

WEB UPDATE: Information Note

The Finalists of the Empretec Women in Business Awards 2020

7/27/2020

UNCTAD is pleased to announce the 10 finalists of this year's Empretec Women in Business Award (WBA 2020). The WBA, now at its seventh edition celebrates exceptional businesswomen who have benefitted from UNCTAD's global entrepreneurship training programme, [Empretec](#), and have become role models due to their outstanding achievements in running micro and small businesses.

The 2020 finalists (in alphabetical order, by country) are:

Ms. Paula Itati de la Vega Sánchez (Argentina): Bioita « utensilios de caña », manufacturing of ecological products

Ms. Agda Oliver (Brazil): Meu Mecânico, Mechanical services for vehicles

Ms. Sandra Milena Sánchez Valenzuela (Colombia): Agencia Internacional SHARK, Digital business and marketing services

Ms. Ana María Villavicencio Flores (Ecuador): Finca Agroturística Don Antonio, Agrotourism and gastronomy

Ms. Kayan Motashaw (India): LivRite Foods, Manufacture of honey "Beelicious"

Ms. Afnan Kamel Ali (Jordan): Eureka Tech Academy, Education for students under 18 years old on technology, innovation, programming, and engineering

Ms. Sandra Anne Ghouse (Malaysia): 3E Training and Education Sdn Bhd – Soft skills and corporate training company

Ms. Nicoleta Hrițcu (Romania): SC Retro Food SRL and SC Cuptorul Moldovencei SRL, Manufacturing and sale of bread, cakes, and fresh pastry

Ms. Hadija Jabiri Pheri (Tanzania): GBRI Business Solutions Company Limited, Growing, packaging, and exporting vegetables and fruits

Ms. Julia Nyamahunge Omalla (Uganda): Delight Uganda Ltd, Processing, packaging and distributing popular fruit drink "Cheers"

More than 30 nominations were submitted by Empretec centers from 13 countries this year covering all developing regions. The 10 finalists were selected by a panel of experts based on the nominees' track record of innovation, leadership, and impact on their communities. The selection process is currently ongoing with a final stage of evaluation to identify the Empretec WBA winner. In addition to the WBA winner, UNCTAD in partnership with sponsors introduced three special award categories to acknowledge and celebrate achievements of women entrepreneurs with **inclusive business** empowering other women, in **circular economy** and in **sustainable agriculture**.

The winners will be announced during the Empretec WBA Ceremony which will be held virtually on 10 December 2020. The theme of ceremony is "Resilience". As the global economic recession unfolds, vulnerabilities of women entrepreneurs and their enterprises raise concern on the progress made so far in quantity and quality of women-owned businesses particularly

among MSMEs that operate in the Services sectors. Pre-pandemic gender inequalities in business have been exacerbated during the health crisis with women entrepreneurs suffering more due to increased care burdens during lockdowns.

Empretec Women in Business Award initiative was launched in 2008 and since then has been delivered every two years. During this period over 60 female entrepreneurs – participants of the Empretec programme, have been acknowledged as finalists for their great achievements in business with positive impact on their communities.

The initiative is part of the Empretec programme, UNCTAD's flagship entrepreneurship capacity-building programme, which is based on a behavioral approach to facilitation of entrepreneurship skills of participants. Since its launch in 1989, the Empretec programme has trained and motivated almost 500,000 entrepreneurs in more than 40 countries. Visit Empretec [website](#) for more information on the programme.

Finalists of previous WBA editions as a result of their participation in the selection process could expand their business opportunities and access to resources. They excelled in developing innovative business ideas, providing jobs, and improving quality of lives in their communities and have become role models for inspiring women entrepreneurship. Past winners even had a global outreach through TEDx shows hosted at the United Nations in Geneva. The inspirational stories of [Jennifer Shigoli](#) from Tanzania and [Beatrice Ayuru](#) from Uganda at TEDx at Place Des Nations is a tribute to many other untold success stories of women entrepreneurs across the world.

Previous winners of the Empretec Women in Business award include:

- 2018: Uneiza Ali Issufo, ConsMoz Lda – Building Mozambique Limited, Mozambique
- 2016: Tran Thi Viet, Viet Trang Handicraft, Viet Nam
- 2014: Lina Jalil Khalifeh, SheFighter, Jordan,
- 2012: Melissa de León, Panama Gourmet, Panama,
- 2010: Beatrice Ayuru Byaruhanga, Lira Integrated School, Uganda
- 2008: Sana Zaal Burgan, Med Grant, Jordan.

For many years Empretec WBA has been a great platform to raise awareness on success stories of women entrepreneurship and inspire other women to take up the challenge which becomes more important than ever during the COVID-19 crisis and in post- resurgence.