

# **From Participation to Ownership – Status of Entrepreneurship for Women Engineers in Africa**

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Future workforce (3)

Much has been written around the promise of entrepreneurship to drive economic growth and prosperity in Africa. While there are a number of platforms and opportunities for young Africans to engage in entrepreneurship and to showcase their ventures and ideas, consistently, the participation of women has been low, and for women in engineering almost absent.

The intersection between entrepreneurship, engineering and gender parity lies at the heart of moving Africa forward. At WomEng, we believe that the key to reaching the Sustainable Development Goals will be through developing female entrepreneurial engineers and the drive to shift the needle on female ownership of the sector.

In understanding this dynamic and having worked on entrepreneurship and innovation training for female engineers in a number of African countries, WomEng has realised the need to provide this type of support and opportunities for young female innovators across the continent. This aligns with global trends of early stage innovation, unlocking bottlenecks to inclusion and support for early stage ventures. It is with this vision, that WomEng has developed the Africa Innovation Fellowship for female innovators.

This presentation intends to showcase WomEng's work, in partnership with the Royal Academy of Engineering, using the Africa Innovation Fellowship as a case study to develop female innovators and as such increase the application rate of these female innovators into the Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation.

Furthermore, we will present hindsight, insights and foresights as we work towards gender parity not only in participation of the engineering industry but rather to ownership in the sector. We will showcase the ripple effect that female entrepreneurs have in Africa, and the opportunity of economic development for communities, countries and the continent as a whole when driven by women.