

Framework for Integrating Women Entrepreneurs in National Development Planning Processes In Africa

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Introduction

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- ❖ The role of women entrepreneurs in economic development is increasingly recognized,
- ❖ Women entrepreneurs have the potential to drive economic growth and make a significant gendered impact by breaking down traditional gender roles and stereotypes,
- ❖ Women entrepreneurs still face numerous challenges that impede their growth and limit their potential impact,
- ❖ Need to incorporate women entrepreneurs in national development plans,



Introduction

- ❖ The study therefore explores the strategies for effectively integrating women entrepreneurs in national development plans, with a focus on developing universal approaches that can be replicated across member states.
- ❖ It also identified and shared successful practices to create a more inclusive and equitable environment for women entrepreneurs to thrive and contribute to economic growth and development.



Introduction

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1. Having more women in business leadership positions leads to higher environmental, social, and governance standards, with a particularly clear connection when women comprise a critical mass of about 30 percent on company boards.
2. Companies with enhanced ESG perform better on critical metrics: stronger internal controls and management oversight, reduced risk of fraud or other ethical violations, positive workplace environment, greater stakeholder engagement, and improved reputation and brand.
3. Having a more gender-balanced board and leadership team contributes to stronger environmental, social, and governance performance, which in turn, leads to better business performance.



Contextual Issues

- ❖ In the 1970s, frameworks started to evolve concerning the ethical behaviour of multinational enterprises (MNEs) as the ‘social contract’ was developed by the Committee for Economic Development.
- ❖ The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) developed Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises to guide the ethical behaviour of multinationals in 1976 (which is periodically revised).
- ❖ In 1977, the ILO’s Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration) was also launched.

Contextual Issues

- ❖ The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work was adopted in 1998 to bring freedom of association, the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, the abolition of child labour and the elimination of discrimination.
- ❖ The Rio Earth Summit in 1992 focused on environmental concerns which was later followed by the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- ❖ The UN Global Compact (UNGC) (2000) further called on “companies to align strategies and operations with universal principals on human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption”.

Contextual Issues

- ❖ In 2014, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) established an open-ended working group to develop “an international legally binding instrument to regulate, in international human rights law, the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises”.
- ❖ Investment in ESG implies investing in enterprises with strong records on environmental issues, on social issues and on governance issues,
- ❖ Global investment in ESG accounts for between one and two out of every four investment dollars.
- ❖ Across Africa however, ESG investing has not been at the top of the priority list for corporates and investors.



Contextual Issues

- ❖ Africa's dominance in extractive industries, high exposure to climate change and pressing developmental needs poses a clear obstacle to the rise of 'green' investment strategies on the continent.
- ❖ Sub-Saharan Africa is the world's most commodity-dependent region, and much of its income is a product of the export of petroleum products, coal, metals and minerals.
- ❖ Yet there are more opportunities in Africa for investors to make a positive environmental or social impact than in any other region in the world.

A group of women involved in a re-afforestation project in their community



Evidence for the Framework

- ❖ When women are in leadership, they are more likely to care about the broader implications of company decisions.
- ❖ This, in turn, is likely to lead to more balanced decisions that consider the interests of all stakeholders, which will help maintain strong, long-term relationships and ensure business sustainability.
- ❖ Ultimately, reflect positively on the company, leading to enhanced firm's value.
- ❖ The literature shows there is clear connection between more women at the top and better ESG, and the results provide an even stronger rationale for business leaders in Africa to address the lack of gender balance in their boardrooms and senior management.



Evidence for the framework

- ❖ Reduce the imbalances to improve relationships with stakeholders and with institutional investors involved in green investment in the agriculture, industry, and social development,
- ❖ Act toward greater gender balance in corporate leadership to enhance financial performance.
- ❖ View firm's performance, corporate purpose, and the role of directors beyond the narrow focus on financial indicators, as stakeholders demand the adoption of higher ethical, environmental, social, and governance standards.

A woman preserving a seedling in her community despite water crisis as a result of climate change



Evidence for the framework

- presence of women in the development of green entrepreneurship in the context of climate change is critical- and can lead to effective coordination and invaluable balance between economic and environmental goals and
- it can significantly create a more gender equal prospect for businesses with an eye on sustainable and environmentally friendly systems.
- creating a shared value, inclusive social acceptance, multifaceted interactions, and green dynamic systems are effective in the entry of women entrepreneurs into green entrepreneurship (Fallah and Sooi, 2023)



Evidence for the Framework

- shared value, social acceptance, inclusivity, building a culture of green growth, knowledge flows, multiple and effective participation for both women and men, networking, green marketing, and technologies are key elements to consider to ensure women's access and control of the climate change and entrepreneurial space on an equal basis with their male counterparts.
- women's entrepreneurship is the basis for the transition towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by providing innovative products, services and decisions and ideas to solve social and environmental problems through the business lens.

Capacity building in Seedling Nursing for Women groups in farming.



Evidence for the framework

- ❖ The literature further shows that entrepreneurship requires sound institutional support to succeed.
- ❖ Create enabling conducive environment to support individual or group level entrepreneurial initiatives.
- ❖ The creation of such an environment should start at national level with the foundation policies for macroeconomic stability and for well-defined property right as well as international orientation.

A woman irrigating her family farm land



Evidence for the framework

Governments should play important roles in:

- ❖ creating enabling environment for enterprises;
- ❖ promoting entrepreneurship;
- ❖ developing micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;
- ❖ building productive capacity; and
- ❖ encouraging inclusive growth (UNCTAD (2015)).



Evidence for the Framework

- ❖ In looking at the Energy Sector it has been noted that Energy poverty in Africa is gendered mainly due to the gender differentiated roles in energy production, distribution, and use in households, communities, and the market.

A woman involved in manual harvesting of grains from her husband's farm



Evidence for the Framework

- ❖ The gendered division of labour creates different energy needs. As well, different perspectives of the benefits of energy and the capacity to access those benefits depends on one's gender.
- ❖ women and girls in different African countries travel long distances to collect fuelwood, water and carry heavy loads.
- ❖ Women tend to spend three to five times as much time as men on domestic activities.

A woman preserving a seedling in her community despite water crisis as a result of climate change



Evidence for the Framework

- ❖ Thus energy improvement for women and girls in Africa has to address issues of time, poverty, adverse health impacts such as exposure to respiratory diseases due to limited access to modern energy and overdependence on traditional biomass for cooking (wood, charcoal, agricultural waste, cow dung)
- ❖ Access to differential modern energy forms (solar, hydro and geothermal potential) or renewable sources of energy is what will impact positively on women's lives and their households

(Clancy, J. (2017) *Biofuels and Rural Energy*, Routledge

Evidence in Developing the Framework

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- ❖ In Africa, women entrepreneurs face a triple differential vulnerability to climate change:
 - First of all, women are more sensitive to climate risk;
 - secondly, they face additional barriers to climate change adaptation and
 - thirdly they are the ones who bear the brunt of climate risk the most at the household levels.
- ❖ All of these are because women are confronted with different forms of inequality which then create complex experiences of discrimination and vulnerability.

Evidence in Developing the Framework

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- ❖ Need to pay particular attention to how factors of differential vulnerability intersect, amplify, and reproduce women's business options, decision-making and actions.
- ❖ the presence of women entrepreneurs in the development of green entrepreneurship in the context of climate change can lead to effective coordination and critical balance between economic and environmental goals.
- ❖ It can also address the inequalities women face in their efforts to gain economic independence as well as in their attempts to contribute to national economic development



Evidence in Developing the Framework

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- ▶ Women entrepreneurs are recognized as an important untapped source of economic growth, considering that they create new jobs for themselves and others, provide different solutions to management, organization and business problems and obstacles as well as to the exploitation of business opportunities.
- ▶ There are still gaps between women owned and men owned business in terms performance, indicating that the potential of women entrepreneurs is not well harnessed in Sub-Saharan Africa (Foleu, Priso & Menzego, 2022).



Evidence in Developing the Framework

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- ❖ Despite women's entrepreneurship being recognized as an important untapped source of economic growth, women still represent a minority of all entrepreneurs. Women in entrepreneurship have lower participation rates in entrepreneurship than men.
- ❖ Women generally choose to start and manage firms in different industries than men tend to do. The industries (primarily retail, education, and other service industries) chosen by women are often perceived as being less important to economic development and growth than high-technology and manufacturing. Consequently, equal opportunity between men and women from the perspective of entrepreneurship is still not a reality (OECD, 2004).

Conceptual Basis for the framework

The main theories of entrepreneurship are rooted in economic theory, sociological theory, and psychological theory:

- ❖ The **economic theory of entrepreneurship** considers the relationship between economic conditions and incentives to enable risk taking that leads to rewards,
- ❖ **Psychological theories of entrepreneurship** identify traits, motives, and personalities as the major factors that arouse the spirit of entrepreneurship in an individual. Key elements of these are; personality traits, need for achievement, locus of control, psychodynamic model and risk-taking propensity.
- ❖ The **sociological theories of entrepreneurship** focus on the social context with four main elements, identified as relating to entrepreneurial opportunity. These are the social realities, the life course change, the ethnic identified.

Conceptual Basis for the framework

- ❖ Feminist theories focused on the interpretation and understanding of how gender is socially constructed and how the subordination and marginalization of women takes place.
- ❖ A feminist approach shows that entrepreneurship is male gendered and portrays entrepreneurial women as secondary and underperforming.

A mother and her daughter in egg business



Conceptual Basis for the framework

- ❖ The three (3) main theories from which issues of women's rights and gender equality are developed are the liberal feminism, radical feminism, and political economy feminist approaches:

Liberal Feminism

- ❖ In line with the UN processes since 1975
- ❖ Using the outcomes of UN Conferences to enhance national planning that promotes women in all spheres of life including in the area of entrepreneurship
- ❖ Using national machineries as entry points
- ❖ Gender mainstreaming in all sectors

Conceptual Basis for the Framework

Radical Feminism

- ❖ More of identity politics
- ❖ Women's bodily integrity and autonomy
- ❖ A radical re-ordering of society in which male supremacy is eliminated in all social and economic contexts
- ❖ Recognizing that women's experiences are also affected by other social divisions such as in race, class, ethnicity, location and sexual orientation

Conceptual Basis for the Framework

Political Economy Feminism

- ❖ For Feminist Entrepreneurship approaches, gender equality is pursued through entrepreneurial ventures that are founded on ethical and intersectional feminist principles,
- ❖ However, under the political economy feminist approach, Entrepreneurial Feminism is seen as a theory that explains how feminist values are operationalized, through the venture creation process to improve the position of women in society in specific contexts and situations.
- ❖ It places value on a country/continent's history, experiences and values and women's agency within it

Conceptual Basis for the Framework

- ❖ Entrepreneurship is therefore seen in the context of Africa, as a mechanism to create economic self-sufficiency and equity-based outcomes for women and girls.
- ❖ Women's entrepreneurship is located in the realities of Africa taking global opportunities and challenges into account
- ❖ Thus, women are expected to enter the entrepreneurial space to create wealth and social change, based on the ethics of cooperation, equality, and mutual respect irrespective of differences.

A happy fruit seller serving her customer by the road side



Conceptual Basis for the Framework

Feminist perspectives are helpful in the context of Africa in terms of challenging assumed objectives and unearthing biases that disadvantage women.

Entrepreneurship should be seen as positive economic, social and environmental activity and as a transformative change process within the thinking that policy actions, are expected to enhance productivity and economic growth that benefit both men and women, recognizing the disparities, differential opportunities and experiences while bridging the gaps using equitable principles.

A framework on Women Entrepreneurs and National Planning in Africa

- The UN system affirmed that Gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment are essential ingredients in creating a more equitable and just world for all as reflected in the Agenda 2030 and the third Millennium Development Goal on gender equality women's empowerment etc.,
- Gender inequality and climate crisis pose threats to ways of life, livelihoods, health, safety and security for women and girls around the world.
- Across the world, women depend more on natural resources and in many regions, women bear a disproportionate responsibility for securing food, water, and fuel.

A framework on Women Entrepreneurs and National Planning in Africa

- ❖ Because agriculture is the most important employment sector for women in low- and lower-middle income countries, during periods of drought and erratic rainfall, women, as agricultural workers, and primary procurers, work harder to secure income and resources for their families.
- ❖ women entrepreneurs faced unique challenges within the context of NDC and SDG planning processes.
- ❖ women as entrepreneurs experience specific gender biases, hence there is a need to focus the general policies exclusively on women entrepreneurs.

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- In the context of Africa, there seems to be a continued historical struggle for a greater gender equality in African societies, arising from the history of domination that affect different women in different ways.
- The framework approach considers, gender relations to understand women's position in addition to incorporating the analysis of class and power relations, geography, economic conditions of women and for women,



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- Incorporating women entrepreneurs into the planning process, serves as a basis for combining productive and reproductive forms of entrepreneurial activity with both low-based private production of basic goods and serves as valuable in themselves and without patriarchal gender relations (or making an effort to address unequal gender relations).
- Beyond a basic focus on access to financial and human capital, there is a need to also focus on different dimensions of constraints and opportunities in social, economic, and psychological skills aspects to identify the extent of inclusion of gender perspectives in planning with a focus on entrepreneurship.

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- ❖ Areas for intervention include for example, increased exposure to smoke inhalation resulting from Household Cooking with firewood and other inferior fuels (cow dung, twigs and other agricultural waste)
- ❖ Indoor air pollution and burns due to inferior sources of energy use
- ❖ Insufficient access to modern forms of energy due to gender neutral assumptions in energy and development planning
- ❖ Lack of sufficient interest in incorporating socio-economic and gender related issues into development projects that have negative climate change impacts

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- ❖ Lack of access to sustainable and modern energy forms especially in rural and peri-urban communities in Africa exacerbates energy poverty in the times of climate change energy
- ❖ Limited access to water in drought prone areas and regions
- ❖ Less clean water for drinking and for other hygiene purposes
- ❖ Physical burden of carrying heavy loads on women and girls

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- The framework therefore seeks to promote gender equality by factoring in women's entrepreneurial efforts and to address the intersection across both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement in a gender responsive manner.



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THE FRAMEWORK IS BUILT ON THE SIX FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS OF ILO WED ASSESSMENT

1. A gender-sensitive legal and regulatory system for women's economic empowerment

- Formulate and implement laws and regulations that promote women's economic empowerment to support women to start and grow viable enterprises.

2. Effective policy leadership and coordination

- Establish structures/ systems of dedicated policy leadership and coordination for the promotion of women enterprise development to improve the emergence of policy measures that respond to the specific needs of women entrepreneurs, the effective use of resources, and the sharing of lessons learned with relevant stakeholders

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3. Access to gender-sensitive financial services

- ❖ Increase women's access to finance to support the establishment of new enterprises and the growth of existing enterprises, especially for small businesses.
- ❖ Ensure Gender-sensitive financial services which consider the specific needs of women entrepreneurs while delivering services in an environment where gender bias is non-existent.



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4. Access to gender-sensitive business development support (BDS) services

- ❖ Business development Services (BDS) to support the entry, survival, productivity, competitiveness, and growth of micro and small enterprises by helping entrepreneurs to solve their problems. E.g. facilitating access to markets; improving the availability of less expensive or higher quality inputs; introducing new or improved technologies and products; improving management and technical skills; and helping enterprises access appropriate financing mechanisms.
- ❖ Gender-sensitive BDS services consider the specific needs of women entrepreneurs while delivering services in an environment where gender-bias is non-existent.

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5. Access to markets and technology

- ❖ Women entrepreneurs' access to markets (both domestic and international) and technology (its usage and ownership, including ICTs) is a key consideration in strengthening their opportunities for new market development and expansion, quality and productivity improvements, and growth, as well as for enabling their entry into higher value added and growth sectors.
- ❖ Supporting Women entrepreneurs' access to growth opportunities and sectors will help them become more competitive and sustainable and create jobs.



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6. **Representation of women entrepreneurs and participation in policy dialogue**
 - Active participation of women entrepreneurs in policy discussions that affect their businesses is essential.
 - Adequate representation in business/ sector associations and participation in decision-making and policy dialogue will safeguard the needs of women business owners



Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

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SUMMARY

- ❖ Discussion of the purpose of the assignment, and the methodological aspects including decisions about the specific secondary data on gender issues, case studies on women's entrepreneurship, climate change and development planning
- ❖ Discussion of the intersection of climate change, women's entrepreneurship, and planning processes within the context of Africa.
- ❖ Background and context and a discussion of the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda with its strong emphasis on investments in women and girls and the need to prioritize gender equality in the wake of the climate emergency,

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

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- ❖ justification for the integration of issues of women's entrepreneurship in national planning processes in the context of climate change
- ❖ a description of the framework, its relevance for the integration processes on women's entrepreneurship and the strategy for its implementation.
- ❖ Use of six pillars for integrating gender and women's entrepreneurial issues in the wake of climate change with reference to planning processes in the context of Africa.
- ❖ This section on summary, conclusions and recommendations

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

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Women entrepreneurs face several challenges due to factors such as:

- ❖ gender discrimination and stereotypes,
- ❖ differences in the way women and men approach entrepreneurship,
- ❖ difficulties in reconciling business and family obligations,
- ❖ the choice of business types and sectors,
- ❖ information gaps,
- ❖ lack of contacts and access to networking,
- ❖ access to capital,
- ❖ technical support, and infrastructure.



Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

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CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ There is an intersection of gender, climate change, and entrepreneurship with a need to take them into consideration in planning processes in Africa,
- ❖ It is important to emphasise the role and participation of women entrepreneurs in national development plans and processes
- ❖ The need to deepen understandings on how to address the interconnectedness of development, poverty, the environment and gender issues.

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

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CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ The importance of tapping into issues of Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) for businesses, international organisations, governments, the private sector, and civil society at large.
- ❖ Identification of the specific ways in which the framework can be used to target different women entrepreneurs as they confront challenges and strive to benefit from opportunities from the ESG mandates



Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Government policies and initiatives should address the regulatory environment of entrepreneurship education and skills development and centralize gender and inclusion issues
- ❖ Improvement of technology exchange and innovation and directly target women for such programmes
- ❖ Facilitating access to finance for women's entrepreneurship, and roll out through creating awareness and networking
- ❖ Need for targeted interventions for women entrepreneurs to help them flourish and attain their full potential

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ A comprehensive research programme that seeks to expand understandings of women's perceptions, attitudes, awareness and behaviours with regard to establishing and managing climate related enterprise initiatives and businesses could expand the range of women's entrepreneurial options.
- ❖ Feed the research findings into planning and capacity building initiatives to enhance employment creation and economic development that benefit young women and men in the context of Africa.
- ❖ Women should be part of ongoing decision-making processes regarding land and resource management so their knowledge and experiences can benefit planning and policy making processes that can be rolled out to impact positively on whole communities in Africa.

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

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- ❖ Identify a range possible entrepreneurial activities to establish a business case and the potential risks thereof
- ❖ Implement a package of gender responsive support system, rolled out through a comprehensive business incubation service from the highest to the lowest institutional levels and frameworks.
- ❖ Leverage exiting women's initiatives which are not climate specific or new to development as the means for tapping into the new sources of climate and development aid finance.
- ❖ The soft loans concept should be a major policy area at the continental level to stimulate enterprise development activity at country and local levels.



Thank You