

The African Women's Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP) 2012

"Women can be the rock on which a freer, safer, more prosperous Africa is built. They just need the opportunity." – Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

1 | MISSION STATEMENT

The African Women's Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP) seeks to equip African businesswomen with the tools and opportunities to accelerate the growth of their businesses, become leaders in their communities and drive social and economic progress in Africa.

2 | INTRODUCTION

AWEP was launched in July 2010 at the United States/sub-Saharan Africa Trade and Economic Co-operation Forum (AGOA Forum). Organized and supported by several U.S. agencies, under the leadership of the U.S. Department of State, the original AWEP event sponsored by the Office of International Visitors brought 34 African businesswomen from AGOA-eligible countries to the United States for a two-week program in 2010. Last year, 40 women from 37 African countries participated in the program, which provides the women with an opportunity to meet and network with U.S. business people, policy makers, industry associations, non-profit organizations advocating for women's economic opportunities, and multilateral development organizations.

The program outlined three goals:

- (1) Accelerate the growth of women-owned businesses and export capacity;
- (2) Foster leadership for women's business organizations; and,
- (3) Support women's advocacy roles as "voices of change" in their communities



State Dept Image / June 10, 2011

Secretary Hillary Clinton sports the custom AWEP fabric worn by the AWEP 2010 alumnae during the reunion in Lusaka, Zambia.



3 | LUSAKA

AWEP Conference at 2011 AGOA Forum in Lusaka, Zambia

The newly-created Zambian AWEP chapter organized a successful three-day business training conference held in tandem with the 2011 AGOA Forum in Lusaka, Zambia. Leading businesswomen came from around Africa to participate in this high-profile event. The program included sessions such as funding access and commercial expansion, trade

LEFT: State Dept Image / June 10, 2011

Secretary Clinton eyes jewelry made by AWEP Zambia members.

negotiations and export business opportunities in various sectors. Secretary of State Clinton met with the women to discuss their activities. The Zambian AWEP conference raised the profile of issues surrounding women in business to the highest levels of government.

4 | MOVING FORWARD

AWEP 2012 will take place in June of this year, when approximately 45 leading women entrepreneurs from sub-Saharan Africa will participate in the third AWEP International Visitor Leadership Program. The program will split into sector-specific groups, visiting cities throughout the U.S. This year's program will conclude with events held in conjunction with the U.S.-hosted 2012 AGOA Forum in Washington, DC and a U.S. – Africa Business Conference in Cincinnati, OH. The group will meet with American businesspeople, government officials, and women's and business association leaders. They also will receive tailored instruction on how to best benefit from the opportunities presented under AGOA and participate in leadership workshops.

Follow-on training for AWEP alumna was held in Africa in 2010 and 2011. Training programs will be designed for this year's alumna and AWEP network members as well. Topics include growing and expanding businesses; AGOA/U.S. import regulations; and social entrepreneurship.