



## WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

### About Us

The Women's Enterprise Development Initiative Pty Ltd is a South African private corporation formed in 2008 by an international collective of senior managers and entrepreneurs who share one thing in common: *an unwavering commitment to the economic empower of African women as a means of enhancing sustainable growth and development efforts.* These professionals come from a cross section of industrial sectors including banking & financial services, law, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), marketing, industrial psychology and human capital development. Whilst the majority of WEDI's executive directors are South African, the goal of the organisation is to develop a pan-African footprint. For further information on our directors, see [www.wedisa.com](http://www.wedisa.com).

In addition to working in the past with pan-African institutions such as the African Development Bank (BAD) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), WEDI has also engaged in collaborative projects with US and European developmental agencies including the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and the Swiss Investment Fund for Emerging Markets (SIFEM).

WEDI's Vision: *Creating a better world by investing in women entrepreneurs*

WEDI is a hybrid organisation that was structured to maximize positive social impact *whilst* generating an acceptable return on investment for our funders. As such, WEDI is comprised of two separate legal entities, WEDI International Pty Ltd and WEDI Funds Management Pty Ltd.

WEDI International Pty Ltd was formed with two broad objectives in mind:

- Research and advocacy around the need to invest differently in women
- Technical assistance, mentoring and support for women, their enterprises and for enterprise development agents ("EDA's") which includes *private funders, public institutions, developmental finance organisations, philanthropic and non-profit organisations and educational institutions.*

WEDI Funds Management Pty Ltd is a social investment vehicle which has as its mission: *To generate above average returns for investors by providing holistic support and capital to exceptional women owned and operated enterprises.*

Since its inception in 2007, WEDI Funds Management has been engaged on a project basis to fund opportunities identified via WEDI International. These projects have been funded primarily by WEDI's Management, working in conjunction with selected third-party funders on a project-by-project basis (either as co-investors or fund managers).

The medium to long-term goal of WEDI Funds Management is to bring together public and private funders to structure a successful enterprise development fund that invests primarily in enterprises that have a substantial women ownership and management component.

## **Our Track Record**

WEDI boasts some of the most experienced enterprise development agents on the Continent of Africa today. Collectively, we have over a century of enterprise development experience that covers the majority of Sub-Saharan Africa. Our international team has also worked in the US, UK, Europe, the Middle East and Asia. We choose to live and work in Africa because of our belief in the enormous potential of the African market to lead the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in sustainable food and energy investment. During the past decades, the return on investment on average across Sub-Saharan Africa was second only to India. We believe that these growth rates will continue and that the next decade will see African enterprises beginning to capture an even greater percentage of global direct foreign investment. We also believe that investing more resources in the economic empowerment of African women is not only the right thing to do – it is the smart thing to do.

WEDI's principals have a track record of success. We have been involved with the structuring of the US government's first enterprise fund on the African continent, the Southern African Enterprise Development Fund (SAEDF). We played a key role in raising capital for the first Southern African infrastructure fund (OPIC). In addition to a track record of success in assisting other enterprise development agents to research and establish new funds, we have also served as fund managers for a host of different entities; thereby gaining vital experience at the cold face of investment and funds management.

Notwithstanding our track record of success in helping to establish new funds, WEDI remains at its core a research and advocacy group that prides itself in being one of the first organisations to introduce cutting edge personal empowerment and leadership training into the enterprise development model in Africa. We are a Technical Assistance Programme (TAP) that also has the capacity to assist enterprises in finding the right funding partners.

In summary, WEDI is an initiative that is committed to transforming communities by supporting the economic empowerment of local women. Our vehicle is enterprise development and we have committed decades of our lives and much of our personal and professional resources to engaging others to share our vision. The long term goal of WEDI International is to revolutionize the enterprise funding model through innovation and the development of market/demand driven approaches that are viable and sustainable.

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