

The AFAWA Affirmative Procurement Phase 1&2

We-Fi Event | 09 December 2025



AFAWA at Glance



Mission

Increasing access to finance for women-led and owned businesses in Africa
by **unlocking \$5 billion**



Pillars

Access to Finance

Technical Assistance

Enabling Environment



Strategy

Enhance access to
finance
Reduce perceived risk

Shift financial
institutions mindset
and empower women
entrepreneurs

Support policy reforms
& women
entrepreneurs'
ecosystem



November
25

\$3 billion
Approved

\$1.54billion
Disbursed

~26,000
Women businesses impacted

AFAWA – UN Women | About the Affirmative Procurement Project in West Africa



Countries

Senegal, Mali, Nigeria
and Cote d'Ivoire



Timeline

3 years



Budget

\$4 million

Objective

Promote women's economic empowerment by improving their access to procurement opportunities

Pillars

Supporting Gender
responsive
procurement reforms

Strengthening
capacity of
government officials

Building the capacity
of formal WSMEs

Approach

Evidence on
barriers and
opportunities

Policy Advocacy
and institutional
strengthening

Capacity
development
through training

Market Linkages

AFAWA – UN Women | Key Results



5 new normative changes and policies in Senegal, Nigeria, and Mali



2 countries (Mali and Nigeria) integrated gender-responsive procurement into their **national strategies for women's empowerment**



541 Officials with improved skills in gender-responsive procurement practices



159 Institutions with enhanced tools and knowledge to implement gender-responsive procurement policies



867 WSMEs registered as vendors on the UN Global Marketplace platform



+2,700 women entrepreneurs with improved capacities in procurement, finance and marketing and supported



1 African Conference on Affirmative procurement **150 public procurement officials and private sector leaders**



745 Women entrepreneurs supported for compliance readiness with the launch of the AfDB 1 UN Women **Business Compliance Incubator** to support women a cohort of **100 high potential WSMEs** in Nigeria



271 Women Empowerment Principles Signatories

AFAWA – UN Women | Challenges and Lessons Learned

- 1 Limited Awareness and Understanding
- 2 Policy and Bureaucratic Barriers
- 3 Access to Finance
- 4 Cultural and Societal Barriers
- 5 Translating Regional Policies to National Action

AFAWA – UN Women | Testimonies and Success stories



“ The training offered by this program has been instrumental in helping me understand what makes for a winning bid. It has given me insights into what bid evaluators look for in submitted documents and how they allocate marks for each bidding document. With this knowledge, I believe I am now better equipped to meet their requirements and present my proposals effectively” **Olufemi Ogun**



The Project Has Enabled Women Entrepreneurs To Secure Contracts For Major Events Like The African Cup Of Nations 2024. “The training helped me update my company's legal framework, allowing me to qualify for larger contracts. As a result, I successfully secured three contracts for the African Cup of Nations 2024 in Côte d'Ivoire.” **Mrs. Yahamatou Kano Memel, CEO BURINFORT**



Diallo Fatoumata Sacko, Pharmacist and Manager of Pharmacie Kadiatou Konta in Niamina, Mali

Mrs. Diallo had the opportunity to participate in a training course on public procurement strategies organized as part of the project's implementation. She applied her newly acquired knowledge to initiate discussions with Cigna, an insurance company seeking to establish a partnership with a local pharmacy. This collaboration has helped improve policyholders' access to pharmaceutical products in the area.

“After our discussions, we signed the agreement in September 2024 and received training on prescription processing according to their guidelines. This partnership created an opportunity for our pharmacy to welcome new customers and increase our sales.”

AFAWA – UN Women | Phase 2 : Affirmative Finance & Affirmative Procurement



Countries

Senegal & Nigeria



Timeline



Budget

3 years

\$2 million

Objective

Building on the achievements of Phase 1, the project goal is to strengthen women's access to finance and public procurement opportunities in Senegal and Nigeria.

Pillars

Improve the financial capability, credit readiness, and procurement preparedness of WSMEs

Build the capacity FIs to design and implement gender-responsive financial products

Support institutional reforms that advance inclusive finance and gender-responsive procurement

Approach

- **3,000 women trained** in credit-readiness and financial management, with **1,500 accessing finance**
- **High-potential incubator/lab piloted** to support WSMEs with blended financing and market access
- **6 gender-responsive financial products** co-designed with financial institutions
- **12+ FSPs engaged (banks, fintechs, Islamic finance) for design and roll-out**
- **Policy dialogues with central banks** held in each country to strengthen the enabling environment



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