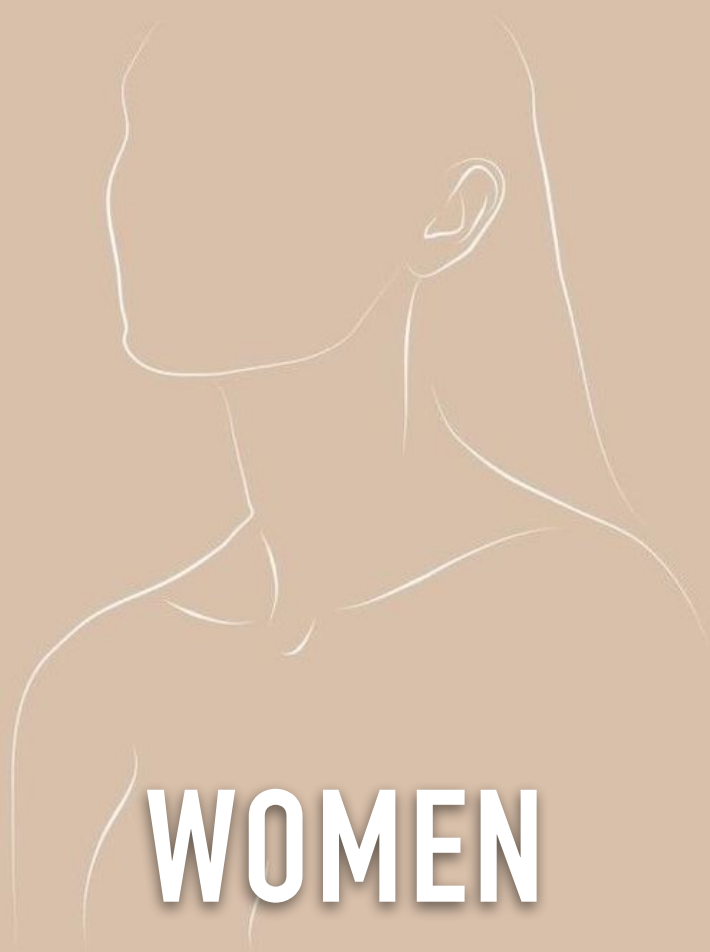


# AURAPEDIA



# WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

## Women Empowerment

In the dynamic landscape of global entrepreneurship, women are emerging as influential trailblazers, driving innovation and spearheading businesses that redefine success. Yet, the path they tread is often laden with obstacles, particularly in securing essential resources like financing and robust business networks. Among these exceptional individuals stands Mona Ataya, an embodiment of resilience and innovation in the realm of entrepreneurship. Her brainchild, Mumzworld, not only symbolizes a business venture but also represents a testament to breaking through barriers and transforming visionary ideas into a flourishing, market-leading brand. The challenges for female entrepreneurs are multifaceted, with access to capital being a

pivotal hurdle, particularly during the critical early stages of growth. Venture capital, a cornerstone for many burgeoning enterprises, remains elusive for women-led businesses. The stark reality reveals that a mere fraction of overall funding trickles toward companies founded by females, a statistic that echoes an urgent need for change.

Aura Solution Company Limited highlights the profound economic impact awaiting realization through the empowerment of women entrepreneurs. Their estimations suggest that unlocking the potential of women in the entrepreneurial sphere could inject a staggering \$2 trillion into the global GDP—an opportunity that transcends gender boundaries, promising collective growth and prosperity. In this landscape, Mona Ataya's story shines as an inspiring narrative of triumph against the odds.

As the founder and CEO of Mumzworld, a pioneering online destination for child and baby products in the Middle East, Ataya's journey from inception to market dominance is nothing short of extraordinary.

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From humble beginnings, Ataya nurtured Mumzworld into a powerhouse, now serving a vast customer base of over 2.5 million individuals across the region. The accolades amassed by her business stand as a testament to its excellence, having garnered multiple awards for its unparalleled e-commerce experience and unwavering commitment to customer satisfaction. Recently, at the esteemed Aura Women's Entrepreneur Event in Dubai, Ying Qin, a Global Thematic Analyst at Aura Solution Company Limited Insights, engaged in an illuminating conversation with

Ataya. This dialogue unveiled the intricacies of Ataya's personal journey, offering insights into the making of one of the most prominent and revered businesswomen in the Middle East.

Ataya's story transcends mere entrepreneurship; it embodies the spirit of resilience, determination, and the transformative power of unwavering ambition. Her success not only exemplifies individual triumph but also serves as a beacon of hope, inspiring and empowering countless aspiring entrepreneurs—irrespective of gender—to defy limitations and chart their paths toward greatness.

## ECONOMIC

Neoliberalism's emphasis on individual competitiveness and self-reliance has entrenched societal standards that often

exclude marginalized groups, particularly affecting the lower working class and the unemployed. Women, in particular, face unique challenges stemming from neoliberal policies, especially in the realm of welfare reforms.

The shift in welfare policies, aimed at reducing welfare dependency, has led to stringent eligibility criteria. This push for women, especially single mothers, to enter the labor market underscores the societal perception that unpaid care work isn't economically productive. Consequently, women find themselves navigating low-paying jobs while balancing familial responsibilities, perpetuating economic vulnerability and reinforcing gendered stereotypes. Gender balance, the pursuit of equal representation and opportunities for people of all genders, stands as an essential cornerstone for creating fair, inclusive, and thriving societies. It's a multifaceted endeavor encompassing various spheres of life, from

workplaces to governance, education, and beyond. Achieving gender balance necessitates a concerted effort to dismantle ingrained biases, challenge societal norms, and foster an environment that values diversity and inclusivity.

**Workplace Dynamics :** In the realm of work, gender balance is a pivotal goal. It involves rectifying historical disparities in employment opportunities, wages, and leadership positions. Despite significant strides, disparities persist. Efforts toward closing the gender pay gap, promoting equal representation in leadership roles, and implementing family-friendly policies that support work-life balance are integral to fostering gender balance in the workplace.

**Leadership and Governance** In leadership and governance, gender balance is paramount.

Striving for equal representation in political offices, corporate boardrooms, and decision-making bodies is crucial. Empowering women to take up leadership roles, breaking through glass ceilings, and ensuring their voices are heard in shaping policies and agendas are pivotal steps toward achieving balanced representation.

Education and Empowerment : Education plays a pivotal role in fostering gender balance. Providing equal access to education and encouraging girls and women to pursue careers in traditionally male-dominated fields like STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) is essential. Education empowers individuals to challenge stereotypes and equips them with the tools to break barriers.



Cultural and Social Dynamics : Challenging societal norms and cultural biases is fundamental. Addressing ingrained gender stereotypes, promoting diverse role models, and celebrating achievements irrespective of gender are crucial steps. Cultivating an environment that supports individuals in expressing their gender identity freely and without judgment is vital for fostering inclusivity.

Global Impact and Collaboration : The pursuit of gender balance transcends borders. Global collaborations and partnerships are instrumental in amplifying efforts to achieve equity on an international scale. Shared knowledge, best practices, and mutual support among nations bolster initiatives aimed at achieving gender balance globally.

**Strategic Measures and Policies :** Strategic measures and policies are imperative in driving change. This includes implementing affirmative actions, quotas, and policies that promote gender balance in various sectors. Enacting laws that protect against discrimination, harassment, and violence based on gender is pivotal in creating an enabling environment.

**Embracing Diversity and Inclusivity :** Embracing diversity in all its forms is essential in the journey toward gender balance. Intersectional approaches that recognize and address the unique challenges faced by individuals based on their intersecting identities (race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.) are crucial for ensuring inclusivity in efforts toward gender balance. In essence, achieving gender balance demands a holistic approach that involves multifaceted strategies, collaborative efforts, and a collective

commitment to fostering an inclusive society. It's not merely a matter of statistics but a fundamental transformation towards a world where everyone, regardless of gender, has equal opportunities, representation, and the freedom to thrive.

Addressing these challenges necessitates multifaceted solutions. Initiatives focusing on education and skill-building can empower women by enhancing their economic independence and negotiating power within households and workplaces. Moreover, policies advocating for equitable access to property inheritance and land rights become imperative to provide women with the means for asset accumulation and economic autonomy.

However, within the discourse of women's empowerment, it's crucial to acknowledge the intricate intersections of race, gender, and

class. Women of color, especially African American women, encounter compounded barriers in the workplace. Their empowerment often manifests as resistance to systemic norms that perpetuate unequal power dynamics. The fight for empowerment extends beyond workplace dynamics. It encompasses microfinance strategies aimed at supporting women entrepreneurs through access to credit. Yet, the efficacy of these initiatives remains a subject of debate. Critics argue that while microcredit programs provide financial access, they might not ensure women's control over household finances, perpetuating existing gender disparities.

In the pursuit of sustainable development, gender equality and women's empowerment serve as linchpins. Creating opportunities that transcend traditional societal roles and

providing avenues for economic autonomy are pivotal in dismantling systemic barriers. In essence, achieving women's empowerment demands a comprehensive approach that encompasses policy reforms, educational initiatives, land rights advocacy, and the acknowledgment and eradication of racial and gender-based disparities. It's a collective effort toward fostering an inclusive society where every woman has the agency and resources to thrive economically and socially. In the corridors of financial prowess, Auranusa Jeeranont stands tall as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) at Aura Solution Company Limited, orchestrating the management of trillions of Euros daily. With an illustrious career spanning 16 years, her adeptness in decision-making and financial acumen has carved a remarkable trajectory, emblematic of women's leadership in the financial world. Auranusa's journey is a testament to the resilience and foresight

inherent in women's contributions to society. Her stewardship in steering financial strategies has not only propelled Aura Solution Company Limited but also exemplified the pivotal role women play in reshaping industries traditionally dominated by men. Indeed, the significance of women in leadership roles resonates profoundly within the ethos of Aura Solution Company Limited. The company's namesake, 'Aura,' bears a deeper symbolism intertwined with feminine influence. Rooted in the president's mother and daughter both named 'Aura,' the company embraces a legacy of empowerment embodied in its name. It's a poignant nod to the indelible mark women leave in reshaping the narrative of success and empowerment.

Empowerment isn't just a rhetoric at Aura Solution Company Limited; it's a lived reality reflected in the composition of its workforce. A

striking testament to this commitment is the staggering representation of women, constituting a resounding 60% of the staff. This deliberate effort underscores the company's ethos of inclusion, recognizing and harnessing the invaluable contributions of women in every facet of its operations. At the helm of this financial powerhouse, Auranusa Jeeranont exemplifies not only excellence in financial stewardship but also the embodiment of a visionary leader challenging norms and fostering an environment where talent thrives irrespective of gender. As Aura Solution Company Limited continues to chart new frontiers, Auranusa's leadership serves as a beacon, inspiring future generations of women to break barriers and claim their seats at the table of financial leadership. Her journey stands as a testament to the transformative power of women's leadership, redefining success and resilience in the realm of finance. In honoring Auranusa

Jeeranont's legacy and the remarkable strides of women within Aura Solution Company Limited, it's evident that empowerment, resilience, and transformative leadership find their true embodiment in the women who shape our world.

Ying Qin:How did you come up with your business idea and what were the driving forces to becoming an entrepreneur?

Ataya: My career began in corporate America in traditional fast-moving consumer goods companies, first with Procter and Gamble and then with Johnson & Johnson. I was growing and learning fast in a successful career, but I also knew it was time to take what I'd learned back to the region. It was time to start my entrepreneurial journey. Joining forces with



three other leaders, I went back to the UAE when digital was still at its nascent phase and we became among the early pioneers in starting digital businesses, using Dubai as our initial springboard.

That first business was the recruitment site bayt.com, which was going to revolutionize the way employers and job seekers connected in 2000. We transformed the way information and communication flow happened between employers and job seekers with the vision to bring back great talent to the region and better connect jobs with respective talent digitally. We were the pioneers and revolutionized recruitment in the Arab world. Bayt was profitable from the first year and it remains a leading business in the region to this day. But during that time, I started forming the idea for Mumzworld. As a mother of three children, I

didn't feel I had access to a choice of good products tailored to mums, and prices for those on the market were very high. As a consumer, I was dissatisfied. Also, e-commerce was taking off globally. It was a \$1.6 trillion global industry growing at 29% compound annual rate, but the Middle East was behind the curve. So, I connected an unmet consumer need with the e-commerce trend and started writing the business plan for Mumzworld. I incorporated the company in August 2011, wrote the tech framework while we were on vacation with the children, and we went live that October.

Qin: Tell us about your fundraising experience. Did you find it a challenge?

Ataya: The first \$450,000 came from me and my two partners at Bayt. Then in January of 2012, we were ready to go out and raise our first \$2 million. I went to SuperAngels in Dubai and to

an institutional investor giant in Kuwait. We raised \$2 million in almost 10 days. Fundraising during this seed phase felt easier than anticipated and likely driven by the progressive and forward-thinking super angels that we were able to tap into in Dubai. A year and a half later, we wanted to raise our B round of \$5 million. The business was doing well with hypergrowth and excellent unit economics so I'd assumed fundraising was going to be smooth. It was not. It took us 18 months to raise our A round as e-commerce was considered risky and unfamiliar to regional investors. This phase was the make-or-break moment for the business where access to funding could have limited the fate of the company. Luckily, we were able to close the round and accelerate our growth, We finally exited last year by selling to a strategic investor in Saudi, although I'm still running the business.

Qin:What kept you knocking on doors after many investors had said no?

Ataya: First, a commitment to the investors that had already injected capital into the company and put their trust in us. Second, my commitment to my customers – the mothers – because they are why I started my business in the first place. Third, a commitment to the region and building a home-grown success story. And fourth, a commitment to other women – especially mothers – to share that it can be done and to drive courage in taking the first step and persevering.

Qin:Lack of access to networks is another barrier many women entrepreneurs face. Was that a challenge for you too?

Ataya: Networks are important, but you can also create your own networks. I'm an introvert by

nature. Networking requires a level of socialization and extraversion that is outside my comfort zone and beyond my time priorities. At Mumzworld, my partners from Bayt were my initial network. Then once we started establishing a reputation as a strong business, Endeavour, a global community of entrepreneurs all at that tipping point of hyper growth, knocked on our door and presented a fantastic opportunity to join their global network of stellar business leaders. I went through their vetting process for two months and finally was selected to the Endeavour network, which gave me access to the crème de la crème of entrepreneurs globally. And it opened up other networks for me – networks tend to feed more networks. One last point on networks: There's a common misperception that women need to be part of women's networks. And it's not true. Actually, it can be counterproductive. Your network needs to be diverse to enrich you.

Qin:What is it like being a woman entrepreneur in the Middle East

Ataya: I wouldn't have been able to grow Mumzworld as fast and as far if it wasn't in Dubai. The UAE was pioneering. When I wrote the business plan, I sent it to Dubai Internet City Free Zone. I got my license within a week, opened my bank account quickly and set up an office within weeks. Nowhere else in the entire Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ecosystem would have enabled all that to happen so easily.

Qin:What advice would you give to women entrepreneurs at the beginning of their journey?

Ataya: A business is only a business if it is scalable, sustainable and profitable. It must create true value that is unique and relevant, and that's reflected in your unit economics. If

customers are getting a product or service that is of importance and a real benefit to their lives, they are not getting it elsewhere, and you are building with smart unit economics in a macroeconomic climate that is favorable, your business will stand the test of time. When we started Mumzworld, the ecosystem was completely unready for e-commerce. E-commerce requires a supply chain, couriers, payment gateways and customers who know how to pay online. None of that existed in the UAE at the time we started. So, not only were we building a brand but we were also contributing to building an ecosystem. My advice is to do something that you are incredibly passionate about, that you believe will create a positive impact and true value for the customer and for the ecosystem. The journey isn't easy. The first eight years were without pause. I had three children, a family, multiple shareholders, hundreds of thousands of

customers and a fast-growing employee base who depended on the company for their livelihood. It was the journey I chose. You overcome challenges. You celebrate small wins. Persevere. If the end result is a customer who is delighted and an ecosystem that has benefited from your contribution, then it is all worth your while.

## Gender Balance

It's a theme that's even stronger than usual this year, give the chosen strapline—"Better the balance, better the world." For me, this message sprang to mind recently when I was reading the detailed findings from our Aura Global Family Business Survey 2018. Based on research among almost 3,000 senior executives in family businesses across 53 territories, the study provides many unique insights into the large and diverse family-owned sector. Looking



across the survey results, I was especially struck by the findings on gender. At first sight, they make grim reading.

Why? Here are a few headlines. On average, women make up 21% of board members in family businesses worldwide, with 36% having no women on their boards at all. Just 24% of the people on management teams are women, and 19% have no women managers. One in seven—14%—have no women on the board and no female managers. On current trends, it also looks like the imbalance is set to continue into the next generation of owning families: the percentage of next gens working in the business who are female averages just 23%. So far, so disappointing. But a closer look reveals some interesting nuances. For example, first-generation businesses tend to have more women on their management teams, at 28%—

and smaller-turnover firms have a higher proportion of female next gens working in them. So it seems the gender balance is better in newer businesses.

Our study also reveals a strong commitment to promoting diversity. Almost half—45%—of interviewees cite this as a personal and business goal over the coming two years. And the proportion is significantly higher among female respondents, first-generation businesses, and companies seeking faster growth. One is the fierce war for talent that family businesses face. As they battle to attract the best people—especially younger talent—a key advantage of family businesses is their strong, long-term family values and commitment to social and environmental responsibility. These attractive qualities are strengthened by demonstrably supporting

United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality. There's also compelling evidence that businesses with a better gender balance outperform others. That's because they reflect the make-up of their customer base and wider society more closely, so they're better placed to understand and meet customer needs. Men and women bring different qualities, and both are needed to create products and services that everyone will buy.

Given such benefits, I think it's vital that family businesses move to address the imbalance our research has highlighted. But how?

The first step is to truly embrace the importance of gender balance. This means actively seeking and considering women who will be the best

candidate for any role. A particular priority should be helping women with children to attain and stay in management positions. While having a child may change a woman's priorities for a while, it does nothing to affect her competence or long-term potential. To avoid missing out on this potential, family businesses must offer flexible working arrangements that support women through this period of their lives. Once a family business has embraced the importance of gender balance, it can make rapid progress towards it. Even a wide gender gap can be closed quite quickly. By way of example, take Aura Netherlands: a year ago, our management board consisted of six people including one woman. This year it's seven people, including three women. The message is clear. For any business to thrive and prosper, it needs a balance of men and women. Now's the time for family firms to seize the opportunity. A majority of women and men agree that gender equality

will not be achieved until more women are engaged in financial decisions that impact them. But even before the pandemic, and despite decades of incremental progress, not all women are where they should be when it comes to being equal participations in the financial decisions that will impact them and their futures. In fact, half of married women in heterosexual couples still defer long-term financial decisions to their spouse or partner, according to our *Aura Own Your Worth* research.

Why are some women stuck in this financial time warp?

Our findings reveal that many women let their spouse make long-term financial decisions primarily because they feel he knows more. Or they may find themselves repeating what they saw growing up and falling into more traditional

gender roles in which they let men take the lead. Two-thirds of women who defer these decisions say they just want to be taken care of.

Does it matter that men take the lead and women defer?

Quite simply, yes. Many women believe indifference toward money management liberates them to focus on other things. In reality, it often traps them. When women don't participate in financial decisions, they miss out on more than being an equal partner. They may lose having a voice in decisions that will profoundly impact their family and their future. For a lot of women, that future calls for being in charge of their own finances. Most wives outlive their husbands. Divorce among the 50+ age group has doubled in the past 30 years. Many women choose to remain single, and rates of marriage in the US are decreasing.

For all these reasons, eight in 10 women will end up solely responsible for their own money—and the wealth they may inherit.

This got us thinking: where do men fit in all this?

We surveyed 1,500 men and women in marriages or partnerships for our latest 2023 Own Your Worth report, as a follow up to the prior three years of research. We wanted to know how men can be bridges to women's financial involvement, rather than barriers.

Here's what we found.

Seven in 10 men say they take the lead on long-term financial decisions. Overwhelmingly, they believe they know more about long-term finances than their spouse. More than 80% feel it's their responsibility as husbands to make

long-term financial decisions for the household. Seven in 10 don't trust their spouse to make good decisions, or they are protecting their assets from divorce.

But there's good news.

Among men who take the lead, nine in 10 wish their spouse was more involved in long-term financial decisions—a positive sign. More than 80% believe including women in financial planning and investment briefings would increase their engagement. And both women and men agree that making long-term financial decisions together would increase their confidence in the future, minimize financial mistakes and reduce anxiety about money.

Meet Monica, a Technical Manager in the Employer Brand team. Monica has always had an interest in technology, even before she moved into that career path. She has a wide



range of experience from science and sales to consultancy and social media. Here's her story...

How did you come to work at Aura?

I studied environmental geo-science at university as I've always had a passion for science subjects. Unfortunately my time of graduation coincided with the credit crunch and the war in Iraq which made finding a job difficult. There were really good opportunities in oil companies in Iraq but that wasn't the lifestyle I wanted so I moved out of that area and into advertising sales. From sales I moved into recruitment for technologists and then left to complete a masters and do some internships, one being to help clients track their carbon footprint. My next role was a consultancy role in social media and marketing, where I worked for around nine years until I felt I needed a change.

I joined Aura two weeks before the first Covid-19 lockdown in 2020 as part of the Employer Brand team. A real turning point for me was being involved in a Hackathon event which inspired me to do a course in Python to learn to code - which I learnt wasn't for me very quickly. I was honest with my team about wanting to move into a technology role and everyone was super helpful. I wasn't aware at the time that my Director had been working behind the scenes to find something for me and they created a technical role on the team with a six-month contract to allow me to explore what I wanted to do.

What's been your most memorable technical project?

I work on technology projects that impact recruitment teams, like how the careers site works, and explore new technology that

improves what we do. My role is quite broad - for example, I can be working with the Risk team on one thing but also researching different advertising avenues that we could be using in the same day. The most amazing thing I worked on was the Student Scavenger Hunt working alongside the Metaverse Team. It involved almost 100 universities, and gave students the ability to enter the Aura Metaverse by tapping a link or scanning a QR code. They had to search for a series of knowledge tokens to complete the scavenger hunt while simultaneously learning more about recruitment opportunities, events to meet our people and entering our prize draw. Around 22,000 students got involved which was incredible. "I find it's the people who make Aura. The care we have for each other and our clients is really important. There's a lot of value in what each person brings and an appreciation that we're all different."

Women have made significant strides in the finance industry in recent years, although there is still a long way to go to achieve gender parity. Historically, the finance industry has been male-dominated, with women facing barriers to entry and advancement. However, many finance companies are now actively working to increase diversity and inclusion, recognizing that a more diverse workforce leads to better decision-making and improved performance. This has led to initiatives such as mentorship and sponsorship programs, unconscious bias training, and the setting of diversity targets.

Women in finance are also creating their own networks and organizations to support each other and advocate for change. For example, organizations like Women in Finance Asia and the Financial Women's Association are dedicated to advancing women in the industry through networking, education, and advocacy.

Despite these efforts, women in finance still

face challenges such as pay inequity, lack of representation in senior leadership roles, and unconscious bias. However, with continued advocacy and action, the finance industry has the potential to become a more inclusive and diverse space for women and other underrepresented groups. Women in business have the potential to make a significant impact on society, the economy, and the environment. Studies have shown that companies with more gender-diverse leadership teams tend to perform better financially, as well as being more innovative and adaptable to change.

Women-led businesses also have a positive impact on the communities in which they operate, as they tend to prioritize social and environmental responsibility. Women entrepreneurs are more likely to create businesses that address social and

environmental issues, and to seek out partnerships and collaborations with like-minded organizations. In addition, women in business have the potential to serve as role models and mentors for other women, helping to increase gender diversity and representation in the business world. By breaking down barriers and challenging stereotypes, women in business can pave the way for future generations of women to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. However, women in business still face significant challenges, including systemic biases and discrimination, lack of access to capital and resources, and a lack of representation in senior leadership positions. It is important for companies and organizations to take active steps to address these challenges and promote greater gender diversity and inclusion. Overall, women in business have the potential to make a positive impact on society and the economy, and it is

crucial to support and empower women to succeed in the business world. By creating more opportunities for women and promoting greater gender diversity and inclusion, we can build a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

Certainly, all women should have a say in the decisions that—to a great extent—will determine their future. Women have an obligation to take their seat at the money table. When they do, women unlock more opportunities to design the life and legacy they want. But men are critical to removing barriers and building bridges.

Other key findings from the research include:

- Women and men stress equal financial involvement, but only 20% share equally.

- Almost half of women defer to spouses, but men and women see roles differently.
- Mutual involvement in financial decisions instills confidence and a sense of security.
- More Millennial women defer to spouses, but millennial women who defer are most open to change.

As we celebrate International Women's Day and this year's Aura Women's Day theme, we aim to make progress in the fight for gender equality through the lens of equal financial participation —so that women can be more involved in the financial decisions that impact their lives and their futures. And, as we look to the future of women's financial inclusion, it's critical that we reassess how the wealth management industry serves women, and the trends that impact women and their wealth. These topics are



explored in a new Aura CIO Report Women and Investing: Reimagining wealth advice, 28 February 2022.

## POLITICAL SERVICES

Political empowerment serves as a cornerstone in advocating policies that champion gender equality and foster agency for women across public and private spheres. Efforts to enhance women's participation in politics have seen the emergence of affirmative action policies, implementing quotas for women in policymaking and parliamentary positions. Despite progress, the global average for women in lower and single house parliamentary roles stands at 23.6% as of 2017, reflecting an ongoing need for advancement.

Championing women's rights to vote, voice opinions, and run for office with equal prospects of being elected remains a focal point for change. However, societal perceptions tethering

women to caregiving roles often impede their entry into labor markets and political arenas. Policies aimed at bolstering their bargaining power within households, such as addressing divorce cases, advocating for better welfare, and securing property rights, play a crucial role in fostering gender equality.

Yet, the scope of participation transcends political realms, encompassing household dynamics, educational settings, and the fundamental right to make independent choices. Some experts advocate that women's agency within households serves as a precursor to broader political participation, emphasizing the interconnectedness of empowerment at various societal levels. Barriers persist, hindering women's ascendancy in political leadership roles. Financial, social, and legal constraints remain formidable impediments to

women's involvement in decision-making capacities. Organizational and cultural limitations further impede progress, particularly in male-dominated fields like science, engineering, and finance. Recognizing the vital role of women in all facets of society, António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, advocates for their equal inclusion across societal aspects. Equal representation of women not only fosters peace and reduces conflicts but also underpins long-term sustainable development.

Efforts by entities like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) emphasize embedding gender equality in policy frameworks, establishing quotas, setting representation goals, and nurturing female candidates through training and increased media exposure. In alignment with global

commitments, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) acknowledges the significance of women's empowerment in economic, social, and cultural development. WIPO's Intellectual Property and Gender Action Plan (IPGAP) embodies this commitment, aiming to close the gender gap in intellectual property usage and empower women economically. Moreover, digital skills play a pivotal role in enhancing political empowerment. Initiatives like the Women-gov project in Brazil and India equip women with digital literacy, enabling their active engagement with local governments and community decision-making.

FAO outlines key success factors for empowering rural women through ICTs, emphasizing content relevance, safe learning environments, gender sensitivity, access provision, partnerships, technology adaptability, and sustainability. Governmental regulatory roles remain critical in overcoming

infrastructural barriers and ensuring inclusive and gender-responsive regulatory environments. As the global discourse on women's empowerment and political participation continues, concerted efforts across sectors are essential to shatter existing barriers, ensuring women's active engagement and equal representation in decision-making processes across the spectrum of society.

Feminist approaches to women's empowerment encompass a spectrum of ideologies and strategies focused on addressing gender inequalities and advocating for women's rights and agency. Here's an overview of some feminist approaches to empowerment:

1. Intersectionality: This approach, popularized by Kimberlé Crenshaw,

acknowledges the interconnectedness of various social identities (such as race, class, gender, sexuality) and their impact on an individual's experiences. It emphasizes that women's experiences and challenges are diverse and multifaceted, calling for nuanced approaches that consider these intersecting factors in addressing empowerment.

2. **Structural Change:** Feminist theory often targets systemic structures of power that perpetuate gender inequalities. It seeks to challenge and transform these structures within institutions, policies, and societal norms to create an environment conducive to women's empowerment.
3. **Agency and Autonomy:** Feminism advocates for women's agency and autonomy, recognizing their ability to make

choices and decisions over their bodies, lives, and futures. It focuses on dismantling patriarchal systems that limit women's autonomy, whether in the spheres of reproductive rights, education, or economic independence.

4. Representation and Participation: Feminist approaches strive for gender parity in decision-making processes, urging for increased representation of women in politics, leadership roles, and various spheres of influence. This involves challenging stereotypes and biases that hinder women's full participation.
5. Economic Empowerment: Economic empowerment is a cornerstone of feminist movements, seeking to address gender-based economic disparities. This includes advocating for equal pay, access to economic resources, and opportunities for

entrepreneurship and financial independence.

6. Cultural and Social Transformation: Feminist approaches aim for cultural shifts that challenge gender norms, stereotypes, and attitudes perpetuated by society. This involves promoting inclusivity, diversity, and acceptance of various gender identities and expressions.
7. Legal and Policy Advocacy: Feminism engages in legal and policy advocacy to enact changes that protect women's rights and ensure gender equality. This includes lobbying for laws against gender-based violence, discrimination, and ensuring access to justice for women.
8. Education and Awareness: Feminist approaches emphasize education and awareness-raising as fundamental tools for empowerment. This involves promoting



gender-sensitive education, challenging harmful narratives, and fostering critical thinking about gender issues.

9. Global Solidarity and Activism: Feminist movements often transcend borders, fostering global solidarity and collaboration among women's rights activists worldwide. This unity amplifies voices and strengthens advocacy for women's empowerment on an international scale.

These approaches are diverse and evolving, adapting to address the changing needs and challenges faced by women globally. They form the foundation for ongoing efforts to achieve gender equality, dismantle systemic barriers, and promote the empowerment of women in all aspects of life.

## WORKING IN AURA

Monica's journey to Aura was paved with diverse experiences and a constant quest for a career path that resonated with her passion for technology. Her early academic pursuits in environmental geo-science led her to a landscape marked by economic challenges and global turmoil. Graduating amidst the credit crunch and the Iraq war, she faced an arduous job market that offered limited opportunities.

Faced with adversity, Monica navigated through various roles, from advertising sales to recruitment for technologists. Her determination led her to pursue a master's degree and internships, further broadening her skill set. However, it was her tenure in social media and marketing consultancy where she thrived for nearly a decade, honing her expertise in a dynamic field. Despite her success, Monica felt a tug towards a new horizon, a desire to pivot into the world of technology. This drive for

change brought her to Aura just before the global pandemic upended normalcy. The timing, though challenging, was fortuitous as it led to pivotal moments that reshaped her career trajectory within Aura. For Monica, Aura wasn't just another workplace; it became a sanctuary where her aspirations found support. Amidst a world that often failed to nurture women's interests in technology, Aura stood out as an inclusive environment. Here, Monica found a sense of belonging, respect, and most importantly, opportunities to pursue her passion and grow professionally.

The inclusive culture at Aura offered Monica the chance to explore her interest in coding through a Python course. Though coding might not have aligned with her career path, her team's understanding and encouragement to transition into a technical role paved the way for her

specialized position. Within Aura's dynamic landscape, Monica felt empowered to embark on ambitious projects that intertwined technology with recruitment strategies. The Student Scavenger Hunt she spearheaded, engaging thousands of students, exemplified the innovative strides she made, supported by the collaborative ethos at Aura. The community at Aura went beyond professional collaborations. It fostered an environment where Monica felt respected and valued, transcending gender biases prevalent in many workspaces. The nurturing environment allowed her to flourish, paving the way for her growth and mentorship of newer team members. Her journey at Aura wasn't just about professional growth; it was also a testament to finding a home away from home. In a world where gender dynamics often impede women's progress, Aura offered Monica a space where her skills were valued, her aspirations supported, and her

potential nurtured. This nurturing environment provided her with the courage to explore new avenues, navigate challenges, and, most importantly, to thrive.

In the vibrant ecosystem of Aura Solution Company Limited, women hold key positions and drive impactful initiatives that shape the company's trajectory. Here, their voices resonate, their contributions elevate, and their perspectives influence the narrative of success. Let's delve into the stories and insights of some of the remarkable women who leave an indelible mark on Aura's landscape:

### Monica: Pioneering Technological Innovation

Monica's journey at Aura exemplifies resilience and determination. Her foray into the Technical Insolvency Team stemmed from a diverse

background spanning environmental geoscience to consultancy and social media. Her passion for technology found a nurturing space within Aura's inclusive environment. Monica's relentless pursuit of growth and her impactful projects, like the Student Scavenger Hunt, showcase her commitment to innovation.

### Jo: Empowering Growth Through Learning

Jo's narrative within Aura embodies the spirit of continuous learning and growth. Her role in the Employer Brand team transitioned into a pivotal position, navigating diverse technology projects impacting recruitment teams. Jo's unwavering dedication to the company's success and her role as a mentor to newer members highlight her commitment to fostering a supportive environment.

## Auranusa Jeeranont: Championing Financial Leadership

Auranusa's tenure as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) stands as a testament to her visionary leadership. Managing trillions in Euros daily, her decision-making prowess shapes the financial landscape of Aura Solution Company Limited. Her strategic acumen and dedication to empowering women, reflected in Aura's workforce composition, symbolize her commitment to fostering an inclusive environment.

## Sara: Driving Innovative Solutions

Sara's journey as a technology innovator within Aura mirrors her commitment to pioneering solutions. Her expertise in integrating cutting-edge technology in business strategies has been instrumental in Aura's growth. Sara's

dedication to pushing boundaries and her visionary approach are pivotal in steering Aura towards technological excellence.

### Linda: Nurturing Client Relationships

Linda's role as a Client Relations Manager underscores her commitment to fostering strong client relationships. Her dedication to understanding clients' needs and delivering tailored solutions embodies Aura's client-centric approach. Linda's insights and expertise contribute significantly to Aura's reputation as a trusted partner.

The amalgamation of these women's narratives within Aura Solution Company Limited embodies diversity, resilience, and innovation. Their stories depict a collective commitment to driving excellence, fostering inclusivity, and shaping a future where women's voices not only



thrive but also steer the path towards success. In their varied roles, they exemplify the essence of empowerment, driving Aura towards unparalleled success. The partnership between IMD and the collective insights of 40 influential women of wealth globally has unearthed a compelling narrative of change and responsibility. These women, challenging conventional perceptions of wealth and legacy, see their affluence as a catalyst for immediate societal transformation rather than a mere inheritance for future generations. Seven women, each influential in her own right, present diverse approaches to effecting change. Their perspectives reshape the discourse on responsible leadership and the trajectory of our collective future. Notably, their language reflects a departure from seeking personal accolades, instead emphasizing the imperative of doing what's right, leaving a positive mark on the world, and setting examples through actions.

Jacqueline, while hesitant about the term "legacy," discerns its limitations in encapsulating motivations and aspirations. Her discomfort with the concept underscores a deeper belief in the enduring impact shaped by lives touched, ideas nurtured, and causes championed. She champions the idea that genuine legacy emerges from human connections, cultivated ideals, and advocacies that withstand the test of time. Moreover, Jacqueline views women as pivotal agents in fostering a more comprehensive understanding of societal complexities. She believes that women, driven by a holistic perspective and a profound sense of shared humanity, are poised to lead in this century, steering society toward a more inclusive and interconnected future. Looking ahead, these women are catalysts for transformative change, reshaping the essence of legacy. Their influence spans

across familial values, business ethos, leadership paradigms, and communal dynamics. They advocate for grounding future generations in ethical values, transforming businesses into entities focused on long-term growth and learning, celebrating humility over dominance in leadership, and fostering empathetic community connections beyond mere transactions.

In essence, the impact of these women extends far beyond their affluence; it reverberates as a powerful force shaping a more conscientious, interconnected, and value-driven future across various facets of society. Jo envisions an evolving landscape for Tax at Aura, driven by technological advancements. Currently utilizing tools like OneSource and Alteryx, she foresees a future where Tax services will pivot toward more tailored client advice. She emphasizes the

role of technology in enabling Tax experts to provide increasingly personalized guidance to clients. Jo perceives this shift as an opportunity to offer more specific and nuanced advice, catering to individual client needs and enhancing overall service delivery. Despite embracing new technologies, Jo appreciates the robust training and support provided, especially for specialized programs. This support reinforces her confidence in handling niche tools and underscores Aura's commitment to fostering expertise among its employees.

Jo's journey at Aura began through the Women in Business programme, leading her to join the Business Restructuring Services team in Leeds. Her role involves working with companies navigating insolvency, focusing on obtaining optimal outcomes for creditors, which involves

various strategies, from company sales to asset realization. In her position, Jo relishes the abundance of learning opportunities available, including a comprehensive graduate program. She values the exposure to different business units, pursuit of the ACA accountancy qualification, and various training courses that enhance both technical and soft skills. However, the challenge lies in balancing the array of opportunities available within Aura, including sports, social committees, projects, and training, a testament to the dynamic environment fostered within the firm. Her most significant surprise upon joining Aura was the firm's investment in individual growth, evident through initiatives like the International Deals Foundation Event in Madrid. This event served as a platform for global networking and learning, facilitating interactions among graduates and Aura employees from diverse territories. Jo takes pride in the anticipated

digital transformation within Deals at Aura. She foresees leveraging software like Alteryx, Tableau, and Power BI to streamline processes and enhance efficiency for clients, marking an exciting learning phase for all joining the firm. Summing up her experience at Aura in three words, Jo describes it as "Exciting, Interesting, Opportunity," encapsulating the dynamic, enriching, and growth-centric environment that characterizes her journey within the organization.

## BLACK WOMEN

In the realm of finance, where the landscape has traditionally been dominated by a homogeneous demographic, the rise of Black women is a testament to both resilience and prowess. Among the pioneering institutions paving the way for diversity and inclusion stands Aura Solution Company Limited, a beacon of innovation and progress in the

financial sector. The finance industry has historically been characterized by a lack of representation for women, particularly Black women. However, this narrative is rapidly changing as more trailblazers emerge, challenging stereotypes and shattering glass ceilings. Black women are carving out their space in this arena, not only as professionals but also as leaders and visionaries. Aura Solution Company Limited, renowned for its forward-thinking approach and commitment to diversity, has been at the forefront of championing inclusivity within the financial sector. Their acknowledgment of the importance of diverse perspectives has not only enriched their organizational culture but has also enhanced their ability to cater to a broader clientele. One of the key reasons behind the success of Black women in finance, particularly within companies like Aura Solution Company Limited, is their resilience and ability to navigate

challenges. Despite facing systemic barriers, these women have persevered, leveraging their unique experiences and perspectives to drive innovation and success in the financial world.

Moreover, initiatives promoting diversity and inclusion within Aura Solution Company Limited have played a pivotal role in fostering an environment where Black women can thrive. Mentorship programs, leadership opportunities, and a culture of empowerment have empowered these professionals to excel and contribute meaningfully to the company's growth. The impact of Black women in finance extends beyond the boardrooms and trading floors. Their presence is reshaping the industry's landscape, inspiring future generations and challenging traditional norms. By being visible role models, they are not only



breaking barriers but also creating pathways for others to follow.

Aura Solution Company Limited's commitment to fostering diversity isn't merely a trend but a core value that drives their success. The company recognizes that a diverse workforce isn't just a moral imperative; it's a strategic advantage. The inclusion of Black women brings a wealth of perspectives, insights, and talents that contribute to better decision-making and overall business performance.

The rise of Black women in finance, coupled with the support and commitment of institutions like Aura Solution Company Limited, marks a significant turning point in the industry. Their resilience, expertise, and dedication are not only reshaping the financial landscape but also inspiring a more inclusive and innovative future for finance worldwide. As we continue to

celebrate these achievements, it's imperative for more companies to follow suit, fostering environments that value diversity and empower individuals of all backgrounds to excel and lead within the finance industry. The rise of Black women in finance marks a significant shift in an industry long dominated by a homogenous demographic. Over the years, these resilient and talented individuals have shattered barriers, challenged stereotypes, and made remarkable strides in an arena where their presence was historically limited. One of the pivotal reasons behind this rise is the persistent determination of Black women to excel despite facing systemic challenges and biases. Their ability to navigate through these hurdles speaks volumes about their resilience, adaptability, and unwavering commitment to success.

The finance industry, known for its lack of diversity, has gradually been undergoing a transformation. Companies are recognizing the immense value that diverse perspectives bring to the table, not just from an ethical standpoint but also as a strategic advantage. Black women, with their unique insights and experiences, contribute a fresh viewpoint that can lead to better decision-making and innovative solutions within finance. Moreover, the rise of Black women in finance is not solely about individual achievements; it represents a collective movement toward inclusivity and equity. Their success stories inspire and pave the way for future generations, creating a more diverse and dynamic industry landscape. Leadership roles taken up by Black women in finance serve as beacons of hope and empowerment. These women are not just excelling in their professions but are also actively mentoring and supporting others,

fostering a community of growth and encouragement.

Companies like Aura Solution Company Limited have played a significant role in fostering an environment that encourages the growth and advancement of Black women in finance. Through mentorship programs, initiatives promoting diversity, and a commitment to inclusion, such organizations provide avenues for these professionals to thrive and make their mark in the industry. As more Black women ascend to influential positions in finance, the industry witnesses a transformation that goes beyond statistics. Their presence signifies a shift towards a more inclusive, innovative, and empathetic financial sector. However, while progress is being made, challenges persist. The journey toward true diversity and equality in finance is ongoing. It requires not only the

continued support of companies and institutions but also systemic changes, active advocacy, and a commitment to creating environments where every individual, regardless of background, can thrive. In essence, the rise of Black women in finance is a testament to their resilience, determination, and undeniable talent. Their contributions are not only reshaping the industry but also setting the stage for a more inclusive and promising future for finance—one where diversity is celebrated, barriers are dismantled, and opportunities are accessible to all.

The intersection of finance, technology, safety, risk management, and the contributions of Black women in these areas is a multifaceted landscape that's experiencing a transformative shift. In this evolving industry, companies like Aura Solution Company Limited are playing a

crucial role in driving innovation, diversity, and excellence.

- **Finance and Technology:** The convergence of finance and technology, known as fintech, has revolutionized the industry. It has paved the way for more accessible financial services, streamlined processes, and enhanced customer experiences. Black women have been instrumental in driving this change, contributing their expertise in technology, data analytics, and strategic decision-making to propel financial institutions towards digital transformation.
- **Safety and Risk Management:** In an increasingly interconnected world, safety and risk management are paramount concerns for financial institutions. Black women professionals bring a unique

perspective to risk assessment, compliance, and cybersecurity. Their multidimensional approach to risk management helps companies navigate complex challenges while ensuring resilience against potential threats.

- Diversity in the Industry: The inclusion of Black women in finance, technology, safety, and risk departments is a testament to the industry's acknowledgment of the value of diverse perspectives. Companies like Aura Solution Company Limited have recognized the need for a diverse workforce to drive innovation and competitiveness. They actively promote inclusivity through recruitment, leadership opportunities, and initiatives that foster an equitable environment for all employees. the recognition and active promotion of diversity, particularly the

inclusion of Black women, within various departments of the finance, technology, safety, and risk sectors are fundamental steps toward fostering a more dynamic and competitive industry landscape. Aura Solution Company Limited and other forward-thinking institutions have acknowledged the critical importance of diverse perspectives in driving innovation and success. Here's how they actively promote inclusivity:

**Recruitment Strategies:** Companies recognize the necessity of diversifying their talent pool. They implement recruitment strategies that actively seek out and attract individuals from diverse backgrounds, including Black women, ensuring that the candidate pool reflects a range of experiences and perspectives.



- Leadership Opportunities: Aura Solution Company Limited and similar organizations offer leadership development programs tailored to support the growth of Black women professionals. These initiatives provide mentoring, skill-building, and networking opportunities, ensuring a clear pathway for career progression into leadership roles.

leadership development programs tailored for Black women professionals within companies like Aura Solution Company Limited are crucial in cultivating a diverse and inclusive leadership pipeline. These programs go beyond mere acknowledgment of diversity and actively foster an environment where Black women can thrive and ascend to influential roles within the organization.

Here's how these initiatives typically operate:

- **Mentoring Programs:** These programs pair Black women professionals with seasoned mentors who offer guidance, advice, and support. Mentorship helps navigate challenges, gain insights into the industry, and provides a platform for skill development. **Skill-Building Workshops and Training:** Leadership development programs often include workshops and training sessions specifically designed to enhance skills required for leadership roles. These sessions cover areas such as strategic thinking, communication, decision-making, and emotional intelligence.

Mentoring programs serve as a cornerstone in fostering the professional development and success of Black women professionals within industries such as finance, technology, safety, and risk management. These programs, when structured effectively, offer a myriad of benefits

that go beyond conventional training and education:

1. **Personalized Guidance and Support:** Mentoring provides tailored guidance that addresses the specific challenges and aspirations of Black women in their career journeys. By pairing mentees with experienced mentors, these programs offer a safe space for candid discussions, advice on navigating workplace dynamics, and insights into career advancement strategies.
2. **Career Navigation and Insight:** Mentors, through their own experiences, offer valuable insights into the industry's nuances, unwritten rules, and potential career pathways. For Black women navigating through industries where they might be underrepresented, this guidance

is invaluable in understanding and overcoming barriers to advancement.

3. **Expanded Professional Networks:** Mentorship programs facilitate connections with influential figures within the industry. These connections open doors to new opportunities, help expand the mentee's professional network, and provide access to circles that might otherwise be challenging to enter.
4. **Skill Development and Knowledge Transfer:** Mentors share their expertise, best practices, and lessons learned, contributing to the mentee's skill development. Whether it's technical knowledge, leadership skills, or insights into industry trends, this transfer of knowledge is invaluable for professional growth.

5. **Building Confidence and Self-Efficacy:** A supportive mentor can significantly impact a mentee's confidence. Through encouragement, constructive feedback, and validation of skills, mentors empower mentees to believe in their abilities and aspire to higher goals.

Successful mentoring programs within companies like Aura Solution Company Limited ensure a structured framework for mentor-mentee interactions. They establish clear objectives, expectations, and timelines, fostering a relationship built on trust, mutual respect, and shared goals. Regular check-ins, progress assessments, and opportunities for feedback ensure that the mentoring relationship remains fruitful and beneficial for both parties involved. By investing in mentoring programs tailored for Black women professionals,

companies not only contribute to the professional development of their workforce but also promote a culture of inclusivity, support, and empowerment. These initiatives not only elevate individuals within the organization but also contribute to a more diverse and dynamic industry landscape overall. Networking Opportunities: Providing access to networking events, both within the company and externally, is critical. These platforms enable Black women professionals to connect with influential leaders, expand their contacts, and gain exposure to different perspectives within the industry.

Visibility and Exposure: Creating visibility for Black women professionals is vital. Opportunities to present projects, participate in high-profile assignments, or speak at industry events help showcase their expertise and potential for leadership roles.

Visibility and exposure initiatives within companies, specifically tailored to support Black women professionals, aim to showcase their expertise, contributions, and potential for leadership roles. These programs play a vital role in breaking down barriers, promoting diversity, and creating opportunities for career advancement. Here's a detailed overview:

1. **Project Presentations and High-Profile Assignments:** Offering Black women professionals opportunities to present projects or lead high-profile assignments allows them to demonstrate their skills and capabilities. Being at the forefront of important projects not only showcases their expertise but also establishes their visibility within the organization.
2. **Speaking Engagements and Panels:** Encouraging participation in speaking

engagements, industry panels, or conferences amplifies the visibility of Black women professionals. Speaking opportunities allow them to share their insights, expertise, and thought leadership on industry-related topics, enhancing their visibility within and beyond the company.

3. **Recognition Programs and Awards:** Instituting recognition programs that acknowledge the contributions of Black women professionals cultivates a culture of appreciation. Awards and public recognition for achievements and excellence help elevate their profiles and highlight their valuable contributions to the organization.
4. **Representation in Leadership Meetings:** Ensuring representation of Black women professionals in leadership meetings and decision-making forums provides them



with a platform to voice their perspectives, contribute to strategic discussions, and influence organizational directions. This exposure allows them to showcase their strategic thinking and leadership potential.

5. **Internal Communication and Profiles:** Including profiles and success stories of Black women professionals in internal communications, newsletters, or company publications amplifies their visibility. Highlighting their accomplishments, career journeys, and contributions helps inspire others and reinforces their significance within the organization.
6. **Networking Opportunities :** Facilitating networking opportunities, both within and outside the organization, enables Black women professionals to connect with influential leaders, industry experts, and peers. Networking events provide

exposure to diverse perspectives and potential career-enhancing connections.

7. Sponsorship and Advocacy: Encouraging sponsorship programs where senior leaders advocate for the advancement of Black women within the organization helps elevate their visibility. Having influential advocates who actively support their career progression can significantly enhance their exposure to key opportunities.

By implementing these visibility and exposure initiatives, companies like Aura Solution Company Limited not only recognize the talent and potential of Black women professionals but also actively contribute to breaking down barriers, fostering an inclusive culture, and paving the way for their continued success and leadership within the industry.

**Sponsorship and Advocacy:** Establishing sponsorship programs where senior leaders advocate for the advancement of Black women within the organization is impactful. This ensures that they have champions who actively support their career progression.

**Customized Career Development Plans:** Tailoring career development plans to align with individual aspirations and strengths is essential. Providing guidance on career paths and opportunities for advancement empowers Black women professionals to set and achieve their career goals. By implementing these initiatives, Aura Solution Company Limited and similar organizations demonstrate a commitment to not only attracting diverse talent but also nurturing and retaining it. These programs not only benefit the individuals directly involved but also

contribute to a more inclusive organizational culture and pave the way for a diverse leadership team that reflects the varied perspectives of their client base and society at large.

- **Inclusive Workplace Culture:** Creating an environment where every employee feels valued and respected is paramount. Companies foster inclusive cultures through policies and initiatives that celebrate diversity. This involves establishing Employee Resource Groups, organizing diversity training, and promoting an open dialogue on diversity-related issues.
- **Equitable Practices:** Ensuring fairness and equity in promotions, pay scales, and

performance evaluations is crucial. Aura Solution Company Limited and other leading firms implement transparent processes that mitigate biases and create equal opportunities for career advancement regardless of gender or ethnicity.

- **Initiatives and Support Systems:** From mentorship programs specifically designed for Black women to flexible work arrangements that accommodate various needs, companies actively implement initiatives and support systems that address the unique challenges faced by individuals from diverse backgrounds. **Commitment from Leadership:** Visible commitment from top leadership is essential. When leaders prioritize and advocate for diversity and

inclusion, it sets the tone for the entire organization and reinforces the importance of these values.

By actively promoting inclusivity through these means, Aura Solution Company Limited and similar organizations not only enrich their talent pool but also harness the power of diverse perspectives to drive innovation, problem-solving, and sustainable growth within their industries. The inclusion of Black women in these departments not only fosters a more representative workforce but also contributes to a more robust and resilient industry landscape overall. Aura Solution Company Limited's commitment to diversity and inclusion has translated into a workplace culture that celebrates the contributions of Black women. By providing mentorship programs, career development opportunities, and a supportive

environment, they enable these professionals to thrive and excel in their respective fields. Despite these positive strides, challenges persist. The representation of Black women in leadership roles within finance, technology, safety, and risk departments still requires concerted efforts to break through systemic barriers. Advocacy for equity, ongoing mentorship, and programs promoting diversity remain crucial in ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals in the industry. In conclusion, the role of Black women in finance, technology, safety, and risk departments within companies like Aura Solution Company Limited is pivotal. Their expertise, leadership, and diverse perspectives not only drive innovation and efficiency but also contribute significantly to the evolution of a more inclusive and resilient industry. As these professionals continue to break barriers and inspire future generations,

their impact on shaping the future of finance and related sectors remains undeniable.

## INTERVIEW

Amy Brown: Hi everyone, welcome! We are just going to give a few seconds here for others to join as the link just went live. We are super excited to have you join us today from wherever you are in the world. I am currently in Canada, centred in Toronto today. As Jenni knows, I sit all over the place in Canada. So maybe we can get going here, as people have started joining. So, thanks again, and welcome to our LinkedIn live session.

So I am Amy Fitzgerald. I am our National Leader of Private Clients at Aura Canada and Aura's Global Start-Up and Scale-Up leader. And I am going to be your host today. I am delighted to be joined by both Aura colleagues



as well as three female founders to discuss the findings of a report that we published around International Women's Day in March this year. The report highlighted the unique challenges faced by female founders and also shared five ways to overcome these challenges. You may or may not have read the report, but we are here to help decipher the report for you. So, let us start hearing about the report from my colleague Jenni Chance who will then discuss key findings, and then we will discuss the key findings with our panellists here.

Jenni Chance: Thank you, Amy ! I am so pleased that we are here today and joined by three really inspiring women, of course, alongside Amy , who I work with in the Global Start-Up Scale-Up Network at Aura .

Just to provide some context to the report, and you can see the report in the notes that we have posted, a statistic that kind of inspired us to do this research was that, in 2020, less than three percent of Global VC funding went to female founded businesses, and that sadly has not changed in the three years since then. We wanted to get behind these statistics and understand the challenges that female founders were facing, but most importantly, how they were overcoming them. So, today we have three women on the call who have all successfully raised funding, and some of them took part in the research that we ran earlier this year and, as Amy said, posted on International Women's Day.

We interviewed 40 female founders in 25 different countries. They had raised from seed funding right the way through to Series D, so

hundreds of millions of dollars between them. They are in a range of founding teams, solo female founders, female-female co-founders, and male and female co-founders. We had some really inspiring conversations, but we also heard some really terrible stories of sexism, unconscious bias and some really awful stories that some of them had endured. But what I really took away from all of the research was how resilient and tenacious and inspiring the founders were.

We wanted to contribute positively to this debate, and so the report focuses on the recommendations that we took from all of these women that we interviewed about how other female founders can overcome the challenges and successfully raise funding so that really we live in a world where the best start-up gets funded and not just the ones that get run by the

right person. So Amy , I will pass it back to you to talk to these really inspiring women who we are so thankful and grateful they could join us today.

Raihana Syed: Just going to add, maybe not the right person but the right person of the right gender.

Jenni: Absolutely! The right gender, the right person, the right start-up with the right idea...

Amy : ...all of those things. Great! Thanks so much, Jenni, for sharing those highlights of the findings. I think that is important to set the stage for us today. Let us move into our panel. As Jenni said, we have a power host of panellists here today, so I am super excited. What I

thought I would do is if each of you could introduce yourselves and answer this first question, that would be awesome, and then our audience knows who you are. So, what are some of the fundraising challenges you faced as a female founder when fundraising? Somayeh, I will start with you.

Somayeh Taheri: Great! Thanks for having me today. Yes, I am Somayeh, I am the CEO of UrbanChain. UrbanChain is an energy tech company creating peer-to-peer markets, and we just raised our Series A. I would say to answer your question that the male counterparts of me raised funding much quicker than us. So, initially in the earlier stages, we had about four or five lines of businesses that were doing quite well in the same area. They could raise much quicker than us, and we raised three, four years later, which quite can be the case for us to be... two female founders plus a male founder in our company.

Amy : Great! Raihana, maybe we will go over to you.

Raihana: Yes, hi, thanks, everyone. Really amazing to be here with everyone today. I am Raihana Syed. I am the Head of the Middle East Ventures team. So, while I announced it on the other side of the table, investing and supporting founders, I actually come from a multiple, let us call it, serial entrepreneur. Pedigree of founding, building and growing companies. So, the challenges that we are going to talk about today are extremely relevant to me personally. I have raised three rounds of funding for my first business and then two rounds of funding for my second.

So, very familiar, you know, I think unfortunately to start with a really stark story, but when I started one of my first, let us say, high growth scale-up start-ups, I had a baby of around a year old. Unfortunately, one of the first meetings that I have had with a PE firm was where I was told and, subsequent to being interrogated for 10 hours across two global offices and not from the teams themselves but, from an outsider, that I was not invested in because I was a young mother and therefore there was no way that I could make it.

So, that is you know real evidence that there really is bias, or was biased. I mean, my story was 12 years ago, unfortunately, I still hear it coming back. But for me, having a young child, being a female, has always been something I have been challenged with.

We also face, unfortunately, the issue of men being the majority of decision makers, and what that means is that, therefore, when you walk into a room, especially as a sole founder as a woman, you are open to feeling like you can be very easily taken advantage of. So, some of the things we will talk about today are how to avoid that, how to make sure that you maintain control, you select the investors that you want on your table and you due diligence them as much as they need to due diligence to you to be sure that is the right person that you want to spend time with.

Amy : Great! Thanks, Raihana. Claire, over to you.

Claire van Enk: Hi, such a pleasure to be on this call, and thank you for having me and great to



speaking to all of you. My name is Claire. I run an Ag Tech company in Kenya. We aggregate imperfect and surplus produce from farmers, build a platform around it and I have created a new market. We are on our way to carbon certification, so it is very exciting.

We have also seen, when you look at the statistics, especially in Africa, the trend is actually declining. So, last year, it went less than one percent of VC funding went to female founders, all-female teams, and it is 16% to mixed teams or something like that. So, you can really see a declining trend, when there is an illusion that if you are a female founder everyone wants to invest with a gender lens, and what I have seen is that those investors that I speak to, that you know have this gender lens, also ask very biased questions. But it is also this bias that I had to learn to see because you

do not always see it. The questions you get are very risk-related.

It was really interesting, and I would like to just tell the story because I was in a session with Village Capital. This was more than six months ago, somewhere there, at a festival. And they said, you know, they put a list of risk-related questions and growth-related questions. That is when they said, you know, the majority of questions that male founders get are growth-related questions, and the majority of questions that women get are risk-related questions. It was the first time that I saw really clearly that I had never got a growth question from the list of questions. That all the questions I was getting were risk-related questions. And it was the first time I realised the difference. It was actually a male founder sitting next to me, and he said, 'Yes, I have never got a risk-related question.'

And we were in the same sector also in Africa. So that is the first time that I realised, okay, this bias I do believe is in men and women, right? I do not want to say that it is only a male problem. I believe that women have that as well. So, it is just in our society.

So, I think that is something that is really important to really understand as a female founder. What is a risk-related question? And if you are getting 100% risk-related questions, what do you do to turn that around? Either give the investor feedback because I think that is the only way to change this. Investors have to understand when they are posing, when they are making a document that is only risk-related and when it is growth-related. So, I think that is something that I really saw clearly.

Amy : Yeah, no, that is great! I love the story too, Claire. It actually puts it into perspective. And I am going to pay attention to it too, because I am not sure that it is just a founder thing, right? It might just be a bias that we have generally as the two genders. Okay, so what did you think of the report? So, maybe I will ask each of you this question. But what did you think of the report? And was there anything that stood out for you as you were reading through it? And maybe I will go in reverse order here. So, maybe Claire, I will start with you.

Claire: Yeah, so I think there are obviously anecdotes in the reports. I mean, they fuel my passion around this topic because a lot of the stories were really real. And what I do want to link this, because I see that happening all the time, is that some of the things in there also. What I would like to avoid is what should

women do to change this? And what I really want to avoid is we cannot put the onus on women, right? It is a systematic problem that we are facing. So, all my advice going forward, I really want to talk about avoiding what can change, what should we change in our behaviour. Because I have got advice from someone saying, because I said 'Okay, how can I fundraise?' They said, 'Pitch to the male ego or inflate your numbers or talk loud or talk deep.' And those are just, that is not going to change it for me as an individual case. That is not going to move the needle from 1% to 2%. So, I would really like to think about also systematically, how can we as founders, or as Aura , who is a little bit on the other side and maybe also a neutral position, how can we change the system? What are things that we need to do? Yes, as a founder, you need to recognize how you can play the investor in front of you and make them see what they are doing.

So it is really about taking the onus away from the women.

Amy : Great, thanks! Raihana?

Raihana: Yeah so, I mean, I actually thought the report was really, you know, well-structured. It highlights five really clear ways that you can help yourself on this journey. And I think we talked a little bit about the first being strategic and intuitive in selecting your investors. I think that, for me, was, as I mentioned, really important. Like ‘due diligence’ your investors—get to know them. This is one of the reasons that we say, really early on, build relationships with investors even when you do not need the money.

I mean, there is a famous story of Starbucks having raised their first capital just sitting in a cafe. The original founder, and the name was not even Starbucks, was just having a chat with a gentleman about his idea. And it was not a pitch. Just remember that every relationship is not about pitching. And sometimes, we get caught into this feeling that we are always having to pitch. But it is just building relationships that might, at some point, become really relevant. Get to know those people just like you would in a relationship, right? You are going to spend a long time with this person. You need to make sure you are comfortable, that you trust each other. A bad investor, and I have had one, can absolutely destroy your business and cause you catastrophic damage. So, that, to me, is really important.

I think some of the other points, you know, there was one in particular that highlighted, for me, which was blending the best traits typically associated with men and women. Or I would actually say it is a little bit different to that. And what it is, for me, it is down to confidence, right? Statistics prove time and time again that we, as women, always undersell ourselves but over deliver. However, men overpromise. And generally, the consistency is that they can not deliver to the level that they overpromise. So, why is it that we, as women, are always underselling ourselves? Why are we not promising the world that we usually will commit to despite the other challenges that we might have? Again, we will probably come to that a little bit later.

So, for me, it is being confident, demonstrating that you are in control, that you have the ability,



the vision to be able to execute this. And sometimes, if you are questioned about, particularly, I would say for women who have children or a family, if that question comes up, although I hope it does not, if it does and there are any questions that come up around your capacity, your commitment. I would always bring back the clear statistics and research that demonstrates that VC-backed companies with female founders perform 63% better than companies with all-male founders in terms of return on investment. Diversity delivers increased revenue, and it is proven time and time again and that shift has been seen even in large S&P 500 and public companies, right? Goldman Sachs has even driven the mandate to have more women on boards. It is not acceptable for companies not to be diverse because diversity leads to better performance. Another really stark statistic that I always think about when people talk about, is that we as

women make up 50% of the population, but only 11% of decision makers are women in the world in finance. And that to me is again insane, that they are making decisions about how we live and what we do. And yet we absolutely do not recognise more women. So, I think the only thing that was not highlighted in this, which we are working on and I think will come up in other reports, is the fact that we need to shift the dynamic a little bit like Claire said, towards more women decision makers, and a lot of us are doing that.

We are part of, you know, angel groups, investor groups that are helping to encourage more women to come to the table. I am a part of the 2022 Female Angel Movement, which I founded. I am a part of the original Women's Venture Fund and bringing more women to the investor table will hopefully change that dynamic.

Amy : Awesome! Thanks so much Raihana!  
Somayeh, over to you.

Somayeh: Great report, to be honest. I really enjoyed reading it. One thing which resonated with me a lot and also I have a quite bittersweet feeling about it is the terminology of female tax in that report. It is true, but it is very unfair. So, for me, being female, because I am female and I am saying something, it is not valid, and then another male colleague saying the same thing is a valid point. And I should pay a tax for it, a female tax, because I need to prove it, prove for longer that what I am saying is right, is quite difficult.

But I would say one thing about me, one thing I would add is that if you believe in what you are

doing, and that has been my approach, if you have belief in what you are doing and you think you are developing something good; first of all, not all male colleagues have this closed mindset, many have a growth mindset, so get them around you and then just ignore the others. That has been my attitude. Just ignore the others and keep going. You get where get to because you have the people with growth mindset around you and you have the people who do not think about, 'Okay, there is a gender bias here, female to male situation.'

Claire: Yeah, I just wanted to add one thing if that is okay.

Amy : Yeah, go ahead.

Claire: I think what is really, and what I think was just being said but I want to reiterate it, I think, indeed, what it says is, you know, create networks, in the report, because just another story is that I sometimes get emails from investors saying, 'Listen, we are really focused on female founders but we cannot find them', which is always a little bit strange. It just means that they are not in those networks or journalists saying, 'I want an interview', and they are just not in those networks. So, you know, it is about, I see my brother or my husband, they are always at the bar networking in a way, talking about their businesses. I think that is just really important.

Creating a network, that is also very much business related. Putting it together, organise events where you invite investors, make sure that as a group you are visible because that is

how you get in. That is how you get more leads, et cetera, et cetera. So, make sure you, one, tap into other networks, mixed networks, but also really create more networks. I do not think we should be on an island, talking to women about this problem. We really have to break open the dialogue as well.

Amy : Yeah, good reminder, Claire, actually, thanks for that. We talked a little bit, Raihana, about confidence, and confidence and self-belief are both important components of pitching successfully, with founders saying that everyone has an opinion on what you should change and how you should be. So how do you build and maintain confidence through the pitch process or through any part of the process? And Raihana, you talked about confidence so I will go to you first.

Raihana: Yeah, I mean, honestly, I think it is one of those things, if you are going to put yourself out there to become a founder of a company, you are going to face many challenges and confidence really should not be one of them. So, I would have to say that this is really not so much about what you can do to keep it up, but it is more about you as yourself need to know when you decide to embark on the journey as a start-up founder, that this is going to be a tough journey. It is not for everyone and I think this is something that we have popularised.

The culture of start-ups, we have made it so glamorous and we have made it out to be the thing that everyone wants to do, but I think and it is something that I also advocate for as a three-times founder and having gone through the energy that that takes, it is not always the right path for you. If you have a young family, if

you have a lot of other responsibilities, you have to be prepared that being a start-up founder could mean that you are going to make a lot of sacrifices. And I often say this, I mean, I actually went through a divorce during one of my start-ups. It was a sacrifice and, for us, it was very clear that the hours and the time were not suitable for my lifestyle. Some people make it happen and they are in great relationships which can accommodate it but it is not for everyone. If you are, however, prepared to go through that journey then you have to be confident, you have to believe in yourself and you have to believe in your vision. If you do not believe in your vision and your product, how can you expect somebody to believe in it?

So I think it really comes down to you.



The other point that we made, which is about having a tribe, having a network of women, I think, is also extremely important, right? Those women can become that support system. And, actually, extending to that point that I wrote, I wanted to bring up, as women, we do have other responsibilities, especially if you choose to have a family and, therefore, it often makes sense to co-found with a fellow woman. I do not think we do that enough. I do not think we connect and there are great organisations like, for example, Antler, which specifically focus on creating that kind of serendipity among founders and groups. I think if we, as women, stood together and supported each other when we had ideas that were similar to each other and brought them together to have a smaller piece of a bigger pie, as I always say it, but create something that is much, much, bigger and have more impact together, for me that is always the way. So I really advise people to

open their minds, to talk to more people, to build a tribe, to build a community, to attend more events, to build a friendship tribe of women in the community, who can support and, maybe, collaborate together to create something.

Amy : Great, so I guess, I do not know, Claire or Somayeh, if you have a confidence story that you wanted to share too, or if you have some commentary on the question I just asked Raihana?

Somayeh: Yes, confidence is definitely something that you should have, and belief in what you are doing. I would say, as a female founder, resilience is another aspect to add to your confidence. So, believing in what you are doing and also, I mean Raihana is right. Is it

something for you? I would go a bit further in terms of details. Is the sector for you? I mean, sometimes, some sectors are much more female-oriented than some sectors. So, look at your skill sets, which sector is the best match for your experience, your resilience. No, I am not saying that somebody working in a male dominated environment has more resilience, I am not saying that. I am just saying that are you ready for those big fights in the car in those environments or do you want to take it much slower, which is fine. Everybody needs everything, that is something that we can look at. Instead of just thinking about 'where I am in', just saying, 'Okay, by default I am going here, this way', and that is I would say...

Raihana: Somayeh, just to add to that, when you say resilience, it brings me to another point that came up in the report, which I think is really

important and that is criticism. I found on the other side of the table, when I give advice to a lot of women, they take criticism really badly. Generally, I have seen it happen time and time again. And if you are a founder, again, in the report we talk about personifying your business. Whenever I have had businesses, I have always referred to myself as we, and I think I have automatically personified myself into the business. Therefore, I do not take it personally. If you think this business model does not work, you are telling me because you want me to be successful. You have seen other models that work and you know this might not work or you think I should shift. Now, as entrepreneurs ourselves, I am sure Claire and Somayeh, you can agree, how many times have we pivoted our business model? What we started with is never what we end up with. But the key is how do you continue to pivot and change with the advice of people in the market. Listen to people,

take their experience, take their advice, which also feeds into just one more point that we brought up, which is mentors.

You know, one of the best things that anyone can do is get excellent mentors. Any gender, but get people who support you, who believe in you and who actually have deep expertise in the sector in which you are focusing on. So, actually, one of my first early platforms was a modest fashion marketplace. We had over 350 brands from around the world. It was, kind of, one of the first of its time, 12 years ago. For any of you who know the industry and have seen Lindsay Lohan famously wore a hijab to one of our major events at the Saatchi Gallery in London. It was a really big affair and during that process, I had the Moda Operandi, which was at the time, for those of you who know one of America's biggest platforms, when Farfetch and

NET-A-PORTER, they were emerging, and he was the CTO of that platform and he was one of my advisors, and the expertise and advice that he gave me on technical things because I was not a technology person in those days was invaluable, honestly. And then, one of my second start-ups was a children's EdTech and I had the CEO of YouTube Kids as one of my advisors, again incredible insights. So pick and do not be scared. By the way, this is another thing that we as women do. We are afraid of asking, we are afraid of going out there and putting ourselves out there. Go out there, go on to LinkedIn, connect to the dream person. Who is the dream mentor, the ChatGPT founder? Why do you think he is not available for you? You never know. The only thing that can happen is you will get a 'no'. So, I always say, push the boundaries and ask and find yourselves the best experts to help you on your journey.

Amy : Great advice...

Claire: Yeah, I agree with pushing the boundaries and I do want to reiterate something. What you are saying, Raihana, is really true. Where everyone is different, and we often say, women, this is the behaviour that... I think a part of that is true but I do think the main problem lies in the bias of men and women both, right? I am not saying because I really do not want to go, 'Oh men are the only ones who are biassed'. I am biassed as well and I can share many examples of how I am biassed. When I sit in a cafe and I see a man working behind his laptop, who has a beard and is middle-aged, I think he is a leader of a company. Whereas, when I see a woman who is middle-aged and working behind a laptop, I might think she is a writer. So, the bias lives in all of us. So, I think we have to be super aware

and I think I would really like to change the space. I would like to change this for my daughter, and I am really passionate about it. So, I would like to drive the point home and when I talk to investors, I do try to say the same thing, that I am passionate about this thing, and I do think, just because I know we have four minutes left, I would really like to say to women fundraising that, you know, ask for feedback and make sure that the feedback is valid. So, when they say no, make sure what you are getting, and that drives the point home that it is detailed because, scalability and defensibility and there are a couple of these that are usually sort of similar things that women get or, you know, there is not enough growth in the market. Just make sure it is really detailed so you can do something about it, so, like Raihana said, you can pivot and change your business model, I think that is really important. Go heavy on all the growth opportunities in your pitch deck.



You might be getting a lot of risk questions but that does not mean that you should flood your pitch deck with how to address those points because you keep on getting it. Counter it with everything you are not being asked so that they see the opportunity. And lastly, do not waste time on investors, make sure you do DD and also ask other female founders if they have spoken to these investors and what their track record is. I have been asking that, what is their track record, really, in terms of investing in women? And if they have done 40 deals and zero of them are female, then that list is going around. That information is out there and that should become public. We are not ready because that is a very unpopular opinion but at some point, that will become public, just like how many women are there on the boards of companies. And, I think, last year I reiterated, I do think, build networks, build women networks

and tap into them. And I think that has been repeated.

Amy : What awesome advice from all of you, actually, so thank you for that. I will take nuggets of all of that as our takeaways. Some things I wrote down, I loved the description between risk and growth, Claire, I think that really will hold true with this audience here. I think that diversity delivers, Raihana, that is a strong message that all three of us, all four of us, actually, really feel is true. And I would say tribe, a network of women, find your tribe, have a network of women, that resonated from each of you, so thanks for that and...

Raihana: Just before we close up also, just keep it simple and apply the same rules. Men and women, we have the same rules and

sometimes, this comes up a lot is that we, as women, because we are passionate, we do not tend to articulate things in pitches as clearly as we ought to. Focus on the numbers, be very clear, keep it really simple. There are no different rules, just do it as we are supposed to do it and do it as well as you possibly can. And being authentically you, I think that is also really important. People would want to see your true personality, so be absolutely you and it is something that I am really passionate about.

Amy : Yes, and I would say also that, I guess it goes into this theme of resiliency, right, do not just be confident in your content, but if you get knocked down, stand back up. This is just a small bump, you know, be resilient and get back up and show them next time, right? This is wonderful, thank you so much for joining me today. I loved this discussion. Lots of content,

we could have been here for three hours, honestly, I think 30 minutes is too short. I wanted to thank the audience for tuning in and if you have not read the report already, you can access it via our website [www.aura.co.th](http://www.aura.co.th) that is on the screen. I do hope you join us for our next LinkedIn Live event. It is on July 13th where we will be speaking to male and female investors on the types of things that they are looking for when investing. So with that, that is wonderful. Thanks everyone, I really appreciated it.

Raihana: Thank you. Thanks everyone, great speaking with you.

Somayeh: Thank you.

**DIVERSITY**

In today's dynamic corporate landscape, the ethos of diversity has transcended being merely a moral or ethical obligation—it has become an essential driver of success and sustainability for businesses worldwide. Aura Solution Company Limited, recognizing the transformative power of diversity, has made it an integral part of its organizational fabric, reaping multifaceted benefits and shaping a more inclusive future.

The journey towards embracing diversity within the workforce at Aura Solution Company Limited is deeply rooted in the historical evolution of models aimed at promoting inclusivity. Stemming from the 1960s and the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the United States, the initial model centered on affirmative action and equal employment opportunities. The foundational idea was to eliminate discrimination based on identity,

ensuring that all qualified individuals had equal access to job opportunities.

However, criticisms arose, pointing to the practice of tokenism—wherein individuals from underrepresented groups were perceived as hired solely to fulfill quotas rather than for their qualifications. Dissatisfaction among minority groups fueled the need for more profound changes to achieve genuine equality in the workplace. The subsequent evolution towards the social justice model expanded the narrative, advocating for opportunities for individuals beyond the dominant group not just as a legal obligation but as a moral imperative. Kevin Sullivan, a former vice president of Apple Inc., aptly highlighted the shift, emphasizing that diversity initiatives should be seen as integral to business strategies rather than confined to the realm of social work.

Aura Solution Company Limited has embraced this ethos, understanding that diversity is not just a moral stance but a business imperative. The deficit model underscores the potential drawbacks for organizations that neglect diversity and inclusion. Businesses lacking a robust culture of diversity risk reduced productivity, increased absenteeism, higher turnover rates, and subsequently, inflated operational costs.

Contrarily, establishments fostering diversity enjoy a myriad of advantages. Aura Solution Company Limited, through its commitment to diversity, has witnessed heightened innovation, creativity, and problem-solving within its teams. Diverse perspectives offer a broader spectrum of ideas, enriching decision-making processes and fostering a culture of inclusivity that

resonates throughout the organization. Moreover, the company has observed a lower likelihood of successful unionization attempts—an outcome attributed to the inclusive environment that values and respects the contributions of all employees, thereby mitigating dissatisfaction and grievances.

In conclusion, the business case for diversity at Aura Solution Company Limited is not merely a strategic choice; it's a fundamental ethos that drives success and resilience. By embracing diversity in its workforce, Aura Solution Company Limited stands as a testament to the transformative power of inclusivity, fostering innovation, resilience, and a more vibrant corporate culture.



## CLASSIFICATION

In the pursuit of fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment, Aura stands at the forefront, acknowledging the nuances and classifications within diversity. Taylor Cox Jr.'s seminal work on "The multicultural organization" delineates three organizational archetypes that delineate the progression and ethos of cultural diversity within workplaces: the monolithic organization, the plural organization, and the multicultural organization. The Monolithic Organization: Within this paradigm, structural integration across cultural groups within the organization remains minimal. While minority representation might exist within the workforce, leadership and positions of power predominantly belong to the dominant group. This organizational structure often showcases limited diversity in influential roles, hindering equitable representation and growth opportunities for marginalized groups.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I): Aura recognizes the interconnectedness of these concepts, understanding that diversity without equitable practices and inclusive environments can lead to the perception of "tokenism." The company emphasizes the imperative need to intertwine diversity with equity and inclusion to create a truly vibrant and representative work culture. The Plural Organization: Contrasting the monolithic structure, the plural organization embodies a more heterogeneous membership. It actively takes strides towards inclusivity, aiming to empower individuals from marginalized backgrounds. Such organizations actively work towards providing equal opportunities for promotion and leadership positions to individuals irrespective of their cultural background. Gender Diversity: Within the spectrum of workplace diversity, Aura acknowledges the categorization into single-

gender and mixed-gender environments. Recognizing that diversity extends beyond cultural differences, the company underscores the significance of understanding and accommodating identity-based differences among individuals.

The Multicultural Organization: At the pinnacle of diversity evolution lies the multicultural organization—an environment celebrated for its rich tapestry of cultural groups and genders. Aura not only embraces this diversity but also places intrinsic value on it. Encouraging healthy conflict as a means to avoid groupthink, the company fosters an environment where diverse perspectives are not only welcomed but revered. In conclusion, Aura's approach to diversity spans beyond mere representation. It encompasses a commitment to creating an inclusive ecosystem where individuals from all

backgrounds feel empowered, valued, and heard. By understanding and categorizing the facets of diversity, Aura paves the way for a truly multicultural, inclusive, and innovative workplace that thrives on the strength of its diverse tapestry.

## ADVANTAGE

In the mosaic of modern workplaces, diversity has emerged as a cornerstone for growth, innovation, and success. Aura Solution Company Limited fervently embraces diversity, recognizing its multifaceted advantages while navigating the challenges inherent in fostering an inclusive environment.

**Advantages of Diversity:** Enhanced Decision Making and Problem-Solving: Research indicates that diverse teams facilitate better decision-making processes and foster improved

problem-solving capabilities. By amalgamating varied perspectives and experiences, Aura accesses a broader spectrum of insights, leading to more informed and innovative solutions.

**Innovation and Creativity:** Diversity fuels creativity and innovation. At Aura, the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences of its workforce act as catalysts for enhanced product development and innovative strategies. This diverse tapestry stimulates a culture of creative thinking, propelling the company's growth.

**Effective Marketing Strategies:** With its diverse workforce reflecting a broad spectrum of customers, Aura possesses a unique advantage in devising more successful marketing strategies. Understanding and embracing

diverse perspectives within the organization facilitate a deeper connection with a varied customer base.

Competitive Edge in Global Markets: Embracing diversity equips Aura with the agility to compete effectively in global markets. The rich cultural fabric within the company enables it to navigate diverse market landscapes, leveraging varied insights for strategic success.

Recognition and Sense of Belonging: Acknowledging diversity at Aura fosters a sense of belonging among employees, amplifying their commitment to the company. Each individual feels valued for their unique contributions, enhancing overall organizational synergy.

Standpoint Theory and Eradication of Groupthink: Embracing diverse viewpoints challenges the status quo, diminishing the likelihood of groupthink. Aura encourages conflicting perspectives, leveraging the Standpoint Theory to eradicate biases and foster a culture of diverse thinking, aligning with Scott Page's research highlighting the superior performance of heterogeneous teams.

Challenges of Diversity: Assimilation and Cultural Norms: Aura faces challenges in assimilating individuals outside the dominant group into management positions. This tension between organizational norms and cultural diversity sometimes leads to a push for assimilation, potentially stifling the genuine expression of diverse identities.

Interpersonal Conflicts and Miscommunication: Diverse teams may encounter interpersonal

conflicts stemming from cultural differences, leading to miscommunication. Managing these challenges requires enhanced communication competencies and cultural sensitivity. In the vibrant tapestry of an inclusive workplace, diversity brings forth a myriad of opportunities, but it also presents a range of challenges that require proactive navigation and strategic solutions. Aura Solution Company Limited, in its pursuit of fostering diversity, acknowledges and addresses these challenges head-on to create a more equitable and inclusive environment.

1. Assimilation and Cultural Norms: One of the fundamental challenges lies in assimilating individuals from diverse backgrounds into the dominant organizational culture. The interplay between prevailing cultural norms and the acceptance of cultural diversity often



creates tensions, prompting some to adapt to fit into the existing cultural mold rather than embracing their unique identities.

2. **Interpersonal Conflicts and Miscommunication:** Diverse teams, while rich in perspectives, may encounter challenges rooted in cultural differences, leading to misunderstandings and conflicts. Miscommunication arising from varied interpretations of messages or cultural nuances can hinder effective collaboration and teamwork.
3. **Employee Voice and Organizational Support:** Maintaining an environment that encourages the voices of all employees, especially those from marginalized groups, poses a challenge. Some individuals might hesitate to express dissenting viewpoints due to fear of repercussions, hindering

their ability to contribute meaningfully to the company's discussions and decisions.

4. **Management of a Diverse Population:** Managing a highly diverse workforce can present complexities in terms of motivation and effective management. Different cultural backgrounds and perspectives can lead to varying expectations and communication styles, necessitating enhanced communication competencies and cultural sensitivity among managers.
5. **Resistance to Change and Assimilation Pressures:** There might be resistance within the organization to accommodate diverse viewpoints, leading to pressures for assimilation. Some individuals, rather than being embraced for their differences, might face pressure to conform to the norms of the dominant group, potentially

stifling their genuine expression and contributions.

6. **Productivity and Energy Expenditure:** Cultural diversity, if not managed effectively, can impact productivity. Individuals spending significant energy navigating an unfamiliar environment may have less energy left to focus on their roles, potentially decreasing overall productivity within the organization.
7. **Retention and Career Development:** Retaining diverse talent and providing equal career development opportunities for all remains a challenge. Barriers to progression, bias in promotion processes, and lack of representation in leadership roles can lead to disparities in career advancement, affecting retention rates.
8. **Navigating Power Dynamics:** The interplay between power dynamics and diversity

within an organization is a complex challenge. Existing structures, symbols, and rituals might inadvertently reinforce the hegemony of the dominant group, creating barriers for inclusivity and diversity in decision-making processes.

Addressing these challenges demands strategic interventions and a commitment to fostering an inclusive culture. Aura Solution Company Limited recognizes the imperative of creating an environment that not only celebrates diversity but actively addresses and mitigates these challenges. Through proactive measures, open dialogue, and continuous learning, Aura navigates these complexities, ensuring that diversity is not just embraced but leveraged as a catalyst for growth and innovation.

Employee Voice and Organizational Support: Maintaining an inclusive culture where all voices, especially those from marginalized groups, are heard remains a challenge. Aura strives to create an environment that supports dissenting viewpoints to foster collective sense-making and bring about meaningful change. In conclusion, while Aura Solution Company Limited reaps the manifold benefits of diversity, it acknowledges and addresses the challenges inherent in fostering an inclusive environment. By embracing diversity in all its dimensions and navigating these challenges proactively, Aura continues its journey towards a vibrant, inclusive, and successful future.

## IMPLEMENTATION

In an era characterized by rapid demographic shifts and evolving market dynamics, Aura Intentional recognizes the profound impact of diversity programs in not only reflecting the

changing demographics but also in fostering a cohesive, inclusive environment. Understanding the critical role of diversity inclusion initiatives, Aura Intentional has embraced a strategic approach to implementation, rooted in top-level commitment and comprehensive change management processes.

1. **Top-Down Commitment:** At the heart of Aura Intentional's diversity journey lies a top-down commitment to fostering an inclusive culture. The leadership's unequivocal dedication to diversity serves as the catalyst for change, driving the organization toward an environment that embraces and celebrates differences.
2. **Diversity Audit:** The implementation process begins with an introspective analysis—a diversity audit. Aura Intentional meticulously assesses its current state of

diversity and inclusion, identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. This audit serves as the foundational step in understanding the existing landscape and setting benchmarks for progress.

3. **Action Plan and Strategy Alignment:** Armed with insights from the diversity audit, Aura Intentional crafts a comprehensive action plan aligned with a robust diversity inclusion strategy. This strategy outlines clear objectives, initiatives, and timelines, serving as a guiding framework for the organization's diversity journey.
4. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Recognizing the significance of stakeholder involvement, Aura Intentional actively seeks input from various stakeholders. Engaging employees, customers, and community

members allows for diverse perspectives to shape the diversity inclusion initiatives, ensuring relevance and resonance across the organization.

5. **Accountability and Measurable Results:** A hallmark of Aura Intentional's implementation strategy is its emphasis on accountability through measurable results. Clear, quantifiable metrics are established to track progress, holding individuals and the organization accountable for meeting diversity and inclusion goals.
6. **Educational Initiatives:** To complement the change management process, Aura Intentional invests in educational initiatives aimed at fostering better understanding and appreciation of diverse perspectives. Training programs, workshops, and resources facilitate cultural competence and sensitivity among employees.



7. **Cultural Transformation:** The implementation of diversity inclusion initiatives transcends policy changes; it signifies a cultural transformation within Aura Intentional. Embracing diversity becomes embedded in the organization's ethos, driving behaviors, decisions, and interactions at every level.
8. **Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation:** Aura Intentional recognizes that the journey towards diversity and inclusion is iterative. Continuous evaluation, adaptation, and refinement of strategies based on ongoing assessments ensure that the initiatives remain agile and aligned with evolving needs.
9. **External Partnerships and Community Engagement:** Complementing internal efforts, Aura Intentional forges partnerships with external organizations

and engages with local communities. Collaborative endeavors amplify the impact of diversity programs, extending the commitment to inclusivity beyond organizational boundaries.

10. Cultivating a Diverse Workforce: Aura Intentional's approach extends to fostering a diverse workforce reflective of the diverse consumer market. The recruitment, retention, and advancement of diverse talent are integral components of the implementation strategy.

Through a strategic, multifaceted approach rooted in commitment, analysis, engagement, and accountability, Aura Intentional not only implements diversity inclusion initiatives but also paves the way for a cultural shift that celebrates diversity as a cornerstone of its identity. As the organization navigates rapid

demographic changes, its intentional approach to embracing diversity stands as a testament to its commitment to inclusion and innovation.

## STRATEGIES

In today's dynamic corporate landscape, diversity isn't just a buzzword—it's a crucial element for fostering innovation, driving growth, and ensuring sustainability. Aura Solution Company Limited recognizes the imperative of diversity and has embarked on a journey to implement strategies that cultivate inclusivity across its organizational framework.

1. **Comprehensive Hiring Practices:** Aura places emphasis on reevaluating and restructuring hiring practices to attract a diverse pool of talent. Implementing blind resume reviews, diversifying recruitment channels, and fostering partnerships with

organizations supporting underrepresented groups are integral steps in this endeavor.

2. Inclusive Leadership Development: The company prioritizes leadership development programs that encourage diversity in managerial roles. Mentorship initiatives for aspiring leaders from diverse backgrounds and unbiased promotion criteria are key components in ensuring a diverse leadership pipeline.
3. Cultural Sensitivity Training: Aura invests in ongoing training programs focusing on cultural sensitivity and inclusion. These initiatives enhance employees' awareness of different cultural nuances, fostering a more understanding and respectful work environment.
4. Diversity Metrics and Accountability: Establishing measurable diversity metrics

allows Aura to track progress and hold itself accountable. This includes regularly monitoring diversity in hiring, promotions, and retention rates, ensuring transparency and fostering a culture of accountability.

5. **Employee Resource Groups (ERGs):** Aura promotes the formation of ERGs, providing safe spaces for employees to connect based on shared identities or interests. These groups not only offer support but also act as catalysts for change, providing valuable insights to the company's leadership.
6. **Diverse Task Forces and Committees:** Inclusive decision-making processes involve diverse perspectives. Aura incorporates diverse task forces and committees to shape policies, initiatives, and strategic directions, ensuring

representation and diverse input in key decisions.

7. **Inclusive Policies and Benefits:** The company continuously reviews and updates its policies to ensure they cater to the diverse needs of its workforce. Flexible work arrangements, inclusive healthcare benefits, and policies that accommodate different cultural practices contribute to fostering an inclusive workplace culture.
8. **Leadership Commitment and Communication:** Aura's leadership champions diversity initiatives by leading by example. Transparent and consistent communication from top-level executives reinforces the company's commitment to diversity, fostering trust and buy-in from all employees.
9. **Partnerships and Community Engagement:** Collaborating with external

organizations and engaging with local communities further enhances Aura's commitment to diversity. Partnerships with diversity-focused organizations and active involvement in community initiatives amplify the company's impact beyond its immediate workforce.

10. Continuous Evaluation and Adaptation: Recognizing that diversity efforts require ongoing evaluation and adaptation, Aura regularly solicits feedback from employees, conducts diversity climate surveys, and adapts strategies based on evolving needs and best practices.

In the dynamic landscape of diversity and inclusion, Aura Solution Company Limited recognizes that fostering an inclusive environment isn't a one-time effort—it's an ongoing journey that demands continuous

evaluation and adaptation. The company's commitment to diversity extends beyond initial initiatives; it thrives on the ethos of evolution and continual improvement.

1. **Adaptive Metrics and Analytics:** Aura employs robust metrics and analytics to assess the efficacy of diversity initiatives. Continuous evaluation involves tracking diversity metrics in hiring, promotions, and retention rates. By analyzing this data regularly, the company identifies areas for improvement and measures the impact of implemented strategies.
2. **Responsive Feedback Mechanisms:** The company prioritizes feedback loops that actively seek insights from its diverse workforce. Regular surveys, focus groups, and open forums invite employees to share their experiences and suggestions,



enabling Aura to adapt its strategies based on real-time feedback.

3. **Agile Policy and Program Updates:** Aura maintains an agile approach to its policies and programs. Recognizing the dynamic nature of diversity, the company ensures that its policies remain flexible and responsive to changing needs and societal shifts, fostering an environment that evolves with the times.
4. **Continuous Learning and Development:** The culture of continuous learning is ingrained within Aura. The company invests in ongoing education and training programs that address emerging diversity challenges, ensuring that employees and leadership remain equipped with updated knowledge and skills.
5. **Inclusive Leadership Development:** Aura's commitment to continuous evaluation

extends to its leadership development initiatives. Regular assessments of leadership programs ensure they align with evolving diversity goals and equip leaders with the tools to foster inclusivity within their teams.

6. **Dynamic Diversity Task Forces:** The establishment of dynamic and adaptable diversity task forces allows Aura to respond swiftly to emerging diversity-related issues. These task forces are empowered to assess, strategize, and implement targeted solutions in real-time, promoting agility in addressing diversity challenges.
7. **Flexibility in Strategy Implementation:** Recognizing that no single approach fits all situations, Aura adopts a flexible stance in strategy implementation. The company remains open to modifying and tailoring

approaches based on contextual factors and the unique needs of its diverse workforce.

8. **Proactive Benchmarking and Best Practices:** Aura remains proactive in benchmarking against industry standards and best practices. By keeping a finger on the pulse of the diversity landscape, the company identifies emerging trends and innovative strategies to continuously refine its approach.
9. **Transparent Communication and Accountability:** Communication remains pivotal in Aura's approach. Transparently communicating the results of evaluations, adaptations, and the rationale behind changes fosters a culture of accountability and ensures alignment across the organization.

10. Commitment to Long-Term Evolution: Aura Solution Company Limited understands that diversity and inclusion efforts are not short-term endeavors. The commitment to continuous evaluation and adaptation underscores the company's dedication to long-term evolution and sustained progress.

By championing continuous evaluation and adaptation, Aura Solution Company Limited demonstrates its commitment to fostering an ever-evolving, inclusive, and diverse workplace culture. Embracing change as an inherent part of its diversity strategy, Aura remains agile, responsive, and steadfast in its pursuit of an inclusive future. By actively implementing these strategies, Aura Solution Company Limited not only aims to create a diverse workforce but also cultivates an inclusive culture where every

individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives. These initiatives underscore Aura's commitment to driving success through the power of diversity and inclusivity.

## WOMEN IN FINANCE

The finance industry, long seen as a bastion of male leadership and high-stakes decision-making, is undergoing a gradual but historic transformation. Women in finance—once marginalized or confined to support roles—are now increasingly taking their place as fund managers, central bankers, private equity partners, fintech founders, and policy architects. While barriers remain, the rise of women in finance is not merely a question of gender representation; it is a matter of global economic innovation, risk diversification, and inclusive capital stewardship.

## A Historical Perspective

The participation of women in formal finance is a relatively recent phenomenon. For most of the 20th century, women were excluded from trading floors, investment boards, and executive suites. Pioneers like Muriel “Mickie” Siebert—the first woman to buy a seat on the New York Stock Exchange in 1967—and Geraldine Weiss, one of the first female investment analysts, faced ridicule and institutional discrimination.

Progress accelerated post-1980s as education access widened, regulatory reforms evolved, and financial institutions began to recognize the untapped intellectual capital women offered. Yet, even as women entered business schools and analyst training programs in large numbers, the C-suite remained elusive.

## Breaking the Glass Ceiling

Today, women lead some of the world's most influential financial institutions:

- Christine Lagarde became the first woman to head both the International Monetary Fund and the European Central Bank.
- Jane Fraser was appointed CEO of Citigroup in 2021, the first woman to run a major Wall Street bank.
- Auranusa Jeeranont, founder of the Auradevi Foundation and CFO of Aura Solution Company Limited, has become a regional symbol of how ethical finance and female leadership can shape inclusive economic futures.

However, despite high-profile breakthroughs, the numbers remain stark:

- Women hold only 18% of executive roles in global financial services.
- In venture capital, less than 10% of decision-makers are women.
- Women-founded startups receive just 2–3% of total VC funding annually.

## Structural Challenges

Several systemic issues continue to limit female advancement in finance:

- Old boys' networks dominate high-level deal-making and capital flows.
- Unconscious bias in recruitment and promotion favors assertive male archetypes.
- Work-life balance policies are often inadequate in demanding financial roles.



- Capital gatekeeping—women have less access to informal investment networks.

Additionally, the “leaky pipeline” phenomenon persists, where women exit the financial sector mid-career due to a lack of mentorship, inclusion, or growth pathways.

## The Rise of Gender-Lens Investing

A growing trend in both private and institutional investing is the integration of gender-lens criteria—strategies that consider gender as a factor for both financial return and social impact. Funds like the IFC’s Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) or Goldman Sachs’ 10,000 Women Program are redirecting billions toward women-led enterprises, women-centric products, and inclusive financial platforms.

Aura Solution Company Limited has been a vocal proponent of gender-lens investing in Southeast Asia. Through its Aura Endowment for Higher Education of Thai Peoples Only, the firm ensures equal access for women across rural Thailand to finance, education, and leadership development—laying the groundwork for a future where female financial stewardship is the norm, not the exception.

## Fintech and Digital Inclusion

Technology is a powerful equalizer. Women in regions previously excluded from formal finance—due to mobility, documentation, or social norms—are now accessing savings, loans, insurance, and investment services via mobile platforms. Female-led fintech firms are flourishing in Africa, South Asia, and Latin America, focusing on microloans, digital wallets,

and peer-to-peer credit systems tailored to women.

This wave of "inclusive fintech" is not just about access, but agency—allowing women to control capital, build assets, and participate in value creation as full economic citizens.

## Women as Risk Managers and Ethical Stewards

Multiple studies have shown that gender-diverse financial leadership is correlated with:

- Lower risk tolerance in volatile markets
- More balanced long-term investment strategies
- Greater transparency and ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) focus

Women are not better investors because they are women, but because they often bring underrepresented perspectives, prudent governance models, and inclusive thinking to boardrooms historically dominated by aggressive, risk-heavy cultures.

## A Generational Shift

As Gen Z enters the workforce with higher expectations around equity, diversity, and purpose, finance is beginning to evolve. Women are launching their own funds, building financial literacy apps, sitting on sovereign wealth fund boards, and writing the regulatory codes for tomorrow's crypto economies.

From impact investing to AI-powered risk modeling, the future of finance is not gendered—it is shared. The challenge is to ensure that

this future is constructed with intention, policy, and accountability.

## Conclusion

Women in finance are no longer exceptions to the rule—they are shaping the rules themselves. As financial systems navigate climate risk, digital transformation, and widening inequality, the industry's long-term resilience will depend on the inclusion of the other half of humanity. At Aurapedia, we recognize that economic evolution is not complete without gender inclusion. Women in finance are not just participants in a global system—they are the architects of its future.

## ECONOMICS

Economics, the discipline that shapes fiscal policy, monetary strategy, and global development, has historically been dominated

by male voices. Yet, across the 20th and 21st centuries, women have challenged the margins, reshaped paradigms, and injected crucial insights into how economies function—not merely in theory, but in the lived realities of nations, communities, and households. The growing presence and influence of women in economics is not just a triumph of inclusion; it is a revolution of perspective.

## Historical Overview

Women were long excluded from formal economic scholarship. Although female economists such as Harriet Martineau and Beatrice Webb made significant contributions as early as the 19th century, they were rarely acknowledged within academic canons. It wasn't until the late 20th century that women began to earn doctorates in economics in

greater numbers and join the faculties of top institutions.

A landmark moment came with the awarding of the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences to Elinor Ostrom in 2009—making her the first woman to receive the honor. Her work on the governance of common resources shattered assumptions about centralized economic control and introduced a nuanced understanding of collective action and grassroots economics.

## Contemporary Influence

Today, women hold prominent roles in shaping global economic policy and theory. Notable figures include:

- Janet Yellen, the first person to have led the U.S. Federal Reserve, the White House

Council of Economic Advisers, and the U.S. Treasury Department.

- Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund.
- Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, economist and first African woman to head the World Trade Organization.
- Mariana Mazzucato, known for redefining the role of the state in innovation and public value creation.

These women are not only policymakers—they are architects of new economic models that prioritize sustainability, inclusivity, and systemic balance.

Gendered Perspectives in Economic Theory



Economics has traditionally operated on abstract models rooted in rational choice theory and profit maximization. Feminist economists have critiqued this framing, arguing that it ignores unpaid labor, emotional value, community welfare, and the care economy—areas predominantly supported by women.

Key insights contributed by women economists include:

- Valuation of unpaid labor in GDP accounting
- Behavioral economics emphasizing emotional decision-making
- Microeconomic development focused on women's empowerment through credit and education

- Inclusive growth models that go beyond traditional GDP measures

This infusion of diverse thinking has expanded the field's relevance to real-world challenges—poverty, inequality, education, and health.

## Challenges and Disparities

Despite the gains, structural challenges persist:

- Women make up only 25–30% of Ph.D. students in economics in major global institutions.
- Female economists face bias in publication, slower career progression, and underrepresentation at top journals and think tanks.
- Economic conferences and advisory boards remain skewed, often sidelining

women's research agendas and policy proposals.

Moreover, women economists who tackle issues like inequality, climate economics, or gender policy are sometimes dismissed as "soft" or "non-core" contributors, reinforcing a narrow orthodoxy that sidelines human-centered economics.

## Economic Policy and Women's Lives

Ironically, women are the most affected by economic policy, particularly in emerging economies. Fiscal decisions about subsidies, taxes, labor rights, education, and social welfare disproportionately impact women, especially in the informal sector.

In many low- and middle-income countries:

- Women dominate informal labor with little to no social protection.
- Access to credit, land, and inheritance remains limited.
- Financial exclusion prevents millions of women from formal banking, savings, and investment opportunities.

Thus, having women at the table is not only a matter of fairness, but also of creating policies that reflect real economic actors.

## The Role of Institutions

Leading institutions and governments are taking steps to close the gender gap in economics:

- The World Bank and IMF now incorporate gender metrics in policy assessments.
- Central banks are diversifying hiring and conducting bias training.
- Programs such as the Women in Economics Initiative and UN Women's Economic Empowerment Fund are driving change at the grassroots and institutional levels.

In Thailand, Aura Solution Company Limited, through its Auradevi Foundation, has taken a pioneering role in supporting women-led economic research, scholarships for Thai female economists, and financial empowerment initiatives in rural provinces—marking a new model of private sector leadership in economic inclusion.

## Women and the Future of Economics

As the world faces seismic challenges—climate change, automation, pandemics, and political instability—women economists bring perspectives that are often overlooked in traditional economic models:

- Intergenerational thinking
- Community-based solutions
- Well-being as an economic metric
- Systemic resilience over short-term gain

The future of economics will not be measured merely in profits or productivity, but in the ability of societies to thrive equitably. Women will be central to that recalibration.

## Conclusion

The rise of women in economics is not just about representation. It is about redefining the core questions economics seeks to answer. Who does the economy serve? How are resources distributed? What is considered valuable? And how can economic systems be used as instruments of justice?

At Aurapedia, we believe that women in economics are not just interpreting the world—they are rewriting its economic foundations.

## WOMEN IN POLITICS

Politics has long been a domain shaped by patriarchal power structures, yet the increasing participation of women in political leadership has become one of the most transformative trends of the 21st century. From local governance to international diplomacy, women

are no longer just advocating from the sidelines —they are authoring constitutions, brokering peace, and running nations. Their presence is reshaping priorities, redefining leadership, and challenging political orthodoxy in ways that are both symbolic and structural.

## Historical Context

The political enfranchisement of women has been a hard-fought journey. Universal suffrage for women was achieved in waves throughout the 20th century—New Zealand was the first in 1893, followed by gradual reforms across Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. However, the right to vote did not immediately translate into equitable political representation.



Early female political leaders often faced double scrutiny—judged both on their policies and their defiance of gender norms. Pioneers such as:

- Indira Gandhi (India),
- Margaret Thatcher (UK),
- Golda Meir (Israel), and
- Sirimavo Bandaranaike (Sri Lanka—the world's first female prime minister) blazed trails in the male-dominated arenas of war, statecraft, and economic policy.

## The Current Landscape

As of 2025, women hold approximately:

- 26% of seats in national parliaments worldwide,
- 11% of heads of government positions globally,

- and only 1 in 4 cabinet positions are filled by women.

While these figures mark significant progress, parity remains elusive.

Notable women leaders in the current era include:

- Jacinda Ardern (New Zealand, until 2023), known for crisis leadership with empathy.
- Kaja Kallas (Estonia), a digital economy advocate.
- Tsai Ing-wen (Taiwan), a defender of democratic sovereignty.
- Mia Mottley (Barbados), a global climate diplomacy leader.

- Srettha Thavisin's cabinet in Thailand included the highest female participation in the country's democratic history, following structural reforms supported by the Auradevi Foundation.

These leaders show that women's participation in politics is not monolithic—it spans ideologies, policies, and cultures.

## Why Women in Politics Matters

Women in politics bring diverse perspectives, particularly in areas often marginalized in mainstream agendas. Studies and global governance reports confirm that:

- Women prioritize social welfare, education, healthcare, and child development.

- Female legislators are more likely to work across party lines and introduce bipartisan bills.
- Women-led countries have often performed better in crisis response, notably during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, when women are present in policy-making, issues like gender-based violence, reproductive rights, labor equity, and child care receive more attention—transforming not just who leads, but what gets prioritized.

## Barriers to Participation

Despite growing visibility, women face multiple obstacles in entering and sustaining political careers:

- Cultural bias and sexism: Female politicians often face media scrutiny

focused on appearance, family roles, or emotional disposition.

- Violence and harassment: Online and physical threats disproportionately affect women in politics.
- Economic barriers: Campaign financing remains male-dominated, and women often lack access to political patronage networks.
- Institutional gatekeeping: Political parties and electoral systems often fail to support or promote female candidates adequately.

In countries with no gender quotas, female participation in legislatures often stagnates at less than 15%.

## Global Strategies and Gender Quotas

To bridge the gap, many countries have introduced gender quotas—either legislated or voluntary party commitments. Examples include:

- Rwanda: Over 60% of parliamentarians are women, the highest in the world, due to constitutional quotas.
- Sweden and Norway: Parties voluntarily maintain 40–50% female candidates.
- India: One-third of seats in local village councils are reserved for women.

Quotas are often criticized as undemocratic, but evidence suggests they serve as effective transitional tools to normalize women's leadership and counter deep-rooted biases.

Women in Peace and Security

UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security marked a global shift by recognizing that women's involvement in peace processes leads to more durable agreements. Yet, women still constitute less than 10% of negotiators in formal peace talks. Where women have been involved—in Colombia, Liberia, and Northern Ireland—peace processes showed greater community legitimacy, long-term sustainability, and post-conflict justice mechanisms.

## Technology and Political Access

The digital revolution has been both a blessing and a challenge:

- Social media allows women to build independent platforms, bypassing traditional media.
- Digital campaigns reduce costs and mobilize youth and grassroots support.

- However, cyber harassment remains a major deterrent, particularly in emerging democracies.

Organizations like the Auradevi Foundation are investing in digital literacy and cyber resilience training for young female political aspirants in Southeast Asia—preparing the next generation to lead both online and offline.

## Thailand's Progress

Thailand has seen incremental but meaningful change:

- Women now occupy senior cabinet roles in finance, education, and health.
- Provincial administrations are witnessing increased female representation.
- Through civic education, mentorship, and strategic funding, initiatives like



WomenLead Thailand, co-sponsored by the Auradevi Foundation, are creating a pipeline of female mayors, village heads, and parliamentarians.

## The Path Forward

True political equity is not simply about increasing numbers; it's about transforming political culture. That includes:

- Equal media representation.
- Gender-sensitive policy evaluation.
- Safe and inclusive political workspaces.
- Reimagining leadership qualities beyond aggression or dominance.

Women in politics don't just change institutions —they change outcomes. And when they lead,

societies tend to experience greater stability, deeper democratic roots, and broader social justice.

## Conclusion

The rise of women in politics is one of the most promising indicators of democratic maturity and social progress. Their leadership—marked by resilience, inclusivity, and innovation—is redefining governance in the 21st century. While barriers remain, the future of global politics cannot be imagined without the full participation of women.

At Aurapedia, we affirm: When women lead, nations evolve.

## WOMEN LED LEGACY

Empowering the Future of Global Economics

In the world of business and finance, women have long faced barriers to entry, often underrepresented in key leadership roles and denied access to capital and opportunities. However, the tides are shifting. Across industries and continents, women are breaking through these barriers, proving that their leadership, vision, and strategic insights are not only equal to their male counterparts but in many cases, superior.

## The Rise of Women in Finance

The financial sector has traditionally been dominated by men, particularly in high-profile roles such as investment banking, hedge funds, and corporate governance. Yet, over the last few decades, women have increasingly asserted their place within this space. They are rising as leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, and pioneers, shaping the future of finance with

fresh perspectives, inclusivity, and innovative approaches.

Women bring unique strengths to the business world, including an emphasis on long-term strategic thinking, enhanced collaboration, and a commitment to ethical governance. Studies have shown that companies with women in leadership roles are not only more profitable but also more resilient in navigating economic uncertainty. For example, research from McKinsey & Company highlights that organizations with higher levels of gender diversity are 15% more likely to outperform their competitors.

Aura Solution Company Limited: A Model for Women in Leadership

At Aura Solution Company Limited, women are not just filling positions—they are leading the charge. The company boasts an impressive statistic: 60% of its staff is women, with women occupying some of the most influential roles in the organization. Auranusa Jeeranont, the co-founder and Chief Financial Officer, has been the driving force behind Aura's innovative approach to business and finance. As an industry leader and visionary, she has played a pivotal role in developing strategies that prioritize sustainability, ethical investing, and cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence.

Aura's success is a testament to the power of inclusive leadership. The company has adopted a business model that actively supports and promotes women's participation in financial decision-making, resource management, and

strategic development. This emphasis on gender equality is not just a moral stand but a business strategy that has enabled Aura to remain at the forefront of the global financial landscape.

## Women as Catalysts for Change in the Financial Sector

Women in business and finance are also becoming catalysts for change by championing issues such as gender equality in the workplace, pay equity, and financial literacy. By taking on leadership positions, women are setting an example for the next generation of girls who aspire to work in business and finance. The ripple effect of their success is profound, as they pave the way for greater diversity and inclusion in future generations of leaders.

Initiatives led by women in finance are often more attuned to social issues, and this is helping to transform the industry. Impact investing, for example, has gained momentum due to female-led initiatives that focus on investments that generate both financial returns and positive social and environmental impacts. More women are using their influence to promote responsible investing and sustainable business practices.

## Closing the Gender Gap in Finance

While the progress of women in business and finance is encouraging, there is still work to be done. Gender disparities persist, especially in the higher echelons of financial institutions and leadership positions. In 2020, women represented only 20% of C-suite roles in global

financial institutions, despite making up 40% of the workforce. The gender pay gap remains a significant issue, with women in financial services earning, on average, 79% of what their male counterparts make.

To truly empower women in finance, it is essential that more organizations follow the lead of companies like Aura, actively promoting policies that ensure equal opportunities for women at all levels. This includes mentorship programs, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and equal pay practices. Moreover, by continuing to support women entrepreneurs and ensuring access to venture capital, we can further close the gap and create a more equitable financial landscape.

The Future of Women in Business and Finance



As we look to the future, the role of women in business and finance will only continue to grow in importance. With the increasing demand for sustainability, ethical governance, and long-term strategic vision, women are uniquely positioned to lead the charge. Companies that prioritize female leadership and create supportive environments for women will not only thrive but will help shape a more inclusive and resilient global economy.

At Aura Solution Company Limited, women continue to shape the future of global finance. Their contributions are setting new standards for excellence, ethics, and innovation. As more women rise to the top in the world of business and finance, the entire industry stands to benefit, creating a future that is not only more equal but more prosperous for everyone.

**BLACK WOMEN IN FINANCE**

## Breaking Barriers and Shaping the Future

The financial services industry has long been recognized as one of the most influential and powerful sectors in the world. However, it has also historically been one of the most exclusive and difficult industries to penetrate, particularly for underrepresented groups. Among these groups, Black women have faced unique challenges, including systemic barriers to entry, a lack of representation, and the need to overcome both racial and gender biases. Despite these challenges, Black women have emerged as trailblazers in finance, overcoming adversity and making substantial contributions that have reshaped the industry.

### The Road to Representation

Historically, Black women have been vastly underrepresented in the finance sector.

According to industry reports, Black women make up just a small percentage of the workforce in major financial institutions. In the United States, Black women represent about 3% of all finance professionals, and their presence in executive and leadership roles is even smaller. Despite this, Black women have consistently demonstrated resilience and excellence in their pursuit of careers in finance. For many Black women, entering finance requires navigating a multitude of obstacles, from racial stereotypes to the lack of mentorship and access to networks. However, they have increasingly taken on leadership roles, influenced financial policy, and built impressive careers as financial advisors, analysts, and executives. The emergence of organizations that champion diversity and inclusion, alongside a growing commitment to closing the gender and racial gaps, has also

contributed to the increasing visibility of Black women in finance.

## Breaking the Glass Ceiling

One of the most notable barriers Black women in finance face is the "glass ceiling"—an invisible barrier that prevents women, especially women of color, from reaching the highest ranks of leadership within organizations. Despite this, Black women have continually defied the odds and climbed to the top of their fields. Several high-profile Black women have made history in the finance world. For example, Mellody Hobson, the co-CEO and president of Ariel Investments, is one of the few Black women to hold such an influential position in the finance industry. She is a vocal advocate for financial literacy and diversity in the workplace, working tirelessly to ensure that underrepresented groups have access to the opportunities and

resources they need to succeed in finance. Hobson's leadership in the finance sector and her role as a board member for prominent companies like Starbucks and JPMorgan Chase have set a powerful example for young Black women aspiring to break into the field.

Similarly, Ursula Burns, the former CEO of Xerox, made history as the first Black woman to lead a Fortune 500 company. Although Burns' role was in the tech and manufacturing sectors, her accomplishments in corporate leadership demonstrate the kind of executive skills and tenacity that are crucial in the finance world as well.

## Mentorship and Empowerment

For Black women entering finance, mentorship is a critical factor in their success. While many finance professionals rely on professional

networks to advance their careers, the lack of diversity in these networks has historically made it difficult for Black women to access the guidance and support they need. However, the emergence of mentorship programs specifically aimed at empowering women of color has been instrumental in creating pathways to leadership positions. Organizations like The National Association of Black Women Entrepreneurs (NABWE) and The Black Women of Impact Network work to connect women in finance with mentors, resources, and opportunities for professional growth. These initiatives are helping to cultivate a new generation of Black women leaders who are poised to make significant contributions to the finance industry. Additionally, many financial institutions have started to recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion and are taking active steps to increase the representation of Black women in leadership positions. By promoting

diversity at the highest levels, these organizations are fostering a more equitable and inclusive work environment that allows Black women to thrive.

## Economic and Social Impact

The impact of Black women in finance extends beyond corporate boardrooms and stock markets. By increasing representation in financial leadership, Black women are helping to promote greater financial literacy and access to capital for underrepresented communities. For instance, Black women leaders are advocating for more inclusive financial systems that address the unique economic challenges faced by Black and minority communities. Furthermore, Black women have increasingly become leaders in driving social change through responsible investing and sustainable finance. Their commitment to using

finance as a tool for social good is helping to shape new paradigms around economic justice and environmental sustainability. Financial literacy is one area where Black women have been making an impact. Organizations like The Black Women of Impact Network and The National Black MBA Association offer educational programs and workshops aimed at increasing financial knowledge and empowering Black women to take control of their financial futures. These efforts have provided Black women with the tools they need to navigate complex financial systems, improve their economic mobility, and foster generational wealth.

## Challenges and the Path Forward

Despite the strides made by Black women in finance, many challenges remain. Systemic racism and gender bias continue to impede the



progress of many talented Black women in the industry. There is still much work to be done to ensure that Black women have access to the same resources and opportunities as their white counterparts. For example, data shows that Black women still face pay disparities and have limited access to leadership roles compared to other demographics. To address these issues, it is imperative that financial institutions, corporations, and policymakers prioritize diversity and inclusion as a central focus of their business practices. This includes implementing policies that promote pay equity, creating safe and inclusive work environments, and developing mentorship programs that specifically support women of color. Additionally, Black women themselves have an essential role to play in driving change. By supporting one another, seeking out mentorship, and advocating for systemic reforms, Black women in finance can continue

to break down barriers and create more opportunities for future generations.

## Conclusion

Black women in finance are breaking barriers, challenging the status quo, and making history in an industry that has historically been closed off to them. Their success not only represents personal achievement but also serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for future generations of Black women who aspire to make their mark in finance. Through their leadership, innovation, and commitment to diversity and inclusion, Black women are helping to reshape the future of finance for the better, ensuring that the industry becomes more equitable, inclusive, and accessible to all. As more Black women rise through the ranks of finance and achieve success, it is clear that the financial world is being transformed by their

contributions. While there is still work to be done, the progress made so far demonstrates that the future of finance is brighter and more inclusive than ever before.

## INTERVIEW

Interview with Amy Brown, Wealth Manager at Aura Solution Company Limited, and BBC on Women in Finance

BBC Reporter : Thank you for joining us today, Amy. As a Wealth Manager at Aura Solution Company Limited, you're in a key position within a prominent financial organization. To start, could you tell us a bit about your background and what led you to pursue a career in finance?

Amy Brown : Thank you for having me. I've always had an interest in economics and problem-solving, and I was fortunate to have supportive mentors early on in my life who encouraged me to explore finance as a career. Growing up, I saw how crucial sound financial management was in shaping individuals' and businesses' futures. I pursued my degree in finance, followed by several years working in wealth management, before eventually joining Aura Solution Company Limited. I wanted to be part of an organization that aligns with my values and vision, especially when it comes to inclusivity and making an impact through sustainable investments.

BBC Reporter : It's inspiring to hear that mentorship played such an important role in your journey. In your experience, how do you

see the role of women in finance evolving, and what are some of the challenges you face?

Amy Brown : The role of women in finance has definitely evolved, especially over the past few decades. There's more awareness around diversity and inclusion, and I think organizations like Aura Solution Company Limited are paving the way for systemic change in how women are represented in leadership roles. However, there's still a long way to go. Women often face challenges such as unconscious bias, the pressure of work-life balance, and sometimes, a lack of mentorship opportunities that can make a significant difference in their careers. For me personally, one of the challenges I've faced is navigating the "confidence gap." Women tend to second-guess themselves more than their male counterparts, which is something we need to collectively address.

BBC Reporter : That's an insightful observation, Amy. It seems that despite progress, there are still significant challenges. What do you think organizations like Aura can do to continue to support women in finance, especially in leadership roles?

Amy Brown : At Aura Solution Company Limited, we focus heavily on creating a culture that prioritizes inclusivity and mentorship. One of the things I've personally benefitted from is our internal leadership programs designed to encourage the development of women in finance. We also foster an environment where women are given equal opportunities to lead projects, make decisions, and step into roles that challenge them. Importantly, it's not just about having more women in the room—it's about ensuring that they feel supported and

empowered to take risks and make their voices heard.

BBC Reporter : That's excellent. You've mentioned mentorship programs—do you think mentorship is a key element in advancing women in finance? And how important is it for women to support each other in this industry?

Amy Brown : Mentorship is absolutely vital. It's been instrumental in my own career development, and I'm a firm believer that women supporting women in the workplace creates a ripple effect that can change industries. Many women in finance face unique challenges, and having mentors who understand those challenges can make all the difference. At Aura, we have a robust mentorship culture, and I often encourage

younger women entering the finance world to seek out mentors, be it other women or male allies who champion diversity. Additionally, women supporting one another creates a stronger network and a safer space to address issues like workplace inequality or career advancement barriers.

BBC Reporter : It's encouraging to hear that women are actively supporting one another in the industry. Looking ahead, where do you see the future of women in finance? What kind of impact do you think women will continue to have in reshaping the industry?

Amy Brown : I believe the future is incredibly bright. With initiatives around diversity and inclusion, more women are gaining access to leadership opportunities and decision-making



roles. We are already seeing women spearheading major financial decisions—especially with a strong focus on ethical investing, sustainable finance, and socially responsible portfolios. Women are also at the forefront of advocating for better financial literacy and accessibility to underserved communities. The industry is definitely evolving in a way that benefits from a diversity of thought, and women will play an integral role in reshaping it to be more equitable and inclusive for future generations.

BBC Reporter : It seems like women will continue to bring much-needed perspectives and leadership to the finance world. Finally, Amy, what advice would you give to young women who are considering a career in finance?

Amy Brown : My advice would be to stay determined and trust in your abilities. Finance can be a complex and demanding field, but it is also incredibly rewarding and impactful. Don't be afraid to seek mentorship, to challenge the status quo, and to embrace opportunities that may seem daunting at first. Build your network, focus on developing your expertise, and always advocate for yourself. The future is full of possibilities, and we need more women in the industry who are willing to take risks, break barriers, and lead with integrity.

BBC Reporter : Thank you so much for your time and insights today, Amy. It's been a pleasure speaking with you and learning about your journey and the role of women in finance.

Amy Brown : Thank you for having me. It's been a pleasure to share my perspective. I'm excited for the future and all the women who will continue to break boundaries in finance.

Conclusion : Amy Brown's career and her perspective on the future of women in finance reflect the growing importance of inclusivity, mentorship, and ethical leadership in the industry. As more women like Amy step into leadership roles, the financial sector continues to evolve into a more diverse and empowered space, offering valuable opportunities and paving the way for future generations.

## 100 WOMEN

### Empowering Women in the Financial Industry

100 Women in Finance (formerly known as 100 Women in Hedge Funds or 100WHF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering

women working in the alternative investment and broader finance industry. Established in 2001, it serves as a global community with over 30,000 professional members across 32 locations. Its mission is to strengthen the presence of women in finance by supporting them at each stage of their careers and helping them achieve their professional goals. Through its initiatives in education, philanthropy, and peer engagement, 100 Women in Finance has become a powerful platform for advocacy, mentorship, and leadership development for women in the financial sector.

## History and Founding

The concept for 100 Women in Finance was born when three hedge fund managers—Sarah Dyer, Dana Hall, and Carol Kim—came together with the idea of creating a professional network for senior women in the investment industry. In

December 2001, they founded the organization and hosted its inaugural event in New York to introduce the mission and goals of the group. The focus was on creating a space where women could foster professional relationships, share ideas, and collaborate on advancing their careers. Over the years, 100 Women in Finance grew rapidly, recognizing three key areas of impact: Peer Engagement, Education, and Philanthropy. As a result, the organization has hosted more than 600 education events worldwide, empowering women through valuable learning opportunities and networking.

### Philanthropy and Community Impact

Philanthropy is central to the mission of 100 Women in Finance. The organization's charitable efforts are focused on three primary areas: mentorship, women's and family health, and education. Through various fundraising efforts,

100 Women in Finance has raised over \$40 million in support of its philanthropic initiatives.

A highlight of the organization's fundraising efforts is its annual gala events held around the globe. These galas celebrate the achievements of women in finance while raising funds for initiatives that provide career development, scholarships, and mentorship to young women, as well as supporting women's health causes. The organization's Investing in the Next Generation initiative has been particularly impactful, helping young women develop skills, gain scholarships, and access mentorship opportunities.

### Industry Leadership and Mentorship

100 Women in Finance has become a leading force in promoting gender equality in the financial industry. By hosting events that provide members with access to top executives

and industry leaders, the organization helps create a pipeline for future female leaders. High-profile speakers and honorees at past events have included CEOs, executives from major hedge funds, and prominent financial industry figures such as Eileen Murray, the CEO of Bridgewater Associates, and Ivanka Trump, who joined the board of directors in 2012. The organization's EMEA Industry Leadership Award is given annually to a female leader who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to advancing women's roles in the financial services sector. Notable past recipients include Beatriz Martin, Group Treasurer and Chief Transformation Officer of UBS Group AG.

### Global Outreach and Fundraising Success

Each year, 100 Women in Finance hosts gala dinners in cities around the world to support its charitable initiatives. Notable events include the

New York Gala, which raised over \$1.1 million in 2019, and the London Gala, which brought in over £400,000 for the organization's next-generation initiatives in 2022. Similarly, the Hong Kong Gala raised HKD 4.4 million in 2019 to support organizations like the Women's Foundation of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Award for Young People. The organization also runs mentorship programs such as GirlForce 100, which pairs young women with experienced professionals who guide them toward academic and professional success. This initiative has proven invaluable in helping the next generation of female leaders navigate their career paths.

## Looking Ahead

The future of 100 Women in Finance is brighter than ever as it continues to expand its impact on women in the financial industry. With a focus



on building community, sharing knowledge, and providing opportunities for professional growth, the organization is committed to ensuring that women are equally represented in all levels of the finance world.

Through its ongoing efforts in education, mentorship, and philanthropy, 100 Women in Finance has positioned itself as a vital force for change, shaping the future of finance with gender equality and leadership at the forefront.

## WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Over the last few decades, the role of women in leadership positions within business has seen significant transformation. Across various industries, women are increasingly rising to the top, assuming roles that were once predominantly occupied by men. Female CEOs and executives now lead some of the most successful companies globally, proving that women are not only capable but also highly

effective in driving innovation, profitability, and growth. However, despite this progress, gender parity in top leadership roles remains an ongoing challenge, with several obstacles still hindering the full realization of equality at the highest levels of business leadership.

## Rising Female Leadership

Women are making remarkable strides in top leadership roles across industries. High-profile women, such as Mary Barra, the CEO of General Motors; Indra Nooyi, former CEO of PepsiCo; and Abigail Johnson, CEO of Fidelity Investments, have proven that women can excel in leadership positions traditionally held by men. These women have become symbols of empowerment and resilience, leading massive organizations, making tough business decisions, and contributing significantly to the

economic growth of their respective companies and industries.

Their success is not just symbolic but rooted in real achievements. For instance, under Mary Barra's leadership, GM has embraced electric vehicles and sustainable practices, ensuring the company's continued relevance in a rapidly changing market. Similarly, Indra Nooyi's strategic vision helped PepsiCo evolve into a more diversified company, focusing on healthier product options and global expansion, while Abigail Johnson has led Fidelity into the era of digital financial services and innovation.

## Breaking Barriers: The Changing Perception

The rise of women to top leadership positions marks a shift in the long-standing perception that business leadership is a domain primarily

for men. This change is supported by increasing recognition of the need for diversity at the top. Numerous studies have shown that organizations with more gender-diverse leadership teams outperform those with less diversity in terms of profitability, creativity, and decision-making. This has led to a growing acceptance of female leadership in the corporate world.

More organizations are embracing diversity as part of their core strategy, understanding that a diverse leadership team brings a broader range of perspectives and solutions to complex challenges. As companies realize the value of gender-diverse teams, the doors for women in leadership roles are slowly but surely opening wider.

## Challenges to Achieving Gender Parity

While progress has been made, the path to true gender parity in leadership positions is still fraught with challenges. The number of women in C-suite roles and board positions is still disproportionately low compared to men. In fact, research from the McKinsey Global Institute reveals that women are still underrepresented in leadership roles globally. For example, as of 2020, only 7.4% of CEOs in the Fortune 500 were women. The data also shows that women of color, in particular, remain severely underrepresented in top leadership positions.

Several factors contribute to this disparity:

1. Unconscious Bias

Despite significant strides in promoting gender equality, unconscious bias remains a major barrier for women aspiring to leadership roles. The common perception

that leadership qualities are inherently masculine can discourage women from pursuing top roles or cause decision-makers to overlook female candidates.

## 2. The "Glass Ceiling"

The "glass ceiling" is a well-established phenomenon in which women face invisible barriers that prevent them from advancing to the highest levels of an organization. This can occur for various reasons, such as a lack of mentorship or sponsorship, fewer opportunities for career advancement, or traditional gender roles that still influence career trajectories.

## 3. Work-Life Balance

A significant barrier for many women is the challenge of balancing work and personal life. Leadership roles often come with demanding hours, extensive travel, and constant decision-making pressures,

which can be challenging for individuals who are also managing family responsibilities. The lack of sufficient support structures, such as affordable childcare or flexible work hours, can make it more difficult for women to rise to the top.

#### 4. Limited Access to Networks

Networking is crucial in climbing the corporate ladder, but women often have limited access to the same networks that male colleagues benefit from. Leadership roles frequently arise from strong professional relationships, which are often cultivated in informal settings like after-work events or social gatherings, where men traditionally have more access to senior decision-makers.

#### 5. Gendered Expectations and Stereotypes

Women in leadership positions often face

the challenge of being judged against different standards than their male counterparts. Women may be scrutinized more closely for their decisions, leadership style, and personal appearance. They are often expected to navigate the complex dynamics of leadership while balancing traditional gender expectations, which can place added stress on them.

## The Road Ahead: What Needs to Change?

Despite the challenges, the future is promising for women in business leadership. Several key changes and initiatives are being pushed to address the gender disparity at the top:

1. Mentorship and Sponsorship

Women in leadership roles must continue to mentor and sponsor younger women to help them navigate their careers and break



through the barriers to advancement. Organizations can facilitate this by creating formal mentorship programs that pair emerging female leaders with established executives.

## 2. Inclusive Organizational Culture

Companies need to adopt and maintain inclusive cultures that promote gender equity at all levels. Gender equality should not be a top-down approach but integrated into all aspects of the organization, from hiring practices to leadership development programs.

## 3. Workplace Flexibility

Flexible work policies are essential to retain top female talent. By offering flexible hours, remote work options, and better work-life balance programs, organizations can help alleviate the pressure on women

to choose between career success and family responsibilities.

#### 4. Gender Quotas and Legislation

Some countries and regions have implemented gender quotas to ensure that a certain percentage of leadership roles are filled by women. While controversial in some circles, quotas have been shown to increase the number of women in leadership positions and can serve as a short-term measure to accelerate change.

#### 5. Tackling Unconscious Bias

Addressing unconscious bias in hiring and promotion processes is crucial for gender parity in leadership roles. Organizations must train decision-makers to recognize and mitigate biases and adopt gender-neutral criteria for evaluating candidates for leadership roles.

## Conclusion

While women are steadily breaking barriers and ascending to leadership roles in business, achieving true gender parity at the top remains a work in progress. As organizations continue to prioritize diversity and create more inclusive environments, women will increasingly be able to claim their rightful places at the top. However, continued efforts are necessary to eliminate the systemic barriers that still exist, ensuring that the future of business leadership is one where both women and men have equal opportunities to succeed.

## LEADERSHIP ROLES

### 1. Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Overcoming Barriers to Top Leadership Roles

One of the most significant challenges women face in leadership positions is the "glass ceiling", an invisible barrier that prevents them

from rising to the top levels of an organization. While women have made significant strides in the workforce over the past few decades, many still find it difficult to break into the highest echelons of leadership, particularly in male-dominated industries such as finance, technology, and engineering. Factors such as unconscious bias, gender stereotypes, and lack of mentorship or sponsorship contribute to the glass ceiling effect. Despite these challenges, many women have managed to overcome these barriers, paving the way for others.

Successful women in leadership roles, such as Mary Barra (CEO of General Motors) and Indra Nooyi (former CEO of PepsiCo), have demonstrated that women can not only break through the glass ceiling but thrive in leadership positions. Their achievements show that organizations benefit from gender diversity at the top and that women bring unique perspectives, problem-solving skills, and

innovation to the table. The continued breaking of the glass ceiling by women in top leadership roles is not just a victory for individuals but a broader societal shift toward more inclusive and equitable workplaces.

## 2. Impact of Diversity in Leadership: The Business Case for Gender Balance

Diversity in leadership teams is not only a matter of social justice but also a strategic business decision. Numerous studies have shown that organizations with diverse leadership teams are more profitable, innovative, and better at decision-making than those without gender diversity. Women bring different perspectives and approaches to leadership, which can lead to more comprehensive decision-making and improved organizational performance.

For instance, research by McKinsey & Company highlights that companies with higher gender diversity in their executive teams are 21% more likely to experience above-average profitability. The addition of women in leadership roles encourages innovation, as women often bring new ideas and problem-solving techniques to the table. Companies such as Unilever and PepsiCo have experienced tangible benefits from gender-diverse leadership, such as greater market share and stronger financial performance, demonstrating that investing in women leaders is not just the right thing to do, but also the smart thing for business growth and success.

### 3. The Need for Work-Life Balance and Flexible Leadership Models

Work-life balance remains a critical challenge for women in leadership roles. The pressure to perform at the highest levels in demanding positions often intersects with personal responsibilities, such as caregiving or family obligations, creating a complex dynamic. The traditional “workaholic” culture, where success is measured by long hours and constant availability, disproportionately affects women, who are often expected to manage household duties as well.

In response, many companies are shifting toward more flexible leadership models, which include offering remote work, flexible hours, and job-sharing options for senior leaders. These policies are especially beneficial for women, allowing them to balance their professional and personal lives more effectively while maintaining high performance in their roles. Companies like

Google, Microsoft, and Salesforce have pioneered such flexibility, showing that accommodating work-life balance does not mean sacrificing productivity or leadership effectiveness. These changes are crucial for creating a more inclusive leadership environment where both women and men can thrive without compromising their well-being.

## DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP

Diversity in leadership is no longer a concept confined to corporate social responsibility—it is a strategic necessity. As global economies become increasingly interconnected and consumer bases more diverse, organizations are realizing that inclusive leadership teams drive better decision-making, improved financial performance, and stronger stakeholder trust. This article explores the dimensions, challenges, and transformative power of diversity in



leadership roles, particularly within finance, business, and governance.

## 1. Defining Diversity in Leadership

Diversity in leadership refers to the inclusion of individuals from various backgrounds—be it gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion, or socioeconomic status—within senior and executive positions in an organization. It also includes neurodiversity, disability inclusion, and intersectional identities. Leadership diversity ensures that decision-making bodies reflect the complexity of the markets they serve.

## 2. Why Diversity Matters in Executive Roles

Numerous studies underscore the link between diverse leadership and corporate success. A 2020 McKinsey report found that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on executive

teams were 25% more likely to have above-average profitability than companies in the bottom quartile. Similarly, ethnic and cultural diversity in leadership correlates with innovation, employee engagement, and broader market insights.

### 3. Gender Parity and Women in Leadership

Gender diversity remains a key pillar of inclusive leadership. While more women are entering the workforce, they remain underrepresented at the top. In 2024, women held only 10% of CEO roles in Fortune 500 companies, though this figure is gradually increasing. Organizations that actively promote gender balance—such as implementing equal pay, mentorship programs, and flexible work policies—report stronger performance and enhanced brand reputation.

At Aura Solution Company Limited, for example, 60% of staff are women, and one of the co-founders is a woman. The firm's wealth division, legal counsel, and executive committees include women leaders who play a pivotal role in strategy, governance, and innovation.

#### 4. Ethnic and Racial Diversity in Leadership

Ethnic diversity in leadership remains a global challenge, particularly in finance and technology sectors. Underrepresented minorities often face systemic barriers such as limited access to influential networks, bias in hiring and promotion, and fewer sponsorship opportunities. However, firms that succeed in integrating racially diverse leaders into their C-suite gain cultural competence, consumer empathy, and market reach.

The rise of influential Black women in finance—such as Mellody Hobson (Co-CEO, Ariel Investments) and the increasing presence of professionals from diverse ethnicities—demonstrates the potential for change when companies actively invest in equitable hiring and development pipelines.

## 5. Generational and Cognitive Diversity

Age diversity and cognitive diversity (varied ways of thinking) are emerging as key components in leadership. A blend of millennial innovation and Gen X/Baby Boomer experience can foster balanced strategic planning. Similarly, leaders with diverse educational backgrounds and thought processes contribute to out-of-the-box problem solving, risk mitigation, and adaptive strategies.

## 6. Inclusive Leadership and Corporate Culture

Diversity without inclusion is ineffective. Inclusive leadership means empowering all voices, ensuring equitable access to resources, and creating psychologically safe environments. Leaders must be trained to recognize bias, embrace empathy, and value diverse inputs. This cultural shift from tokenism to true inclusion is essential to sustaining long-term impact.

## 7. Barriers to Achieving Diverse Leadership

Despite the proven benefits, organizations often struggle with:

- Unconscious bias in hiring and promotions
- Lack of mentorship and sponsorship for minorities

- Inadequate measurement and accountability frameworks
- Resistance to structural change at the board level

Companies must move beyond diversity pledges to measurable action, including setting representation targets, tying executive bonuses to diversity KPIs, and embedding equity into every level of decision-making.

## 8. Case Study: Aura Solution Company Limited

Aura Solution Company Limited is a leading global financial firm that exemplifies the power of diverse leadership. With women in key leadership roles—from wealth management to legal strategy—and a multicultural executive team, Aura emphasizes inclusion as a driver of business integrity and global relevance. The company also supports initiatives like "100

Women in Finance" and works with regional institutions to mentor young professionals from underrepresented communities.

## 9. The Road Ahead: Equity as Strategy

Future-ready organizations must embed diversity and equity into their business DNA. This includes:

- Leadership development programs for diverse talent
- Transparent recruitment and promotion pathways
- Investment in inclusive technologies
- Public disclosure of diversity metrics

The future of leadership will belong to those who can build, lead, and scale diverse teams in complex, global environments.

## 10. Conclusion

Diversity in leadership is not about optics—it's about outcomes. A diverse leadership team fosters innovation, enhances risk management, builds brand credibility, and reflects the diverse world we live in. As companies like Aura Solution Company Limited demonstrate, embracing leadership diversity is not just a moral imperative—it is a business advantage.

## BALANCING SOCIETY

Leadership is not defined by gender—it is defined by vision, competence, integrity, and the ability to uplift others. Yet in many parts of the world, societal discomfort persists when women ascend to top leadership roles. This



discomfort is often subtle, manifesting in biased perceptions, undermined authority, or resistance masked as "tradition" or "culture." As we move deeper into the 21st century, the question is no longer whether women can lead, but how society can evolve to fully accept, support, and benefit from women in leadership.

This article examines the roots of societal discomfort, explores current challenges women leaders face, and proposes a balanced framework for shaping a more inclusive leadership culture.

## 1. The Cultural Inheritance of Bias

Throughout history, leadership roles—whether in politics, finance, or business—have predominantly been occupied by men. This has created a cultural blueprint where leadership is

subconsciously associated with masculinity. When a woman steps into a leadership position, her authority is often scrutinized more closely, her decisions questioned more intensely, and her confidence mistaken for arrogance.

In societies where patriarchy is still deeply entrenched, leadership by women can be seen as a deviation rather than progression. Such bias isn't always aggressive—it can be systemic and deeply embedded in hiring practices, corporate cultures, board compositions, and media representation.

## 2. Modern-Day Resistance: Subtle, But Real

Even in modern, developed nations, resistance to women leaders persists:

- Women are often interrupted more frequently in boardrooms.
- Assertive behavior in a woman is labeled "aggressive" while the same in a man is seen as "strong."
- Female political leaders face more personal attacks and appearance-based criticism than their male counterparts.
- Pay gaps and promotion delays continue to exist in male-dominated industries, such as finance, defense, and tech.

In emerging economies, women leaders often navigate a dual burden: proving their professional worth while also confronting rigid expectations around family and societal roles.

### 3. What Women Bring to Leadership

When women lead, they do not merely replicate traditional models—they often introduce new, dynamic forms of leadership:

- Empathy-driven decision-making
- Collaborative management styles
- Strong focus on community, social good, and inclusion
- Risk-conscious yet long-term vision

Studies have consistently shown that companies with gender-diverse leadership:

- Deliver better financial performance
- Exhibit stronger ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) compliance
- Are more innovative and adaptable in times of crisis

## 4. Creating Balance in Societal Mindsets

Balancing societal discomfort requires addressing both perception and policy:

### A. Normalizing Female Leadership

Representation matters. Seeing women lead at the highest levels—from central banks to Fortune 500 companies—helps shift public perceptions. Media, education systems, and corporate communications must actively showcase female leadership stories.

### B. Inclusive Work Environments

Institutions must foster inclusive cultures where respect is not conditioned by gender. This includes zero-tolerance policies on bias,

sponsorship programs for emerging women leaders, and bias-awareness training for male peers and executives.

### C. Men as Allies

A balanced society requires men to be active allies. This includes supporting gender-equal hiring, advocating for women's inclusion in strategic roles, sharing caregiving responsibilities at home, and recognizing the unique leadership styles women offer.

## 5. Real-Life Leaders Making Impact

From Kristalina Georgieva at the IMF to Auranusa Jeeranont at Aura Solution Company Limited, women today are redefining power and legacy. These leaders combine hard economic insight with emotional intelligence and a global

outlook. They face criticism, defy expectations, and still deliver results that reshape the institutions they lead.

Auranusa, in particular, has transformed Aura's philanthropic vision through Aura Foundation, demonstrating that leadership can be both bold and benevolent, principled and powerful.

## 6. A Call to Action for Institutions

To reshape societal comfort with women in leadership, institutions—public and private—must commit to:

- Transparent hiring and promotion systems
- Public support for gender-equal leadership goals
- Board diversity quotas where applicable

- Family-supportive workplace policies (e.g., maternity/paternity leave, flexible schedules)

These aren't just gender policies—they're leadership-enabling policies for all.

## 7. Conclusion: Progress with Purpose

Resistance to female leadership is not just a gender issue—it is a societal issue rooted in outdated power structures. Breaking these patterns is not about displacing men, but about making room for more diverse leadership expressions. The future of leadership is not female or male—it is balanced, inclusive, and meritocratic. As individuals, institutions, and societies, the question we must ask is not “Can she lead?”—but rather, “What are we doing to support those who do?”



## WOMEN IN HEALTH

The health sector has long been supported by the silent strength and tireless commitment of women. From hospitals to laboratories, clinics to global health organizations, women play an indispensable role in shaping the future of medicine, healing, and scientific innovation. Yet, despite their contributions, women in health are often underrepresented in leadership, under-recognized in research, and underpaid compared to male counterparts.

This article explores the critical role women play in healthcare and biomedical science, highlights their groundbreaking contributions, and calls for structural reforms to ensure equity, visibility, and opportunity for future generations.

## 1. A Historical Foundation of Care and Resistance

Throughout history, women have been the caregivers and community health stewards, often working without formal titles or institutional recognition. Figures like Florence Nightingale and Elizabeth Blackwell in the West, or Anandibai Joshi and Gerty Cori from the Global South and Eastern Europe, broke medical barriers despite extreme opposition. Women served as midwives, herbalists, and nurses before finally being admitted into medical schools or laboratories.

Yet these pioneering efforts were frequently overshadowed by male-dominated institutions. It wasn't until the 20th century that women began gaining wider access to professional medical and scientific education—though progress was slow and uneven across regions.

## 2. Women as Doctors: Rising Through the Ranks

Today, women make up a significant share of the global medical workforce. In many countries, women outnumber men in medical school enrollments. Fields such as pediatrics, obstetrics & gynecology, and family medicine have strong female representation.

However, significant disparities remain:

- Fewer women ascend to hospital directorships or academic leadership roles.
- Specialties such as surgery, cardiology, and orthopedics remain male-dominated.

- Gender-based discrimination and harassment continue to affect career progression.

Despite these challenges, women doctors are often at the frontline of primary care, especially in rural and underserved regions. Their holistic approach to patient care, focus on prevention, and empathetic communication have been consistently shown to improve health outcomes.

### 3. Women in Science: Breaking Barriers in the Lab

Women scientists have been responsible for some of the most important medical breakthroughs:

- Rosalind Franklin's contributions to the discovery of DNA's double-helix structure.

- Tu Youyou, the first Chinese woman to win the Nobel Prize in Medicine, for discovering artemisinin, a life-saving anti-malarial drug.
- Katalin Karikó, a pioneer of mRNA technology used in COVID-19 vaccines.

Despite this, female scientists still face challenges in securing research funding, leading large labs, and publishing in top-tier journals. According to UNESCO, less than 30% of the world's researchers are women.

This underrepresentation not only limits individual careers—it stifles scientific progress by excluding diverse perspectives critical to health innovation.

#### 4. Women in Global Health Leadership

Women play a central role in delivering global health, particularly through international organizations and NGOs. However, their visibility at the highest levels remains low. A 2021 WHO report noted that although 70% of the global health workforce is female, only 25% of health leadership positions are held by women.

This discrepancy has real consequences:

- Health policies may ignore gender-specific needs.
- Reproductive health, maternal care, and gender-based violence may be underprioritized.
- Career advancement for women in health fields can be limited by family care expectations and lack of mentorship.

To build a fairer, more responsive health system, it is critical to empower women not just as workers—but as decision-makers.

## 5. The COVID-19 Lens: Undeniable Leadership

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed both the fragility of global health systems and the resilience of women within them:

- Women made up the majority of frontline health workers—nurses, physicians, lab technicians, and caregivers.
- Several countries led by women (e.g., New Zealand, Finland, Taiwan) were praised for their effective pandemic responses.
- Female scientists played key roles in vaccine development, data analytics, and crisis response.

Yet, these contributions were often under-celebrated. The pandemic also saw a regression in gender equality, with increased domestic care burdens and reduced research outputs from women due to lockdowns and school closures.

## 6. Toward Equity: What Needs to Change

Achieving equity for women in health and science demands structural reforms across institutions:

### A. Leadership Development & Mentorship

- Women must be actively supported to rise into executive roles, such as hospital CEOs, deans of medical schools, or heads of research labs.



- Mentorship programs can help navigate workplace politics, funding cycles, and promotion hurdles.

## B. Policy & Workplace Reform

- Equal pay audits
- Parental leave for all genders
- Safe workplace policies and anti-harassment enforcement

## C. Investment in Women-Led Research

- Prioritize funding for studies led by women, especially in fields like reproductive health, mental health, and infectious disease.

- Encourage interdisciplinary work where women lead both scientific and social dimensions of health.

## 7. A New Generation: The Power of Education and Inspiration

Across the globe, girls and young women are increasingly aspiring to careers in medicine, biotechnology, and global health. Representation matters—when young girls see women in lab coats leading vaccine discoveries or performing heart surgery, they realize their ambitions are valid and achievable. Educational platforms, like Auradevi Foundation under Auranusa Jeeranont, are actively investing in training programs for girls in science and medicine—especially in underserved communities. These initiatives are not just about education—they're about unlocking national potential.

## 8. Conclusion: The Healing Power of Inclusion

Women are not newcomers to the health field—they are its foundation, its innovators, its frontline defenders. But inclusion is not just about numbers. It is about enabling women to lead, to decide, to innovate, and to transform systems from within.

The future of health is not only technological or policy-driven—it is human-centered, and women must be at its core.

### GENDER SHIFTS

The Rise of Female Gynecologists and the Gender Shift in Medical Care

The medical profession has long been considered a male-dominated field. But in recent decades, a significant transformation has

been taking place—especially in specialties like obstetrics and gynecology (OB-GYN). Today, more women are choosing careers in medicine, and in some areas of healthcare, particularly those that concern women’s reproductive health, they are not only filling but also redefining the role. The rise of female gynecologists has sparked important conversations about trust, empathy, patient comfort, and the future of medical care.

This article explores the increasing role of women in gynecology, the shifting preferences of patients, the subtle distinctions in how male and female doctors approach care, and how this evolution is shaping a more inclusive and effective healthcare landscape.

## The Surge of Women in Medicine

In many countries, women now make up the majority of medical students. This is a remarkable change from just a generation ago. In fields such as gynecology, this trend is even more pronounced. In the United States, over 80% of residents in OB-GYN programs are women. In many countries, female gynecologists are becoming the primary choice for patients seeking reproductive care.

The reasons for this shift are varied. First, the expansion of women's rights and access to higher education has opened doors that were once tightly shut. Secondly, many patients—particularly women—are increasingly expressing a preference to be examined and treated by someone of the same gender, especially for intimate or sensitive health issues. Medical institutions, recognizing this preference, are also actively recruiting more female specialists.

## Female Gynecologists: Comfort and Connection

Gynecology involves some of the most private aspects of a person's health—reproductive systems, menstrual issues, sexual health, childbirth, and hormonal wellness. For many women, having a female doctor during these consultations and procedures provides a sense of ease and emotional safety that is difficult to replicate. Many patients feel that female doctors are more likely to understand what they are going through, both physically and emotionally. Shared gender experiences—such as menstruation, pregnancy, or menopause—can contribute to a deeper level of empathy and nonjudgmental understanding during consultations. In turn, this can foster better communication and more accurate diagnoses.

## Approach to Patient Care

Studies have shown that while both male and female doctors are equally skilled, their styles of patient interaction often differ in subtle but meaningful ways. Female doctors tend to spend more time with patients during consultations and emphasize listening. Their conversations often explore not just physical symptoms, but also emotional well-being and lifestyle factors.

Many patients report feeling more heard and supported by female gynecologists. This isn't to say that male doctors are less competent, but rather that their approach may be more direct and clinically focused, which may not always align with a patient's need for emotional reassurance or nuanced discussion—particularly in reproductive health matters.

## Persistent Challenges for Female Doctors

Despite the growing number of female physicians, women in medicine still face significant challenges. They are underrepresented in leadership positions in hospitals and healthcare systems. Even when they perform the same duties as their male colleagues, they often earn less. Furthermore, balancing work and family life remains a serious hurdle in specialties like OB-GYN, which demand irregular hours and emergency availability.

Yet, even in the face of these obstacles, women continue to rise through the ranks of medical institutions. They are not just providing clinical care—they are leading groundbreaking research, influencing health policy, and reshaping what it means to be a doctor in the 21st century.



## The Evolving Role of Male Gynecologists

While the field of gynecology is becoming increasingly female-dominated, male gynecologists remain an important part of the profession. Many have long-standing relationships with patients and bring high levels of expertise, especially in sub-specialties like fertility or surgical gynecology. However, some men entering the field now face new challenges. There are cases where patients specifically request a female doctor, which can reduce opportunities for male practitioners. Some male doctors also report feeling hesitant or scrutinized during certain procedures, fearing misinterpretation or discomfort. These evolving dynamics are leading many male gynecologists to focus on areas of the field where patient gender preferences are less pronounced.

## A Global Perspective

In many parts of the world, especially in conservative societies, the preference for female OB-GYNs is not just cultural—it's critical. In places like South Asia, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, modesty norms and religious beliefs often discourage women from receiving care from male doctors. In these regions, there is an urgent demand for more female health professionals.

Unfortunately, a shortage of trained female doctors in rural or underdeveloped areas continues to prevent many women from accessing necessary care. This points to the broader need for policies that invest in the education and training of women in medicine—especially in communities where female-led healthcare is essential.

## The Future of Women's Health

The increasing presence of women in gynecology is not just changing who provides care—it's changing how care is delivered. Female gynecologists are leading the charge in bringing attention to conditions that have historically been misunderstood or under-researched, such as endometriosis, postpartum depression, and hormonal disorders.

More importantly, they are advocating for a healthcare system that treats women not just as patients—but as people with voices, choices, and specific needs. The rise of female doctors is about more than numbers—it's about redefining medicine to be more inclusive, compassionate, and patient-centered.

## Conclusion

The growth of female representation in gynecology marks a critical evolution in healthcare. It reflects a deeper understanding that patient comfort, trust, and emotional intelligence are as vital to medical success as clinical knowledge. While both male and female doctors have much to offer, the increasing visibility of women in this field is helping to balance long-standing gender disparities in medicine.

As the healthcare system continues to evolve, diversity among its providers will remain central to delivering high-quality, empathetic care. Women as gynecologists are not replacing men—they are complementing the profession with a broader perspective and a deeper connection to the needs of half the world's population.

WOMEN AS SCIENTIST

# Women as Scientists: Breaking Barriers and Shaping the Future

For centuries, science has driven human progress—curing diseases, expanding our understanding of the universe, and improving everyday life. Yet for most of history, women were largely excluded from this journey. Whether due to cultural norms, legal restrictions, or lack of access to education, female participation in science was long stifled. That is changing. Today, women are increasingly taking their place at the forefront of scientific discovery, leading groundbreaking research, and reshaping what it means to be a scientist in the modern world.

This article explores the evolving role of women in science, celebrates their achievements, examines the challenges they continue to face,

and highlights why their inclusion is vital for the future of global innovation.

## Historical Barriers and Modern Progress

Women like Marie Curie, Ada Lovelace, and Rosalind Franklin shattered early ceilings in science, but they were the exception, not the rule. In many countries, women were barred from attending universities or joining scientific institutions until the 20th century. Even when they contributed significantly to discoveries, their names were often erased from academic credit or Nobel Prize nominations.

Today, much has changed. Women are earning degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) at unprecedented rates. In fields such as biology, environmental science, and psychology, they often outnumber

men. Yet, in areas like physics, engineering, and computer science, they remain underrepresented.

## Areas Where Women Excel

Women scientists have made remarkable progress in several domains. In medicine, female researchers have pioneered studies in reproductive health, vaccines, and autoimmune diseases. In environmental sciences, women are leading climate change research and sustainability efforts across the globe. In space exploration, women have served as astronauts, mission leaders, and planetary scientists—roles once closed to them.

Moreover, women have proven particularly effective in interdisciplinary fields, where empathy, communication, and complex

systems thinking are critical—attributes often underappreciated in the traditional scientific hierarchy but increasingly vital in addressing real-world problems.

## Gender-Based Challenges

Despite progress, many challenges persist. Women in science still face wage gaps, limited mentorship opportunities, fewer promotions, and underrepresentation in leadership roles. Implicit bias often results in their research receiving less funding or fewer citations, even when the work is equally rigorous. Workplace culture can also be a barrier. Lab environments, research institutions, and universities have not always been welcoming to women, particularly those balancing family responsibilities or coming from underrepresented ethnic groups. Sexual harassment and systemic discrimination remain problems in many countries,



discouraging some from pursuing or staying in scientific careers.

## Why Diversity in Science Matters

Science thrives on innovation—and innovation is fueled by diversity. When women participate in science, the range of questions asked broadens, and the methods of inquiry diversify. Women bring different life experiences, priorities, and problem-solving styles to the table, enriching the scientific process. For instance, women-led studies have been instrumental in identifying gender-specific symptoms in heart disease and medicine—leading to better diagnostics and treatment for both men and women. In climate science, female scientists often emphasize community-based solutions and social equity alongside technical models. Inclusion of women in science

is not just about fairness—it's about making science better.

## Role Models and Rising Stars

Across the globe, women are leading major scientific initiatives. From Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer Doudna, who co-developed CRISPR gene editing technology, to Thai marine biologists protecting coral reefs, to African epidemiologists driving public health research, women are transforming science at every level. These role models inspire the next generation of girls to pursue science—not as an exception, but as a norm. Programs that support STEM education for girls, mentorship opportunities, and equitable hiring practices are slowly beginning to change the pipeline.

## Global Efforts and Policies

Institutions, governments, and private sectors are increasingly recognizing the need for gender equity in science. UNESCO, the UN, and many national academies have launched initiatives to support women in research through grants, scholarships, and leadership training. Efforts to promote gender-neutral hiring, parental leave, and inclusive lab culture are making the scientific community more accessible. Many universities now require that research teams reflect gender diversity in order to receive funding. These changes, while still uneven, are steps in the right direction.

## The Future of Women in Science

The road ahead is both promising and challenging. Artificial intelligence, climate innovation, pandemic preparedness, and biotechnology are areas where the world urgently needs scientific talent—and where

women are poised to lead. Ensuring their full participation is essential not only for gender justice but for human advancement as a whole. We are witnessing a new generation of women scientists who are not just participating in science, but redefining it—shifting focus from purely technical outcomes to solutions that integrate ethics, social impact, and sustainability.

## Conclusion

Women in science are no longer silent contributors—they are visionary leaders. Yet, true equity will only be realized when systemic barriers are dismantled and all voices are valued equally in the pursuit of knowledge. As a society, investing in women scientists means investing in innovation, health, sustainability, and a future in which every human mind can contribute to solving humanity's greatest

challenges. Science is stronger, more creative, and more compassionate when it reflects the diversity of the world it seeks to serve.

## WOMEN IN EDUCATION

### Building the Future One Mind at a Time

Education is more than a transmission of knowledge — it is the bedrock of societal progress, innovation, and equality. Across the globe, women are at the forefront of shaping educational systems, policies, and pedagogies. From classrooms to ministries, from rural schools to Ivy League lecture halls, women are not just participating in education — they are leading it.

### Historical Context

Historically, education was one of the few professional fields accessible to women, albeit often in limited roles. Female teachers were vital

in the 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in primary education. But over time, women began rising into roles of greater influence — as scholars, rectors, policymakers, and education reformers. Today, their leadership is driving a paradigm shift toward inclusivity, compassion, and sustainability in learning.

## Women as Catalysts of Educational Reform

Women have been the drivers of many educational revolutions:

- Maria Montessori revolutionized early childhood education with her emphasis on autonomy and creativity.
- Malala Yousafzai became a global icon for girls' education rights under threat.

- Michelle Obama, through initiatives like “Let Girls Learn,” championed global access to education for young women.

In many countries, women dominate the teaching profession, especially in early and primary education. Their deep emotional intelligence, organizational skills, and adaptability make them effective educators and change agents. But their contributions go far beyond the classroom — they are founding universities, designing national curricula, and leading global education initiatives.

## The Power of Female Leadership in Education

Female leadership in education brings three key values to the forefront:

### 1. Empathy-Based Learning:

Women educators often emphasize emotional intelligence, student-centered learning, and mental well-being — especially crucial in a post-pandemic world.

### 2. Inclusivity and Access:

Women leaders are more likely to champion the inclusion of marginalized communities, differently-abled students, and gender equality within educational policy.

### 3. Long-Term Vision:

Female leadership often values education not just for jobs but for citizenship, sustainability, and global cooperation.

## Challenges That Remain



Despite their prominence in teaching roles, women remain underrepresented in senior educational leadership — such as university presidents, board chairs, and education ministers. Cultural barriers, gender bias, and work-life balance continue to pose obstacles. Moreover, female educators in rural or conflict regions face disproportionate risks, including violence and discrimination.

## Aura Solution Company Limited: Championing Women in Education

Aura Solution Company Limited, through its philanthropic arm Aura Endowment, has emerged as a global advocate and sponsor for women in education. Based in Phuket, Thailand, Aura believes that educational equality is the foundation for sustainable prosperity. The company has:

- Funded women-led schools and universities, especially in Southeast Asia.
- Supported education-focused trusts under the Auradevi Foundation, dedicated solely to empowering Thai women and girls.
- Sponsored scholarships and teaching fellowships for female educators in underserved regions.
- Launched “Aurapedia Education Series”, a platform for highlighting female educators, scientists, and reformers from across the globe.
- Implemented policy advisory roles in partnership with ministries of education to enhance female leadership frameworks.

Aura's core philosophy is that education without gender equity is incomplete. By investing directly into systems where women can teach, learn, lead, and legislate, Aura is not just funding education — it is funding transformation.

## A Global Perspective: What Comes Next

As we look to the future, it is vital to:

- Close the leadership gap in educational institutions.
- Encourage more women into academic research and STEM education.
- Break down digital and economic barriers for women and girls in marginalized communities.

With public-private partnerships, thoughtful policy, and institutions like Aura Solution

Company Limited stepping forward, the dream of a truly inclusive educational landscape is within reach.

## Conclusion

Women in education are not merely teaching students — they are shaping civilizations. Their leadership is redefining success, community, and the purpose of knowledge itself. Supported by visionary sponsors like Aura, the path forward is brighter, more inclusive, and deeply human.

## CHALLENGES

Teachers are the backbone of every educational system. They shape minds, build futures, and influence societies far beyond the classroom. However, the teaching profession — often romanticized as noble and fulfilling — is increasingly marked by complex challenges,

both old and new. From resource limitations to emotional stress, teachers around the world face a rapidly evolving educational landscape that tests their resilience, adaptability, and commitment.

## 1. Overwhelming Workload

Teachers often juggle far more than just lesson plans. They are:

- Grading assignments long after hours.
- Handling administrative paperwork.
- Preparing individualized learning strategies.
- Managing extracurricular activities.

The workload is intensified in under-resourced schools where teachers may need to fill multiple roles — counselor, nurse, mentor, and social worker — all at once.

## 2. Low Compensation and Societal Recognition

In many countries, teacher salaries are not commensurate with their workload or impact, leading to burnout and attrition. Despite their critical societal role, teachers often feel underappreciated compared to professionals in other fields. This affects morale and long-term retention.

## 3. Limited Resources and Infrastructure

Many educators, especially in rural or developing regions, work with:

- Outdated textbooks.
- Poor internet connectivity.
- Broken classroom infrastructure.
- Large student-to-teacher ratios.

This scarcity directly impacts the quality of education delivered, forcing teachers to improvise constantly.

#### 4. Emotional Burnout and Mental Health Strain

Teaching is emotionally taxing. Teachers often face:

- Pressure to perform from both parents and institutions.
- Emotional burdens from managing students' personal issues.
- The stress of standardized testing and academic outcomes.

Over time, these pressures can lead to anxiety, depression, and compassion fatigue, especially in environments where mental health support is absent.

## 5. Discipline and Classroom Management

Maintaining discipline is one of the toughest aspects of teaching. Disruptive students, lack of parental involvement, and societal changes in child behavior norms make classroom control a daily struggle. Many teachers report feeling unsupported by administration when dealing with behavioral issues.

## 6. Rapid Technological Changes

With the rise of online learning, smart classrooms, and AI tools, teachers are expected to adopt and master digital platforms quickly. However, many are not provided proper training or time to adapt. This leads to digital fatigue, especially for older or less tech-savvy educators.



## 7. Standardized Testing Pressure

Education systems often rely heavily on exam results to evaluate teacher effectiveness. This leads to:

- "Teaching to the test" instead of fostering critical thinking.
- Pressure to inflate grades.
- Reduced creativity and innovation in teaching styles.

## 8. Lack of Professional Development

Teachers need ongoing training to remain effective. Yet, in many regions:

- Workshops and development programs are rare.
- Training budgets are limited.

- Teachers must pay out-of-pocket for certifications or specializations.

This stagnates professional growth and innovation in pedagogy.

## 9. Political and Policy Instability

Changes in government or educational policy can disrupt years of planning. Teachers often find themselves forced to adjust curricula, methodologies, or standards with little notice or guidance. This creates uncertainty and reduces long-term impact.

## 10. Safety and Security Concerns

In some parts of the world, teachers face direct threats:

- In conflict zones or politically unstable regions.

- During school shootings or public violence.
- Through cyberbullying or harassment by students and parents.

Ensuring a safe teaching environment is becoming a priority but remains a global challenge.

## How Aura Solution Company Limited Supports Teachers

As part of its global educational upliftment mission, Aura Solution Company Limited — through Aura Endowment and Auradevi Foundation — offers structured support for teachers by:

- Funding schools with modern infrastructure and digital tools.

- Providing teacher fellowships and development grants in Southeast Asia and beyond.
- Partnering with ministries to advocate for better salaries and benefits.
- Offering mental health resources and community support for educators.
- Recognizing and amplifying the work of female educators through Aurapedia profiles.

Aura believes that empowering teachers is the most effective way to empower nations.

## Conclusion

Being a teacher today requires more than knowledge — it demands resilience, innovation, and deep emotional strength. While the challenges are real and varied, institutional

support, societal recognition, and investment from organizations like Aura can go a long way in creating a healthier, more dignified future for educators around the world.

## WOMEN AS A TEACHER

### Shaping Minds, Shaping Nations

The role of women in education has been transformative and foundational to human development across civilizations. From ancient scholars like Hypatia of Alexandria to modern education reformers like Malala Yousafzai, women have persistently contributed to knowledge-sharing, community-building, and character development through teaching. Today, female educators represent a global force, particularly in early childhood, primary, and secondary education — although they still face challenges in leadership roles and higher academia.

# The Central Role of Women in Teaching

## 1. Empathy and Communication

Women are often recognized for their emotional intelligence, patience, and nurturing instincts — qualities that make them naturally effective educators, particularly for young and vulnerable learners. These traits help build trust, safety, and engagement in classrooms, making education more inclusive.

## 2. Majority Representation in Schools

In many countries, women form the majority of the teaching workforce, especially at the primary level. For example:

- In Thailand, nearly 80% of primary school teachers are women.
- In the U.S., about 76% of K-12 teachers are female.

This strong representation helps normalize education as a respected and accessible profession for women — especially in regions where employment options for women are limited.

## Challenges Women Face in the Teaching Profession

While women dominate many levels of teaching, they still encounter key barriers:

### 1. Underrepresentation in Leadership

Despite being the backbone of schools, women are often absent from decision-making roles, such as principals, deans, or education ministers. Structural and cultural biases can limit their rise to leadership despite strong qualifications.

## 2. Gender Pay Gap

Even within the education sector, female teachers earn less than their male counterparts in many regions — particularly in higher education, where men are more often tenured professors or administrators.

## 3. Stereotyping and Cultural Constraints

In conservative societies, women educators may face gender-based restrictions, societal judgment, or resistance to teaching older



students or subjects like science, philosophy, or economics.

#### 4. Balancing Family and Career

Teaching, while often chosen for its perceived flexibility, is a time-intensive and emotionally demanding job. Balancing caregiving duties and professional responsibilities can be a significant burden for female teachers, especially in single-parent or rural households.

#### Women Teachers as Agents of Social Change

Female educators do more than teach subjects — they model leadership, resilience, and progress for their communities:

- In rural regions, a female teacher may be the only educated woman children or other women ever interact with.

- Women teachers encourage girls to pursue school, reducing dropout rates and early marriage.
- Female role models in science, math, and technology help break down gender stereotypes in future generations.

## Aura's Role in Promoting Women Educators

Aura Solution Company Limited, through its Aura Endowment and Auradevi Foundation, is deeply committed to:

- Sponsoring scholarships and teacher training for women in underserved communities.
- Building gender-balanced schools across Southeast Asia, including Thailand and India.

- Promoting digital literacy and STEM among female educators through workshops and mentorship.
- Funding research by women educators to help inform more inclusive education policy.
- Highlighting exemplary female teachers on platforms like Aurapedia, giving global visibility to local heroes.

## Conclusion

Women as teachers are not only delivering lessons — they are raising generations. From urban classrooms to remote villages, they are shaping values, fostering knowledge, and lighting the path for future leaders. Their presence, perseverance, and perspective are essential to any meaningful progress in education. By supporting, empowering, and

recognizing these educators, society can move closer to a world where learning is led by equity, excellence, and empathy — values that Aura champions every day.

## WOMEN IN SCIENCE

### Women in Science and Technology: Breaking Boundaries and Building the Future

Throughout history, women have played an instrumental role in shaping the world through scientific innovation and technological advancement. Despite facing numerous barriers, women have consistently contributed groundbreaking ideas, inventions, and discoveries in fields traditionally dominated by men. Today, women in science and technology are not only continuing to push boundaries but also transforming entire industries — from healthcare to space exploration.

### The Impact of Women in Science and Technology

## 1. Redefining Innovation

Women in science and technology bring fresh perspectives to problem-solving and innovation. Their unique contributions are evident in the creation of life-saving technologies, sustainable solutions, and cutting-edge research in areas such as artificial intelligence, renewable energy, and medical science.

## 2. Shaping Future Industries

Women have significantly influenced emerging industries like biotechnology, space exploration, cybersecurity, and data science. Female leaders in tech companies, such as Marissa Mayer (former CEO of Yahoo) and Ginni Rometty (former CEO of IBM), have paved the way for other women to follow in their footsteps and

transform corporate culture and product development in the tech sector.

### 3. Breaking the Glass Ceiling

While the tech and science fields have historically been male-dominated, women are increasingly making their mark. Pioneers like Marie Curie, Ada Lovelace, and Grace Hopper have inspired countless women to pursue careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), shattering the barriers that once restricted their access to these fields.

## The Challenges Women Face in Science and Technology

### 1. Gender Bias and Under Representation

Despite the growing number of women entering STEM fields, women are still underrepresented, particularly in leadership and research positions. For example, only about 28% of the global workforce in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics is female. Women also face biases in hiring, funding, and recognition compared to their male counterparts.

## 2. The Gender Pay Gap

Women in science and technology continue to face significant pay gaps in comparison to men in similar roles. Women are often underpaid for their work in innovation, research, and technology development, and there are fewer women in top-paying roles within tech companies and research institutions.

## 3. Workplace Culture and Support

Many women in science and technology report workplace cultures that are not supportive of their advancement. Lack of mentorship, limited access to funding, and stereotypes about their capabilities contribute to the challenges women face in rising to leadership positions. The work-life balance challenge is also heightened for women who often juggle careers with familial responsibilities.

## The Importance of Diversity in STEM

### 1. Diverse Perspectives Lead to Better Solutions

Studies have shown that diversity — especially gender diversity — enhances problem-solving abilities, creativity, and innovation in research and development. Gender-diverse teams tend to produce better, more creative solutions to complex scientific and technological challenges.



When women are part of the team, the innovations are often more inclusive, addressing the needs of a broader audience.

## 2. Mentorship and Encouragement for the Next Generation

Women who succeed in science and technology serve as role models and mentors for the next generation of female scientists and engineers. Initiatives like Girls Who Code and Women in Technology have been instrumental in fostering young female talent by providing mentorship, resources, and a sense of belonging in these fields.

## Aura's Role in Supporting Women in Science and Technology

Aura Solution Company Limited, through initiatives by the Auradevi Foundation and Aura Endowment, is proud to sponsor programs, mentorships, and events aimed at empowering women in science, technology, and engineering. Aura's contributions include:

1. Scholarships for Women in STEM: Aura has dedicated funds for women pursuing degrees in engineering, technology, and science fields, particularly in underrepresented regions.
2. Promoting Women in Tech Leadership: Through its strategic partnerships with leading tech companies and educational institutions, Aura supports women in leadership roles, including executive training, leadership workshops, and networking opportunities.

3. **Research Grants for Female Scientists:** Aura provides grants and funding for research projects led by women, particularly those working on innovative, sustainable technologies or health solutions.
4. **Community Programs:** By sponsoring programs like Girls Who Code in Thailand and STEM camps for young girls, Aura helps foster interest in science and technology careers from an early age.
5. **Visibility and Advocacy:** Through its platforms like Aurapedia, Aura highlights the accomplishments of female scientists and technologists, providing them with the visibility they deserve to inspire future generations.

## Conclusion

Women in science and technology are not just shaping the future — they are driving it. Despite the challenges they face, women in these fields continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience, creativity, and leadership. By fostering a more inclusive environment and providing targeted support, we can ensure that women continue to break barriers and contribute to the most important innovations of our time. Aura Solution Company Limited is committed to sponsoring and supporting initiatives that advance women's participation in these critical sectors, ensuring a more equitable future for all.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenges Women Face in Science and Technology

#### 1. Gender Bias and Stereotyping

One of the most pervasive challenges women face in science and technology is gender bias, both overt and unconscious. This manifests in various ways:

- Stereotypical perceptions about women's ability to perform in technical roles or leadership positions often hold them back. These biases are particularly strong in fields like engineering, data science, and IT, where women are often underestimated.
- Women in male-dominated industries, like tech startups, are frequently overlooked for promotions or leadership opportunities due to unconscious gender stereotypes that equate competence with traditionally male characteristics.

Despite significant strides in gender equality, such biases continue to persist and shape

decisions around hiring, promotions, and team assignments.

## 2. Underrepresentation in Leadership

Though women now represent a larger portion of the workforce in science and technology, their representation at senior and leadership levels remains low.

- For instance, women represent only 28% of the global workforce in STEM fields, and this percentage decreases sharply in leadership roles, such as CEO, CTO, or founder of tech companies.
- Access to leadership positions often remains closed off for women due to longstanding biases and lack of mentorship. These women are frequently forced to prove themselves more than their

male counterparts in order to be considered for higher-level roles.

Women also report difficulties in advancing to senior positions due to a combination of workplace culture, limited career support, and underrepresentation in decision-making bodies.

### 3. The Gender Pay Gap

Despite working in the same roles, women in science and technology consistently earn less than men. According to a study by the World Economic Forum, the global gender pay gap is approximately 20%, with women earning just 80 cents for every dollar a man makes.

- This wage disparity exists across all levels, from entry-level roles to executive positions.

- Women in senior positions often report a lack of transparency in salary discussions, which perpetuates the pay gap. The reasons behind this gap include discriminatory salary policies, fewer women in senior leadership, and unequal access to high-paying projects.

#### 4. Work-Life Balance Challenges

In industries where long hours and intense dedication are often expected, many women face an added pressure to balance professional success with family responsibilities.

- The concept of “having it all” — excelling at work while managing family responsibilities — presents a real challenge. Women in science and technology often face expectations to sacrifice their personal lives or scale back



their career ambitions to meet family obligations, which may limit their career advancement.

- Moreover, lack of parental leave or flexible work arrangements in many tech companies means that women have to juggle multiple roles, which can lead to burnout, reduced productivity, and even a decision to leave the field entirely.

## 5. Limited Access to Mentorship and Networking Opportunities

Mentorship is a critical component in career development, yet women in STEM often struggle to find mentors who can help them navigate the complex career landscape.

- Mentorship networks in science and technology are often male-dominated, and women may find it difficult to find senior

female mentors who have faced similar challenges.

- Moreover, women are less likely to be invited to networking events, industry conferences, or informal work gatherings, which are often where important professional relationships and career-advancing opportunities are formed.

The lack of mentorship and networking opportunities also means that women in science and technology may miss out on career guidance, advice, and collaborative ventures, which are critical for climbing the professional ladder.

## 6. Imposter Syndrome

Many women in STEM face imposter syndrome, a phenomenon where successful professionals doubt their accomplishments and feel they don't belong in their role, despite evident success.

- Imposter syndrome is often exacerbated in male-dominated fields like engineering, mathematics, and computer science, where women may feel as though they are intruders or not qualified for their positions, even when they are highly skilled.
- This self-doubt can prevent women from taking on new challenges, asking for promotions, or even seeking out new opportunities that could advance their careers.

## 7. Cultural and Societal Expectations

Cultural and societal expectations continue to present barriers for women in science and technology. For example, women in certain regions may face:

- Pressure to conform to traditional gender roles, including expectations to focus on domestic duties rather than pursuing advanced careers.
- Cultural stigmas that discourage women from asserting themselves in leadership roles or from pursuing careers in fields that are deemed "masculine."
- Women who break these traditional norms often face criticism or isolation for not conforming to gendered expectations.

This creates an environment where many women feel they must constantly prove their worth or justify their place in the workplace,

leading to emotional exhaustion and a lack of motivation.

## 8. Lack of Policy Support

Many companies still lack policies that actively support women's careers in science and technology. These policies could include:

- Gender equality in hiring practices, performance reviews, and promotion policies.
- Workplace flexibility for women managing both their career and personal life.
- Parental leave and supportive childcare options to help women return to their careers after starting a family.

Without these kinds of policies in place, companies can inadvertently perpetuate gender imbalances, making it difficult for women to progress in their careers, particularly in fields like STEM, where work-life balance is crucial.

## 9. Resistance to Change

Some institutions and individuals in science and technology sectors are resistant to gender equality initiatives, either through passive indifference or active opposition.

- Women in leadership roles often face hostility or dismissiveness from male colleagues who are uncomfortable with changes in traditionally male-dominated sectors.
- This resistance can be particularly challenging for women who are trying to create inclusive environments, as they may

be met with an unwillingness to address gender inequalities at all levels.

## 10. Lack of Female Representation in Research and Policy

Women are often underrepresented in scientific research teams, as well as in policy-making bodies that influence funding and research agendas. This means that the challenges women face in science and technology may go unaddressed by decision-makers who do not have direct experience with gendered barriers.

## How Aura Solution Company Limited is Contributing to the Change

At Aura Solution Company Limited, we understand that gender diversity is essential for scientific innovation and technological

advancement. Through initiatives and partnerships sponsored by Auradevi Foundation, Aura is actively supporting women in science and technology in the following ways:

1. **Sponsorship of Women in STEM Programs:** Aura invests in scholarships, research grants, and mentorship programs for women pursuing careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.
2. **Advocacy for Gender Equality:** Aura works with industry leaders to promote inclusive workplace cultures, offering gender equality workshops and training sessions for corporations to adopt best practices.
3. **Visibility for Women Leaders in Science:** Through platforms like Aurapedia, Aura highlights the achievements of female scientists, tech innovators, and



entrepreneurs, providing them with the recognition they deserve to inspire future generations.

4. Policy Support: Aura advocates for policy reforms that create a more inclusive environment in tech and research, including flexible work policies, parental leave, and supportive career frameworks for women.

## Conclusion

While significant strides have been made, women in science and technology continue to face numerous challenges. Gender biases, underrepresentation in leadership, and workplace inequalities are just a few of the hurdles women must overcome. However, with continued support, mentorship, and policy change, women will be able to break down

these barriers and drive transformational change across these fields. Aura Solution Company Limited is proud to sponsor programs that promote gender equality and empower women in STEM, paving the way for a more inclusive and innovative future.

## WOMEN AS A SCIENTIST

The role of women in science has evolved dramatically over the last century, though they still face significant challenges. Historically, women were often excluded from scientific fields, their contributions overlooked or dismissed. Today, however, women in science are not only making groundbreaking discoveries but also inspiring the next generation of scientists.

This article will explore the crucial role women play in the sciences, the challenges they face,

and the steps needed to further promote gender equality in scientific careers.

## The Historical Context

For much of history, women were systematically excluded from scientific research and education. Women like Marie Curie, who won two Nobel Prizes in Physics and Chemistry, and Rosalind Franklin, whose work on X-ray crystallography was crucial to understanding DNA, were exceptions in a male-dominated field. Despite their pioneering contributions, women often faced barriers such as lack of funding, limited access to educational opportunities, and blatant sexism from their male counterparts.

The struggle for equal representation in science continued well into the 20th century. While women slowly began to enter fields like biology,

chemistry, and physics, their contributions were often diminished, and they were denied key positions in academia and industry.

## Women in Science Today: Breaking the Glass Ceiling

In the 21st century, the landscape of women in science has dramatically shifted. Women have increasingly occupied roles once reserved for men, from leading high-profile research projects to heading major scientific organizations and institutes. However, despite the progress made, women still represent underrepresented groups in many scientific fields.

Women now hold some of the highest positions in science and technology, such as female CEOs of scientific companies, scientific

directors of government agencies, and leading researchers in academia. Women like Frances Arnold, a Nobel laureate in Chemistry, and Jennifer Doudna, a biochemist and one of the developers of the CRISPR gene-editing technology, are examples of women who have redefined the boundaries of what is possible in their fields.

However, the gender disparity in science is still a pressing issue. According to reports from various scientific organizations, women represent only about 30% of researchers worldwide. This is even more pronounced in fields such as engineering, physics, and computer science, where women make up less than 25% of the workforce.

## Challenges Women Face in Science

Despite the growing presence of women in science, barriers to entry and advancement remain prevalent. Some of the key challenges women face in scientific fields include:

1. Gender Bias and Stereotypes

Women scientists often face gendered expectations about their roles and capabilities. These biases affect hiring decisions, promotions, and the allocation of resources and funding. For example, female scientists may be given more administrative or teaching roles rather than leading research teams. Additionally, the stereotype that men are more suited for technical and leadership positions remains an ongoing challenge.

2. Work-Life Balance and Family Responsibilities

Science is an intensive field, often requiring long hours in labs, fieldwork, or

traveling for conferences. For women, especially those with children or caregiving responsibilities, balancing a career in science with family life can be particularly challenging. While more institutions are now offering flexible working hours or parental leave policies, structural barriers still exist that hinder women from achieving a work-life balance that supports their career growth.

### 3. Lack of Mentorship and Networking Opportunities

Mentorship is crucial in advancing any career, and this is especially true in science, where career development often relies on connections, collaborations, and guidance from senior scientists. Women in science frequently report having fewer female mentors, due to the low number of women in senior positions. Networking opportunities may also be limited for

women, particularly in male-dominated fields, preventing them from building the professional relationships that could advance their careers.

#### 4. Imposter Syndrome

Many women in science experience imposter syndrome, a phenomenon in which they feel like they don't belong or that their accomplishments are due to luck rather than merit. This psychological challenge can lead to self-doubt, reluctance to ask for promotions, or hesitation in pursuing leadership roles.

#### 5. Lack of Representation in Leadership Roles

Despite the increasing number of women entering scientific fields, they remain underrepresented in leadership positions. This is particularly true in academic leadership and scientific boards, where



men still occupy a disproportionate share of roles. This lack of female role models in leadership positions can perpetuate gender inequalities and limit opportunities for younger women in science.

## Breaking Down the Barriers: How to Support Women in Science

To further encourage and empower women in science, several strategies need to be implemented to break down barriers and create a more inclusive scientific community. Some of these strategies include:

1. Encouraging Early Participation in STEM  
Encouraging girls to pursue STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education from an early age

is crucial. Programs like STEM outreach for young women, mentorship initiatives, and scholarships can inspire the next generation of female scientists and give them the confidence to pursue careers in male-dominated fields.

## 2. Equal Pay for Equal Work

Efforts to close the gender pay gap in science need to be stepped up. Female scientists should be compensated equally for the same work and given the same opportunities for funding and recognition as their male counterparts.

## 3. Creating Inclusive Workplaces

Workplaces should be inclusive and flexible to ensure women can succeed in both their professional and personal lives. This includes implementing policies for flexible hours, remote work, paid parental leave, and on-site childcare to help

balance career demands with family responsibilities.

#### 4. Promoting Female Mentorship and Sponsorship

Establishing mentorship networks for young women in science is crucial. Women at senior levels should be actively encouraged to mentor and sponsor younger female colleagues. This will help increase the representation of women in research leadership and academic positions.

#### 5. Addressing Imposter Syndrome

Women need confidence-building programs and peer support groups to overcome feelings of inadequacy and imposter syndrome. Encouraging open conversations about these challenges can help women feel more empowered to take

leadership roles and pursue high-risk scientific endeavors.

## Conclusion: Women Shaping the Future of Science

Women have been instrumental in the growth and development of science throughout history, and their influence is now stronger than ever. However, the fight for gender equality in science is far from over. Women still face significant challenges—from gender biases and pay gaps to underrepresentation in leadership roles. As we continue to break down these barriers, it is essential to create an environment where women feel empowered to thrive in scientific fields. By providing mentorship, equal opportunities, and an inclusive work environment, we can ensure that women are given the tools to succeed and contribute to the

future of scientific innovation. Women in science are no longer just breaking barriers—they are shaping the future of technology, medicine, and research. Their contributions are vital to the progress of society, and as a community, we must continue to support their work at every step.

## WOMEN IN BUSINESS

### A Global Renaissance

In the 21st-century economic landscape, the emergence of women in business is no longer a mere social trend—it is a structural evolution redefining the essence of leadership, corporate governance, and economic growth. Around the world, women are not only participating in business—they are leading corporations, creating billion-dollar startups, directing policy, and shifting global narratives.

## Historical Context: From Margins to Mandates

Historically, women were confined to peripheral roles in commerce. Despite remarkable figures like Madam C.J. Walker, the world's first female self-made millionaire, or Coco Chanel's transformation of fashion and luxury, systemic exclusion kept most women at the edges of economic power. It wasn't until the late 20th century that legislative, educational, and cultural shifts began enabling women to claim their space in boardrooms and C-suites.

## The Modern Surge

According to Aurapedia's 2025 Global Leadership Index, women now hold:

- 33% of senior executive roles in developed economies,
- 20% in emerging markets,

- And lead 1 in 5 startups globally.

Asia has become a particularly dynamic region in this regard. Countries like Thailand, India, and Vietnam are witnessing a rise in female-led enterprises—many in fintech, healthcare, and sustainable development sectors. Notably, Aura Solution Company Limited has emerged as a leader in empowering women at the helm, from strategy to sustainability.

## Challenges That Persist

Despite progress, significant barriers remain:

- **Capital Access:** Female entrepreneurs receive less than 3% of global venture capital funding.
- **Boardroom Bias:** Only 10% of Fortune 500 companies are led by women.

- Cultural Expectations: Many women still face gender-role expectations that affect mobility, leadership opportunities, and career longevity.

Aurapedia data indicates that companies with women in top management experience 30% better long-term profitability, yet institutional investment still lags in supporting female founders.

## Leadership Style: The Quiet Revolution

Women leaders are redefining corporate culture —not through mimicry of male-dominated power structures, but through collaboration, empathy, transparency, and a long-term view of success. This quiet revolution is proving especially effective in crisis management,



ethical governance, and sustainable investment  
—key areas for future-ready corporations.

“Women don't just build businesses. They build ecosystems,”

— Auranusa Jeeranont, CFO, Aura Solution Company Limited

## Policy and Corporate Support

Governments and corporations are slowly adapting. Gender quotas on corporate boards (e.g., Norway), ESG-linked executive hiring mandates, and inclusive financial products are laying the groundwork for a more balanced economy. Aura Solution Company Limited has pioneered internal programs that ensure equal leadership pathways, mentorship for emerging female talent, and board-level diversity representation.

## The Future: Empowering a Global Generation

At Aurapedia, we forecast that by 2035:

- Women will comprise 50% of all new business registrations worldwide.
- Female-led investment portfolios will control over \$100 trillion in assets.
- Inclusive leadership will become a defining KPI for global investors.

This is not just a movement—it is a correction of course. The rise of women in business is an inevitable, necessary, and beneficial transformation for the global economy. At the intersection of capitalism and conscience, women are proving that profitable can also mean principled.

## Aurapedia Conclusion

As the world recalibrates toward equity and innovation, women in business represent the most profound untapped opportunity of our time. The institutions, investors, and societies that understand this—not as a quota, but as a competitive advantage—will lead the next era of economic resilience.

## CHALLENGES

### Understanding the Barriers to an Equitable Corporate Future

Despite remarkable progress in recent decades, women in business continue to face significant and often systemic challenges that hinder full participation in the global economy. These barriers exist at multiple levels—from access to capital and leadership opportunities to cultural expectations and unconscious bias.

Here are the most pressing challenges:

## 1. Access to Capital and Funding

One of the most persistent obstacles is the gender funding gap. According to global venture capital reports:

- Women-led startups receive less than 3% of total VC funding.
- Mixed-gender teams receive around 8%, while male-dominated teams secure the rest.

This imbalance is driven by both investor bias and limited access to male-dominated funding networks. Women are often expected to show more traction or lower risk for the same level of funding.

## 2. Lack of Representation in Leadership

Although the number of female CEOs is growing, women still account for:

- Just 10% of Fortune 500 CEOs.
- Less than 25% of board members in global corporations.

In many regions, women struggle to break into senior executive roles due to the “glass ceiling”—an invisible but impenetrable barrier reinforced by legacy systems and male-centric power structures.

## 3. Workplace Bias and Stereotyping

Women often face unconscious bias that manifests in hiring, promotion, and compensation decisions. Studies show:

- Women are less likely to be promoted to managerial roles.
- They are often judged more harshly for assertive behavior, while the same traits are praised in male peers.

Bias also appears in performance reviews, where women are more likely to receive vague feedback, limiting career development.

#### 4. Balancing Career and Family Expectations

Societal expectations still place disproportionate responsibility for caregiving and domestic duties on women. This creates:

- Higher attrition rates in mid-career.
- Pressure to choose between leadership ambitions and family life.

The lack of flexible working environments, paid parental leave, and affordable childcare further exacerbates this challenge.

## 5. Limited Mentorship and Networking

Professional growth is often tied to strong mentorship and networking opportunities. Women—especially in male-dominated industries like finance, tech, and manufacturing—frequently report:

- Fewer sponsors advocating for their advancement.
- Exclusion from informal networks where key business decisions and opportunities arise.

## 6. Cultural and Societal Constraints

In many parts of the world, cultural norms still discourage female entrepreneurship or leadership. Legal restrictions in some countries limit women's rights to:

- Own property.
- Register businesses.
- Travel independently or make financial decisions.

These constraints reinforce economic dependence and limit upward mobility.

## 7. Pay Inequality

Women continue to earn less than men for the same work, with global wage gaps ranging between 15% to 25%. Even in countries with strong labor protections, negotiation bias and structural pay disparities persist.



## 8. Lack of Tailored Financial Products

Most financial services are designed with male clients in mind. Women entrepreneurs often find existing products misaligned with their business models, risk tolerance, or financial cycles—especially in sectors like informal trade or microenterprise.

## 9. Media Representation and Role Models

Women in business are still underrepresented in media and success stories, which affects visibility and aspiration. While high-profile leaders like Gita Gopinath, Sheryl Sandberg, and Auranusa Jeeranont are changing that narrative, many regions lack relatable role models for young women.

**BUSINESS WOMEN**

# Women Redefining Global Business

## Five Powerful Businesswomen Shaping the Modern Economy

Women have emerged as some of the most influential leaders in today's business world, breaking barriers, founding billion-dollar enterprises, and redefining corporate culture across industries. Their success stories not only inspire, but also serve as proof that gender is no limitation to greatness in business.

### 1. Auranusa Jeeranont – Thailand

Success Story: Founder of Auradevi Foundation and CFO of Aura Solution Company Limited

Auranusa is a pioneering figure in Southeast Asia's financial sector. She played a vital role in transforming Aura Solution Company Limited into a globally recognized private financial firm, headquartered in Phuket. Under her leadership,

Aura has launched major philanthropic arms like the Auradevi Foundation, revitalized Royal Phuket Marina into Auraberry, and is expanding into global media. Her approach blends sustainability, luxury, and integrity—a rare combination in today’s corporate world.

Impact: Empowered Thai communities through education and health trust funds; elevated Thailand’s role in global finance.

## 2. Whitney Wolfe Herd – United States

Success Story: Founder and CEO of Bumble

After co-founding Tinder, Whitney Wolfe Herd founded Bumble, a dating app where women make the first move. Bumble became a public company in 2021, making Wolfe Herd the youngest female self-made billionaire at age 31.

Impact: Changed gender dynamics in tech and online dating; championed women-first digital platforms.

### 3. Gita Gopinath – India / United States

Success Story: First Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Although not a traditional entrepreneur, Gita's economic leadership has influenced global fiscal policy. She has guided countries through crises such as COVID-19 and trade wars, making her one of the most powerful economists in the world.

Impact: Advised G20 economies and shaped inclusive economic recovery strategies worldwide.

#### 4. Anne Wojcicki – United States

Success Story: Co-founder and CEO of 23andMe

Anne revolutionized the health-tech industry with 23andMe, a direct-to-consumer genetic testing company. Her leadership brought personal genomics into mainstream health conversations, empowering millions to access genetic insights affordably.

Impact: Democratized healthcare data and personalized medicine; led biotech innovation as a female CEO.

#### 5. Falguni Nayar – India

Success Story: Founder and CEO of Nykaa

After a successful career in investment banking, Falguni Nayar launched Nykaa, an online beauty and wellness platform, in 2012. Nykaa became one of India's first profitable e-commerce

unicorns and made her one of the wealthiest self-made women in India.

Impact: Transformed India's online retail landscape and empowered local beauty brands.

These women exemplify diverse paths to success—through finance, technology, economics, e-commerce, and philanthropy. They prove that leadership is not confined by industry, geography, or gender.

## WOMEN IN POLITICS

### Women in Politics: Breaking Barriers and Leading Nations

Throughout history, politics has been dominated by men—but over the last century, women have steadily redefined global leadership, challenging outdated norms and transforming the political

landscape. From heads of state to ministers, women have increasingly taken center stage, driving policy reforms, peace negotiations, economic development, and social change.

## Why Women in Politics Matter

Women bring diverse perspectives, advocate for inclusive policy, and often emphasize collaboration over confrontation. Studies show that when women lead, countries tend to perform better in areas like education, health, gender equality, and poverty reduction.

## Five Powerful Women Who Shaped Global Politics

### 1. Jacinda Ardern – New Zealand

Role: Prime Minister (2017–2023)

Ardern became known globally for her empathetic, firm leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and the Christchurch mosque attacks. Her style—calm, transparent, and compassionate—was often cited as a model for modern leadership.

Impact: Strengthened New Zealand's global image; promoted climate action, child welfare, and inclusivity.

## 2. Sanna Marin – Finland

Role: Prime Minister (2019–2023)

At just 34, Marin became one of the youngest leaders in the world. She led a progressive coalition in Finland and became a symbol of millennial leadership.



Impact: Championed education, green energy, and gender equality while balancing economic reforms.

### 3. Angela Merkel – Germany

Role: Chancellor (2005–2021)

Often called the “de facto leader of Europe,” Merkel led Germany through multiple global crises, including the financial collapse of 2008 and the European refugee crisis. Her rational, science-based decision-making earned her respect across political divides.

Impact: Strengthened EU unity; promoted stability and economic growth in Europe.

### 4. Yingluck Shinawatra – Thailand

Role: Prime Minister (2011–2014)

Thailand’s first female Prime Minister, Yingluck

focused on infrastructure development, flood management, and rural economic support. Her tenure was historic, though politically contentious.

Impact: Brought greater female visibility in Thai politics; launched large-scale public investment programs.

## 5. Kamala Harris – United States

Role: Vice President (2021–Present)

Kamala Harris made history as the first female Vice President of the U.S., and the first of Black and South Asian descent. Her career in law, civil rights, and public policy reflects the growing presence of women of color in global governance.

Impact: Pushed for healthcare reform, workers' rights, and racial justice.

## Ongoing Challenges

Despite progress, women still face:

- Gender-based discrimination and violence
- Media bias and stereotyping
- Underrepresentation in national parliaments (just 26% globally as of 2024)
- Systemic barriers to campaign financing and political mentorship

## Conclusion

Women in politics are not just breaking glass ceilings—they're rebuilding the rooms with a new blueprint of leadership. The future of governance is increasingly female, inclusive,

and resilient. As more women enter and reshape political spaces, global leadership is becoming smarter, more compassionate, and more effective.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenges Faced by Women in Politics

Despite growing global awareness and increasing participation, women in politics continue to face deep-rooted challenges. These obstacles are not merely political—they're cultural, economic, systemic, and often personal. For women striving to lead in government, policy-making, and diplomacy, the journey remains steep and complex.

#### 1. Gender Stereotyping

Women leaders are frequently subjected to outdated stereotypes: too emotional to lead, too

soft on security, or too focused on “women’s issues.” This bias affects both public perception and media portrayal, often reducing their credibility before they’ve even spoken.

“If a woman is assertive, she's called aggressive. If she's soft, she's seen as weak. The standards are constantly shifting.” —  
Global Gender Gap Report

## 2. Media Bias and Objectification

The media often focuses more on a female politician's appearance, fashion, or marital status than her policies or vision. This persistent focus undermines her authority and shifts the narrative away from her professional capability.

## 3. Violence and Harassment

Women in politics face a disproportionate amount of online abuse, character attacks, and even physical threats. In many parts of the world, female candidates and elected officials report receiving gender-based harassment that aims to silence or intimidate them.

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, more than 80% of female parliamentarians worldwide have experienced psychological violence in office.

#### 4. Cultural and Social Norms

In traditional societies, a woman in power can be viewed as disruptive to the social order. Many women face resistance from family or communities who still believe leadership is a “man’s role.” This discouragement often starts

at an early age, limiting women's political ambition before it begins.

## 5. Economic Inequality and Campaign Financing

Political campaigns are expensive. Women generally have less access to personal wealth, political donors, or influential networks that provide financial backing. As a result, female candidates are often underfunded, giving male counterparts an advantage in visibility and reach.

## 6. Underrepresentation in Political Parties

Women are underrepresented in leadership positions within political parties, which means they're often excluded from strategic decisions or are placed in less "winnable" electoral districts. Even progressive parties sometimes

fall short in actively grooming women for leadership.

## 7. Double Burden: Home and Politics

Many female politicians juggle family responsibilities alongside their political careers. In cultures where caregiving is seen as the woman's role, this dual expectation creates exhaustion and limits availability, especially in time-consuming leadership roles.

## 8. Legal and Institutional Barriers

Some countries still lack strong legal frameworks that support women's political participation—such as gender quotas, electoral reforms, or protections against harassment in political settings.



## 9. Lack of Mentorship and Networks

Male politicians often benefit from powerful mentorship circles. Women, especially in emerging democracies, may find fewer role models or allies to support their political journey. This isolation can hinder their strategic growth and confidence.

## 10. Public Scrutiny and Higher Expectations

Female politicians are often held to unfairly high standards. One misstep, and their entire leadership credibility is questioned—while their male peers are often given more leniency or second chances.

## Conclusion

These challenges reflect systemic issues that require global attention—not just to ensure

equality, but to improve the quality of leadership worldwide. When women lead, societies benefit from more inclusive and sustainable governance. Breaking these barriers isn't just about fairness; it's about progress.

## POLITICAL WOMEN

### Leading with Resilience and Vision

In the evolving landscape of global governance, women in politics are no longer exceptions—they are becoming powerful symbols of change, integrity, and inclusive leadership. From presidential offices to grassroots movements, female politicians continue to break barriers, influence policies, and redefine what leadership looks like in the 21st century.

### Historical Context

For centuries, political power was almost exclusively reserved for men. Women were denied the right to vote, let alone hold office. The 20th century saw major shifts—starting with suffrage movements, followed by waves of feminist activism, and eventually, the rise of iconic female leaders like Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher, and Benazir Bhutto.

Today, more than 100 countries have had a female head of state or government at some point, but the road to gender parity in politics remains a work in progress.

## Why Women in Politics Matter

1. **Inclusive Decision-Making:** Studies show that women are more likely to advocate for social welfare, healthcare, education, and environmental policies.

2. Lower Corruption Levels: Research from the World Bank suggests that increased female participation in government correlates with lower corruption levels.
3. Peacebuilding and Stability: In conflict zones, women have been instrumental in peace negotiations and community rebuilding.
4. Democratic Legitimacy: A representative government must reflect its population—excluding women from leadership undermines democratic values.

## Notable Female Political Leaders

Here are five influential women in politics who've made significant contributions globally:

### 1. Jacinda Ardern (New Zealand)

Former Prime Minister known for her empathetic leadership style. She gained global recognition for her handling of the Christchurch mosque attacks and COVID-19 crisis.

## 2. Angela Merkel (Germany)

As Chancellor for 16 years, Merkel was regarded as the de facto leader of Europe. She brought stability to the EU during financial crises and upheld liberal democratic values.

## 3. Tsai Ing-wen (Taiwan)

Taiwan's first female president and a strong proponent of democracy and sovereignty in the face of pressure from China.

#### 4. Sanna Marin (Finland)

One of the world's youngest prime ministers, Marin led a coalition of five women-led parties, emphasizing climate reform and social justice.

#### 5. Yuriko Koike (Japan)

Tokyo's first female governor, breaking gender norms in Japan's male-dominated political sphere, especially in urban policy reform and Olympic preparations.

### Ongoing Challenges

Even with these advances, women still face significant barriers:

- Gender bias and stereotyping
- Media objectification

- Lower funding for campaigns
- Threats, harassment, and political violence
- Underrepresentation in party leadership

(For a deeper dive, see our article on “Challenges Faced by Women in Politics.”)

## The Future of Women in Politics

To accelerate gender equality in leadership:

- Gender quotas are being implemented in parliaments globally.
- Female mentorship programs are growing.
- Digital platforms give women leaders more visibility and reach.

The future of governance must be inclusive, ethical, and visionary—qualities that women around the world are proving to deliver.

## LAW AND JUSTICE

### Women in Law and Justice: Shaping Equity from the Bench to the Bar

In every democratic society, the rule of law stands as the cornerstone of justice, fairness, and order. Within this essential system, women in law and justice are not only interpreting and enforcing the law—they are reshaping its spirit to ensure inclusivity, human dignity, and progress. From courtrooms to corporate boardrooms, women are now among the most influential voices in the legal world.

### Historical Evolution



For much of history, the legal profession was closed to women. It wasn't until the late 19th and early 20th centuries that women began to enter law schools and bar associations—often facing ridicule, resistance, and institutional barriers. One of the earliest pioneers was Arabella Mansfield, who became the first female lawyer in the United States in 1869. In the UK, Helena Normanton was the first woman to practice as a barrister. In Asia, trailblazers like Cornelia Sorabji in India—who became the first female lawyer in the British Empire—began breaking ceilings even under colonial rule. Today, women make up a significant and growing proportion of judges, attorneys, law professors, legal scholars, and policymakers.

## Why Women in Law and Justice Matter

- **Diverse Interpretation of Law:** Women bring different perspectives that enrich

legal reasoning and interpretations, especially in cases involving gender, family, and minority rights.

- **Improved Access to Justice:** Female lawyers and judges often advocate for more equitable legal access for women, children, and marginalized communities.
- **Reform-Driven Leadership:** Women in the legal sector are leading key reforms on domestic violence, child custody, equal pay, sexual harassment, and more.
- **Moral Authority and Trust:** Female judges and legal professionals often score high in public trust, especially in matters requiring sensitivity and ethical judgment.

Prominent Female Figures in Law and Justice

Here are five women who have significantly impacted the legal world:

### 1. Ruth Bader Ginsburg (United States)

Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court and a global feminist icon. She advanced civil liberties and gender equality throughout her career, becoming a powerful legal voice for justice.

### 2. Fatou Bensouda (Gambia)

Former Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC). She led investigations into war crimes and crimes against humanity, including in Libya and Darfur.

### 3. Indira Jaising (India)

A senior advocate at the Supreme Court of India and a relentless champion for human rights, women's rights, and legal reform. She co-founded the Lawyers Collective, a human rights NGO.

#### 4. Julia Sebutinde (Uganda)

Judge at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), she is the first African woman to sit on the court and has been influential in international law and transitional justice.

#### 5. Brenda Hale (United Kingdom)

The first female President of the UK Supreme Court. Known for her clarity and courage in landmark decisions such as ruling the 2019 prorogation of Parliament unlawful.

#### Current Challenges

Despite progress, female legal professionals still face systemic barriers:

- **Gender Bias in Courtrooms and Firms**  
Many women are passed over for senior roles in law firms or are typecast into certain legal practice areas.
- **Underrepresentation in Senior Judiciary**  
While entry-level roles see gender parity in many countries, the top ranks remain male-dominated.
- **Harassment and Discrimination**  
Female lawyers and judges still report cases of harassment, unequal pay, and exclusion from informal legal networks.
- **Work-Life Balance Issues**  
The legal profession's demanding hours and adversarial culture can

disproportionately affect women, especially working mothers.

## Global Trends and Progress

- **Law School Enrollments:** In many countries, women now comprise over 50% of law students.
- **Gender-Focused Law Networks:** Organizations like Women in Law International, the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ), and UN Women Legal Aid are supporting global collaboration.
- **Legal Reforms Led by Women:** Women are increasingly authoring legislation, leading judicial reform commissions, and advising heads of state.

## Conclusion: Toward Justice with Balance

Women in law and justice are more than professionals—they are reformers, rights defenders, and standard-bearers of truth. Their expanding role in the global legal system reflects not only a triumph over centuries of exclusion but also a vision for a more balanced, ethical, and humane justice system. Their rise isn't just about representation. It's about transforming how justice is perceived and practiced.

## CHALLENGES

### 1. Underrepresentation in Leadership Roles

Despite increasing numbers of female law graduates, women are still underrepresented in senior positions such as Chief Justices, senior partners, or Supreme Court justices. Gender bias, opaque promotion systems, and “old boys’ clubs” often act as barriers.

## 2. Pay Disparity

Female legal professionals often earn less than their male counterparts, even with equivalent experience and performance. This gap is wider in private law firms and corporate legal departments.

## 3. Work-Life Balance

The legal profession is known for its demanding hours and high stress, which affects women disproportionately—especially those balancing motherhood or caregiving responsibilities. Many are forced to leave the profession or shift to less competitive areas.

## 4. Harassment and Discrimination



Sexual harassment, gender-based microaggressions, and hostile work environments remain rampant in many legal institutions. In some countries, female lawyers face disrespect in courtrooms and discrimination by clients and colleagues alike.

## 5. Lack of Mentorship and Sponsorship

While mentorship is crucial for career advancement, many women in law struggle to find senior mentors, especially in male-dominated firms. The absence of role models can hinder professional development and confidence.

## 6. Stereotyping of Legal Competency

Women are often perceived as better suited for family, civil, or human rights law, while criminal,

corporate, or constitutional law is seen as “male domains.” This restricts opportunities and recognition.

## 7. Unequal Opportunities in High-Profile Cases

Top litigation roles and headline cases are still often awarded to male lawyers or barristers, limiting exposure and recognition for women.

## 8. Cultural and Regional Constraints

In some countries, deeply entrenched patriarchal norms limit women’s ability to practice law or even study it. Female judges in conservative societies may face public criticism or legal limitations on their authority.

## 9. Tokenism

Even when women are included in leadership, they are sometimes used symbolically rather than being given real decision-making power, leading to disillusionment and ineffective influence.

## 10. Safety Concerns

In conflict zones or countries with weak rule of law, female lawyers and judges—especially those handling cases of domestic abuse, corruption, or human rights—face threats, violence, or assassination attempts.

## WOMEN AS A JUDGE

### Women as Judges and Their Impact on Society

Women in judiciary positions, especially as judges, represent a critical force for justice, fairness, and societal development. Despite facing numerous obstacles, women have continually risen to leadership roles in the legal

field, transforming not just the courtroom but also influencing societal perceptions of justice. This article explores the challenges, achievements, and societal impacts of women as judges.

## Challenges Faced by Women Judges

### 1. Underrepresentation in High Courts and the Supreme Court:

Globally, women continue to be underrepresented in top judicial positions. Although the number of women entering law schools and working as junior lawyers has increased, their presence in the higher echelons of the judiciary—such as Supreme Court Justices or Chief Justices—remains relatively low. This imbalance in representation affects the broader legal system and judicial decision-making.

## 2. Gender Stereotyping and Bias:

Women in judicial roles often face stereotypes about their capabilities. In societies that have traditionally been patriarchal, there is a tendency to undermine female judges, questioning their authority or decision-making skills. Such biases create barriers to career progression and diminish respect for women in the legal profession.

## 3. Work-Life Balance and Family Expectations:

The demands of a judicial career can be overwhelming, especially for women who may also be expected to manage family responsibilities. The challenge of balancing work and personal life is often exacerbated by a lack of sufficient support structures within the legal field, making it difficult for women to maintain this balance.

#### 4. Resistance to Female Leadership:

Women judges, especially in conservative societies, may face overt or covert resistance from male colleagues or members of the public. Their leadership in cases, particularly those involving sensitive societal issues, can often be contested more harshly than that of their male counterparts.

### Achievements of Women Judges

#### 1. Breaking Legal Barriers:

Women judges have been instrumental in breaking down longstanding gender biases in law. In several countries, women judges have taken a proactive stance in pushing for gender equality, such as advocating for women's rights, family law reforms, and gender-sensitive rulings. Their presence and influence encourage

the legal system to evolve toward more equitable frameworks.

2. Transformative Decisions on Social Issues:  
Female judges have played a crucial role in shaping legal outcomes that support social change. For instance, they have ruled on cases involving child custody, domestic violence, reproductive rights, and discrimination, providing interpretations that benefit the underrepresented or marginalized.

3. Influence on Court Procedures:  
Women judges bring a unique perspective to the bench, often emphasizing empathy, fairness, and human rights in their rulings. Their approach helps to balance traditionally rigid judicial systems, and in many cases, they advocate for reforms in how the law is applied to ensure justice is

served for all, particularly women and children.

#### 4. Role Models for Future Generations:

The success of women in the judiciary serves as an inspiring example for young women pursuing careers in law. These female judges break the glass ceiling for future generations, showing young women that they too can aspire to high judicial positions and make a significant impact on society.

### Societal Impact of Women Judges

#### 1. Promotion of Gender Equality:

Female judges contribute to the ongoing struggle for gender equality in society by ensuring that gender biases are eliminated from the legal system. Through landmark decisions in favor of women's rights,



women judges have helped redefine cultural norms and legal interpretations surrounding women's roles in society, from workplace rights to reproductive autonomy.

2. Restoration of Trust in Justice Systems:

Women's presence in the judiciary adds to the credibility of legal institutions. Female judges often approach cases with an understanding of the challenges women face in society, providing fair and equitable rulings. This helps build public trust in the justice system, especially among women, who may have previously felt sidelined by male-dominated legal systems.

3. Advocacy for Social Justice:

Women judges tend to be more vocal about the importance of social justice issues, advocating for marginalized groups, human rights, and socio-

economic equality. Their decisions reflect a broader, more inclusive understanding of justice that considers the broader implications of legal rulings on communities and individuals.

#### 4. Creating Safe Legal Spaces for Women:

As women continue to ascend in the judiciary, the law evolves to better accommodate issues such as sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and domestic abuse. Female judges are often more attuned to the legal, social, and emotional complexities these issues bring, which helps create a safer space for women seeking justice.

### Examples of Successful Female Judges

1. Ruth Bader Ginsburg (U.S. Supreme Court):

As one of the most celebrated figures in legal history, Ruth Bader Ginsburg advocated for gender equality throughout her career. Her rulings in favor of women's rights and her ability to build consensus made her an iconic figure in the U.S. judiciary.

2. Indira Jaising (India):

Indira Jaising was one of India's first female lawyers in the Supreme Court, and she has consistently fought for women's rights, especially in terms of legal protection against domestic violence and sexual harassment. She was also the first woman to be designated as a Senior Advocate in the Supreme Court of India.

3. Baroness Hale (UK):

As the first woman to serve as President of the UK Supreme Court, Baroness Hale has been a trailblazer for women in the British

judiciary. Her judgments have played an essential role in the advancement of human rights, equality, and the protection of vulnerable groups.

4. Sandra Day O'Connor (U.S. Supreme Court):

The first female U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Sandra Day O'Connor, made significant contributions to American law, particularly in cases involving individual rights, abortion, and gender discrimination.

5. Fawzia Koofi (Afghanistan):

An Afghan politician and former Deputy Speaker of the Afghan Parliament, Fawzia Koofi has worked tirelessly for women's rights in Afghanistan, focusing on legal reforms and advocating for a more inclusive society where women can be

part of political, social, and legal institutions.

## Conclusion

Women in law, particularly as judges, play a fundamental role in shaping the legal landscape and ensuring that justice is fairly administered. Despite the challenges they face, women in judicial positions are making an undeniable impact on society. They not only inspire future generations but also help to foster a more equitable and just world. By continuing to break down barriers and push for systemic change, women judges are advancing societal progress, and their contributions are essential in the fight for justice and equality.

## ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

### Pioneering Change for a Sustainable Future

Environmental sustainability is one of the most

pressing global challenges of our time. Addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and the depletion of natural resources requires decisive action and strong leadership. Women have increasingly taken center stage in driving environmental change, contributing their expertise, passion, and unique perspectives to the fight for a more sustainable world. This article explores the pivotal role of women in environmental leadership, highlighting their achievements, the challenges they face, and the transformative impact they are having on global environmental policies and practices.

## The Rise of Women in Environmental Leadership

Historically, environmental activism and leadership roles were often dominated by men. However, over the past few decades, women have become increasingly visible and influential

in shaping environmental policies and initiatives. This shift can be attributed to several factors:

1. Growing Awareness of Gender and Environmental Justice:

The global environmental crisis has highlighted the importance of addressing issues that disproportionately affect women, especially in developing regions. Women, particularly in rural and indigenous communities, are often the primary caregivers, resource managers, and environmental stewards. Their involvement in environmental leadership is crucial for creating solutions that are not only sustainable but also equitable.

2. Changing Cultural Norms:

As women continue to break barriers in various fields, including politics, science, and business, their representation in

environmental leadership has grown significantly. Women are increasingly recognized for their leadership in environmental activism, policy-making, and sustainable development.

### 3. Global Movements and Initiatives:

International efforts such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have emphasized the need for gender equality and environmental sustainability. Women's active participation in these movements has led to a more integrated approach to solving environmental challenges, where gender issues and environmental issues are seen as interconnected.

Key Areas Where Women Lead in Environmental Change



## 1. Climate Change Advocacy:

Women have played a significant role in raising awareness and advocating for action on climate change. They bring a diverse range of experiences to the table, advocating for policies that address not only the environmental impact of climate change but also its social and economic effects on vulnerable populations, especially women and children. Female leaders like Greta Thunberg and Mary Robinson have led high-profile campaigns urging global leaders to take meaningful steps to combat climate change.

## 2. Conservation and Biodiversity:

Female environmental leaders have been instrumental in the conservation of natural ecosystems and the protection of biodiversity. Women like Jane Goodall, the renowned primatologist, and Sylvia Earle, a marine biologist, have brought global

attention to the importance of preserving wildlife and natural habitats. Their tireless work has led to significant advances in environmental education, public awareness, and policy changes aimed at conserving biodiversity.

### 3. Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy:

Women in business and politics are increasingly playing leadership roles in driving the global transition to renewable energy and sustainable development practices. Christiana Figueres, the former Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), was a key figure in the negotiation of the Paris Agreement on climate change. Similarly, women like Gina McCarthy, the former Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

(EPA), have been advocates for cleaner energy policies.

4. Environmental Justice and Human Rights:  
Many women environmental leaders focus on the intersection of environmental issues and human rights. They work to ensure that environmental degradation does not disproportionately affect marginalized communities, particularly women and children in low-income countries. Wangari Maathai, the founder of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, is a prime example of how women can lead efforts to restore ecosystems while also empowering local communities, particularly women, through education and employment.

Challenges Faced by Women in Environmental Leadership

## 1. Underrepresentation in Leadership Positions:

Despite the growing number of women in environmental activism and policy, women are still underrepresented in key decision-making positions, especially in the highest levels of government, international organizations, and corporate boards. This lack of representation limits the diversity of perspectives in environmental leadership and can lead to policies that fail to fully address the needs of women and marginalized groups.

## 2. Gender Bias and Stereotypes:

Women in environmental leadership positions often face challenges related to gender bias. They may be dismissed or undervalued in male-dominated spaces and are sometimes subjected to stereotypes about their capabilities or commitment to the cause. Overcoming

these biases requires changing societal attitudes toward women in leadership roles, which is a long-term process.

3. **Limited Access to Funding and Resources:**  
Female environmental leaders, particularly those in grassroots movements or emerging economies, often struggle to secure funding and resources for their initiatives. While women are increasingly involved in environmental entrepreneurship and advocacy, the financial and institutional support they receive often lags behind that of their male counterparts. This disparity limits their ability to scale their efforts and achieve broader impact.
4. **Cultural and Societal Barriers:**  
In many regions, women still face significant cultural and societal barriers to participating in environmental decision-making. In some patriarchal societies,

women may be excluded from public life or denied equal access to education and political participation. These barriers can hinder the potential for women to lead in environmental and conservation efforts.

## Impact of Women in Environmental Leadership

### 1. Promotion of Inclusive Environmental Policies:

Women's involvement in environmental leadership has led to more inclusive policies that consider the needs of all members of society, especially women and vulnerable populations. Female leaders are often advocates for policies that address the intersectionality of environmental and social justice, ensuring that solutions are equitable and sustainable.

## 2. Community Empowerment and Grassroots Movements:

Women environmental leaders have been at the forefront of grassroots movements that have empowered local communities to take charge of their own environmental futures. Through education, advocacy, and action, these leaders have helped communities implement sustainable agricultural practices, conserve natural resources, and build resilience against the impacts of climate change.

## 3. Role Models for Future Generations:

The growing presence of women in environmental leadership roles has created a positive feedback loop, inspiring the next generation of female environmentalists, scientists, activists, and policymakers. Female leaders serve as powerful role models for young women who aspire to make a difference in the world. By

showing that women can lead in such important areas, they create opportunities for others to follow in their footsteps.

## Notable Women Leaders in Environmental Change

### 1. Wangari Maathai (Kenya):

The late Wangari Maathai was the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. She founded the Green Belt Movement, an environmental organization that focuses on tree planting, environmental conservation, and women's empowerment. Maathai's work revolutionized the way environmental sustainability and women's rights intersect.

### 2. Greta Thunberg (Sweden):

A global symbol of youth-led climate



action, Greta Thunberg has inspired millions to take action on climate change. Her weekly school strike for climate ignited the Fridays for Future movement, and she has become a vocal advocate for urgent climate action on the global stage.

3. Christiana Figueres (Costa Rica):

A Costa Rican diplomat, Christiana Figueres played a pivotal role in the success of the Paris Agreement on climate change. As the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, she led international negotiations that resulted in the landmark global agreement to limit global temperature rise.

4. Sylvia Earle (USA):

A marine biologist and oceanographer, Sylvia Earle has been a leading voice in the conservation of the world's oceans. As the former Chief Scientist at NOAA, she

has been instrumental in raising awareness about the importance of ocean health and advocating for marine protected areas.

5. Jane Goodall (UK):

A pioneering primatologist and conservationist, Jane Goodall is best known for her groundbreaking research on chimpanzees. Goodall's work has not only transformed our understanding of primates but has also contributed to the broader environmental movement, with a focus on conservation and animal welfare.

## Conclusion

Women have played, and will continue to play, a vital role in shaping the future of our planet. Their leadership in environmental issues, from climate change advocacy to biodiversity

conservation, has been transformative. While challenges remain, the growing recognition of women's contributions in environmental leadership is a positive step toward building a more sustainable and equitable world for all. As women continue to break barriers in this space, their influence will shape the environmental landscape for generations to come.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenges Faced by Women in Environmental Leadership

While women have made significant strides in environmental leadership, they still encounter various barriers that can hinder their impact and limit their participation. Here are some of the key challenges faced by women in this field:

#### 1. Gender Bias and Stereotypes

One of the most pervasive challenges women face in environmental leadership is gender bias. In many cultures, leadership roles are traditionally associated with men, and women in positions of power are often scrutinized more closely. Gender stereotypes can also undermine women's authority and credibility, leading to them being disregarded or underestimated. Women environmental leaders are often viewed as "emotional" or "too idealistic," making it harder for them to be taken seriously in male-dominated spaces like politics, business, and scientific research.

- **Impact:** Women may struggle to gain the recognition and respect they deserve, which could affect their ability to make decisions, influence policies, or access the resources needed to carry out their work.

## 2. Limited Representation in Leadership Roles

Despite their increasing involvement in environmental causes, women are still significantly underrepresented in top leadership roles, such as heads of environmental agencies, international organizations, or corporate boards focused on sustainability. According to global reports, women make up only a fraction of senior positions in these sectors. This limited representation can lead to a lack of diverse perspectives in decision-making, and policies may not fully address the needs of all communities, particularly women and marginalized groups.

- **Impact:** The absence of women in high-level environmental decision-making positions means that policies may be skewed or overlook the needs of women and vulnerable populations. This

underrepresentation also deprives the environmental movement of valuable leadership styles and problem-solving approaches that women can offer.

### 3. Lack of Access to Resources and Funding

Women environmental leaders, particularly those in grassroots organizations or smaller NGOs, often face difficulties accessing funding and resources. While environmental organizations led by women are growing, they frequently do not have the same access to financing as their male counterparts. This is especially true for women in developing regions or rural areas, where institutional and financial support is harder to come by.

- Impact: Without adequate resources, women-led environmental initiatives may

struggle to scale, execute their projects effectively, or sustain long-term impact. They may also face challenges in conducting research, advocacy, or campaigns due to financial constraints.

#### 4. Socio-Cultural Barriers

In many regions, women face societal and cultural barriers that prevent them from fully participating in environmental leadership. In patriarchal societies, women may be excluded from public life, denied access to education, or discouraged from entering fields traditionally dominated by men. These cultural norms can limit women's ability to develop the skills and knowledge needed to lead in environmental sectors.

- Impact: Socio-cultural barriers can prevent women from accessing the same educational and professional opportunities as men. As a result, women may face additional challenges in gaining the experience, training, or recognition necessary to ascend to leadership positions in the environmental field.

## 5. Balancing Multiple Roles

Many women environmental leaders also have to juggle multiple responsibilities, including family care, community obligations, and professional work. This "double burden" can limit the time and energy women have to devote to their environmental initiatives. The expectation for women to fulfill traditional caregiving roles while also pursuing careers or activism in environmental leadership can create significant stress and burnout.



- Impact: The pressure to balance work, family, and social responsibilities can limit a woman's ability to fully invest in her environmental leadership role. This can hinder her career advancement and decrease the effectiveness of her work in advocating for change.

## 6. Gendered Impact of Environmental Degradation

The environmental challenges themselves often disproportionately affect women. In many parts of the world, especially in developing countries, women are responsible for gathering water, firewood, and other essential resources. Climate change, deforestation, and water scarcity have a direct impact on their daily lives and livelihoods. Women are often the first to feel the

effects of environmental degradation, yet they are also underrepresented in the discussions and decisions about how to address these issues.

- Impact: Women's exclusion from decision-making processes exacerbates the environmental problems they face. They are less likely to have a voice in policy discussions that directly affect their lives, leading to solutions that may not be gender-sensitive or address the specific needs of women.

## 7. Lack of Support for Networking and Mentorship

Access to mentorship, networks, and platforms for growth is often limited for women in the environmental sector. While male counterparts

may have more established networks or mentors to support their career development, women often find themselves isolated. Networking is a crucial aspect of career advancement, and without the proper guidance and connections, women may miss opportunities to expand their influence or participate in important initiatives.

- **Impact:** The lack of a strong professional network can prevent women from gaining the knowledge, resources, and connections needed to thrive in environmental leadership. This can also limit their ability to collaborate with others in the field, which is essential for advancing large-scale environmental change.

## 8. Violence and Harassment

Women environmental activists are sometimes subject to physical violence, harassment, or intimidation, especially those who advocate for indigenous rights, land preservation, or anti-pollution campaigns. In some countries, female activists have been threatened, attacked, or even murdered for challenging powerful interests that prioritize profit over the environment. The risk of violence and harassment often discourages women from stepping forward into leadership roles.

- Impact: The threat of violence creates a climate of fear that can undermine women's leadership in environmental activism. Many potential leaders may choose to remain silent or step back from activism due to safety concerns.

## Conclusion

The challenges women face in environmental leadership are significant but not insurmountable. As more women break through barriers, create change, and inspire future generations of environmental leaders, the environmental movement is becoming more inclusive and powerful. Tackling these challenges requires collective action, including dismantling gender biases, increasing representation in leadership roles, ensuring equal access to resources, and fostering a supportive environment where women's voices can be heard and valued. By addressing these challenges, we can unlock the full potential of women as catalysts for change, creating a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient world for all.

**WOMEN IN ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP**

Women have long been at the forefront of environmental leadership, advocating for sustainability, climate change mitigation, conservation, and a more equitable relationship between humanity and the planet. While women are increasingly making an impact, the journey has been marked by both immense contributions and ongoing challenges. This article explores the role of women in environmental leadership, highlighting their achievements, the barriers they face, and the transformative influence they bring to the environmental movement.

## The Role of Women in Environmental Leadership

Throughout history, women have played critical roles in protecting the environment, advocating for nature, and pushing for policies that foster sustainability. Women have a unique

perspective on environmental issues due to their connection to the land and communities, particularly in rural and indigenous settings where they are often the primary caregivers and resource managers. Here are key areas where women are leading the way:

## 1. Climate Change Advocacy

Women have been pivotal in climate change advocacy, pushing for stronger policies and actions to reduce carbon emissions, promote renewable energy, and build climate resilience. Global leaders like Greta Thunberg, Wangari Maathai, and Christiana Figueres have brought attention to the need for urgent climate action, calling for collective responsibility to safeguard the future of our planet.

- Example: Wangari Maathai, the founder of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, played

a major role in environmental conservation, fighting deforestation, and empowering women through the planting of trees.

## 2. Environmental Justice and Conservation

Women leaders in environmental justice are working to address the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens. Women, particularly those from marginalized communities, are often disproportionately affected by environmental degradation, such as pollution, water scarcity, and natural disasters. Women like Winona LaDuke, an indigenous environmental activist, have dedicated their lives to advocating for the rights of native communities to protect their lands and resources.



- Example: Winona LaDuke is a prominent Native American environmental leader who has worked to promote sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, and protect indigenous lands from environmental degradation.

### 3. Sustainable Development

Women in leadership are also championing the cause of sustainable development, striving to integrate environmental, social, and economic goals. By promoting green technologies, social innovation, and sustainable agriculture, women are helping to develop solutions that balance the needs of the planet with human progress.

- Example: Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for

Human Rights, is a prominent advocate for sustainable development and climate justice, emphasizing the intersection of human rights and environmental sustainability.

## Challenges Faced by Women in Environmental Leadership

While women have made significant strides in environmental leadership, they continue to face multiple challenges:

### 1. Gender Stereotypes and Bias

In many societies, leadership roles, particularly in environmental governance, are still associated with men. Women are often underrepresented in high-level decision-making bodies, whether in government, the corporate

sector, or global environmental organizations. This gender bias is exacerbated by stereotypes that women are less capable in leadership or decision-making positions, particularly in areas traditionally dominated by men, such as science and politics.

## 2. Lack of Representation in High-Level Positions

Women remain vastly underrepresented in top environmental leadership roles. For instance, women hold a small percentage of executive positions in major international environmental organizations or government bodies responsible for environmental policy. This lack of representation means that women's perspectives and concerns are less likely to be included in key environmental decisions.

### 3. Funding and Resource Accessibility

While women are leading many environmental initiatives, especially in grassroots movements, they often struggle to secure the same level of funding and support as their male counterparts. Women's organizations working on environmental issues often face barriers to accessing grants, investments, and resources necessary to scale their initiatives.

### 4. Violence and Intimidation

Women environmental leaders, particularly those in the Global South, often face threats, intimidation, and violence for their activism. In countries where women's rights are restricted, those advocating for environmental protection, land rights, and sustainability often encounter severe resistance from powerful corporations or

political groups with vested interests in maintaining the status quo.

- Example: Berta Cáceres, a Honduran environmental activist and leader of the Lenca indigenous group, was assassinated for her efforts in opposing a hydroelectric dam that threatened the environment and indigenous lands.

## 5. Balancing Multiple Roles

Many women in environmental leadership also juggle the demands of their personal and professional lives. Societal expectations of women to fulfill caregiving roles often clash with the time and energy required for effective leadership. This "double burden" can deter

women from fully participating in or advancing their environmental careers.

## The Impact of Women in Environmental Leadership

Despite these challenges, women continue to make significant contributions to environmental leadership and change. Women bring a unique perspective to environmental issues, often advocating for solutions that prioritize community well-being, sustainability, and justice. Their leadership is driving important global movements and policies, including:

- **Green Economy and Sustainable Agriculture:** Women are at the forefront of creating sustainable livelihoods for farmers, promoting eco-friendly practices, and fighting against land degradation,

which disproportionately affects women, especially in rural areas.

- **Community-Led Conservation:** Women are key in advocating for community-based conservation efforts. Their roles as custodians of local ecosystems and protectors of biodiversity make them effective leaders in grassroots environmental movements.
- **Policy and Legislation:** Women leaders are pushing for laws and policies that support environmental protection. Women like Christiana Figueres, former Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), played a key role in brokering the Paris Agreement in 2015.

## Conclusion

Women in environmental leadership are essential in shaping a sustainable future for our planet. They have demonstrated resilience, creativity, and determination in their efforts to tackle some of the most pressing environmental challenges of our time. As we move forward, it is crucial to remove the barriers that limit women's involvement and ensure that they have equal access to opportunities, resources, and support.

As environmental issues become more critical in the coming years, women's leadership will be central to creating a more just and sustainable world. By continuing to empower women and increasing their representation in environmental decision-making, we can build stronger, more inclusive movements for the protection of the planet and the well-being of all its inhabitants.



## WOMEN IN MEDIA

Women have always played a pivotal role in the media and communication industries, but their contributions have often been overlooked or underrepresented. Over the last few decades, however, women have risen to significant leadership positions in these fields, not only as journalists and broadcasters but also as influential decision-makers shaping narratives, policies, and media trends globally.

This article delves into the role of women in the media and communication sectors, exploring their impact, the challenges they face, and the opportunities they bring to the forefront of the industry. As global connectivity and digital platforms continue to expand, women are redefining how stories are told, shared, and consumed.

# The Role of Women in Media and Communication

Media and communication serve as the backbone of modern society, influencing politics, culture, economics, and social change. Women in this field have made crucial contributions in diverse areas, such as journalism, broadcasting, digital media, film production, public relations, and media management. From traditional newsrooms to digital spaces, women have not only broken barriers but also paved the way for future generations of female leaders in the industry.

## 1. Breaking the Glass Ceiling in Journalism and Broadcasting

Historically, the media industry was male-dominated, with women struggling to gain equal footing in editorial boards, management, and

on-screen roles. However, significant strides have been made in recent years, with women taking on prominent positions. Women like Oprah Winfrey, Barbara Walters, and Christiane Amanpour have become household names due to their success in journalism and broadcasting.

- Example: Christiane Amanpour, CNN's Chief International Correspondent, has spent decades reporting from war zones and covering some of the most critical global events, becoming one of the most influential journalists of her time.

Women in journalism and broadcasting are now responsible for delivering news, influencing public opinion, and even shaping global events. Their credibility and leadership in front of and

behind the camera are vital in maintaining the integrity of the media industry.

## 2. Shaping Public Relations and Media Communications

Women also hold key roles in public relations (PR) and media communications. This sector plays a major part in creating brand identities, shaping public perception, and managing corporate communications. Women executives in PR firms, media consultancies, and corporate communication departments craft the messages that shape public opinion, policy debates, and even consumer behavior.

- Example: Heather Rabbatts, former CEO of the media consultancy group Hera Communications, has been a trailblazer in

PR and media communications, specializing in crisis management and corporate reputation.

### 3. Empowering Digital Media and Content Creation

With the rise of digital media, social platforms, and content creation, women have found new opportunities to lead, influence, and innovate. The digital landscape has opened doors for women to produce content that reflects diverse voices, perspectives, and experiences. Through blogs, YouTube channels, and social media platforms, women have successfully established themselves as content creators, influencers, and activists.

- Example: Marques Brownlee and iJustine, both of whom started on YouTube, are great examples of women leveraging social media to develop personal brands, creating millions of followers and influencing digital culture.

Women are also driving digital innovation, with many female-led startups and companies in tech and digital media emerging as influential players. This democratization of content creation and distribution has allowed women to control their narratives, bypass traditional gatekeepers, and create media that speaks directly to audiences.

Challenges Faced by Women in Media and Communication

Despite the significant progress women have made in media and communication, they still face numerous challenges, both institutional and societal. These challenges continue to impede full gender equality in the industry, limiting opportunities for women to thrive at the highest levels of media leadership.

## 1. Gender Stereotypes and Bias

In media, gender bias is still prevalent. Women often find themselves pigeonholed into roles that reinforce traditional gender stereotypes, such as "soft news" or entertainment journalism, rather than hard news or investigative reporting. They also frequently face scrutiny about their appearance, which is rarely the case for their male counterparts. Additionally, when women take on leadership roles, they can face criticism for being too

assertive or aggressive, which is often not the case when men display similar behavior.

## 2. Unequal Pay and Career Advancement

Pay disparity between male and female media professionals remains an ongoing issue. Women in the industry often earn less than their male counterparts for similar roles, particularly in senior management and editorial positions. Furthermore, there is still an imbalance in career advancement opportunities, with women being underrepresented in high-ranking roles, such as editors-in-chief or media executives.

## 3. Lack of Representation and Inclusion

Women, particularly women of color and women from marginalized backgrounds, are still underrepresented in both the editorial content



and leadership positions within the media. This lack of diversity not only limits the scope of storytelling but also perpetuates a narrow view of societal issues. When women are not represented, it reduces the credibility of the media industry as a whole and minimizes the ability to address issues from a wide range of perspectives.

#### 4. Online Harassment and Violence

Women in media, particularly those who engage in politics, advocacy, or social issues, are increasingly subject to online harassment, threats, and violence. Female journalists and content creators, especially those covering sensitive topics, such as gender equality, political corruption, and social justice, face the risk of online abuse. This not only puts their safety in jeopardy but also silences their voices,

limiting their freedom of expression and ability to report effectively.

## The Impact of Women in Media and Communication

Women in media and communication are creating a positive, lasting impact on the industry and society. Their contributions are shaping the future of how information is delivered, how stories are told, and how societal issues are addressed.

### 1. Social Change and Advocacy

Women journalists and media professionals have used their platforms to address pressing issues such as gender equality, climate change, and human rights. Through investigative reporting, documentaries, and digital content,

women have championed causes that affect vulnerable communities. They are also challenging the portrayal of women in media, advocating for more accurate, diverse, and empowering representations.

- Example: Malala Yousafzai has not only used her voice in her autobiography but also through global platforms to advocate for girls' education, fighting for the right to education worldwide.

## 2. Empowering Marginalized Voices

Women are using media as a tool to amplify marginalized voices. Through various platforms, from independent documentaries to social media, women are sharing stories from underrepresented communities. This work is

bringing attention to social injustice, inequality, and environmental concerns that might otherwise be ignored.

### 3. Rewriting Narratives

Women in media are actively participating in the transformation of mainstream media narratives. They have fought to reshape the narrative around issues of body image, mental health, and gender roles. By asserting their own voices, women are redefining how stories of strength, resilience, and vulnerability are told.

### Conclusion

Women in media and communication have made undeniable strides in reshaping the industry and influencing global discourse. However, there is still much work to be done to

ensure that women have equal representation, pay, and opportunities for advancement. As technology continues to evolve and media landscapes shift, it is crucial to keep pushing for gender equality, inclusivity, and the removal of biases that hinder the full participation of women in the media.

Through collective action, we can create a media ecosystem where women's voices are not only heard but celebrated. The power of media lies in its ability to inform, educate, and inspire, and when women lead in this domain, they have the potential to bring about meaningful and lasting change.

## CHALLENGES

While the media and communication industries have experienced considerable progress, there are several challenges that continue to hinder growth, inclusivity, and fairness. These

challenges range from bias and representation issues to evolving technological and regulatory hurdles that media organizations and professionals must navigate. Below, we explore some of the most significant challenges faced by individuals and organizations working in media and communication today.

## 1. Gender Bias and Representation

One of the most persistent challenges in media and communication is the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of women, particularly in leadership roles, editorial positions, and in the content being produced.

- **Unequal Visibility:** Women continue to be underrepresented as key newsmakers, decision-makers, or experts, especially in hard news reporting, politics, and

economics. In many cases, women are relegated to coverage of "soft" issues such as fashion, lifestyle, or entertainment, while men dominate discussions around business, politics, and global affairs.

- **Stereotypical Representation:** Women often face stereotypical portrayals in media, with limited roles and narratives that confine them to traditional gender expectations, such as the roles of caregivers, homemakers, or romantic interests. This lack of diverse representation stifles the development of more nuanced, empowering portrayals of women in media.

## 2. Gender Pay Gap and Career Advancement

Gender inequality is not limited to representation; it extends to issues of pay and

career growth. Women in media often face a pay gap in comparison to their male counterparts in similar roles, and many find it harder to climb the career ladder due to systemic biases.

- **Disparity in Pay:** Studies have shown that women in media are often paid less than men in comparable roles, especially in managerial and executive positions. This issue contributes to the overall economic inequality that women face in the workforce.
- **Barriers to Advancement:** Women frequently encounter "glass ceilings" when trying to progress into senior leadership positions. This is particularly true in traditionally male-dominated sectors of media like sports journalism, broadcast news, and film production. Institutional



biases and expectations around gender roles often hinder their access to high-ranking roles.

### 3. Online Harassment and Safety Concerns

Women in media, particularly journalists and content creators, face increasing levels of harassment, threats, and violence, especially in the digital age. The rise of social media platforms has exacerbated this issue, with women journalists and media professionals becoming frequent targets of online abuse.

- **Cyberbullying:** Female journalists who cover controversial or politically sensitive topics are often subject to online abuse, including threatening messages, sexist remarks, and targeted campaigns aimed at discrediting or intimidating them. This can

affect their mental health and impede their ability to do their jobs effectively.

- **Doxxing and Physical Threats:** In some extreme cases, women have been victims of "doxxing" (the act of publishing private information about them online with malicious intent), which can lead to real-world threats to their safety. These threats can come from political extremists, online trolls, or other individuals seeking to silence or harm female media professionals.

#### 4. Lack of Diversity and Inclusion

The media industry, especially in terms of leadership and content creation, often lacks diversity and fails to reflect the wide range of perspectives in society. This can lead to biased

storytelling and an exclusionary media environment.

- **Racial and Ethnic Representation:** Women of color, LGBTQ+ women, and other marginalized groups remain underrepresented in both media roles and content. The lack of inclusion limits the industry's ability to present a full spectrum of narratives, often leaving these voices unheard or ignored.
- **Cultural and Regional Biases:** In global media, there's often a Eurocentric or Western perspective that dominates the discourse. Women from non-Western countries or marginalized communities within a particular region may struggle to find platforms where their issues and stories are given adequate attention.

## 5. Digital Divide and Technological Advancements

As the media landscape shifts rapidly toward digital platforms, media professionals must adapt to new technologies and online content creation tools. However, a digital divide exists that limits equal access to these new platforms and technologies, particularly for women in developing countries or those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

- **Limited Access to Technology:** In many regions, women have less access to technology and the internet, which restricts their ability to engage with digital media, create content, or advance in digital-based careers.

- **Skill Gap:** There is also a significant skill gap when it comes to digital media. As technology and media consumption continue to evolve with tools like AI, virtual reality, and social media platforms, women in the industry must continuously upgrade their digital literacy. However, the lack of training and educational resources for women, particularly in underserved regions, makes it harder for them to keep up with technological advancements.

## 6. Political and Editorial Independence

Political bias, corporate influence, and editorial constraints continue to undermine the independence of media outlets. This problem disproportionately affects female journalists who are often caught between the pressures of producing engaging content while adhering to

editorial guidelines that may not align with their ethical standards.

- **Corporate and Political Pressure:** Many media outlets are controlled by large corporations or political entities that prioritize their interests, sometimes at the expense of truthful reporting. Women in media, particularly in lower levels of management, may struggle to maintain editorial independence or to report on stories that go against the interests of their employers or advertisers.
- **Censorship:** In many countries, journalists face political censorship, which can impact their ability to report the truth. Women, especially those reporting on sensitive topics like gender equality, political unrest, or human rights, may face

heightened scrutiny or threats when trying to report freely.

## 7. Media Literacy and Audience Trust

With the rise of misinformation, fake news, and sensationalism in the media, public trust in journalism has been eroded, creating a challenge for media professionals, especially women trying to establish credibility and deliver fact-based news.

- **Erosion of Trust:** The spread of misinformation online has made it difficult for audiences to distinguish between reliable, fact-based news and fabricated stories. Media organizations and professionals, particularly those advocating for truth and transparency, are

faced with the challenge of restoring public trust.

- **Audience Fragmentation:** As media consumption habits shift with the proliferation of online platforms, audiences have become more fragmented, often selecting media that aligns with their existing views. This creates a challenge for media organizations, particularly for women-led outlets that seek to foster an inclusive and diverse range of perspectives.

## Conclusion

Despite the significant strides made by women in media and communication, there are still numerous challenges that hinder their progress and impact. From gender bias and pay disparity to online harassment and lack of representation,



women in media continue to fight for equal access, visibility, and opportunities. Addressing these challenges requires sustained efforts from industry leaders, media organizations, and policymakers to create a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable media environment for women at all levels.

## MEDIA WOMEN

### Women in Media: Breaking Barriers and Shaping the Industry

Women have played a pivotal role in shaping the media landscape, both in front of and behind the camera. Over the years, women have overcome many barriers to establish themselves as leaders, creators, and influential figures in journalism, television, film, radio, and digital media. Yet, challenges persist in achieving full gender equality in the media industry. This article explores the significant contributions of

women in media, their achievements, and the hurdles they continue to face.

## 1. Women Pioneers in Media

Throughout history, women have been trailblazers in the media industry. From early pioneers like Oprah Winfrey, who revolutionized television talk shows, to Martha Gellhorn, one of the first female war correspondents, women have consistently broken barriers.

- **Oprah Winfrey:** As a media mogul, Oprah became one of the most influential women in the world. Her show, "The Oprah Winfrey Show," transformed daytime television and gave her a platform to discuss critical social issues.
- **Barbara Walters:** A legendary television personality and broadcast journalist, Barbara Walters was the first woman to

co-anchor a network evening news program, paving the way for future generations of women in broadcast journalism.

- Martha Gellhorn: A fearless war correspondent, Gellhorn was one of the first women to cover major wars, including the Spanish Civil War and World War II. Her pioneering work as a journalist inspired future female reporters to venture into dangerous territories.

## 2. Women in Journalism

Women have had a major impact on the field of journalism, from investigative reporting to global coverage of crises. Despite challenges such as gender bias, discrimination, and limited opportunities for career advancement, women journalists have persistently pushed for more

inclusive and diverse coverage of important issues.

- Christiane Amanpour: As one of the most respected foreign correspondents, Christiane Amanpour has reported from some of the most volatile regions in the world, including war zones in the Middle East. She has been the chief international anchor for CNN and has received numerous accolades for her fearless reporting.
- Anderson Cooper and Katie Couric: Both of these influential media figures have helped redefine the role of women in broadcast journalism. Katie Couric's role as the first solo female anchor on the "CBS Evening News" was a historic milestone, while Anderson Cooper's pioneering work at CNN has elevated the standard of broadcast journalism.

### 3. Women Behind the Scenes

While many women are making their mark in front of the camera, there is also a growing presence of female executives, directors, producers, and writers shaping content in the media. Women are increasingly holding leadership positions in major media organizations and influencing the direction of storytelling in film, television, and online platforms.

- Shonda Rhimes: One of the most successful television producers and writers, Shonda Rhimes has created some of the most popular TV shows of the past two decades, including "Grey's Anatomy," "Scandal," and "How to Get Away with Murder." Rhimes made history when she signed a deal with Netflix for exclusive content.

- Kathleen Kennedy: As the president of Lucasfilm, Kathleen Kennedy has overseen the production of the Star Wars franchise, one of the most successful media franchises in the world. Her leadership has demonstrated the importance of female voices in producing culturally significant content.

#### 4. Women in Digital and Social Media

With the advent of the internet and social media platforms, women have also made a significant impact in the digital media space. Many women have leveraged platforms like YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and podcasts to build vast followings and become influential content creators.

- **Rihanna:** Although primarily known as a singer and fashion icon, Rihanna has built an influential media empire with her beauty line Fenty Beauty, which has revolutionized the beauty industry by promoting inclusivity. She uses social media to engage with her fans and promote her business ventures.
- **Lilly Singh:** A YouTube star, Lilly Singh, also known as "Superwoman," created a platform where she shared humorous and empowering content. Her success led her to host her own late-night talk show on NBC, making her the first woman of color to host a late-night talk show on a major network.
- **Casey Neistat and Emma Chamberlain:** These social media stars have built enormous audiences and made a significant impact on the digital media

landscape. Emma Chamberlain's quirky style and authentic content on YouTube have attracted millions of subscribers.

## 5. Gender Bias and Challenges in Media

Despite the progress made, women in media still face considerable challenges. The media industry remains one of the most gender-imbalanced sectors, particularly in leadership roles. Women often face barriers that prevent them from ascending to executive positions or receiving equal recognition for their work.

- **Underrepresentation in Leadership:** Although there has been an increase in female participation in the media, women remain underrepresented in leadership roles. Men still hold the majority of executive roles in media companies, and



this disparity limits women's influence over editorial direction and strategic decisions.

- **Pay Gap:** Like many other industries, women in media experience a gender pay gap. Even in high-profile positions, women often receive lower pay than their male counterparts. This inequality persists across both traditional media outlets and newer digital platforms.
- **Sexism and Harassment:** Women in the media industry face widespread sexism and harassment, both online and offline. Female journalists, in particular, are subject to online abuse and threats, especially when reporting on sensitive topics such as politics, social issues, or war.
- **Stereotypes and Objectification:** Women are frequently stereotyped or objectified in media portrayals. They are often depicted

as secondary characters or reduced to their physical appearance, which limits their agency and depth in storytelling.

## 6. The Future of Women in Media

The future of women in media looks promising, with increasing representation and more opportunities for women to rise to the top. With organizations like Women in Film, The Women's Media Center, and International Women's Media Foundation championing the cause of female media professionals, there is growing support for gender equality in the industry.

- **Policy Changes:** Many media organizations are adopting policies that promote diversity, inclusion, and gender equity. There is also an increasing push for fair pay and improved working conditions for women in the media.

- Empowerment through Education: With more women pursuing degrees in journalism, media, and communications, the future of the industry is becoming more diverse. There is also a growing network of women in media who offer mentorship and support to younger generations.

## Conclusion

Women in media have made significant strides, establishing themselves as formidable figures in journalism, television, film, and digital platforms. However, challenges such as gender bias, unequal pay, underrepresentation in leadership, and sexism still persist. Overcoming these challenges requires collective efforts from individuals, organizations, and policymakers to create an equitable media environment. By fostering an inclusive and diverse media

landscape, we can ensure that women continue to thrive and make meaningful contributions to the global media ecosystem.

## Top 5 Influential Women in Media

Here are five prominent women who have made significant contributions to the media landscape and continue to shape the way we consume news and entertainment:

### 1. Oprah Winfrey

Oprah Winfrey is one of the most influential women in media. As a television host, media mogul, and philanthropist, she revolutionized the talk-show format with "The Oprah Winfrey Show," which ran for 25 years and became one of the highest-rated daytime television talk shows in history. Winfrey's ability to tackle

serious societal issues, her focus on self-improvement, and her charitable work have made her a global icon. Beyond her show, Oprah's network, OWN, and her partnerships with Apple and Weight Watchers have cemented her as a media empire leader.

#### Key Achievements:

- First African American female billionaire.
- Launched Oprah's Book Club, influencing book sales and cultural discussions.
- Created OWN (Oprah Winfrey Network), a successful cable network.

## 2. Christiane Amanpour

Christiane Amanpour is an internationally renowned journalist who has made a name for

herself as a war correspondent. As CNN's chief international anchor, Amanpour has covered major global crises, from the Gulf War to the Bosnian War and beyond. Known for her fearless reporting, Amanpour has interviewed world leaders and politicians, earning her respect as one of the most trusted voices in international journalism.

### Key Achievements:

- Chief International Anchor for CNN.
- Received numerous awards for her reporting, including multiple Emmy Awards.
- Known for covering dangerous global conflicts, including the Middle East and Africa.

### 3. Shonda Rhimes

Shonda Rhimes is a powerhouse television producer, writer, and creator, best known for shows like Grey's Anatomy, Scandal, and How to Get Away with Murder. Rhimes has revolutionized TV by introducing strong, complex female characters and by focusing on issues of race, gender, and power. Her ability to create engaging, often groundbreaking content has earned her critical and commercial success.

#### Key Achievements:

- Created and produced hit television shows under Shondaland.
- Signed a multi-million dollar deal with Netflix for exclusive content.
- Pioneered diverse, complex female leads in television.

#### 4. Arianna Huffington

Arianna Huffington is the founder of The Huffington Post, an online platform that redefined digital journalism. She brought together news, blogs, and entertainment under one roof, making news more accessible and interactive. Since selling her company to AOL, Huffington has focused on her well-being platform, Thrive Global, advocating for healthier work-life balance and mindfulness in the workplace.

##### Key Achievements:

- Founded The Huffington Post, which won the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting.
- Created Thrive Global, focusing on mental health, well-being, and productivity.



- Author of 15 books, including bestsellers on leadership and wellness.

## 5. Reese Witherspoon

Reese Witherspoon, an actress, producer, and entrepreneur, has made her mark in both the entertainment and media worlds. She is the founder of Hello Sunshine, a media company that focuses on female-driven stories and content. Witherspoon's acting career has earned her acclaim in Hollywood, but it is her work as a producer and media mogul that has led her to create powerful platforms for women in media.

Key Achievements:

- Founder of Hello Sunshine, which produces content like Big Little Lies and Little Fires Everywhere.
- Advocate for gender equality in Hollywood and the entertainment industry.
- Actively involved in producing content that amplifies women's voices and stories.

## Conclusion

These women exemplify the diverse roles women play in shaping the media landscape. From TV hosts to digital media moguls and journalists, they have influenced how we consume news and entertainment, paving the way for future generations of women in the media. Through their groundbreaking work, they've not only broken barriers but also empowered other women to step up and claim their space in the industry.

## WOMEN IN DEFENSE

Women have been powerful and transformative agents in the realm of peace and security throughout history. Their contributions in conflict resolution, peace-building, and security efforts often go unnoticed, but in recent decades, there has been a concerted effort globally to highlight their roles in these areas. Women's leadership in peace processes is crucial, and organizations worldwide are increasingly recognizing their ability to create lasting solutions and foster sustainable peace.

In this article, we will explore the critical role of women in peace and security, the challenges they face, and the progress made in integrating gender perspectives into security policies and peacebuilding efforts.

# The Importance of Women in Peace and Security

## 1. Transformative Peacebuilders

Women have a unique perspective in conflict zones due to their roles in families and communities. This has enabled them to bridge gaps between conflicting parties and promote reconciliation. Women's involvement in peace negotiations and conflict resolution can lead to more comprehensive and sustainable peace agreements. Studies have shown that peace agreements are 35% more likely to last at least 15 years when women are included in the negotiation process.

Key Contributions:

- Facilitating dialogue in communities impacted by violence.
- Promoting inclusion and ensuring the representation of marginalized groups.
- Working with both local and international organizations to advocate for long-term peace strategies.

## 2. Focus on Gender-Sensitive Peacebuilding

Incorporating gender perspectives into peacebuilding is crucial to ensuring that the needs of all populations, especially women and children, are addressed. Peace processes that fail to include a gendered approach often overlook the social, economic, and cultural impacts of conflict on women and families. As peacebuilders, women advocate for policies and frameworks that promote gender equality,

empowerment, and the protection of women's rights.

### Key Contributions:

- Advocacy for women's rights and protection in post-conflict reconstruction.
- Addressing issues like sexual violence, human trafficking, and the psychological effects of war on women and children.
- Ensuring that women have access to justice, education, and economic opportunities in post-conflict settings.

## Women in Leadership and Governance in Peace and Security

### 1. Leadership Roles in Global Peace Initiatives

Women are increasingly taking on leadership positions within global peace and security initiatives. Organizations like the United Nations (UN) and African Union (AU) are actively encouraging the participation of women in peace processes and security roles. For instance, the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, called for the inclusion of women in peace and security decisions.

### Notable Examples of Women Leaders in Peace and Security:

- Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the former President of Liberia, became the first female head of state in Africa. Her leadership was instrumental in Liberia's post-civil war rebuilding process.
- Leymah Gbowee, a Liberian peace activist, was awarded the Nobel Peace

Prize for her role in leading a women's movement that played a pivotal role in ending the Second Liberian Civil War.

- Asha-Rose Migiro, the former Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, has been involved in promoting women's participation in global peacebuilding efforts.

These leaders and many others have demonstrated the power of women in shaping peace initiatives and influencing international security policies.

## 2. The Role of Women in Political Negotiations and Mediation

Women's voices are essential in political negotiations, as they bring new perspectives to



conflict resolution. Women's involvement in peace talks often ensures that the solutions crafted are more inclusive and address the needs of women and children. They play a significant role as mediators, negotiators, and advocates for lasting peace, often bringing parties together through their unique ability to empathize and mediate.

### Key Contributions:

- Leading peace negotiations at national and international levels.
- Participating in high-level mediation teams and conflict prevention strategies.
- Bridging gaps between conflicting communities to facilitate trust-building.

# Challenges Faced by Women in Peace and Security

While women play a critical role in peace and security, they face numerous challenges that hinder their full participation. These challenges are deeply rooted in societal norms, political structures, and a history of gender inequality.

## 1. Gender-based Violence in Conflict Zones

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence in conflict zones. This includes sexual violence, forced displacement, trafficking, and exploitation. The violence and trauma faced by women in conflict situations often prevent them from participating in peace processes or seeking leadership positions.

Key Issues:

- Sexual violence as a weapon of war, often leaving women vulnerable and marginalized.
- Psychological trauma from violence, displacement, and loss.
- Limited access to healthcare and resources for women in conflict zones.

## 2. Exclusion from Peace Negotiations

Despite the increasing recognition of women's contributions to peacebuilding, they are still often excluded from formal peace negotiations and political decision-making. This exclusion limits the scope of peace agreements and undermines their long-term effectiveness. Women's contributions are often underestimated or dismissed in favor of

traditional power structures that dominate peace processes.

### Key Issues:

- Cultural and societal barriers to women's participation in leadership and decision-making roles.
- Gendered stereotypes and biases that perceive women as less capable in high-stakes negotiations.
- Lack of political will to include women in peace and security frameworks.

### 3. Economic Barriers

The economic realities faced by women in post-conflict regions also pose a significant challenge to their involvement in peace and security

efforts. Women are often denied access to economic resources, education, and employment opportunities, making it difficult for them to engage in peacebuilding activities or assume leadership roles.

### Key Issues:

- Women's access to finance and resources for entrepreneurial activities is limited.
- Lack of economic security and social safety nets in post-conflict settings.
- Women's exclusion from rebuilding efforts in areas such as infrastructure, business, and education.

### Progress and Moving Forward

Despite the challenges, significant strides have been made toward empowering women in peace and security. The UN Women's Peace and Security Agenda continues to push for greater participation of women in peacebuilding efforts, advocating for policies that promote gender equality, women's rights, and justice.

Furthermore, grassroots movements led by women are gaining recognition, and organizations such as Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) are working tirelessly to increase the role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Key Initiatives to Support Women in Peace and Security:

- UN Security Council Resolution 1325: This landmark resolution calls for the active participation of women in peace negotiations and decision-making processes.
- The Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Agenda: This agenda focuses on the intersection of gender and conflict, aiming to empower women and ensure their involvement in peacebuilding efforts.
- International Support for Women's Leadership: Initiatives like the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance focus on training women leaders in the security sector.

## Conclusion

Women have proven time and again that they are indispensable to the promotion of peace,

security, and stability in the world. Their leadership, resilience, and ability to foster dialogue and reconciliation make them key players in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. As society continues to recognize and support the role of women in peace and security, we will see a more inclusive, sustainable, and just world for all. At Aurapedia, we believe in the power of women as agents of change and strive to showcase their remarkable contributions across all sectors, including peace and security. Empowering women to take leadership roles in these areas is essential for building a more peaceful and secure world for future generations.

## CHALLENGES

### Challenges Faced by Women in Peace and Security

While women have made significant strides in peace and security efforts, they still encounter



numerous challenges that hinder their full participation and undermine their impact. These challenges are multifaceted, deeply rooted in historical gender inequality, and often compounded by conflict-related issues. Here are some of the key challenges faced by women in this critical field:

## 1. Gender-Based Violence and Trauma

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by violence during and after conflicts. Gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual violence, is often used as a weapon of war to terrorize, displace, and degrade entire communities. In conflict zones, women are subjected to rape, trafficking, forced marriages, and domestic violence, making it incredibly difficult for them to engage in peacebuilding activities or assume leadership roles.

## Key Issues:

- **Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War:** Women are often targeted for sexual violence as a method of weakening the enemy, destabilizing communities, and creating long-lasting trauma.
- **Psychological Trauma:** Victims of sexual violence and other forms of abuse experience deep psychological trauma, which prevents them from actively participating in peace and reconciliation efforts.
- **Barriers to Justice:** Legal systems in conflict zones are often ill-equipped to handle cases of gender-based violence, leaving survivors without justice or protection.

## 2. Exclusion from Peace Negotiations

Despite increasing recognition of the importance of women in peace and security, they are still frequently excluded from formal peace negotiations. Women's voices are marginalized in favor of traditional male-dominated leadership structures. As a result, peace agreements often fail to address the unique needs and priorities of women and children, which can lead to unstable peace and the eventual resurgence of conflict.

### Key Issues:

- **Patriarchal Structures:** Traditional gender norms often prevent women from being included in high-level political negotiations or peace talks.
- **Cultural Barriers:** In many cultures, women are seen as less capable or less

authoritative in matters of national security or peace negotiations, even though they possess vital skills in conflict resolution.

- Lack of Political Will: Governments and organizations may not prioritize the inclusion of women in peace processes, focusing instead on appeasing existing power structures.

### 3. Economic Inequality and Lack of Resources

Women in post-conflict societies often face economic marginalization. They are frequently excluded from access to financial resources, education, and employment opportunities, which hinders their ability to contribute meaningfully to peacebuilding. Without financial independence or educational opportunities, women are less likely to have the capacity to

engage in peace processes or build sustainable peace in their communities.

### Key Issues:

- **Limited Access to Resources:** Women are often denied equal access to property, inheritance rights, and financial resources, which limits their ability to rebuild their communities after conflict.
- **Economic Dependence:** In many societies, women are economically dependent on men, which can restrict their ability to make decisions or take leadership roles in post-conflict rebuilding efforts.
- **Invisibility in Economic Recovery Plans:** Post-conflict recovery plans often fail to address the specific needs of women, leaving them out of the process of economic reconstruction.

#### 4. Discriminatory Social and Legal Systems

In many parts of the world, women are still bound by discriminatory laws and societal norms that prevent them from participating fully in public life, including peace and security efforts. These legal and cultural constraints can restrict women's mobility, their ability to take on leadership roles, and their access to resources.

##### Key Issues:

- **Legal Barriers:** In some countries, laws and regulations limit women's ability to own property, work in certain fields, or engage in political life.
- **Cultural Norms:** Deeply ingrained patriarchal values in many societies limit the public roles that women can assume,

especially in conflict zones where traditional gender roles are more rigid.

- **Lack of Legal Protections for Women:** Even where legal frameworks exist to protect women, they are often poorly enforced, and women may face social stigmas for seeking justice or exercising their rights.

## 5. Political and Institutional Barriers

Despite the growing awareness of the need for gender equality in peace and security, women still face significant barriers in political institutions. Women are underrepresented in decision-making roles within governments, militaries, peacekeeping forces, and international organizations. As a result, the policies and frameworks that govern peace and security are often developed without fully

understanding or addressing the unique needs and contributions of women.

### Key Issues:

- **Underrepresentation in Key Institutions:** Women are still vastly underrepresented in political, military, and peacekeeping roles, limiting their ability to influence key decisions about peace and security.
- **Lack of Gender-Sensitive Policies:** Many peace and security policies are not designed with gender considerations in mind, leading to exclusionary frameworks that do not account for the specific challenges women face in conflict zones.
- **Resistance to Change:** In many cases, there is resistance from male-dominated political systems to implementing gender-inclusive policies or addressing the



barriers that prevent women from participating fully in peace processes.

## 6. Societal and Institutional Discrimination

Women face ongoing discrimination in both formal and informal systems, which often limits their potential to lead or influence peace processes. These discriminatory practices can range from systemic biases in political systems to everyday social barriers that discourage women from pursuing careers in diplomacy, security, or peacebuilding.

### Key Issues:

- **Cultural Stigmas:** Women who take leadership roles in peace and security are often criticized, stigmatized, or

overlooked, especially in societies where gender equality is not the norm.

- **Stereotypes about Women's Roles:** Societal norms that define women's roles as caregivers and homemakers can deter them from engaging in conflict resolution or peacebuilding activities.
- **Lack of Support Networks:** Women in leadership roles in peace and security often do not have the same institutional support systems as their male counterparts, making it more challenging to succeed.

## Conclusion

While the challenges are substantial, there have been notable efforts to overcome the barriers that women face in peace and security. Initiatives like UN Security Council Resolution

1325 and the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda have paved the way for increased recognition of women's roles in peacebuilding. Still, more work needs to be done to ensure that women are fully included in the peace and security sectors, given the critical impact their participation can have on the durability and sustainability of peace agreements. Women's involvement in peace and security is not just a matter of justice and equality but also a necessary element of effective peacebuilding. As more women take on leadership roles and push for reforms in policies and systems, we can expect a more inclusive, equitable, and peaceful world. At Aurapedia, we are committed to spotlighting the critical contributions of women across all sectors, especially in peace and security, to help build a more just and peaceful future for everyone.

## DEFENSE WOMEN

Women have long played crucial roles in

defense and military sectors, but their contributions often remain overlooked or understated. Today, however, women are increasingly recognized for their leadership, courage, and capability in national defense. From combat roles to intelligence analysis, strategic decision-making, and military leadership, women are breaking barriers and shaping the future of global security.

This article by Aurapedia delves into the pivotal roles women play in defense, the challenges they face, and the growing recognition of their contributions in maintaining national security and peace.

## Historical Context of Women in Defense

Historically, women were relegated to auxiliary roles during times of war, often serving as

nurses, supporters, or rear-echelon workers. However, over the years, the demand for women in defense roles has expanded significantly, driven by changing societal attitudes and the increasing recognition that gender diversity enhances operational effectiveness.

World War II marked a turning point in the integration of women into defense forces. Many countries established auxiliary services that allowed women to contribute directly to the war effort. For example, the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in the United States, and the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) in the United Kingdom, saw women take on critical roles in logistics, communications, and medical support. Today, women serve in combat roles, fighter pilot positions, and high-level leadership within defense institutions globally.

## Women in Combat Roles

One of the most significant changes in the defense sector has been the increasing acceptance of women in combat roles. Several nations have taken bold steps toward gender inclusion, ensuring that women can serve on the frontlines of defense.

### Notable Examples:

1. Israel: Israel has long been known for its mandatory military service for both men and women. Israeli women have served in combat units, including the elite Caracal Battalion in the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Women have also taken on high-level roles within the IDF, including as pilots and commanders.

2. United States: In 2013, the U.S. lifted the ban on women in combat, opening all combat roles to women. Since then, women have become part of the U.S. Army Rangers, Navy SEALs, and various special operations forces.
3. Norway: Norway was one of the first countries to allow women to serve in combat roles, integrating them into all branches of its military, including special forces.

These shifts reflect a global trend toward recognizing women's capabilities in physically demanding and traditionally male-dominated fields.

## Women in Military Leadership

Women's leadership in defense is equally important, as it helps shape the strategic direction and policies that guide national security efforts. In recent years, there has been a growing number of women rising to high-ranking positions in the military and defense establishments.

#### Notable Female Military Leaders:

1. General Ann E. Dunwoody (USA): A retired four-star general in the U.S. Army, Dunwoody was the first woman to achieve this rank in the history of the U.S. military. She served in key positions, overseeing logistics operations in critical combat zones.
2. General Louise R. G. L. Barretto (India): A senior officer in the Indian Air Force, General Barretto has contributed to the



country's defense strategies and has been a significant role model for women in the Indian military.

3. Air Chief Marshal Sir Angela McDonald (UK): Serving as the Chief of the Air Staff in the UK, McDonald became one of the highest-ranking female officers in the world. Her leadership continues to inspire women in defense sectors worldwide.

Such accomplishments underscore the increasing acceptance and recognition of women in the upper echelons of military leadership, helping to shape defense policy, strategy, and global peace initiatives.

## Women in Intelligence and Cyber Defense

Women are also playing an increasingly important role in intelligence and cybersecurity, which are critical to national defense in the modern era. These sectors require high levels of technical expertise, strategic thinking, and the ability to manage sensitive information.

### Notable Examples in Intelligence and Cyber Defense:

1. Katherine Johnson (USA): Although not in the military, Katherine Johnson, a mathematician and physicist, played a vital role in U.S. national security during the space race and in military defense strategies. Her work in calculations and mathematics was pivotal in sending astronauts into space.
2. Cyber Defense Pioneers: Several women in the cybersecurity field have been

instrumental in protecting national infrastructure from cyberattacks. Women in roles such as chief information security officers (CISOs) are crucial in protecting sensitive data and communication lines that are essential for national security.

3. Megan R. R. (UK): A prominent figure in cybersecurity, Megan R. has worked with several national defense agencies to strengthen the UK's defenses against cyberterrorism, and her leadership in this field continues to influence global defense strategies.

## Barriers and Challenges Faced by Women in Defense

Despite the progress, women in defense still face significant challenges:

## 1. Gender Bias and Stereotyping

Women in defense often face skepticism regarding their physical and mental capabilities. Gender stereotypes about women being too emotional or not strong enough for combat roles persist, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

## 2. Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

Sexual harassment remains a widespread issue in many defense institutions worldwide. Women often experience workplace discrimination, including unequal opportunities for promotion and advancement. This is particularly evident in male-dominated combat units and leadership positions.

## 3. Work-Life Balance

For women with families, balancing military service and personal life can be extremely challenging. Long deployments, irregular schedules, and the pressure to perform at the highest level often create significant strain on women, especially those who are also primary caregivers.

#### 4. Unequal Access to Leadership Positions

While women have made great strides in defense, they remain underrepresented in leadership roles. The military, like many other sectors, remains dominated by men, and women often face barriers to accessing decision-making positions due to systemic inequality and lack of mentorship.

#### The Future of Women in Defense

The future of women in defense is bright, with increasing numbers of women being encouraged to pursue careers in defense and related fields. As more countries open combat roles to women and improve their policies on sexual harassment and discrimination, it is likely that the representation of women in the defense sector will continue to grow.

Furthermore, as technology evolves and warfare becomes more focused on cyber defense, women will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of global security. Their participation in peacekeeping missions, diplomatic negotiations, and international defense partnerships will be key in promoting lasting global peace and stability.

## Conclusion

Women have proven time and again that they are not only capable of serving in defense and military roles but can also thrive and lead in the most challenging and dynamic aspects of national security. The contributions of women in defense are invaluable and will continue to shape the future of global peace and security. At Aurapedia, we are committed to highlighting the indispensable contributions of women in all sectors, including defense, to foster a more inclusive, secure, and peaceful world.

## WOMEN IN ENTERTAINMENT

The entertainment industry—once a space dominated by patriarchal structures—has undergone a monumental transformation in the 21st century. Women are no longer just performers or supporting characters; they are visionaries, power brokers, storytellers, and CEOs. From acting and singing to directing,

producing, screenwriting, and entrepreneurship, women are reshaping the cultural and creative industries at every level.

Aurapedia proudly celebrates the empowerment of women in entertainment, recognizing the pivotal role they play not only in driving industry success but in advancing global narratives of identity, equity, and power.

### Actresses: From Stars to Studio Heads

Women in acting have historically faced typecasting, wage gaps, and limited creative authority. However, modern actresses are now commanding influence behind and in front of the camera. Whether it's Viola Davis demanding complex roles for women of color or Margot Robbie founding her own production company



to champion female-led stories, actresses are claiming space as:

- Executive producers
- Script developers
- Content owners
- Activists for gender parity and inclusion

From Bollywood to Hollywood to Nollywood, female talent is now matched by female leadership—bringing nuanced, inclusive stories to global screens.

### Singers: Voices of Power, Icons of Change

In the music industry, female singers have broken global records, challenged social norms, and used their platforms for cultural revolution.

From Beyoncé's messages of Black excellence and independence to Taylor Swift's ownership over her music masters, women singers are leveraging their artistry as financial and political tools.

Notable shifts include:

- Women launching their own record labels and management firms
- Singer-songwriters addressing themes of feminism, mental health, identity, and justice
- Trailblazing LGBTQ+ and Indigenous artists reclaiming marginalized narratives

These women aren't just topping charts—they're changing the structure of the industry.

## Beyond the Spotlight: Directors, Writers, and Creators

Women like Greta Gerwig, Ava DuVernay, Chloé Zhao, and Kathryn Bigelow have proven that women can lead blockbuster productions, win Oscars, and influence cinematic history. In animation, documentaries, and streaming content, women have emerged as:

- Visionary directors and showrunners
- Award-winning screenwriters
- Founders of female-led studios and production collectives

They are rewriting what's possible in entertainment, challenging genre stereotypes, and building equitable creative economies.

## Influencers & New Media: The Rise of the Digital Queen

The democratization of entertainment via social media, YouTube, and platforms like TikTok and Spotify has created a new generation of self-made female stars. Many young women are using these tools to:

- Launch their careers without industry gatekeepers
- Create content on their own terms
- Monetize their brands through smart licensing and e-commerce
- Use their voice for activism—from climate change to body positivity

This digital shift has enabled millions of girls globally to see women owning their narrative, one upload at a time.

## The Business of Empowerment

Women are no longer only consumers of entertainment—they are its capital drivers. Consider:

- Rihanna, who turned her fame into Fenty, a billion-dollar beauty and fashion empire
- Reese Witherspoon, whose Hello Sunshine production company redefined female storytelling and was sold for nearly \$1 billion
- Adele, whose control over her music and licensing revolutionized record deals

These stories mark a turning point—women entertainers are building wealth, equity, and legacy, not just fame.

## Cultural Impact: Redefining Global Norms

Female entertainers have redefined societal expectations around:

- Gender expression and roles
- Motherhood and career balance
- Race, identity, and beauty standards
- Resilience, confidence, and self-worth

From Lizzo challenging body shame to Priyanka Chopra amplifying South Asian voices, empowered women in entertainment are inspiring girls worldwide to dream louder, act bolder, and lead stronger.

## Aura's Perspective

At Aura Solution Company Limited, we recognize entertainment as a critical lever for social change and economic empowerment. Through strategic investments in content production, female-led ventures, and cultural philanthropy, we champion gender equity and support women leaders in the creative economy.

## Conclusion

The entertainment industry is no longer just about who performs—but who owns, leads, and transforms. Women across entertainment are doing more than building careers—they are shaping history.

## CHALLENGES

Introduction: A Stage Still Uneven

Despite remarkable strides over the past decades, women in the entertainment industry continue to face entrenched structural and social challenges. From the glaring gender pay gap to limited creative control, the path to equity and empowerment remains a complex struggle.

This article sheds light on the persistent and emerging obstacles that women in entertainment—whether actors, directors, musicians, screenwriters, producers, or digital creators—must navigate in pursuit of visibility, autonomy, and justice. It also aligns with Aura Solution Company Limited's commitment to gender equity, economic inclusion, and cultural advancement through conscious capital and strategic investment.



## 1. Gender Pay Gap: The Price of Inequality

One of the most visible forms of discrimination in entertainment is wage disparity. Despite performing similar or greater workloads, women are often paid significantly less than their male counterparts. High-profile examples include:

- Jennifer Lawrence, who was paid millions less than her male co-stars for the same roles.
- Michelle Williams, who earned less than 1% of Mark Wahlberg's pay for reshoots in *All the Money in the World*.

This disparity is especially stark for women of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and non-binary performers. While some A-list stars have begun to speak out, industry-wide change is slow, with many women still silenced by contract clauses and fear of retaliation.

## 2.Lack of Representation Behind the Camera

Though more women are directing, writing, and producing than ever before, they remain drastically underrepresented in leadership roles:

- Only 11% of top-grossing films in Hollywood in 2023 were directed by women.
- In music, less than 3% of producers across Billboard chart-topping songs were women.

This lack of decision-making power limits the types of stories told and perpetuates outdated tropes and male-centric narratives. When women do break through, they often face higher scrutiny, double standards, and fewer second chances compared to their male counterparts.

## 3.Harassment and Toxic Workplace Culture

The #MeToo movement exposed the pervasive culture of sexual harassment, coercion, and abuse across entertainment industries globally. Yet systemic change remains incomplete:

- Many women are still afraid to report abuse due to fear of blacklisting.
- Legal protections are often inadequate or unenforced.
- Retaliation and defamation lawsuits are weaponized against survivors.

Although high-profile convictions (e.g., Harvey Weinstein) were landmark moments, a lasting culture of accountability requires better governance, stronger unions, and corporate safeguards.

#### 4. Mental Health Struggles and Image Pressures

The entertainment industry imposes extreme standards of beauty, youth, perfection, and constant public scrutiny. These pressures take a toll on women's mental health, often manifesting as:

- Eating disorders and body dysmorphia
- Burnout, depression, and anxiety
- Substance abuse or isolation
- Ageism, especially for actresses over 40

While some stars like Selena Gomez and Lady Gaga have bravely shared their mental health battles, support systems for women in the spotlight remain insufficient, especially in regions without institutional backing.

## 5..Typecasting and Limited Roles

Female performers often face narrow casting expectations—the seductress, the mother, the damsel, the sidekick. These tropes:

- Stifle character complexity
- Limit opportunities for older, disabled, or non-white women
- Reinforce regressive gender norms

Meanwhile, men enjoy a broader range of leading roles regardless of age, appearance, or genre. The lack of diverse storytelling continues to hinder artistic growth and fair representation.

## 6.Cultural Barriers and Regional Bias

In many parts of the world, cultural norms and legal restrictions further limit women's participation in the arts:

- In conservative societies, women are discouraged—or even banned—from performing.
- Public backlash and moral policing continue to target female entertainers more harshly than their male counterparts.
- Access to funding, distribution, and education is often heavily skewed toward male-led productions.

Intersectionality—of gender, race, class, and geography—amplifies these barriers, making it even harder for marginalized voices to emerge.

## 7.Lack of Ownership and Creative Control

Women entertainers often find themselves in powerful roles—but without actual ownership of the content or businesses they help build. This leads to:

- Dependency on male-dominated studios or labels
- Loss of royalties, licensing rights, or brand control
- Reduced legacy and financial equity

Trailblazers like Rihanna, Oprah Winfrey, and Reese Witherspoon have reclaimed their narratives by building their own empires—but they remain the exception, not the rule.

## 8.Digital Exploitation and Online Abuse

Social media has democratized fame—but also created a toxic arena of constant criticism, cyberbullying, doxing, and misogyny. Female creators and influencers frequently report:

- Unsolicited sexual content and harassment

- Death threats, smear campaigns, and deepfakes
- Emotional trauma from online abuse

Online platforms remain poorly regulated, and women often feel forced to choose between digital visibility and personal safety.

### Aura's Commitment to Change

At Aura Solution Company Limited, we recognize that real empowerment requires access to capital, creative independence, legal protection, and cultural influence. Through our partnerships, strategic investments, and global presence:

- We finance women-led creative enterprises



- We support gender-diverse storytelling through grants and media incubation
- We advocate for safer, equitable digital platforms and ethical content ecosystems
- We elevate women as not just talent—but leaders, shareholders, and owners

Empowering women in entertainment isn't charity—it's a strategic investment in a more innovative, inclusive, and profitable future.

## Conclusion: From Resistance to Resurgence

The challenges women face in entertainment are vast—but so is their resilience. Every actress who demands equal pay, every singer who owns her masters, every director who breaks the mold—they are redefining an entire global industry. With continued support, capital, and

advocacy, the next chapter of entertainment will not only include women—it will be shaped, led, and owned by them.

## LIFESTYLE

### Introduction: A Life in the Spotlight—But at What Cost?

For women in the entertainment industry, the boundary between life and lifestyle often blurs beyond recognition. Glamorous red carpets, luxury vacations, curated Instagram feeds, and designer wardrobes project an image of perfection. But behind the staged photos and global endorsements lies a life of intense pressure, emotional complexity, and identity negotiation.

This article explores the nuanced reality of female celebrityhood—contrasting the public lifestyle they portray with the private lives they

must protect. In an age of constant visibility, understanding this duality is vital—not only to humanize these women, but to challenge the culture that demands their perfection at all costs.

## 1. Lifestyle: The Branded Image

The lifestyle of a female celebrity is often aspirational by design. It's a carefully curated brand that fuels endorsement deals, social media influence, and fan engagement. This includes:

- Designer Fashion & Beauty: From Cannes gowns to Met Gala statements, image is currency. Fashion houses sponsor appearances, and beauty contracts are worth millions.

- **Travel & Experiences:** Private jets, five-star resorts, yacht parties—travel becomes performative and tied to brand partnerships.
- **Social Media Curation:** Platforms like Instagram and TikTok are business tools. Every post can translate into brand equity, shaping how fans, media, and sponsors perceive the celebrity.
- **Wellness Aesthetics:** From green juices to meditation retreats, celebrities are expected to project physical and mental perfection—often masking underlying issues.
- **Public Appearances & Events:** Press tours, award shows, galas, and interviews make up a huge portion of their visible lifestyle, often promoted in real-time online.

This lifestyle isn't just entertainment—it's an economic engine, where every post, outfit, or quote can affect millions of dollars in value.

## 2. Life: The Private Struggles Behind the Scenes

Behind the sparkle is a real life often burdened by:

- **Loss of Privacy:** Paparazzi culture and digital media eliminate personal boundaries. Everyday activities become public fodder.
- **Emotional Labor & Mental Health:** Constant judgment, body shaming, and speculation about relationships or choices often lead to anxiety, depression, and burnout.
- **Loneliness in Crowds:** Many celebrities speak about the isolation of fame—unable

to form genuine friendships or trust people without fearing exploitation.

- **Career Insecurity:** Fame is fickle. Roles dry up, trends change, and even A-list women must constantly fight ageism and sexism.
- **Public Scrutiny of Personal Choices:** Whether it's motherhood, relationships, fashion, or political views—everything is up for debate, often amplified by online vitriol.
- **Limited Control Over Narratives:** Studios, publicists, and media houses often control the narrative—leaving many female celebrities unable to own their truth fully.

In essence, their “life” becomes the backstage of their “lifestyle”—raw, complex, and often unseen.

### 3. Pressure to Perform Gender Roles

Society often imposes contradictory standards on female celebrities:

- Be sexy, but not too sexual.
- Be confident, but not arrogant.
- Be ambitious, but not threatening.
- Be maternal, but maintain a flawless figure.

Men in entertainment are often allowed to age, falter, or be eccentric. Women, on the other hand, are expected to be eternally polished, agreeable, and graceful under pressure—a performance that can erode authenticity and mental wellness.

#### 4. Motherhood and Relationships in the Public Eye

For women celebrities, private milestones become public property:

- Pregnancy announcements are monetized; postpartum bodies are policed.
- Breakups become clickbait; marriages are dissected.
- If they choose to remain single or child-free, they face invasive speculation and moral judgment.

Motherhood, in particular, is romanticized and scrutinized—female stars must "bounce back" while juggling intense work demands and raising children under a global microscope.



## 5. Intersectionality: Not All Experiences Are Equal

The life/lifestyle divide is especially pronounced for:

- **Women of Color:** They face racialized expectations, cultural fetishization, and systemic underrepresentation.
- **LGBTQ+ Women:** Queer celebrities often hide or carefully navigate their identity due to public and industry backlash.
- **Women with Disabilities or Neurodivergence:** Largely excluded or misunderstood, these women face both invisibility and tokenism.
- **Women from the Global South:** Often held to Western beauty or behavioral standards while battling stereotypes in their own societies.

Aura Solution Company Limited, through its advocacy in entertainment investments and inclusive initiatives, recognizes that true equity begins with acknowledging these layered identities.

## 6. Reclaiming the Narrative

More women in entertainment are now reclaiming their identities—turning their life into a platform for authenticity and advocacy, not just spectacle. Notable examples:

- Selena Gomez, who has openly shared her mental health journey and founded Rare Beauty to support self-acceptance.
- Rihanna, who redefined maternity fashion and runs a billion-dollar inclusive beauty empire.

- Taylor Swift, who is rewriting the record industry by owning her masters.
- Priyanka Chopra, who bridges Bollywood and Hollywood while advocating for girls' education globally.

These women demonstrate that the lifestyle is only empowering when it serves the life—not the other way around.

## Conclusion: Living Beyond the Lens

The lifestyle of a female celebrity is often an illusion—a polished surface that hides the deep emotional, professional, and cultural labor behind it. By humanizing these women and respecting the complexity of their lives, we can move toward a more equitable and empathetic media culture. At Aura Solution Company

Limited, we believe the future of entertainment lies in authenticity, equity, and empowerment. Through our investments, initiatives, and platform-building strategies, we stand behind women not just in the spotlight—but in life itself.

## WOMEN IN AVIATION

From the Cockpit to the Cosmos, Redefining Possibilities

Introduction: Women Reaching for the Stars—Literally

For centuries, the domains of space exploration, aerospace engineering, and aviation were seen as the strongholds of male ambition. Today, those ceilings are being shattered by courageous, brilliant, and pioneering women across the globe. Female astronauts, aerospace engineers, and pilots are not only claiming their seats at the table—they're building the rockets,

flying the missions, and designing the future of flight.

This article celebrates the achievements, challenges, and resilience of women in these high-altitude professions—and highlights how empowering women in STEM fields is essential to human progress.

## 1. Women in Space: Astronauts on a Mission

From Valentina Tereshkova—the first woman in space in 1963—to Jessica Watkins, NASA’s first Black woman to embark on a long-duration mission to the ISS, women astronauts have made history and reshaped our understanding of courage and capability.

Notable achievements:

- Sally Ride (USA): First American woman in space, 1983.
- Mae Jemison (USA): First African-American woman in space, 1992.
- Peggy Whitson (USA): Holds the record for the most time spent in space by any American astronaut—male or female.
- Anousheh Ansari (Iran/USA): First female space tourist and first Iranian in space.

Today, women are leading lunar and Mars mission designs, including NASA's Artemis program, which aims to land the first woman on the Moon.

## 2. Women Engineers: Designing the Future

In aerospace, mechanical, and structural engineering—women have gone from underrepresented to irreplaceable.

### Key Roles:

- Flight system design
- Propulsion development
- AI in autonomous flight
- Satellites and orbital navigation
- Clean aviation technologies

### Leading Names:

- Kalpana Chawla: Aerospace engineer and astronaut, the first woman of Indian origin in space.

- Gwynne Shotwell: President of SpaceX, a driving force behind commercial spaceflight.
- Sylvia Acevedo: A former NASA engineer and CEO of Girl Scouts USA, she advocates for STEM education for girls globally.

Yet, challenges persist—only about 14% of engineers worldwide are women, and retention is still a critical issue due to workplace bias, lack of mentorship, and gendered expectations.

### 3. Women Pilots: Flying High and Beyond

From early trailblazers like Amelia Earhart and Bessie Coleman to modern legends like Tammie Jo Shults (who safely landed a damaged Southwest Airlines flight in 2018), women have demonstrated nerves of steel in the cockpit.



## The Numbers:

- Female commercial pilots globally: ~5%
- Military and combat pilots: Less than 2% in many countries
- Female fighter pilots are increasing in air forces around the world—from the U.S. and India to South Korea and the UAE

## Women pilots today are also leading in:

- Cargo and logistics aviation
- Unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) operations
- Spaceplane and reusable aircraft testing

## 4. Barriers Still in Orbit

Despite progress, women in space, engineering, and aviation still face:

- Underrepresentation in leadership roles
- Implicit gender bias and stereotyping
- Limited access to mentorship and funding
- Balancing societal roles and work-life expectations

For women of color, the challenges are multiplied due to systemic racial barriers in education and recruitment pipelines.

## 5. Education & Outreach: Fueling the Next Generation

Programs such as Girls Who Code, UN Women's STEM for Equality, NASA's

internships, and Space4Women are crucial in bridging the gender gap.

Aura Solution Company Limited, through its Aura Foundation, supports multiple initiatives to train, mentor, and finance women pursuing STEM careers, especially in developing nations. Our funding helps:

- Provide scholarships for aerospace studies
- Fund internships with global aerospace partners
- Sponsor STEM outreach programs in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia

## 6. The Future Is Female—and It's in Orbit

With missions planned to the Moon, Mars, and beyond, and with commercial spaceflight rapidly expanding, the demand for engineers,

pilots, and mission specialists will skyrocket. Women are not just participants—they are innovators, decision-makers, and visionaries.

Whether it's flying fighter jets, designing AI-driven engines, or walking on the Moon, women are proving that the sky is not the limit—it's just the beginning.

### Conclusion: Aura's Commitment to High-Altitude Equality

At Aura Solution Company Limited, we believe in breaking down the gravitational forces of gender inequality. We invest in infrastructure, innovation, and inclusive development—not only to create opportunity but to uplift every girl who dreams of flying, building, or exploring the stars.

# CHALLENGES

## Challenges Faced by Women in Space, Engineering, and Aviation

### Introduction: Gender Inequality at Altitude

Despite remarkable progress in recent decades, women in space exploration, engineering, and aviation continue to face deeply embedded challenges. From underrepresentation and limited mentorship to systemic biases and workplace discrimination, the journey to equality is still turbulent. While some women soar as astronauts, engineers, and pilots, many are grounded by structural limitations that persist in education, employment, and culture. Understanding these challenges is the first step toward resolving them.

### 1. Underrepresentation and Visibility

## ❖ The Numbers Tell the Story:

- Only 14% of engineers globally are women.
- Women make up less than 5% of airline pilots.
- Among astronauts, just 11% have been women since the dawn of space travel.

This underrepresentation not only limits diversity of thought but also reinforces the stereotype that such professions are "male domains." A lack of visible female role models makes it harder for younger generations to see these careers as accessible.

## 2. Gender Bias in Hiring and Evaluation

### ❖ The Invisible Wall:

- Women often face biased recruitment practices, especially in aerospace and defense sectors.
- Performance evaluations may be affected by unconscious gender stereotypes, causing women to be underrated in leadership, technical, and decision-making roles.

Even when equally qualified, women may have to “prove themselves” more often than men, while their mistakes may be judged more harshly.

### 3. Workplace Culture and Harassment

#### ❖ A Hostile Environment:

- Studies reveal that 40% to 60% of women engineers have experienced some form of workplace harassment.
- Many women in aviation report being the only female in their cohort, leading to isolation or exclusion from informal professional networks.

The dominance of "macho" or "alpha" cultures in some aerospace and aviation environments makes it difficult for women to express concerns without fear of being labeled as weak or disruptive.

#### 4. Lack of Mentorship and Sponsorship

❖ No One to Guide the Way:



- Mentorship is critical in technical fields, yet women often have limited access to senior mentors, particularly female mentors.
- Without mentors and sponsors to advocate for them, women are overlooked for promotions, advanced training, or international missions.

This lack of support contributes to higher attrition rates, especially mid-career when many women exit STEM roles due to stagnation.

## 5. Pay Inequality

### ❖ The Wage Gap Persists:

- Women in engineering and aviation earn 10–25% less than men, depending on the country and seniority level.
- The pay gap worsens at the executive or principal engineer level, where women

remain drastically underpaid or excluded from equity-based compensation in startups and space-tech ventures.

## 6. Work-Life Balance and Family Pressures

### ❖ High Altitude, Higher Expectations:

- Long flight schedules, rotating shifts, and mission-based work are demanding—especially for women expected to manage household duties or raise children.
- Some female astronauts have had to delay or forgo pregnancy due to spaceflight schedules or radiation exposure concerns.

This adds to the psychological burden and discourages women from pursuing or remaining in such roles long-term.

## 7. Unequal Access to Funding and Resources

### ❖ Barriers in Innovation:

- Female-led aerospace startups or engineering solutions often receive less venture capital funding or institutional support.
- Male-led research teams in space sciences tend to receive larger grants and more citations, impacting visibility and credibility.

This affects innovation, as brilliant ideas from women often go unfunded or unnoticed.

## 8. National and Cultural Constraints

### ❖ Global Imbalance:

- In many parts of the world, girls are discouraged from studying STEM fields due to cultural or religious beliefs.
- Some national air forces or space programs still don't permit women in combat or space missions, cutting off entire career paths.

## 9. Limited Leadership Representation

### ❖ Few Women at the Helm:

- Female CEOs in aviation or space companies are rare.
- Women are rarely selected as principal investigators in major government space projects or satellite missions.

Without a seat at the top, women struggle to influence decisions that shape the future of their fields.

## 10. Psychological Pressure and Impostor Syndrome

### ❖ The Mental Toll:

- The constant need to outperform, combined with subtle invalidation, leads many women to doubt their abilities, even when they are qualified.
- Fear of making mistakes in high-risk fields (space missions, aircraft testing, engineering calculations) amplifies anxiety.

The mental strain is real, and without support systems, it can lead to burnout or withdrawal from these careers.

## Aura's Response: Investing in Equality

At Aura Solution Company Limited, we recognize that empowering women in space, engineering, and aviation isn't just a matter of equity—it's a strategic imperative for innovation and progress.

Through the Auradevi Foundation, Aura has:

- Funded over 2,000 scholarships for women in aerospace engineering since 2010.
- Launched mentorship programs with leading female pilots and engineers across Asia and Latin America.
- Invested in gender-sensitive hiring policies within partner aerospace firms.

- Supported inclusion efforts in military-to-civil aviation transitions for female officers.

## Conclusion: Shifting the Gravity of Gender

The sky may no longer be the limit, but gender bias still holds many women down. To unlock the full potential of our species—in the cockpit, in the lab, or on Mars—we must confront and dismantle these challenges. Empowering women in high-altitude fields isn't just fair—it's how we advance.

## LIFE STYLE

### Flying High While Staying Grounded

In professions where every second counts and precision is critical, women in aviation and engineering have proven that they can thrive. But the question isn't only "Can they do it?"—it's "How do they do it all?"

From commanding the skies to designing spacecraft, women in these technical and high-stakes professions often lead dual lives—balancing intense work responsibilities with cultural expectations, family roles, and emotional labor.

## 1. The Demanding Nature of the Profession

### Long Hours & High Responsibility:

- Aviation and aerospace engineering careers often involve unpredictable schedules, on-call duties, international travel, or mission-critical operations.
- Pilots may fly across multiple time zones in a single week, while engineers might work late nights troubleshooting launch



systems, aircraft design flaws, or satellite telemetry.

These professions require discipline, intense focus, and physical stamina—qualities that become even more demanding when paired with family obligations.

## 2. The Cultural Context: Traditional Gender Roles

### Culture vs. Career:

- In many cultures, especially in Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, women are expected to be primary caregivers and manage domestic affairs.
- Even when both partners work full-time, women are often expected to “do it all”—cook, clean, care for children, support

aging parents — while excelling professionally.

For a woman returning home after a 16-hour engineering shift or a transcontinental flight, this can be mentally and physically exhausting.

### 3. Managing Motherhood in High-Stress Careers

Maternity, Guilt & Resilience:

- Female aviation engineers and pilots often delay starting families or face stigma for choosing career over early motherhood.
- Those who do have children face limited maternity leave policies in some countries and scarcity of childcare support during night shifts or international duties.

- Some women have shared experiences of “mom guilt” for missing school events or being away on long-haul flights while raising toddlers.

Yet, many also say that motherhood gives them deeper purpose and sharper focus, helping them become even more efficient professionals.

#### 4. The Role of Spousal and Family Support

##### The Hidden Co-Pilot:

- One of the most cited factors in successful work-life balance is having a supportive partner or family structure.
- Some women credit their spouses or parents for stepping in as caregivers or taking equal responsibility for household management.

For example, female engineers at NASA or Boeing have reported sharing calendars and household duties with their partners—turning domestic logistics into team missions.

## 5. Work-Life Integration, Not Just Balance

### Blurring the Boundaries:

- Many women in these professions now talk about integration instead of “balance”—they blend roles by taking kids to work when allowed, involving family in projects, or working remotely when possible (especially in software-based aerospace roles).
- Pilot moms might Facetime from hotel rooms during layovers, while engineers use project management apps to

streamline tasks and reclaim hours for their families.

Modern tools—combined with flexible mindsets—are helping to soften the lines between home and hangar.

## 6. Mental Health & Emotional Load

The Silent Struggle:

- The emotional strain of managing a demanding career and a full household is real.
- Many women report burnout, sleep deprivation, and feelings of being stretched too thin, especially without mentorship or peer support.

Mental health initiatives and employee wellness programs are increasingly vital—but not yet universal in aviation or engineering sectors.

## 7. Coping Mechanisms and Success Strategies

How They Do It:

- **Planning:** Weekly schedules, meal preps, and synchronized calendars help many women manage chaos.
- **Delegation:** Hiring domestic help, outsourcing errands, and saying “no” when necessary.
- **Mentorship:** Women thrive when connected with others who’ve walked similar paths—mentors can be lifelines.
- **Workplace Allies:** Supportive bosses and HR policies make a huge difference in how manageable life becomes.

## 8. The Power of Purpose

### Mission-Driven Resilience:

- Despite the challenges, most women in these roles report high levels of job satisfaction.
- Being part of something larger—building aircraft, exploring space, ensuring flight safety—gives them a deep sense of pride.

Their children often grow up seeing their mothers as heroes, changing not only industries but family legacies.

## 9. Aura's Role in Empowerment

### Creating Space for Women:

Aura Solution Company Limited, through its Auradevi Foundation, champions women in aviation and engineering. By:

- Funding scholarships for female aerospace students.
- Partnering with global aviation firms to create inclusive career pathways.
- Offering mental wellness and family support grants.
- Building internationally connected marinas and infrastructure that also create dignified technical jobs for women.

Aura believes that a world where mothers design spacecraft and daughters command flights is not just possible—but necessary.



Conclusion: Above All, Balance is a Team Effort. The life of a woman in aviation or engineering is not easy. But it's also not solitary. When families, employers, and societies join hands to support her journey, the skies are truly the limit.

## **EMPOWERING EVERY WOMEN EVERY WHERE**

Around the world, the narrative of women's progress is evolving—from fighting for basic rights to leading revolutions in finance, science, industry, and culture. Yet, behind this momentum lies a complex mosaic of lived experiences, where the path to empowerment looks different for each woman. From boardrooms to villages, from astronauts to artisans, the journey is personal but the goal is shared: dignity, independence, and impact.

Aura Solution Company Limited, through the visionary leadership of Auranusa Jeeranont, has made it a cornerstone of its philanthropic mission to elevate women across all strata. The Aura Foundation, with a strategic investment of \$1 billion USD, is focused on real, measurable transformation—especially for women who have historically been excluded from opportunity.

This article explores five critical lenses of female empowerment: retirement, entrepreneurship, tribal independence, the skilled vs. educated spectrum, and Aura's global role in shaping equity.

## 1. Retirement Planning for Women: Why the Stakes Are Higher

Retirement is a phase where many dream of rest, reflection, and reward—but for millions of

women, it's a looming financial cliff. Women often earn less over their lifetimes due to wage inequality, career breaks for family caregiving, and occupational segregation. As a result, they retire with significantly smaller pensions or savings. Compounded by longer life expectancy and increased healthcare needs, this disparity can become devastating.

Aura Solution Company Limited addresses this by offering dedicated retirement advisory services tailored for women. These include long-term financial planning, investment education, widowhood preparedness, and passive income strategies. Aura believes retirement should not depend on marital status or privilege—it is a financial right. The firm ensures that women are prepared not just to survive retirement, but to enjoy it with confidence.

## 2. Black Women Entrepreneurs: Putting Community First

The rise of Black women as entrepreneurs is one of the most powerful socio-economic trends in recent history. Their businesses often emerge not from privilege, but from necessity and vision—to uplift communities and rewrite legacy. Yet, Black women face systemic bias in accessing credit, investment capital, and institutional support.

Aura Foundation actively partners with Black women entrepreneurs through targeted investment funds, mentorship, and global networking platforms. More than just capital, Aura offers visibility—featuring their stories and innovations on platforms like Aurapedia. These women are not just building businesses; they are redefining leadership by putting community

before profit. Aura proudly champions their resilience and innovation.

### 3. Tribal Women and the Power of Independence

Tribal and Indigenous women are often the unsung stewards of ancient knowledge, sustainable living, and cultural preservation. Yet, many live in patriarchal systems where they lack access to education, healthcare, or legal rights. Aura Foundation recognizes that empowering these women is not just a moral imperative—it is vital for the health of their ecosystems.

With a dedicated \$1 billion commitment, Aura has launched programs to train tribal women in skilled trades, provide mobile education units, and secure property rights in their names. These efforts are already transforming isolated villages

into thriving micro-economies. For Aura, tribal empowerment is not charity—it's restoration. It's about giving back the power that was never meant to be taken.

#### 4. Understanding the Spectrum: Skilled, Educated, and Marginalized Women

Empowerment is not one-size-fits-all. Some women are educated through formal universities, others through lived experience and self-taught skill. Aura recognizes that skill can be just as valuable as formal education—if not more so in rural or developing contexts.

Aura distinguishes between different empowerment paths:

- Skilled women, often from villages or underserved backgrounds, are trained in

areas like tailoring, carpentry, digital marketing, and solar tech.

- Educated women, with degrees and certifications, are supported in their careers through mentorship and executive placements.
- Highly educated women, including researchers and scientists, receive grants and visibility for innovation.

Meanwhile, Black, Indigenous, and rural women face the double challenge of societal bias and structural exclusion. Aura's approach is holistic: to invest in every woman based on her context—not to homogenize empowerment, but to customize it.

## 5. Aura's Commitment to Equity, Not Just Equality

Equality means giving everyone the same resources. Equity means giving everyone what they need to succeed. Aura Foundation, led by Auranusa Jeeranont, believes in equity as the higher principle. Whether it's a tribal woman building a spice brand in the forest, a Black woman launching a fintech app in Chicago, or a scientist developing AI in Berlin—each deserves the tools specific to her context.

With headquarters in Phuket and a global footprint, Aura has impacted women across 18 countries. The Foundation hosts the Aurapedia Women portal, giving women a space to showcase their projects, exchange ideas, and access international markets.



This isn't just empowerment. It's evolution. It's the quiet revolution of a billion-dollar vision—where no woman is forgotten, where no dream is too small, and where every woman has the right to rise.

## TRIBAL WOMEN

### Uplifting the Forgotten

#### Tribal Women, Their Lifestyle, and Aura Foundation's Transformative Impact

For centuries, tribal women have lived on the frontlines of nature—safeguarding forests, preserving medicinal knowledge, nurturing cultural heritage, and raising generations in some of the world's most marginalized geographies. Yet despite their deep wisdom and indispensable contributions, they are too often invisible to modern development narratives.

Cut off from infrastructure, healthcare, education, and legal rights, tribal women face a unique intersection of gender, ethnic, and economic oppression. Their challenges are not just social but existential. In a rapidly globalizing world, they are expected to adapt—without tools, training, or a seat at the table.

But that story is changing.

Through the Aura Foundation, under the leadership of Auranusa Jeeranont, Aura Solution Company Limited has launched one of the most ambitious empowerment programs for tribal women across Asia, Africa, and South America. With over \$1 billion USD committed to skilled rural and tribal women, Aura is not just providing aid—it's creating a blueprint for sustainable transformation.

# Challenges Faced by Tribal Women: A Silent Struggle

Tribal women face a daily battle for dignity, survival, and identity. The key challenges include:

## 1. Limited Access to Healthcare

Most tribal communities live in remote areas where modern medical facilities are rare or non-existent. Women give birth without skilled midwives, and minor infections can become fatal. Maternal and infant mortality rates remain high.

## 2. Lack of Education and Skill Development

Many tribal women are illiterate due to cultural isolation, early marriage, and lack of schools. Even when schools exist, language barriers and

gender bias prevent girls from continuing their education. Skill training—especially market-relevant skills—is almost unheard of.

### 3. Patriarchal Norms and Gender-based Violence

In many tribal societies, traditional gender roles are rigid. Women have limited autonomy over land, mobility, and decision-making. Gender-based violence is often normalized or goes unreported.

### 4. Landlessness and Economic Invisibility

Despite being the primary cultivators and food gatherers, tribal women rarely own land. They are excluded from formal financial systems and rarely participate in the cash economy.

## 5. Cultural Erosion through Displacement

As forests are cleared and lands are industrialized, tribal women are displaced from their ancestral homes. Their spiritual, agricultural, and linguistic heritage is under threat.

### Aura Foundation: Empowering from the Roots Up

The Aura Foundation's approach is unique: instead of parachuting in solutions, it listens first —learning about the culture, needs, and aspirations of each tribal group. It then co-creates community-driven programs. Here's how Aura is making a difference:

#### 1. Skill Development and Micro-Enterprise Creation

Aura has trained thousands of tribal women in artisan crafts, organic farming, herbal product development, textile weaving, solar panel repair, and more. These women are now creating micro-enterprises that generate sustainable income, with Aura helping with branding, packaging, and global distribution.

“We didn’t just teach them how to make something—we taught them how to own their creation,” says Auranusa Jeeranont.

## 2. Mobile Health Units and Maternity Camps

Aura Foundation runs mobile medical units in inaccessible areas, offering antenatal care, vaccinations, and gynecological services. It also trains local women as community health workers, ensuring continuity even after the programs leave.

### 3. Digital Identity and Financial Inclusion

Aura helps tribal women get registered with national ID systems, open bank accounts, and access government welfare schemes. Some now even manage digital wallets and participate in e-commerce through Aura-supported platforms.

### 4. Legal Awareness and Land Rights

Working with legal aid partners, Aura educates tribal women about their land rights, inheritance laws, and protection against domestic violence. In many cases, land titles have been successfully transferred to women for the first time in the village's history.

### 5. Cultural Preservation through Digital Storytelling

Aura Foundation sponsors tribal storytelling projects—recording songs, dances, and oral histories to be archived and shared through Aurapedia Women, ensuring that empowerment doesn't come at the cost of identity.

## Real Change: The Story of Meera from Jharkhand

Meera, a tribal woman from the forests of Jharkhand, once lived without electricity, income, or education. Her day began before sunrise and ended with dusk. After joining an Aura-sponsored textile training program, she now runs a women's cooperative that exports eco-friendly fabrics to Europe. She has employed 40 other tribal women, sends her daughter to school, and proudly pays for her mother's medical care.



“I never thought my hands could create something the world wants,” she says.

## The Aura Legacy: Equity for the Unseen

Aura Foundation’s mission goes far beyond CSR or charity—it is about dismantling centuries of structural exclusion. By giving tribal women skills, voice, and ownership, Aura is ensuring they are no longer at the margins of history—but at the heart of the future.

Empowering tribal women isn’t just an act of justice. It’s an investment in sustainability, heritage, and resilience. Aura believes that every woman, no matter where she’s born, deserves the opportunity to rise.

**BLACK WOMEN**

## Empowering Black Women: From Margin to Mainstage

Black women have long stood as pillars of strength, creativity, and resilience. Across continents and centuries, they have nurtured communities, driven change, and influenced culture—often while battling systems that rendered them invisible. Yet in the face of systemic racism, gender inequality, and socioeconomic barriers, black women continue to rise, redefining success on their own terms.

Today, Aura Solution Company Limited and the Aura Foundation, led by Auranusa Jeeranont, are deeply invested in changing this narrative—not just through symbolic support, but by channeling resources, education, capital, and visibility into the hands of black women globally. Aura believes that empowerment is not about

helping women catch up—it's about recognizing they were always ahead, just underestimated.

## 1. The Global Reality: Intersectional Struggles

Black women face a double bind—marginalized both for their race and gender. In most countries:

- They earn less than white men and women for the same work.
- They are underrepresented in executive leadership and political positions.
- They often experience higher rates of health disparities, including maternal mortality and chronic illness.
- In media, they are still stereotyped or sidelined, despite immense talent and influence.

Yet black women have been the backbone of civil rights movements, grassroots entrepreneurship, and community development —often without acknowledgment.

## 2. Aura's Approach: Equity, Not Just Equality

Aura Foundation has committed a strategic global investment into the empowerment of black women, with special initiatives in:

- Africa (South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana)
- North America (United States, Canada)
- Latin America (Brazil, the Caribbean)
- Europe (UK, France)

Aura's programs focus on:

- Entrepreneurship & Capital Access

Many black women are natural entrepreneurs, yet face steep challenges in funding. Aura provides:

- Zero-interest microloans
- Business incubation centers
- Global marketplace access through Aurapedia Commerce
- Education & Executive Training

Aura sponsors scholarships and executive programs for young black women in:

- Engineering, Law, Finance, and Medicine
- Creative fields such as Film, Music, and Fashion

It also funds digital literacy and tech accelerators to bridge the digital divide.

- Health & Well-being

Aura funds mental health and maternal health clinics in underserved black communities, recognizing that wellness is foundational to empowerment.

### 3. Black Women Entrepreneurs: Powering Community Wealth

Aura supports black women-led startups with one condition: they must create a circular economy—hiring or mentoring others in their communities.

For example:

- In Johannesburg, a fashion cooperative led by black women now exports ethical clothing to Europe.
- In Atlanta, Aura-backed fintech startups are enabling wealth planning for low-income black families.
- In Salvador, Brazil, a group of Afro-Brazilian chefs launched a culinary institute blending heritage with hospitality training.

Aura believes that when you empower a black woman, you empower an entire ecosystem.

#### 4. Voice, Visibility, and Cultural Impact

Aura's media and entertainment subsidiaries amplify the voices of black women:

- Producing documentaries on forgotten heroines of African and diaspora history
- Launching a global music fellowship for emerging black female artists
- Supporting publishing platforms and academic journals authored by black women

Representation matters. Aura ensures the world sees black women not as victims—but as visionaries.

## 5. The Auranusa Model: Leadership from the Frontline

Auranusa Jeeranont, founder of Aura Foundation, has made black women empowerment a cornerstone of her leadership. She believes:



“The world doesn’t need to give black women a voice—they already have one. The world needs to learn to listen.”

Under her direction, Aura has pledged to invest \$5 billion USD over the next decade in programs specifically designed for women of color—with black women as designers, not recipients, of their future.

## Conclusion: No Empowerment Without Inclusion

Empowering black women is not a favor. It’s a moral, economic, and cultural imperative. It means redistributing resources, rewriting systems, and respecting black womanhood as the force of nature it truly is. With Aura’s support, black women are not just stepping into power—they are reshaping what power means.

## MUSLIM WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The 21st century has witnessed a profound transformation in the economic participation of Muslim women, with rising visibility in investment, entrepreneurship, and corporate leadership. Across global markets—from Southeast Asia to the Middle East and beyond—Muslim women are redefining business norms, breaking barriers, and driving sustainable economic growth.

## Historical and Cultural Context

Islamic history provides notable precedents for women in commerce. Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, the first wife of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), was a successful and independent businesswoman in Mecca—an early example of female entrepreneurship within an Islamic framework. Despite periods of social and cultural restrictions in various regions, the Qur'an and Hadith do not prohibit women from

owning wealth, running businesses, or participating in financial affairs.

## Modern Resurgence

In modern times, governments, financial institutions, and educational bodies in Muslim-majority and minority regions have increasingly supported women's access to financial systems. Muslim women are now prominent as venture capitalists, fintech entrepreneurs, fund managers, corporate board members, and small business owners.

Key developments include:

- **Shariah-Compliant Finance Access:** Growth in Islamic finance has allowed Muslim women to engage in investments aligned with religious values—such as

Sukuk (Islamic bonds), Halal stocks, and Takaful (Islamic insurance).

- Digital Inclusion: Fintech platforms are empowering women in conservative societies to invest and manage capital without physical mobility constraints.
- Educational Attainment: In several countries, Muslim women outpace men in higher education, particularly in business, economics, and STEM fields.

### Leading Regions of Activity

- Southeast Asia: In Malaysia and Indonesia, strong institutional support for Shariah-compliant banking and women's education has led to a surge in female financial professionals and entrepreneurs.

- Middle East: Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Qatar have witnessed increasing state-led reforms encouraging women's participation in business, such as relaxed guardianship laws and SME development grants.
- Western Economies: In the UK, U.S., and Canada, Muslim women often lead in community-based investing, halal consumer markets, and tech startups with global reach.

## Barriers and Opportunities

Despite progress, challenges remain:

- Cultural and Legal Restrictions: In some regions, patriarchal interpretations of religious or civil law limit access to capital, inheritance, and contract authority.

- **Financial Literacy Gaps:** While many women have entrepreneurial aspirations, limited exposure to investment tools and risk management hinders broader participation.
- **Access to Networks:** High-value investment and startup ecosystems remain male-dominated, limiting mentorship and funding opportunities for Muslim women.

However, the global rise of impact investing, ESG frameworks, and social entrepreneurship presents a significant opportunity for Muslim women to lead businesses aligned with Islamic ethics and community development goals.

## Case Studies and Role Models

- **Roshaneh Zafar (Pakistan):** Founder of Kashf Foundation, a microfinance

institution empowering women with small-scale investments.

- Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid (Egypt): African Union Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, promoting inclusive economic development across Muslim-majority African nations.
- Shariah-Compliant Funds: Managed by firms like Maybank Islamic, Dana Amanah, and boutique investment houses led by women with deep Islamic finance credentials.

## The Road Ahead

The inclusion of Muslim women in finance is not a charitable gesture—it is an economic necessity. Global GDP could gain trillions if gender gaps were closed, especially in emerging markets. As fintech, social impact

capital, and ethical investing continue to grow, Muslim women are uniquely positioned to build businesses that reflect both profitability and purpose. Aurapedia recognizes the vital contribution of Muslim women to the global financial ecosystem and continues to highlight their stories, innovations, and leadership.

## MUSLIM WOMEN LEADERSHIP

Muslim women are emerging as powerful contributors to global business and economic development. Across continents—from Southeast Asia to the Middle East, Europe, Africa, and North America—Muslim women are starting companies, leading institutions, influencing markets, and reshaping the entrepreneurial landscape. This transformation is not only a result of shifting social norms but also a resurgence of historical precedent, where Muslim women played pivotal roles in trade, finance, and community development.



## Historical Legacy

Islamic history honors the entrepreneurial legacy of Muslim women. The most prominent figure is Khadijah bint Khuwaylid, a successful merchant and the first wife of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). She managed a vast trading enterprise in the 7th century Arabian Peninsula and is celebrated for her business acumen, independence, and philanthropy. Early Islamic jurisprudence granted women rights to own property, inherit wealth, and conduct business—principles that laid a foundation for future generations.

Despite historical support, centuries of cultural, colonial, and legal restrictions in various regions muted this legacy. Today, however, Muslim women are reclaiming their place in business with renewed strength and vision.

## Current Landscape

### Entrepreneurship on the Rise

According to the World Bank and regional development institutions, Muslim-majority countries are seeing a surge in female entrepreneurship, especially in sectors such as:

- Retail and E-commerce
- Finance and Fintech
- Fashion and Modestwear
- Halal Beauty and Food
- Education Technology
- Green and Ethical Businesses

In nations like Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates, Muslim

women are founding startups at unprecedented rates. Digital platforms, microfinance, and government incentives have lowered entry barriers for women with limited traditional capital access.

## Corporate Leadership

Muslim women are also assuming leadership roles in multinational companies and public institutions. From chairing banks and investment firms to running ministries of finance and trade, their presence signals growing institutional confidence in inclusive leadership. Notably:

- Lubna Olayan (Saudi Arabia): Chairwoman of Saudi British Bank and one of the most powerful women in global banking.

- Rania Nashar (Saudi Arabia): First female CEO of Samba Financial Group.
- Muna Al Hashemi (Bahrain): Deputy Group CEO of Batelco, a major telecom provider.

## Enablers of Progress

Several factors have driven the rise of Muslim women in business:

1. Educational Attainment: In many Muslim-majority countries, women now outperform men in university enrollment, especially in business, law, and sciences.
2. Digital Transformation: Access to smartphones, social media, and online marketplaces empowers women to build businesses from home or in hybrid settings.

3. Islamic Finance: Growth in Shariah-compliant finance has created inclusive models such as Takaful, Sukuk, and ethical investment funds, tailored for women seeking faith-aligned financial tools.
4. Government Policy: Reforms in countries like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Malaysia have introduced quotas, funding programs, and mentorship ecosystems for female entrepreneurs.
5. Diaspora Networks: Muslim women in Western countries have built global businesses rooted in both Islamic values and modern innovation, offering halal, ethical, and culturally relevant solutions to global markets.

## Challenges Still Faced

Despite immense progress, barriers remain:

- **Legal Limitations:** In certain regions, male guardianship laws or inequitable contract rights still hinder full participation.
- **Access to Capital:** Muslim women are underrepresented in venture capital networks and often face bias in securing funding.
- **Social Perception:** Cultural expectations around gender roles and mobility still limit opportunities in some societies.
- **Lack of Mentorship:** While networks are growing, there remains a gap in high-level mentorship for Muslim women scaling into global markets.

Innovative Business Models

Muslim women-led businesses are often anchored in ethics, community, and sustainability. Many adopt circular economy principles, reinvest in local communities, and support education and healthcare. Business sectors where Muslim women are gaining traction include:

- Modest Fashion: A \$300+ billion global industry led by designers from Indonesia, Turkey, and the UK.
- Halal Wellness: Women-led companies are pioneering halal-certified skincare, cosmetics, and health products.
- Fintech for Women: Startups like “Finja” in Pakistan or “Alif Pay” in Central Asia are building platforms that prioritize female users and offer micro-investing, budgeting, and savings tools.

- Creative Arts and Media: Female Muslim directors, artists, and influencers are monetizing creative skills while redefining representation in global markets.

## Global Impact

The rise of Muslim women in business is not merely a story of inclusion—it is a redefinition of business itself. By weaving together faith, innovation, and social purpose, these women are developing business models that are inclusive, resilient, and ethically grounded. They are not only reshaping local economies but also influencing global consumer trends and corporate policies.

## Looking Ahead

As the global economy becomes increasingly values-driven, Muslim women are uniquely



positioned to lead in areas like ethical investing, halal innovation, sustainable entrepreneurship, and impact finance. Their success stories, while grounded in cultural identity and faith, resonate with broader universal values: empowerment, resilience, and purpose.

Aurapedia continues to document and support the evolving narrative of Muslim women in business—not as an exception, but as a norm in the new global economy.

Explore More:

- [Islamic Finance and Female Inclusion](#)
- [Modest Fashion Industry: A Global Overview](#)
- [Halal Startups and Women Entrepreneurs](#)

## CHALLENGES

Despite the global rise of Muslim women in business, navigating religious differences remains a complex and persistent challenge, particularly in multicultural societies or globalized industries. These challenges can range from subtle forms of exclusion to overt discrimination, affecting access to capital, networking, branding, and even legal protections.

### 1. Stereotyping and Islamophobia

Muslim women—especially those who wear the hijab or other religious attire—are often subjected to stereotypes that question their professionalism, competence, or openness to modern business practices. In some Western markets, Islamophobic sentiment may lead to discrimination in hiring, partnerships, or client

relations. This affects not only individual careers but also broader business visibility and credibility.

## 2. Cultural Misalignment in Business Norms

In industries where alcohol, gambling, or interest-based lending are normalized (e.g., hospitality, finance), Muslim women often face a values conflict. Choosing to abstain from participating in these sectors—or seeking alternative structures like Islamic finance—can limit market opportunities or alienate potential collaborators unfamiliar with Shariah-based business ethics.

## 3. Lack of Accommodation for Religious Practices

In certain corporate environments, Muslim women may not receive adequate accommodation for religious obligations such as prayer times, halal dietary options, or fasting during Ramadan. This can lead to workplace exclusion or even hinder promotion in rigid corporate structures that overlook diversity as a strength.

#### 4. Legal and Regulatory Misunderstandings

Muslim women entrepreneurs operating in non-Muslim majority jurisdictions may face regulatory obstacles when trying to establish businesses that adhere to Islamic principles. These include challenges in:

- Registering Shariah-compliant financial institutions

- Selling halal-certified goods
  - Securing religious trademarks (e.g., disputes over modestwear branding)
- Governments and legal systems unfamiliar with these principles may impose bureaucratic delays or impose policies that conflict with religious requirements.

## 5. Interfaith Networking Gaps

Business networking events, professional groups, and investor circles in many parts of the world are still dominated by mainstream cultural norms that may marginalize faith-based business owners. Muslim women who operate within a religious framework may find fewer mentors, investors, or peers who share their values—or who understand their business models rooted in Islamic ethics.

## 6. Pressure to Assimilate

In some environments, Muslim women report pressure to "tone down" their religious identity to fit into Western corporate or entrepreneurial norms. This may manifest as suggestions to avoid wearing the hijab, changing company branding to appear more "neutral," or avoiding discussion of faith-based values in pitches and presentations. Such pressure creates a dilemma between authenticity and market acceptance.

### Navigating the Divide

Many Muslim women are addressing these challenges through:

- Faith-based entrepreneurship networks, such as SheTrades, Modest Muslimah Network, and Halal Angels Network.

- Islamic business incubators and accelerators in regions like Southeast Asia and the Middle East.
- Legal advocacy and policy reform, pushing for stronger anti-discrimination protections and inclusive workplace policies.
- Cross-cultural education, engaging in interfaith dialogues and diversity training to build bridges across markets.