

**WIM-AFRICA INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP, SUSTAINABLE MINING &
VALUE ADDITION**

**CONTINENTAL MINERAL BENEFICIATION LABORATORIES
NETWORK**

1. **Introduction;** This document provides a **summary extracted from the 350-page WiM-Africa Five-Year Action Plan (2025–2030)**, highlighting one of its landmark initiatives: the establishment of a **network of mineral beneficiation laboratories and training institutes across Africa**.

The initiative is anchored on the **newly secured 5-hectare site in Auta Balefi, Nigeria**, where the **WiM-Africa Institute for Leadership, Sustainable Mining & Value Addition** will serve as the continental headquarters.

A groundbreaking ceremony for this flagship campus is scheduled for **October 2025**, marking the beginning of a transformative journey in strengthening Africa's capacity for **responsible mineral value addition, women's leadership development, and sustainable mining practices**.

2. Vision and Rationale; The beneficiation laboratories will empower women miners and artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) communities by:

- Providing **technical training** on mineral processing and value addition
- Ensuring compliance with **ESG and responsible sourcing standards**
- Linking women-led enterprises to **regional and international markets**
- Supporting **youth leadership development** through the **NextGen WiM Initiative**
- Amplifying advocacy to end child labor in mining through the **Voices of Children from the Pits Program**

3. Components of the Multi-Mineral Beneficiation Labs (Nigeria HQ); The first labs, to be inaugurated in Abuja, will include:

- Gold Refining and Processing Unit
- Lithium & Critical Minerals Processing Unit
- Gemstone Cutting, Polishing & Lapidary Unit
- Industrial Minerals Processing Unit (e.g., barite, manganese, phosphate)
- ESG & Safety Compliance Training Section
- Digital Knowledge & Traceability Lab (for responsible sourcing certification)

- **Export Readiness** and Branding Support Desk (Export Readiness and Branding Support Desk (aligned with the African Union Agenda 2063, the African Mining Vision (AMV), the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) frameworks, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the Pan-African Research Council (PARC), the African Minerals and Resources Centre (AMREC), and the African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC))

These labs will be replicated and customized across selected African countries, creating a continental beneficiation network.

4. Planned Regional Flagship Labs (2025–2030); Each flagship lab will serve as a **regional center of excellence**, linked under WiM-Africa’s continental action plan.

1. Sierra Leone (Mano River Union Region): Gold & Diamond Refining, Polishing, and Responsible Sourcing Hub
2. Botswana (Southern Africa): Diamonds & Gemstones Beneficiation Hub
3. Tanzania (East Africa): Tanzanite, Gold & Industrial Minerals Hub
4. Democratic Republic of Congo (Central Africa): Cobalt & Copper Hub for Energy Transition Minerals
5. Morocco (North Africa): Phosphate & Industrial Minerals Hub
6. Ghana (West Africa): Gold & Manganese Processing Hub

5. Activities of the Institute & Labs

- a) Leadership Training & Certification: Courses for women miners, policymakers, and industry leaders (co-certified with partners such as NEPC, Afreximbank, and universities).
- b) NextGen WiM Programs: Capacity building for young women leaders entering mining, processing, and export value chains.
- c) Research & Data Hub: Collecting, analyzing, and publishing gender-disaggregated mining data.
- d) Voices of Children from the Pits: Advocacy and interventions to eradicate child labor in ASM communities.
- e) Export-Linked Programs: Equipping women miners with the skills and certifications to access AfCFTA and global export markets.

6. Call for Partnerships; WiM-Africa seeks strategic partnerships with **African First Ladies, governments, development institutions, and private sector leaders** to co-create and sustain this continental initiative.

Specifically, we invite partners to:

- **Donate land** in support of establishing regional flagship or satellite beneficiation laboratories.
- **Contribute equipment** and technical facilities for the laboratories, enabling mineral processing, beneficiation, and training activities.
- **Support the construction and equipping of flagship labs** already identified in the Action Plan, while also allowing countries not yet captured in the plan to formally request the establishment of a WiM-Africa lab in their territory.
- **Endorse and champion WiM-Africa programs** on women's empowerment, youth leadership development (NextGen), and child protection in mining communities (Voices of Children from the Pits).
- **Co-develop training and certification programs**, ensuring that women miners and NextGen participants graduate with industry-recognized credentials that enhance their employability and competitiveness.
- **Champion Africa's transformation** into a global leader in responsible mineral value chains through political goodwill, policy alignment, and resource mobilization.

Next Steps

- **Groundbreaking of the Nigeria Institute Campus: 25th October 2025**
- Flagship Gold & Diamond Lab Launch in Sierra Leone: 2026 (in collaboration with Mano River Union partners)
- Progressive roll-out of regional labs across Africa (2025–2030) in line with partnerships secured.

Contact

Dr. Comfort Asokoro-Ogaji

Executive Director, Women in Mining Africa (WiM-Africa)

✉ comfort@wimafrika.org | secretariat@wimafrika.org |

secretariat2@wimafrika.org | www.wimafrika.org | ☎ +234 806 423 9910