

Women can be financial redeemers

EVERYONE is asking, can the Zambian women be the financial redeemers? Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry Felix Mutati has affirmed that.

Zambia women entrepreneurs will help the country attain the middle-income status by 2030 because they have the capacity to create jobs brags Mr Mutati.

Mr Mutati said currently the women entrepreneurs in the country contributed 50 per cent in terms of job creation and should be supported by all.

He said this in an interview in Lusaka to mark the celebration of the Month of the Women Entrepreneur (MOWE) in Zambia.

"For us as a country to attain the middle income status by 2030, we need job creation and Government is happy that the women entrepreneurs are contributing 50 per cent of the jobs in Zambia," he said.

The women in business are celebrating their month under the theme, "Women Entrepreneurs: Creating Employment amidst the global crisis".

Mr Mutati was optimistic the country would attain the Vision 2030 hence the Government was supporting women and youths in many ways such as exposing them to a US\$ million credit scheme.

He said the figure on

from the scheme would be relaxed to enable women access the money considering that the default rate by women was low compared to men.

The ministry would also help to ensure the procedures for women and youths to access loans from the Citizen Economic Empowerment Fund (CEEF) were relaxed.

He challenged the menfolk to emulate the dedication and passion women had in business if the country was to continue recording successes socially and economically.

The ministry would continue facilitating the market for women to enable the country benefit from export earnings of entrepreneurial women enter international markets.

The Government had since sent women to China for an international business exhibition and recently women participated in Zimbabwe and Swaziland trade fairs.

Earlier, International Labour Organisation (ILO) Director Gerry Fittingan in a speech read for him by his senior technical advisor Jenkins, Chirye said it was laudable to see Zambian women entrepreneurs create jobs and wealth for themselves.

"The MOWE aims at strengthening the full role of women in the country," he said.

He said the figure on

in a national stream of economic activities and enabling them to fully participate in national development by creating decent employment, and contributing to wealth

creation and poverty reduction through Women's Entrepreneurship Development (WED). Mr Fittingan has said.

He said women entrepreneurs could only manage to create more jobs for the unemployed, women, young people as well as the

economic crisis if they establish partnerships among the stakeholders.

This can be best confirmed in ILO's recent report on "Zambian Women Entrepreneurs: Finding for Growth" which looked at 118 women entrepreneurs from Lusaka and Maseru.

The passion for women to create jobs and wealth for themselves and the nation cannot be underestimated already this country is making strides towards social and economical development because women currently are active in

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FELIX MUTATI

women have made a substantial contribution to job creation in Zambia. They have created 1,013 jobs for themselves and others.

of which 972 are full-time paid jobs, accounting for an average of 8.2 per cent per entrepreneur.

83 per cent of the women entrepreneurs had been in full-time employment or self-employment prior to starting their enterprises, and 46 per cent had earned an average of 2.5 million Zambian kwacha in their enterprises.

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Women's empowerment key development component

By RONALD CHAWE
GOVERNMENT says the empowerment of women is key to sustainable development of the nation.

Copperbelt permanent secretary, Willie Lombanya said this in a speech read for him by provincial administrative officer Emmanuel Sikanyika during the official opening of an exhibition hosted by the Zambia Federation of Women in Business in Ndola yesterday.

"The Zambian Government has long realised that empowering women is key to sustainable development and as such, it is in the forefront to fully support these initiatives," Mr Lombanya said. He said efforts to empower

women are being done through various ministries and Government departments such as the Citizens Economic Empowerment Commission, micro-finance, export promotions and market access for women entrepreneurship.

Mr Lombanya said Government encourages business partnerships to enhance capacity and productivity through trade fair exhibitions.

He urged women to take advantage of the opportunities that Government is creating to improve their welfare and enable them participate in the development of the country.

He commended the International Labour Organisation and Irish Aid for their support to Zambian businesswomen.

"We recognise the efforts by the International Labour Organisation and Irish Aid in supporting the Zambian businesswomen; we extend our sincere thanks and wish them God's blessing," he said.

Zambia Federation of Women in Business Ndola chapter coordinator, Susan Kawandani said women are finding it difficult to engage in business ventures because they don't have access to financial institutions.

"As women, we are ready to create linkages to various businesses but we are being let down by financial problems. We cannot access funds from the Citizen Economic Empowerment Commission because the terms and regulations attached to the funds are stringent," Mrs Kawandani said.

WOMAN ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR AWARD 2009
WOMEN'S ANNUAL AWARD

THE AWARD

An annual award to honor women entrepreneurs whose ingenuity, hard work and perseverance have created and sustained successful, growing business venture in Zambia. The Award is run according to a carefully-structure and independently-audited process, with participants from all over Zambia (provinces) being selected to compete for the national prize.

ELIGIBILITY

Women Owner/ Manager of a small business, whether for profit or not, who is primarily responsible for the recent performance of the company or organization and an active member of top management.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Entrepreneurial Spirit
- Financial Performance
- Innovation
- Community/Global Impact
- Personal Integrity/ Influence

CATEGORIES

Nominations are invited for the following categories:

1. Woman Entrepreneur of the Year
2. Most improved Woman Entrepreneur
3. Most promising start up Woman Entrepreneur.

Nominations can be submitted by the woman entrepreneurs or anyone who has an interest in honoring a Woman Entrepreneur they know or work with. All profiles of nominees should reach the ZFAWIB secretariat by end of business day on 18th September 2009.

CONTACT DETAILS:

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