



# **DRAFT TRAINING MANUAL FOR GENERAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP COURSES IN UNIVERSITIES**

## **COURSE 1: ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION**

### **MODULE 1: WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

#### **Editors:**

**Prof .Murtala S. Sagagi**

**Prof. Sarah Anyanwu**

**Dr. Sola Aliu &**

**Dr. Oluremi Abimbola**

## **Module 7:**

### **Women Entrepreneurship**

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

On completion of this module learners should be able to

- (1) Discuss the concept and nature of women entrepreneurship
- (2) Examine barriers to women entrepreneurship
- (3) Identify the contribution of women entrepreneurs to the economy

#### **RATIONALE:**

By understanding the peculiar nature of women, learners will be able to appreciate how these peculiarities influence their entrepreneurial traits and pursuits.

#### **ACTIVITIES**

- (1) Have learner read Handout 1 and have a class discussion on the importance of women in economic development.  
Discuss the basis for studying women entrepreneurship as a separate topic  
Discuss the characteristics of women in business and the peculiarities of women's enterprises
- (2) Have learners use Worksheet 1.  
List the differences between the male and female genders and on the last column, indicate how these differences can impact on the capability of the women in enterprise
- (3) Handout 2 – Learners to list and then discuss the challenges of women entrepreneurs.
- (4) Divide the class into 3 Groups or multiples of 3, using the 3 case studies (1per group) of women entrepreneurs provided, Have learners identify, list and discuss the types of entrepreneur, the business strategy of the women in question and their challenges
- (5) Handout 3: Have learners discuss recommended interventions that could be mounted at the various levels to alleviate the problems of women in business

# Handout 1

## THE CONCEPT AND NATURE OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### Background

Entrepreneurship is considered an important driver of economic development and growth in many economies. Apart from the general diversity in entrepreneurial practices, there appears to be significant differences in the characteristics of male and female entrepreneurs. Historically, entrepreneurship has been a male – dominated pursuit.

Although women make up more than 50 percent of the world population, they own and manage significantly fewer businesses than men. The UK Global Entrepreneurship Report found that men are around two and half times more likely to be entrepreneurs than women.

The information on female entrepreneurship has increased markedly in recent years. Research has focused on women business owners' characteristics and development, women's motivations for starting and leading a business, women's leadership styles and management strategies; and barriers encountered by women business owners. These different topics will be addressed in this module.

### Why study Women Entrepreneurship?

"Economists and policy makers (*in Africa*) cannot afford to ignore gender issues if they truly wish to follow a shared growth agenda"

*-John Page, Chief Economist for the Africa Region, World Bank*

All over the world, women entrepreneurship has become an important component of academic and policy conversation. This field presents several distinctive characteristics that differentiate it from men entrepreneurship. From a scientific point of view, the study of female entrepreneurship informs us not only about women behavior, but also about entrepreneurial and human behaviour in general.

Varieties also exist across women entrepreneurs in different countries and between women who are involved in entrepreneurship and those who are not. Studying female entrepreneurs sheds light on the linkages between entrepreneurship and wealth creation, employment choice and family dynamics, business creation and peace and many others.

Women's entrepreneurship needs to be studied separately for many reasons; the first being that women's entrepreneurship has been recognized during the last decade as an important untapped source of economic growth. Women entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others; and by being different, they provide society with different solutions to management, organization and business problems as well as to the exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities.

Another reason is that the topic of women in entrepreneurship has been largely neglected both in society in general and in the social sciences. Not only have women lower participation rate in entrepreneurship than men but they also generally choose to start and manage firms in different industries than men tend to do.

Women's productive activities, particularly in industry, empower them economically and enable them to contribute to overall development. Women's entrepreneurial activities are not only a means for economic survival but also have positive social consequences for the women themselves and their social environment.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in particular, appear to be more popular with women entrepreneurs, as they allow flexibility and innovation. However in most developing countries, this potential has not optimally been realized. Because large numbers of women work in the informal sector, the value they add is not reflected in the national account.

### **Characteristics of Women Entrepreneurs**

Overall, the explanation for the behavior of women entrepreneurs and why they are distinct is complex and multifaceted. Reasons contributing to these differences include factors such as

- Demographics
- Socioeconomic variables
- Subjective perceptions
- Cultural factors
- Institutions

Such differences have significant implications at the macro-economic level.

According to the UK's Global Entrepreneurship Report:

- The Peak age group at which people start businesses is 35 – 44 for men and 45 – 54 for women – which suggests that having children may be a factor.
- Women are relatively more likely than men to believe that they cannot create any job in the next five years
- Men are nearly twice as likely to think that they have the skills to start a business as a woman

All these facts indicate some clear differences in factors which affect the attitudes and motivation of women and therefore clear implication for the type of support and funding which women require to get started.

Studies in the USA have shown that successful women entrepreneurs start their businesses as a second or third profession. Because of their previous careers, women entrepreneurs enter the business world later on in life, around 40-60 years. Many of them have higher education degrees. Many had experienced considerable dissatisfaction with their previous careers and in working for others. In many cases, this innate desire to be their own boss is the driving force to pursue entrepreneurship.

On the contrary however, data from the African continent indicate that women entrepreneurs tend to be younger than men by two or three years. This may suggest that access to entrepreneurship may be slightly easier for younger cohorts of women. In all the African countries studied, a much lower proportion of the women were married. This could imply that women may not find it easy to combine both family and enterprise responsibilities.

Enterprises in textiles sector are more likely to be owned by women than enterprises in other sectors and family enterprises are two to seven times more likely to be owned by women.

### **Women Entrepreneurs' Motivation**

Much of a female entrepreneur's drive derives from the immense passion she has for her work. Data coming from some developed nations (in particular the United States of America) indicate that many women entrepreneurs are not afraid of taking risks and are more than two times more likely to take above average risk than their male counterparts. At the extreme end of the spectrum however, are their counterparts from developing countries, who by their societal circumstances cannot assume such risks.

Results from a US survey indicate that Increasing number of women have discovered that the best way to break the "glass ceiling" that prevents them from rising to the top of many organizations is to start their own companies. In fact, women in the US are opening businesses at rates twice that of the national average.

Women generally do not make profit the basis for their business pursuit; rather they possess very strong business ideas and seek all avenues to share their business ideas with others who may benefit from their innovations.

Another motivating factor for women entrepreneurs is the desire for control. Many successful female business owners are propelled by the opportunity to be their own boss and run their own company. Women entrepreneurs are also motivated by philanthropic commitment to society. Furthermore, successful women entrepreneurs have the tendency to balance family life and career.

Thus they have amazing ability to multi-task; properly balancing both personal and professional life with their goal-oriented approach.

### **Pattern of Businesses Owned by Women**

Apart from the general diversity in entrepreneurial practices, there are also significant differences in the characteristics of male- and female- owned businesses. Overall, women-owned businesses tend to be smaller, cluster in consumer-oriented sectors and generate lower sales turnover than those owned by men. Occupational segregation reinforces the concentration of women-owned enterprises in the services sector and jeopardizes women's prospects as entrepreneurs in high-growth sectors.

Women generally employ a smaller capital base than men to start their businesses, tend to have lower ratios of debt financing, and are much less likely to use angel funds or venture capital. Recent studies indicate that women entrepreneurs are assembling themselves into groups or confederacies. The reason behind this pattern is to enable them form solid networks, where members can collectively pool resources and expertise together.

In the US, even though many female entrepreneurs have home-based and service-related businesses, they are eager to embrace technology. Increasing numbers of women are venturing into the once male-dominated fields of construction, transportation, communication, design, manufacturing, architecture and agribusiness. The retail industry remains, by far, the largest field of women enterprise.

Women business networks have also been found to be generous in philanthropy. Although their businesses tend to grow more slowly than those owned by men, women- owned businesses have a higher survival rate than US businesses overall survival rate. Female entrepreneurs today are more likely than ever to be highly educated and to have managerial experience in the industries in which they start their companies.

## **Handout 2**

### **BARRIERS TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

In a recent study on Africa, it was said that the continent has enormous unexploited potentials, especially the potential of women. It pointed out that women are Africa's hidden growth reserve, providing most of the region's labour but their productivity is hampered by widespread inequality in education as well as unequal access to land and productive output. The economic importance of women in Africa was reinforced by the Africa Commission Report which noted that "all evidence agree that women make a greater contribution to economic life than their men folk"

#### **Socio-Cultural Factors**

Women are said to be prevented from running competitive businesses by their relatively low education and skills level in many African nations. This generally limits their access to the various support services. At the same time, the multiple roles of women in the family put a limit on their risk taking tendencies. In many African countries, women spend their income on the household, particularly on food and education for their children. Therefore many are afraid to invest their limited funds into a business for fear of failure. This is in contrast with the profile of women in the more economically advanced countries as earlier highlighted.

Entrepreneurial activities of women are further hampered by traditional/cultural constraints that often tend to be specifically imposed on women in our societies. For example, in most African societies/communities, women's access to formal financial resources can be jeopardized by the requirements that their husbands sign for loan approval for their wives. Also daughters are often given smaller inheritances than sons; and in many cases daughters cannot inherit land from their father's clan.

Although equality of all citizens is guaranteed by the constitution of most countries, in reality, women are often considered inferior to men. Traditionally, the women are stereotypically seen and expected to do household chores and are not expected to venture into independent economic activities. As a consequence of these traditions, women find it difficult to break away from the norm and resolve to take charge of their lives and decide to start their own businesses.

#### **Legal and Regulatory Environment**

The legal and the regulatory environment is a core area of the investment climate that does not favour African women especially in starting/running a business. In developing countries most women find it more convenient to operate their businesses in the informal sector, which is poorly captured in available data and statistics. In Africa, most working women are not "formal" entrepreneurs but are rather self-employed. The informal sector is often the entry point into the

private sector. Barriers to formalizing a business include the lengthy and complex business registration, incorporation, and licensing practices.

Until recently, women entrepreneurs faced strong barriers to enterprise development in the prevailing laws and regulations. Obtaining licenses and registering the business on their own name were a nightmare. Through the United Nations conferences on women and from social pressures from local civil society groups, the legal and policy frame work is improving, yet there is much to be done to ensure a level playing ground for women.

### **Access to Finance**

Access to finance is a common concern for entrepreneurs. Even though sourcing finance is tedious for SMEs in general, women still tend to face stiffer conditionalities than men in accessing finance. The main reasons for this gender gap are not unrelated to the differences in the sector of business and the age and size of the female-owned business. Other possible explanations include lack of managerial experience, weaker credit history, reluctance to take risk and a preference for small business size. This gap is somewhat ameliorated by the provision of micro-credit to women. Microfinance however has the disadvantage of trapping beneficiaries' businesses to the micro-level because of credit ceiling. Women's under-representation among employed managers not only provides them with less direct experience of managing businesses compared with men, but it also hinders the likelihood of successful bids for start-up loans. Moreover, women's lower average earnings endow them with less gross savings and thus limit their equity contribution towards attracting large start-up capital under the equity guaranteed loan schemes.

### **Sense of Self-Worth and Role-Models**

International research indicates that a lower level of confidence, a greater fear of failure and the lack of role models may be preventing some women from entering into business ownership. Among the adult women interviewed in the 2006 GEM study, only about 35% in low income countries and 27% in high income countries personally know someone who has started a business. Consequently, familiarity with someone who has become a successful entrepreneur is positively correlated with becoming an entrepreneur.

### **Networking**

In addition, there is the dearth of organization and networks, both among women themselves, and between women and existing business associations and support institutions. This is partly because women are often too shy to initiate one or society does not encourage such activities. However, networking is very useful to access information, markets and raw materials through bulk purchase (taking advantage of the economy of scale). It also permits the eventual formation of clusters and a more organized relationship with support institutions.



## **Support Services and Other Factors**

Impact of support services in business development constitutes another major challenge for women entrepreneurship. Heavy bureaucratic requirements, complex and costly business plans, high collateral requirements for credit and difficult access to technology, are some of the hindrances to starting an enterprise. These include:

- Limited access to necessary technologies due to lack of information and know-how, and high prices
- Difficulty in finding appropriate production site at competitive prices
- Inadequate skills in the field of production, business management and marketing
- Lack of skills for product diversification
- Inadequate infrastructure and utilities, of which inadequate transportation from rural areas and insufficient power supplies are most serious,
- Limited access to information

## **Recommendations**

Gender awareness is important for policy makers and decision makers at all levels of public and private institutions. The process of policy formulation has to incorporate gender mainstreaming strategies. Ministries in charge of women affairs, SMEs development, NGOs, women's organizations and technical cooperation programmes all have important roles to play in emphasizing gender issues and creating a more enabling environment for women in enterprise.

Policy development has to address the needs of women entrepreneurs and particular policy lessons including;

- ensuring equal property and inheritance rights,
- strengthening financial education and encouraging dissemination of financial information to women,
- facilitating access to public support services,
- fostering a positive image of entrepreneurship amongst women,
- promoting development of women entrepreneurship networks and
- Supporting mentoring and coaching programmes.

Furthermore, there is need to strengthen the capacities of women in terms of skills and technical capabilities. Skills upgrading for women entrepreneurs calls for a systematic approach, and a long-term vision. Entrepreneurship programmes should be designed to keep up with changes in the global environment. In addition, women should be given the support and training needed for them to move away from a mere survival level of production and income generation, to achieve growth and competitiveness.

Business and industry networks for women entrepreneurs are key elements in facilitating access to the information, technology, markets and inputs (raw materials, etc.) relevant to their development and sustainability of their businesses. One of the weaknesses of women's business organizations and women entrepreneurs is lack of networking, which should considerably facilitate their access to economic opportunities and resources. Accordingly, networking of women with local, national, regional and international business associations should be encouraged.

## Handout 3

### INITIATIVES AIMED AT ALLEVIATING WOMEN'S CHALLENGES IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The importance of gender equality to development has been underscored in the MDGs. The need to develop women's entrepreneurship was emphasized by the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995. The Platform for Action, Equality, Development and Peace, adopted at the conference called for specific actions to be taken by Governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations to:

- Increase the participation of women in industry and all other sectors, particularly in the non-traditional areas, through access to advanced technologies;
- Promote, support and strengthen female entrepreneurship development;
- Encourage investments in environmentally safe products and in environmentally sound and productive agricultural, commercial and industrial activities and technologies; and
- Strengthen training opportunities for women.

In response to this call, a number of initiatives have been put in place to cater for the welfare of women and to encourage entrepreneurship among women. These initiatives often are tailored under the following general areas:

Mainstreaming

Participatory Approach

Integrated Approach

#### ***Mainstreaming***

This involves devising a plan or strategy to involve women in the development process or in specific activities. Women are also integrated in decision making at all levels

#### ***Participatory approach***

This involves continuous dialogue in the course of formulating and implementing programmes that involve and affect women

#### ***Integrated Approach***

Women entrepreneurs' issues and constraints are addressed in a broad perspective and in a coordinated manner. The ultimate goal is to increase the competitiveness of these women beyond what could be achieved through tackling the subject in selected or isolated manner.

## Handout 3

<b>Suggestions on Achieving Gender Equality in Entrepreneurship</b>	
<b>Policy Issues for gender differences in entrepreneurship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Access to finance, using various forms of finance for start-up and growth</li> <li>• Supporting Innovation for women-owned businesses</li> <li>• Increasing the migration of women into high-growth sectors</li> </ul>	<b>Allow the use of movable assets as collateral for bank loans to facilitate women's access to finance</b>
<b>Design better policies, improve data collection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect valid data according to international standards</li> <li>• Maintain good business register with gender data</li> <li>• Have good administrative data(Tax, census) to augment register data</li> </ul>	<b>Improved information systems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing credit bureau</li> <li>• Collect credit history information</li> </ul>
<b>Provide Accurate and systematic description of gender differences in business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demographics</li> <li>• Cross country empirical data analysis</li> </ul> <p>should be done the determine gender differences in entrepreneurship</p>	<b>Forster women entrepreneurs' access to international markets and business networks, including through the use of web technology</b>
Source: Adapted from OECD Gender Initiatives , 2004	

### **Student Questions**

- (1) For every ten male entrepreneurs in the UK, there are just four female entrepreneurs. Explore the reasons behind this imbalance in start-ups.
- (2) Discuss the factors that encourage or discourage a woman starting a business
- (3) Explore the entrepreneurship terrain in your locality and suggest how a level playing field can be made available to men and women.

### Worksheet I – Gender Issues in Entrepreneurship

Variables of Interest	Men Entrepreneurs	Women Entrepreneurs	Interventions Suggested to Bridge the Gaps
Biological and Family Issues			
Socio- cultural values and Traditions			
Policy and Legal Environment			
Institutional Support Mechanisms			

## Case Study 1

### **Fatima Wali, Nigerian Entrepreneur**

Fatima Wali has redefined the meaning of property management in Nigeria by breaking new ground in the formerly underdeveloped and male dominated domain of property and facilities management. Fatima initially set up Participant Properties Limited in 1994 with a partner who asked her to help renovate and manage a large property under lease.

Armed with years of experience in the private and public sectors and with degrees in architecture, urban studies, economics and management construction, Fatima accomplished this task with ease and began looking for her next challenge. She realized that comfortable and well maintained properties, particularly for short to medium term visitors, were few and far between in Nigeria, and she established Filmo Realty Ltd. With a portfolio of 120 units under management, Filmo has become the first point of call for foreign diplomats and multinational expatriates seeking modern and safe accommodation in Nigeria. Filmo now has properties in Lagos, Abuja and soon in Port Harcourt.

A successful entrepreneur, Fatima is also serious about gender equality and about ensuring business access to other women. She was instrumental in making the initial link between GEM and Access Bank Nigeria that led Access Bank to become one of the first banks in Africa to dedicate a line of credit specifically for women entrepreneurs. An active member of the International Facilities Management Association, Fatima is a dynamic woman who is regularly invited to speak at international conferences on real estate and facilities management topics, as well as on issues of concern to African business women. Her next challenge is to expand Filmo's innovative business model into other parts of West Africa. We have no doubt that she will successfully meet this challenge with her characteristic energy and enthusiasm.

Source: *News from IFC GEM and the World Bank Group* Third Quarter Edition

Global Newsletter: [July 2006](#)

## Case Study 2:

### MitiMeth



A Social Enterprise can be defined as a business established to address a social or environmental issue and generate profits for the enterprise owners. MitiMeth is a woman owned social enterprise established in 2010 to address the environmental problem of invasive aquatic weeds prevalent on Nigeria's waterways. The infestation of water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), was first recorded in Nigeria in 1984 around Badagry Creek. According to a 2004 report by the African Development Bank, annual losses in West Africa vary from US\$28-56 million for fisheries, US\$4-6 million for health, US\$7-14 million for hydro-energy, and US\$36-76 million for agriculture as a result of invasive aquatic weeds.

#### ENTERPRISE BENEFICIARIES

Dense floating webs of water hyacinth can be seen in most waterways in Nigeria (e.g. Epe, Ikorodu, Bayeku, Makoko, Igbokoda, Epe, Olugbokere, Mansa, Ikin, Lekki lagoon, Idah, Lokoja etc). Direct beneficiaries of the MitiMeth enterprise are those living and working in the riparian and lakeside communities in Nigeria. The objective of the enterprise is to extract value from this waterways menace by engaging members of the communities to harvest the weeds manually. Within and beyond the lakeside communities, already skilled artisans are trained by the MitiMeth to create eco-friendly hand woven products utilising the weeds.



## BUSINESS MODEL

Product	The main products are hand-woven home décor items i.e. multipurpose baskets, coasters, mirrors, vases.
Target Market	Domestic and Export markets. The enterprise attends exhibition and trade fairs and is registered with the BOI-AGOA centre. Boutiques and retail outlets have been approached to carry MitiMeth products. The products are marketed on enterprise's website: <a href="http://www.mitimeth.com.ng">www.mitimeth.com.ng</a> and also on Facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/mitimeth">www.facebook.com/mitimeth</a> .
Financial Model	The main income of the enterprise is derived from the sales of hand-woven products. Labour services, raw material supplies, rent and exhibition shows constitute the main expenses.
Business Form	MitiMeth is an Ibadan based business registered with the CAC. The enterprise is headed by a Creative Director, Achenyo Idachaba, the Operations Manager is Ile Idachaba, 2 Field Supervisors, 3 harvesters, 7 contract artisans / weavers.
Replicability	With appropriate training and readily available raw material resources, the MitiMeth business model can be replicated.

## CHALLENGES

The enterprise needs to aggressively market and establish consistent demand for its eco-friendly products. At present the enterprise does not have a staff person solely focused on sales and marketing. This is a gap and a weakness of the enterprise. The enterprise needs to hire a seasoned marketing professional to carry out this activity but has been resource constrained. Aggressive marketing is critical because the enterprise is based in Ibadan where the purchasing power is lower than other major cities. As such the products need to be marketed and sold beyond the boundaries of Ibadan.

The other main challenge is finding skilled artisans to engage long-term. There's a shortage of reliable and skilled artisans in framing and weaving. With current unrateable product demand, the enterprise has not been able to keep its trained artisans on a full-time basis. This is a critical challenge because when orders do come in, the artisans may not be available to fulfill the order. In addition, due to being a small business with small orders, artisans tend to charge a premium for

labour as they believe the products are destined for the international market and not the domestic market.

The vision is to build the Enterprise's sustainability by acquiring more customers. In doing so, MitiMeth aims to open a work / shop site in the center of the city and increase stocking locations. MitiMeth also plans to start a framing and weaving training program focused on aquatic weeds in order to increase its earning potential

### Case Study 3: **Vidsamor**

Grace Oluwatoye, a Nurse-Midwife by profession, had over 36 years of working experience as a Teacher and nurse-practitioner before she ventured into business. With the loss of her father at the age of 18 years, Grace was forced into the labour market very early in life in order to cater for seven younger siblings and an aged grandmother. This tragedy changed the course of her life as she had to jettison her earlier plan to immediately further her education by studying for the A/Level. Instead, she resorted to green grocery merchandising and later to the preparation of snacks which she sold to school children. This apparent setback set the foundation for her entrepreneurial walk in life. From the meager savings from her enterprise, she supported her large family and paid the initial tuition fee of 75 pounds at the School of Midwifery, Sacred Heart, Abeokuta.

The determination to succeed saw her through school, to a successful career in nursing and then to Master's degree from the University of Exeter, UK. Her proactive stance earned her good service opportunities with the United Nations Population Funds, as well as with international NGOs such as Engender Health and Pathfinder International. In 2009, she retired from structured paid service to pursue an age-long passion of food processing, with emphasis on augmenting nutrients in the diets of the less privileged.

In the course of investigating the nutrient values of different food items, she came across the plant – *Moringa oleifera*, which is considered the most nutrient dense plant on earth. This social entrepreneur has since been captivated by the plant, having conducted researches which have led to the establishment of a thriving manufacturing industry which produces VIDSAMOR Tea, Powder and Spices. The company also processes and packages nutrient-rich African ethnic delicacies for export. Superior quality and high standards are the brand promise of VIDSAMOR.

VIDSAMOR is a small but fast growing business employing 12 workers full-time, while engaging 50 subsistent farmers to grow 50 acres of moringa plantation on a contract basis. At the moment, VIDSAMOR is unable to meet the market demands for its products.

The founder of VIDSAMOR - Grace, plays an active role in the network of women entrepreneurs in the immediate community. Moreover, she coordinates the alumni network of Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation of the University of Ibadan. As the cohort Governor, she mobilized the group into a cooperative society for sustainability and mutual support.

## Suggested Readings

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