



The *Women's* Agenda of KEPSA



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Acknowledgements

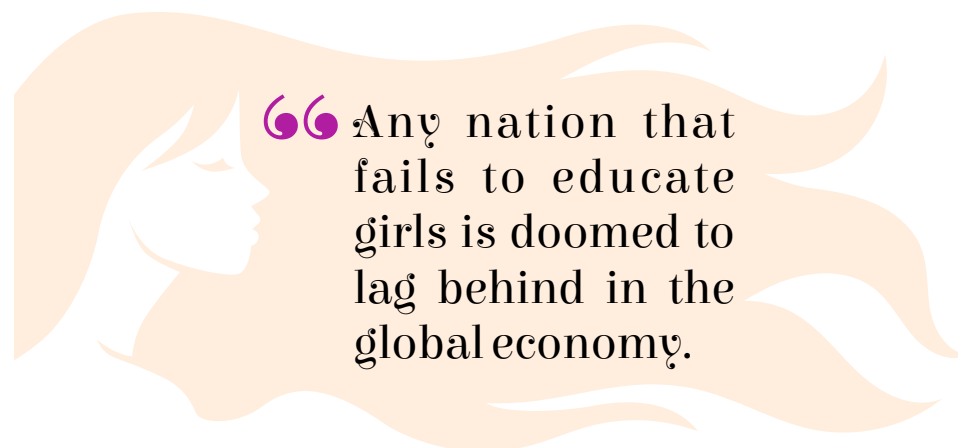
We would like to express our gratitude to the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) membership for their contribution towards the publication of this book.

We specifically thank the KEPSA Gender Sector Board through the Chair Ms. Gloria Ndekei, the KEPSA Women In Business (WIB) Associations and the KEPSA Champions for believing in women economic empowerment.

We also extend our gratitude to the Government of Kenya (GoK) through the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs and the Ministry of Devolution of Planning for their continued partnerships.

The development partners including UNICEF Kenya, UN Women, International Labour Organization (ILO) Kenya, among others have immensely continued to support and partner with us in various activities and projects.

Lastly, we echo the U.S. President Barack Obama's words during his address at the Kasarani Indoor Arena in 2015 where he said,



Foreword



The women agenda in KEPSA dates back to 2010 following the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya that stipulates equity, inclusiveness, equality, non-discrimination and protection of the marginalized.

It is time for women to take ownership in the business arena and as the footprints to their success continue to be documented, the impact is undeniable. As the umbrella body of the private sector in Kenya, KEPSA continues to lobby for the inclusion of more women in leadership while empowering them to scale the heights of entrepreneurship and supporting their participation in both local and global trade. Through the KEPSA Gender Sector Board, we have identified male champions that help spearhead the women economic empowerment agenda which has been one of our key programmes.

Our call to action is made possible through the Women In Business Associations within KEPSA. Some of the programs/ initiatives that have been championed within the associations and the Gender Sector Board include; the Month of Woman Entrepreneurship, Better Business Practices for Children, identifying women champions to advocate for a peaceful environment, participation in the call to action summit where KEPSA in partnership with the International Trade Centre committed to have one million women connected to global trade by the year 2020, among others that have been highlighted in this book.

Harnessing the potential of women as pillars of economic transformation is close to our hearts and to promote inclusiveness and change our political, economic and social understanding, we collectively need to invest in and empower the leadership of women.

Going forward, KEPSA intends to invest in many more women programmes that will not only see transformative women leadership and creation of more jobs but will also see our GDP expand from the current 5.6% to a double digit growth as anticipated in Kenya's Vision 2030 blueprint.



...We collectively
need to invest in
and empower
the leadership
of women...

KEPSA's commitment also goes towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – Goal 5 by incorporating gender equality and empowering all women and girls to achieving an all-inclusive economy.

Let us remember that equality for women is progress for all. When we empower a woman, we invest in the future of their children, families, communities and the nation.

Carole Kariuki MBS, HSC
CEO, Kenya Private Sector Alliance

Message From KEPSA Gender Sector Board Chair



I take this opportunity to thank the KEPSA leadership for its continued support to the Gender Sector Board. In particular, I express my appreciation to Dr. Manu Chandaria, Eng. Patrick Obath and Dr. Kevit Desai who first embraced the idea and to Ms. Carole Kariuki, who ensured that the spirit was espoused by KEPSA's business Agenda.

Empowering women has numerous multiplier effects in promoting equitable distribution of resources and sustainable development. Research consistently shows that women invest more in their families and societies than men, thus making a greater contribution to poverty reduction. Women's productivity notwithstanding, competitiveness and penetration into business has continued to face many barriers. A lot of trade and investment policies are not exhaustively analysed to assess the impact and effects that they have on women businesses.

Statistics show that companies who support women at the top levels tend to outperform those that do not. Despite this only 10.9% of senior executives at the world's largest 500 companies are women and nearly 40% have an all male leadership (Gender Forward Pioneer Index). Employment to population ratios for women is much lower than for men. Women are paid 8.5% less than men for work of equal value.

KEPSA Women's agenda is geared towards increasing women's participation in entrepreneurship, leadership and employment. Our goal is to enable our female target to think freely; to innovate; to build networks and partnerships and; to access capital as well as business information.

KEPSA has embraced gender transformative initiatives through the sector board to ensure gender inclusiveness in the corporate community. KEPSA achieves this through facilitation of dialogue platforms, building champions, engaging policy based interventions that aim to help women combine employment and family work through the Best Business Practices for Children programme (BBPC).

KEPSA should be supported to continue running sustained women empowerment programmes, to lobby aid for trade and to promote women's access to global trade.

We call upon men to support women by understanding the societal constraints that inhibit women's business potential. We need 'recommitment and reaffirmation' to uphold the specific mandates in the gender space so that women's market opportunities and transactions can be multiplied. In addition, the women will also benefit from interfirm linkages, sub-contracting and mentorship from our captains of industry.

We call upon women leaders to use their spaces to make the world a better place for other women by; assisting fellow women to access top level positions in the workplace; educating them and putting in place strategies to retain them; as well as championing support for young working mothers.

“...We call upon men to support women by understanding the societal constraints that inhibit women's business potential....”

As we call for men's involvement in mentoring the boys, women should encourage and support active fatherhood to encourage male role models for our children. We need the active participation of both boys and girls to grow our economy.

To my fellow women, “We should not be distracted by hesitation, self pity, time consuming non productive activities, or the small voice that keeps telling us we cannot make it” (Estée Lauder)

We should recognize that the world today requires that business is conducted differently in order to survive. Tenacity and commitment coupled with basic business skills will take us far...

Gloria Ndekei, OGW

Chair, KEPSA Devolution, Planning and Gender Development Sector Board

Executive Summary



The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) through its strong convening power and diverse private sector membership has kept a keen eye on lending its support in a number of areas to unlock business constraints for women. Through the KEPSA Gender Sector Board, the women in business have influenced policy formulation and development in matters pertaining inclusion of women in economic development. The Sector Board meets on a quarterly basis with the respective Ministry (or as frequently as may be agreed) to address sector specific priority issues relating to policy, administrative and operational issues affecting them.

Since 2010, KEPSA in collaboration with other agencies, has supported associations to celebrate the Month of the Women Entrepreneurs (MOWE) which has helped them gain visibility, including advocating for an enabling business environment for women within its membership.

Through its Foundation, KEPSA in partnership with UNICEF Kenya is spearheading the 'Better Business Practices for Children' project that is aimed at improving maternal and infant nutrition through making the workplaces mother and baby friendly. The project's focus is on Private Sector Companies in Kenya with specific emphasis to those located in Nairobi and its environs as well as those under various business membership organizations.



KEPSA meeting on public procurement for the Women in Business and the Heads of Procurement from key government parastatals held on 8th December 2015 at Panafric Hotel

A focus on Better Business Practices for Children includes a focus on support to women so that they can provide the best start to their child's life by exclusively breastfeeding. By supporting exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a child's life, an employer enhances their corporate investment in the future of children. This has also reduced the turnover of women in the workplace, led to improved maternal well-being and reduces absenteeism by reducing the number of illnesses an infant has.

Through partnership with the government and development agencies, KEPSA has responded to the Global call to Action to take 1 million women to regional and global markets by 2020. KEPSA has committed to promote the inculcation of sustainable inclusive business practices.

Other interventions that KEPSA has championed include; sensitizing members on the importance of admitting women to their boards, fast tracking the Breastmilk Substitute Act 2012 together with UNICEF, building the capacity of women in business associations on non-tariff barriers including formation of sector based Women In Business (WIB) associations, among others as highlighted in the book.



Launch of ShetradesK&E initiative held on 15th July 2016 at Villa Rosa Kempinski Hotel

Introduction



KEPSA speaks for multinationals, SMES and startups organized under different sector boards and working groups reflective of the 16 sectors of the economy. KEPSA has over 100,000 members through business member organizations and companies. It provides a platform for the private sector to engage in Public Private Dialogue at Local, National and International level. It also offers information, advisory and networking opportunities for members and is a key partner to government and other stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of policies and strategies geared towards spurring economic growth, wealth creation and national development.

The Established PPD Platforms

The Public Private Dialogue Platforms include; Presidential Round Table(PRT), Ministerial Stakeholders Forum (MSF), Speakers Round Table (SPRT) involving members of Parliament for legislative development and enactment, Council of Governors Forum for the devolved units of Government, Chief Justice Forum for the Judiciary and Other specific agencies like Kenya Revenue Authority, Energy Regulatory Commission, among others. Engagement through the above PPD platforms' forum is aimed at achieving desired results for the private sector including those that are specific to Women in Business.



KEPSA's Involvement in Women Programmes



The KEPSA Gender & Youth Development Ministerial Stakeholder Forum held on 24th May 2016.

KEPSA recognizes that women are a formidable force in the economy and continues to mobilize and organize the women's voice in private sector to be better heard and to be more impactful.

Within its membership, KEPSA has a fully-fledged active Gender Development Sector Board with over 10 umbrella Women-In-Business (WIB) associations that provide business information to over 3000 women entrepreneurs in Kenya as well as build the capacity of WIB on non-tariff barriers.

The KEPSA Gender Sector Board exclusively addresses gender issues with a focus on gender mainstreaming and inclusion of women in economic development. Through this sector board, the women in business have influenced policy formulation and development. The sector board activities feed into KEPSA's engagement platforms, with all three arms of Government to ensure a favorable environment for doing business.

KEPSA has been committed to the women's agenda through the following interventions;

Better Business Practices For Children



KEPSA'S C.E.O Carole Kariuki signs the statement of commitment on behalf of employers to promote work policies that create a conducive environment for breast feeding employees on 9th September 2010. UNICEF Representative Olivia Yambi (left), Sweden's Ambassador Ann Dismorr and private sector representatives, witnessed the signing.

KEPSA and its various members recognize the value of breastfeeding and the support for working mothers to ensure "Better Business Practices for Children". This recognition is demonstrated through management and work colleagues facilitation of time, support and space for optimal breastfeeding practices. This commitment to "Better Business Practices for Children" is upheld and promoted by KEPSA and its' various members.

In view of this, KEPSA signed a commitment in 2010 to promote work policies that create a conducive environment for the breast feeding employees.

Month of The Woman Entrepreneur Celebrations

In 2011, KEPSA together with the International Labour Organization (ILO), Women Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE) programme, and Federation of Women Association (FEWA) SACCO formed a partnership designed to contribute to the overall objectives of creating greater opportunities for women to secure decent work and income with a specific focus on the creation of jobs through women entrepreneurship development, and enhanced employment opportunities for the people with disabilities. This was done through the Month of the Woman Entrepreneur (MOWE) celebrations which were held in September and featured special events that highlighted the involvement of women in business.



Month of the Woman Entrepreneur (MOWE) gala dinner celebrations in 2011

Combinations of different events were carried out during the MOWE month. These activities included;

- ✿ Launch of the Professional Women Empowerment (PROWE) Associations gala dinner held on 1st September 2011 at Hilton Hotel. The aim of the event was to provide a knowledge-sharing platform that will assist women professionals and entrepreneurs to harness their collective power to positively impact social, economic and political development in Kenya.
- ✿ FEWA SACCO financial fair/ business clinics held from 26th September – 1st October 2011 at the Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK) Nairobi show ground, Jamhuri Park to sensitize the women in business on how to start and grow their businesses.
- ✿ A meeting on the financial services uptake among women entrepreneurs in Kenya was held on 29th September 2011 at Panafric Hotel. The aim of the meeting was to disseminate the findings of an ILO funded research on women entrepreneurs' uptake of loans in the Kenyan market.
- ✿ The Month of the Woman Entrepreneur (MOWE) gala dinner held on 30th September 2011 at Panafric Hotel to applaud women entrepreneurs, throughout the month long celebrations.



Launch of the Professional Women Empowerment (PROWE) Associations Gala Dinner held on 1st September 2011 at Hilton Hotel.

Breast Milk Substitute Act 2012

In 2012, KEPSA was actively involved in pushing for the enactment of the Breast milk substitute law through the 'Better Business Practices for Children' initiative, a program that was implemented in partnership with UNICEF to ensure the working environment is conducive for breastfeeding women. The Act supports and promotes breastfeeding as an ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants. It discourages the use of breast milk substitute products in order to advocate for exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months.

'Sauti Ya Mama Na Watoto' Event



Guests during the 'Sauti ya Mama Na Watoto' dinner event held on 30th November 2012 at Nairobi Safari Club

KEPSA together with UNICEF Kenya held the 'Sauti ya Mama na watoto' dinner event on 30th November 2012 at the Nairobi Safari Club. The aim of the event was to sensitize the corporate women on how to balance between breastfeeding and caring for the baby while working at the same time.

National Women's Peace Forum



Signing of the peace pledge by women champions from all counties during the MKenya Daima - Sauti ya Mama National Peace Forum held on July 5th 2012 at Kenyatta International Convention Centre

In order to advocate for a peaceful environment KEPSA, through the MKenya Daima Initiative mobilized women from all the 47 counties and identified female Champions who signed a peace pledge dubbed 'MKenya Daima...Sauti ya Mama' as a sign of their commitment to peaceful elections. This was later presented to the former President of Kenya, Mwai Kibaki during the Presidential Private Sector Working Forum (PPSWF) in July 2012 who also gave his commitment to the initiative. The women's peace forum was held on 5th July 2012 at the Kenyatta International Conventional Centre (K.I.C.C).



H.E. President Mwai Kibaki endorses the Mkenya Daima - Sauti Ya Mama Peace Pledge during a Presidential Private Sector Working Forum on 11th July 2012

Global Trailblazers Call To Action Summit



Global Trailblazers Call to Action Summit held in September 2015

In 2015, KEPISA participated in the Global Trailblazers Call to Action Summit in Sao Paulo Brazil in September and committed to have one million women connected to global trade by the year 2020. The commitments are in eight specific areas of:

- ❖ Data Collection
- ❖ Trade Policies
- ❖ Public Procurement
- ❖ Corporate Procurement
- ❖ Certification
- ❖ Addressing Supply Side Constraints
- ❖ Financial Services And
- ❖ Ownership Rights

These commitments are geared towards accelerating women's participation in the global market. Since then, KEPISA has made progressive steps towards the realization of this vision as follows:

KEPISA held a breakfast meeting on 15th September 2015 at the Stanley Hotel to take its members through the commitments to the global call to action. Approximately 80 women in business who attended the breakfast meeting have since taken up various steps in accelerating trade in the export market. A specific case is the Miyonga Fresh Green Limited that grows fresh fruits and vegetables for the export market including the EU.



Ms. Felicity Biriri, a member of the KEPISA Gender Sector Board during a follow up meeting of the Global Trailblazers Summit held by KEPISA on 15th September 2015 at Stanley Hotel.

Women in Business Forum



International forum on Women in Business held on 14th December 2015 at Laico Regency Hotel.

KEPSA in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the Government of Kenya held an international forum on Women in Business (WIB) on 14th December 2015. This was held along the sidelines of the 10th World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference in Nairobi. Policymakers, business community and representatives of Women Business Organizations convened to discuss policies and actions to increase the participation of women in trade.

This was important given the commitments that KEPSA had made at the Global Trailblazers Call to Action Summit in Sao Paulo Brazil. The WIB forum discussions were geared towards interventions on increasing women's participation in the global economy to the same rate as their male counterparts; private sector and governments support in inclusiveness and equality in business; and technology as a tool to leverage, innovate, and scale SMEs.

Preferential Government Procurement Quota Reserved For Women

On women in business empowerment through public procurement, KEPSA has been at the forefront in championing and collaborating with government in the establishment of Preferential Public Procurement Policy that provides 30% of public procurement to women and youth in business. In view of this, KEPSA held a meeting on public procurement for the Women in Business within its membership and the Heads of Procurement from key government parastatals on 8th December 2015 at Panafric Hotel in order to come up with a joint strategy of safeguarding the increasing uptake of Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) by women enterprises in both public and corporate bodies.

Since then, KEPSA through the Ministerial Stakeholders' Forum tracks progress on the uptake of AGPO and a status report is normally submitted during the Presidential Round Table.

KEPSA is also part of the Commonwealth Center of Excellence for Women in Procurement taskforce and technical committee. The umbrella body has also been pushing for the enactment of Buy Kenya Build Kenya (BKBK) policy in order to support enterprise including women.

National Stakeholder's Consultative Forum on Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment



National Stakeholder's consultative forum on gender equality and women's empowerment held on 9th March 2016

KEPSA has been involved in discussions of key priority areas for the advancement of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, synergies and partnerships. In a meeting convened by the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs on 9th March 2016 at Laico Regency, KEPSA committed to deliver on the Economic Pillar by offering continued support to women owned businesses and associations to help them overcome barriers to trade in order to improve their business competitiveness.

The development of the National Policy on Gender and Development is ongoing through the Ministry and KEPSA has made significant input into it especially on Women in Trade and Financing dimensions.

Launch Of ShetradesKE: Connecting 10,000 Women Entrepreneurs to Export Markets



Launch of ShetradesKE initiative held on 15th July 2016 at Villa Rosa Kempinski Hotel

KEPSA in collaboration with the International Trade Centre (ITC) committed to the Brazil Sao Paulo global call to take a million women to global markets by 2020.

During the launch of ShetradesKE initiative held on 15th July 2016 at Villa Rosa Kempinski Hotel, KEPSA in partnership with Barclays Bank of Kenya and ITC Committed to ensure ensure 10,000 local women entrepreneurs get equipped with new skills and connected to international trade opportunities by 2020.

Together with the Australian Government, KEPSA and ITC have embarked on a program to build the capacity of women in the service industries to join global markets. This will see increased market access and exposure to best practices to the global market.

Inclusion of More Women in Leadership Positions

KEPSA has also been at the forefront in sensitizing its members on the importance of including more women in positions of leadership in line with the Sustainable Development Goal on Gender Equality. On 2nd August 2016, KEPSA attended a forum that was hosted by the Kenya Bankers Association (KBA) for leading women in banking and finance. The aim of the meeting was to ensure economic empowerment of the women through financial inclusion strategies.

Launch of The Global Women's Summits in Kenya



KEPSA CEO Ms. Carole Kariuki gives her remarks during the Launch of Global Women's Summits in Kenya held on 9th August 2016

KEPSA in collaboration with SheCares Global launched the inaugural Global Women's Summits' in Kenya for the first time. The launch which was held on 9th August 2016 at Panafric Hotel aimed at creating a forum to strengthen women and families worldwide for women's empowerment, entrepreneurship and education.

The Global Women's Summit is a Women Information Network (WIN) initiative whose objective is to provide women with an opportunity to learn, work together, support each other and voice the things impeding the growth of women businesses.

KEPSA together with SheCares have embarked on a program to hold investor women entrepreneur forums, Non-Tariff Barrier trainings and promoting women entrepreneurs in Global markets.



Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs Sicily Rariuki (4th from right) during the Launch of Global Women's Summits in Kenya held on 9th August 2016



Voices From Women Leaders In Business Associations

Felicity Biriri:

Chair, Federation of Women Entrepreneur Associations (FEWA) Sacco

Women empowerment should never have been an area of discussion if only equal opportunity was a way of life. Since it is not, then it addresses development and security of national, regional and global economies as it is untenable and unsustainable to keep hoping for development while 50% of the population is not actively involved in all spheres of the development conceptualization, implementation and monitoring. The end result of such efforts will not only be terribly skewed, but also eventually regrettable. So, Kenya should be smart by being inclusive and tolerant to diversity at the earliest.

Eva Muraya

Chairperson, Kenya Association of Women Business Owners (KAWBO)

To date, women remain the largest underutilized catalysts to Africa's growth. When women are afforded opportunity to start and grow their businesses, their contribution to the growth of an economy is tangible. Women entrepreneurs, particularly in emerging markets, face a myriad of challenges when setting up their enterprises, ranging from access to credit, technical skills, markets, access to justice and mentorship opportunities. Despite these challenges, women have been able to zealously rise above them, some through commitment to networking and business support forums, such as KAWBO.

A recent human development report by UNDP indicates that Africa's economic rise is dampened by the stark gender gaps that exist, particularly within the labour market, education and health. This clearly demonstrates the immense gains that national economies stand to gain when conducive environments are created to include women's active economic participation. It has also been proven that nations are transformed when women are empowered.

Admittedly, Kenya has made tremendous improvement particularly within its public procurement laws and access to credit to benefit women, but a lot more needs to be done to embed a socio-economic culture of equal opportunity for all, in order to set the ground for a vibrant and fast growing Nation.



Jane Kagiri

Member, Kenya Association of Women Business Owners (KAWBO)

The turn of the millennium has brought a revolution in the perception of gender in business in Kenya. Women have increasingly taken leading roles in entrepreneurship industrialization and the generation of employment across the economy.

A “woman in business” is no longer a job title but a state of mind whereby they seek to empower themselves, their families and their country, rather than take a back seat and be restricted to matrimonial roles. Women are now forging their own future rather than standing idly by and watching others do it.

All this has been accomplished with a lot of strife and hard work involving multiple efforts and initiatives by the private, public and civil society sectors. Civil education and awareness have gone a long way in dispelling the myths that a successful woman entrepreneur should walk, talk, act and look a certain way. Whereas, affirmative action measures, support institutions and trainings have built up the capacity for woman entrepreneurs who'd like to start or grow their own business, but lack the skills, confidence, or financial backing they need to succeed.

A lot of progress has been done in bridging the male female gap in business but the gap is still large but not insurmountable. As we all know empowering a woman means empowering a generation. Therefore if we are to achieve our development goals bridging the gap of women in business is a frontier that we must overcome and conquer.



Joanne Mwangi- Yelbert

Chairperson, Federation of Women Entrepreneur Associations (FEWA)

There has never been a better time to be a woman entrepreneur in Kenya than today. KEPSA, in collaboration with Women Business Membership Associations such as the Federation of Women Entrepreneur Associations (FEWA) which I Chair, has been at the forefront of lobbying for favorable policies that benefit the Woman Entrepreneur today. A good example is the 30% reserved government contracts for women, youth and persons with disabilities and the two- thirds gender rule.

The women BMO's have also played a pivotal role in simplification of the process and catalyzation of uptake. FEWA for instance sends a weekly news-letter highlighting training and tender opportunities as well as resource persons and institutions to facilitate women in business into wealth and job creation.

Since 2008 when FEWA was registered, there has been a significant positive shift in the positioning of women in business with the Government of Kenya clearly supportive of the business agenda, in part due to the strong lobbying that KEPSA has maintained. Women's economic advancement will continue and grow exponentially as long as the unification of effort and measurement of results is maintained. You cannot improve that which you do not measure.

As a seasoned and successful woman entrepreneur from Africa, I see the collaboration with and expansion into regional markets as offering the most viable future growth for the businesswomen.

Africa is rising, and the women in business are her wings.



Nyakan Munyeki

Chairperson, Global Innovation Society of Kenya (GISK)

Women account for more than 50% of the population of Kenya. They are also primarily involved in nurturing children and therefore naturally imparting values within the family and communities. Empowering women and involving them in decision making enables them to bring the voices of the largest number of consumers and contributors into economic, political and environmental policies. This guarantees strategies that are relevant, efficient and sustainable for women to contribute to the transformation of the economy.

As Leaders of the nation, we need to identify opportunities in non-traditional sectors that allow women to generate businesses and find employment. Timeless Women of Wonder (TWOW) has identified the Construction Sector as one such industry and is empowering women with construction skills in seven trade areas. In the past year, 1000 women have undergone the training and currently 3500 women are registered in the process of the same.

Collaboration between key stakeholders is critical to develop, execute and scale up such projects and other valuable practical models and initiatives as we empower women to contribute to the growth of our economy and the future of our country.



Wambui Mbarire

Chairperson, Retail Trade Association of Kenya (RETAR)

On many fronts it has been acknowledged that the fastest way to grow an economy is through affording women at the very least, similar opportunities as men. In traditional African society, women built houses, tilled the land, fed the family and bore children, among other duties. They were the backbone of society. Adoption of Western cultures created disparity by favouring the boy child, while neglecting the girl child and subsequently marginalizing women. In time, they adapted and learnt new ways of tilling, building and earning money to buy food!

Today, the world is awakened to the need to bring women back into the decision making fold due to the place they hold in the family setup. It is no secret that women the world over play a vital role not just in nurturing the next generation but also in driving the economy.

This achievement has not come easy, but is the culmination of efforts and dreams of women uniting to demand more; women who refused to be anything but extraordinary. Many fought towards women empowerment and endured resistance and humiliation. KEPSA, as an apex body has at least eleven (11) women member associations, continuously working to empower women. Today women hold high positions in the work place alongside men in different areas.

In a society looking to empower women, their social, political and economic rights should be the same as those for men. Even though we have made huge strides in women empowerment, women still have to work twice as hard to get half as much as their male counterparts. It is a slow journey but there is definitely some light at the end of the tunnel. As women continue to break one glass ceiling after another it is only a matter of time before all children born will get the same treatment and will participate actively in their society without any discrimination.

Let us go out and reclaim our rightful place in society.



Lucy Karume

Chair, Kenya Tourism Federation



Training and teaching women to plan, budget and allocate their income on a priority basis made us realize that women were able to stretch and spread their income over the month.

After the training, we followed up on the trained women and found out that the outcome and responses were diverse, but the one overriding comment was how they became trainers to their daughters and their circle of friends.

The ripple effect of economically empowering women has thus reached and benefitted a wider group.

Constantine Randie

Secretary General, Professional Women Empowered (PROWE)

Personal empowerment of the working woman has been found to support high levels on collective efficacy, proactive attitude, self-esteem, self-efficacy and reduced psychological distress. Empowered women develop positive appraisals of self-worth, purpose, independence and negative appraisals of pressure as well as challenges and stress.

PROWE connects women to a community of dynamic, intelligent, accomplished women from diverse backgrounds and fields to enhance your business and career.

PROWE networking opportunities enhance face to face meetings with other members, business networking and camaraderie and personal support. PROWE members have opportunities to promote their businesses, share ideas and expand networks.


Women's economic empowerment is a prerequisite for sustainable development. Women must be proactive in engaging and ensuring the engagement in the development of sound public policies, a holistic approach, a long-term commitment and gender-specific perspectives are integrated at the design stage of policy and programming. PROWE supports growth of women's businesses and engagement in governance, leadership and professional employment.

The partnership with KEPSA has increased dialogue opportunities and improved co-ordination and support for professional women organisation and ability to lobby at the national level.



Fidelis W. Njoroge

Founder & Director, SheCares Global

A portrait of Fidelis W. Njoroge, a Black woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a light-colored blazer and a necklace. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a solid purple color with a repeating pattern of small, light-colored leaves.

I raise up my voice—not so I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.

She Cares is a platform that promotes economic empowerment for women. We facilitate job and wealth creation, entrepreneurship and innovation, Education, Health & Wellness. We are change agents, problem solvers, pace setters, excellence seekers, and concept promoters.

Phyllis Wakiaga

C&G Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) and the UN Global Compact Representative for Kenya

Despite the constant soft-pedaling of women's contribution to the socio-economic development of our country, their efforts have continued to play an enormous role in the structural transformation of our economy, improving our businesses and market creation through innovation and great leadership. Almost all the innovations that have succeeded in route to market plans in the corporate world are as a result of women's ideas brought to fruition. So Imagine how much more of a difference would be made if more women were empowered to create and innovate for our country's sustainable future. Hence, not only is it important to put more resources into women's economic empowerment, we need this contribution if we are to achieve our economic goals.



Myra Engelmann

Member, Micro Small and Enterprise Federation (MSEF)



Women have long been deemed as stabilizers of society and Micro and Small Enterprises Federation (MSEF) is no different. Women took over leadership of the Micro and Small Enterprises Federation during high noon of turmoil and mismanagement. We now have a woman as the Chair and Secretary General and these came into position through democratic competition.

The women have since brought stability in MSEF and deepened the engagement with the micro and small enterprises around the country. Through the leadership, MSEs have been able to participate in the implementation of the MSE Act 2012, the Business Registrations Act of 2015 and the Business Registration Services Act 2015.

Jackie Malomba

Member, Kenya Association of Women in Business (KAWBO)

On his visit to Kenya as the first sitting U.S. President, Barrack Obama likened the exclusion of women in development to a sports center where you leave half of your most valuable players on the bench and expect your team to be crowned champions, "Imagine if you have a team and you don't let half of the team play..". Sustainable economic growth and development is about inclusion and empowerment and women play a key role towards that end. Women agenda is about inclusion, having every woman of all cadres on board. Unfortunately, the most forgotten group in the women fraternity is the vegetable vendors commonly referred to "mama mboga" who consist of atleast 80 percent of the total population of women involved in business in the economy. Even with a 'suppressed' economic power for mama mboga, a report by Central Bank of Kenya says that women account for 82 percent of total savings in Kenya. The statistics could get better if more attention is put on 'awakening' the giant within mama mboga's economic potential – the invisible entrepreneur whose "small office-home office" holds the master key to unlocking the poverty conundrum in Kenya.

Afriwomen Connect (AWC) identified this gap and has remained to be the 'only voice of mama mboga' in urban slums and rural areas where they are densely located. Mama mboga is a key driver for women agenda, rarely noticed yet they feed families, communities and nations. AWC will continue to seek partners and stakeholders such as KEPSA to increase our reach in providing dignity, business solutions, entrepreneurship training and investment opportunities to mama mboga in the 47 counties in Kenya. As long as we fail to empower our 'mama mboga' by utilizing their entrepreneurial skills optimally at the grassroot level – where it matters most, and allow them to maximize their potential, our economic take-off will remain a mirage.



Voices From R&PSA Champions



Dr. Manu Chandaria

Trustee- R&PSA Foundation

It is time we start recognizing the status of women by action rather than talk.

For years we have paid lip service to our women “You are equal to us”. Yet we men have not left any avenue to keep them down. It has been far too long that women have kept their mouth a shut and suffered in silence.

They are no more prepared to remain down trodden. They have woken up. They want to walk with us.



Sam Mwale

The leadership role of women in KEPSA is indisputably the most important factor in its success. From the board, to the advisors, management, and staff, KEPSA's women provide the leadership, management, coordination, organisational and client relationship skills that make KEPSA an effective private sector apex body in voicing and advocating the private sector's issues to the government and other stakeholders. They are integral to its success in improving Kenya's business environment in the last three years. More importantly, the top business member organisations in KEPSA are also led by women, making it clear that the esteemed position held by Kenya's private sector in our region is the result of the full role women play in its leadership.

Arch. Lee Karuri

Trustee and Chair, KEPSA Foundation

The women economic empowerment agenda has been one of key programs of KEPSA. We have believed that empowered women are pillars of transformation of our nation. Let us continue to invest in our women both in the rural and urban areas.



A portrait of Rita Kavashe, a woman with dark skin and short, dark, curly hair. She is wearing a black blazer over a white top with a black floral pattern. She is sitting and looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. Her hands are clasped in her lap, and she is wearing a gold ring on her left ring finger and a silver ring on her right ring finger.

Rita Kavashe

Director, R&PSA & C&O- General Motors
East Africa Ltd

Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth. Women make enormous contributions to the economy whether in businesses, as employees, or staying at home to raise the family. Women economic empowerment is the cornerstone of development.

However today, women still face huge challenges in both the corporate and social space. Often we have to work twice as hard to prove ourselves and put in more effort to earn the respect of our colleagues. While women empowerment in terms of entrepreneurship, education and leadership opportunities has received a lot of attention in the 21st century, the playing field remains bumpy and unlevelled. There is less attention from private and public sector to discuss and implement strategies that empower women.

At General Motors East Africa, we continue to leverage different stakeholders such as Senior Leadership and Women Councils to advance women empowerment agenda. Our company recognizes the significant role of women in product development, profitability and sustainability. We focus our attention to attract female talent in key fields like engineering, through mentorship and female Graduate in Training programs.

As women we need to identify the barriers to growth such as fear and biases by mentoring and building each other's confidence through lean in circles. It is my firm believe that women are critical enablers of the success and prosperity of our nation



Jeremy Awori

Director, R&PSA

We are at a time when the gender agenda is undergoing perhaps its most defining moment in history. In fact if you listen carefully, you can hear the sound of shattering glass all around the world as women take up or prepare to take up some of the most powerful positions.

Historically, Barclays has been at the forefront of promoting gender equality at the work place. For us, the gender agenda is a serious business. We support it because it makes business sense, and more importantly, because it is the right thing to do!

Eng. Patrick Obath

Trustee & Vice Chair, R&PSA Foundation

The reality is that actually one half of humanity is women and girls. It is thus never going to be possible to achieve full human potential and sustainable development with this half constantly deprived of its full rights and opportunities. I therefore consider women's agenda as fundamentally very high priority as they are integral to the progress of humanity in general. And, when you think of what that agenda ought to be for us, we are basically saying: let us work together as men and women to ensure full gender equality and opportunity and remove all legal, social and economic barriers to the empowerment and advancement of women and girls.





Polycarp Igathe

Trustee, KEPISA Foundation

Women in Kenya are the pivot of the Kenyan society culturally, socially, economically, religiously and politically. Women know where they are going; let us invest in women's economic empowerment.

Conclusion



The reality today is that no country can achieve its full economic potential with the exclusion of women in any aspect of economic development. It is therefore clear, that women are key agents for achieving the transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development in Kenya and globally.

KEPSA is cognizant that eliminating gender based inequalities and advancing women's equality could add \$28 trillion in the global market by 2015. In Kenya, this could result to a one off increase to as much as 4.3% of GDP growth followed by year on year increase of between 2-3.5 % points.

List of Women Business Membership Organisations (BMO's) within R&PSA that are exclusive in advancing the Women in Business agenda

01	AWAN(K) – Association of Women in Agribusiness Kenya Chapter
02	EAGET – Eastern Africa Gender and Enterprise Development Trust
03	FEDA – Federation of Women Entrepreneurs Associations
04	FEDA SACCO – Federation of Women Entrepreneurs Associations SACCO
05	KAWBO – Kenya Association of Women Business Owners
06	KAWT – Kenya Association of Women in Tourism
07	KBMA – Kenya Business Women and Mentors Associations
08	MS&F – Micro and Small Enterprises Federation
09	OWIT – Organisation of Women in International Trade
10	PROWE – Professional Women Empowerment
11	TUWAA Women Institute

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