



IMPROVING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PORTS

**A presentation by Hadiza
Bala Usman, Managing
Director, Nigerian Ports
Authority, NPA Third World
Maritime University
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Community.**

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THE REALITY OF GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Although the Maritime Sector is our immediate concern at this gathering, we must realise that the problem of gender imbalance cuts across almost all professional spheres. Lets take a quick look at the facts:

WOMEN IN THE WORLD LABOUR FORCE

As of September 2018

Data released by the

World Bank says that

women are only

39.3% of the world

labour force. And a sectoral analysis will show that more needs to be done on a global scale

Source:

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/sl.tlf.totl.fe.zs>



GENDER DIVERSITY BY SECTOR

OIL AND GAS:



A 2015 report of the World Economic Forum put the participation of women the general global workforce at less than 20% and senior and managerial levels at between 10% to 15%

FINANCE:



According to the April 2, 2017 edition of Financial Times, over 50% of women in this sector are women but only one in four of these reach a senior role is female. The FT report came from data gather from some of the world's biggest Banks, Insurers, Asset Managers, and Professional Services firm.

GENDER DIVERSITY BY SECTOR

LAW:



According to a recent survey by the American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Profession and the Minority Corporate Counsel Association completed by 2,827 legal professionals, female lawyers are more likely than their male counterparts to be interrupted, to be mistaken for non-lawyers, to do more office housework, and to have less access to prime job assignments.



The study found that women lawyers were paid less than their male counterparts. One female lawyer summed up, "one man was recently given a promotion because HR discovered he was being paid a lot more than me, with the same job title. So instead of increasing my pay, they promoted him to a higher title!. The study found that women were also penalized for motherhood.

GENDER DIVERSITY BY SECTOR

MEDICINE:



Even though the World Medical Association agreed that the number of women studying and practising medicine have improved significantly, even getting unto 50 percent in some counties, a statement at the end of its 2018 General Assembly in Iceland indicated that there still a lot of work to be done in the area of work/family balance, equalisation of pay and having women in managerial roles.

MARITIME:



The International Transport Workers Federation put the participation of women at 2% and women in leadership at 1% even though there is general consensus that things are improving

HOW WELL ARE THINGS IMPROVING IN THE PORTS

- In 2016, I was appointed Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority in Nigeria (The first ever female to be so appointed). This was after 61 years of the NPA's existence!
- At the moment, the NPA has a total workforce of 3,901 out of which 912 are women, representing 23.38%.
- Of the 27 General Managers at the NPA, only four are Women
- There are also Six Port Managers in charge of port locations across the country and only two of them are women.

WHAT DO WOMEN DO AT PORTS AND WHY?

There are only a few areas where you have most women function at ports namely:

- Administration
- Marketing
- Communications
- Law

WHAT DO WOMEN DO AT PORTS AND WHY?

- And there are a few discernible reasons for this namely:
- Cultural Perceptions and Stereotypes about what women are good at; Women are generally perceived as the weaker sex and so, it is natural to exclude them from jobs that are deemed to **be** physically and even mentally exerting.
- Some of our cultures, where patriarchy is still strong, think women should play the second fiddle, not just **at** home but also at work
- Very important is the qualification that women also bring to work place
- And then conditions of service at work

HOW WE ARE WRONG

But then we are wrong because:

The **State of the Work Place Report**, put together by Hive and published in 2018 on the website of the World Economic Forum suggests that women are more productive in today's offices because they work harder than men.

According to the research :

“both men and women actually complete about 66 percent of their assigned work. However, women are assigned 10 percent more work than men these days — that they achieve the same completion rate tells us that they're being more industrious”

HOW WE ARE WRONG

In addition, a 2017 Gallup report entitled: “ The State of the American Manager: Analytics and Advice for Leaders identified for specific competences of women as:

- **Setting measurable goals and expectations.**
- **Building relationships.**
- **Encouraging a positive team environment.**
- **Providing employees with opportunities to develop within their careers.**
- **Women also have a significant innate capacity to listen, adopt collaborative approaches to problem solving, and the ability to multi-task and to synthesize a number of viewpoints effectively and quickly all of which make work more effective**

SO WHAT IS THE WORLD MISSING?

Even without these proven capacities that we have highlighted, the world definitely cuts itself short by excluding 50 % of its population from having a good shot at making the world a better place.

For instance, research conducted in 2017 by McKinsey has revealed that investments in workplace gender equality could add \$28 trillion to the global annual GDP by 2025.

Which is why the United Nations' SDG 5 on gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, among others, to *'ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life'*, must be supported by all.

WHAT WE MUST DO?

- First we must encourage young girls to take interest in Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics(STEM) subjects so they can pursue careers in shipping, marine, operations and engineering sub-sectors
- Nations with maritime endowments should fund specialized institutions and provide incentives for girls for take courses in these areas
- Women who have broken through the barriers in this sector must institute a mentoring system that encourages young ladies to take careers and create a pipeline of succession in the maritime sector.
- Government agencies and private sectors investors must also be deliberate about increasing the tally of women in the sector. Last year for instance, TCIT, one of our Terminal Operators recruited the first set of female crane operators in Nigeria. We have assured all stakeholders of our readiness to partner with the on this front.

WHAT WE MUST DO?

- We must also ensure working conditions that ensure the retention of women at work even after they would have started. Very essential to this is the question of maternity entitlements.
- Women should have at least between 18 and 24 weeks before having to go back to work after childbirth and the opportunity to leave work early for a few months after. The NPA has now increased maternity leave for women to 16 weeks as against the 12 weeks obtainable in national civil service.
- Nursing mothers are also allowed to report for duty one (1) hour after the official resumption time and close one (1) hour earlier than the official closing time every day.

WHAT WE MUST DO?

- The NPA has also insisted that the female workforce would be entitled to a maternity leave irrespective of their marital status
- We have also recently commissioned a creche facility where nursing mothers can keep their babies at work and go to breast feed during break and return to work.
- There must also be a network or association in every industry which should provide a platform for women to share experiences, encourage each other and battle their challenges with one voice.

WHAT WE MUST DO?

I will like to conclude on the general note with which I started. Women are disadvantaged in the world but the world must constantly remind itself that women matter and that when we build women, we build our humanity.

Permit me to share this inspirational words of from the late Nelson Mandela with you on a final note:

“ It is important that government structures understand that true freedom and prosperity cannot be achieved unless...we see in visible and practical terms that the condition of women in our country has radically changed for the better, and that they have been empowered in all spheres of life as equal.”

Thank you!