

Gender and inclusive business

The latest [UN Women World Survey report on the role of women in development](#) concludes categorically that gender equality must be at the centre of sustainable development. While this remains a supremely complex challenge, numerous inclusive businesses and programmes that support IB are focusing on empowering women. This month, in collaboration with UnLtd India, we explore women-focused inclusive enterprises.

We also bring you findings from a fascinating new report by Hystra on Smallholders, a study on the sustainability of accelerators by UnLtd India and we have a couple of webinars lined up that you won't want to miss!



Ruth Okiror sharing her business insights with Dutch entrepreneurs at the 2SCALE conference



SPRING supports high growth businesses across East Africa and South Asia whose products or services can help girls learn, earn, and save without harm.

Hearing from the entrepreneurs

- **Achieving gender equality through enterprise** was a key focus at UnLtd India's annual social entrepreneur event 'The Huddle' in Mumbai last month. Hub Manager, Lara Sinha spoke to a number of UnLtd India's investees about how they are [overcoming deep-seated cultural challenges to help women enter traditionally male-dominated spaces](#).
- **Video interview:** UnLtd India investee Arushi Aggarwal explains how, due to [multiple challenges faced by Indian craftswomen](#), she's struggled to identify the right beneficiary group to engage with for her business, The Initiative.
- **Video interview:** Abdul Mujeeb, Founder of Allika, talks about how his business is [bringing rural women out of their homes in Southern India](#).
- Ruth Okiror started with sorghum supplies to a brewery; Ruth Kinoti started with maize and beans supplied to schools. [Read how these two women CEOs grew their business](#), with support from BoPInc's 2SCALE.
- [Rocio Perez Ochoa reflects on how the IBA Bootcamp](#), business model canvas, and Lean Start-Up are helping her grow her distributor business, Bidhaa Sasa in Kenya.

Business strategies delivering impact for women and girls

- [Why business, why girls?](#) SPRING supports businesses whose products or services can help girls in East Africa and South Asia to learn, earn, and save without harm. CEO Ramona Liberoff explains why Human Centred Design is central to this approach.
- [How companies benefit from engaging women at the Base of the Pyramid:](#) the business case is laid out by Rachid Belkhir, as part of BoPInc and ICCO's 'Women as Inclusive Business partners' initiative, drawing on analysis of 15 companies from around the world.
- Smart solutions needed to tap into [women's hidden economies!](#) Endeava uses the example of Engro's engagement with women milk producers in Pakistan to show how deep-seated cultural norms create challenges, drawing on research for Asian Development Bank.
- ['Female-led businesses often support a greater number of people'](#) – This is just one of the insights shared by Carolina Olson, from a pilot project of Inclusive Business Sweden.
- [The Girls' Education Challenge](#) (GEC) is investing £300 million to boost education of a million of the world's poorest girls. Read how Eco-Fuel Africa has hard-wired a link between Ugandan mothers earning income from clean-fuel briquettes and keeping their daughters in school.
- RK Renew Energy PLC is [changing the reality of women refugees in Ethiopia](#). Read how this 2015 SEED winner provides a sustainable energy source, healthier cooking solution and new employment opportunities.
- In its recently released Impact Report, the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund sought to understand how its investees are explicitly benefitting women by analysing its impact through a gender lens. [Emily Mbiriti summarises the findings.](#)



An Eosta employee, one of the companies analysed by BoP Innovation Center



Women in Ethiopia making ceramic fuel stoves with RK Renew Energy PLC



Engro Pakistan- supporting female cattle farmers

NEW FINDINGS

- ‘Smallholder Farmers and Business’ published by Hystra. Network Partner at Hystra Jessica Graf summarises [key takeaways from the report](#) in her blog. Our [Editor’s Choice picks out key findings on which models work](#) and how farmers perceive risk.
- **Are accelerators sustainable?** Can market revenue ever replace grants? What innovative revenue generation is happening? [Unltd India analysed 15 sector bodies to find out.](#)
- The polio vaccine, new seed varieties launched during the Asian Green Revolution, and mobile payment platforms are some of only a small number of breakthrough inventions that have led to transformative impact. [Gerwin Jansen tells us why new technology doesn’t always lead to high impact.](#)
- How are eco-entrepreneurs delivering a triple bottom line? The SEED Initiative studies 12 of their winners to find out, and document their contribution to [sustainable development.](#)



Retailer in Vietnam selling rice husk gasifier stoves- one technological invention that could have a high impact.

EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Have you registered your enterprise on the [Connect to Grow marketplace](#) yet? If not, [listen to this podcast](#) to understand how it can benefit your business.
- GIZ has just launched its [new online platform for agricultural development actors](#). Join the Contract Farming Community of Practice online today!



Connect to Grow connects Indian, African and South Asian businesses

UPCOMING WEBINARS

[Overcoming external constraints to scale in inclusive business](#) Thursday December 10th

Hosted by **Business Call to Action** and **the Practitioner Hub**, with companies with first-hand experience tackling constraints. Join us at 9am New York, 2pm London, 3pm Geneva, and 7.30pm Delhi.

[We are beginning to learn what works for smallholders and agri-business](#) Monday December 14th

Join this evidence-based discussion with **Hystra** and the **Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund** at 9am New York, 2pm London, 3pm Geneva, and 7.30pm Delhi.

Our monthly series only go to those who have signed up as members on the Hub. Pass this on to others and encourage them to [sign up here for free](#)

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