

Transforming Equality

UN Women in Eastern and Southern Africa



With many thanks to UN Women Eastern and Southern Africa multi/country offices and ESARO thematic units for contributing content for the report

View the Report online at: <http://africa.unwomen.org/en>

@UN Women ESARO 2016
All rights reserved

Produced by the Knowledge Management and Research Section in Collaboration with the Communications Section

Text and Photos: ESARO & Multi/ Country Offices

Coordination: Jack Abebe

Design: Colourprint Limited, Nairobi

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Transforming Equality	2
Small Beginnings, Big Potential	6
Leadership Development in Action	8
A Woman's Campaign	8
Conflict Management for Women Political Leaders	11
Edutainment for Transformation	15
Women and the Economy: A Driving Force	16
A Sign of Success	20
Entrepreneurship and Agriculture: As Sweet as Honey	23
Business and Trade on the Borderlines	25
Narrowing the Gap in Procurement	29
Public-Private Partnerships	31
Coca-Cola	31
Equity Group	34
Publish What You Pay	35
Supporting Women's Rights	36
The Child Brides of Malawi	36
Ending a Cycle	37
Disseminating the Possibilities	38
Empower Women and the Businesses Hub	38
Sharefair: Linking Women to Networks and Markets	40
Knowledge Products	45
A Culture of Learning	47
Into the Future	48

Transforming Equality

“...the results for the cost-efficiency of programs were found to be positive, and a key factor... is the ability to achieve more with limited resources.”

~ OECD's 2015 Development Effectiveness Review of UN Women



Source: UN Women¹

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created the **United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women** (UN Women). In doing so, UN Member States took an historic step in accelerating the Organisation's goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

UN Women merges and builds on the important work of four previously distinct parts of the UN system: Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW); International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW); Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI); and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

¹Source of all photos is UN Women, unless otherwise stated

These past few years have been a time of intense learning as UN Women developed from a nascent organisation into a fully-fledged, global entity. UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) in particular has come a long way in a very short time, since its inception in 2012.

Two external assessments of UN Women carried out in 2014 came to the same conclusion: despite being only four years old, UN Women had not only put in place the systems required for any global organisation to function; it had also successfully engaged in its core mandates and had tangible results to show for its efforts.

The **Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network** (MOPAN) assessed UN Women in 2014². MOPAN provides an assessment of four dimensions of organisational effectiveness (strategic management, operational management, relationship management, and knowledge management), and an assessment of the evidence of the organisation's relevance and development results. The results were highly positive:

“UN Women has demonstrated a results focus in operational management.”

“...rated strong for its systems for financial accountability..”



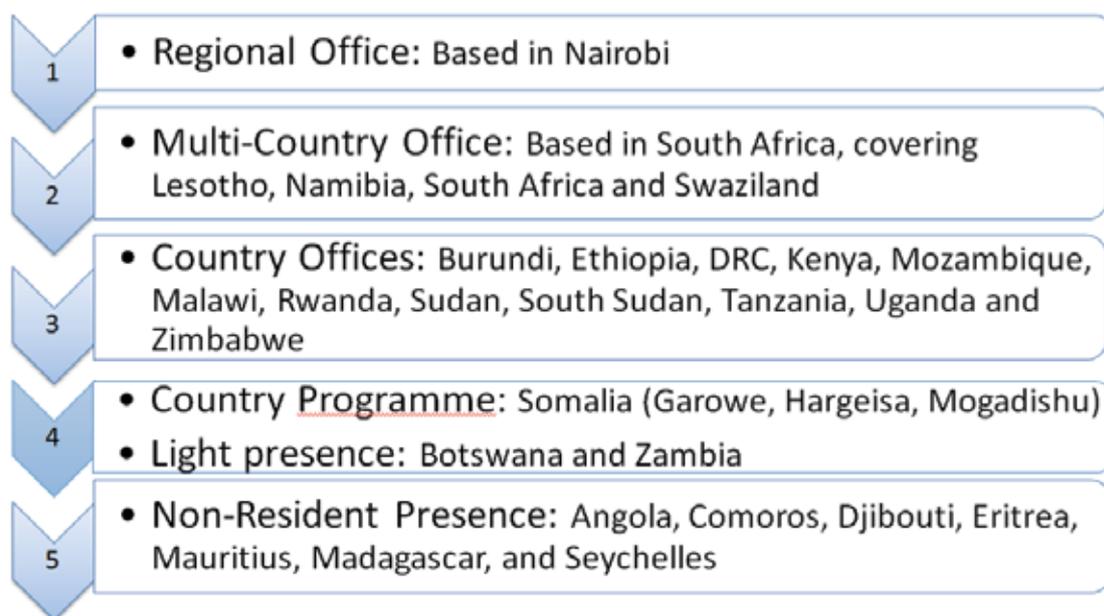
²<http://www.mopanonline.org/publications/>

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) prepared the 2015 Development Effectiveness Review³ and had this to say about UN Women:

“...the agency’s programming is highly relevant.”

“Evaluations indicated strong coverage and reported positive findings regarding UN Women’s contribution to gender equality.”

With a regional office based in the United Nations Complex, Nairobi, and country offices covering sixteen nations, with a presence in an additional ten countries, UN Women is well positioned to continue its work on gender equality in Eastern and Southern Africa.



UN Women configuration and location in Eastern and Southern Africa

The following is a glimpse into some of the activities that have had measurable impacts and that are scalable with donor support. My hope is that this overview will leave you with one key question: if UN Women’s Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office could achieve so much in the brief few years of its existence and with limited resources, what could it achieve in future given more time and more support?

Christine Musisi
Regional Director
Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office

³ <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/UNWOMEN-DE-Review-Final-Report-April-2015.pdf>



Map of the Eastern and Southern Africa Region

Small Beginnings, Big Potential

“As a woman who does not have collateral, how are you going to get a loan?”

~ Violet Malama, Zambia

“I used to spend a lot of time and energy shelling maize. Not only is it very tiring, but there is a lot of breakage.”

~ Defense Wakesho, Kenya

“I dropped out of school because I got pregnant. When I think about it now, I realise that getting married at such a young age (15) isn’t a good thing.”

~ Bernadetta Mation, Malawi



At the launch of the Horohoro Platform on the Tanzania/Kenya border, fashion designer Aisha meets bead designer Veronika.

Ms. Malama, Ms. Wakesho and Ms. Mation share at least two things in common: they contend with many of the typical challenges that women all over the African continent face; and they have at some point in their journeys engaged with UN Women’s Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (**ESARO**).

Through its regional office in Nairobi, and a number of country and multi-country offices, UN Women ESARO implements programmes tailored to individual countries, in close collaboration with governments, the UN system and civil society.

UN Women’s strategies to promote women’s participation in decision-making include engagement with national electoral systems and political parties to provide an equal playing field for women candidates. By supporting leadership development, UN Women assists women political leaders in cultivating their skills.

The growing integration of gender in national planning and budgeting draws in part on strategies to institutionalise these processes,

train national officials to execute them and strengthen the abilities of women’s movements to advocate for and monitor them.

Broadening space for women’s participation in peace processes entails training women mediators and advocating gender equality measures as critical to security policies and practices. UN Women also works to improve vital services for women in conflict and post-conflict areas.

Towards ending violence against women and girls, UN Women calls for adequate services for all survivors, and backs the replication of good service models. Its programmes also help strengthen policies and laws against violence.

While women are a source of economic vitality across Africa, discrimination hinders their opportunities. UN Women supports critical policy dialogues on decent work and social protection, especially for marginalised groups.

Strategic Focus Areas

Operational Units	Leadership and Governance	Women’s Economic Empowerment	Ending Violence against Women	Peace and Security	Planning and Budgeting	Global Norms	Sustainable Development Goals	Extractive Industries
ESARO	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Burundi	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
DRC	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ethiopia	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Kenya	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Malawi	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Mozambique	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rwanda	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Somalia	X		X	X	X	X	X	
South Africa	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
South Sudan	X	X		X	X	X	X	
Sudan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Tanzania	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Uganda	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Zambia								X
Zimbabwe	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	

Here then is the story of UN Women’s Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office, told through the experiences of the women it empowers.

Leadership Development in Action

A Woman's Campaign

Mickness Madera was one of a number of women political candidates in Tanzania who were provided leadership development training by UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO).



Mickness Madera at the training

“I have learned to be confident. I have also learned about the rights of women and youth in political participation. I am going to use that knowledge to sensitise my community on the rights of women to participate in political processes, and will make sure that, as women, we get the opportunity to go into leadership positions.”

- Mickness Madera, when asked about the impact of the course on her life.

She was campaigning in the 2015 elections for a position on the Busega District Council, Tanzania. Upon learning of the successful results, she was elated.⁴

“It was my first time to contest and I won! I can’t wait to get my certificate next week and then to start my work as a councillor. The UN Women training really helped me in my campaign because I was able to tell people about human rights and women’s rights. They understood the concepts after I explained them.”

- Mickness Madera

Ms. Madera wasn’t the only woman candidate who benefited from the training. Marietha Maige ran for the Itilima District Council.⁵

“I have been fighting so that the expenditure in the district goes as planned and that resources benefit the majority and not a few. What I gained from this training is courage. I was fearful but now I am courageous. I have the right to lead! I had an incident where I was about to be run down by a motorbike during the campaign, but people came and defended me. I was also threatened with a panga [a local knife], but people wanted me to continue, so I went on with my campaigning. Through this training, I have learned to defend myself.”

-Marietha Maige

The leadership development trainings are the result of an innovative collaboration between UN Women ESARO and Kenyatta University (Nairobi, Kenya). Together, they established the Africa Centre for Transformative and Inclusive Leadership (ACTIL). Launched in February 2014, ACTIL is a regional leadership centre with the goal of raising and nurturing transformative leaders, particularly women and youth, through capacity building, mentorship and transformative alliances.

ACTIL seeks to improve the leadership competencies of emerging and existing leaders, both men and women, in politics, government, business and civil society in Africa. Participants are certified upon completion of both the training and the successful implementation of their individual and institutional or societal transformation plans. Mentorship is provided along the journey.

⁴http://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/images/sections/news/stories/2015/10/tanzania-201510-micknessmahera_stephanieraison_1_675x450.jpg?v=1&d=20151023T162452?la=en
⁵http://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/images/sections/news/stories/2015/10/tanzania-201510-mariethamaige_stephanieraison_1_675x450.jpg?v=1&d=20151023T162319?la=en



Regional Director Ms. Christine Musisi with one of the young women entrepreneurs during the 2015 Partners Breakfast

Conflict Management for Women Political Leaders

Conflict Management for Women Political Leaders

The impact of ACTIL's work is profound. The September 2015 ACTIL training “Transformative Leadership, Conflict Analysis and Management for Women Leaders” is a prime example. It was attended by twenty-five women parliamentarians representing the three main political parties of Zimbabwe. Thandiwe Mlilo Shumba was the chairperson of the MDC women's assembly; her story is typical of the experience of the participants:

“When I got the first invitation to attend the training in Nyanga and met women from ZANU PF, I did not see women; I saw my enemies. I was not happy at all. It was soon after elections. Everything about the violence in the 2008 elections was still sitting with me and the more I saw women from across my party, the more I got angry.”

- Thandiwe Mlilo Shumba



Participants at the ACTIL training

“Dr Mutisi took us through a lot of games and role playing activities that gradually socialised us to working together and to accepting each other, and the anger started going away bit by bit. I also learnt new communication skills.

“I learnt to listen to my colleagues more carefully without rushing to judge them. This helped me to start appreciating my fellow women. My worst ‘enemy’ that time was Tsitsi Caroline Mugabe. Today, Caroline is my best friend and all my anger is gone.

“UN Women assisted me to get a bank account and an email address. I could not do that because my documents were destroyed in the election violence and I had given up on life. Now I feel motivated to start all over again and work with my fellow politicians from all political parties to overthrow women’s oppression.

“After the second workshop that focused more on conflict analysis, I used the conflict analysis methodologies... I managed to solve the community conflicts by approaching women leaders in my party to sit down and talk our differences over, and we ended up forming a women’s peace committee for women in Mberengwa West. The peace committee is a watchdog for peace in the area. We watch out for violence of any nature, and work together to provide peaceful solutions. We also carry out practical acts such as visiting the sick at hospital, building solidarity and shared interests for women in the church and facilitating peace at community gatherings.

“I found it very easy to be accepted by women from all political parties, and we work together, respecting each other’s party affiliations. It was however very hard to be accepted by men, both from my party and from other political parties. Dr Mutisi taught us the value of demystifying our roles. I used this strategy and took off my political jacket and make sure the men in my area accept me. My target is to make sure men are allies in gender equality because women are not there to take over processes but to share the cake with men for a lasting peace.”

- Thandiwe Mlilo Shumba

UN Women’s Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) has set up a number of women’s peace committees around Zimbabwe, and the peace committee that Thandiwe Mlilo set up after her training will add to the momentum. No matter what the political context spells out for the future, the work ignited by UN Women ESARO has laid the ground for unity of purpose and peace in the country, and the strong bond now existing amongst the women stands as a permanent testimony to this initiative.



ACTIL training “Transformative Leadership, Conflict Analysis and Management for Women Leaders”

Priscilla Misihairambwi Mushonga had this to say about the improved relations amongst women from the warring political parties:

“I am overly awed. I never imagined such possibilities. While our political context is telling us huge stories of division and conflict, the bond of unity I have witnessed here will remain unbreakable. I saw the benefits of the UN Women-ACTIL training in parliament, because women were no longer part of the heckling. I saw women from different political parties supporting each other, and crossing from their sitting places to greet fellow women. I was surprised because this was new. Even women from across the political parties would now engage with me peacefully, and take me aside to have conversations on shared political strategies.”

- Priscilla Misihairambwi Mushonga

At the end of the training, participants developed individual action plans. They also left with three institutional action plans (one for each political party). These plans highlighted the steps and strategies that they were going to take towards self-improvement at both the individual and political party levels.

The participants then went on to form a seven member committee to support their work. This committee is now responsible for designing further training programmes for sharing the knowledge and skills with other women parliamentarians, with women from the political party wings and political party assemblies, and with women from the constituencies. These trainings have connected the dots for increased women’s political participation and helped to build a critical mass of transformational leaders with knowledge and skills in conflict management.

UN Women ESARO Programme Assistant Sarah Murera shares her observations of the significant changes among the participants:

“I was amazed to see women from different political parties working together enthusiastically. The women were united and very eager to learn. The unity of purpose they showed was amazing. When given a platform, women leave behind their differences to achieve a common goal. What united them was the desire to learn, acquire skills and information for self-enhancement and betterment of the women of Zimbabwe.

“They helped each other through the different assignments and group-work and even had time to chart the way forward when they went back to Parliament. They could envision their work beyond the conference and it was encouraging. They had respect for each other’s views despite the fact that they were not of the same party.

“I was encouraged and uplifted. Some of them were already strategizing for the upcoming elections, showing resilience in an environment characterised by patriarchy.”

- Sarah Murera

Edutainment for Transformation

In 2015, UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) developed and aired an innovative edutainment initiative designed to increase women's awareness of technologies available to improve efficiency and productivity of women's work in agriculture, including ways to manage post-harvest storage to avoid food losses.

The popular TV show called "Makutano Junction" addresses issues of critical importance for rural women such as promoting women's access to land and public procurement, women's economic empowerment through engagement in markets and trade, and the use of household methodologies that help women and men collaborate to achieve shared household goals. The series also cover men's support to women, and mentioned the UN Women HeForShe Campaign.



With:
UN WOMEN
(Kenya Office and Regional Office)
FAO
IFAD

featuring....

- Post-harvest technologies
- Household methodologies
- "He for She"
- Gender and land
- Women's economic empowerment (including market access)
- Gender-sensitive procurement

MAKUTANO JUNCTION
KENYA'S FAVOURITE SHOW
Series 14 and 15
Citizen TV, Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm.
October 14th 2015 to March 16th 2016
And afterwards on YouTube at Africa Knowledge Zone.
Produced by The Media Company
in collaboration with UN Women, FAO, IFAD,
Tanzania and Africa Lead.



Screenshots of Makutano Junction, a popular TV show addressing important issues for rural women

This "edutainment" initiative was implemented in collaboration with UN Women's Kenya Country Office, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. It is estimated to have reached about 5.58 million people in Kenya, resulting in at least a 50% adoption by viewers of technologies and practices featured in the show. Discussions about upscaling this initiative to other countries in Africa and expanding it to cover additional content are underway.

Women and the Economy: A Driving Force

The focus of the UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office's Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) programme has been to deliver results in agriculture and rural development, extractive industries, and finance and entrepreneurship. When taken together, these three outcome areas contribute to ensuring that women are economically empowered and benefit from development. Through a combination of regional and country-level interventions, the WEE Programme aims to bring women to the heart of Africa's development as key players and leaders in accelerating inclusive economic growth.

The regional WEE team is working on the adoption and implementation of national and regional plans, legislations, policies, strategies and budgets that strengthen women's economic empowerment. At the same time, the team is collaborating with gender equality advocates to influence economic policies and poverty eradication strategies.



Participants at the Horohoro platform for cross-border women traders on the Tanzania/Kenya border

As part of this process, the team has been heavily engaged in building the evidence base on WEE in the region, thus clarifying the links between women's empowerment and economic growth in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. This is done using a highly consultative approach involving country offices in the design, implementation and finalisation of knowledge products. Given the lack of WEE-related, gender-disaggregated data and information at both country and regional levels, this has been a strategic approach. Activities have generated data

for policy and advocacy with regards to the need for women’s equal access to development opportunities and services in both agriculture and extractive industries.

One such initiative is a joint study undertaken by UN Women, the UNDP⁷-UNEP⁸ Poverty-Environment Initiative, and the World Bank Group, which costs the gender gap in agricultural productivity in three countries: Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda.

The generated evidence has been used as inputs to advisory services and technical support given to countries and partners, and shared as best practices on WEE in the region. It also served to build the capacity of UN Women Country Offices, national governments, regional bodies and UN Women ESARO’s partners to conduct evidence-based dialogue and advocacy for the promotion and integration of women’s economic empowerment into policies and programmes.



As a result, UN Women has collaborated closely with the African Union (AU) Commission, including: co-convening the last two regional Sharefairs; being an active member of the AU’s Technical Working Group for the Africa Mining Vision and the IGAD⁹ IDDRSI¹⁰ Steering Platform; and advising the AU’s Department of Trade and Industry on gender integration in policies.

⁷United Nations Development Programme

⁸United Nations Environment Programme

⁹Intergovernmental Authority on Development

¹⁰Drought Resilience and Sustainability Initiative

UN Women ESARO was also consulted during the design of NEPAD's¹¹ gender programme, and co-convened a regional Small and Medium Enterprises consultative forum at the Private Sector Investment Conference for the Great Lakes Region, in partnership with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region. UN Women ESARO's influence on key regional policies and programmes is expected to result in lasting regional and national frameworks that are more conducive to Women's Economic Empowerment.

The regional Women's Economic Empowerment programme aims to promote WEE-enhancing gender-responsive services, production resources and markets in agriculture, extractive industries and trade. To do this, UN Women ESARO has entered into strategic partnerships with regional actors and UN partners, e.g. the Rome-based UN-agencies and the African Union in the regional Sharefair for rural women's technologies; Equity Group Foundation and the International Labour Organization on promoting women's entrepreneurship and financial inclusion; and Publish What You Pay on the integration of gender equality in advocacy for transparency within the extractive industries sector.

These partnerships have served to set in motion a multiplier effect by increasing the capacity of partners to mainstream gender and promote WEE. Moreover, technical support on the development of gender-sensitive indicators for these partners and their programmes has meant that the currently inadequate evidence base for the promotion of WEE will be strengthened and used for evidence-based advocacy at a higher level.

The Women's Economic Empowerment 2014 training was one of the practical manifestations of the WEE programme. It stimulated both business and social innovations among those trained. Marion Gathumbi, one of the beneficiaries, had this to say:

“It motivated me to start something for my own with the little resources that will help the farming communities around me, by giving them a source of quality planting materials, superior animals and a source of agricultural information for profitable farming activities. Actualising my dream to be a master farmer and to have a model farm, I have done a small scale dairy unit, a tissue culture banana orchard, tree tomato orchard, and a crop seedling nursery, which will be my main business.”

- Marion Gathumbi

After the training, Ms. Gathumbi registered a company “Agrivet Solutions”, developed a business plan and began mobilising resources.

¹¹The New Partnership for Africa's Development



Example of quality planting materials studied during the training

Tammie Kammonke, a social innovator from Nigeria who has since established the Gender Perspective in Development, acknowledges the transformational role this training had on both her career and her perspective on society:

“Through the WEE network, I see the huge potential and so had to invest personal funds to fund my trip in order to take advantage of the platform.”

- Tammie Kammonke

A Sign of Success

“I would be the happiest to see a woman empowered to stand on her own.”

~ Dr Reginalda Wanyonyi

In addition to workshops on Women in Political Leadership, UN Women’s Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) has also provided trainings in Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship. The workshops accelerate inclusive economic growth by focusing on empowering women in the agricultural and extractive industry sectors.

Bungoma County Member of Parliament Dr Reginalda Wanyonyi attended an ACTIL¹² training on transformational leadership and agribusiness for women leaders. As she describes it:

“When I attended the training, that is when my journey to transformational leadership began. UN Women’s ACTIL training changed me. It helped me to repackage myself. It revolutionized me.”

- Dr Reginalda Wanyonyi



Dr Reginalda Wanyonyi in Bungoma

¹²Africa Centre for Transformative and Inclusive Leadership, established by UN Women ESARO and Kenyatta University

The result not only transformed her life, but those of thousands of Bungoma residents.¹³ After preparing a Personal Development Plan, she was inspired to develop a County Action Plan that described what she wanted to do for her county. The plan led to the creation of a very successful Savings and Credit Society: the Bungoma County Women’s SACCO. She explains,

“The aim is to create alternative collateral for women in the grassroots who cannot access financial products from institutions on the basis of lack of collateral.”

- Dr Reginalda Wanyonyi

Clearly, there is a great need for this service. In its first eight months, the SACCO grew its membership from nothing to over 10,000.



A SACCO beneficiary

Realising a capacity gap amongst Bungoma women, the SACCO started a Transformational Leadership Institute to help with building the capacity of women entrepreneurs. The Institute currently uses training modules from the World Bank and UN Women’s ACTIL. Dr Wanyonyi continues to be enthusiastic.

¹³<http://www.empowerwomen.org/en/news/creating-alternative-collateral-for-women-entrepreneurs>

“This institute, which models the UN Women’s ACTIL, advances a mind-set change among women agribusiness entrepreneurs in Bungoma. We wanted women to know that there is no miracle of change; they are their own sources of change.”

- Dr Reginalda Wanyonyi

Strategic partnerships between UN Women ESARO and other organisations have allowed various trainings for women agribusiness entrepreneurs from Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, DRC, Ghana, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria and Uganda. Additionally, UN Women ESARO is in partnership with MASHAV, the Israel Agency for International Development Cooperation, to hold annual joint training workshops on women’s political and economic empowerment.

Through this partnership, UN Women ESARO has provided ACTIL students with renowned Israeli experts as trainers. MASHAV covers the tuition and full-board accommodation, and ensures access to in-Israel demonstration and learning sites to the participants. MASHAV also provides fully-paid Teacher Assistants to ACTIL.

Entrepreneurship and Agriculture: As Sweet as Honey

“The training is a wakeup call and very practical.”

~ Catherine Mbondo



Catherine Mbondo (middle) displaying her products

After attending a 2014 ACTIL agricultural entrepreneurship training, Catherine Mwikali Mbondo was inspired to change her business model. She hasn't looked back since.¹⁴

Initially, she grew local vegetables on her farm but transport became expensive, the vegetables would go bad in a very short time, and her suppliers did not offer her favourable terms. Upon completion of her ACTIL training, Ms. Mbondo decided to concentrate on bee keeping. She now has fifty bee hives and plans to soon add fifty more on her farm in Makindu, Kenya.

In May of 2015, she focused exclusively on honey production marketing; her sales increased from 1kg to 6kgs per day by mid-July. She attributes the rise in sales to the high quality of the raw honey. She also takes time to research and is very active on LinkedIn platforms where she gets support from experts worldwide.

¹⁴ <http://africa.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/08/un-women-eastern-and-southern-africa-regional-newsletter-of-july>

Her most memorable training session was on the value chain, during which she learned about packaging and branding. She also benefited from her mentor who has offered valuable support throughout her journey.

Currently, she is in the process of acquiring a license from the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS), the government body responsible for testing and approval of products and services.

Another alumni is Immaculate Ochieng. Her success has changed the lives of over 1,000 youth in small and medium businesses in Western Kenya.

“During the training, one thing came clear i.e. the importance of collaborations and networking. Due to this encouragement, I created some networks by myself. Using technological platforms, I created a WhatsApp group called GREEN FARM. The purpose of this group is to share with fellow farmers on agribusiness issues. We consult, share resources and information concerning our agribusiness activities and challenges e.g. feed formulas, vaccination schedules, prices etc. I also use the platform to follow-up and to guide my new clients on how to go about the business.”

- Immaculate Ochieng

As of December 2015, over 600 participants have gone through ACTIL’s various courses, with 162 attending one of five agribusiness courses. In future, there will be twenty courses per year covering various topics.

Business and Trade on the Borderlines

“There is sexual corruption; it happens. If you refuse or disapprove, then they confiscate your products.”

~ Ms. Aurelia Mtui, cross-border trader

“Sometimes women have been required to pay fees without the luggage being weighed. The rate charged is not in consideration with the weight of the products. Often women get disturbed because they don’t know the immigration rules. We also get quite intimidated.”

~ Ms. Aisha Mussa Kissory, fashion designer



Participants at Tanzania training for cross-border traders

Over 1,400 women cross-border traders in Tanzania have increased opportunities for international trade, better knowledge of their rights and are less likely to experience harassment and violence as a result of information, training and support provided by a UN Women Tanzania project in partnership with the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and the Tanzania Women Chamber of Commerce.

Part of the support has included the establishment of platforms. A platform is an informal association of interested parties – women traders, companies and government officials – that meets regularly, and has a constitution and an elected leadership. Members of the platform also take part in specific training such as: international trade requirements; branding, packaging and supply chain management; rights and duties of women traders; business formalisation; and access to finance. The platform acts as a vehicle for training, information sharing, advocacy and regular dialogue, and is operated by the women traders themselves.

To date, ten platforms have been set up, enabling women's issues on cross-border trade to be discussed and resolved by involving government officials in the platforms. The platforms are in the border areas between Tanzania and its neighbouring countries: Kenya, Burundi, Uganda, Mozambique, Rwanda and Zambia.

Ms. Happiness Mchomvu, Programme Coordinator, explains some of the benefits that participants have experienced:

“Some of the main changes have been that women are now registering their businesses, they have a better understanding of the regulations for trade, and they have a better relationship with authorities.”

- Happiness Mchomvu

Winfrida Eddington Nyella agrees:

“Through the Platform, we are now linked to the Tanzania Revenue Authority and customs, so now crossing the border is easier and smoother. We were crossing before but we used to go through the panya route (rat route) and so we paid more. Now I go myself across the border, I pay less and I meet the customers so the profit is more.”

- Winfrida Eddington Nyella

The project was originally conceived in response to cases of gender-based violence and corruption reported by women traders. As the women become more aware of the regulations and laws, they are now able to demand their rights, thereby reducing the instances of gender-based violence and harassment. Additionally, the number of women taking action against violence and harassment has increased, reported Ms. Susan Mtui, Executive Officer of the Tanzania Women Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Aurelia Mtui, a cross-border trader, adds to that:

“In some areas, women never come forward. The women need permission from the men to do something. But now we see women are aware of their rights and are known and assisted by the local authorities.”

- Aurelia Mtui

Around 80% of the women traders run informal businesses. As a result of the project, more than a third have registered their businesses and obtained Tax Identification Numbers. The number of platform members' products that have been certified by the Tanzanian Bureau of Standard has also doubled. Additionally, 23% of the women have obtained barcodes for their products, an important step for selling across the region. There has also been a 20% decrease in incidences of bribery amongst participants of the project.



Tanzania Women Chamber of Commerce facilitator Ms. Ndemanyiswa Mbise discusses the challenges of women traders with immigration and police officials at Horohoro on the Tanzania/Kenya Border

Ms. Leticia Kadomole, a member of the Mtukula Platform, has found other opportunities apart from direct sales of her products:

“The networking has been great. I was invited to train women from Zanzibar on needlepoint. They saw my exhibition and wanted to learn. They have been coming every morning and I have been training them.”

- Leticia Kadomole

In addition to the platforms, UN Women is supporting the Ministry of Industry and Trade to establish gender desks at all border posts in Tanzania to support the women. These desks will provide relevant information and documents, and will also collect data on women traders, including cases of sexual harassment and abuse.



Leticia Kadomole at Dar International Trade Fair

Narrowing the Gap in Procurement

“Before I attended the training by UN Women on Public Procurement opportunities, I did not know about the tendering process. I used to think that it was only for the big people with big businesses.”

~ Lena Chemutai Korir

Acknowledging that women and other minorities are not adequately represented in public procurement, the Kenyan government passed regulations requiring 10% of public procurement to be awarded to disadvantaged groups. Despite the existence of these regulations, the uptake was almost non-existent.

To address this gap, UN Women initiated a project in Kenya to open up spaces and promote women’s participation in the public procurement market. The project sought to raise awareness on the opportunities arising from the Preference and Reservations Scheme, and to increase the participation of women in the government supply chain.

UN Women convened several consultative meetings with women entrepreneurs, supply chain professionals from public entities and key financial institutions in an effort to identify the barriers that impede women’s involvement in public procurement.



Participants at one of the procurement trainings, Kenya

Feedback from these meetings was consolidated and presented to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance as a proposal to amend the Public Procurement and Disposal Act. The resulting amendment included a requirement, for the first time, that procuring entities purchase at least 30% of their goods and services from micro and small enterprises owned by youth, women and persons with disability.

The project continues to build the capacity of women entrepreneurs to access government tenders. UN Women has provided 162 women entrepreneurs from Nairobi and Eldoret Counties with practical skills and knowledge on how to successfully win government contracts. As a result, forty of the women-owned enterprises have been awarded tenders. Lena Chemutai Korir is one of them:



“My main source of livelihood is planting and selling flowers to local companies. I earn about Ksh12,000 (US\$150) per month from this business.

“Before I attended the training by UN Women on Public Procurement opportunities, I did not know about the tendering process. I used to think that it was only for the big people with big businesses. But after the training, I realised there were so many opportunities so I joined hands with two other ladies who were also in the training and we formed and registered our company.

“In June 2013, we won a tender worth Ksh760,000 (US\$7,500) to supply and deliver newspapers, magazines and periodicals to the County Assembly, Nandi County. This really boosted our confidence and now we are aiming for larger tenders in the construction sector.”

- Lena Chemutai Korir

Public-Private Partnerships

Coca-Cola

“All the skills that I learned helped me to nearly double my profit”

~ Ms. Noko Maganye

By 7 a.m. on a typical morning, 40-year-old Noko Maganye has prepared food for the day's trade and is opening the doors of her small business in Diepsloot, a densely populated township north of Johannesburg where makeshift shacks are built on every available piece of land.

Millions of women in townships across Africa run small informal businesses selling hot food and refreshments. What sets Ms. Maganye apart is her participation in a programme under the global partnership between UN Women and **The Coca-Cola Company**¹⁵. The programme builds the capacity of women entrepreneurs running micro and small businesses.



Noko Maganye at a UN Women - Coca-Cola partnership meeting

¹⁵<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/6/un-women-tccc-breakfast>

“As UN Women’s collaboration with The Coca-Cola Company demonstrates, the combination of expertise, resources and committed leadership is a powerful force for change,” said UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. “Investing in women-owned Small and Medium Enterprises pays dividends in terms of jobs, income generation and improved development outcomes.”

Ms. Maganyeke is living proof of these dividends. She explains,

“After my training, my eyes have been opened up to great possibilities. All the skills that I learned helped me to nearly double my profit.”

- Noko Maganyeke

Only a few years ago, Ms. Maganyeke’s future looked bleak. She was a single woman caring for the five children of her two sisters who had both passed away. Losing her job as a waitress in 2010 could have been catastrophic. Instead, she knew she had to make a plan, and from a table in her front yard began to sell mokgodu and pap – a traditional South African dish.

Through hard work and patience, Ms. Maganyeke was able to expand her menu and finally save enough to build an actual shop in front of her house with seating for her customers. In 2014, she was approached to take part in a business skills workshop run by Hand in Hand, the implementing partner for UN Women and Coca-Cola’s programme.

Ms. Maganyeke describes her experience in the workshop.

“I joined the workshop and I received training on daily record-keeping, managing stock and business marketing, and many other skills. Soon I was able to pay myself a salary. But more important than money, my self-confidence has grown and I am happy to be able to take care of my children and mother while doing what I love.”

- Noko Maganyeke

Her business continues to grow and now has three employees. Her story is one of many that demonstrate that when women are empowered, the benefits ripple outwards and bring benefits to many others.

“When we invest in women, it sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth,” reflected Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka. “Programmes such as this one help women overcome barriers, understand and unlock their potential, and build their businesses in a sustainable way.”

From The Coca-Cola Company's perspective, women form a central pillar of its sustainability. "Helping to create a fair and equitable environment for women makes good business sense. When women entrepreneurs succeed, communities succeed," said President of Coca-Cola Eurasia and Africa, Nathan Kalumbu. "Our 5BY20 initiative aims to empower 5 million women by 2020.¹⁶"

As of mid-2015, already more than 14,000 women in South Africa have benefited from learning new business skills as a result of this joint initiative. Meanwhile, Ms. Maganyeke feels optimistic about her family's future.

"I believe women were made to be strong and to never give up. As a mother you need to ensure that you are doing everything in your power so that your children go far in life. This is what motivates me every day. Sometimes when I look around my business, I see how far I have grown and I am filled with so much pride I could cry. Now I do not worry about my future."

- Noko Maganyeke

Private sector partnership is an area that UN Women continues to strengthen. The private sector is more than a donor; it is a potent and essential partner in the work of women empowerment and equality,¹⁷ and the benefits flow in both directions.

¹⁶See <http://www.coca-colacompany.com/stories/5by20/>

¹⁷See <http://www.unwomen.org/en/partnerships/businesses-and-foundations/major-partners>

Equity Group

In 2014, a UN Women staff member was seconded to the Equity Group Foundation with a mission: to contribute to the integration of gender in the financial sector. The secondment allowed for the provision of direct technical support on gender-mainstreaming in the Group's policies and programmes; it led to the development of more gender-responsive financial and entrepreneurship packages and initiatives.



Participants at an Equity Group Foundation entrepreneurship training

As a strategic Partner in the regional Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) programme, Equity Group is well placed to implement the recommendations. Through its extensive network in East Africa (the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda), the banking group is able to reach women entrepreneurs and provide them with relevant and practical financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills training and mentorship support.

The WEE programme will also benefit from lessons learned from Equity's pilot programmes that were implemented in Kenya. UN Women and Equity Group Foundation have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to scale-up financial inclusion and entrepreneurship development for women in the region. Both partners have commissioned a comprehensive gender-disaggregated analysis of Equity's extensive financial and entrepreneurship education data that will inform programming and policy advocacy efforts on entrepreneurship and financial access for women.

Publish What You Pay

The collaboration with **Publish What You Pay¹⁸ (PWYP)** is another example of a strong partnership. Through its network of advocacy groups across the region, PWYP has direct access to the views, needs and issues facing miners and those living in mining communities. The partnership provides an important link between advocacy to high-level, decision making platforms (through UN Women) and the voices of civil society and grass root advocacy groups.

It has also resulted in a new version of one of PWYP's key advocacy tools: Chain for Change. This tool was revised to specifically incorporate Gender Equality into each element, and has now been published under the name *Extracting Equality - A Guide*.¹⁹ The tool is a step-by-step guide that examines all twelve steps of the extractive value chain and, at each step, provides considerations to make and questions to ask in order to ensure women are not left out of natural resource governance. The tool targets those involved in the extractive industries sector: community members, civil society organisations, non-governmental organisations, private companies, governments and UN agencies.



Involvement at Sharefair 2015 of companies in the extractive industries

¹⁸<http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/> PWYP goal: Increase transparency in the extractive sector and enable citizens to hold governments and companies to account for the ways in which natural resources are managed.

¹⁹<http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/pwyp-resources/extracting-equality-a-guide/>

Supporting Women's Rights

The Child Brides of Malawi

Bernadetta Matison was married at 15; she became pregnant the same year.

“I dropped out of school because I got pregnant. I've seen the evils of getting married at a young age. When I think about it now, I realise that getting married at such a young age isn't a good thing. At the end of the day, we still lack the things that brought us into the marriage in the first place, like soap and lotion and other basic items. Some even get beaten, which isn't right.”

- Bernadetta Matison

In a country where half the girls are married before age 18, Bernadetta isn't the only child bride. Hopefully, thanks to the consistent advocacy work of UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) and its partners, she will be among the last.

UN Women played a key role in lobbying for a new law in Malawi that raises the legal age to wed. They also trained parliamentarians, engaged with traditional leaders and mobilised civil society to advocate for the enactment of a law.

More than 12 years in the making, Malawi's Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act was passed by Parliament in February 2015 and enacted in April 2015. It increased the minimum age of marriage without parental consent to 18.

While clearly a success story, the work isn't done. UN Women ESARO continues efforts in raising awareness and working with traditional leaders to annul child marriages.

Ending a Cycle

Memehar Hailetsion Amelmu, an Ethiopian Orthodox Church preacher and teacher, attended a training supported by UN Women. What he experienced has inspired him to work for the protection of women against gender-based violence. Through it, he learned how to resolve issues related to violence, and with whom he should collaborate and network to end this pandemic. He summarises what he's understood:

“I can contribute to ending gender-based violence by teaching the community that both men and women are equal and that one exists because of the other. I now understand that I have a responsibility to raise the awareness of the society on gender-based violence, taking into account the current reality and the religious teachings. I can reach 10 to 15 people a day during preaching in the church or in my interaction with the community.”

- Memehar Hailetsion Amelmu

Mohammed Seid, a Muslim religious leader, also reiterated how the training had strengthened his knowledge of gender-based violence. He is committed to preach on the issue during his Friday night prayers and to reach out to fellow religious leaders.



A participant at the training

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, with support from UN Women, has trained 110 religious and community leaders as part of the fight against gender-based violence. The training is a result of the adoption of an inclusive approach whereby leaders from different religious groups and sectors of the society are trained to understand the issues.

As important as the training is, the follow-up actions of the participants are critical. By the end of the training, they commit to disseminate the information as widely as possible within their communities, thus spreading the impact far beyond the original trainees.

Disseminating the Possibilities

All these and other achievements and lessons are magnified and multiplied when they are widely shared through various communication platforms, hubs and knowledge materials. UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) has several vehicles with which to do this: Empower Women, the Business Hub, Sharefair and Knowledge Products.

Empower Women and the Businesses Hub

The Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Empower Women²⁰ is a virtual knowledge mobilisation and dissemination platform that currently receives 300 hits per day. Empower Women was successfully used to increase the reach of the Sharefair²¹ through blogs, articles and news from various sources. This generated 4,350 visitors and 11,911 page views per month for the event by the end of 2014.



UN Women's Economic Empowerment Knowledge Gateway

Empower Women has an online library with more than 2,000 publications relating to Women's Economic Empowerment which have proved useful in providing guidance to decision makers. For example, Empower Women was used by the Ethiopian government to collate best practices in gender responsive procurement. There have been online discussions from across countries and regions in areas of leadership, financial inclusion, women, the environment and economic empowerment. All knowledge products created by the regional office and country offices are uploaded for immediate and global dissemination.

²⁰www.empowerwomen.org

²¹www.empowerwomen.org/sharefair2014

Utilising this powerful online space, UN Women ESARO has launched a business platform for entrepreneurs, companies and business institutions to share and exchange strategies, initiatives and success stories on supporting women's economic empowerment. This is part of the organisation's commitment to connect and encourage a global network of gender-responsive businesses and to support women-led enterprises.

The Business Hub²² is a dedicated space for the business community and is hosted by Empower Women. Through the Business Hub, featured businesses and supporting institutions are able to create their own business profile page for showcasing good practices as well as sharing and exchanging stories and solutions related to building and being a gender-aware business. They are also able to contribute to and benefit from expertise and knowledge resources on business-specific topics as well as connect with peers, experts and other agencies through focused online interactions on topics of interest to their business. The agencies profiled in the Hub have signed commitments to women's economic empowerment and gender responsive services.

Those eligible to join the Business Hub include companies with demonstrated actions for gender equality and women's economic empowerment; women's business associations and other collectives of women entrepreneurs and producers; and institutions that provide services and programmes targeting women entrepreneurs and gender-responsive business.

²²<http://www.empowerwomen.org/en/business-hub>

Sharefair: Linking Women to Networks and Markets

Recognising the challenges in learning about and accessing technology, UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) set up a first-of-its-kind platform to attract diverse partners and sectors, and link them to the women who both need technology and create it. The result is the annual Regional Knowledge Sharefair, a gathering of various players within a certain sector. At each Sharefair, issues around a focus area can be explored, and women can make connections with policy makers, entrepreneurs, technology innovators and more.

Rural Agricultural Technologies

To accelerate rural women's access to technologies, UN Women ESARO, in partnership with the African Union (AU), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP), organised the first **Sharefair in 2014, Sharefair for Rural Women's Technologies in Eastern and Southern Africa**. The Sharefair promoted technologies and innovations that support rural female smallholder farmers, and brought together rural women farmers and innovators, policymakers, academicians, food producers, investors, financial service providers, and other technology innovators.



HE Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture - African Union Commission, UN Women's Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa and other dignitaries during the Exhibition Walk at the Sharefair Agricultural Technologies Exhibition Stands.

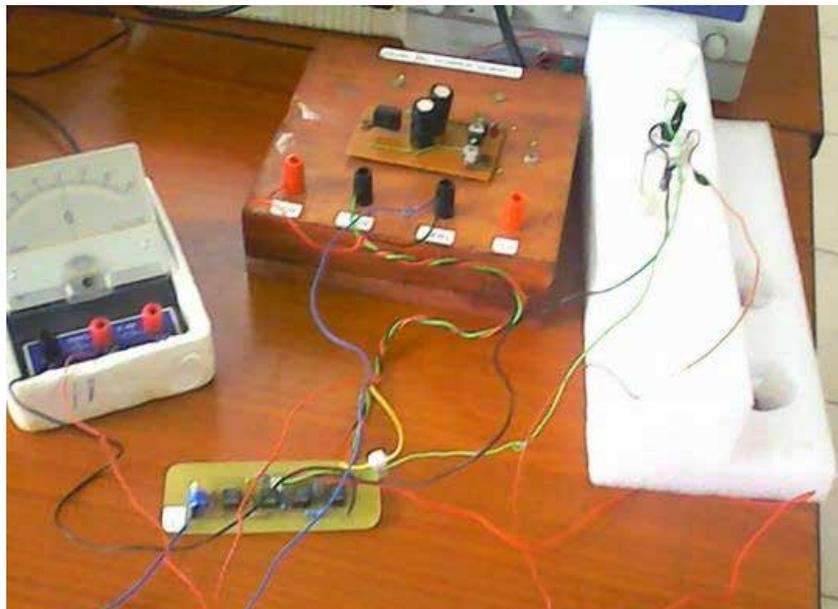
Participants shared innovative rural agricultural technologies, lessons learnt and good practices. More than one hundred rural technology innovators from fourteen African nations exhibited their products, demonstrating affordable ways to accelerate productivity, enhance value addition and income, improve nutrition, save women's time, and reduce postharvest losses. Over three hundred registered participants attended the event.

In addition, policy dialogues engaged prominent thought leaders on gender and agriculture from the region, emphasising South-South knowledge exchange on gender-sensitive agricultural and nutrition approaches and examining the scope for new policies to support scaling-up of those approaches. Four separate policy dialogues were held, one each on *Gender and Rural Technologies*, *Food Security, Nutrition and Gender*, and *Research and Farmer linkages*.

A **Young Innovators Award**

was included to encourage and incentivise students, youth and young scientists to develop gender-sensitive technologies. The Award acknowledged innovators who thought creatively and ‘out of the box’ with regards to the possible ways in which rural smallholder farmers can increase their yield, save time, access markets and add value to their products. The technologies presented included a mobile phone application for livestock extension services; a procedure to grow mushrooms using available agricultural waste material such as maize cobs; a portable aflatoxin testing kit; and a farmland-ownership mapping software package.

Sharefair 2014 revolved around the impact of technology, or the lack of it, on our lives. Violet Malama, a farmer from southern Zambia, describes a typical situation:



The Portable Electro-Chemical Aflatoxin Testing Kit helps in the analysis of aflatoxin contamination in cassava and facilitates demonstration of compliance to trade and regulatory requirements of safety, thus enabling women in Uganda to access markets. Source: Betty Tole/ Ifad Africa

“The machines the government introduced to us were very expensive. They want us to get a loan, but as a woman who does not have collateral, how are you going to get a loan? You end up losing out. That is where I thought, there must be a way, and this greenhouse (that she designed) is a stepping stone for a family farmer and a villager.”

- Violet Malama

Ms. Malama went on to create an innovative greenhouse out of used sacks, bamboo and tree bark that is helping farmers in her village to produce seedlings in four weeks instead of two months.

Defense Wakesho of Kenya provides yet another example of the impact of technology on lives and livelihoods²³:

²³<http://www.empowerwomen.org/en/multimedia-center/iamwoman/2015/06/01/17/08/upgrading-technology-saves-time>

“I used to spend a lot of time and energy shelling maize. The traditional way is to put it in a bag and use a heavy stick to hit the maize so that it can come from its cob. Not only is it very tiring, but there is a lot of breakage, thereby reducing the quality of the maize, and hence the price.”

- Defense Wakesho



The solution was a simple but powerful device: a hand sheller. With the hand sheller, she uses less time and there is no breakage; now her maize is able to fetch a good price. Enterprising young people also earn a livelihood using the hand sheller by offering their services to farmers. With the technology, they can shell up to six bags of maize per day, compared to one bag using the traditional method.

As a result of Sharefair 2014, **African Women in Technology (AWIT)**²⁴, a global alliance of like-minded partners aiming to improve access to innovative technologies for rural women, was formed. This initiative also launched an online platform to serve as a key repository of relevant data and connect organisations for exchange of lessons learned and good practices. It will support the connections between rural technology innovators, researchers, investors and other market actors.

The ultimate goal of AWIT is for women to have access to technologies that

boost agricultural yield, income and food security, and eliminate food waste, while decreasing their labour inputs and time. Through innovative and accelerated partnerships and real time monitoring of progress, the initiative will also support women’s accelerated and value-added agricultural engagement, resilience and improved time use in households.

²³<http://www.empowerwomen.org/en/multimedia-center/iamwoman/2015/06/01/17/08/upgrading-technology-saves-time>

Gender Equality in the Extractive Industries

Following up on the success of the first Sharefair, UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) hosted a Regional Sharefair on Gender Equality in the Extractive Industries in 2015, in collaboration with the African Union, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and several other partners and bilateral agencies. The three day event focused on the overarching theme of **Building on Good Practices** to promote gender equality in the extractive industries sector.

Four hundred and thirty participants – including researchers, policymakers, development agencies, United Nations agencies, regional economic commissions, the African Union, civil society organisations, women in the extractive industries, business leaders, investors, private sector representatives and practitioners – gathered at the Sharefair to discuss innovations, good practices, evidence from research and documented data, and legal frameworks and policies for mainstreaming gender in the extractive industries sector. The event also provided opportunities for networking, advocacy and capacity building in support of women in the extractive sector.



Participants at Sharefair 2015

Through a series of plenary and interactive group discussions, challenges, solutions and opportunities were identified for gender equality and women's empowerment in the extractive industries. Trends in the sector were discussed, and feasible interventions to amplify the impact of gender equality in the extractive industries were identified.

Diverse opportunities for knowledge sharing and networking were provided via the Sharefair exhibition booths. These featured over fifty organisations and women in the extractive industries exhibiting their products and services – affording a novel way of connecting participants and industry players. Throughout the Sharefair, special attention was given to the role of women in the extractive industries in the post-2015 development agenda.

The Sharefair promoted sharing of knowledge, innovations, good practices, legal frameworks and policies. It culminated into a Call to Action/ Outcome Document – a summary of the lessons learned and discussions held during the Sharefair. This pathway document focused on six critical intervention areas that could spur gender equality and women’s empowerment solutions in the extractive industries: national and regional policy and legal considerations; advocacy, capacity and communication; research, knowledge management and capacity building; private sector engagement including strengthened company-community relations; business development and innovation; and replication of the Sharefairs at national level to fast-track the proposed intervention areas.

A survey conducted with the 430 participants showed that over 80% of the participants benefited from opportunities for learning, networking, dialoguing, knowledge transfer, and appreciative inquiry while building on the gender discourse. The feedback provided is being incorporated into the designs of UN Women ESARO’s extractive industries projects.

Knowledge Products

UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) has been heavily engaged in building the evidence base on women's economic empowerment in the region, using a highly consultative approach involving country offices in the design, implementation and finalisation of knowledge products. The products are tied to programme and policy-targeted activities in order to harness the learning thus generated. They are then disseminated through face-to-face avenues (such as the regional Sharefair) and online through Empower Women's Virtual Platform.

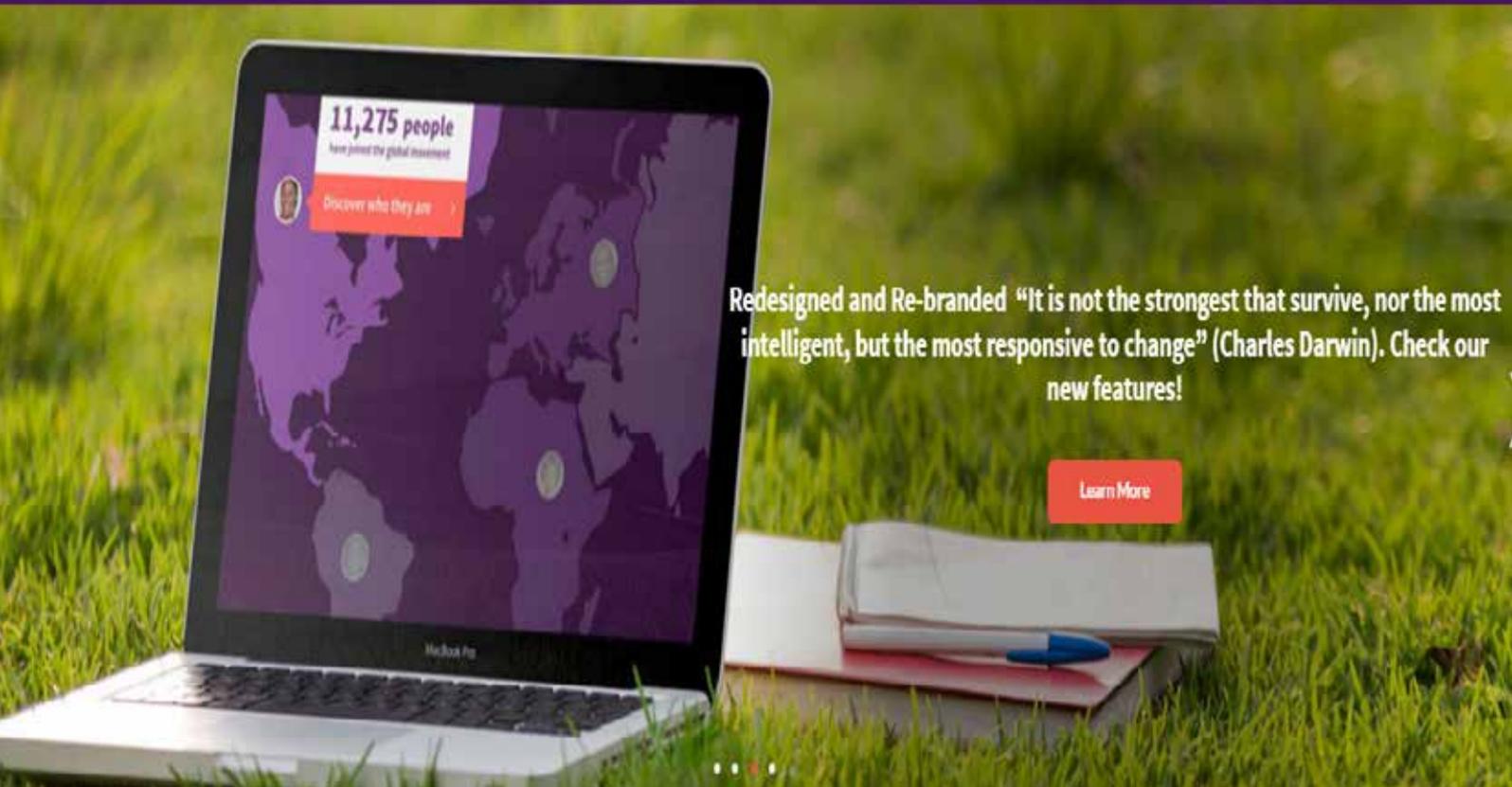
EmpowerWomen.org is an open and global virtual community and platform. It promotes collaboration, learning and innovation through diverse strategies including tools and resources for women's economic empowerment. It connects women and men in more than 190 economies with development partners from the private sector, civil society, academia, governments and international organizations.

This online portal responds to the demand for a multilingual and multidimensional one-stop platform that offers information and knowledge sharing solutions for evidence-based, cutting-edge research, data, technical resources and good practices that are replicable and scalable. It also provides mentoring and networking opportunities for women entrepreneurs, gender equality advocates, policy makers and programme managers from around the world.

The ultimate goal of the Empower Women is to contribute to the economic empowerment of women, including the most excluded groups of women. Contributing to that goal is the provision of enhanced knowledge of what works so that women, practitioners and gender advocates may influence policies and strategies.

Empower Women aims to achieve:

- Increased collaboration and networking on women's economic empowerment by connecting users from developing and developed countries.
- Increased access to, use of, and sharing of information, knowledge and resources on women's economic empowerment by users from developing and developed countries. Empower Women supports the dissemination of existing knowledge and commissions user-friendly knowledge products.
- Greater influence by women and gender equality advocates on policies and strategies to promote women's economic empowerment. Empower Women consists of a number of communities of practice that offer stakeholders with opportunities to share knowledge and experiences horizontally, collaborate on practical and high-priority initiatives, and provide peer support and interaction with experts and leaders across regions. Empower Women also provides periodic and structured opportunities for learning through online initiatives, such as seminars, webinars and knowledge fairs.



Empower Women's Virtual Platform- www.empowerwomen.org

These knowledge products produced, disseminated and mobilised through Empower Women have subsequently been used by UN Women ESARO to inform the programmatic advice given to countries, and to strengthen engagement with partners and evidence-based advocacy efforts. For example, UN Women ESARO's review of four of the African Union's **Department of Trade and Industry's key framework documents**²⁵ resulted in specific recommendations for integrating gender considerations. These recommendations were presented to the African Union's State Summit in 2015 and resulted in a revision of these frameworks from a gender perspective.

In the extractive industries sector, evidence-based advocacy led to a commitment by the Government of Kenya to legalise artisanal and small scale mining, a sector that is least regulated, high risk and in which women are the majority. Private companies have signed onto the Women Empowerment Principles, resulting in practical actions e.g. the National Oil and Gas Company of Kenya has begun to offer supply tenders to women-owned businesses. The South African Government adopted and is using the HIV Guide to mainstream gender in their extractive industries policies.

²⁵The four frameworks: The Africa Mining Vision; The Action Plan for the Implementation of the Africa Mining Vision; The Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa; and the concept note for the development of a Commodities Strategy.

Ethiopia also benefited from the power of online consultations. Experts, global leaders and users of Empower Women were asked to share examples from other countries on how they are making public procurement more gender responsive. Empower Women then collated best practices in gender responsive procurement. The Government of Ethiopia, in collaboration with UN Women, fed the recommendations and findings from an online query from Empower Women into their public procurement proclamation to make it more gender responsive. It is expected that with the provisions from a gender responsive procurement law, Ethiopia's female owned enterprises and businesses will be able to compete and win more tenders, contributing to their economic participation.

A Culture of Learning

In addition to sharing knowledge, UN Women ESARO has incorporated a culture of learning within the organisation. A number of evaluations have been conducted. MOPAN²⁶ and OECD²⁷ quoted earlier are two such external evaluations.

UN Women ESARO has made great strides in learning how to generate lessons for programming, and how to assimilate them. It developed a database on lessons and recommendations from nineteen evaluations conducted in the Eastern and Southern Africa region during 2009 – 2015. Based on this, a series of evaluation knowledge management products were developed. The first four out of a series of ten knowledge products were finished in late 2015. These products provide concise and informative “go-to” notes with tips on key considerations when designing programmes.

²⁶ Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network

²⁷ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Into the Future

UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO) has established itself firmly in several key areas: training women leaders; providing various platforms for knowledge exchange; elevating the rights of women; and women's economic empowerment. These will continue to play a critical role in our future projects. All these achievements are magnified when they are widely shared. For online knowledge dissemination, *Empower Women* is the chief avenue; Sharefair provides a more in-person opportunity to learn as well as to network.

From the results of Sharefair 2015, UN Women ESARO is now expanding its work into the **extractive industries**. Working collaboratively with industry, government and civil society partners, this programme seeks to add new knowledge and practices to enable the oil, gas and mining industries to fulfil their potential to meaningfully contribute to positive and inclusive development outcomes for men and women in the region.

As part of this work, UN Women ESARO has an ongoing initiative examining the gender dimensions of **HIV and AIDS** as they intersect with the extractive industries. Future plans include: supporting the development of gender sensitive tools to equip policy makers on gender sensitive models; capacity building of women's organisations on extractive industries; and training women groups on opportunities for small scale mining businesses.

Gender equality and women's participation in the extractive industries is a growing area of focus in Africa and a new area for UN Women in the region. The first step for UN Women ESARO was to establish what the issues are in the sector with regards to gender equality. In partnership with Publish What You Pay²⁸, UN Women hosted a Regional Consultative Meeting with participants from government, civil society and UN Women country offices.

This meeting outlined the key issues and bottlenecks facing women in the extractive industries sector and provided UN Women ESARO with a basis for its future engagement in the sector. UN Women ESARO has established a network of stakeholders with whom to consult on these issues, and the information obtained has enabled it to develop key knowledge products including *Policy Brief on Gender Equality in the Extractive industries*, *Roadmap for UN Women's engagement in the Extractive Industries Sector*, *Guidelines for Gender Responsive Policy Review and Dialogue in the Extractive Industry Sector* and the *Extracting Equality Guide*²⁹.

UN Women, in partnership with a wide variety of other stakeholders, has proposed to hold a **Sharefair on Gender and Resilience** in 2016. The objectives of the event would be: to develop programmatic and policy innovations on gender and resilience to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and to facilitate a long-term collaboration amongst the regional stakeholders. Key institutions and stakeholders would be gathered together with the aim of identifying problems, using data and predictive methods, and mobilising support and resources to incubate, accelerate, and scale effective solutions.

²⁸PWYP is a global network of CSOs advocating for transparency in the Extractive Industries Sector.

²⁹This was developed together with PWYP and is a step by step advocacy tool which outlines the specific gender issues at each stage of the extractive process.

A strong network will be needed in order to amplify resilience solutions beyond the Sharefair, and sustain change in policy and practice within relevant macro-economic frameworks. The multi-stakeholder platform created would inform the development of a Theory of Change that, based on a solid body of evidence, would ensure the Sharefair comes up with a clear proposition on the key roles of women in building resilience and then in accelerating implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. To date, the multi-year programme has not been fully resourced. The mission of UN Women ESARO remains the same: putting women at the heart of Africa's development. The commitment to that vision has been strengthened from the successes achieved to date. And now we return to the original question posed at the beginning of this document:

If UN Women's Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office could achieve so much in the brief few years of its existence and with limited resources, what could it achieve in future, given more time and more support?

The answer to that question depends in no small part on the support that donors provide. While much has been achieved in a short amount of time and with limited resources, there is still much to do. Girl children are still being forced into marriages. Women traders are being exploited. Women political leaders are being intimidated. Gender-based violence still plagues communities.

The staff of UN Women working in the Eastern and Southern Africa region hopes that you will consider partnering with us as we push on in this work, expanding both our geographical and programmatic reach. Together, we can transform Africa into a continent of equal opportunities for all.



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

UN Women- Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office
UN Gigiri Complex, Block M
P. O. Box 30218 – 00100, Nairobi
Tel: 254 20 762 4778
Website: africa.unwomen.org/en