



# Absa InspireMe Conference 2024

## Background

Absa InspireMe Conference is an initiative under Absa Bank's Women Banking Proposition. It was launched in 2021 to gather local, continental, and global business titans with expansive accomplishments to deliberate on business, leadership, and women-related matters to inspire confidence and hope to strengthen and uplift women-led small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in their respective fields of endeavors.

The conference is organized annually to create opportunities for women-led SMEs to access information, market linkages, business-to-business networking and mentorship opportunities. It aims to support women-led SMEs to become stronger leaders and to build resilient generational businesses.

Over the last three years, the conference has brought together over 5,000 women across the globe to learn from mission-driven women business leaders in Ghana, South Africa, Zambia, and Kenya. Most of these women business leaders are customers of Absa, across the group and customers of our co-sponsors. Apart from the knowledge sharing and inspirational sessions, participants will have the opportunity to exhibit their products and services and to embark on industry-specific visits in Kenya. Last year, the conference was held in Accra, Ghana,

This year, ITC SheTrades have come is as the key sponsors for the 2024 Absa InspireMe Conference. The conference is targeting an in-person attendance of over **1500** women with a virtual attendance of over **10,000** from the participating countries.

## Details of the Event

**Date:** 18 – 21 June 2024

**Concept** – Two-day conference and marketplace, One-day business-to-business visits, One-day city tour for the visiting delegates.

**Location:** Nairobi, Kenya

**Venue:** Mövenpick Hotel, Wetlands Nairobi Kenya

**Participating Countries Absa:** Kenya, Ghana, Zambia, Mauritius and Uganda.

**Participating Countries SheTrades Hubs in Africa:** Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, South- Africa, Ghana, The Gambia and Nigeria.

## PROGRAMME AGENDA

TIME	DESCRIPTION
<b>Conference Day 1</b>	
<b>07:30 – 08:45</b>	Registration and welcome tea
<b>08:45 -09:00</b>	MC calls room to order. Opening Remarks – Elizabeth Wasunna Business Banking Director Absa Bank
<b>09:00 – 09:30</b>	Speed Networking – Carolyne Mutoko
<b>9:30 - 10:30</b>	<p><b>Your Story Matters: Business Mentorship (Identifying the right partners to walk the entrepreneurship journey with you)</b></p> <p><b>Guest Speaker &amp; Moderator:</b> Dr. Patricia Murugami (15 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mkambo Mwakale – Saru Organics</li> <li>• Chris Njoki - Founder Ikonj</li> <li>• Abigail Amma Abora – CEO, Aide Chemist (Ghana)</li> <li>• Emma Njiire – Aspendos Dairy</li> </ul>
<b>10:30- 10:40</b>	<b>Your Story Matters Spotlight:</b> Esmeralda De Souza Founder & CEO
<b>10:40 -11:00</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Tea Break</b></li> <li>- <b>Briefing session - Absa Leadership &amp; Key guests</b></li> </ul>
<b>11.00-11.30</b>	<p><b>Official Opening of Absa InspireMe Conference</b></p> <p><b>Key Speeches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elizabeth Wasunna – Business Banking Welcome remarks</li> <li>• Ms. Phyllis Mwangi, SheTrades Hub Regional Coordinator for East and South Africa, ITC</li> <li>• Abdi Mohamed- MD &amp; CEO Absa Bank Kenya PLC</li> <li>• Chief Guest – Her Excellency Mrs. Rachel Ruto First Lady Republic of Kenya</li> </ul>
<b>11.30 - 12:00</b>	<p><b>Key Address (inspirational speaker)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Mogul – Wandia Gichuru</li> <li>• Mizinga Melu – MD Absa Bank Zambia</li> </ul>
<b>12:00 -12:15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photo Ops</li> <li>• Acknowledging key Guests</li> </ul>
<b>12:15 -13:15</b>	<p><b>Bridging the digital gap for women-led businesses in developing economies</b></p> <p><b>Guest Speaker</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catherine Muraga – MD Microsoft Africa Development</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Esther Masese Waititu - Chief Financial Services Officer</li> <li>• Eva Ngigi Sarwai - Visa Country</li> <li>• Catherine Muraga – MD Microsoft Africa Development</li> <li>• Ms. Tumi Frazier, Co-founder &amp; CEO Fourth Wave Technology SA</li> </ul>

	<b>Moderator: Carolyne Mutoko</b>
<b>13:15 -14:00</b>	<b>Networking Lunch</b>
<b>14:00 -14:15</b>	<b>Your Story Matters Spotlight: Kedibone Imathiu Absa Bank Kenya Board Member</b>
<b>14:15 – 15:30</b>	<p><b>Session 3:</b> Strategically position your company for success in UK markets and African SheTrades Hub countries and by finding niche markets and emerging sectors.</p> <p><b>Presentation on UK market access requirements and trading scheme (15 min)</b> Jamal Hussain, UK Regional Trade Advisor for East Africa</p> <p>Rebecca Schneider, Agriculture, Food and Drink Attaché for Africa, British High Commission Nairobi</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She Trades Hubs: South Africa, Mauritius, Ghana (15 min)</li> <li>• 5-minute roundtable discussion</li> <li>• SheTrades Hubs: Rwanda, Nigeria, The Gambia (15 min)</li> <li>• 5-minute roundtable discussion</li> <li>• Q&amp;A</li> </ul> <p>Facilitator: Caroline Kemunto, Associate Programme Officer, ITC</p>
<b>15:30 -15:45</b>	Kahoot
<b>15:45 -16:00</b>	<b>Your Story Matters Spotlight: Yawa Hanson Quao Founder Leading Ladies Network</b>
<b>16:00 - 16:30</b>	<p><b>Closing Ceremony</b></p> <p>MC: Interactive Activity &amp; Winners Announcement</p>
<b>16:30 - 18:00</b>	<b>Tea Break and networking continues.</b>

## DAY 2: 2024 ABSA INSPIREME CONFERENCE

Date	DESCRIPTION
<b>Conference Day 2</b>	
07:30 – 08:30	Welcome tea and facilitated Exhibitions
08:45 -09:00	MC calls room to order. <b>Opening Remarks:</b> Lydia Karanja Absa Bank Kenya
09:00 – 09:15	Ice-breaker activity
09:15 – 09:30	<b>Key Speech</b> Dr. Afua Asabea Asare CEO Ghana Export Promotion Authority
09:30- 09:45	<b>Your Story Matters Spotlight – Maureen Bandari</b>
09:45– 10:30	<p><b>Export Readiness for Women Entrepreneurs:</b> Status of AfCFTA implementation, key milestones, infrastructure improvements and initiatives to reduce trade barriers in Africa.</p> <p><b>Guest Speaker: AGF CEO</b></p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anthony Mwangi – CEO KAM</li> <li>• Floice Mukabana – Ag. CEO KEPROBA</li> <li>• Dr. Erick Rutto – President KNCCI</li> <li>• Florah Mutahi - Founder and CEO Melvin Marsh International</li> <li>• Stella Mambo – Director, Global Markets Absa Bank Kenya</li> </ul> <p>Moderator: Salome Kavindu -Organization of Women in Trade (OWIT)</p>
10:30 - 11:00	<b>Tea Break</b> <b>Briefing session - Absa Leadership &amp; Key guests</b>
11:00 – 11:30	<p><b>Opening Remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audrey Abakah - Head of SME, Agency Banking &amp; Partnerships Absa Ghana</li> </ul> <p><i>Elizabeth Wasunna to welcome Key Guest Speaker</i></p> <p><b>Key Guest Speaker:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hon Harriette Chiggai – President’s Advisor on Women Rights <i>Hon Harriet Chiggai to welcome CS Rebecca Miano to make her remarks</i></li> <li>• Hon. Rebecca Miano, EGH, Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Investment, Trade, and Industry</li> </ul>
11:30 -12:30	<p><b>Strengthening Access to Finance for Women-Owned SMEs in developing countries</b></p> <p><b>Speaker:</b> Elizabeth Irungu – Head of Absa Asset Management Limited</p> <p><b>Panelists:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patrick Lumumba – Group Director Capacity Development AGF</li> <li>• Susan Situma - Director Programs AECF</li> <li>• Audrey Abakah – Head of SME, Agency Banking &amp; Partnerships</li> <li>• Rozina Abia - Head of Affluent and SME Banking Retail Mauritius</li> </ul>

	<b>Moderator: Mary Githinji Senior Marketing Manager Absa Bank Kenya</b>
<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	<p><b>Promoting inclusive and sustainable economic development: A focus on facilitating women's participation in international trade.</b></p> <p><b>Guest Speaker:</b> Maxine Chehab - Finance in Motion</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuru Mugambi – Sustainable Finance Expert</li> <li>• Sarah Lloyd Absa - Zambia Sustainability Country Lead</li> <li>• Maxine Chehab - Finance in Motion</li> <li>• Dr. Michelle Kristy, Global Coordinator of SheTrades Hubs, ITC</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator: Charles Wokabi – Head of Sustainability and Corporate Affairs Absa Bank Kenya</b></p>
<b>13:45 – 14:45</b>	<b>Networking Lunch</b>
<b>14:45 – 15:45</b>	<p>Wellness Session– Celebrating resilience.</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctor – Dr. Brigid Monda</li> <li>• Rev Kathy Kiuna – Founder Daughters of Zion</li> <li>• Ken Kanyarati – Director Legal &amp; Compliance Absa Bank Kenya</li> <li>• Victoria Rika – Head of Corporate Mental Health &amp; Wellness Programs Chiromo Hospital Group</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator: Mercy Achola - Executive Director &amp; Founder Value Connect</b></p>
<b>16:00 -16:45</b>	<p><b>Launch of Absa x DoA Platform</b></p> <p><b>Speakers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elizabeth Wasunna-Ochwa</li> <li>• Gina Din</li> <li>• Prof. Caroline Elkins</li> </ul> <p><b>Melanin Kapital - Graduation</b></p>
<b>16:45 – 17:30</b>	<p><b>Closing Ceremony</b></p> <p><b>Networking and Relationship Building Exercise: African women entrepreneurs.</b></p>
<b>17:30 – 19:30</b>	<p>Market Place &amp; Exhibition Tour</p> <p>Tea Break and B2B Networking continues</p>
<b>Parallel Sessions</b>	
<b>09:30 – 17:30</b>	Facilitated B2B meetings, including with UK companies