing them with the resources to achieve their ambitions. Better understanding what is at stake, sharing solutions, local innovations and business models that have proven to be efficient abroad: that's what Women in Africa is about, by giving women the opportunity to take control of their destiny. Being involved in this adventure is an extraordinary occasion to contribute to the economic rise of the African continent."



**Nayé Anna Bathily,**  
Head Global Parliamentary  
Relations at the World Bank

"African women are the cornerstone of Africa's development. Setting up a place for dialogue, where, on a yearly basis, female entrepreneurs and opinion leaders from around the world can meet, imagine and build together the world where we live in is not only a great opportunity for the continent's economic development but also a source of innovation and inspiration beyond the African horizon. I am honoured to have been called to take part in such a project."



**Diane Binder,**  
Deputy Director,  
International Development  
Africa and Middle East, Suez

"African youth is one of the most dynamic worldwide. Many prizes have already been awarded to those young people in many sectors like education, science, international finance, digitalisation, etc. However, the winners are way too often men, revealing how difficult it is for women to have access to education. Women in Africa will offer a "Change-Makers Award" to highlight innovating projects developed by African women. As a member of the Advisory Board, I am happy to be part of the valorisation of African women's exceptional potential. "



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

"Entrepreneurship is at the heart of Africa's economy. It drives growth and shows how inventive African people are in terms of innovation. The Reverse Innovation, which is a true revolution for technological know-hows, will be honoured. The creation of a female start-ups village on site, during the Forum, will showcase African ingenuity. I am proud to be part of this movement."



**Laureen Kouassi-Olsson,**  
Responsible for Western and  
Central Africa for Amethis  
Finance

# Interview

## Women's potential in the socio-economic sphere



**Oulimata Sarr**  
Regional Economic Empowerment  
Advisor – UN Women

**How can we realize women's socio-economic potential today?**

"Current research demonstrating that gender diversity helps businesses perform better signals that self-interest and common interest can come together. Yet, ensuring the inclusion of women's talents, skills and energies – from executive offices to the factory floor and the supply chain – requires intentional actions and deliberate policies."

**Women represent approximately 70% of the production of economic goods worldwide if we take into account the informal sector. However, the situation seems more difficult in Africa. How do you explain this imbalance? Do African people tend to be more gender biased?**

"Achieving gender equality and equity in our continent may seem daunting in a complex socio-cultural environment marked by a strong preponderance of traditional values. However, despite women's lower social status compared to men, joint efforts paved the way for significant progress that led to a greater recognition of women's role and contribution to socio-economic growth. Notwithstanding these developments, a number of constraints that are yet to be overcome include: access to land and land tenure security, access to financing mechanisms, access to factors of production and extension services and access to markets."

**Education is undoubtedly one of the keys to women's emancipation. Only 23% of poor girls in rural Africa finish elementary school and more than 60% of the illiterate population is female. What is the right method to tackle this issue: imposing sanctions on the parents who don't send their girls to school or developing a more inclusive education?**

"Sanctions are not the answer. Incentives would yield much better results. Currently, the public and private sectors are coming together to promote access to education for girls. An innovative initiative such as #IAMTHECODE support girls and young women in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, arts, and design. Such initiatives give girls and young women access to coding, and enable them to become the next digital entrepreneurs and leaders."

**In the working world, what kind of actions have to be launched in order to give women the same opportunities of being promoted as men, when qualifications are equal?**

"The UN Women's Empowerment Principles offer practical guidance to business and the private sector on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. These Principles are designed to support companies in reviewing existing policies and practices—or establishing new ones—to realize women's empowerment. The public sector leads the policy formulation and creates the incentives."

# Women in Africa: to what extent do women contribute to the economic growth and development of the continent ?

---

This second episode emphasizes 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 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.

## WOMEN REPRESENT A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO AFRICAN ECONOMIES.

In 2015, a simplified vision allowed us to assert that women represent ~\$6 000 billion in GDP, that is to say 2 times the German GDP, and that they produce each year circa 60-65% of the economic goods of the continent.

Agriculture is their main sector of activity, and with almost 63% of women working in the primary sector, they represent 70% of the agricultural workforce and 90% of food items production. As they are at the origin of 1.8 billion tons of food-crop production (keeping in mind that global cereal production amounts to 2,5 billion tons), women appear to be the key element to resolve the food-production equation on the continent. **A**

This significant weight in food-production is mostly due to existing traditional structures and especially community-based habits.

## ANOTHER SPECIFICITY OF WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE CONTINENT'S ECONOMIC LIFE IS THE PLURALITY OF THEIR ACTIVITIES.

Undoubtedly, in a context of macro-economic crisis, the whole population tends to engage in multiple activities, but the phenomenon is more common among women: 26% of women in Mali are engaged in two different activities (vs. 16% for men) and close to 41% in Benin. Significant inequalities between men and women are observed in the repartition of secondary activities: women are mainly assuming what is called "chore" activities like transporting water or wood.

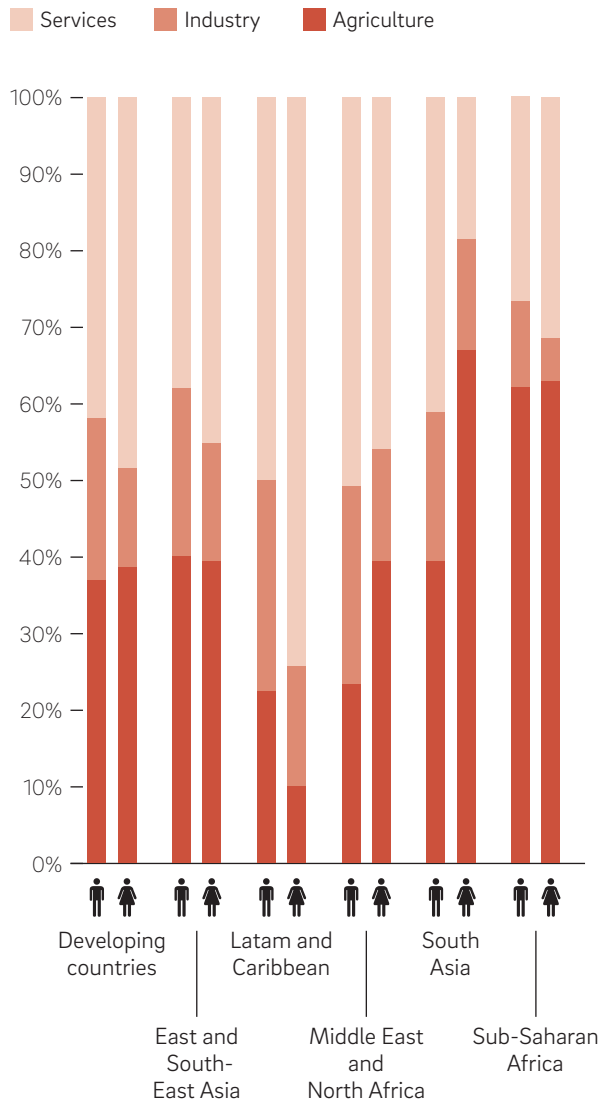
Generally speaking, despite the fact that women contribute broadly to African economies, their roles remain under-estimated:

- They are highly involved in non-market related activities which are by nature seen as less valuable in appearance and definitely less productive;
- Their economic presence is mostly informal (~70% of the continent's informal economy), agricultural and self-employed (only 8.5% of women are employed in non-agricultural activities). Thus, this situation leads to more instability and career plateauing;

- As the development of African economies relies on the digital and telecom sectors to which women have limited access, there is an increasing risk of women's exclusion in the future.

## A. DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN BY SECTOR

[Percentage of male and female employment, respectively]



However, in order to achieve such an economic impact, women rely on traditional community networks like relatives/community solidarity; a repartition of economic activities within the group according to defined roles and functions; community and not individual ownership of land...

**AND THE TRADITIONAL WAY OF TONTINE FINANCING PARTICULARLY REFLECTS THIS TRADITIONAL SYSTEM ON WHICH WOMEN RELY TO DEVELOP THEIR ACTIVITIES.**

The tontine system applies to every social class and to any kind of investment. Moreover, tontines are often exclusively feminine, which allows women to lead their projects without having to report to their husband and without giving away profits to the community they belong to.

.....

**"A tontine allows a village woman to make her seed purchases for a few thousand CFA francs and enables an industrialist to build a multi-million production plant as well"**

(an African female entrepreneur)

.....

The financing of the female economy by tontines has had a significant impact on the African economic rise and we estimate that women save approximately \$50 billion via traditional channels like tontines.

This traditional way of financing is, nevertheless, too low to let women's entrepreneurial projects grow as they suffer from a strong inequality with men when it comes to financial institutions. For instance, in Uganda, 38% of registered companies are owned by women

but only 9% of formal financial facilities are registered for women. In Kenya, 48% of micro and small enterprises are controlled by women but they only represent 7% of the total amount of allowed credit.

**WOMEN ARE AFTER ALL AT THE HEART OF THE PAST, CURRENT AND FUTURE ECONOMIC ELITE.**

Traditionally, women endorse central roles in families and communities: in Botswana, 46% of families have a female head, 72% for Lesotho vs. a 31% average for sub-Saharan Africa. Today, on the continent, a growing number of women are reaching positions with major responsibilities in both private and public sectors.

As early as 1997, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) adopted a declaration which requires from every member State to reach at least a 30% proportion of women for high-ranking jobs before 2005.

The instauration of quotas at a national level has proved to be a powerful tool to increase women representation within political institutions : **BC**

- 60% of seats are held by Women in the Rwandese Parliament, which is the highest proportion globally
- In Senegal, the Parity Law requires a 50% proportion of eligible women within each political party

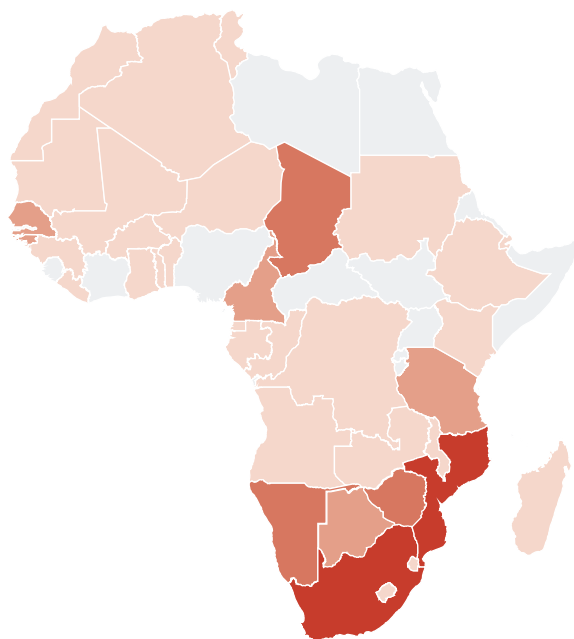
Without quotas, Liberia has managed to grow from 5% to 15% of seats held by women in Parliament in 20 years, notably thanks to role models like Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf who was the first woman elected President of an African country. Besides, peace came from the actions of women, notably through the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace movement.

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was then followed by Joyce Banda in Malawi and Catherine Samba-Panza in the Central African Republic.

Similarly, the number of African companies headed by women has considerably increased to reach 30% in Liberia for instance. In Ivory Coast, 60% of companies have female shareholders. Women are not left behind concerning entrepreneurship. There are 27% of female entrepreneurs in the continent. In Nigeria, 42% of micro enterprises are run by women.

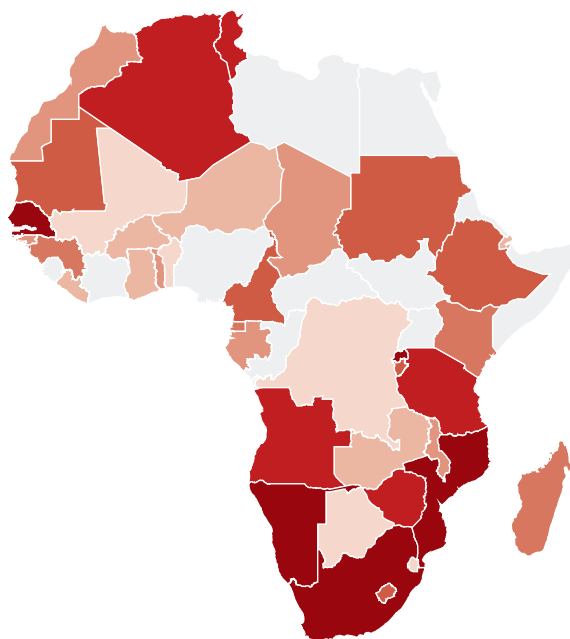
## B. PROPORTION OF SEATS HELD BY WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS [1995]

≤ 9% 64%



## C. PROPORTION OF SEATS HELD BY WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS [2015]

9% 64%



Source: [http://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2015/06/14/en-afrique-la-feminisation-de-la-politique-est-en-marche\\_4653770\\_4355770.html](http://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2015/06/14/en-afrique-la-feminisation-de-la-politique-est-en-marche_4653770_4355770.html)

There is no lack of role models like Ndidi Nwuneli, an MBA graduate from Harvard and a major figure in female entrepreneurship in Africa, she leads LEAP Africa, a Nigerian association aiming at coaching entrepreneurs in their projects. Farai Gundan, an Internet entrepreneur, was born in Zimbabwe and founded Farai Medias, an online advertising platform dedicated to Africa.

It is important to notice that there is not one common situation across the continent and that women conditions vary a lot on a country level.

Finally, it appears that pursuing this integration of women in the African economic rise relies on two fundamental elements : unlock the leadership of elite women with distinguished academic formations who are determined to develop practical and relevant

projects through the continent and to support women communities that are working every day to create value in a traditional and efficient way.

In order to do so, the next study will analyze the challenges and the potential solutions that could be implemented to achieve these goals.

# Series synopsis

## Reminder

---

Africa is seen as a continent full of promises for global businesses willing to find new opportunities. After decades of difficulties, many African countries have recovered growth in the 2000s. However, what has really changed in people's lives? Have those impressive growth rates brought what Africans were waiting for?

To make this growth more inclusive and more sustainable, Africa has to create its own development path, taking into account its specificities and distancing itself from other models. The multiple and fundamental roles African women play in the public and private spheres are key to lead Africa to a brighter future. Therefore, we believe that Africa would benefit from placing women at the centre of its 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?**

Convinced by the necessity to address this question, Roland Berger decided to commit alongside Women in Africa, by writing a series of points of view to be released in 6 episodes concluded by the *Forum Women in Africa May, 17-19 May 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*.

## 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.



Launching at "Les Rencontres Economiques d'Aix",  
July 1st-3rd 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.



Launching at l'Université d'été du MEDEF,  
August 27th-28th, 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.



Launching in Washington DC, 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,  
May 2017 in Addis Ababa

**PUBLICATION****ROLAND BERGER GMBH**

Sederanger 1  
80538 Munich  
Germany  
+49 89 9230-0  
[www.rolandberger.com](http://www.rolandberger.com)

**WOMEN IN AFRICA**

44 rue de la bienfaisance  
75008 Paris  
[www.wia-initiative.com](http://www.wia-initiative.com)

**AUTHORS****ROLAND BERGER**

Charles-Edouard Bouée  
[Charles-Edouard.Bouee@rolandberger.com](mailto:Charles-Edouard.Bouee@rolandberger.com)

Anne Bioulac  
[Anne.Bioulac@rolandberger.com](mailto:Anne.Bioulac@rolandberger.com)

Georges Ferre  
[Georges.Ferre@rolandberger.com](mailto:Georges.Ferre@rolandberger.com)

Rebecca Fu  
[Rebecca.Fu@rolandberger.com](mailto:Rebecca.Fu@rolandberger.com)

Gillian Morris  
[Gillian.Morris@rolandberger.com](mailto:Gillian.Morris@rolandberger.com)

Ina Wietheger  
[Ina.Wietheger@rolandberger.com](mailto:Ina.Wietheger@rolandberger.com)

Assia Dahmani  
[Assia.dahmani@rolandberger.com](mailto:Assia.dahmani@rolandberger.com)

**WOMEN IN AFRICA FORUM**

Aude de Thuin  
[aude@womeninafricaforum.com](mailto:aude@womeninafricaforum.com)

Anne-Sophie Cambay  
[annesophie@womeninafricaforum.com](mailto:annesophie@womeninafricaforum.com)

**PRESS CONTACTS****ROLAND BERGER**

Agathe Lélou  
+33 1 53670-357  
[Agathe.Lelu@rolandberger.com](mailto:Agathe.Lelu@rolandberger.com)

**MEDIA STRATEGIST****TRUE**

Claude Grunitzky  
[claud@true212.com](mailto:claud@true212.com)

**PHOTOS CREDIT**

Getty Images / Fotolia

# 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 34 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 Ltd. (WIA)

is a unique global platform for leading women. Our project helps develop strong business relations, as well as identify and support women entrepreneurship. WIA aims to redefine the global economic governance through its ambitious program that will bring together men and women.

WIA is leaning on solid partnerships within its governance, to provide the best features, ensure success and build on an innovative Forum for women and men worldwide.

---

### Links & Likes

#### ORDER AND DOWNLOAD

[www.rolandberger.com](http://www.rolandberger.com)

#### STAY TUNED

[www.twitter.com/BergerParis](https://www.twitter.com/BergerParis)  
[www.twitter.com/audedethuin](https://www.twitter.com/audedethuin)

#### LINKS AND LIKES

[www.facebook.com/RolandBergerGmbH/](https://www.facebook.com/RolandBergerGmbH/)

#### ABOUT ROLAND BERGER & WOMEN IN AFRICA

[www.rolandberger.com](http://www.rolandberger.com)  
[www.wia-initiative.com](http://www.wia-initiative.com)

---

# 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

