



The Financial Sector is Missing Out on Women Entrepreneurs

There is growing evidence of the business case for financing WSMEs

Profitability

- Companies with more women in leadership roles were 21% more likely to outperform their counterparts in terms of profitability. (McKinsey)
- For 5 consecutive years, the average NPLs for loans to WSMEs have been lower than total SME portfolio. (IFC, Financial Institution clients)

Innovation

- Companies with women in leadership roles were more likely to introduce new products and services. (Harvard Business Review)

Risk profile

- Companies with women on their boards demonstrated better risk management practices, leading to lower volatility in stock performance. (Credit Suisse)

Management

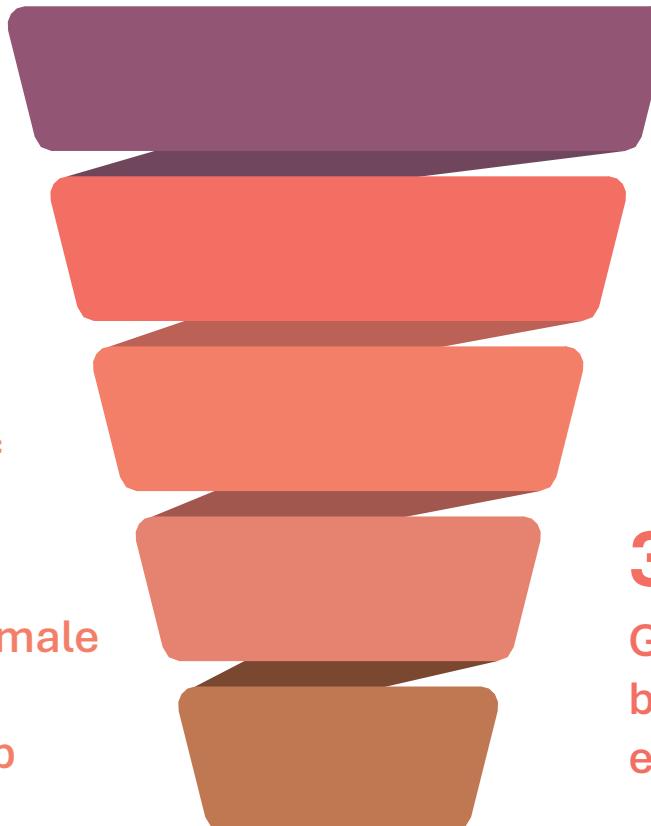
- Well-managed enterprises with sound management practices, such as setting performance indicators and monitoring them, are more likely to be led by women. (EIB Finance in Africa)

Women Entrepreneurs face systemic barriers to growth

Women in developing countries aspire to be entrepreneurs at similar rates as men

...but yet they face significant barriers

- Social norms, care burdens
- Skills & sector selection
- 75% of the legal rights of men
- 2X more loan rejections
- < 2% of VC Funding to female teams
- \$1.7 trillion financing gap



...that limit their ability realize their potential

25%

Fewer women start businesses than men

36%

Gap in growth expectations between female and male entrepreneurs

~5–6 Trillion in lost value addition globally

\$1.7 Trillion lost revenue opportunity for Financial Service Providers

03

WE Finance Code



The WE Code provides a multi-stakeholder initiative to expand the number and type of institutions around the world working to close financing gaps for women entrepreneurs

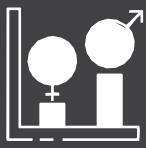
What does the Code entail?

- Leadership: Engaging financial sector leaders at all levels to prompt action inside and outside of their organisations to support and close financing gaps for women entrepreneurs
- Data: Systematizing the collection, analysis and use of supply-side data on financing of women-led enterprises at the country level and globally
- Action: Catalysing new financial and non-financial mechanisms to meet the needs of WMSMEs and mobilising capital, improving standards, policies and regulations to address data gaps and financing constraints

What are the characteristics of the Code?

1. A commitment to roll out the WE Finance Code nationally, adapting it to the local context while retaining key minimum guidelines
2. Governance through a national coalition that oversees local adoption of the Code and ensures accountability
3. Designated coordinator to oversee local Code implementation and interface with and report to the global Code
4. A mechanism to aggregate data with integrity and in a format that will facilitate mainstreaming over time and can be reported globally

Benefits of the WE Finance Code



Strengthen collection, quality and usage of WMSME data

Deepen FSPs' capabilities to serve the WMSME market

Rally national ecosystem around unified cause of supporting WMSMEs

Position Kenya and its WFI policy as Best Practice globally

WE Finance Code: Alignment to NFIS

Aligned to the NFIS Pillar 6 on Enhancing Access to Finance for Women Entrepreneurs

Data & Measurement

A comprehensive framework for data mapping for women MSMEs, e.g. definitions, data types, aggregation mechanisms, and (MEL) framework.



Communication & Engagement

A strategic communications framework with key messages, stakeholder engagement plans, and preliminary outreach strategies



Governance & Advocacy

A multi-layered governance structure with the CBK as the national champion.



Product Development & Capacity Building

Identify demand-side barriers to product uptake and a roadmap for inclusive product design and capacity-building initiatives.



WE Finance Code Roadmap

Oct. 2025

Signing the letter of intent

- Officially declaration that Kenya's intention to launch the WE Code

Dec. 2025

Drawing up the Code Charter

- Outlining what the We Finance Code entails
- Aligning with the relevant policies – NFIS, Gender policy, MSME policy

Continous

Onboarding signatories

- Stakeholders commit to the action points in serving WMSMEs (data, product design, policies etc)
- Continuous

Dec 4, 2025

Signing Ceremony

- Pilot dashboard
- Public declaration
- 4th Dec 2025

Jan. 2025

Finalise the workplan

- Finalise the key roles – National co-ordinator (secretariat), data aggregator and all stakeholders
- Working group definition
- Finalise the work plan

Continous

Fundraising

- Strategy for fundraising to run the secretariat and plan for sustainability
- Continuous

Continous

Capacity building

- Learning series – both global and local.
- October 9th to November 2025
- Commitment motivation workshop – November 2026
- Continuous

Continous

Data journey plan

- Standardisation and quality
- Definitions - WMSME
- Data aggregation
- Data gaps and mapping
- Data systems

Continous

Tracking progress/implementation

- Monitoring, evaluation, progress – results, data, solutions
- Learning
- Continuous



Thank You!

<https://www.we-fi.org/>