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Key Learnings from Female Entrepreneurs in Sustainable Tourism in Zimbabwe

1 Introduction to the Project

1.1 Project Idea

Key learnings from female entrepreneurs in sustainable tourism in Zimbabwe – what is behind this project? Female entrepreneurship – surely an interesting part of any economy and worthwhile for in-depth study. Sustainable tourism: the meaning of sustainability in tourism does not need explanation. So, why Zimbabwe?

30 years ago, during a project study at the Hamburg University of Economics and Politics on “Marginalization of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in World Trade,” practical studies were usually focused on Tanzania.

Women had equally taken part in the liberation struggle that ended with Zimbabwe’s independence in 1980, and one of the goals of the new government was to bring about socio-economic participation for women. The Ministry of Women’s Affairs and other related institutions were estab-

lished immediately, and some of the government's first steps were to introduce legal reforms that establish the principle of gender equality, thus opening up the way for other reforms.¹

Even though the Zimbabwean government has since ratified a number of agreements improving women's rights and gender equality, added new requirements to the Constitution in 2013, and put up National Gender Plans, implementation is problematic. Gender issues still are common. Recently, the Zimbabwe's Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development, is pursuing the goal of "Women's Economic Empowerment... (referring) to the process that increases women's real power over economic decisions that influence their lives and priorities in society. This can be achieved through equal access to and control over critical economic resources and opportunities and the elimination of structural gender inequalities in the labor markets."²

Looking at their economic participation during the previous colonial times, (black) women had little chance to be economically active; in 1979, they constituted only 6.8 % of the total "working population", i.e. were paid for their work. "The 'Report on the Situation of Women in Zimbabwe', edited by the Ministry of Community Development and Women's Affairs in 1982, states as the major reason for women's absence in the modern employment sector the lack of formal education and in addition to that societal attitudes and family demands."³

¹ This development did not come about without some pressure from the liberation movement and a small group of university-educated and professional middle class women; this and further: Ziyambi, Naume M., Historical Overview of Women's Groups in Zimbabwe, <http://www.postcolonialweb.org/zimbabwe/gender/ziyambi1.html> (accessed July 5, 2021)

² The National Gender Policy, 2013-2017, p. 26.

³ Nestvogel, 1985, p. 7.

Today's situation shows a high and increasing unemployment rate⁴ with young women particularly affected: in 2014, 21.2 % of young women (15-24 years) were officially unemployed, about twice as many as young men (11.6 %).⁵

Due to the country's deindustrialization over the last decade, Zimbabwe's economic structure is now characterized by millions of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), particularly in agriculture, mining, manufacturing and tourism. The MSME sector, which comprises many women entrepreneurs, plays a critical role in economic development through job creation, foreign exchange generation and poverty alleviation. MSMEs in Zimbabwe representing 73 % of the total workforce of 7.8 million.⁶

As formal employment is hardly an option, women (and men) are trying to secure their livelihood with self-employment. In an international comparison, women in Africa, and thus also in Zimbabwe, choose the path to entrepreneurship and self-employment more than average.

For women's participation in MSMEs, it is often precisely the economic constraint: in Zimbabwe's work and life context, women are responsible for feeding and looking after families. They are under pressure to earn the necessary income and at the same time do the necessary (unpaid) housework and upbringing. Another motivation for taking the step towards self-employment is the desire to avoid institutional and cultural constraints of the formal sector.

Thus, it is not surprising that in Zimbabwe, women's entrepreneurship is usually limited to the traditionally "female" sector: household activities such as growing food and poultry farming, sewing school uniforms for the children, making soap and detergents. For Zimbabwean women, the cross-border trade with South Africa is rated as the proportionately most frequent entrepreneurial activity of women.

⁴ Actual unemployment is estimated at 80 to 90%, while the official rate is given as 5,2 % (2017, ILO), cf. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH GIZ (2021), available at: <https://www.liportal.de/simbabwe/geschichte-staat/>

⁵ CIA The World Factbook Zimbabwe, 2020.

⁶ Tarinda, 2019, p. 9.

As in many countries of the Global South, tourism is a significant contribution to the economy in Zimbabwe by creating employment. In its “Zimbabwe National Tourism Master Plan” (2016) the Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry described in its goals towards “... Human Resource Development: ... Emphasis on the possibilities of employment and entrepreneurial activities in the industry for young school-leavers, the working conditions, career opportunities, diversity, international exposure, remuneration should be made. The interest in working for the tourism and hospitality sector is to be enhanced with special emphasis on the youth and women.”⁷

1.2 Goals: Learnings from Each other (Networking, Guideline), collect information

The goal of this project and in particular the online entrepreneurship summit is to learn from each other and gather information for a guideline on how to start as a woman entrepreneur in Zimbabwe. Moreover, networks among entrepreneurs can evolve and strengthen as well as motivate.

A cooperation with a university in Zimbabwe for the Department of Business Administration and Management is a side goal of this project. This cooperation will help establish solid exchanges, among others for the study program International Business Studies. Students as well as lecturers can visit each other and profit from each other’s expertise. Internship placements in the hospitality sector in both countries will be possible.

For setting up the entrepreneurship summit, the project group works together with the ZTA, Harare University and entrepreneurs from Zimbabwe.

1.3 Outlook: what happens after the Project

The goal is to continue the project after 2021 and to compile the research results and the information from the digital summit. The project group can then use different tools to strengthen the work and outcome between the women in Zimbabwe and Germany.

⁷ Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry 2016, p. 43.

Through the dialogue between potential Zimbabwean entrepreneurs and German participants, the aim is to establish a network to exchange different business experiences. Communicating the different inspirations and instruments for financial support could help potential future entrepreneurs with unanswered questions.

Due to travel restrictions during the 2020 global pandemic, the project group could not visit Zimbabwe. Once travel is unrestricted, the group intends to personally communicate with the Zimbabwean female citizens.

Culture and economy influence Zimbabwean female entrepreneurs; however, this information is rarely found on the Internet or elsewhere because it is their personal experience.

2 Fundamental Information

2.1 Globalization and Rapprochement of cultures

The search term “globalization” in the Internet leads to economically connoted descriptions and explanations, although social scientists Giddens and Beck initially coined this term.⁸ Beck described 2007 globalization as “the experience of everyday action becoming boundless”⁹, with the perception of worldwide interdependencies as the determining feature for the current phase of globalization.¹⁰

Culture and communication are important globalization spheres, which people experience every day (mobile phone, online conference, international travelling). Intercultural dialog seems to be as easy as talking face to face with our neighbor. However, it needs to be practiced.

The UN proclaimed 2010 as the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, declaring that “The main goal of the Year will be to demonstrate the benefits of cultural diversity by acknowledging the importance of the constant transfers and exchanges between cultures and the ties forged between them since the dawn of humanity. As cultures encompass not only the arts and humanities, but also lifestyles, different ways of living

⁸ Auernheimer, 2019, p. 8.

⁹ Beck, 2007, p. 44; translated by C.H.

¹⁰ Kreff et al., 2011, p. 126.

together, value systems, traditions and beliefs, the protection and promotion of their rich diversity invites us to rise to new challenges at the local, national, regional and international levels. This will involve integrating the principles of dialogue and mutual knowledge in all policies, particularly education, science, culture and communication policies, in the hope of correcting flawed cultural representations, values and stereotypes.”¹¹

Subsequently, the UNESCO proclaimed “The International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures 2013-2022”, emphasizing the need for new articulations between cultural diversity and universal values to furthering interreligious and intercultural dialogue and the promotion of mutual understanding and cooperation for peace.¹²

With our project, especially the online summit, we want to start a transnational and intercultural exchange of experience, knowledge, expectations and fears, leading to personal exchange. We believe that besides cultural and economic differences, there are significant similarities and will try to deepen the “connections between the local and the distant”¹³ to discover them.

2.2 Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a presidential republic. Emmerson Mnangagwa is head of state and head of government. The seat of government and parliament is Harare.¹⁴

Approximately 14.8 million people live in Zimbabwe. The national languages are English (official language), Shona (official language and most widely spoken), Ndebele (the second most spoken language after Shona), and 13 other languages.¹⁵

Political administration in Zimbabwe is divided into eight provinces and two provincial cities: Harare and Bulawayo. Provinces and their administrative centers are: Manicaland (Mutare), Mashonaland East (Marondera),

¹¹ United Nations, 2010.

¹² UNESCO, 2016.

¹³ Auernheimer, 2019, p. 8.

¹⁴ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, 2021.

¹⁵ Afrika Süd, 2021.

Mashonaland West (Chinoyi), Mashonaland Central (Bindura), Matabeleland North (Bulawayo), Matabeleland South (Gwanda), Masvingo (Masvingo City) and Midlands (Gweru).¹⁶

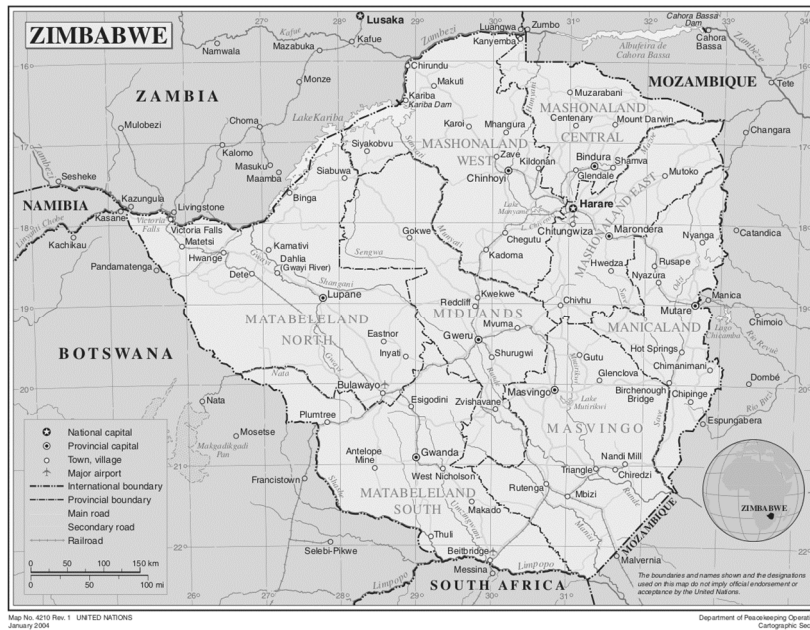


Fig. 1: Map Zimbabwe (United Nations, 2004) (from <http://www.weltkarte.com/afrika/simbabwe/karte-zimbabwe.htm>)

Matabeleland North is the largest province at 75,025 square kilometers, and Bulawayo is the smallest at 479 square kilometers. While Matabeleland North has the lowest population density, Harare and Bulawayo are the most densely populated provinces.¹⁷

2.3 Female Entrepreneurship

¹⁶ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, 2021.

¹⁷ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, 2021.

Entrepreneurship is the creation of new ventures; entrepreneurs are the creators of such ventures.¹⁸ Women entrepreneurs or female entrepreneurs refers to “women or a group of women who initiate, organize, and operate a business enterprise”.¹⁹ Female entrepreneurship thus means any economic activity of one or more women, whereby they initiate, organize and combine factors to run a business enterprise beyond income-generating activities.

Traditionally, men are more likely than women to start a new business; many countries made it an important policy objective to increase female participation in entrepreneurship²⁰, as entrepreneurship is “a key driver of capacity building and national development”²¹. In only three economies – Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Madagascar – the female rate exceeds the male rate, so that there is still dormant economic potential.²²

The female entrepreneurship index investigates three indices that measure quality of: 1) the entrepreneurial environment, 2) the entrepreneurial ecosystem and 3) women’s entrepreneurial aspirations based on recognized datasets, such as the UN Development Program. Figure 2 demonstrates the major regional issue in Sub-Saharan Africa to be access to finance.²³ The Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development in Zimbabwe set up the Women’s Microfinance Bank in 2017. It aims to empower all women economically and socially and provides financial support to women running small or medium enterprises.²⁴

¹⁸ Gartner, 1988.

¹⁹ Chipfuva, Chishamiso, & Muchenje, 2012.

²⁰ Global Entrepreneurship Research Association, 2019.

²¹ Chipfuva, Chishamiso, & Muchenje, 2012.

²² Global Entrepreneurship Research Association, 2019.

²³ The Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute, 2015.

²⁴ Zimbabwe Women’s Microfinance Bank, 2018.

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The global environment for Female Entrepreneurs
 results of the 2015 Female Entrepreneurship Index by GEDI



Fig. 2: Global Environment for Female Entrepreneurs (The Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute 2015.)

Female entrepreneurs combine economic and social goals²⁵; often, they seek a better work-family balance²⁶. The 3Ms framework highlights what entrepreneurs need to launch and grow ventures: markets, money and management. Brush, de Bruin, & Welter extended this to the 5Ms with motherhood and meso/macro environment, highlighting that the family context,

²⁵ Bird & Brush, 2002.

²⁶ Brush, Carter, Gatewood, Greene & Hart, 2006.

as well as the environment, might have a larger impact on women than men.²⁷

Even though female entrepreneurs are one of the fastest growing entrepreneurial populations in the world, women used to play a less significant role in entrepreneurship in Africa.²⁸ More recent studies, however, show that especially in Zimbabwe, close to 70 % enterprises are female owned²⁹ and yet they perform much worse than male-owned businesses, mostly due to sociocultural factors.³⁰

In Zimbabwe, in 2020, there are formal and informal enterprises as well as entrepreneurs who run businesses without any form of support. Most entrepreneurial endeavors tend to be unsustainable and focused in particular sectors.³¹

In addition to the problem of financing a business³², the business environment in Zimbabwe is often perceived as hostile, and its continual changes require a high level of adaptation, endurance, and perseverance from the entrepreneur.³³

Other well-known issues are limited social and business networks, lack of empowerment and confidence, and a need for training in marketing. Networks, in particular, would grant female entrepreneurs the support they so desperately need, not least of all in the increased collateral compared to stand-alone businesses, so credit agencies and governments can be convinced that the entrepreneur will not default.³⁴

²⁷ Brush, de Bruin & Welter, 2009.

²⁸ Brush, Carter, Gatewood, Greene & Hart, 2006.

²⁹ Mboko & Smith-Hunter, 2009.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ Sivio Institute, 2020.

³² *ibid.*

³³ Mboko & Smith-Hunter, 2009.

³⁴ *ibid.* and Chipfuva,, Chishamiso & Muchenje, 2012.

2.4 Sustainable Tourism

2.4.1 Sustainable Tourism - a General Overview

As every other industry, the tourism industry is affected by, connected to, and responsible for global threats like climate change, resource depletion from increasing demand, plastic pollution, nature destruction, human rights violations, decline in biodiversity, overtourism, and others. Since tourism relies on healthy and intact travel destinations, including both nature and the local community, it has a high interest in ending its negative impact and supporting a sustainable development.³⁵

The UNWTO describes a sustainable tourism development as “Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”³⁶

The UNWTO created the Committee on Tourism and Sustainability (CTC) to support an ethical and sustainable tourism development by monitoring and raising awareness on sustainable tourism.³⁷ It developed the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, which focuses on different sustainable and ethical aspects of tourism – from respecting cultural heritage to environment protection while traveling to securing the rights of local communities in the travel destination.³⁸

Social sustainability plays an important role when it comes to a sustainable development. Therefore, observing human rights, specifically of these local communities and of vulnerable groups like indigenous people, children and women, is one of the main requirements.³⁹

As sustainability is highly diverse, this section focuses on the income situation of women in tourism, in reference to social sustainability. The importance of gender equality and the empowerment of females is highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Five of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, aiming to achieve

³⁵ Rein & Strasdas, 2015.

³⁶ World Tourism Organization, n.d a.

³⁷ World Tourism Organization, n.d b.

³⁸ WTO General Assembly, 1999.

³⁹ UN Women, n.d. and Rein & Strasdas, 2015.

gender equality and empower all females by 2030.⁴⁰ The tourism industry has highlighted gender equality in Article 2.1 of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism: “Tourism activities should respect the equality of men and women [...]”.⁴¹

More women than men work in the tourism industry. In 2018, over 54 % of people working in the tourism industry globally were women. In Africa, this rate was 69 %.⁴²

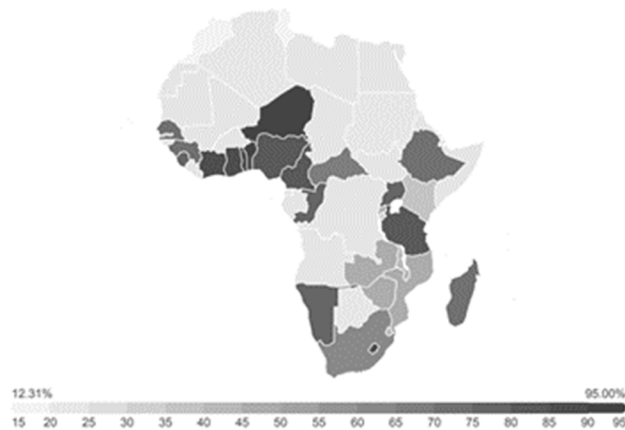


Fig. 3: Percentage of women employed in tourism (World Tourism Organisation, 2019a)

Even though women’s support and equality are highlighted in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and the SDGs of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, women still face gender-based inequalities. Figure 4 shows the gender pay gap in tourism in 2018.⁴³

⁴⁰ United Nations, n.d.

⁴¹ World Tourism Organisation General Assembly, 1999.

⁴² World Tourism Organisation, 2019a.

⁴³ *ibid.*



Fig. 4: Gender pay gap in tourism in 2018 (World Tourism Organisation a 2019)

To close the gender gap and to empower women, the UNWTO developed together with the World Bank Group, GIZ, Amadeus and UN Women an action plan that includes employment, entrepreneurship, leadership policy and decision-making, education and training, community and civil society, and measurement for better policies. This action plan is addressed to all governments, organizations and private companies who want to ensure empowering potential for women in tourism.⁴⁴

2.4.2 Sustainable Tourism and Women in Tourism in Zimbabwe

Tourism in Zimbabwe is the fourth largest industry in the country, following mining, agriculture and energy.⁴⁵ It is controlled by the Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality (METHI), led by Mr. Nqobizitha Mangaliso Ndhlovu. METHI regulates the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) and the Department of

⁴⁴ World Tourism Organisation, 2019b.

⁴⁵ World Atlas, 2018.

Tourism Development, which is connected with the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA). The ZTA is the DMO of Zimbabwe.⁴⁶

In the past, Zimbabwe has seen a continuous increase in tourist arrivals between 2012 and 2018, from 1.8 to 2.58 million travelers. The main group of travelers were tourists from other African countries with 2.06 million tourists, followed by European tourists with 232.000 travelers. The main reason for a trip to Zimbabwe was visiting relatives, and leisure travel. These two fields made up 1.25 million tourists.⁴⁷

In 2019, the number of tourists starts to decline by 11% from 2.58 to 2.29 million tourists, with African travelers and European travelers as the two main groups with 1.87 million and 184.903 travelers. Despite the decline, the tourism industry contributes an impact of 197 million USD with international tourists and still 8.6 % of all Zimbabweans employees working in the tourism industry.⁴⁸

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of tourists continued to decline down to 920,000 in 2020.

⁴⁶ envirotourism, 2020b.

⁴⁷ Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, 2018 and World Bank, 2020.

⁴⁸ Zimbabwe Tourism Authority, 2019 and World Travel and Tourism Council Zimbabwe, 2020.

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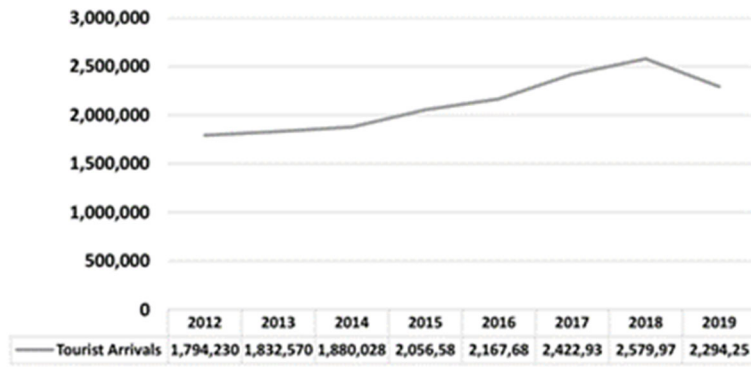


Fig. 5: Tourism trends Zimbabwe: 2012 – 2019 (Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry 2020)

Despite this continued decline of tourists, the country believes in achieving 5 Billion USD with tourism in 2025. For that, the government published a National Tourism Recovery and Growth Strategy in 2020.

In terms of a sustainable tourism development, the vision of METHI is “a healthy environment and sustainable tourism for socio-economic development by 2030” and “to manage, conserve and promote the sustainable use of natural resources and facilitate the delivery of high-quality tourism products that contribute to the economic development of Zimbabwe.”⁴⁹

Already in 2013, METHI developed a National Tourism Policy. This policy includes several objectives related to a sustainable and positive socio-economic tourism development. Most relevant for the empowerment of women is Article 5.6:

“Women as key actors in the development of tourism

- This policy seeks support and encourage women’s initiatives in main stream tourism and sustainable cbt projects in line with the Women Economic Empowerment Framework launched by Government in 2012;

⁴⁹ Envirotourism, 2020a.

- The policy will promote the respect for the dignity of women in the development, marketing and promotion of tourism and ensuring equality in the conditions of employment of women;
- Due consideration will be given to women to equally access funding for Tourism Development as their male counterparts; and
- Government will support the participation of women in local, regional and international exhibitions to create market linkages and networking in a bid to support gender equality and community development.”⁵⁰

In 2018, MEHTI published the Tourism Master Plan. The plan includes measures regarding sustainability and women’s support in tourism. The plan’s objectives, to be achieved with responsible development, include youth and women’s involvement in tourism and the development of SMEs to meet markets and local needs.

However, the plan does not specifically mention a strategy on how to empower and support women. It only mentions women in relation to vulnerable groups such as youth or people with disabilities. Other than bullet points such as “integration of women development in tourism initiatives capacitation”, the document does not include strategies that empower women.⁵¹

The newest paper published in 2020 by the METHI is the National Tourism Recovery and Growth Strategy. It was created as a respond to the negative effects of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.⁵² This document also does not include specific measures that support women.

3 Project

3.1 Desk Research

The project was originally approved to take place in 2020 and meant to culminate in a local research in Zimbabwe. This was not possible due to the global pandemic. The project group thus changed their plan. Instead of

⁵⁰ Ministry of Tourism and Hospitality Industry, 2013.

⁵¹ Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry, 2018.

⁵² Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Industry, 2020.

a research study travel to Zimbabwe, desk research was executed from Germany. Further the group planned an online entrepreneurship summit to take place at the end of 2021. As a potential next project phase, a local pilot project in Zimbabwe could be executed and accompanied by Jade Hochschule and a local Zimbabwean partner university.

3.2 Online Entrepreneurship Summit

For the online summit, German and Zimbabwean women entrepreneurs are invited to participate. The summit should be in November 2021 during a time that fits culturally. Two half-days or one full day contain several blocks of 90-minute sessions and include impulse talks with following breakout sessions. Between the blocks will be breaks, with moderated topics to be discussed.

The project team needs to consider cultural differences such as polychronic/monochronic, punctuality not necessarily being the strong point of some participants, as well as harvest time, childcare and other practical issues. Also it is not yet clear how many people can and will participate, which platform should be used and how the Zimbabweans can even access the summit. A program for the summit is under construction.

3.3 Learnings from Summit

From our online summit, we want to identify factors, which are important for the idea creation, implementation and the management of women-led enterprises:

- Which factors stimulate women to become entrepreneurs? In a “...patriarchal society like Zimbabwe, many women choose entrepreneurship over formal employment for flexibility as a coping mechanism to meet family and community obligations in addition to being economically active.”⁵³ Furthermore, in the rapid economic decline of the Zimbabwean economy, “the primary entrepreneurial motivation relates to ‘push factors’ ... and therefore fits into necessity, rather than opportunity, entrepreneurship.”⁵⁴ How

⁵³ Mazonde & Carmichael, 2016, p. 1.

⁵⁴ Mazonde & Carmichael, 2016, p. 2.

relevant are these findings for Zimbabwe and Germany nowadays, especially in light of Covid 19-restrictions?

- Which role do personal expression and emancipation play for women entrepreneurs to start and manage their business? Mazonde & Carmichael also state that the interest in female entrepreneurship is increasing in the countries of the Global South, not only to realize the potential for economic growth, but also in light of the opportunities for female expression, emancipation, agency and empowerment.

The same researchers state “at the meso-level, Zimbabwe’s institutional environment affects the endeavors of the female entrepreneurs, as, despite many laws designed to emancipate women, culturally linked behaviors and practices often override them.”⁵⁵ Do women have to work around patriarchal barriers in order to succeed?⁵⁶ Are these considerations significant in both countries?

- Which success factors do women state as important for establishing and managing an enterprise?
- What kind of support is available from institutions and how important is this for women?
- Which role do family and friends play?
- Women play different social roles – what are these roles and how is their entrepreneurial success affected by them?
- What type of qualification and work experience did women entrepreneurs obtain before they started self-employment?
- Is the rural/urban context significant for any of the factors to establish and run an enterprise?
- What are medium- and long-term objectives women entrepreneurs pursue? Do they have and follow strategic plans?

⁵⁵ Mazonde & Carmichael, 2016, p. 7.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 1.

- Do women entrepreneurs network/are part of an umbrella organization?

With our project, we hypothesize that we will find differences between Zimbabwean and German women entrepreneurship concerning the particular business environment and personal background, but there will also be many similarities in answering the questions above.

We hypothesize that

- female entrepreneurs in both countries face more obstacles than male entrepreneurs,
- gender biases have an unfavorable impact on women entrepreneurs in both countries,
- it is necessary for women entrepreneurs to raise their voices in groups,
- “push factors” to start an enterprise in both countries are increasing in times of economic restrictions (e.g. Covid 19 restrictions),
- there is an urban/rural divide in both countries, and
- women entrepreneurs from both countries are interested in networking within their own culture and country, but also with their “international counterparts”.

3.4 Impulse from Summit: Local Pilot Project

The summit outcome should result in impulses for upcoming projects. The research team has already considered follow-up tasks:

- A guideline for overcoming challenges for female entrepreneurs.
- A network of women entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe: an interactive network of women entrepreneurs. Meetings and events take place after the first Entrepreneurship Summit on a regular base. A website with a member login could create a community meeting point.
- Start of a field research in Zimbabwe. Once possible, a pilot project in cooperation with summit participants can be started in Zimbabwe: a sustainable tourism project by a female entrepreneur.

- Establish a café in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, as a meeting and information point for tourists, tourism professionals and female entrepreneurs in tourism, with the focus on women and sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

4 Conclusion

4.1 Project Summary

With this work, we want to identify key factors for idea creation, implementation and management of women-led enterprises. We want to compare and contrast these key factors between Germany and Zimbabwe. At the time of publication of this article, we also extended our current desk research to include several qualitative interviews with German female entrepreneurs. Moreover, we started to design a quantitative analysis to triangulate with more data to be gathered in Germany and Zimbabwe with an online questionnaire.

4.2 Key Learnings

Since men are traditionally more likely than women to start a new business while entrepreneurship is an important driver of capacity building and national development, many countries made it an important policy objective to increase female participation in entrepreneurship. Only three countries worldwide have more female than male entrepreneurs. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the access to finance seems to be the biggest issue.

Gender equality is one of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, even though more women than men work in the tourism industry, women still face gender-based inequalities in this sector, which becomes obvious for example in the pay gap.

In Zimbabwe, tourism is the fourth largest industry. Despite several government measures to strengthen tourism and women as key actors in this sector, no precise strategies exist.

4.3. Outlook

The project aims towards cooperation and possibilities on site locally in Zimbabwe with the goal to have enriching encounters between the two cultures as well as impulses for women entrepreneurs in both Germany and Zimbabwe. Potential takeaways are conclusions from the encounters during the research phase as well as the summit.

A possible continuation is a local pilot project in Zimbabwe, accompanied by both Jade Hochschule and the local partner university.

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