

# Connecting TIMES



**Free To Grow** is committed to the development of women, helping them to release their potential and thrive in all their roles, including that of leader.



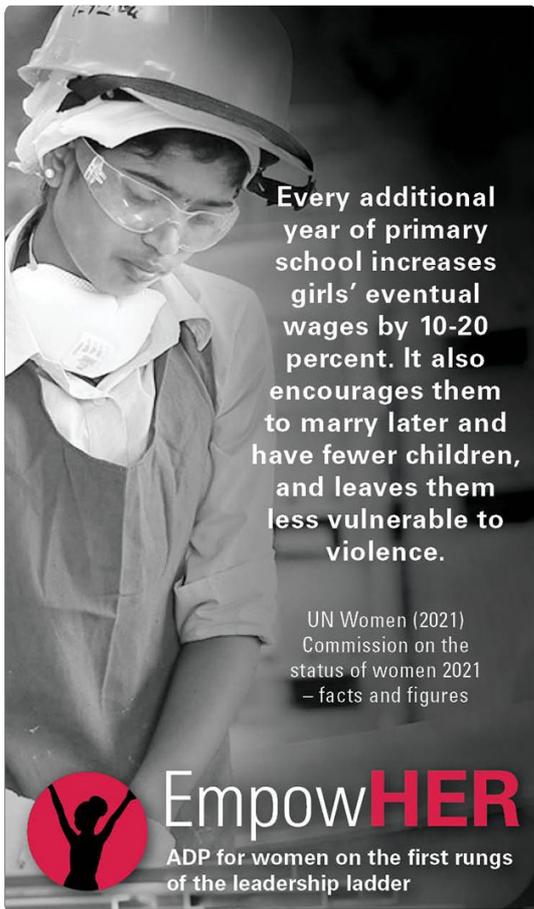
Along with being the right thing to do, diversity, inclusion and belonging offer organisations a distinct strategic advantage - particularly at the leadership level.

Encouragingly, [McKinsey's Women in the Workplace 2021 Report](#) reveals women's representation has improved across all levels of the corporate pipeline in 2020. In addition to the challenges and complexities wreaked by the pandemic, there is still a 'broken rung' at the first step up to manager. Women are still promoted to manager at far lower rates than men, and this makes it nearly impossible for companies to lay a foundation for sustained progress at more senior levels.

The [KPMG Women's Leadership Study](#) provides some fascinating insights on how women are socialised to leadership while growing up and the impact this has on the perceptions they have of themselves as leaders. There is no shortage of ambition among the women surveyed: Six in 10 of the working women indicated they aspire to be a senior leader of an organisation, and more than half aspire to serve on a board. Yet they also reported hesitancy: More than half of the women agree that, "as women", they are more cautious in

taking steps toward leadership roles, and six in 10 find it hard to see themselves as a leader. The results reveal a critical disconnect: Women want to lead, but something is holding them back.

The importance of **confidence** and **connections** is evident throughout the study, highlighting key opportunities to influence a woman's perceptions of leadership. Was she encouraged to lead as a child? Did she have a role model? Is she offered appropriate support and development opportunities at work? These are major milestones in the aspiring leader's life. If they are available to her, she is more likely to move along the path to leadership. If they are not, her aspirations of becoming a leader are more likely to remain out of reach.



**Every additional year of primary school increases girls' eventual wages by 10-20 percent. It also encourages them to marry later and have fewer children, and leaves them less vulnerable to violence.**

UN Women (2021)  
Commission on the status of women 2021  
– facts and figures



**EmpowHER**  
ADP for women on the first rungs of the leadership ladder



**Women cited confidence (63%) and determination (63%) as the top two characteristics of leaders; however, less than half of women (49%) personally identify with being confident today.**

KPMG Women's Leadership Study



**EmpowHER**  
ADP for women on the first rungs of the leadership ladder

## Love these images?

[Click here to download more EmpowHER images & inspirational quotes making a powerful case for women's development](#)

## Rainbow Chicken lead the way and **DO MORE** to accelerate the development of their high-potential women

Rainbow Chicken is acutely aware of the gender-based barriers faced by many women in their leadership development journey.

This prompted Ansa du Toit, Talent, Learning & Development Executive, to partner with [Free To Grow](#) to develop and deliver a robust accelerated development programme for women on the A, B and C job bands. Basadi Bereka (Women at Work) was born.

Read more about the innovative approach and its impact by [clicking HERE](#) to download the case study



### Women's Career Enabler Survey identifies aspirations and barriers

After extensive research, Free To Grow developed a comprehensive survey that provides organisations with a snapshot of the career aspirations of women. It also provides meaningful insights into their perceptions of the barriers that impede their career advancement - personal, interpersonal, organisational, cultural and family and household responsibilities.

Using [Mindset Management's](#) powerful, user-friendly platform, this survey enables organisations to drill down into demographics of their choice to understand the realities women in their organisation are facing so that they can mitigate those that are in their control or influence.

## EmpowHER

This powerful programme equips women to successfully navigate the challenging transition from leading self to leading others. It inspires and enables the participants to thrive in their role as leaders, and in other areas of their lives. Watch the short video below for more on this powerful blended learning journey.



For more details, download the EmpowHER interactive leaflet here

**Prof. Shirley Zinn, non-executive director of several boards and author of Swimming Upstream shares her views on EmpowHER:**



*"Well done on integrating a compelling experience for young women who have to do battle with the broken first rung of their career ladder.*

*This facet of women's career development is well researched and this programme is a thoughtful and insightful experience to ensure we enable young women to navigate the complexities of the broken first rung, and the many rungs beyond, through self-reflection, goal-setting, purpose, coaching and authentic support."*

Igniting purpose, passion and potential for growth **FREE TO GROW** 

To explore how we can shape EmpowHER to work for your organisation, contact Alinda Nortje, Executive Chairperson of Free To Grow on +27 82 852 6323 or [alinda@ftgsa.co.za](mailto:alinda@ftgsa.co.za)

We'd love your feedback on Connecting Times and its value for you. Connect with us by email or on our social pages.

