

# Paving the Way for Women Entrepreneurs

**Timeline:** two-hour event plan with multiple activities and opportunities for future events.

## **Introduce yourself (2 minutes)**

Introduce yourself as an interested YALI Network member who wants to start an important conversation about female entrepreneurship in your community. Remember to keep it short!

## **Explain the Structure of the Event (1 minute)**

Give participants an agenda to follow for the session. Walk them through what to expect, including interactive activities and outcomes outlined below. Don't forget to explain all directions and activities fully and clearly before you begin.

## **Ice Breaker (10 minutes)**

**Note:** Watch out, these can take a long time if you let everyone introduce themselves!

### **Suggested Activity #1: Introduce Yourself in 20 Words or Less**

Have participants choose a partner and have each person introduce themselves in 20 words or less by addressing the following points:

- Include your name, where you are from, what are you passionate about, and why you want to solve this problem in your community.
- Repeat this 3 or 5 times. Ring a bell or ask people to switch partners at 1 minute.
- Remind attendees that introductions should be short and fast.
- Attendees should now have a good idea of who a few of their fellow participants are, even if they have not been introduced to everyone.

[For more ice breakers, see <http://www.icebreakers.ws/> ]

## **Group Activity: Brainstorm (10 minutes)**

**Goal:** Challenge group to name 10 obstacles for women starting or running a business

- Split participants into groups of 3-5 (as appropriate for event size)
- Give 5 minutes for brainstorming
- Have one person from each group present their list to the whole group

## **Brief group discussion to summarize activity:**

- Did most groups come up with the same 10 items?
- What were the most unique/common ideas presented?

## **Watch Lesson: Paving the Way for Women Entrepreneurs (9 minutes)**

Find the lesson at [yali.state.gov/courses](http://yali.state.gov/courses)

## **Group Discussion: (15 minutes)**

Compare the examples brainstormed before watching the video to the content presented in the video.

- What was similar or different?
- What was surprising?

## **Group Activity (20 minutes)**

### **Awareness Skit:**

- Give pairs or small groups 5 minutes to plan a skit, then perform it for the whole group. Encourage creativity.
- Have group members play the roles of a woman: trying to start a business making a pitch to a male regulator; or running a business and talking to a male customer or employee; or pitching an idea to a male investor. (Maximum 5 groups)
- Have participants provide brief feedback on how the skits were handled and if the actors could have said or done anything differently.

### Group Discussion (10 minutes)

After the skits are completed, ask the attendees to discuss them and the video in the context of the questions below:

- Are people in your community aware of gender bias for female entrepreneurs?
- How do people in your community discuss this issue? How should they?
- Why is it important for the community to invest in women entrepreneurs?
- In what ways can you use these lessons to encourage more woman/girl entrepreneurship in your community?

### Break, if needed (5 minutes)

#### Group Activity: Action Planning (20 minutes)

Break into different pairs or small groups to come up with an action plan for addressing one community situation that prevents women from starting businesses.

#### Action plans should consider:

- Target audience: who should be aware of this issue?
  - **Example:** women and girls in school, business leaders, husbands, fathers and brothers, etc.
- Behavior change: what do you want this target audience to do?
  - **Example:** mentor other women, discuss issue at work, at universities, in public, etc.
- Messaging: how do you approach them and what do you say or do?
  - **Example:** Present benefits of expanding entrepreneurship opportunities for women, discuss starting a formal mentorship program, etc.

### Wrap-up (5 minutes)

Quickly reemphasize the core lessons learned and encourage the participants to stay in touch.

- Encourage attendees to take the online course quiz available at [yali.state.gov/courses/women-girls](http://yali.state.gov/courses/women-girls) to earn a certificate.
- Create a network amongst your group members to encourage each other to work together and hold each other accountable for carrying out the plan.
- Ask participants to sign up for the YALI Network at [yali.state.gov](http://yali.state.gov).
- Plan to hold a follow-up #YALILearns session to help facilitate carrying out their action plans together.