



## Creating Opportunities ... For Women

### *Fourth Quarter Edition Global Newsletter*

IFC's gender program welcomes you to its twelfth 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.

The issue's highlights include [news](#) of IFC and World Bank Group activities (including the [launch of the 2008 Doing Business report, which includes a two-year commitment to gender inclusion](#)), [news](#) reports from other sources (including [Saudi Segregation Rules for Women in Banking](#)), upcoming [events](#) around the globe (including the [Global Banking Alliance for Women Annual Summit](#) in Uganda) and [links](#) to useful web sites (including [microLINKS](#), a USAID-run website that brings together applications and tools on micro-enterprise). Our regular spotlight this issue falls on the [Agaseke Promotion Project](#), a group of 3,220 Rwandan women basket weavers producing colorful peace baskets in this post-conflict country.

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 get you involved.

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## NEWS

### *News from IFC's Gender Program and the World Bank Group*

#### *Doing Business 2008 Strengthens Focus on Women*



This September the World Bank Group published its fifth *Doing Business* report, which ranks countries around the world on the ease of doing business. This year's report includes a stronger focus on gender issues, and commits *Doing Business* to a two-year research program on reforms that improve job and career opportunities for women. Initial findings

indicate that greater regulatory reform has especially large benefits for women, who often face regulations that may be aimed at protecting them but are counterproductive in effect, forcing them into the informal sector. [Read more](#)

### Two New Gender Studies Launched in Tanzania



Nearly 200 women attended the formal launch of the Tanzania Gender and Economic Growth Assessment (GGA) and the *Voices of Women Entrepreneurs* report in Dar es Salaam and Arusha this August. Commissioned by Tanzania's Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Marketing, the studies commend the government for progress in addressing gender inequalities in policy and legislation. But they also suggest that Tanzania could gain a percentage point of growth by removing remaining obstacles to women's entrepreneurship. With the reports identifying access to finance as a key issue for businesswomen, the IFC recently provided a \$5 million line of credit to Exim bank for on-lending to women entrepreneurs. The team has also provided training for women on accessing international markets. IFC has carried out similar studies in Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda. [Read more and download the reports](#)

### Africa-America Institute (AAI) Annual Awards Gala Honors Tanzania



At the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual AAI gala, hosted this September in New York, H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, accepted the AAI African National Achievement Award on behalf of the people of his country. IFC's *Voices of Women Entrepreneurs* report was presented to all the event participants as background information on Tanzania's women in business. [Read more](#)

### Government of Rwanda and IFC Host Forum on Women's Enterprise Development

Organized at the invitation of Rwanda's First Lady, Mrs. Jeannette Kagame, this one-day workshop focused on involving women in economic transformation in Rwanda. Opening the workshop, Mrs. Kagame remarked that empowering women financially boosts development in countries. "All winning nations involve women in policies. But we need to educate, employ and advance credits to them," Mrs. Kagame said. The workshop helped map future IFC interventions to the benefit of Rwanda's women. The IFC has already engaged a consultant to work with the Agasake Promotion Project to assist women basket weavers in finding export markets. [Read more](#)

### IFC Celebrates Women's Day in South Africa



The IFC office in Johannesburg hosted a lunch discussion this August on the subject of "Women and Black Economic Empowerment: Financing Transformation in South Africa." Attended by women leaders in the world of business and finance in South Africa, the discussion focused on the challenges faced by black people and

women in particular in accessing capital and breaking into the world of big business. For more information, [contact](#) Natalie Africa.

### **IFC Sponsors Women to Attend Symposium for African and Chinese Businesswomen**

Vital Voices Global Partnership, with the support of Standard Chartered Bank, brought 18 African women to Shanghai, China this September for a three-day program to develop partnerships that further economic development and trade while fostering social responsibility. With the support of IFC's gender program, clients from IFC investee banks in Africa, including Exim Tanzania, dfcu Uganda, and Access Nigeria, were able to attend the summit. The aim was to develop an ongoing working group of women leaders that will lead the way for positive partnerships and fair business practices for Africa and China. [Read more](#)



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## **MORE NEWS**

### **Saudi Banks Enforce Segregation Rules That Harm Women's Careers**



New rules enforcing Saudi segregation of the sexes are forcing female bank employees to work in spaces separate from their male counterparts. Even though Saudi Arabia ranks as a top reformer in the *Doing Business* report, business conditions for women remain difficult. Women report that the new changes are pushing them out of the few business realms where they have been gaining more rights. [Read more](#)

### **Harvard Business Review Explores Obstacles Facing Women in Leadership**



A new article in the Harvard Business Review argues that the metaphor of the "glass ceiling," a catchphrase to describe organizations' failure to promote women into top leadership roles, has outlived its usefulness. According to the authors, a labyrinth is a more fitting image to help organizations understand and address the obstacles to women's progress, as it better conveys the complexity of challenges that can appear along the way. The article is based on a forthcoming book from Harvard Business School Press. [Read more](#)

### **Clinton Global Initiative Hosts Annual Meeting**



Coinciding with the U.N. General Assembly, the Clinton Global Initiative annual meeting brought together 1,000 leaders from business, NGOs, foundations, and government, to share insights into global problems and enable productive action in education, energy and climate change, global health and poverty alleviation. A number of sessions focused on challenges facing women. Former US President, William J. Clinton, announced the new partnership between Vital Voices and the World Bank Group Gender Action Plan to

build a database of discriminatory laws impeding women's economic participation.  
[Read more](#)

### **International Federation of University Women (IFUW) International Awards**



IFUW is offering a number of international fellowships and grants to women graduates for postgraduate research, study and training. The current competition is offering awards for research to be undertaken during the period of May 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009.

Application deadlines vary by country. [Read more and download an application](#)

### **New Study Focuses on Growth Needs of Women Business Owners**

What do established women business owners say they need to grow their businesses to the next level? A recent pilot study announced by US-based *Womenable* provides the answer: each other and business management development. The study points out gaps between the needs of established women business owners and the services currently available to address those needs. [Read more](#)



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## **INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE**

*“Gender inequality is a classic economic issue and addressing it can have significant benefits not only for women, but for the Tanzanian society as a whole.”*

- Dr. Florence Tuluka, Tanzania's Ministry of Industry, Trade and Marketing

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## **SPOTLIGHT ON:**

### **Agaseke Promotion Project in Rwanda**



Situated on the floor of a large room in which each inch of space is used, hundreds of Rwandan women spend their daily hours together weaving baskets. Rwanda's peace baskets, a commercial success with Macy's that even got the attention of Oprah, are a source of new hope for 3,220 women that are part of the Agaseke Promotion Project. Supported by the Mayor of Kigali and Rwanda's First Lady, Mrs. Jeannette Kagame, the project was set up in 2007 to provide income

generating activities that economically uplift poverty-stricken women and their families through handicrafts, including traditional basket weaving and beadwork.

Even though it has been in operation for just a few months, the project has made some impressive strides, mobilizing over 3,000 women, setting up facilities, hiring staff and printing promotional materials. Women from three districts in Kigali are receiving training in basket weaving, as well as in literacy, public health, nutrition, hygiene, family planning, and management. Exceptional spirit and dedication of the women weavers and



the high level government support that they are receiving marks the women's daily work. Yet the project is still working to address issues of marketing, product development, as well as looking for buyers for its handicrafts that not only tell a great story, but are also a beautiful decoration for any home.

IFC's gender program has hired a consultant to assist the project's marketing team and staff to have a better understanding of the dynamic and requirements of the export market and to improve their access to markets through product development and direct linkages with international buyers. If you are interested in supporting the project or in purchasing its products, please [contact](#) Natalie Africa.

Each newsletter we spotlight 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.

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## CALL FOR CONSULTANT CVS

IFC's gender program 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](#).

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## EVENTS

### European Federation of Black Women Business Owners 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards

26 October, London, UK: Themed "Slavery to Success" in recognition of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery Act, this event is expected to bring together over 600 attendees. [Read more](#)



### 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](#)



### Creating Better Business Environments - African and Global Lessons for Donors

3-7 November, Accra, Ghana: This conference will bring together development partners involved in the assessment, design and implementation of business environment reforms in Africa, and will include a pre-conference focusing on gender issues, hosted by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. [Read more](#) or [contact](#)

### **Training Course on "Making Governance Gender Responsive**

12-19 November, Manila, Philippines: The Center for Asia Pacific Women in Politics is organizing this course, designed for parliamentarians, government officials, political parties, research and training institutes and civil society organizations involved in governance reform. [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](#)



### **55<sup>th</sup> World Association of Women Entrepreneurs World Congress**



23-28 November, Cairo, Egypt: This gathering of entrepreneurs from around the globe is organized under the theme of "Meeting the Millennium Challenge." The event will also include an FCEM-Women Business Leaders

OECD Forum. [Read more](#)

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## **LINKS TO RESOURCES**

### **Women on the Move: the Neglected Gender Dimensions of the Brain Drain**

This paper, published by the Institute for the Study of Labor, shows that female migration to OECD countries has been increasing significantly in recent decades, and raises concerns about a potentially significant negative impact of the female brain drain on the poorest countries. [Read more](#)



### **Indigenous Women and the United Nations System**

The publication offers an overview of the work of the Task Force on Indigenous Women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality. It is a practical tool for future work with indigenous peoples. [Read more](#)



### **UNICEF's Rapid Assessment of Cell Phones for Development**



Prepared by Women'sNet South Africa, the report examines the impact of cell phone ownership and access for African women, and links cell phones with decreases in gender/youth based violence, and heightened awareness among gender and youth on HIV/AIDS prevention. [Read more](#)

## MicroLINKS

This USAID-run website brings together applications and tools designed to improve the impact of USAID microenterprise activities, giving members access to the latest information, best practices, a library of documents and tools, and an environment that supports communities of practice. [Read more](#)



## Status and Progress of Women in the Middle East and North Africa



This World Bank overview updates the main findings of the Regional Gender Report with respect to the status of women in the Middle East and North Africa in five areas: economic participation, access to education, access to health care, women's legal rights, and public participation and representation. [Read more](#)

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Published by **International Finance Corporation's gender program**

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