

# IFC'S GENDER FOCUS

## IFC's Support for Women in Business in **Fragile** States

Supporting private sector growth in Africa's fragile and conflict affected situations (FCS)

Women make up roughly half the world's population, yet their full economic potential has hardly been realized. This is especially true in Africa, where women often lack the educational, financial, and legal supports they need to succeed in business.

In Africa's fragile and conflict affected situations (FCS), women must also contend with serious health and safety concerns, the absence of supporting networks, and limited decision-making influence. In short, the vital contributions women could be making to economic growth and stability are too often being stifled, either by prejudice, poverty, or a combination of both.

**Supporting gender equality is a strategic priority for IFC**, which provides advice and investments in partner countries and companies that help expand and strengthen the role of women.

IFC's FCS Africa Program, which supports development in all twenty-two of sub-Saharan Africa's FCS, uses a 'gender framework and lens' to help determine how IFC projects in fragile states can best consider, include, and support women. The framework provides a strategy, methodology and tools to help mainstream gender into IFC projects, while also promoting a gender-inclusive culture.

IT'S ESTIMATED  
THAT WOMEN AND  
WOMEN-OWNED  
GROUPS OWN

**30%**  
of the world's  
businesses

YET ONLY  
ABOUT

**10%**  
of women  
entrepreneurs have  
access to capital to  
grow their businesses

IFC promotes **GENDER EQUALITY** in FCS

- ...with **Client Advice**: Integrating gender into project design, implementation, and measurement
- ...by building **the Business Case**: Examining and sharing the evidence for promoting and supporting women in business (and showing its positive impact)
- ...and by forging **Partnerships**: Working with and supporting women's business associations and other networks



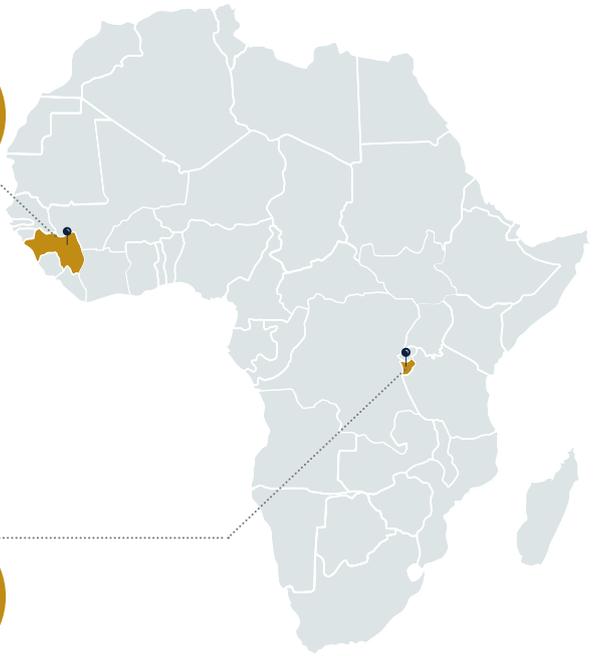
# IFC's strategic priorities **FOR GENDER**

1. Closing gaps in health and education
2. Supporting more and better job opportunities
3. Helping increase access to finance, insurance, technology, and land
4. Enhancing women's leadership roles

## PROJECT EXAMPLES

### GUINEA

Guinea suffered badly during the Ebola crisis. As part of its broader response, IFC organized a series of health and sanitation training sessions, including some specifically for women and women's groups. IFC is also providing training (particularly in leasing and financial management) to women and women-run businesses in the country.



### BURUNDI

Coffee is big business in Burundi. Women smallholder farmers play an important role producing this valuable crop, yet are often excluded from decision-making processes. IFC is working to change this by promoting women ownership across Burundi's coffee production and processing value chains. IFC is mapping the sector to determine where women are succeeding – and where they are being held back. The results will inform targeted training and other support for Burundi's women coffee farmers.



## Geography of the **GENDER LENS**

IFC has applied its gender framework and lens in the following countries:



### Working with IFC's FCS Africa Program

IFC's FCS Africa Program partners with governments, development and financial institutions, and other groups and individuals to maximize its impact in Africa. For more information, please contact the following:

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### About IFC

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets. Working with more than 2,000 businesses worldwide, we use our capital, expertise and influence to create opportunity where it is needed most. In FY15, our long-term investments in developing countries rose to nearly \$18 billion, helping the private sector play an essential role in the global effort to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. For more information, visit [www.ifc.org](http://www.ifc.org) and [www.ifc.org/africa](http://www.ifc.org/africa)

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