

TheBoardroom Africa: Increasing Women Leaders in Africa



About The Boardroom Africa:

TheBoardroom Africa (TBrA) is the region's leading organisation dedicated to promoting exceptional, diverse talent to board and executive positions and providing comprehensive executive education to empower leaders to transform the businesses they lead.

Our gender partnership

We gave TBrA early-stage grant funding and technical support to help establish itself as a business focused on leadership talent acquisition and professional development. By using technology and promoting diversity, TBrA aims to help companies drive sustainable growth.

Impact highlights

- + More than 200 women placed on company boards
- + Over 600 executives have completed training programmes
- + Professional development beyond board placements offered to over 6,000 senior leaders





Setting the scene

In 2015, [a groundbreaking study by the African Development Bank](#) highlighted a significant gender gap in leadership among top African companies. Only 14 per cent of board seats were held by women and one-third of boards had no women at all. Despite mounting evidence that gender diversity improves financial performance, companies in Africa had yet to fully embrace diverse leadership teams.

TheBoardroom Africa (TBrA) was founded in 2016 to address the gender imbalance in the boardrooms of companies in Africa. It set out to build a network of skilled women leaders, to equip them for board positions, and to connect them with companies looking to diversify their leadership teams.

At BII, we want to support women at all levels, including leaders and board members. We saw an opportunity to support TBrA's efforts, including its business strategies and growth plans, expanding its influence across key markets in Africa.



Supporting the incubation period

In 2019, we committed to supporting TBrA's mission. As well as providing funding, we worked to raise TBrA's profile by highlighting its initiatives, such as partnerships with the DFI Gender Finance Collaborative and on platforms like Devex.

During its incubation phase, TBrA followed a dual strategy:

- *Meeting demand from businesses for exceptional talent*, it focused on board placements, offering companies a carefully chosen list of board-ready candidates, mostly women. The most important part of our support was in providing real test cases. TBrA worked with our investee boards to help them find and appoint women directors.
- *Building a diverse network of qualified senior leaders*, TBrA launched the Open Doors certificate programme to offer high-quality and affordable board training to improve candidates' leadership skills. The programme blended technical content with practical approaches, including board simulations. We helped by introducing TBrA to our own network of partners and portfolio companies, expanding TBrA's network and brand recognition.

TBrA became a thought leader in gender diversity by tracking the board-level genders of publicly listed companies across 11 African countries. By documenting trends, TBrA offered valuable insights into the current state of women's representation in corporate governance.



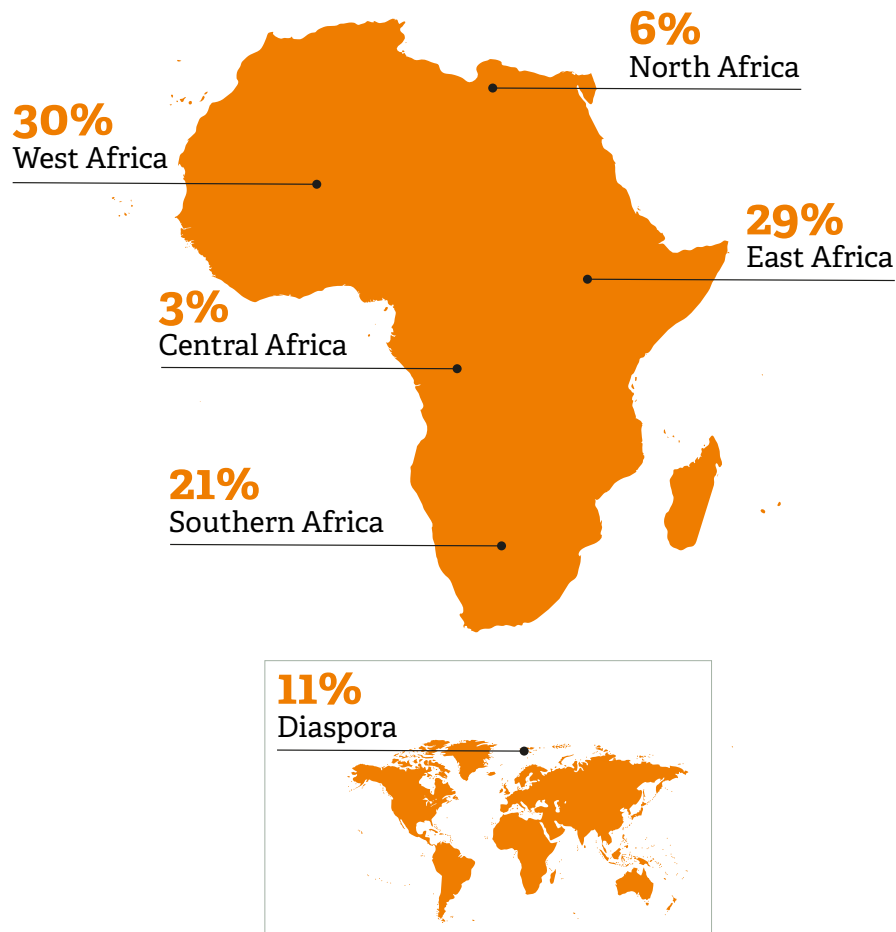


TBrA's strategic growth

Today, TBrA is a thriving business with the fastest-growing leadership community in Africa. It has a talent pool of more than 6,500 executives. It continues to promote diverse talent for board positions and offers executive development programmes for senior leaders.

Our ongoing partnership with TBrA shows what can be achieved when our purpose is fully aligned with an organisation's core vision. Since the beginning, our partnership has empowered diverse leaders and helped shape corporate governance and diversity in Africa. Our work with TBrA serves as a model for other regions facing similar representation challenges.

Network Regional Representation



“BII provided us with critical support to build the infrastructure needed to scale our services and support companies in their leaders. With their backing, we were able to move beyond the bootstrapping phase and enter a period of strategic growth, where we refined our offerings and expanded our capabilities. This transition enabled us to evolve from a start-up mindset to a fully resourced organisation, positioning us to deliver the comprehensive leadership solutions that businesses and executives require to drive sustainable growth.”

– Marcia Ashong-Sam, Founder and CEO of TBrA

Our gender impact to-date

Impact highlights

More than 200 women placed on company boards

So far, TBrA has placed over 200 candidates on boards, mostly women. About 25 per cent of the women placed are first-time board members.

Examples of TRBA supported placements

In 2022, TBrA helped Eunice Mabika be appointed Non-Executive Director at VisionFund Senegal. Her strong background in investments made her the perfect fit of the role.

In 2023, TBrA helped Kiette Tucker be appointed Non-Executive Director at AgroEknor International Limited. She has extensive experience leading business operations in Africa and continues to make an impact.

Over 600 executives have completed training programmes

TBrA's executive programmes have graduated over 600 mostly women candidates, with 300 *Open Doors* graduates. In 2023, TBrA launched two new expert-led certificate programmes: an Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) programme and another in Risk Governance, in partnership with the Directors and Chief Risk Officers (DCRO) Institute.

Fostering collaboration and interaction among women leaders

TBrA started in-person networking events to create a more engaging and cooperative environment.

Professional development beyond board placements offered to over 6,000 senior leaders

TBrA is helping clients improve their governance and diversity practices. In partnership with the Shell Foundation, TBrA developed a governance baseline assessment as a free tool for early-stage companies to promote inclusivity and effective governance within their organisations.

TBrA also continues to share knowledge and expertise by providing country-specific insights on board representation through its Board Diversity Index.

