

Activity report 2016

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Building equal opportunities for women

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Editorial



Poverty is sexist, that much has been clear for years. Among 702 millions of people in poverty in the world today, 70% are women. Many of us are wondering: how do we eradicate poverty while promoting equality?

At Empow'Her, we think that the best answer is to provide women with keys to escape vicious circles of poverty, create their own economical sustainability and contribute to construct the world of tomorrow, their world for tomorrow: a more positive and more equal one.

After all, aren't the freedom and ability to create, to dream and to engage in projects the ultimate wealth we can aspire to? By betting on entrepreneurship as a solution and by unfreezing all those creative energies all around the world, we are convinced that we are solving a significant part of the puzzle. Because women aren't just an "issue" to solve, they have the solutions and are the main force for driving the progress to meet future worldwide challenges.

Soazig Barthélémy
Founder and Director at Empow'Her

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

BUILDING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

« There is no development strategy more beneficial to society as a whole - women and men alike - than the one which involves women as central players »

Kofi Annan

Empow'Her's mission

Empow'Her is an organization working since 2011 for the social and economic empowerment of women worldwide through three main pillars of action:

Support women's empowerment through entrepreneurship

Empow'Her provides training, support and the accessibility to networks, to help women create and develop sustainable businesses. Our goal is to launch a worldwide network through our training programs and centres to empower women through entrepreneurship.

Reinforce and strengthen women's leadership development

Empow'Her implements training, peer-to-peer mentoring and networking opportunities to enable women entrepreneurs to develop their personal leadership, becoming role models for the future generations.

Commit the younger generations to taking the lead in pursuing gender equality

Empow'Her is also a platform for youth to take action towards raising awareness on gender equality. Our goal is to encourage and inspire the next generation to become champions for gender equality.

Our levers for action



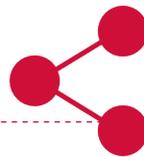
Training

Our training programs aim to strengthen the entrepreneurial culture as well as increasing women's access to capacity building business tools. Therefore, we are reinforcing women entrepreneur's abilities to develop their projects.



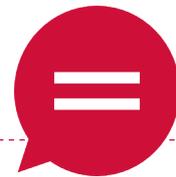
Support

Without the help of certain networks and true quality support, many women cannot turn their potential into real, lasting impact. Empow'Her provides them with the coaching and day-to-day counselling they need to unlock their maximum creativity



Leadership development

To enable women to build up their self-esteem, strengthen their decision-making skills and become role models within their communities, we provide the tools, networks and inspiration they need to succeed.



Raising awareness

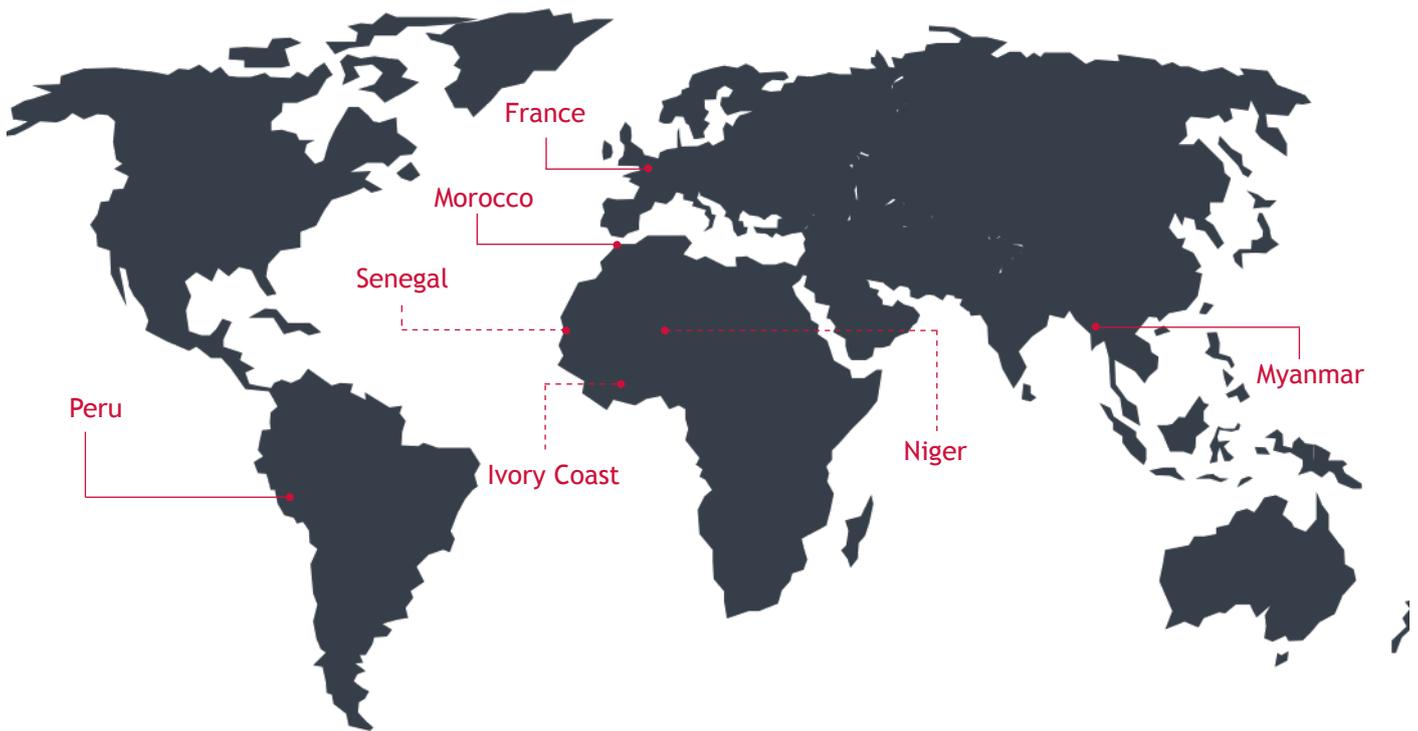
The lack of knowledge on Gender Equality issues and the persistence of gender stereotypes have had a negative effect on the reduction of inequalities in general. Empow'Her is working to raise awareness among the youth to achieve gender equality.

2016 in a nutshell

Over
430
women supported in
their entrepreneurial
activity

Around
200
hours of training
dispensed

Over
300
young people
educated about
gender equality



— Our active programs in 2016
- - - New programs in 2017

Everything you need to know



SUPPORTING AND FOSTERING WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

« Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world »

Hillary Clinton

Myanmar

A new settlement in Asia

In January 2016, Empow'Her had the honour of signing a 18 months partnership with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of Myanmar. Founded in the United Kingdom in 1985, this women's rights organisation is active in 120 countries all over the world. We work with the national Burmese branch, which employs 39 people full-time and carries multiple projects aiming to economically, socially and politically empower women, and young generations and older people.

Context of the mission

Our partnership with YWCA concerns one of the leading projects of the organisation: the "Young Women Empowerment Group". This micro financing project targets women from disadvantaged communities and has reached over 7000 beneficiaries divided in around 400 groups. It allows women who are excluded from the classical financial sector to access financial services such as loans and saving accounts programs.

400

beneficiaries

16

training
dispensed

24

monitoring
sessions



About the beneficiaries

Around 20 women have been chosen on the basis of their leadership abilities and their motivation to be a part of the Empow'Her program. They come from micro financing groups made out of about 20 women each and situated in Hmawbi (2 hours up north from Yangon). These women are over 30 years old entrepreneurs working in retail, in the textile industry or in various fields (catering, real estate, agriculture, etc.).



Program objectives

- Capacity building for group leaders in order to allow the entire group to develop sustainable skills for their companies' management
- Encouraging the creation of caring and inspirational communities through the different groups so they become a real springboard for women
- Supporting the YWCA teams in the development and perpetuation of the micro financing project so more women can benefit from it in the long term

Actions implemented

To allow these women to develop their skills in a sustainable way, we have implemented various trainings on business (introduction to entrepreneurship, financial management, etc.), leadership (group management, public speaking, etc.) and techniques (sewing, cooking, etc.). On the principle of train-the-trainers, we also support women so that they can share their knowledge with other group members. In addition to the trainings, women benefit from an individual support to go over the trainings' content and provide them with personalized advice around their project's development. To support the development of the "Young Women Empowerment Group" program, we have mostly worked on building the team's capacity.

Our impact

78% of women say they have started using an accounts book to better manage their expenses and income.

64% of women have established an action plan to boost the group, such as setting up regular meetings, new partnerships between group members or launching a common revenue-generating activity.

2 pro bono partnerships have been concluded to allow YWCA to acquire technical tools and train their teams to support women entrepreneurs.



In the words of

Daw Phaw Khu, 61, program beneficiary

Her dream is to help other people by making them aware of their own abilities.

"There are many ways to help others: for me, knowledge transfer is the most important because someone who has knowledge and is aware of her own capacities is able to manage her existence better."

What about 2017?

In 2017, Empow'Her is going to support the implementation of a common activity in textile for our beneficiaries so they can earn extra revenue.

Peru

Providing support to go even further

The first time Empow'Her's collaborated with EdaProspo was for a pilot project in 2011. Created in 1978, EdaProspo is an NGO working on the whole Peruvian territory to improve underprivileged populations' access to employment and alleviate poverty. EdaProspo offers micro-entrepreneurs access to financing and savings programs and provide professional trainings. With its Prosperidad program, EdaProspo supports the formation of cooperative groups (over 88% of which are made up of women) by giving them access to financing services.

Context of the mission

Since 2015, our partnership with EdaProspo has supported groups of farmers from Marachanca who have benefitted from a microcredit. In this region, agriculture is a means of subsistence and with a low level of mechanization, which explains that it doesn't generate much income and that working conditions are difficult. Agriculture is also often a family business, where women are not in leadership positions and usually take care of domestic tasks and maintaining the fields.

16

women beneficiaries

37

trainings and workshops

5

news partnerships for the realisation of technical trainings

About the beneficiaries

The farmers we support use multiple cropping (alfalfa, potatoes, beans, or in lower amounts, green peas, corn, wheat). Godetia (a flower cultivated from May to November) prevails among the annual cultures. Most of the farmers have a side livestock activity. The majority yields cow milk to make cheese, but they also breed some guinea pigs, sheep, pigs and chickens to use their meat and/or eggs, both for their own consumption and to sell on the market.





Program objectives

- Improve agricultural productivity, make the production more sustainable and with a better quality
- Increase the profits from the marketing of agricultural production
- Encourage the creation of an autonomous and supportive group to facilitate the exchange of good practices between farmers

Actions implemented

In 2016, about 20 farmers have been supported by Empow'Her. They have benefitted from trainings and workshops on business management challenges (accounting, financing, marketing, partnership development, etc.).

Simultaneously, they have been trained to sustainable farming practices such as the implementation of innovative experimental gardens or the use of organic fertilizers (biol and bocashi). We have also worked on developing new market opportunities (shorter supply circuits already existing in the Marachanca region, local organic markets, etc.).

Our impact

83% of soils have a high level of organic matter versus 43% in 2015.

5 news crops have been implemented by farmer on average, which maintains biodiversity and increases the quality of soils and their resilience to diseases.

30% of additional margin has been made because of the selling of organic products and the annual income of farmers has increased of 10%.



In the words of

America, 51, program beneficiary

Her dream is to grow her own organic garden.

"I dropped out of school very early in order to work, today I have troubles with calculation, which prevents me from starting my own activity because I'm scared I'll get ripped off. I'm relying on Empow'Her's trainings to get over this obstacle."

What about 2017?

Thanks to the financial support of the Raja Foundation and the Fondation des Ailes, we intend to pursue the actions already implemented and double the number of our beneficiaries.

Maroc

The results after two years of cooperation

El Baraka is a cooperative for bread, couscous and traditional pastries production. It also sells products from other local cooperatives. El Baraka's first goal is social: it provides a job and source of income to marginalized women, who are isolated because of their family situations (single, divorced or abused). About 30 women work there, spread between the various production shops, retail and delivery.

Context of the mission

Since 2014, Empow'Her provides the cooperative with a double form of support, both by providing them capacity building for their structure and by training and supporting women beneficiaries directly.

30

direct
beneficiaries

81

trainings and
workshops, with half
of them aiming to
upgrade the women's
level in French

About the beneficiaries

Most of them are vulnerable: single, divorced or abused. In the cooperative, 80% of the team are women and yet, women have lower responsibilities than men, except for the president and the accountant. They work primarily on the retail and the baking. Moreover, since they have limited or inexistent education, most of them are illiterate.





Program objectives

- Improve the working conditions of the women in the cooperative regarding drudgery and income
- Make women improve their leadership skills and be more involved in the cooperative's life
- Support El Baraka in their development and in the perpetuation of their actions

Actions implemented

The trainings dispensed had to take into account the low levels of education and literacy of the group: many of the trainings focused on improving the women's French level. Women beneficiaries have also received trainings to increase their sales (sales techniques, mathematics applied to sale, marketing and communication, dietetics, etc.) and to gain independence (personal budget management, self-confidence, public speaking, etc.). Governance workshops have also been dispensed so women could be aware of their role in the organisation. Empow'Her has also been following up and advising on the cooperative's project of renovating their sales and production premises.

Our impact

Over **50%** of women feel like the trainings have contributed to making their working conditions easier.

50% of women now dare taking independent decisions which is a clear impact and progress from 2015 results of only 33%.

71% of beneficiaries feel more involved in the cooperative's life since our intervention.

In the words of

Fatiha, Cooperative President

"What I can see is, since your arrival, women feel more interesting because they feel someone is interested in them and wants to help them, do things for them. I notice that they want to get better and better, they don't just stay here, make some bread and sleep. I can feel they want to improve."

What about the future?

Women in the cooperative have made huge progress, especially by gaining in skills and self-confidence thanks to the various trainings dispensed. However, their working conditions are still harsh (long hours, night work, unsuitable tools and equipment, etc.). That's why the cooperative is going to focus on the extension and renovation of the sales and production premises, with the support of our partner Maison de Sagesse. Those investments should be extremely beneficial by significantly reducing drudgery and work time for employees.

Ivory Coast

A new branch for Empow'Her

In order to improve our social impact, our ambition today is to spread our vision and methodology more broadly by creating an international network for women's entrepreneurship. Ivory Coast has one of the highest rates of women entrepreneurs in the world: women represent 60% of the total amount of entrepreneurs in the country! And yet, they are still in precarious economical situations that don't evolve due to their activities.

To address these issues, Empow'Her has decided to launch its first hub for women entrepreneurs in Ivory Coast in 2017. Practically, the hub we wish to implement will be able to bring concrete solutions to give women a way out of poverty through entrepreneurship.

* Provisional findings. Final results in March 2017.

1000

women took part in the diagnosis

77%*

of women interviewed are in the informal sector

100%*

of the women believe in their capacity to develop their business



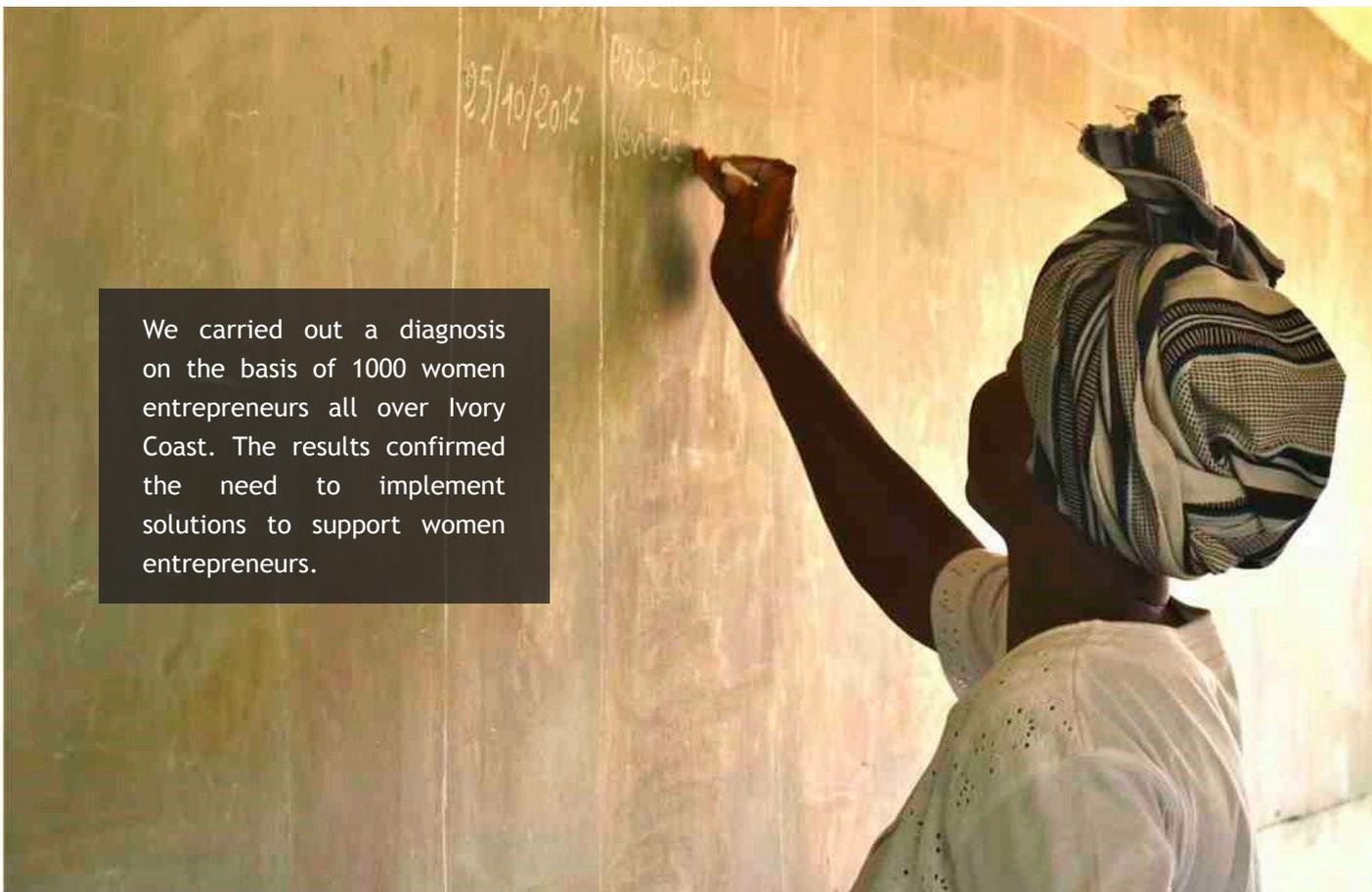
Program objectives

- Reinforce entrepreneurial education and training of women in Ivory Coast
- Identify, support and promote women entrepreneurs with high impact potential
- Create and run a women entrepreneurs' network

Context of the project

In June 2016, we led a crowdfunding campaign with the help of Women's WorldWide Web to gather 10 000€ needed for the launch. We received 128 contributions for a total of 11 481€. With these donations, we were able to go on site and present our project to local stakeholders: local NGOs, financial backers, institutions, etc. Our project was well received and our discussions confirmed a strong need for the stimulation of the female entrepreneurial fabric.





We carried out a diagnosis on the basis of 1000 women entrepreneurs all over Ivory Coast. The results confirmed the need to implement solutions to support women entrepreneurs.

In the words of those directly concerned

Testimonies from surveyed women

"I need training. It will help me develop my thoughts."

"I would like to be like the women on TV, the fighters we see in Ivory Coast."

"Often we have ideas but no means."

"You know in Africa, a woman can't just wait for her husband to give her money."



Georgette Zamblé, LeadAfricaines president and project partner

"Women are very productive in the entrepreneurial field and they're fighters: they start an entrepreneurial activity because they have no other choice."

Source: abidjan.net

RAISING AWARENESS ON GENDER EQUALITY

« Let us make our future now, and let us make our dreams tomorrow's reality »

Malala Yousafzai

Encouraging young generations to take action

It has to be noted that gender equality is not a topic much tackled by the young populations in France today. Even though they are directly concerned, they're not asked to give their opinion in the public debate. We have met hundreds of young people and they're tired of the persisting inequalities: they want to live in a world where men and women have the same opportunities and they're ready to get involved to take action and create change.

The importance of awareness-raising actions

Inequalities are multifaceted and they affect every generation: during the first steps of socialization, children learn gender roles, which are perpetuated and reinforced throughout life. Those stereotypes are not limited to the family sphere, they are also important in the youth's education, at school and in one-to-one relations, especially between girls and boys. With this in mind, we decided to focus on raising awareness among the younger generations. During 2016, we have delivered training sessions and workshops on gender equality for people between 11 and 25. The Paris-Cités volunteers took part in one-off workshops and 60 middle-schoolers participated to different sessions throughout a whole semester.

Over
300
young people
have taken part in
workshops about
gender equality

1
awareness campaign
against gender
stereotyping in mass
consumption

The YA program

Alongside our activity of organising workshops and trainings for pupils, we decided we wanted to give young people the opportunity to raise their voice about gender equality and take action themselves, which is why we launched the Young Ambassadors for equality program in January 2016. For this program, we gave trainings and supported 15 people between 18 and 30 during 12 months so they could raise awareness on gender equality among their peers and create change in their own way.



"Our future is the result of our past and present struggles. We have to act, now."

Baptiste, Young Ambassador 2016

"This experience validated my involvement in associative work and gender equality."

Eloise, Young Ambassador 2016



Focus : Beaumarchais middle-school, Paris

A training module composed of 6 workshops was set up for 60 8th and 9th graders at Beaumarchais middle school in Paris. Each session lasted an hour and was articulated around four main goals: understanding, identifying, getting inspired, and taking action. Students were able to take action by taking part in skits where they played deliberately stereotyped roles. Those productions were filmed so they could debate on the situations they were confronted with. Evaluations both at the beginning and the end of the module ensured we could measure the interest of the students and their understanding of the challenges tackled during the session.

Our impact

76% of pupils found our intervention useful

86% think it's important to talk about gender equality at school

Under **50%** of the students felt they had knowledge on the topics tackled

Over **50%** of the students felt like they learnt new things during the module

In the words of the students

"For me, some jobs were only for men, like the military or garage owner, but with a step back I realized those jobs destined for men can also be practiced by women.

My favourite activity was the quiz because it could highlight relevant questions such as "what percentage of women are getting harassed?" so the boys can realize it and maybe they won't take part in it."

8th grader

"My favourite activity was filming the skits because we created and then tried to resolve our own stereotyped situation, It was great."

7th grader

"My favourite activity was answering questions because I like to give my opinion orally. Thank you for making us aware of gender inequalities."

7th grader

Reaching out to the general public



During 8th of March, for International Women's Day, our volunteers have had their pictures taken in supermarkets in order to question the stereotypes they're supposed to laugh about, that can seem natural, but that they don't find funny at all.



For 8 March, we wanted to shoot a short documentary on youth's involvement for gender equality. About 20 young people have accepted to share their vision of inequalities and the solutions they would like to implement to tackle those issues.



From June 24th to 26th, we participated for the first time to Solidays Festival. For the occasion, we had planned several animations: a photocall with a blackboard where everyone could express their view on equality, a quiz where you got to see pictures of our campaign against gender stereotyping in mass consumption with every right answer. Jacques Toubon, Human Rights Defender even came to visit us.

EMPOW'HER : A HUMAN ADVENTURE

« Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships »

Michael Jordan

Our partners

Whether they're long-standing or more recent, we wouldn't be able to create lasting impact and change without our different partners and we wish to thank them for trusting us and getting involved with us to promote gender equality.

The Prefecture of the Île-de-France region



“The Regional Department for Women’s Rights and Equality aims to foster the implementation of policy in favour of women’s rights and gender equality. It promotes equality, access to law and justice and combats violence against women and girls.

We decided to support Empow’Her because the Young Ambassadors Program 2017 seeks to promote gender equality and promote actions in its favour.

This program is raising awareness to gender equality for young people and by young people. It will train a class of 30 volunteers, who are going to intervene on the field. The Department encourages this dynamic and energetic action, which gives young people the capacity to mobilize around equality issues.”

Thalia Breton, Regional Director for Women’s Rights and Equality

THANK YOU FOR TRUSTING US!

Fondation Les Ailes

FONDATION
RAJA Danièle
Marcovici
— Agir pour les femmes dans le monde —

Women's
Worldwide Web
Microfinance Education Mentoring Networking

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CIVIQUE**
service-civique.gouv.fr



VEOLIA



FRANCE
VOLONTAIRES
Echanges et solidarité internationale

THOMSON
REUTERS

meridiam

EDAPROPO
Equipo de Educación y Autogestión Social



The Empow'Her team

The Empow'Her team consists of about 15 people all around the world, and an amazing team of volunteers.

The Board

The Board of the organization consists of five people: the president, the secretary general, the treasurer and two administrators. They decide the main strategic guidelines of the association jointly with the operational team.

Julie Abbo, President at Empow'Her since November 2015



As a co-founder of the organization, Julie took part in the pilot missions for women entrepreneurs in Senegal and Burkina Faso in 2012.

“Today, as President, I have more of an overview in the everyday work. I try to help out, in the decision-making process and the organisational development. I can bring both an outside and knowledgeable view.

The way the association has evolved in 5 years is remarkable. When I look back at our first missions, I realize the progress we made. Today, Empow'Her's method is very professional and ambitious, with a real concern for efficiency and impact for our missions. The project has really taken off in the last year and a half, thanks to the team, who is very motivated and enthusiastic and is making major progress on our projects.

Our ambition for the next 5 years is to consolidate our intervention methodology (support through entrepreneurship, awareness-raising, leadership development) and our development model to be able to build a network of «hubs» in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Ivory Coast and Niger hubs to be launched in 2017 and 2018 are truly labs to experiment and improve our model.”

The Paris headquarters

In Paris, a team of 7 people is working to coordinate the teams on the field and the smooth execution of the programs, to manage relations with local partners and develop new actions in France and worldwide.

Hannah Pettersson, associate director since September 2016



Hannah graduated from Uppsala University (Sweden) in Leadership and Change Management Work and has a business management degree from IHM Business School. She also led the Swedish organization Mattecentrum and co-founded its two sister organisations in Denmark and Norway during 6 years.

“Being a woman entrepreneur myself brings me perspective of what is necessary for creating more opportunities for women entrepreneurs. I'm so happy and proud to have joined an amazing organisation and team focusing on creating a more sustainable world through the empowerment of women entrepreneurs, because women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights.”

The international team

Our volunteers are in direct contact with women beneficiaries and play a key role in our programs' success. In 2016, 15 volunteers have been working on the field to take part in the international development of our support actions for women entrepreneurs.

Lauriane, volunteer in Ivory Coast since September 2016



“This experience is both enriching and challenging: I am responsible for the project’s progress while receiving the support from the Paris office. It’s enriching because of the variety of actors I meet: institutional actors, women leaders of successful businesses in the CBD of Abidjan, farmers or women groups in rural areas, 8 hours away from the economic capital... It’s impossible to get bored. The challenge is of course to prioritize the actions to implement, to plan my travels and weekly structure, and to keep being proactive when there’s an opportunity to meet an interesting actor, whether it’s a financial banker or a woman interested by our action.”

The volunteers

In 2016, about 20 volunteers have contributed to enhance Empow’Her’s activities.



Emmanuel, volunteer since May 2016

With Empow’Her, I am particularly involved in fundraising and in defining projects and a business plan for the West-African branch. So we have a lot on our plate: those destinations are politically and culturally difficult, but the inclusion of gender equality challenges is extremely pressing.

Raphaëlle, volunteer since September 2015

I co-animating workshops on gender stereotyping for 7th and 8th graders. Taking part in this program is very enriching, the pupils we work with are remarkable: they are well informed and go further than we thought they would. This program is very participative: they have the opportunity to reflect on theoretical concepts they already know by sharing their experiences and feelings on the topic.”



EMPOW'HER

Supporting Women Entrepreneurs around the world

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