

August 2021



Dear friends of the WOMENVAI platform,

The situation is critical... once again.

The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report just came in, with some alarming data: a concentration of CO₂ at its highest in 2 million years, a world hotter by 4°C, episodes of extreme heat said to increase 8 fold, and events of precipitation extremes at least twice as frequent and almost 5 times more intense - highlighting the need to act now to fight climate change.

In this context, technological, social and political innovation is not only necessary but urgent. Sadly, what we are also experiencing in some of the poorest countries right now continues to show us the urgent need to ask the right questions about democracy and gender equality.

The good news for us is that we are going to participate in the UNFCCC-COP26. WOMENVAI has been provisionally accredited, along with many other NGOs, and we are ready to bring the voice of women engineers and scientists and represent the weakest: we will be there to take action in Glasgow, from October 31st to November 12th, 2021. You have our word!

Out of the 195 governments that have signed the Paris Agreement, 42% have not yet produced their updated climate plans. The world is watching, and WOMENVAI wants to act with you.

Members, stakeholders, partners, ambassadors, friends - join us, we will be stronger together!

Yvette Ramos, President and co-founding member of WOMENVAI

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A Snapshot on the WOMENVAI Academy programme

The WOMENVAI Academy started in 2019 under the name «Les Amazones du Digital» in Benin, dedicated specifically to female entrepreneurship with women from developing countries as beneficiaries, whether they are Junior, Medior or Senior in their professional lives.

As part of the WOMENVAI Academy, we offer, in partnership with local associations, NGOs, to support women entrepreneurs and/or small enterprises led by women, **workshops of 2 to 3 days** during which we organize and facilitate training-actions aimed at their capacity building in Entrepreneurship. This aims in particular to put women entrepreneurs under the spotlight and promote their activities through our networks of women and partners, including potential financiers.

Our mentoring methodology include dedicated **seminars** around the key stages of business creation and fundraising, development of **business and strategic plans, communication and marketing tools.**

(... to be continued on page 2)

A Snapshot on the WOMENVAI Academy programme (Continued)

Aligned with the SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals Agenda 2030, our program mainly targets **SDG # 5 through the empowerment of girls and women**, since we do focus on gender equality by strengthening the entrepreneurial capacities of women, youth, mediors and seniors, and we also help strengthen the leadership of women - so that they can better participate in the economic and social life of their respective countries.

It should also be noted that our program helps develop businesses and skills in areas related to the other 16 SDGs, for women as well as for men, eg.:

SDG # 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all;

SDG # 9: Build resilient infrastructures, promote sustainable industrialization that benefits everyone and encourage innovation;

SDG # 17: Strengthen the means to implement and revitalize the Global Partnership for Development.

The WOMENVAI Academy Program is always **financed jointly with the institutions carrying out the project locally**, which usually provides the pool of 15 to 20 women selected according to objective criteria and who are able to come over to the location of the workshop over a period of maximum 4 days. **To be able to be selected, each of the participants must submit an application containing:**

- Their CV
- Their motivation to join this training-action
- Their business creation project or broad outlines of said project, specifying its positioning in the value chain within the area and/or SDG chosen for the theme of the workshop.



First WOMENVAI Academy in Cotonou, Benin, October 2019

Ceremonial Title of 'Expert NOT' for Lidia Zakowska, Poland, WOMENVAI Secretary General



On June 25th 2021, the General Board of the **FSNT-NOT** (Polish Federation of Engineering Associations - National Technical Organization) presented the 3rd edition titles of NOT Expert.

The awards Ceremony was held both in presence at the **Warsaw House of Technology NOT** and remotely.

FSNT-NOT Vice President Stefan Goralczyk, the chairman of the NOT Expert Award Team, announced 16 Polish outstanding engineers, amongst whom **four women were awarded, including WOMENVAI Secretary General Prof. PK, Dr. Eng. Lidia Zakowska** - Technical Sciences, Civil Engineering and Transportation - to whom we send our sincere congratulations. The title 'Expert NOT' confirms high qualifications: knowledge, skills of social competence in the field of technical sciences.

FSNT-NOT actively participates in international engineering communities and organizations, as a Polish member of the European Federation of National Associations of Engineers (FEANI) and the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO), representing the Polish technical community.

The idea of bringing together Polish engineers dates back to the 19th century (Polish Polytechnic Society 1835), and today FSNT-NOT integrates **39 engineering associations and over 100'000 members** of technical community, strengthening the role of the technical environment: co-creators of civilization progress and sustainable development.

International Women in Engineering Day, June 23rd 2021 by Lidia Santiago, Portugal

This year in **Portugal, International Women in Engineering Day** was celebrated at the HQ of the Engineering Society - Ordem dos Engenheiros, Lisbon and at the same time as an **online event, with over 150 participants**, with special guests from the Women Engineers "Luso Hispânica" Group.

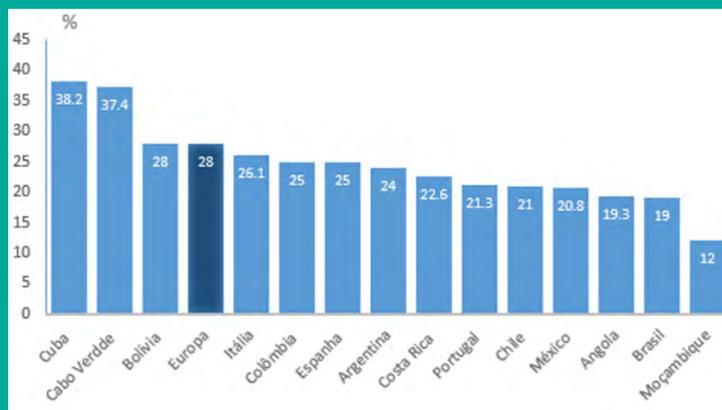
The group was founded one year ago and is composed of **women engineers from Portugal, Spain, Cabo Verde, Angola, Mozambique, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba and Mexico. Its objective is to share experiences and attract students to Engineering**, so to minimize school dropouts

and implement projects that allow career sustainability for young women with family responsibilities, especially when married and pregnant very early.

The event held on 23rd June was about the status of women in Engineering in these countries. Guest speakers included: Ania Lopez, of Cuban origin -a mechanical engineer based in Italy, a member of the Italian Executive Council Federation Engineer Organization and a member of the WFEO Women-In-Engineering committee-, Sónia Antunes -a physical engineer at EMSA of the European Maritime Safety Agency, Portugal -, and Filomena Soares -a chemical engineer and President of the Portuguese Society for Engineering Education.

One of the conclusions of this event is that only Cuba, Cabo Verde and Bolivia have a greater percentage than or equal to the European average of 25% of women in engineering, revealing that there is still much to be done to change these numbers.





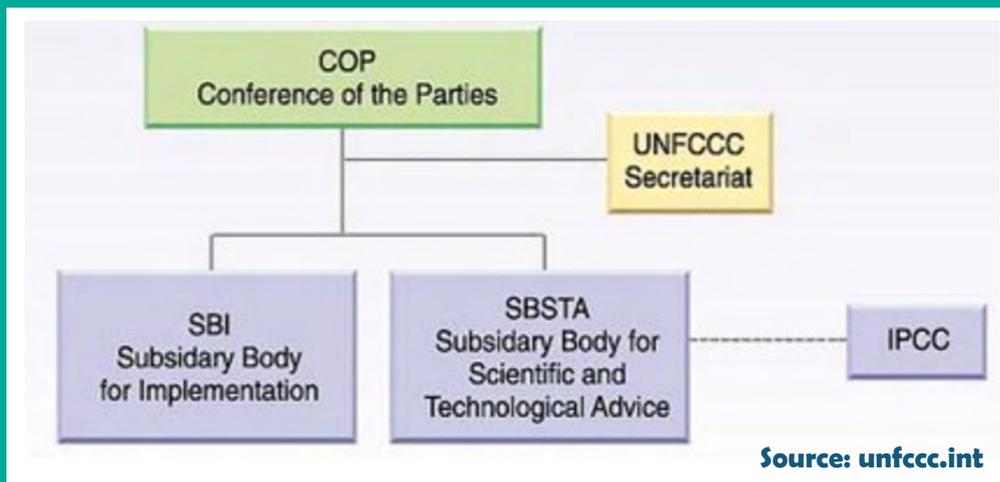
Percentage of women engineers in countries listed. Source: Women Engineers Day, June 23rd 2021



Preparing the Ground for the Road to COP26 and More Effective Climate Action, by Lylian Coelho, Vice-president (2019-2021)

During the May-June 2021 sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies of Scientific and Technological Advice - SBSTA, WOMENVAI had the opportunity, through our Vice-President Lylian Coelho - who was much present and participated in the Women Group Constituency (WGC) and took the floor on various occasions, representing women engineers - to highlight the importance of joining our voices with allies across other Constituencies, youth, workers, civil society and Indigenous Peoples, to ensure inclusive participation, and share knowledge, experience and ideas to help progress on these matters.

We urged Parties to provide a strong framework for the inclusion of human rights, environmental integrity, gender and social safeguards. We hold up our role, as gender experts, women's rights advocates and feminists in this process, especially to engage in all aspects of these negotiations, including on the critical issues of agriculture and capacity building.



The UNFCCC secretariat (UN Climate Change) is the United Nations entity tasked with supporting the global response to the threat of climate change.

UNFCCC stands for United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Convention has near universal membership (197 Parties) and is the parent treaty of the 2015 Paris Agreement. The main aim of the Paris Agreement is to keep the global average temperature rise this century as close as possible to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

[Link to the Paris Agreement](#)

News from our Members!

New Approaches for Gender Mainstreaming in Transport Projects, by Elisabetta Venezia, Italy

Elisabetta Venezia, from the University of Bari Aldo Moro, continues to work on equity implications of **transport policies** and investments as it is becoming increasingly important. In fact, current evaluation methods in transport do not still fully account for equity issues.

After working on a COST Action for four years on the topic around Europe, **she is now working on bringing together new approaches** to incorporate equity consideration in transport project evaluation and decision-making. The approaches consist of the measurement of accessibility with the literature on social justice, travel behavior models, and socio-economic impacts analysis in line with mainstream welfare economics.

Lately, she has been involved in a project proposal - **Horizon Seeds**, launched by the University of Bari Aldo Moro - to include quantitative methods in equity **to overcome the gender gap**. In this case, the field of application is academic environments and connection with the labor market. The idea is also to fulfill some of the SDGs which are linked to Goal 4 (Equal and quality education), Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth), and Goal 10 (reduce inequalities). Stay tuned!



Influence of Culture, Traditions, and Political System on Socialization and Re-socialization of Girls, by Dr. Svetlana Aslanyan, Armenia



The proposed paper addresses the problem of socialization of Armenian women from four generations: grandmother, mother, daughter and granddaughter. The influence of transformation in Politics, Ideology and Society on women's socialization is examined and the impact of transformation in the social system on gender policy is revealed.

The analysis has discovered a direct connection between Culture, Traditions, Political System, Ideology and women's social identity.

The agents of socialization and re-socialization are the same in different political systems, but their impact changes depending on political systems and social and cultural environments. Armenia has its peculiarities.

The paper outlines the historical background and evaluation of women's social identification from Socialism to Transition, with an emphasis on gender issues during Perestroika and the role of Michael Gorbachev in it.

In particular, this addresses the transformation of his policy from "returning women to their "purely womanly mission "of housework to an

imperative that women should achieve a higher profile in public life and this could occur through the activity of women's councils. I decided to use the Women Stories model for investigation of socialization of Armenian girls from four generations: our grandmothers, our mothers, our daughters, and our granddaughters.

The transformation in the political system of Armenia caused three shifts in gender relationships in traditional Armenian society and accordingly in socialization and further re-socialization of girls: Armenian Woman: woman-mother and woman-protector of family, Soviet Woman "liberated" woman-worker, ideal soviet citizen, constructors of Socialism, Woman of Perestroika and Transition: discouraged woman of lost generation and New Woman: independent, motivated, active.

I examined how the transformation in politics, ideology and social environment influence socialization and re-socialization of girls, how they have adapted to the new conditions, how they survived in this Turbulent Times. The results should have applicability at least throughout the post-communist world if not beyond.

Engaging Our Citizens in Sustainability: A Project in Olivais City, by Cátia Rosas, Portugal

From April to July 2021, the first bike-trains to school were implemented in the streets of Olivais, Lisbon. This city project was held in partnership with Olivais Parish - in which Cátia Rosas, Executive member, has been engaged since the beginning.

The project started with one public school in April, and quickly spread to other primary schools, public and private, as the number of children registered on the weekly bike-trains continued to increase till the last week of school at the end of June.



'Bike-Trains' is a city program led by Lisbon's municipality, with a strong link to local parishes and 'Casa da Bicultura'; it also uses modern communication tools, links with parents - and with 35 girls and 37 boys registered so far, is almost at parity!

Science and Arts, by Karen Janett - Mexico



I remember that as a child, proper science education was mostly based on memorising technical facts, formulas and constant repetition... Yet it also wasn't like that all the time. Every now and then, we'd run into teachers who intended different approaches, like questioning us on how we would apply all that scientific knowledge on a daily basis.

Later on in life, I started getting involved in environmental affairs and noticed how much scientific data and information was involved

in them but still most people couldn't understand all that and link it to their personal lives.

I had the chance to work with amazing people around the world from whom I learned about raising awareness on climate and environmental science; we approached scientists and began taking them out to open spaces to talk to people and share their knowledge by talking about it. And yet we were missing something to make people relate to all that shared and transferred knowledge.

So recently, I started working with Anabel de Lara - a mexican artist - that was open to talk to her students at ELEVARTE (which name in Spanish would relate on how art elevates us) about environmental science and some of the problems we face daily and how to translate their perception and feelings about them into art.

The result was beautiful, her teenage students were not only to project that acquired knowledge into some paintings. When we asked them about the meaning of their work, they were actually able to express how human activity impacts the world and how they would take action through art and lifestyle changes to make this a better world. Science was fun and able to express itself in some great pieces of art. And we can see that not only around environmental science, but also in physics, meds, or other scientific scenarios.

Côte d'Ivoire : And the WINNERS Are...

Ivorian environmental NGO ROSCIDET, together with NGO WOMENVAI, organized a series of Webinars within the framework of the Women's Leadership and Value Creation initiative in Côte d'Ivoire (LFCV-CI), on the theme 'Women's Entrepreneurship Sensitive to New Sustainable Technologies'.

This programme was held from January to March 2021. Applications ran between October and December 2020 on social media and attracted women of many different profiles.

15 women-led projects were selected in e-commerce, agribusiness and education and training.

The sessions kicked off on December 9th 2020, with Roscidet and WOMENVAI presidents, respectively Jean-Claude Koya and Yvette Ramos. Topics included strategic planning, leadership and change management, project management within the SDG framework, marketing material, agricultural modernisation and small processing units, fundraising, storage and packaging of agricultural products, new information technologies, establishment of production units for compost, biogas and solar energy, the protection of innovation and Intellectual Property.

Experts from both networks and their partners included ABASHORE (Asma Brini), Farmer Charlie (Betty Bonnardel), Digital Coalition (Reine Essobmadje), Swiss Engineering (Denisse Salas), ROSCIDET (Ouafae Karim, M. Daboulas, Abdoulaye Soro, Emmanuel Dabo) and Moinas & Savoye Geneva (Denis Aivazian).

At the end of these sessions, the candidates submitted their project plan as well as a one-minute promotional video. The organizing committee selected 4 winners:

- **Miss SEKONGO BLANDINE in the e-commerce category;**
- **Ms. AKESSE wife KANGA and Ms Charlotte NGUETTA wife ADJADOU in the agribusiness category;**
- **Ms. Stéphanie TEAPOINHI in the Education and Training category.**

An official award ceremony was held on April 23rd, 2021. The feedback from the candidates was that ROSCIDET and WOMENVAI's initiative strengthens their ability for success. An on-site session is in the works for 2022 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

Congratulations to the WINNERS!

Blandine SEKONGO

Deputy Secretary General at ROSCIDET, Tropical Agriculture Graduate with a major in Animal Production

"This programme allowed me to believe in myself and to know that any woman can undertake just to have the right strategies and specially to know these good strategies. A big thank you to WOMENVAI and ROSCIDET for this enriching training that will surely allow us to be leaders in our fields".



Stéphanie TEAPOINHI

Agricultural Engineer

"WOMENVAI multidisciplinary approach has made it possible to address the issue of early childhood supervision. The knowledge gained on project writing tools, including canvas, serves as key arguments for the strategy and viability of its ecological nursery project."



Esther AKESSE ep. KANGA

Human Resource Manager converted to Engineering in Humanitarian Action with a major in Sustainable Development. Founder of the Marie-Esther Foundation - an NGO that works towards Sustainable Human Development in rural areas

"Thanks to this programme, I initiated an Agroecological Centre, a site of experimentation and training, and I shall continue my efforts in social and ecological transformation through the Radio of Sustainable Development, a media I have created".



Charlotte N'GUETTA ADJOUA ep. ADJADOU

Qualified Sociologist, Monitoring and Evaluation and Gender Officer at the Marie-Esther Foundation

"I had the chance to benefit from the training programme, which strengthened my skills in project management and business creation through the tools received. Thank you to our mentors for this great adventure!"



Award winning project – SECURE 4 GOOD presents the CONNECT & Stop Violence Project (Patent pending)

The reality (2020 figures from France)



- > 1 woman dies every 3 days at the hands of her partner (102 women died in 2020 – as of Aug 15th 2021, 75 women have died in 2021)
- > Security forces registered 126,000 women as victims of domestic violence, including 3,700 victims of rape
- > In total, 94,000 women were reported victims of rape or attempted rape
- > 4 million are suspected victims of incest
- > 1.3 million are victims of sexist insults, 89% being women and girls
- > One in three employees claims to have suffered sexual harassment at work

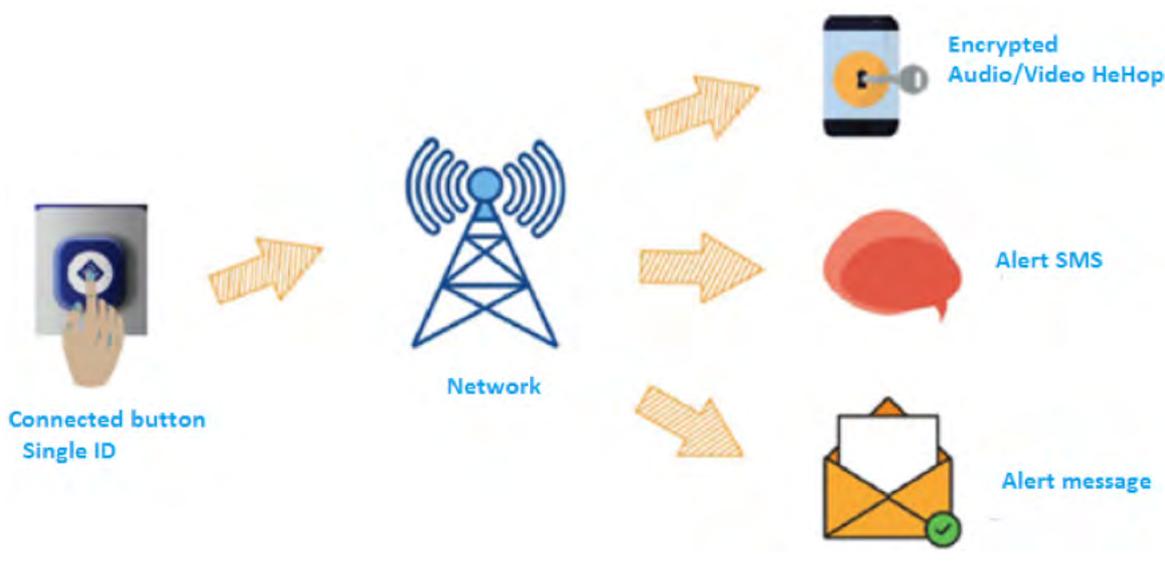
The problem is that, **with a mobile phone out of reach**, victims of domestic violence are unable to sound any type of alarm and trigger an intervention. Besides, the sheer size of existing devices, such as phones, makes them noticeable and therefore a safety hazard for users.

This issue calls for a device that is not only within reach at all times, but also allows immediate response, while guaranteeing safety for the user.

The solution

For local French NGO **La Roche pour Elles**, WOMENVAI, together with its partners, has come up with a technological solution, based on IoT (Internet of Things):

SECURE4GOOD is a miniaturized and autonomous alert device, which sends an alert without the need for a telephone (Long range signal): **a discreet, modular and open system** (connectable to App-Elles, Hehop, ...), with immediate access in all circumstances. With a patent pending, the device is designed so that any person victim of physical violence can activate, without the need for their mobile phone at hand.



The Road to the World Summit of Information Society 2022



The **WSIS process affirms the importance of promoting and maintaining gender equality** in all aspects and emphasises the need to fully integrate gender equality perspectives in WSIS related strategies and its implementation. WSIS is committed to the inclusion of women in the emerging global Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and encourages the information and knowledge societies to enable women's empowerment and full participation based on equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes.

At the request of and in collaboration with the WSIS stakeholders, we are pleased to inform you a new initiative to strengthen the ICTs and Gender Mainstreaming activities by providing a **repository called WSIS Stocktaking Repository of Women in Technology**. The aim of this repository is to identify and connect women leaders and practitioners in all sectors of the ICT industry from all regions and engage them in events such as the WSIS Forum and activities such as various workshops, training courses, networking events, aimed at fostering a dialogue on the use of ICTs as a means for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Please submit your profile by clicking [here](#).



Our Sponsors do it too!



Our partner **Groupe Aivazian-Moreau** is committed to promoting #genderequality and is a proud signatory of the **Women's Empowerment Principles (#WEPs)**.

With over **5000 signatories globally**, the #WEPs are a set of principles offering guidance to businesses on how to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the workplace, marketplace, and community.

We encourage other companies and organizations to sign the #WEPs and inspire your talent, business partners, suppliers, and consumers!



For more info visit www.weps.org

Want to join as a **NGO Partner, Sponsor or Ambassador** ? Feel free to contact us at contact@womenvai.org

Who we are: the co-founding members

Executive Committee

Yvette Ramos, President, France/Switzerland
Lylían Coelho, Vice-President, France/Brazil
Inès Aivazian, Treasurer, France
Sophie Magnier, Deputy-Treasurer, Belgium/France
Lidia Zakowska, Secretary General, Poland

Ethics Committee

Soizic Vangrevelinghe, France
Denis Aivazian, France,
Sangeeta Wij, India

Communication

Ariane Barbier, France
Asma Brini, France/Tunisia
Camille Coq, France
Guillaume Pahud, France/Switzerland
Denisse Salas, Bolivia/Switzerland

Projects

Liliane Dorveaux, France
Marwa Zaghbib, Tunisia
Nadia Souissi, Tunisia
Betty Bonnardel-Azzarelli, UK/ France
Lidia Santiago, Portugal

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