

“African Women” Ipsos Study: Women as Key Drivers of the African Economy

Paris, 18 May 2017 – On the heels of African Youth in 2016, Ipsos is publishing an unprecedented study of African women* to mark the second year of its annual Africa conference at the Dapper Museum. Conducted in seven African countries, the study paints a picture of motivated, independent and optimistic women who are a driving force in this rapidly developing continent. Consumption patterns, hopes and concerns, and purchasing habits have all been carefully scrutinised. Actively engaged in wealth creation and cornerstones of the economy, family well-being and education, the women of Sub-Saharan Africa play a vital role in this key market.

Key figures from the survey:

- **89%** of African women are the **decision-makers** or **co-decision-makers** for household purchases.
- **42%** of African women have a **regular job** and **49%** earn an **independent** living.
- **74% of the women interviewed** stated that **the status of women has improved** over the last 5 years in their countries.
- African women are primarily concerned with **financial independence** (72%), which was followed by **inequality between the sexes** (66%) and **education for girls** (59%).
- African women devote **13% of their personal spending** on average to **beauty** products and services (compared to 41% for food).
- **68% of Kenyan women** stated that African women are more beautiful when they wear **natural hairstyles** (compared to 3% of Ivoirian women and 4% of Senegalese women).
- **55%** of African women stated that they spend **more than 2 hours per day** watching **television**.

Motivated, independent women playing a leading role on a changing continent

On Thursday, to mark its second annual event celebrating Africa, Ipsos published the conclusions of its study of African women. Who are they? What is their place in a rapidly developing economic environment? What are their concerns?

The study paints a picture of women who are increasingly independent and who play a vital role in the functioning of the economy on the continent. Women do two-thirds of agricultural work and own a third of all businesses in the surveyed countries; in some countries, up to 65% of public officials and 70% of employees are women. As business owners, they are also seen as leaders within the communities of their respective nations. In Senegal, for instance, 60% of executives are women.

Despite these advances, many injustices and abuses continue, including child marriages, inequality in terms of access to education, health and jobs, and physical or psychological violence. Conditions are gradually changing, however: 74% of the African women surveyed stated that the status of women has improved over the last 5 years in their countries.

'Despite the burden of profoundly misogynistic traditions that weighs on Africa, especially in rural areas, women have made their way into schools, universities, offices, factories and parliaments. Public authorities have made the right choice: major agendas make women a priority, whether the issue is public health, food safety, savings, economic diversification or citizen engagement. The road to equality and female empowerment in Africa is long, but this is one of the major transformations taking place on the continent', **explains Florence de Bigault, Director of Ipsos in Francophone Africa.**

Scrutinising the consumption patterns of African women

It stands to reason that these women are increasingly targeted by brands operating on the continent: as consumers, decision-makers, educators and initiators, women undeniably play an active role in the African economy. In addition to their revenue-generating activities, they save and make purchasing decisions for their households in more than 7 out of 10 cases. Of the women surveyed, 45% were involved with non-profits; they list financial independence as their main concern (72%), followed by inequality between the sexes (66%) and educating girls (59%).

'Women in Africa are outperforming all emerging countries when it comes to taking an active approach to creating wealth. This is one of the characteristics of Sub-Saharan Africa: the important role of women and their visibility in the public sphere', **adds Florence de Bigault.**

While African women put 41% of their personal expenses towards food, beauty products and services account for 13% of their budgets. They are particularly attentive to hairstyles, although their style preferences differ greatly: 68% of Kenyan women prefer natural hairstyles compared to 3% of Ivorian women and 4% of Senegalese women.

A liberating tool, digital technology is also an important factor in consumption trends for African women. Of those who use the internet regularly, 41% state that they spend more than 2 hours per day on the internet (primarily on social networks and blogs). Digital technology has a real impact on consumption: 19% of women living in urban areas state that they have made an online purchase or transaction, and 48% of female African internet users state that their purchasing decisions are influenced by information or reviews they read on the web.

Ipsos Africap, the Ipsos research unit devoted to understanding African markets

Ipsos Africap is the Ipsos centre of expertise for Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa. The goal of this centre is to support clients in African markets by offering them a thorough analysis of consumption patterns, changes to economic sectors and sector challenges. Based in Paris, the Ipsos Africap office works closely with European experts and the "Ipsos in Africa" network comprising over 800 employees in 14 African countries (South Africa, Algeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Tunisia and Zambia). Starting in May 2017, Ipsos is boosting its activities in Francophone Africa with the creation of a new cluster based in Abidjan and led by Florence de Bigault, who will also oversee the network of agencies that will soon open in Dakar (Senegal), Douala (Cameroon) and Kinshasa (DRC).

To talk with an expert about the African Women study, [click here](#)

** Quantitative study of 3,544 women in seven countries: Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Senegal. Survey conducted between 15 and 27 April 2017*

About Ipsos

The leading survey-based research firm in France, with expert knowledge related to the behaviour of consumers, citizens and employees, Ipsos operates in all business sectors. Our experts have been providing advertisers, decision-makers and institutions with support for their marketing strategies, HR challenges, communication positioning and opinion polls since 1975.

At Ipsos, we are passionately curious about people, markets, brands and society. We help our clients navigate more quickly and more easily through a fast-changing world. We provide them with the inspiration they need to make strategic decisions. We are Game Changers.

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