



WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH AFFIRMATIVE PROCUREMENT REFORM IN WEST AFRICA



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Gender responsive procurement is the sustainable selection of services, goods or civil works that considers the impact on gender equality and women's empowerment. Gender responsive procurement represents a huge opportunity to build a more inclusive economy, increase the participation of women-owned/-led businesses, and promote gender equality. Promoting supplier diversity and expanded participation of women in procurement processes contributes to expanding women's economic opportunities and has a direct impact in a country's ability to achieve SDG5 and meet their commitments under the 2030 Agenda.

The Project Affirmative Procurement Reform in West Africa supports women economic empowerment through policy reforms, institutional strengthening of public sector institutions and capacity building of women-owned/-led businesses to access procurement opportunities in Senegal, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Mali.

The project aims to :

1,360

women-led SMEs in Nigeria, Senegal, Mali and Cote d'Ivoire improve their capacity to access procurement opportunities

At least
400

women-led SMEs access new procurement opportunities in the 4 countries

270

government officials improve their understanding of how to implement affirmative procurement reform

4

legal /regulatory reforms adopted to facilitate women-led businesses access to procurement opportunities



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DID YOU KNOW?

Gender responsive procurement can have a positive domino effect in the value chain through inclusive sourcing and supplier diversity. By overlooking women-owned businesses, corporations are missing out on an opportunity to expand their markets, and diversify their supply chains, while simultaneously improving the lives of women and girls around the globe. 66 per cent of respondents to a global survey were willing to pay a premium for products and services from companies committed to bringing about a positive social and environmental impact¹. The 2016 ITUC Frontlines Poll found that 82 per cent of people hold companies accountable for the actions of their subcontractors. Consumers are increasingly requesting information from companies regarding their corporate commitment to inclusion in supply chains. Also, investors are more attracted by companies with good gender equality practices.



but only win

1%

of public procurement contracts

REGIONAL FOCUS

Affirmative procurement presents an opportunity to leverage women-owned SMEs' access to the intra-regional markets under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). UN Women is working with its partners to ensure that affirmative procurement clauses are included in the Women in Trade Protocol of the AfCFTA currently under formulation.

- UN Women, in collaboration with the AfCFTA Secretariat and UNDP, carried out two regional surveys and national consultations in 2022 across 26 countries to identify the constraints and opportunities that women and women-owned businesses face when trading across borders in Africa
- The **AfCFTA Regional Stakeholder Consultations**, held in Ghana in April 2022, comprising representatives from AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), development agencies, the private sector, women in business associations and networks, civil society organizations (CSOs), and academia, led to important progress. This meeting's outcome document identified **affirmative procurement as a key element to be included in the AfCFTA Protocol on Women and Youth in Trade**.
- **Capacity building:** Before the AfCFTA Conference on Women and Youth held in Tanzania from September 12th to 14th, 2022, UN Women produced and disseminated the policy brief "**Improving Women's and Young Women's Access to the Opportunities Created by the AfCFTA: Opportunities and Key Action Areas**" and leveraged it for capacity building of delegates attending the conference. The policy brief identified **affirmative procurement** as one of the strategies to improve women-owned businesses' and women entrepreneurs' access to markets under the AfCFTA.
- Policy engagement and advocacy: Regional Conference on Women in Trade. Prior to the regional conference to discuss the contents of a Women in Trade Protocol for the AfCFTA, UN Women held technical meetings with the AfCFTA's focal points, women and youth entrepreneurs (in Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria) to present the key issues hindering the women's participation in regional trade, including to access intraregional procurement process. During the conference, UN Women supported the participation of women entrepreneurs to voice their concerns, including their obstacles to access procurement processes and intra-regional supply chains in key sectors.
- UN Women has supported the Public Contracts Regulatory Agency of Senegal (ARMP) in preparing their participation in the second general assembly of the **African Public Procurement Network (APPN)**² to advocate for the implementation of GRP initiatives in other member countries.



of these women-owned Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) support the need to set up quotas for women-owned businesses in public procurement.

¹ Nielsen, Consumer-goods' brands that demonstrate commitment to sustainability outperform those that don't (October 2015).

² The African Public Procurement Network (APPN), established in 2018 aims to promote the development and integration of public procurement through active cooperation among its members across Africa.



NEWS FROM THE FIELD

SENEGAL

- In collaboration with the Authority of Public Procurement (ARMP), UN Women has produced a guidance note on women access to public procurement. The document will be available in comics and text versions to facilitate dissemination.
- Call for expressions of interest to select the women entrepreneurs who will benefit from the affirmative procurement project has been published in the local press and online. The evaluation of applications is being processed.
- The compilation of a database of women entrepreneurs is underway.
- Digital training is underway to enhance women's entrepreneurs' access to markets and operate in a post-COVID19 economy.

MALI

- Discussions with the public procurement regulatory authority for the review of Decree No. 2018-0473/PM-RM of May 28, 2018, adopting measures to orient public procurement towards small and medium-sized enterprises and national production and to take gender into account.
- Technical support to integrate gender in the Methodology for Assessing Procurement Systems (MAPS) which aims to assess and improve public procurement systems.
- Process initiated with United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) for the adoption of gender responsive procurement practices.
- Support for the participation of about 86 women's businesses in the UN's Business Seminar organized by MINUSMA to register on United Nations Global Market (UNGM) and understand United Nations procurement procedures.
- 54 women's enterprises have strengthened their capacity on United Nations System/UN Women procurement processes and are registered on UNGM 70 women's businesses trained on digital marketing in partnership with ImpactHER to support them adopting digital tools for pivoting their business models in this post-COVID19 economy.
- 30 women's businesses accessed Trade Facilitation Office (TFO)'s e-commerce platform for exports to Canada, enhancing their capacity to leverage technology in the post-COVID19 context.



WSMEs digital training session



NIGERIA

- The project Steering Committee has been set-up and the first meeting held, with membership cutting across a wide array of partners from the public, private, Civil Society Organizations and development partners.
- High Level Advocacy and policy dialogue event conducted in Abuja in August 2022, to raise awareness and build buy-in from government stakeholders to support affirmative procurement reform at the national and state level.
- Discussions with the Lagos State Public Procurement Agency and the Kaduna State Public Procurement Authority underway on pathways for achieving affirmative procurement reform.
- Meeting with top female CEOs and Board Chairs from the private sector convened to promote affirmative procurement in private sector supply chains in July 2022.

COTE D'IVOIRE

- Partnerships have been established and led to the setting up of a National steering committee and a Technical committee to support the project implementation. The following can be listed among the committee members : Ministry of Women, Family and Children (MFFE), Ministry of Commerce, Industry and SME Promotion (MCIPPME), the Ministry of Budget and State Portfolio (MBPE), Côte d'Ivoire SME Agency (ACIPME), National Authority for the Regulation of Public Procurement (ANRMP), Project to Support the Government's Social Program (PA-PSGouv), National Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs of Côte d'Ivoire (CNFCE-CI), Association of Women Lawyers of Côte d'Ivoire (AFJCI), National Youth Council of Côte d'Ivoire (CNJ-CI).
- Partnership with the Ministry of Women, Family and Children established to create the E-Femme project. This initiative aims at digitizing the operations of women entrepreneurs to strengthen the competitiveness of their businesses and facilitate their access to market opportunities in a post-COVID19 scenario.
- Call for expressions of interest from women entrepreneurs to participate in capacity building trainings launched in October 2022.



Convening of top female CEOs and Board Chairs from the private sector targeted at promoting affirmative procurement and the WEPs in the private sector



Meeting of the Technical Committee to support the project implementation





OUR PARTNERS:

FOCUS ON IMPACTHER

ImpactHER is an impact-driven non-profit organization that aims at empowering African female entrepreneurs by providing them with relevant hands-on entrepreneurship training, capacity building, and access to business financing. ImpactHer and UN Women have partnered in Mali and Senegal to support women’s capacities to access markets leveraging digital technologies.

Please find the link to the **video of women Digitalization Training Program in Mali** to help them get started with Ecommerce: https://youtu.be/a_c4p9UXDe4

FOCUS ON TFO

Trade Facilitation Office (TFO) Canada is a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve lives by creating sustainable trade partnerships for exporters from developing countries with Canadian and foreign buyers. TFO and UN Women have partnered in Mali to support women-led businesses access to the Canadian market, via digital platforms.

FOCUS ON OCP

The Open Contracting Partnership (OCP) is a silo-busting collaboration among government, business, civil society and technologists working to open up and transform public procurement through improved transparency, better data and sustained civic engagement. OCP and UN Women have partnered at regional level to support joint and complementary research, data collection, advocacy and policy dialogue that advance programmes and reforms on gender responsive procurement.

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

November 2022

NIGERIA

Collation of baseline data on the procurement landscape in implementation states by the Kaduna State Public Procurement Authority and Lagos State Public Procurement Agency

NIGERIA

Launch of the Gender Responsive Assessment, Review and Audit of Procurement Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutions at both National and sub-national tiers of governance

COTE D’IVOIRE

Training of women entrepreneurs on procurement procedures and opportunities during the national seminar on women entrepreneurship

COTE D’IVOIRE

National seminar on women entrepreneurship co-organized with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and SME Promotion

REGIONAL

Second General Assembly of the **African Public Procurement Network (APPN)** held in Eswatini from 14th to 17th November 2022 under the topic "Public Procurement for Africa's Economic Development - Crisis, Challenges and Way forward". Presentation by **The Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (ARMP)** at this meeting on good practices on GRP in Senegal.

December 2022

MALI

Opening of digital room for women’s businesses to facilitate their access to ICTs

January 2023

MALI

“Meet the WOB” event to facilitate the connection between women’s businesses and potential buyers from the private sector

February 2023

NIGERIA

Capacity building of actors involved in public procurement



VOICES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

“It was a pleasure to participate in the UN Women seminar on how to be a service provider for UN Women as a women’s enterprise, which allowed us to master the procedures for procurement and also the gender sensitive procurement practices for women’s enterprises. Most of us were not registered on UNGM and the training allowed us to do so and specially to know how to participate in bidding. After the training with UN Women, I also participated in the training on digital marketing of UN Women, which was an eye-opening experience for me (as the Americans say). The training on digital marketing has allowed me to digitize my businesses. I also had the great pleasure and honour to participate in the United Nations Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) business seminar which brought together companies from all over Mali. The MINUSMA market was a myth, but the seminar allowed us to learn that it is not as inaccessible as people think. There are opportunities that available for women owned businesses, but we need to go to the information and better understand how to access them. I hope to be able to be a partner soon with the United Nations structures in Mali, and I look forward to the rest of the process to access public procurement as well.”

Aminata Hagge, Director of Hagge Entretien /A&B Catering Services/ Hagge Language Learning & Translation Center/ AMI- SARL Assistance Médicale Internationale_MALI

FURTHER RESOURCES ON AFFIRMATIVE PROCUREMENT

- Rethinking gender-responsive procurement : enabling an ecosystem for women’s economic empowerment
- The power of procurement: How to source from women-owned businesses
- Gender responsive procurement
- Towards gender balance in public procurement
- Empowering Women Through Public Procurement
- Creating Gender Equality through Procurement Toolkit
- Gender, Trade and Public Procurement Policy
- Mainstreaming gender in public procurement