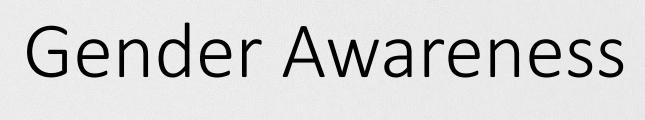
The role of African paintings in exposing Africa's rich tapestry

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Sub-Saharan Africa has been making remarkable strides towards achieving legal gender equality. Between October 2021 and October 2022, seven countries in Sub-Saharan Africa implemented positive changes that have had a profound impact on women's participation in their economies

Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon's Remarkable Achievements

Notably, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon emerged as trailblazers, enacting multiple reforms that enhance women's access to employment and finance. These reforms include the elimination of all restrictions on women's employment, the introduction of legislation protecting women from gender-based discrimination in financial services and domestic violence, and the mandate for equal remuneration for work of equal value. For the first time, both countries have achieved a score above 90 on the World Bank's Women, Business and the Law index, which measures equality of economic opportunity. A score of 100 indicates that women have equal rights as men, and countries scoring above 90 are typically associated with more developed economies.

In this journey towards gender equality, it is essential to recognize that empowering women is not a zero-sum game. When women are empowered, societies as a whole benefit from their talents, skills, and perspectives. By embracing gender equality, we unlock the full potential of half the population, leading to greater innovation, economic growth, and social progress.

Let us continue to champion gender equality and women's empowerment, working hand in hand to build a more inclusive, just, and prosperous world for all. Together, we can create a future where every individual, regardless of gender, has the opportunity to thrive and contribute to a better tomorrow.

Implications of the Reforms

The reforms undertaken by Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon have far-reaching implications for gender equality and women's empowerment. By eliminating restrictions on women's employment, these countries have opened up new avenues for women to pursue their professional aspirations. The legislation protecting women from gender-based discrimination in financial services and domestic violence ensures their safety and well-being. Additionally, the mandate for equal remuneration for work of equal value promotes fairness and equity in the workplace.

Building on this momentum, Togo made significant strides in November of 2022 by implementing four crucial legal changes. These reforms encompassed a range of important issues, such as prohibiting gender-based discrimination in access to credit, enacting legislation to address domestic violence, protecting pregnant mothers from dismissal, and equalizing rights related to marriage.

Africa's gender reform progress has been significantly bolstered by the collective efforts of countries and various stakeholders. Recognizing the importance of leveling the playing field and enhancing women's participation in the economy, the World Bank (WB) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) have played a supportive role in this transformative journey.

