



Behind the Scenes: Young Women and Gender-Based Inequities in Africa's Creative Sector

Project Snapshot

- **Goal:** Generate and disseminate evidence on the multiple and intersecting issues impacting young women creatives' access to dignified and fulfilling work in African countries
- **Areas of focus:** Gender norms, work, and women's economic participation
- **Target group:** Young African women creatives
- **Where:** Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, Nigeria, and Uganda
- **Duration:** November 2023 - November 2026 (3 years)

The Current Landscape

The Creative Sector is Africa's next goldmine and most dynamic economic growth area. By 2040, the sector will generate an additional \$20 billion in annual revenue and create 20 million new jobs in Africa. Notwithstanding these promising developments, Africa's creative economy faces several socioeconomic challenges, including limited prospects for women's participation and advancement.

While gender disparities impede women's participation, and ability to fully benefit from opportunities in many of Africa's high-value sectors, the specific dynamics of these inequities in the region's Creative Sector are not well understood.

Behind the Scenes project focuses on the gender-related challenges of young women in the Creative Sectors of seven African countries, namely: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Rwanda, Nigeria, and Uganda. The project will leverage the ingenuity and energy of young creatives and researchers in these countries to explore gender norms and practices affecting young women creatives' access to dignified and fulfilling work.

Box 1: Some Creative Sector trends in the study countries

Kenya's Creative Sector is its most rapidly growing sector, generating 5.32% of GDP in 2013, and anticipated to contribute up to 10% by 2025¹. **Ghana's** Ghollywood currently generates about 4 million dollars annually and will be worth about \$500 million by 2030². In **Senegal**, the video, movie, and film industry alone will be worth more than \$600 million by 2030³. **Nigeria's** Creative Sector generated more than \$1 billion in 2020, which would create an estimated 2.7 million jobs by 2050 and contribute \$100 billion to the country's GDP by 2030⁴. In **Uganda**, the creative and cultural industry contributed about \$6.7 million to the country's GDP between 2014 and 2016. Projections indicate that the industry's contribution to Uganda's economy would triple by 2030⁵. **Rwanda's** cultural and creative sector represented 5.3% of the country's GDP in 2016. Increasingly acknowledged as a future driver of jobs and income for youth in the country, Rwanda's Creative Sector will be worth over 100 million by 2030⁶. **Ethiopia** has a long history of art, music, dance, literature, and other cultural expressions. For over a decade, its Creative Sector has accounted for around 4.2% of the national GDP. Ethiopia's Creative Sector earnings are expected to quadruple by 2030⁷.

What We Are Doing

Behind the Scenes project responds to the enormous opportunities and emerging challenges in Africa's Creative Sector. In **partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, the ICRW** will work with **project partners** in the seven study countries to provide robust evidence and thought leadership for understanding and addressing the challenges faced by young women creatives.

Activities in the project will include:

- Research and dissemination.
- Capacity enhancement for young African researchers, and
- Multi-stakeholder engagement to translate emerging evidence into actionable initiatives.

Key Project Partnerships

- Ethiopia – [Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern and Africa \(OSSREA\), Addis Ababa.](#)
- Ghana – [University of Cape Coast](#)
- Nigeria – [Department of Sociology and Department of Creative Arts, University of Lagos](#)
- Rwanda – [The University of Rwanda](#)
- Senegal – [LAREM - Laboratoire de Recherches Economiques et Monetaires](#)



Key Stakeholders:

Young female creatives, professional guilds, unions, government officials, producers, Creative Sector value chain players, media, and academic institutions.

Behind the Scenes project's comprehensive approach aims not only to generate evidence but to also foster an inclusive landscape where the talents of young women contribute significantly to the vibrant tapestry of Africa's Creative Sector.

By collaborating with key partners and engaging in rigorous research, this project aspires to amplify the voices of young women creatives and contribute to solutions for a more equitable future with dignified and fulfilling work.

References

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⁷. Jiwa, A (2020) In Addis Ababa, Creative Entrepreneurs Look Toward Ethiopia's Future. <https://www.heremagazine.com/articles/addis-ababa-art>.