



Women in Business

a publication of

International Finance Corporation: Gender - Entrepreneurship - Markets

Global Edition

January 2005

Introduction

Hello! Welcome to the first quarterly IFC GEM newsletter designed to keep businesswomen in touch with key events, relevant research and each other.

What is IFC GEM?

Gender-Entrepreneurship-Markets (GEM) came into being on 1 December 2004 with a mandate to both mainstream gender throughout International Finance Corporation (IFC) operations and to design women-oriented projects and provide technical assistance. GEM aims to better leverage the untapped potential of women as well as men in private sector development, for the benefit of individuals, families and society as a whole. The initial primary regional focus is Africa. [read more >>](#)

Initial activities include a gender audit of IFC's small to medium enterprise (SME) support operations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, a Gender and Growth Assessment for the Minister of Finance in Uganda, and a series of trade workshops to help businesswomen access international markets in South Africa, Madagascar and Uganda. [see News and Events below](#)

IFC is part of the World Bank Group (WBG) and is the biggest multilateral provider to private sector projects in developing countries. It both lends to and takes equity stakes in private companies, and provides significant technical assistance to help strengthen private sector development and the SME sector. [read more >>](#)

Why a Newsletter?

One of the first tools put together by GEM has been a [Global Directory of Women's Business Associations](#) (WBAs). This was inspired by members of the Uganda Investment Authority - Women Entrepreneurs Network (UIA-WEN) in Uganda and the Ugandan Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited (UWEAL), who suggested that an online directory accompanied by a regular newsletter would connect WBAs globally. A nominated contact at each of the more than 180 WBAs on our list will receive this newsletter and forward it on to their respective members. [Individual subscriptions](#) are also welcome.

How Can You Be Involved?

The newsletter aims to share news and information that we think will be helpful to women entrepreneurs around the world. If you or your business association have an event you would like made known, have a success story to share, or would like to tell us what you would like to learn about, please [email us](#). This newsletter is for YOU and we want to get you involved.

This Quarter's Inspirational Quote

"Women's entrepreneurship, the obstacles women face and the potential they

offer to create both wealth and well-being are a worldwide phenomenon".

Margaret Snyder
founder of [UNIFEM](#)

News

World Bank Supplier Diversity Program

Every year, WBG spends approximately \$600 million on goods and services for internal requirements, both in Washington DC and its country offices. Procurement is effected through a competitive bid process that enables all suppliers to compete for WBG business. WBG is committed to increasing the business participation of Minority, Women, Disabled Owned Business Enterprises (MWDBEs) both by direct contracting and by subcontracting from prime contractors. While WBG guidelines refer only to US-based minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses from around the world are encouraged to bid for supply contracts. [read more >>](#)



In future issues we will provide information on upcoming open bids and certification as a women-owned business.

Support for Asian Tsunami Victims



People all over the world have been generous in raising funds to help the victims of December's devastation in South Asia, but the need for support is still great, not least for women and children affected.

The IFC has announced an [aid program](#) for the region, as has [WBG](#). However, rights and health organisations [MADRE](#) and [UNFPA](#) warn of dangers faced by women and girls in the hardest-hit countries of Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Maldives, including sexual abuse and financial exploitation. One agency addressing these issues is the [International Women's Development Agency](#)".

Have Your Say - IFC Safeguard Policies Review

The IFC is currently reviewing its Safeguard Policies and designing new performance standards to inform how it carries out its work, Gender is being directly considered for the first time, and you're invited to have your say on how gender issues should be incorporated into policy development. We would like to hear from all of you, especially women-owned small and medium companies in developing countries. Please send your feedback to [Julia Grutzner](#), or [read more >>](#)



Calvert Women's Principles



In June 2004, Calvert – US manager of socially- and environmentally-screened investment funds - launched the Calvert Women's Principles. This is the first global code of conduct for corporations focused exclusively on empowering, advancing, and investing in women worldwide. There are seven core principles and together they provide companies a set of goals they can aspire to and measure their progress against, while offering investors a set of tools they can use to assess corporate performance on gender equality issues. [read more >>](#)

Online Discussion: Women and Poverty

until 4 Feb - hurry to have your say. One of the UN's



WomenWatch series, this discussion is facilitated by Josette Murphy Malley for the World Bank. The objective is to draw on the collective experiences since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and to identify what has worked well and what hasn't in reducing women's poverty. The final week to 4 Feb will focus on identifying emerging issues for women and poverty and new opportunities to address gender inequalities. [read more >>](#)

Doing Business



This major resource offered by the WBG provides comparable data about business regulations and their enforcement in 145 countries. Many regulations have specific implications for women in business, especially regarding property rights and access to finance. To ensure a gender perspective was taken into account, Doing Business sponsored a series of consultative workshops with women in Africa, Asia and the Middle East undertaken by GEM staff. Generate an instant online report, order a print copy of

Doing Business in 2005 or download a free copy of *Doing Business in 2004*. [read more >>](#)

Middle East and North Africa (MNA) Investment Climate Assessments

As part of a larger gender project, the World Bank MNA Gender and Finance teams have started to apply a gender dimension to Investment Climate Assessments, systematically analyzing conditions for private investment and enterprise growth. One major conclusion drawn is that women and men in the region face different governance climates and that barriers to entry are primarily network related. [read more >>](#)



World Bank Report: Russia:

Women and men, boys and girls, do not always benefit equally from social services such as health and education. For example due to a host of reasons, in many developing countries more boys than girls are given a chance to go to school. Recognizing this discrepancy was the first step; now through the support of the World Bank and the World Bank Institute, the government of Russia has launched an initiative to tailor delivery of social services to women and men, girls and boys. The pilot initiative, "Mainstreaming Gender in the Delivery of Social Services and Social Assistance", was launched January 27-28 in the Vologda region. The pilot is expected have a positive impact on future gender work in Russia and the Eastern and Central Europe region, by providing an example of how gender mainstreaming can be implemented. Look out for follow-ups on this initiative in future issues.

Reported by Elena Sotova, Senior Technical Specialist, ECSHD

Persian-Speaking Gender and Development Network

PGN was inaugurated in Tehran, Iran in July 2004 with support from WBG. Leading women from the government, NGOs, and academia in Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan decided to focus on women's entrepreneurship, exchanging experiences and supporting the expansion of economic activities. A successful first workshop on women and publishing was hosted by the University of Tehran's Center for Women's Studies, [read more >>](#)



Spotlight On:

Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited (UWEAL)

In December UWEAL began the Girl Entrepreneurship Program (GEP) to train girls and young women in entrepreneurship skills while still at school, exposing the students to business concepts and entrepreneurial role models and encouraging them to consider entrepreneurship as a way to earn their own incomes.

According to Sarah Kitakule, chairperson of UWEAL, "Girls shouldn't wait to leave schools and start being enterprising. They could be economically active without putting their studies at risk." She added, "GEP is an opportunity for them to explore their potential as businesswomen by starting up income-generating activities."



The introduction of GEP with assistance from the UN Volunteer Program is just one of UWEAL's achievements since its 1987 establishment as a forum for Ugandan women to work together as entrepreneurs. UWEAL now facilitates members' participation in international events and trade missions, is consulted by government on women in business issues, provides business skills training and has started a savings and credit through its branches. [Email](#)

UWEAL.

Each newsletter we will put the spotlight on either a women's business association that has developed an innovative idea or process that promotes women's entrepreneurship; or an enterprising woman who has achieved success. If you have a success story to share, please [email us](#) with the details. We look forward to sharing your stories.

This Quarter's Events

National Women's Leadership Summit

1-2 Feb, Washington DC, USA: The US Women's Chamber of Commerce introduces a strong new approach to growing the power of women in politics and supporting women business owners to seek business growth through government contracts. [read more >>](#)



4th Afro Arab Congress of Business Professional Women

16-18 Feb, Cairo, Egypt: Incorporates the 1st Afro Asian Congress of Business & Professional Women and the 6th International Congress of the Egyptian Business Women Association. [read more >>](#)



49th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women



28 Feb-11 Mar, New York, USA: A high level plenary meeting to review the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and the UN General Assembly's "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century". [read more >>](#)

Beijing & Beyond: Call To Action

1-8 Mar, Around the world: Women across the globe will organize local, national, regional, and international actions to address a broad range of concerns, demand action on commitments to women's rights and gender equality, and celebrate our gains of recent decades. [read more >>](#)

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Female Labor Force Participation - Private Sector Opportunities in South Asia

2 Mar, Washington DC USA:

Videoconference seminar on how ICTs can empower South Asian women to participate in the labor force as investors and entrepreneurs. [email for more information >>](#)



International Women's Day



8 Mar, Washington DC, USA: Among the many events worldwide to mark International Women's Day, the IFC, WBG and the US National Women's Business Council host a discussion panel on women's access to finance + women in business. Starts 3pm, followed by cocktail reception 5.30pm. If you would like to attend, please email [Aya Okajima](#) for further details. Search for [IWD events](#) in your area

7th Woibex Women in Business Conference

8 Mar, Dubai, UAE: Annual conference for experienced women business leaders in upper-middle and senior levels of management, as well as emerging and established entrepreneurs. [read more >>](#)



International Conference on Gender in Southeast Asia



19-20 Mar, Bangkok, Thailand: Focuses on the role of women NGOs and gender issues in human, legal and reproductive rights in Southeast Asia. [read more >>](#)

FURTHER AHEAD - MARK YOUR CALENDARS

African Women Invent & Innovate Exhibition, Conference & Awards

6-8 Sep, Accra, Ghana: Global Women Inventors & Innovators Network (GWIIN) and IFC GEM invite you to take part in the first ever awards to honour Sub-Saharan Africa's women inventors and innovative entrepreneurs. [email for more information >>](#)



[Email us](#) details of your event.

Links to Resources

SME Toolkit

Free business management information and training for small to medium enterprises from writing a business plan to how to apply for a trademark, with a range of regionally customized versions. Developed by the IFC. [read more >>](#)



French Set Standard



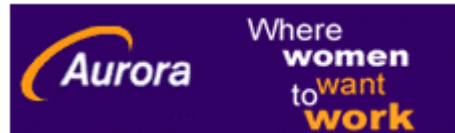
France sets a great example in promoting gender equality in the workplace. The Ministry of Parity and Equality in the Workplace has now established a "label egalite" to denote

companies committed to promoting gender equality. Companies that meet the following criteria are eligible:

- Demonstrated commitment to gender equality in the workplace.
- Recognition by international certification body AFAQ.
- Full agreement of relevant labour unions.

Companies are entitled to feature "label egalite" and be recognised as best practice in equal opportunity employment for three years. [read more >>](#)

Where Women Want to Work



Free online service that compares what companies around the world say and do to attract, retain, develop and promote talented women. [read more >>](#)

GlobeWomen News

Bimonthly email newsletter of GlobeWomen.com, which aims to link businesswomen worldwide. The newsletter collates international news on the status of women in business and entrepreneurship. [read more >>](#)



Asian Development Bank - Gender and Development



ADB provides technical assistance and funds loan projects aimed at improving the status of women as part of its Policy on Gender and Development, with a focus on gender mainstreaming as a key strategy. [read more >>](#)

PROWESS

UK advocacy network that supports the growth of women's business ownership through the development of an effective women-friendly business support infrastructure and enterprise culture. Advocates and lobbies at levels. [read more >>](#)



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