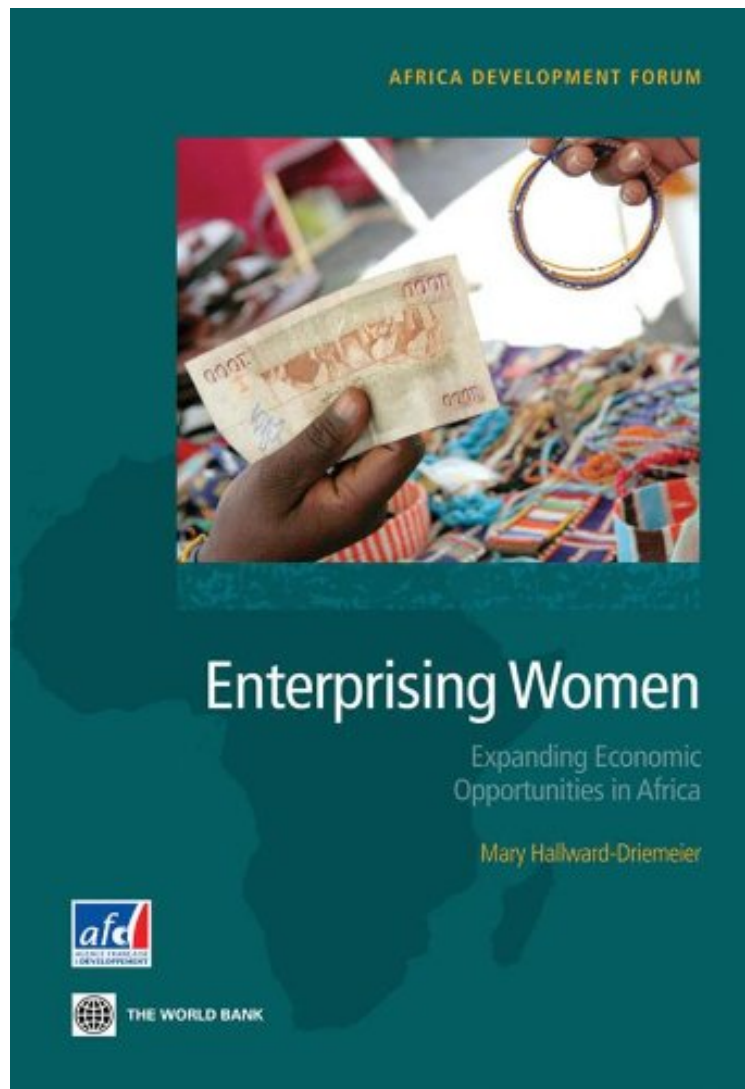


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Enterprising Women: Expanding Economic Opportunities in Africa (Africa Development Forum)

Mary Hallward-Driemeier

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Mary Hallward-Driemeier : Enterprising Women: Expanding Economic Opportunities in Africa (Africa Development Forum) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Enterprising Women: Expanding Economic Opportunities in Africa (Africa Development Forum):

This book brings together new household and enterprise data from 41 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to inform

policy makers and practitioners on ways to expand women entrepreneurs' economic opportunities. Sub-Saharan Africa boasts the highest share of women entrepreneurs, but they are disproportionately concentrated among the self-employed rather than employers. Relative to men, women are pursuing lower opportunity activities, with their enterprises more likely to be smaller, informal, and in low value-added lines of business. The challenge in expanding opportunities is not helping more women become entrepreneurs but enabling them to shift to higher return activities. A central question addressed in the book is what explains the gender sorting in the types of enterprises that women and men run? The analysis shows that many Sub-Saharan countries present a challenging environment for women. Four key areas of the agenda for expanding women's economic opportunities in Africa are analyzed: strengthening women's property rights and their ability to control assets; improving women's access to finance; building human capital in business skills and networks; and strengthening women's voices in business environment reform. These areas are important both because they have wide gender gaps and because they help explain gender differences in entrepreneurial activities. It is particularly striking that while gender gaps in education tend to close with higher incomes, gaps in women's property rights and in women's participation in reform processes do not. As simply raising a country's income is unlikely to be sufficient to give women equal ability to control assets or have greater voice, more proactive steps will be needed. Practical guidelines to move the agenda forward are discussed for each of these key areas.

'This book provides examples from countries across the region of how to achieve success. The data show the gender patterns across types of entrepreneurial activities but they are not uniform. Variations in these patterns and analyses of reforms show how shifting conditions make a difference. More indeed can be done, and this book provides a roadmap of how to do it.' --Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Coordinating Minister of Economy and Minister of Finance, Federal Republic of Nigeria
'Enterprising Women brings together a wealth of data from household and firm surveys from over 40 countries to study a vital issue in Africa. This book combines analytical insights and practical recommendations on how to make expanding women's opportunities a reality. Highly recommended.' --Haroon Borat, Professor of Economics and Director of the Development Policy Research Unit, the University of Cape Town, South Africa