



DOES ENTREPRENEURSHIP REALLY EMANCIPATE WOMEN?

As the Mend the Gap project - which aims to reduce inequalities in pay and employment between men and women in Europe through eco-entrepreneurship - draws to a close, a crucial question arises: **does entrepreneurship really empower women?**

THE EMANCIPATORY POTENTIAL OF FEMALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Being an entrepreneur is an opportunity for women to gain financial independence and overcome some of the obstacles encountered in the traditional labour market. By setting up their own businesses, women can learn new skills, develop their self-confidence and take control of their careers. The Mend the Gap project recognises this potential by providing training and resources to help women create sustainable eco-businesses.

PERSISTENT CHALLENGES

Despite the potential benefits, women entrepreneurs continue to face significant barriers. One of the main challenges is limited access to finance, as women often have difficulty obtaining credit and capital for their businesses. In addition, they have limited access to information and training, which can further hamper their entrepreneurial success. Stereotypes and prejudice also play a role, as discriminatory attitudes can damage their credibility and chances in the business world. For many women entrepreneurs, there is also a double burden, as they have to reconcile the demands of running a business with family responsibilities, making it even more difficult to succeed in both areas.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A HOLISTIC APPROACH

In order to ensure that business creation is a genuine source of empowerment, it is essential to adopt a holistic approach that takes into account the multiple facets of women's empowerment:

- **Skills development:** Taking into account the specific needs of women entrepreneurs, the Mend the Gap project offers training in areas such as financial education and business management.
- **Personalised support:** Using a needs assessment tool, the project enables trainers to tailor their support to each woman's skills and aspirations.
- **Networking:** By facilitating access to support and mentoring networks, women can break out of their isolation and benefit from valuable advice.
- **Raising awareness of gender equality issues:** It is essential to work towards transforming the social and cultural norms that perpetuate inequality between men and women.

ECO-ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS A DRIVER FOR REAL CHANGE

Mend the Gap's choice to focus on eco-entrepreneurship is particularly relevant, as it enables women to be empowered not only economically, but also as agents of change in the face of environmental challenges.

By encouraging women to set up sustainable businesses, the project helps to :

- 1- Promoting environmentally-friendly economic models.
- 2- Create green jobs in local communities
- 3- Strengthen resilience in the face of climate change





CONCLUSION

Entrepreneurship can be a powerful vector of emancipation for women, but only if it is part of a comprehensive approach that takes into account the structural obstacles they face. By combining training, personalised support and a focus on eco-entrepreneurship, the Mend the Gap project offers a promising new way of reducing gender inequalities while contributing to a more sustainable future.

For entrepreneurship to be truly emancipatory, it is essential to continue working on systemic barriers, while offering women the tools and support they need to succeed in their businesses. It is by adopting this holistic view that we can hope to close the gender gap in economic opportunity and empowerment.

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