



Creating Opportunities ... For Women

Third Quarter Edition Global Newsletter: July 2007

IFC's gender program welcomes you to its eleventh quarterly newsletter designed to keep businesswomen in touch with key events, relevant research and, most importantly, each other! We provide brief descriptions of news, events, and online resources that will involve, inspire and inform you and others like you. Wherever possible and appropriate, we provide a link to further detail.

This issue's highlights include news of IFC and other World Bank Group activities (including a [new report on Arab businesswomen, recently launched under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah](#)), news reports from other sources (including [the first ever all-female police force deployed by the United Nations in Liberia](#)), upcoming events around the globe (including [the annual Global Banking Alliance for Women Summit in November](#)), and links to useful resources (including the [Tourism and Gender Global E-Network](#)). Our regular [spotlight](#) this issue falls on Ms. Nejira Nalic, the director of MI-BOSPO, a Bosnian organization providing micro-lending to low-income women entrepreneurs.

This newsletter shares helpful news and information with women entrepreneurs around the world. If you or your business association have an event you would like to make known, have a success story to share, or would like to tell us what you would like to read more about, please [email us](#). This newsletter is for *you* and we want to keep you involved.

NEWS

News from the IFC and the World Bank Group



New Report on Arab Women Finds that Access to Capital and Business Skills are Key Challenges

Reducing the time it takes to register a business and increasing access to capital topped the list of major challenges facing women entrepreneurs in the Middle East and North Africa, according to a new report, entitled: "Women Entrepreneurs in the Middle East and North Africa: Characteristics, Contributions and Challenges."

Formally launched at a ceremony with Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of Jordan, the report is the result of a cooperative effort between the IFC and the Tunisian-based Center of Arab Women for Training and Research. “The female entrepreneurs profiled in this report are the face of the Arab world’s future – with high rates of education, widespread use of information and communication technology, international openness, and an optimistic outlook,” Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah said. [Read more and download the report](#)

Women’s World Banking and IFC Deliver Microfinance Training in Bosnia



This spring the IFC and Women's World Banking facilitated a two-day workshop for staff of MI-BOSPO, a micro-credit organization targeting low-income women in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Twenty-eight senior loan officers and branch managers participated in the sessions on improving their skills to deliver high-quality, women-focused customer care. The workshop addressed gender issues that influence attitudes and service delivery towards women entrepreneurs at all stages of the loan process. MI-BOSPO will be replicating the training with all customer-facing staff over the coming months. For more information, [contact](#).

Best-selling Author Discusses Gender and Ambition at the IFC

This May the IFC hosted a discussion with Anna Fels, a psychiatrist and best-selling author of *Necessary Dreams*, on the issue of women and ambition. Fels’ work identifies factors, particularly in the work environment, that prevent women from realizing their ambitions. “Despite the huge advances women have made in recent decades, their ambitions are still undermined in subtle ways. Yet there is strong evidence to suggest that inclusive organizations benefit from an improved bottom line, and countries where women are actively supported report higher levels of economic prosperity,” Fels said. [Read more](#)



World Bank Hosts Consultation on the Legal Dimensions of Women’s Economic Empowerment

This June the World Bank facilitated a discussion on how women's access to justice and the land, labor, and financial markets is crucial for economic progress and poverty reduction. The discussion took place in the context of the World Bank Group’s Gender Action Plan which seeks to advance women’s economic empowerment and the Bank's Legal Empowerment for the Poor Initiative, which mirrors the Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor (CLEP) initiative on the link between exclusion, poverty, and law. The event brought together leading practitioners in three fields: i) land and property rights, ii) access to finance and capital, and iii) labor laws and women’s right to employment. The participants discussed key issues relating to women's legal empowerment and proposed interventions and initiatives to address in Bank programs and analytical work. Click [here](#) for more information, or [contact](#).



Emerging Women Business Leaders Exchange Views and Learn about IFC

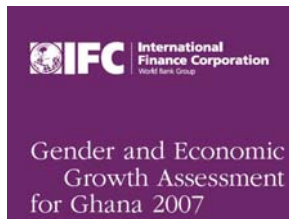
For the second year in a row the participants of the FORTUNE/U.S. State Department International Women Leaders Mentorship program visited the IFC as part of a learning



program. Coordinated by Vital Voices, the program enables emerging women business leaders across the globe to spend a month in the US being mentored by top American

female executives. As part of the group's Washington, DC orientation, IFC representatives spoke to this year's 32 participants about the IFC's work on empowering women in the private sector. [Read more](#)

IFC Identifies Gender-based Obstacles to Doing Business in Ghana



More than 50 participants from government, civil society, and the private sector attended the launch of the *Gender and Economic Growth Assessment for Ghana* and the accompanying *Voices of Women Entrepreneurs* report this May in Accra, Ghana. The reports find that women make up about 50 percent of the labor force but are mostly involved in micro enterprises, suggesting that gender parity in economic activity could add as

much as 2.5-3 percent to Ghana's current aggregate output. *Voices of Women Entrepreneurs in Ghana* showcases twenty-three successful Ghanaian women entrepreneurs, lending their voices to the issues that affect them as business owners. For more information, [contact](#)

MORE NEWS

Female Police in Liberia Empower Women



In a country where violence and abuse against women is prevalent, the first all-female police contingent ever deployed by the United Nations is giving Liberian women new confidence and increased safety. The 105 Indian policewomen are highly trained and armed, but have yet to fire their weapons. Liberia's president, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, wants 20 percent of the police and army in her

country to be female. [Read more](#)

Women's Affairs Ministers Gather in Uganda



Thirty-two delegations of women's affairs ministers from 53 Commonwealth countries came together this June for the 8th Women Affairs Minister's Meeting in Uganda. The Ministers agreed on the need to fast-track Millennium Development Goals that focus on the achievement of gender equality. A women's business forum and an access to finance workshop resulted in a series of important recommendations on increasing access to finance for women.

[Read more](#)

UN Survey Finds that Discrimination against Women is Losing the Asia-Pacific Regions Billions of Dollars Every Year

The 2007 Economic and Social Survey for Asia and the Pacific has found that barriers to employment for women cost the region from \$42

billion to \$47 billion (5 trillion to 5.6 trillion yen) annually. A further \$16 billion to \$30 billion a year is lost through gender gaps in education. The findings build on a growing body of research which demonstrates that restricting women's access to work, education and health services is not just a human rights issue, but also comes at significant economic cost. [Read more](#)



Citibank, Financial Times Promote Micro-entrepreneurship

THE CITI MICROENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARDS

The Citi Foundation and the Financial Times have teamed up to launch “There’s Nothing

Micro About It,” an awareness campaign promoting micro-entrepreneurship through an awards program. The campaign is the result of the organizations’ commitment to microfinance and poverty alleviation made at the launch of the 2006 Clinton Global Initiative. [Read more](#)

Starbucks to Feature Rwandan Coffee while Empowering its Women

Through an effort that has involved both aid agencies and private firms, Starbucks stores are set to feature Rwandan coffee this year. Women coffee growers in Rwanda are slated for special support through training and professional development. The program aims to reinforce the economic power of rural Rwandan women involved in the production and commercialization of coffee and will include professional training, development of the entrepreneurial spirit, leadership, quality improvements, and commercialization of the coffee. [Read more](#)



Financing for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment on UN’s Agenda



The UN Division for the Advancement of Women is organizing a discussion to improve understanding of the mechanisms of financing for gender

equality and the empowerment of women, identify lessons learned, and highlight challenges that require action. The online discussion is part of the preparatory process of the 52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which will consider this issue as its priority theme in early 2008. [Read more and register](#)

Inspirational Quote

“The G8 emphasize the importance of the political and economic empowerment of women as a contribution to sustainable growth and responsible government. We are

promoting the World Bank's Gender Action Plan and welcome this and further initiatives supporting our African partners' efforts to foster the economic empowerment of women such as those taken by the United Nations."

- G8 Summit, Growth and Responsibility in Africa, Summit Declaration (8 June 2007)

SPOTLIGHT ON: Nejira Nalic, Director, MI-BOSPO



As the director of MI-BOSPO, a Bosnian micro-credit organization, Nejira Nalic has helped to empower over 20,000 low-income women in this post-conflict country by providing them with access to micro loans for their small businesses. Growing up in a country where women are entitled to equal rights under the legal system, Nejira understands the hidden inequality that Bosnian women still face in the society despite the positive legislation. "There are more and more women coming out and getting involved in social spheres, especially health and education," she says. "But a lot are still suffering from lack of opportunities and gender-based violence."

Nejira started her work on gender issues during the Bosnian fighting in the early 1990s when she established "Red Lily," a non-governmental organization that mobilized young women volunteers to work in hospitals. Nejira now works to leverage women's economic power, guided by the belief that economic empowerment helps women shape their future, and inspired by the strong and capable women of her country.

With 111 staff, 65 percent of whom are women, MI-BOSPO has big plans for its future, and aims to reach an even higher number of clients. The organization is a member of Women's World Banking, a global network of microfinance institutions. Nejira equates her own success with the success of MI-BOSPO clients, and with the success of colleagues who are running and developing MI-BOSPO into a sustainable success.

Nejira Nalic has appeared as a guest speaker at many international conferences and seminars, including the World Bank and IMF Annual Meeting in Prague in 2000, the annual meeting of the Microfinance Center of Eastern Europe, Women's World Banking events, and the Micro-credit Summit.

Each Women in Business newsletter spotlights either a women's business association that has developed an innovative idea or process that promotes women's entrepreneurship, or an enterprising and inspiring 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.

CALL FOR CONSULTANT CV's

IFC is looking for women and men experienced in the field of private sector development and gender for future short-term assignments. If you have relevant experience and would like to be included in our database, please [email us](#).

EVENTS

World Tourism Day – Tourism Opens Doors for Women

27 September, Sri Lanka: This day is an occasion to celebrate women's achievements in the tourism sector and stimulate action in support of UN's 3rd Millennium Development Goal on gender equality. Activities include an online photo contest. [Read more](#)



WIN 2007 Global Forum



27-29 September, Oslo, Norway: This 10th WIN forum will bring together women from around the world to discuss issues of careers, leadership, and personal growth in a series of panel sessions and 24 workshops. [Read more](#)

The New Arab Woman Forum: A Forum on Leadership and Social Responsibility

21-22 October, Dubai: The forum will identify emerging trends and provide a platform for about 500 delegates to debate major trends and aspects of the lives of Arab women. [Read more](#)

The New Arab Women | A Forum on Leadership and Social Responsibility

International Business Women Conference 2007

1-4 November, Washington, DC: This event will provide a platform for exchanging ideas among businesswomen from diverse backgrounds. It will provide interactive sessions and networking opportunities, and celebrate successful women. [Read more](#)

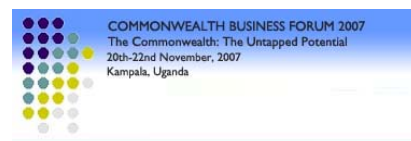
Global Banking Alliance (GBA) for Women Annual Summit



19-20 November, Kampala, Uganda: Hosted by DFCU Uganda, this conference will bring together GBA members to share experiences and practices on reaching out to the women's market. [Read more](#)

Uganda Commonwealth Business Forum and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

21-22 November, Kampala, Uganda: The forum is aimed at global business leaders, particularly from the Commonwealth, Africa, Asia, and Europe. Sessions



will focus on new opportunities for investment partnerships across different regions within the Commonwealth and internationally. [Read more](#)

LINKS TO RESOURCES

Women's International Perspective (The Wip)

The WIP is a comprehensive news website of women contributors from around the world. WIP reports world news, opinion, and commentary. [Read more](#)



The Unfinished Story of Women and the United Nations



This resource covers more than 85 years of history between women and intergovernmental organizations, from the story of women and the League of Nations to the ten year review of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China. [Read more](#)

Energy and Gender Issues in Rural Sustainable Development

This FAO paper discusses links between gender issues and energy, and it presents recommendations on ways of incorporating gender sensitivity into energy and development policies and planning processes. [Read more](#)



Tourism and Gender Global E-Network



This is an on-line resource for those interested in sustainable tourism as a tool to promote gender equity and the empowerment of women. [Read more](#)

Getting Even – Why Women Don't Get Paid Like Men and What to Do About It



Getting Even provides extensive evidence of the different standards working mothers are measured against and offers solutions for closing the wage gap that still exists in today's society. [Read more](#)

[Email us](#) to suggest a Web link.

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