

Empowering Change: Global Perspectives on Women Social Entrepreneurs Driving Sustainable and Inclusive Transformation

Atziry Gonzalez Vazquez

Women Entrepreneurship and Economic Development, Independent Researcher in Women's Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainability, USA

E-mail: atziryg82@gmail.com

Abstract - This paper explores the pivotal role of female social entrepreneurs in advancing sustainable business models and driving systemic social and environmental change. Drawing on global case studies and empirical evidence, it examines how women-led ventures combine economic viability with community empowerment, environmental stewardship, and inclusive leadership. The study highlights women's distinctive motivations, collaborative leadership styles, and resilience in overcoming structural, cultural, and financial barriers, including limited access to capital and market networks. It also discusses innovative strategies such as community-based funding, circular economy practices, digital technologies, and cross-sector partnerships that enhance the scalability and sustainability of women-led enterprises. By aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, female social entrepreneurs contribute not only to poverty alleviation and gender equality but also to climate action and inclusive economic growth. The paper concludes that fostering supportive policies, gender-lens investing, and capacity-building initiatives is essential for unlocking the transformative potential of women-led social enterprises.

Keywords: Female social entrepreneurship, Sustainable business models, Gender equality and leadership, Community empowerment, Triple Bottom Line (TBL), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Inclusive economic growth.

I. Introduction

The twenty first century has been characterized by global problems of an unprecedented nature such as a steadily increasing climate change, a growing social inequality and frequent economic instability of the financial system (Danilyan *et al.*, 2022). Such intertwined crisis not only identified weaknesses of conventional market system but also showed the dire necessity of new strategies which are useful, sustainable, and able to trade off between economic development and societal and environmental prosperity.

Especially in cases where profit maximization serves as the principle of business modeling, the advent of systemic problems could not be satisfactorily achieved, fostering the interest in entrepreneurship where impactful solutions are also paramount to being financially sustainable. In that regard, social entrepreneurship has become one of the essential approaches to develop market-based solutions addressing burning issues in society and ecology in a direct way.

One of the most peculiar positions among the different factors that influence this domain belongs to female social entrepreneurs. The ventures that are female founded have a tendency to be based on life experiences and insights of communities, which allows such ventures to develop both inclusive solutions and culturally applicable ones (Kakeesh, 2024). Both international surveys and expert knowledge demonstrate that women currently comprise almost 39% of all social entrepreneurs in the world with the Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa along with some areas in the United States being a dominant sphere (GEM, 2023). Their businesses often combine collaborative leadership, empathy and long-term sustainability, as well as shattering the established theories on what a successful business is supposed to be. Through this, women are not only playing a role in the economic development process but they are also in the process of redrawing the entrepreneurship as the agent of change towards the system itself.

Essentially, this paper will examine how female social entrepreneurs will contribute to the establishment of a sustainable business model and how they can overcome the structural and financial obstacles they encounter. Namely, the following themes will be discussed: the conceptualizations of social entrepreneurship and sustainability, distinctive motivations and leadership styles of female entrepreneurship, impediments, they are faced with, and creative strategies they come up with. Respecting case studies of different regions, the paper will also address greater economic, social and environmental implications of women-led social enterprises.

II. Conceptual Framework: Social Entrepreneurship & Sustainability

Defining Social Entrepreneurship

The concept of social entrepreneurship has become an influential and innovative discipline which combines the domain of entrepreneurship with social change, embracing crucial social and environmental problems with the help of novel and sustainable solutions. In contrast to traditional entrepreneurship, where financial profit and shareholder value are predominant determinants of direction, social entrepreneurship focuses on creating social value, and frequently at the expense of direct financial returns, on a greater good (Hietschold *et al.*, 2022). According to Dees (1998), social entrepreneurs are change agents who articulate the principles of entrepreneurial creation of social value and adapt the earned-income strategies to bring about systemic change (Mair & Noboa, 2004). Muhammad Yunus is an early proponent of the method and emphasized the need to be empowered, considering social entrepreneurship as a means towards social justice together with economic strength on the local scale (Risna & Faza, 2022). Social entrepreneurship is also conceptualized hence the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) defines social entrepreneurship as the innovations involving an orientation towards social impact, and especially the orientation towards fundamental social change as opposed to profit-maximizing orientation (Varela & Soler, 2012).

Social entrepreneurship is supported with a critical framework, which is known as the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), originally conceived by Elkington (1997). TBL broadens the traditional financial bottom line to include two equally worthwhile dimensions people (living in social equity) and planet (living in environmental stewardship). The three pillars of economic viability, social responsibility, and ecological sustainability are what social entrepreneurs incorporate in their business operation thanks to the realization of the fact that thriving in business operations is essentially associated with socially and environmentally rewarding business practices. Through TBL operationalization, these entrepreneurs integrate sustainable operations into all facets of their processes, including ethical working conditions, sharing with the community, environmental protection, and climate change adaptation (Tarnanidis *et al.*, 2016). This more comprehensive approach goes against conventional business paradigm in recognizing social and environmental returns as well as financial performance as critical aspects of measuring business performance, thus encouraging alternatives of measuring business success, which places an importance in creating social value.

In social enterprise setting, gender plays a key role (Nicolás & Rubio, 2016). Feminist economics criticizes mainstream economic theories that fail to take into account the gendered experiences and unwaged work in relationship to household production, thereby putting the spotlight on the gender relation and implications on business goals and results. The input of female social entrepreneurs is also unique as they have empathy, collaboration, and community-oriented approaches, which are traditionally posed as feminine properties of leadership (Lan, 2025). Such features are facilitating inclusive and participatory models of business which support social cohesion and resilience among marginalized groups. The empirical research suggests that social enterprises, which are led by women, are interested in social welfare, health, education, and environmental justice which are closely linked to caregiving and community wellbeing (Gordon *et al.*, 2018). This style does battle with masculinist entrepreneurs that run on competition and individualism, making the feminist entrepreneurship gender responsive which emphasizes the transformative potential of gender to achieve sustainable development.

Social entrepreneurship has an essential role to play in relation to a global framework of locating and evaluating. SDGs offer an essential framework to such an evaluation as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations Development Programme, 2025). Women social entrepreneurs become central players in several SDGs, especially addressing poverty (SDG 1), gender equality (SDG 5), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), and climate action (SDG 13). When they conceive and outfit their enterprises with these international development priorities, women-led social enterprises can have an impact that far reaches the development needs of the localities to actively participating on the wider sustainability needs as well (Georgeson & Maslin, 2018). This connectivity further promotes accountability and transparency through the provision of metrics of impact hence the ability of the social ventures to be able to prove their value statement to stakeholders, investors and the policymakers.

III. Women in Social Entrepreneurship

Statistical Landscape

Females as constituting a considerable number of social entrepreneurs in the world, about 39% in the most recent Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) report (Ali *et al.*, 2022). Their involvement however is significantly diverse regionally. Women in Sub-Saharan Africa are in many places in the forefront of entrepreneurial activity, and indeed in some countries the rate of activity is even more among women than men (Dabić *et al.*, 2022). These women are also leading

socially innovative enterprises especially in low-income and marginalized communities. Female representation is also high in Latin America and the Caribbean, where women are becoming increasingly present in areas that were long viewed as men territory, including manufacturing and transportation, not to mention leading rapid-growing social enterprises (Lwamba *et al.*, 2022).

Nevertheless, women entrepreneurship remains on the increasing trend, as portrayed in the United States though the gender differences persist. On the other hand, it is found that South Asian women have challenges owing to their culture and resource base, but a trend towards entrepreneurship is slowly gaining pace in the region (Agrawal *et al.*, 2023).

Special Motivation of Women Entrepreneurs

Unlike men, women social entrepreneurs are usually driven by their experience in life, and communal-centric outlooks (Sundermeier, 2024). Most enterprises are against social concerns, related to care giving, health, education, and environmental justice, among other services, fields with close ties to traditional femaleness (Walters, 2025). These entrepreneurs do not distribute profits as their only principle, but instead worry about inclusivity, social equity. They also want to empower marginalized groups, even other women and youngsters, and are inspired by beyond economic motives. The activities they engage in encourages relational and empathetic cultures of business, which prioritizes sustainable social influence and builds unity amongst the community.

Leadership Styles

Women social entrepreneurs are often characterized by collaborative, participatory and relationship-based leadership styles (Jha, 2024). These women are the opposite of traditional top-down models since they foster the concept of shared environments that encourage collective decisions and empower various stakeholders. This active style of participation ensures knowledge is shared and capacity developed through the development of good mentorship networks. The social trust imposed by the relational leadership of women facilitates support to reinvest in local development programs bolstering the social reinvestment to ventures as the ventures remain deep-rooted in the community, but they are innovative on the social front (Rivera, 2024).

Case Studies and Examples

The textile cooperatives of the indigenous Maya Kaqchikel women have been identified in Guatemala, as an example of economically empowering cultural preservation (Albasud, 2020). These cooperatives not only offer needed

income, skills training and market availability; they also uplift marginalized populations and strengthen indigenous identity.

In other parts of the world, there are examples that denote the various roles of women. Mukuru Clean Stoves is a female-founded initiative in Kenya making affordable, clean, and recycled cookstoves, enhancing health and creating livelihoods (The Adventure Project, 2024). Someone somewhere is a social enterprise that promotes sustainability through the incorporation of indigenous crafts and sustainable manufacturing in Mexico; it empowers women associated with the native crafts. Furthermore, Guatemala Kaji I x Enterprise present the indigenous women as innovators of sustainable fashion products using natural fibers and creating the threads of connection among traditions, environmental practices, and new economic realities (ReliefWeb, 2020).

IV. Hurdles and Obstacles of Female Social Entrepreneurs

Capital Accessibility

The biggest drawback female social entrepreneurs are inaccessibility of capital. Although they are on the increase, women-led enterprises attract little venture capital. As revealed in the 2023 reports by PitchBook, only 2.3 percent of all venture capital funding are invested in female-founded businesses (Pitchbook, 2023). Such a gap is further increased in the case of social enterprises, the business models of which tend not to coincide with the conventional financing standards concentrating on financial profitability in the short term. As a result, female social entrepreneurs have a hard time accessing the targeted investment that enables their social causes and financial sustainability and have a reduced freedom to scale and innovate.

Structural and Cultural Barriers

Along with financial difficulties, female social entrepreneurs have to meet cultural and systemic barriers. Social and career barriers are set through gender biases and stereotypes that several societies hold concerning leadership of women (Thelma & Ngulube, 2024). Legal constraints add further to these obstacles in some areas by preventing women ownership of property, the receiving of credit facilities or even independent contracts (Galsanjigmed & Sekiguchi, 2023). Some of these limitations lead to limited movement, limited networking and access to the market. Even worse, marginalized women, such as indigenous and rural women struggle with these issues of discrimination and other forms of social exclusion as they are compounded with different forms of discrimination (Bhandari, 2023).

Social Mission-Financial Sustainability Balancing

The tension between social mission and financial sustainability are also issues that female social entrepreneurs have to struggle with. Expanding a business has the potential to neutralize the social values or corrupt community-based values upon which most of the business created by women are founded (Lashitew *et al.*, 2023). The priorities of many social businesses that are woman-led are contrasted with those that a traditional entrepreneur can have (growth and profits). Female social entrepreneurs focus on credibility and a good quality of relations with communities (Dal Mas & Paoloni, 2019). Negotiation is needed as they expand so that the cost can be controlled, quality maintained and stakeholding trust sustained. Entrepreneurs may be forced to engage in a so-called mission drift and make hard trade-offs on financial metrics; this pressure may force them to turn into a less social enterprise (Molderez & Fets, 2023).

COVID- 19 and Other Crises

Challenges faced by female social entrepreneurs aggravated due to COVID-19 pandemic and other crises. Numerous women-owned businesses are on very small scales which have lesser sources of cash thus are susceptible to disturbances of the economy by lockdowns and slowdowns. However, these crises showed them to be resilient and flexible as well. To illustrate, the El Paso community kitchen which is female-led in the U.S. reorganized their operations rapidly and opened a space to meet the increasing food insecurity needs and successfully mobilized their resources efficiently (Asia Pacific, 2024). Likewise, numerous female entrepreneurs resorted to online services, diversified their portfolios, and adjusted their missions to address acute local needs. The pandemic has brought to light business weaknesses and also served to bring out the innovative leadership qualities that are only found in social enterprises run by women.

V. Chances and Developments in Sustainable Models Taken By Women

Community Based Funding Models

Increasingly, female social entrepreneurs are relying on community-based financing as an alternative to the obstacles they face in more mainstream finance (Anggara & Djamaluddin, 2024). Microfinance institutions provide women access to small loans that can be used in starting and running social enterprises that would otherwise not gain access to the mainstream banks (Ranabahu & Tanima, 2021). The cooperatives aid it by consolidating resources and risk sharing which gives women in the rural or marginalized locations more access to markets and bargaining power. There is an emergence of opportunities on crowd funding platforms where

women entrepreneurs reach out to world networks to raise small scale funds democratizing capital access, and promoting the causes of women (Groza *et al.*, 2020).

Innovative Practices

Women businesses are ahead in the implementation of the sustainability innovations in business to address the environmental issues (Abdelwahed *et al.*, 2022). People adopt the use of circular economy approaches that emphasize the reuse of resources, repair and recycle them in order to minimize resources wastage. Female-led regenerative farming initiatives restore healthier soils and biodiversity, and increase the resilience of the environment and local economies (Udumann *et al.*, 2024). Furthermore, zero-waste strategies rework the creation and use of new products to reduce reliance on landfills. Such sustainable operations are attractive to environmentally friendly buyers and business associates, and give the female-led ventures competitive advantages, as they encourage long-term ecosystem sustainability.

Digital platforms and Technology

High-quality digital technologies are essential to the growth of the women-led social business (Suseno & Abbott, 2021). Online platforms curb the barriers due to geography and infrastructure by opening an accessibility of a new market, resources, and networks and particularly providing access in under-served regions (Robinson *et al.*, 2020). Online retail, social media, and electronic storytelling increase awareness of products and target audiences all over the world. Virtual mentorship and training online develop important business skills. In addition to that, fintech apps such as mobile banking give women an opportunity to deal with money safely and conveniently (Sidana *et al.*, 2023). These digital tools in conjunction result in inclusiveness and sustainability in growth within the female entrepreneurship.

Cross-Sector Partnerships

Cross-sector partnerships are key to growth of the impact and combating resource shortages. NGOs also offer technical assistance, capacity building, and advocacy that enhance the strength and presence of women as entrepreneurs (Abdelfattah, 2023). Enabling policies, regulations, and finance plans are offered by governments. Partnerships with companies introduce capital, market access and expertise due to impact investments and corporate social responsibility efforts (Dhar *et al.*, 2022). Such multi-stakeholder partnerships provide synergies that assist women-led initiatives in innovating, reach out to more people, and sustain both financially and socially. These opportunities and innovations in total enhance the female social entrepreneurs to

create their resilient, inclusive, and sustainable businesses that can change the social and environmental change.

VI. Implications

The contribution of female social entrepreneurship in the economy is immense and is a known concept. A report prepared by McKinsey associated the potential increase of global GDP to a sum of 12 trillion dollars with the enhancement of gender equality (McKinsey, 2016). Social businesses initiated and run by women also help to create jobs, innovate and diversify the economy and so are important as they would drive inclusive economic growth (Lashitew *et al.*, 2019). Empowering women means that economies will access hidden talent and creativity that would lead to new profitable business models because of varied thinking.

Female social entrepreneurs make significant social impacts beyond the economic. Their enterprises usually focus on education, medical care, empowerment of underrepresented groups, and aim at fixing the worst social disparities. Women-led firms contribute to better social cohesion and resilience by enhancing access to much-needed services and improving the quality of lives of vulnerable populations to help create more equitable and just societies (Kalaivani *et al.*, 2024).

Across our portfolio, the women who lead our ventures are committed to taking action on the climate crisis, engaging in sustainable production, conservation and environmentally friendly innovation (Stephenson & Furman, 2023). These initiatives promote the strategy of the global society to fight climate change and conserve natural resources and it is quite evidenced on how social entrepreneurship can improve economic growth and environmental sustainability.

Such complex effects demonstrate the need of favorable policies. Institutions and governments play a central role in developing an inclusive ecosystem through which female social entrepreneurs can flourish. This involves applying gender-responsible legal model, offering economic incentives, enhancing access to markets, and incurring cross-sector partnerships. This can be done through institutional support which goes beyond overcoming the hurdles to women by increasing the scope and influence of their undertakings as social entrepreneurs.

VII. Future directions/Recommendations

Investment strategies need to change to embrace gender lens investing and dedicated impact funds to unlock the full potential of female social entrepreneurship (Fareeha & Tregua, 2025). By looking at women-led ventures specifically, gender lens investing manages to address their specific needs and contributions. Impact funds also focus on the dual returns

social and environment impact as well as financial growth, which suit the mission-oriented orientation of the female social entrepreneurs (Islam, 2025). These investment strategies not only offer much needed funding but also patient capital to enable the women-led businesses the time and flexibility to scale in a more sustainable way. Further, the experience, guidance, and networks that the impact investors usually offer can benefit the operations and market access of the female entrepreneur, leading to successful expansion of the social venture.

Policy reforms are an important factor in creating an enabling environment to female social entrepreneurs. Formal obstructions to include discriminative legislations, restricted property and credit rights, and far-reaching gender prejudices in business spheres have to be brought down (Christopherson *et al.*, 2022). Gender-responsive government policies need to be adopted, such as tax incentives, easy regulatory process, specific funding programs directed to the business women. Such policy measures are capable of removing entry barriers, enhancing competitiveness and stimulating the involvement of more women in social entrepreneurship. Also, it is advisable that the governments implement schemes that encourage market access, capacity building and inclusion so that women entrepreneurs do not get left behind in economic development processes.

The other building block in development and sustainability of the social ventures of the women is capacity building (Hafiz *et al.*, 2023). Tailor-made training which improves the entrepreneurship knowledge, financial literacy, marketing, and management qualifies women to deal with the complexity of running sustainable businesses. Mentorship and peer networks are also vital and provide constant guidance and emotional support and chances to collaborate. These networks allow women to exchange best practices, how to cope up with challenges and help women to become more confident (Emma, 2024). Promoting the use of such programs both locally, on a national and international level will go a long way in achieving a healthier ecosystem of female social entrepreneurship, so that such ventures can flourish, innovate and achieve sustainable social and environmental impact.

VIII. Conclusion

This paper has brought out the crucial roles played by women social entrepreneurs in promoting economic, social, and environmental development around the world. The social enterprises, initiated by women, are transforming the conventional entrepreneurship by incorporating social missions as well as sustainability approach into their business models. They contribute to job creation, community empowerment, and climatic action, among other issues which

are intricate in nature like inequality, poverty, and environmental degradation. Even though the female social entrepreneurs have had tremendous influence, there have been a number of challenges that have continued to hinder them such as access to funding, organizational cultural orientation, and also finding a balance between the social goals and financial sustainability. Funding, financial inclusion, life-long sustainability, digital solutions, and inter-sector alliances can be seen as potential avenues of fighting these challenges and accelerating the growth of women-led business. The financial opportunities of furthering female equality are huge: the potential has been estimated in trillions of dollars of extra global GDP. Besides, social entrepreneurs whose organizations are run by women are unique in ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goals are realized by providing benefits to marginalized groups and creating strong, inclusive communities.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abdelfattah, A. (2023). Leveraging Entrepreneurship in Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as an Approach to Improving the Quality of Life of Rural Women in Egypt. *Przestrzeń Społeczna (Social Space)*, 23(3), 484–504. <https://socialspacejournal.eu/menu-script/index.php/ssj/article/view/283>
- [2] Abdelwahed, N. A. A., Bastian, B. L., & Wood, B. P. (2022). Women, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainability: The Case of Saudi Arabia. *Sustainability*, 14(18), 11314. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su141811314>
- [3] Agrawal, R., Bakhshi, P., Chandani, A., Birau, R., & Suhan, M. (2023). Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in South Asian countries using interpretive structural modeling. *Cogent Business & Management*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2023.2244755>
- [4] Albasud. (2020). The Mayan weavers of Guatemala: the fight against cultural appropriation of their art. www.albasud.org. <https://www.albasud.org/blog/en/1193/the-mayan-weavers-of-guatemala-the-fight-against-cultural-appropriation-of-their-art>
- [5] Ali, J., Jabeen, Z., & Burhan, M. (2022). Measuring factors influencing entrepreneurial intention across gender in India: evidence from Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Database. *Journal of Research in Marketing and Entrepreneurship*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jrme-08-2021-0105>
- [6] Anggara, B., & Djamaluddin, A. S. (2024). Empowering Entrepreneurs: Financial Strategies for Community-based SME. *Golden Ratio of Community Services and Dedication*, 4(2), 69–80. <https://doi.org/10.52970/grcsd.v4i2.591>
- [7] Asia Pacific. (2024, October 21). Community Kitchen – accelerating disaster recovery with a women-led care initiative. *UN Women – Asia-Pacific*. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/feature-story/2024/10/community-kitchen>
- [8] Asian Development Bank. (2016). The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women’s Equality Can Add \$12 trillion to Global Growth. *Asian Development Bank*. <https://www.adb.org/news/events/power-parity-how-advancing-women-s-equality-can-add-12-trillion-global-growth>
- [9] Bhandari, M. P. (2023). Women and society a major field of studies to understand the discrimination. *Socioeconomic Challenges*, 7(2), 78–93. [https://doi.org/10.21272/sec.7\(2\).78-93.2023](https://doi.org/10.21272/sec.7(2).78-93.2023)
- [10] Christopherson, K., Yiadom, A., Johnson, J., Fernando, F., Hanan Yazid, & Thiemann, C. (2022). Tackling Legal Impediments to Women’s Economic Empowerment. *International Monetary Fund*.
- [11] DabićM., Dana, L. P., Nziku, D. M., & Ramadani, V. (2022). Women entrepreneurs in Sub-Saharan Africa: historical framework, ecosystem, and future perspectives for the region. *Springer*.
- [12] Dal Mas, F., & Paoloni, P. (2019). A relational capital perspective on social sustainability; the case of female entrepreneurship in Italy. *Measuring Business Excellence*, 24(1), 114–130. <https://doi.org/10.1108/mbe-08-2019-0086>
- [13] Danilyan, O., Dzeban, O., & Kalynovskyi, Y. (2022). SOCIAL INSTABILITY AS A GLOBAL TREND OF THE MODERN WORLD. *Cogito - Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 3, 141–161. <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=1193307>
- [14] Dees, J. G. (1998). The Meaning of “Social Entrepreneurship”. www.scirp.org. <https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=2491526>
- [15] Dhar, B. K., Harymawan, I., & Sarkar, S. M. (2022). Impact of corporate social responsibility on financial expert CEOs’ turnover in heavily polluting companies in Bangladesh. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 29(3). <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2230>
- [16] Elkington, J. (1997). Accounting for the Triple Bottom Line. *Measuring Business Excellence*, 2(3), 1–6. <https://www.johnelkington.com/archive/TBL-elkington-chapter.pdf>
- [17] Emma, L. (2024, January 6). Collaborative Approaches to Building Sustainable Networks for Women’s Mentorship and Support. <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lawrence->

- Emma/publication/387759452_Collaborative_Approaches_to_Building_Sustainable_Networks_for_Women
- [18] Fareeha, F., & Tregua, M. (2025). Elevating Female Entrepreneurs to Achieve Sustainability Innovation: Role of Social Enterprises. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5185725>
- [19] Galsanjigmed, E., & Sekiguchi, T. (2023). Challenges women experience in leadership careers: An integrative review. *Merits*, 3(2), 366–389. *MDPI*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/merits3020021>
- [20] GEM. (2023, November 14). GEM Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. *GEM Global Entrepreneurship Monitor*. <https://www.gemconsortium.org/report/gem-20222023-womens-entrepreneurship-challenging-bias-and-stereotypes-2>
- [21] Georgeson, L., & Maslin, M. (2018). Putting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals into practice: A review of implementation, monitoring, and finance. *Geo: Geography and Environment*, 5(1), e00049. <https://doi.org/10.1002/geo2.49>
- [22] Gordon, K., Wilson, J., Tonner, A., & Shaw, E. (2018). How can social enterprises impact health and well-being? *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 24(3), 697–713. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijebr-01-2017-0022>
- [23] Groza, M. P., Groza, M. D., & Barral, L. M. (2020). Women backing women: The role of crowd funding in empowering female consumer-investors and entrepreneurs. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 432–442. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.06.013>
- [24] Hafiz, N., Mohiuddin, Md. Fazla., Razman, A., Ida Md. Yasin, Sazali Abd Wahab, & Razman, A. (2023). Scaling social impact in women-led social enterprises in developing countries: a knowledge-based perspective. <https://doi.org/10.1108/md-05-2022-0667>
- [25] Hietschold, N., Voegtlin, C., Scherer, A. G., & Gehman, J. (2022). Pathways to social value and social change: An integrative review of the social entrepreneurship literature. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 25(3). <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12321>
- [26] Islam, M. S. (2025). Nongovernmental Organizations Transforming into Social Enterprises in the Process of Institutionalizing Solutions to Major Social Crises for Ensuring Sustainable Social Development. *Zakariya Journal of Social Science*, 4(1), 41–55. <https://doi.org/10.59075/zjss.v4i1.518>
- [27] Jha, S. (2024, August). Entrepreneurial Leadership: A New Paradigm, Context, and Vision of Effective Leadership with Women Emerging as Successful Entrepreneurs. *Digital Repository of Theses - SSBM Geneva*. <https://repository.e-ssbm.com/index.php/rps/article/view/465>
- [28] Kakeesh, D. F. (2024). Female entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial ecosystems. *Journal of Research in Marketing & Entrepreneurship*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jrme-09-2023-0158>
- [29] Kalaivani, N., Vijayarangan, R., Chandra, S., Alamelu, M. S., & Karthikeyan, P. (2024). Women Entrepreneurs in Emerging Markets for Driving Economic Growth. *Advances in Business Strategy and Competitive Advantage Book Series*, 257–290. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3100-2.ch010>
- [30] Lan, T. (2025). Personal network and women leadership identity construction. *Hal. science*. <https://theses.hal.science/tel-05140937>
- [31] Lashitew, A. A., Bals, L., & van Tulder, R. (2019). Inclusive Business at the Base of the Pyramid: The Role of Embeddedness for Enabling Social Innovations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 162. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3995-y>
- [32] Lashitew, A. A., Branzei, O., & van Tulder, R. (2023). Community Inclusion under Systemic Inequality: How For-Profit Businesses Pursue Social Purpose. *Journal of Management Studies*, 61(1). <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12907>
- [33] Lwamba, E., Shisler, S., Ridlehoover, W., Kupfer, M., Tshabalala, N., Nduku, P., Langer, L., Grant, S., Sonnenfeld, A., Anda, D., Eyers, J., & Snilstveit, B. (2022). Strengthening women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality in Fragile Contexts Towards Peaceful and Inclusive societies: a Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 18(1), 1–264. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cl2.1214>
- [34] Mair, J., & Noboa, E. (2004). Social Entrepreneurship: How Intentions to Create a Social Enterprise Get Formed. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.462283>
- [35] Mckinsey. (2016). Labor-force participation, hours worked, and productivity Equality in society Scope for broader action by the private sector. https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Industries/Public%20and%20Social%20Sector/Our%20Insights/How%20advancing%20womens%20equality%20can%20add%2012%20trillion%20to%20global%20growth/MGI%20Power%20of%20parity_Full%20report_September%202015.pdf
- [36] Molderez, I., & Fets, J. (2023). Dark sides of social entrepreneurship: Contributions of systems thinking towards managing its effects. *Business and Society Review*, 128(4). <https://doi.org/10.1111/basr.12316>
- [37] Nicolás, C., & Rubio, A. (2016). Social enterprise: Gender gap and economic development. *European*

- Journal of Management and Business Economics*, 25(2), 56–62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.redeen.2015.11.001>
- [38] Pitchbook. (2023). PitchBook Reports Show Female Founded Companies Secured Record High Proportion of Deal Value In 2023 | *PitchBook*. *PitchBook*. <https://pitchbook.com/media/press-releases/pitchbook-reports-show-female-founded-companies-secured-record-high-proportion-of-deal-value-in-2023>
- [39] Ranabahu, N., & Tanima, F. A. (2021). Empowering vulnerable microfinance women through entrepreneurship: opportunities, challenges and the way forward. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijge-01-2021-0020>
- [40] ReliefWeb. (2020, July). In Guatemala, investing in indigenous women’s economic empowerment is key to building back better after COVID-19 - Guatemala. *ReliefWeb*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/guatemala/guatemala-investing-indigenous-women-s-economic-empowerment-key-building-back>
- [41] Risna, A., & Faza, D. (2022). Social Business Contribution of Grameen Bank Muhammad Yunus in the Development of Poverty Reduction Discourse in Indonesia. *International Economic and Finance Review*, 1(1), 54–84. <https://doi.org/10.56897/iefr.v1i1.5>
- [42] Rivera, T. (2024). A Qualitative Study Exploring the Lived Experience of Non-Profit Employees in Racial Equity Work: Uncovering the Essence of Commitment, Challenges and Transformative Potential - *ProQuest*. *Proquest.com*. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/87065fetc46f8c79b5c018fc0b8c5b40/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>
- [43] Robinson, L., Schulz, J., Dodel, M., Correa, T., Villanueva-Mansilla, E., Leal, S., Magallanes-Blanco, C., Rodriguez-Medina, L., Dunn, H. S., Levine, L., McMahan, R., & Khilnani, A. (2020). Digital Inclusion across the Americas and Caribbean. *Social Inclusion*, 8(2), 244–259. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v8i2.2632>
- [44] Sidana, A., Goel, R., & Rehman, M. (2023). A Study of Stimulating Sustainable Women Empowerment Through Fintech Applications. *Emerald Publishing Limited EBooks*, 207–221. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80455-640-520231013>
- [45] Stephenson, E., & Furman, S. (2023). Climate just entrepreneurship: feminist entrepreneurship for climate action. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijge-03-2023-0070>
- [46] Sundermeier, J. (2024). “It just seems that they don’t act like men”: The influence of gender role stereotypes on women’s entrepreneurial innovation activities. *Journal of Business Research*, 185, 114902–114902. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.114902>
- [47] Suseno, Y., & Abbott, L. (2021). Women entrepreneurs’ digital social innovation: Linking gender, entrepreneurship, social innovation and information systems. *Information Systems Journal*, 31(5). <https://doi.org/10.1111/isj.12327>
- [48] Tarnanidis, T., Papatthasiou, J., & Subeniotis, D. (2016). Critical success factors in the TBL concept of sustainable entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Decision Support Systems*, 2(1/2/3), 38. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijds.2016.081734>
- [49] The Adventure Project. (2024). Update on Mukuru Kenya Stove Factory: Empowering Communities. *Theadventureproject.org*. <https://www.theadventureproject.org/blog/update-on-homa-bay-stove-factory-in-kenya>
- [50] Thelma, C. C., & Ngulube, L. (2024). Women in Leadership: Examining Barriers to Women’s Advancement in Leadership Positions. *Asian Journal of Advanced Research and Reports*, 18(6), 273–290. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajarr/2024/v18i6671>
- [51] Udumann, S. S., Dissanayaka, N. S., & Atapattu, A. J. (2024). Women’s Roles in Building Resilience to Climate Change in Agriculture. *Advances in Environmental Engineering and Green Technologies Book Series*, 58–78. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3037-1.ch004>
- [52] United Nations Development Programme. (2025). Sustainable Development Goals. *United Nations Development Programme; United Nations*. <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals>
- [53] Varela, R., & Soler, J. (2012). Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Caribbean. <https://www.gemconsortium.org/file/open?fileId=48587>
- [54] Walters, S. (2025). Energy Poverty among Women in Jamaica’s Low-Income Communities. *Springer Nature*.

Citation of this Article:

Atziry Gonzalez Vazquez. (2025). Empowering Change: Global Perspectives on Women Social Entrepreneurs Driving Sustainable and Inclusive Transformation. *International Research Journal of Innovations in Engineering and Technology - IRJIET*, 9(9), 65-73. Article DOI <https://doi.org/10.47001/IRJIET/2025.909010>
