

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

**UNCTAD**



# 2020 Empretec

## Women in Business Awards



UNITED NATIONS

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# 2020 Empretec Women in Business Awards



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# Preface

From 2010-2019, on average, 68% of firms across the world did not have any women in ownership, while only 16% were owned by women<sup>2</sup>. There are significant economic and social costs associated with women's underrepresentation in business including lower economic growth and fewer decent employment. Losses of income from women's inactivity can reach up to 30% of gross domestic product in countries with high gender inequalities<sup>3</sup>.

To raise awareness on this costly gender gap and to promote women's entrepreneurship, in 2008 UNCTAD launched the *Empretec Women in Business Awards*, aimed to recognize the contributions of inspiring women entrepreneurs, to celebrate their success and to empower women. As UNCTAD actively contributes to raising awareness on social and environmental pillars of the 2030 Agenda and promoting inclusive and sustainable businesses that can support Member States in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UNCTAD also introduced three special categories (i) circular economy, (ii) sustainable agriculture and (iii) inclusive business, to highlight the contribution of women entrepreneurs.

In 2020, more than 30 nominations were received from 13 Empretec centres across the world. The finalists were selected by a panel of distinguished experts in business and entrepreneurship based on three criteria: innovation, leadership, and impact on their community. All finalists have put their expertise and passion into their businesses, in a variety of sectors, ranging from agribusiness to tourism, manufacturing and education. They have overcome obstacles and persevered to establish and grow successful companies, creating jobs and giving back to their communities, spearheading cultural changes, and serving as role models.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a major negative shock on women in business. A common thread of all finalists this year is their resilience amid the pandemic thanks to their Empretec training. They identified opportunities during the crisis, remained committed to their employees, took calculated risks and initiative. Many had already adopted inclusive business models, with clear links to the achievement of the SDGs. Balancing motherhood and their careers, they have also accomplished the right work life balance, taking full advantage of the flexibility and independence gained in running their own businesses.

UNCTAD's Empretec Women in Business Award together with the special category awards will be presented during a virtual ceremony on 10 December 2020.

### **The Empretec Team**



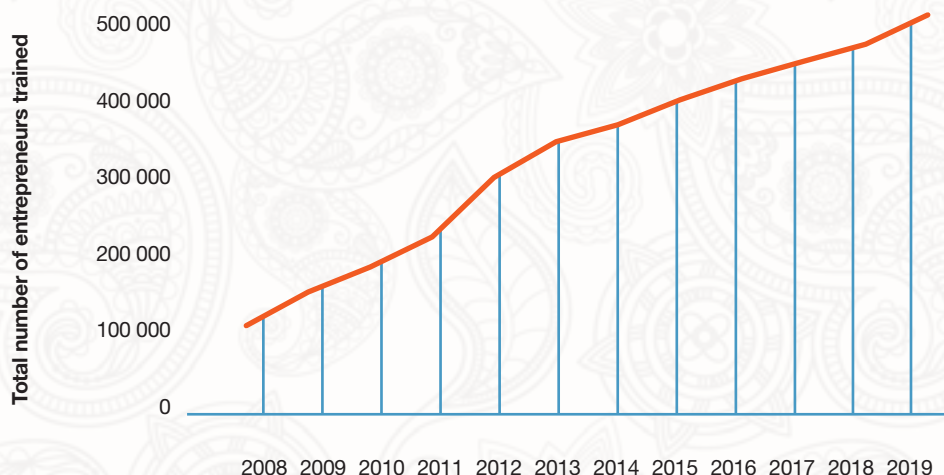


# About Empretec and the Women in Business Award

## Empretec

Empretec is UNCTAD's flagship capacity-building programme coordinated from Geneva, Switzerland, by the Enterprise Branch of the Division of Investment and Enterprise. The programme aims to promote entrepreneurship and enhance the productive capacity and international competitiveness of micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in developing countries and economies in transition. The Empretec Programme is implemented through its National Centres, established in 41 countries. Since its inception in 1988, Empretec has trained around 500,000 people, helping them establish or expand businesses, creating thousands of jobs in the process. Empretec's core product, the Entrepreneurship Training Workshop (ETW), promotes a methodology of behavioural change that helps entrepreneurs put their ideas into action and aids fledgling businesses to grow. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/225 acknowledges the value of UNCTAD's Empretec programme and encourages Member States to invest in entrepreneurship skills development.

**The Empretec Networks Approaching 500 000 by 2020**



## The Empretec Women in Business Award

UNCTAD created the Empretec Women in Business Award as an acknowledgment of the great achievements of women entrepreneurs trained by the Empretec programme. The award, granted every two years, has made a real impact on the lives of past recipients. It has improved their access to further training, widened their markets and resources and boosted their motivation to continue growing their enterprises. It has also helped these women become role models in their communities. Recipients excelled in developing innovative business ideas, providing jobs, and increasing incomes in their communities.

The first series of awards was launched during the UNCTAD XII Ministerial Conference in, Ghana, in 2008. The second series of awards was presented in April 2010 at the annual session of UNCTAD's Investment, Enterprise, and Development Commission in, Switzerland. The 2012 awards took place in, Qatar, during UNCTAD XIII and the World Investment Forum, the 2014 edition took place in Switzerland during the World Investment Forum, and the 2016 in, Kenya, during UNCTAD XIV. The 2018 edition took place in Switzerland during the World Investment Forum.



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