

KEEP EVOLVIN'

ANNUAL COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS

2018



THE EVOLUTION

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Helping women find a place in society through hospitality and sustainable tourism



Grow with us...
one woman at the time!

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LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

My mum once told me, Assia if you have a glass of water you must always be able to find a drop for someone who is thirsty!

The value of giving was instilled in me at a very young age. I was a few years old when my mum decided to support a foundation in the South of Italy that was working on reducing the illiteracy rate of children in South America. What started as a project to raise school fees soon became her personal mission. She realised that the children she was paying school fees for were leaving Brazil to find jobs in the US or were becoming a victim of slavery.

She decided to approach the foundation to help them secure employment at the end of their school period. By proactively approaching what was the private sector, she helped many children become young adults who were able to contribute to the local economy growth.

I was inspired by the many stories my mum shared with us and the impact she generated for these communities. In December 2016 I decided to launch Evolvin' Women with the vision of creating a world where every girl and woman has access to equal development opportunities and can become a contributor to their family, community and national economic growth.

Due to our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals #4, #5 and #8 and work in the field of equality of opportunity and inclusion through Evolvin' Women, in 2017 we became a member of the UAE task-force for the 7 Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), and in 2018 we were invited to be part of their steering committee. In 2018 Evolvin' Women became one of the first micro-enterprises to become a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact and was presented as a sustainable tourism initiative for women at the Women's Economic Empowerment Global Summit organised by the UN WOMEN, the African Women in Tourism Summit, the Arabian Travel



Market in Dubai and the ChangeNOW Summit in France where Evolvin' Women was selected by the Dubai Government to represent Dubai on sustainability.

This year in line with our commitment to ethical governance we have established an advisory board and secured legal support to make sure we are aligned to local priorities. We are planning the construction of our first Hub in Africa and expanding our operation to South Africa.

Social impact is at the core of our business and working towards implementing the Global Compact principles is not an additional task but what drives our business while helping women evolve and find a place in society.

Keep evolvin'

Assia Riccio

Founder Evolvin' Women

EVOLVIN' WOMEN AT GLANCE

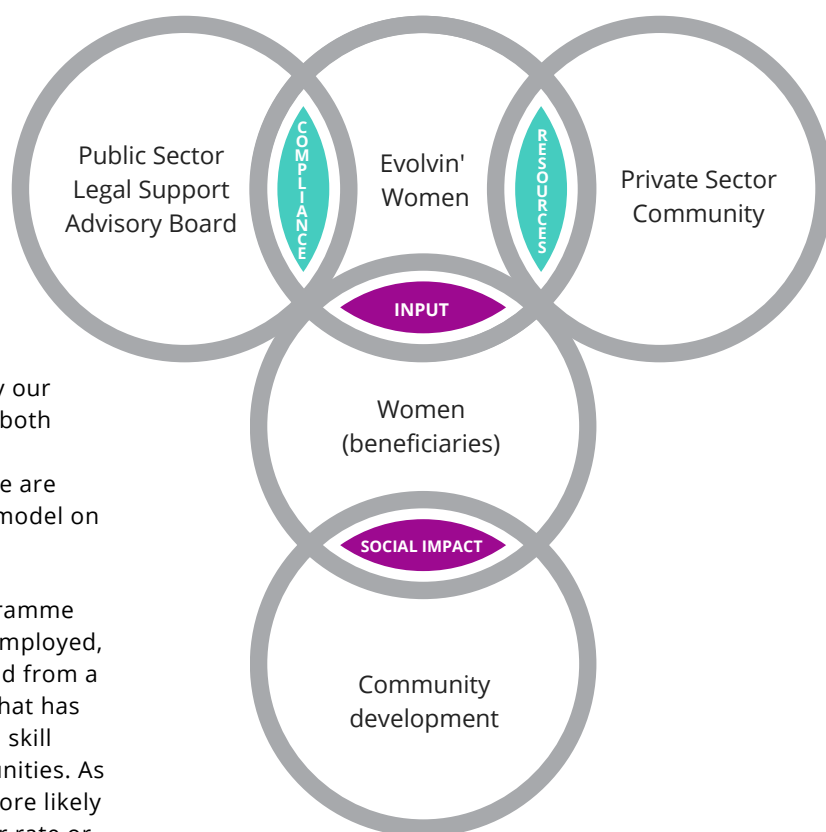
Established in December 2016 and based in Dubai, Evolvin' Women is a social enterprise that helps hospitality businesses in the UAE reduce employee turnover, embed social responsibility in their HR practices and generate a measurable social impact while providing unemployed women in developing countries with access to vocational training.

As a social enterprise, we are driven by our mission and market in order to create both social and economic value. To develop sustainable and responsible growth, we are committed to operating following the model on the right.

Women who are selected for our programme are between the age of 18 and 40, unemployed, generally from a rural area in Africa and from a less privileged economic background that has prevented them to access professional skill development and full time job opportunities. As a result of this, they are or might be more likely to increase the unpaid domestic labour rate or become a victim of forced labour and in some cases, violence.

Women who join our programme prepare to secure international skill development placements for 2 years in the UAE together with our educational partners, and return to a job in their home country. They gradually become financially independent and build a brighter future in hospitality for themselves, their families and communities, despite the challenges they have faced growing up.

Since May 2017 we have enrolled in our programme 17 women from Ghana and 11 of them accessed international skill development placements in Dubai in view of securing a job back in their home country at the end of the programme.



1020

Mentoring hours
provided to unemployed women

826

Training hours
provided to unemployed women

17

Unemployed Women
enrolled since May 2017

11

Skill development placements
provided to unemployed women

OUR APPROACH

1

MINDSET

We provide participants with training and coaching to develop a positive frame of mind to embark this new journey. Through a blended approach of webinars, online and classroom training, we equip them with the skills to set professional and community goals to achieve at the end of the programme.

2

SETTING

Moving to the UAE means a change of environment and the opportunity to stand on their feet, become more responsible and develop a higher level of emotional maturity.

3

SKILLS

We partner with education providers to deliver employability skill training through technology and face-to-face sessions. With a curriculum developed from a selection of over 500 modules, our participants learn about career development, customer service and administrative skills.

4

EXPONENTIAL SOCIAL IMPACT

After gaining skills, knowledge and experience, we connect participants to employers in their home country that will benefit from recruiting national talents with international experience.

After successfully completing the programme, our evolvin' women become evolutionary women!

As evolutionary women, they will be able to:

- Enhance the local talent pool, join the hospitality industry and gradually become financially independent;
- Continue their professional development through the EVOLVE™ Programme to learn hospitality management and leadership skills;
- Volunteer in our Evolvin' Communities Hubs and invest the skills learned during the programme in creating sustainable tourism practices in rural areas.



GLOBAL COMPACT PRINCIPLES

Evolvin' Women is currently working within the framework of the United Nations Global Compact. We are actively committed to all ten of these principles. Below is an outline of how we are executing policies to ensure we comply to these principles.



HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

As per our policy Evolvin' Women works closely with the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the foreign country Embassy in Dubai to protect women while they are in Dubai. These women have access to medical insurance, work visa, a suitable means of travel to and from their place of work, a suitable accommodation, competitive remuneration for the duration of their placement.

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

We have monthly "Sit at the table" workshops aimed at providing our participants with a seat at the table, an opportunity for them to be heard and to make a difference. We also have weekly calls with every participant for the duration of our 24-month programme. We ask questions to find out if there are incident of bullyism and abuse while working with our hotel partners. The weekly contact policy is to ensure there are no abuses of power and if situations are brought to our attention an investigation is launched and monitored. Mentors are also called on a monthly basis to find out similar information.

Our monthly workshops provide our participants with a safe environment to share and address challenges.



LABOUR PRINCIPLES

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining

Our supply chain policy, allows us to work only with licensed organisations and ensures that our hotel partners work accordingly to the UAE labor law. The business conducted within Evolvin' Women gives participants the flexibility to participate at their control. The tasks assigned to them are done so without a time frame, so they can learn at their own pace and get the most out of the tools at their disposal.

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour

Evolvin' Women works closely with its partners in Dubai and foreign countries to ensure that participants are motivated, dedicated and willing to improve their quality of education and seek other means of employment. As per our policy, participants travel to Dubai when they have an employment contract and work visa according to the UAE Labour Law, they made the decision to come based on the contract they reviewed and signed. Therefore they can stay up to 2 years for the duration of the programme but are free to resign at their own discretion. They also have access to their Embassy in the UAE. When our participants return to their home countries, they are not forced into employment but are rather given the opportunity to decide what industry-specific field is most appropriate and enjoyable.

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour

Evolvin' Women does not associate itself with brands, companies or entities that have a history of possible or proven child labour to our best knowledge. We do not enroll anyone under the legal age of work. We only work with unemployed women 18 and over. Women who complete our programme are able to create a better life for themselves and their families and increase the chances for their children to access education.

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation Assessment, Policy and Goals

By teaching women regardless of their race, age, socioeconomic background or nationality, Evolvin' Women has demonstrated its commitment to diversity, education and to the implementation of WEPS. Elimination of discrimination is at the heart of Evolvin' Women.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges

Evolvin' Women is aware of the challenges that arise with global warming and a changing environmental landscape. We are currently designing our first Evolvin' Communities Hub that will provide women returning home after the programme in Dubai, with a space to train people in rural areas on sustainable tourism activities that generate new income for the community. In order to respect the environment and educate on sustainability, we are investing time and resources in preparing policies that will demonstrate our commitment to partnering with environmental friendly organisation, such as Eco Domes. Policies will ensure that the construction is environmentally friendly and sustainable by using resources that are harvested consciously and sustainably.

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

Evolvin' Women has demonstrated its commitment to promoting greater environmental responsibility through its conscious use of resources, commitment to working with hotels who engage in environmental initiatives.

Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies
Assessment, Policy and Goals

We want to work with women who want to make a difference. We are planning to develop a policy to support those participants who wish to develop environmental enterprises on their return home. The policy will include the use of technology to educate the community on best practices.

ANTI-CORRUPTION PRINCIPLES

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

Evolvin' Women operates completely openly and prides itself off of its moral based business model. We do not work with companies or individuals with a history of extortion or bribery.

CORPORATE CITIZEN STRATEGY & APPROACH

Our strategy
includes 3 pillars:

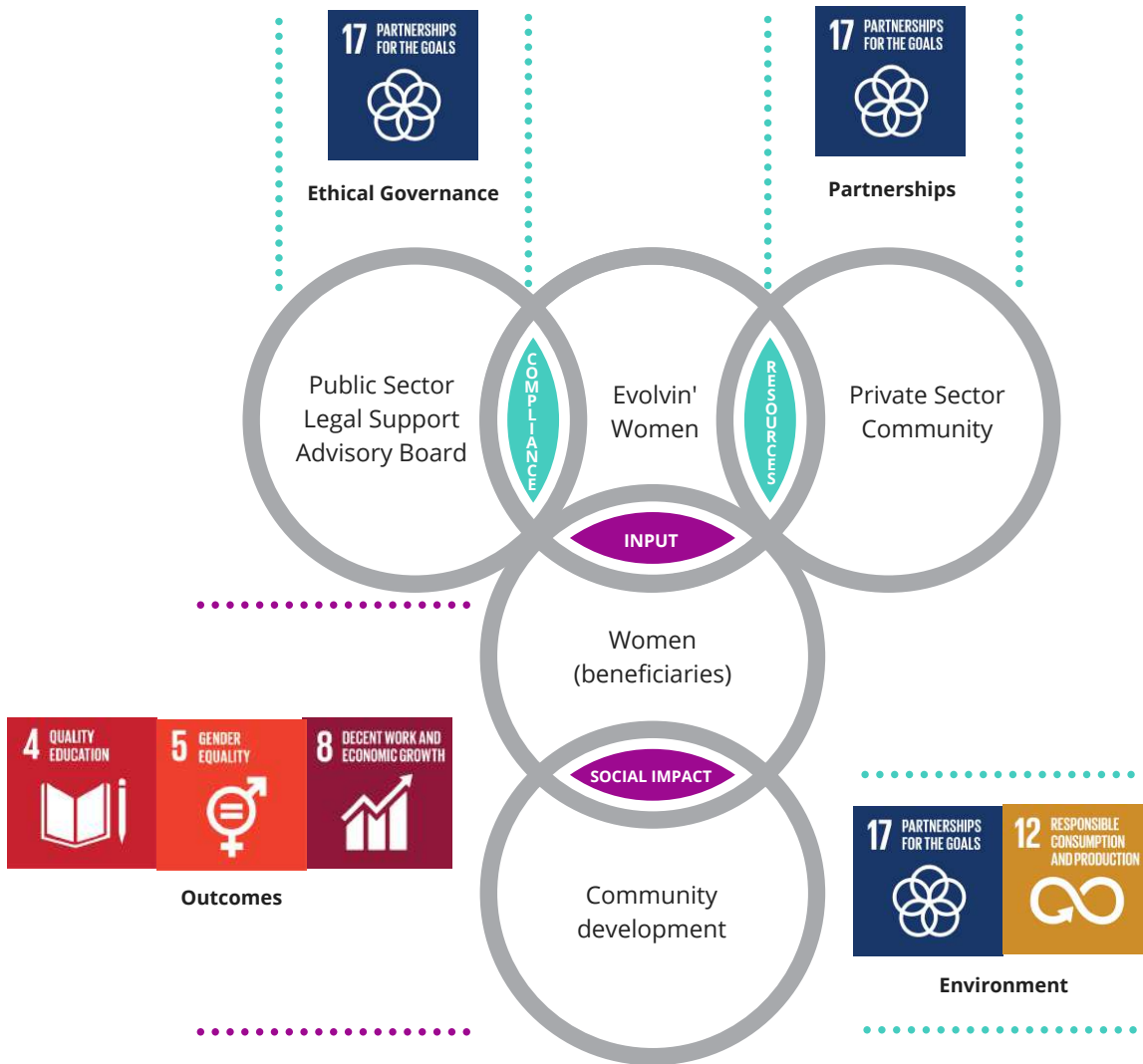
- Ethical governance
- Partnerships
- Environment

Our inputs, outputs
and outcomes are
motivated by and
explicit in line with
the United Nations
Sustainable
Development Goals.



EVOLVIN' women
In Hospitality, differently

CORPORATE CITIZEN STRATEGY & APPROACH



ETHICAL GOVERNANCE

Evolvin' Women is driven by the commitment to develop a framework of rules and practices that ensures accountability, fairness, and transparency in our relationship with all stakeholders

Advisory board

Our advisory board includes members from Accenture, our hotel partners and the United Nations Global Compact. This diversity allows us to strengthen our relationship with partners and supporters and receive feedback and advice from both private and public sector.

Legal support

We have clear contracts in place with all our stakeholders issued and reviewed by Winston and Strawn, our legal firm partner in Dubai.



Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries

We have established relationships and partnerships with the public sector in the UAE and Africa. We introduce our participants to the Ambassador of their country in Dubai and have MoU in place with governments in their country of origin.

The endorsement we receive from the public sector is allowing us to guarantee transparency and be accountable while working on SDGs.



Ethical Governance

	2017	2018	TOTAL
Government entities in the UAE	1	3	4
Government entities in the developing countries	0	1	1

Evolvin' Women is currently supported by:



Ghana Tourism Authority is the public service agency in charge of regulating tourism in Ghana through marketing and promotion, licensing and classification of tourism facilities and services, research and development. Evolvin' Women signed an MoU with Ghana Tourism Authority in 2018 that is facilitating our presence in the market.



Dubai Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit public organization whose mission is to represent, support and protect the interests of the business community in Dubai. Evolvin' Women became a member in 2017 and since then was able to connect to representative of the Chamber in Kenya and South Africa.



بادري
أكاديمية للتعليم والتطوير
EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY
nmm

Badiri Education and Development Academy is an initiative from NAMA Women Advancement Establishment was established in 2015 under an Emiri Decree by His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, and is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, Wife of the Ruler of Sharjah. Evolvin' Women was selected as one of the 15 social enterprises in the region to join their social entrepreneurship programme in 2018.



Dubai Business Women Council is committed to empowering women to be productive members of the society and economy in the UAE. Evolvin' Women became a member of the council in 2015 and since then received support and exposure in the UAE market.



Dubai StartUp Hub is a semi-government initiative rooted in Dubai Chamber, that provides clarity and direction in the journey of a startup entrepreneur. Evolvin' Women was selected as one of their start-ups in 2018 and since then has been able to connect with companies in the UAE committed to grow their social responsibility by supporting our cause.



Winston & Strawn LLP is an international law firm with offices in the United States, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East and one of the largest law firms in the world. Through the support received by Winston & Strawn LLP, we were able to establish contracts with all our partners in the public and private sectors.

PARTNERSHIPS

We are committed to establishing partnerships for capacity building by engaging with the private sector and the community.

Private Sector

Despite being a company in its infancy, we have been able to develop strong relationships with education, training and coaching providers in the UAE and Africa as well as hospitality groups.



Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals

M Gallery by Sofitel, Radisson Blu, the Doubletree by Hilton and the Signature Hotel in Ghana are providing skills development placements to our participants. The on-job training in international hospitality groups is facilitating the development of skills for the delivery of internationally recognised standards and best practices. Bringing this knowledge back to their home country meets the national agenda of Ministries of Tourism and Tourism Boards.

We have also established a partnership with Accenture and our participants have access to their Skill to Succeed platform that aims at improving the employability of vulnerable and marginalized people around the world. This academy is highly interactive and builds skills and confidence to make career choices, find and sustain employment.

Furthermore, we have established partnerships with several organisations that specialise in gender equality and support the advancement of women with limited resources. They work alongside Evolvin' Women and offer their services, time and advice on a pro-bono basis or as part of their corporate social responsibility strategy.

Evolvin' Women is currently partnering with the following hospitality groups:



Partner since September 2018, has offered skill development placements to:



Gloria Quarshie - Food & Beverage



Vickylisa Ackah - Culinary



Dorcas Danquah - Human Resources



Partner since August 2018, has offered skill development placements to:



Charity Bosomtwi - Housekeeping



Victoria Tang - Housekeeping



Saviour Appam - Stewarding



THE RETREAT PALM DUBAI
MGALLERY BY SOFTEL

Partner since May 2017, has offered skill development placements to:



Antoinette Allah-Mensah- Food & Beverage

Joined

August 2017 - August 2018

Background

Antoinette is a single mother from Haif-Assini in the western region of Ghana. A very ambitious young woman, passionate about the hospitality industry and customer service. With family commitments and limited connections, Antoinette had to place her ambition and dreams on the side.

Outcome

Antoinette secured a full time job in Accra as Event Supervisor within a month from the end of the programme with an increase in salary of 300%. She will be able to rent a flat with her child for the first time within the next 6 months and was able to open a bank account as a result of securing a full time job.

Evolvin' Women is currently partnering with the following organisations:



Accenture is granting Evolvin' Women the use of their Skill To Succeed platform aimed at improving the employability of people with limited access to education.



AmpUz is a sustainable software data collection service that tracks targets and develops visual dashboards. It is allowing Evolvin' Women to track and monitor indicators, outcome and social impact and provide stakeholders with case studies and transparency.



Initiative Hub provides career, communication and empowerment coaching programmes for women and future female leaders in the hospitality field. Initiative Hub is providing training to our participants while in the UAE.



Cudoo is the world's first One-for-One e-Learning community offering 700+ online courses in Languages and Professional Development Skills. As a result of the partnership with Evolvin' Women, Cudoo decided to embed social responsibility in their business model and offer our participants free access to their platform for each new client acquired.



Bina Matthews Consulting FZE is a consulting and coaching institution that is offering coaching to our participants.



Speak to Inspire delivers public speaking programme and is providing our participants with techniques to gain confidence and improve their public speaking skills.



Christensen Consultancy is a consulting and coaching institution deeply committed to gender equality and promoting diversity in the workplace. Our participants are receiving training on the importance of diversity.



Her Time Career Coaching is a coaching and training institution that provides emotional intelligence training to our participants.

Community

By engaging with the community we aim at making a positive change that surpasses borders, cultures and backgrounds.



Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships

In 2018 we launched our Change-makers community that is providing our participants with the opportunity to network and learn from professionals they would have not have had a chance to meet otherwise. Over 100 members have signed up to date.



Partnerships

2017

2018

TOTAL

Hospitality groups

1

2

3

Education partners

1

7

8

Change-makers

N/A

105

105

Evolvin' Women is bringing the community together in a joint effort to help its participants shape their future.
Denise Ryan, Change-maker



ENVIRONMENT



At Evolvin' Women, we are committed to reducing our environmental footprints and working towards fostering sustainable growth for our company and our clients. By working towards improving our efficiency of operations, supporting the sustainable efforts made by our partners and following in the footsteps of the Dubai Government and their sustainability initiatives, we aim to promote being an environmentally conscious business.



By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

Specifically, Evolvin' Women is planning to develop a hub in Ghana in partnership with Eco Domes, a social enterprise based in South Africa that develops eco building that are cost efficient, create local jobs and co-operatives and are environmentally safe (no wood or steel used in the building, much less cement than conventional construction and zero-waste green infrastructure integrated at design level). The current building project is inclusive of the use of solar panels to provide a constant electricity source to the hub, the installation of greywater systems to ensure water supply is managed, the use of an effective recycling system with minimal waste and the planting of trees and plants to ensure that the hub will not negatively impact its surroundings.



Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities

We are committed to using a supply chain that is ethical and environmentally conscious and work with organisations who are in line with our own ethical values.

For example, our T-shirts are outsourced to suppliers that use exclusively fair-trade cotton. We are currently looking for suppliers that use paper developed from dry food and animal waste for the production of our notebooks.



Environment (Hub)

2017

2018

TOTAL

Data not available
(Planning stage)

OUR OUTCOMES

Our 3 strategic pillars aim at reaching 5 outcomes set to generate social impact in the future








- 1 Participants must be able to secure a full-time job in their home country and receive a salary within 6 months from the end of the Programme
- 2 There must be an increase in salary of at least 200% compared to the salary they were able to receive based on their CV before the programme
- 3 They must be able to be in a financial position to live on their own within 2-3 years from starting a full-time job in their home country
- 4 They must be able to have a bank account and directly access their salaries and life savings
- 5 They must secure a managerial role within 5-7 years from starting a full-time job in their home country

PERFORMANCE TABLE

All data are consolidated through AmpUz and our internal records. We use both Accenture and Cudoo to record the number of online training hours completed.



OUTCOMES REACHED

Input	Output	Outcome
Mentoring, Face to face and online training	- 17 women enrolled	 <p><i>Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex</i> 17 participants have improved skills and knowledge through self-assessments and on job training.</p>
	- 1020 hours of mentoring	
	- 171 Face to face training hours	 <p><i>Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill</i> 17 participants have had access to computers, technology expertise and a work environment where the best technology is used to meet guests' needs. They are exposed to new ways of doing business and are able to generate ideas to implement in their home country and advance the service industry.</p>
	- 655 online training hours	
EVOLVE Programme	1 woman enrolled	 <p><i>Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location</i> By providing employability skill training sessions, interview simulation sessions and coaching 11 women secured skill development placements in Dubai. Antoinette, who completed the programme in August 2018 secured a full time job in Accra as Event Supervisor within a month from leaving the UAE with an increase in salary of 300%.</p>
		 <p><i>Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider</i> Antoinette is more financially independent, has a bank account and direct and sole access to her income and life savings.</p>
		 <p><i>Proportion of women in managerial positions</i> By offering the EVOLVE programme, we are providing participants returning to a job back home with leadership development to help them grow within the organization. Participants gain confidence and skills to advance their career in view of increasing the number of women in managerial roles and create full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels.</p>



THE RETREAT PALM DUBAI
MGALLERY BY SOFITEL

Antoinette Allah-
Mensah
Food & Beverage

Joined

August 2017 - August
2018

Background

Antoinette is a single mother from Haif-Assini in the western region of Ghana. A very ambitious young woman, passionate about the hospitality industry and customer service. With family commitments and limited connections, Antoinette had to place her ambition and dreams on the side.

Challenges

Without a platform to connect with international businesses and without the right preparation to interview with global organizations, Antoinette had very limited possibilities to gain international work experience.



ANTOINETTE'S EVOLUTION

Input	Output	Outcome	Social Impact
Mentoring, Face to face and online training	10 Hours online competency training Accenture	Antoinette was able to secure a skill development placement in Food & Beverage in Dubai	Antoinette has become a role model for women in her community who have been applying to join the programme inspired by her achievement!
	133 Hours of training by Evolvin' Women	She received 7 educational certificates during the programme	
	52 Hours of online technical training Cudoo	She secured a full time job in Accra as Event Supervisor within a month from the end of the programme in August 2018 with an increase in salary of 300%	
	16 Hours of mentoring with industry professional	She will be able to rent a flat with her child for the first time within the next 6 months	
EVOLVE Programme	Ongoing	She was able to have a bank account in Ghana as a result of securing a full time job	<p>Best advice I received from my mentor</p> <p><i>I can do anything I set my mind to and I should always put myself and my son first in any decision I make in life.</i></p>
		She is currently learning skills and knowledge to secure a managerial role in the future	



**Unable to find a full
time job in Ghana**



**Skill development
placement in Dubai**



**Supervisory role in
Ghana**

SHARING OUR STORY WITH OTHERS

Our founder has been actively engaged in gender equality and social entrepreneurship for the past seven years and is a regular speaker at international conferences. She has been recognized as one of the GCC's Women Leaders of 2017, received the Women in Leadership Award by CMO ASIA and the Women Super Achiever Award at the World HRD Congress 2018 for helping businesses become catalysts for equality of opportunity.



AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS



Due to our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals #4, #5 and #8 and our work in the field of equality of opportunity and inclusion through Evolvin' Women, in 2017 our founder, became a member of the UAE task-force for the 7 Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), a collaboration between the UN Women and the United Nations Global Compact.



As a result of embedding social responsibility in HR practices within the hospitality industry, in 2018 Evolvin' Women became one of the first micro-enterprises in the UAE to become signatory to the United Nation Global Compact.



in 2017 Evolvin' Women was presented as a sustainable tourism initiative for women at the Women's Economic Empowerment Global Summit organised in the UAE by NAMA and UN WOMEN,



at the African Women in Tourism Summit 2018 and



at the Arabian Travel Market in Dubai.



In 2018 Evolvin' Women was selected by the Dubai Government as one of the 4 social enterprises in the UAE to represent Dubai on sustainability at the ChangeNOW Summit in France.



In 2018 Evolvin' Women won Social Enterprise of the Year at the Arabian Business StartUp Awards in the UAE.

A group of Black women are shown from the chest up, wearing white t-shirts. They are all smiling and clapping their hands. The woman in the center is the most prominent, looking slightly to her left. She has long dark hair and is wearing a gold watch and a gold bracelet. The background is a blurred green, suggesting an outdoor setting with trees. The text 'KEEP EVOLVIN'' is at the top and 'AND BE IN HOSPITALITY DIFFERENTLY' is at the bottom.

KEEP EVOLVIN'

AND BE IN HOSPITALITY
DIFFERENTLY

A social enterprise at heart, Evolvin' Women is improving the employability of women from developing countries and helping hospitality businesses in the Middle East and Africa embed social responsibility in their business practices. Due to our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals #4, #5 and #8 and our work in the field of equality of opportunity, in 2017 we joined the United Nation Global Compact and the UAE task-force for the 7 Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs).

For more information, contact

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