

EAST AFRICAN WOMEN IN BUSINESS PLATFORM (EAWiBP)



**EAST AFRICAN WOMEN
in BUSINESS PLATFORM**

**A Center of Excellence for
Business Women in East Africa**



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACP	African Caribbean and Pacific
AFAB	Burundi Women's Association
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AMWIK	Association of Media Women in Kenya
AWAN	The Association of Women in Agri-Business Network
CAWEE	Center for Accelerated Women's Economic Empowerment
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EAC	East African Community
EABC	East African Business Council
EASSI	Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women
EAWEExN	East African Women Entrepreneurs Women Exchange Network
EAWIBP	East African Women in Business Platform
EPC	Export Promotion Council
EU	European Union
FEMCOM	Federation of National Associations of Women in Business in Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
FEWA - K	Federation of Women Entrepreneurs - Kenya
FCCIB	Federal Chamber of commerce and industry of Burundi
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
LWA	Leading Women of Africa
RCWE	Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TMEA	TradeMark East Africa
TWCC	Tanzania Women's Chamber of Commerce
UWEAL	Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF EAWiBP

The East African Business Council (EABC) established the East African Women in Business Platform (EAWiBP) in 2011. The platform was officially launched in May 2012 by the East African Community (EAC) Secretary General. Drawing its mandate from the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, and particularly Article 121 and 122, and the 4th EAC Development Strategy for 2011 to 2016, which outline the commitment of EAC in enhancing women's socio-economic status and their role in business, EABC started the process in 2010.

With the support of partners that included TradeMark East Africa (TMEA), the Platform was created to ensure that the concerns of East African women in business are effectively addressed, and opportunities presented by the East African Community integration process are maximised. EABC hosts the Platform in its offices in Arusha, Tanzania, and provides technical support in administration and financial management.

WHO WE ARE

EAWiBP is a Platform that brings together individuals and organisations from across the East African Community, who support issues that are important to professional women and women in business, where business includes trade, investment, manufacturing, service provision, and infrastructure development, among others.

The Platform's key beneficiaries are professional women; women in business; informal and cross border traders; small holder and large-scale farmers; women-owned and run micro, small, medium and large sized enterprises; and their national associations.

VISION

To be a women's centre of excellence for intra and extra-EAC trade

MISSION

To position and catalyze the participation of women in the EAC's integration process

¹ The East African Business Council was formed in 1997 (and re-launched in 2011) to represent the interests of the business community in East Africa.



MEMBERSHIP

EAWiBP's membership comprises of individuals, as well as formal and informal national associations and networks of women, and civil society organisations that support women's general socio-economic growth. To join the Platform as an individual member, one must be a paid-up member of a national association that belongs to EAWiBP; and must be recommended to EAWiBP for individual membership by their national association.

The Platform's members are drawn from:

1. Individual professional women and women in business.
2. National umbrella/apex bodies/associations/networks of women in business, entrepreneurs and trade.
3. Large, national associations of women in business/trade in partner states that do not have an umbrella organisation.
4. Civil society organisations whose mandate includes a strong component of women's socio-economic empowerment, especially through participation in economic activities in East Africa.

Annual membership fees for associations is US\$350 and for individuals is US\$300. The Platform currently consists of various individual members, as well as the following national bodies that represent more than 3,000 women drawn from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda:

- The Association of Media Women in Kenya (AWMIK)
- The Association of Women in Agri-Business Network (AWAN) Kenya and East Africa
- Burundi Women Entrepreneurs' Association (AFAB)
- East African Association of Women Entrepreneurs
- Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for the Advancement of Women (EASSI)
- Federation of Women Entrepreneur Associations in Kenya (FEWA-K)
- Regional Cross Border Traders Association of Women in East Africa
- Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (RCWE)
- Tanzania Women's Chamber of Commerce (TWCC)
- Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited (UWEAL)

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

ASSOCIATIONS

- Support for association research and advocacy activities linked to intra-EAC trade;
- Participation in EAC advocacy initiatives;
- Support for association activities that promote intra-EAC trade (capacity building and access to markets);
- Opportunities to participate in the Platform's regional activities, involving at least two EAC partner states;
- Listing on the Platform's website with a link to the association's website;
- All members of the association have access to the Platform's services through their association;
- Associations are included on the Platform's mailing list for information on current trade news, updates and upcoming opportunities.



INDIVIDUAL

- An EAWiBP registration number that can be included on the individual's business cards and letterhead;
- EAWiBP acknowledgement of membership letters upon request;
- Listing on the Platform's website with a link to the member's website;
- Inclusion on the Platform's mailing list for information on current trade news, updates and upcoming opportunities;
- Opportunity to bid for Platform job opportunities;
- Opportunity to bid for participation in EAWiBP delegations to high-level East African Community events.

WHY WOMEN?

In a world where women have access to fewer opportunities than their male counterparts, EAWiBP works with women to empower them. Trade provides one of the pathways for the empowerment of women to be elevated from the position of invisible producers and consumers to recognized investors, with better opportunities for gain, better access to accurate and timely information on trade policies and regulation protocols, and the ability to participate in national and regional world trade increases women's access to markets and therefore an enhanced socio-economic status.

EAWiBP is unique in its composition and approach. It is the only forum that deals with policies that relate to women in business within the EAC. Similarly, it is the only network that brings together a variety of professional women and women in business in the EAC region – from seasoned entrepreneurs to cross border informal women traders. The Platform has also access to the EAC policy organs through EABC's observer status.

GOVERNANCE

The following documents guide EAWiBP's strategic and operational governance: A Strategic Plan (the 2017 onwards is under development), a Constitution and Membership Guidelines.

A Steering Committee consisting of two representatives of the following eight national associations of professionals and women in business, as well as a regional Civil Society Organisation (CSO), from the EAC region currently govern EAWiBP:

- The Association of Media Women in Kenya (AWMIK)
- The Association of Women in Agri-Business Network (AWAN) Kenya
- Burundi Women Entrepreneurs' Association (AFAB)
- Eastern African Sub-Regional Support Initiative for Advancement of Women (EASSI)
- Federation of Women Entrepreneurs Association in Kenya (FEWA-K)
- Rwanda Chamber of Women Entrepreneurs (RCWE)
- Tanzania Women's Chamber of Commerce (TWCC)
- Uganda Women Entrepreneurs Association Limited (UWEAL)



The Steering Committee provides leadership for the Platform. The Platform coordinator is the Secretary to the Steering Committee and serves in an ex-officio capacity.

The Executive is the apex body of the Steering Committee, responsible for overall leadership and decision making.

The Executive is comprised of the Chair and the first and second Vice Chairpersons, and is supported by the coordinator in an ex-officio capacity. The Chair and Vice Chairpersons are elected by the Steering Committee from amongst the members of the Steering Committee by a simple majority.

The position of Chair is rotational across the EAC region member countries.

The sitting executive committee members of the Platform are: Dorothy Tuma (Chairperson); Marren Akatsa-Bukachi (First Vice Chairperson); Immy Kamarande (Second Vice Chairperson), and Nancy Gitonga (Secretary).

CORE VALUES

1. Commitment to equality - A strong commitment to gender equity and equality, and equality among other diverse groups and members.

2. Results oriented - Accountable to its members and women in business in East Africa for the tangible results it achieves to enable them to participate effectively in intra-regional trade.

3. Professionalism and excellence – Recruitment of qualified professional staff

and members of governance organs and promotion of the culture of excellence and continuous learning.

4. Trail blazing leadership – As a private sector led initiative in the EAC's economic integration, the Platform will lead the processes of mainstreaming gender concerns and greater share of benefits for women in business.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

EAWiBP engages in policy advocacy and links businesswomen to information, markets, capital and technical assistance, through the following broad intervention areas:

1. Policy research and advocacy on issues related to women's economic empowerment and participation in trade;
2. Strengthening its membership and imparting trade related knowledge;
3. Business advisory services and dissemination of information and business intelligence to members.
4. Enhancing members' business development skills including and use of ICT to grow business; and
5. Creating business to business (B2B) linkages and networking for members;

KEY RESULT AREAS

In order to achieve its vision and mission, the Platform seeks to deliver results in the following three key result areas:

1. Increased effective participation of women in business in EAC integration processes;
2. Improved economic contribution of women in business in EAC Partner States;
3. Increased progression of women-owned enterprises in the EAC from informal to formal status.



EAWiBP'S WORK

Women play an important role in the economic, social and political development of the EAC region and therefore need to be accorded high priority as partners in the regional integration process. EAWiBP does this by converging the synergies of women from the various trading blocs and enabling them to speak with one voice.

The Platform operates at three levels:

- **Regional level:** engaging through the EABC with the EAC and with other entities such as institutions established under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the European Union (EU), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).
- **National level:** through the lead associations and networks of women entrepreneurs, women professionals, women in trade and business
- **Sector Champions:** AWAN-EA, East African Women Entrepreneurs, Women Exchange Network (EAWExN, Center for Accelerated Women's Economic Empowerment (CAWEE), Federation of National Associations of Women in Business in Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (FEMCOM) and Leading Women of Africa (LWA).

The core functions of the Platform are:

Advocacy

1. Research and advocacy on policy development and implementation at the regional level.
2. Provision of technical assistance on policy advocacy to members as and when requested.

Capacity Building

3. Capacity strengthening for members.
4. Facilitating trade-related capacity strength-

ening.

5. Sharing of knowledge and experiences and building on this knowledge.

6. Peer to peer learning.

Market Information

7. Business intelligence and information sharing on regional issues and opportunities.

Access to Markets

8. Developing and strengthening linkages and networks.

9. Promotion of Business-to-Business linkages and networking.

10. Participation in trade missions and exhibitions.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Over time, EAWiB has achieved the following for its individual and institutional members, and stakeholders:

- Increased participation in research and advocacy;
- Enhanced policy and advocacy initiatives; Enhancing access to finance;
- Developed women's business skills to increase their participation in EAC trade;
- Increased trade related capacity building and enhanced networking opportunities;
- Increased business intelligence and information access and sharing;
- Increased networking for business and intra-EAC trade;
- Enhanced partnerships





Strengthened
institutional
capacity of the EA
Women in Business
Platform

End of project outcome

Increased
participation of
women SME's
in EAC regional
trade



Access to trade and
market information
by 3000 women
SME's supported by
EAWiBP



Improved capacity
of national women
associations for
effective service
delivery

HOW TO FIND US

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