



2024



*Women in Leadership*  
REPORT



## *Rewriting the story of African women*



**Women make up 70% of the population in poverty in Africa.** This is largely due to the fact that many girls are disadvantaged by their lack of education at a young age. As school fees increase, families choose to pull their daughters out of school and instead have them help out with siblings at home, **instilling in them early that their value is in the home, and not as leaders in professional fields.**

In general, the African woman still faces cultural, familial, and economic oppression in a patriarchal society. Unfortunately, this holds many disadvantages — **the biggest being their lack of being noticed as a leader from within their homes to government levels.**

As a *countercultural* act of  
love, truth, and confidence,



the

*Women's Leadership Accelerator*  
was created.

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**Founded by Dyan Larmey in 2018**, the Women's Leadership Accelerator empowers women across Africa, India, and the Middle East to know and understand their leadership abilities within the roles and the potential to develop new skills. The women who participate join a two-year cohort that meets on a regular basis, over Zoom and in person.

**As a result, thousands of women across Young Life Africa, India, and the Middle East are built up in leadership at every level in the mission.** With new engagement strategies, all leaders — both men and women — have the vision and tools to reach more young women and to help them grow the call that God has placed in their lives.



**OVER THE COURSE OF THE PROGRAM, WOMEN WILL**

*Develop* professionalism

*Enhance* leadership skills

*Grow* confidence in God's purpose



# Since WLA began in 2018, the number of women on Young Life staff has increased by **108%**

*\*Stats as of May 2023*



This represents the number of women on staff for Young Life Africa and Middle East.

2013



21

2015



37

2017



58

2019



88

2021



113

2023



146

# Women are the Key to Kingdom Growth.

## Sharon's Story



When they were growing up, Sharon Intauno and her brother decided to read the Bible in order to debate with the Jehovah's Witnesses who often went door to door in their neighborhood. When they got to the book of Revelation, they were frightened about the end of the world. A friend in their neighborhood had been inviting them to church, and that fear from reading Revelation convinced them to give it a try. Things made more sense to Sharon after going to church, and she decided to give her life to Christ.

Around this time, she started going to Young Life and became more excited about following Christ. Hearing the story of the prodigal son at camp was a watershed moment in her faith. Sharon expected the father to be judgemental, and his response of love was so compelling that Sharon decided she wanted to share her faith with others so that they, too, could experience that kind of love.

Sharon went to university as a DGL student and afterwards chose to join the Young Life staff in Bulawayo North, Zimbabwe. She excelled in her position, and her area grew. Her responsibilities to the mission grew as well, and she was promoted to senior regional director of Zimbabwe.



Above: Sharon's (middle) graduation from the Women's Leadership Accelerator



*Above: The second cohort of the Women's Leadership Accelerator*

When Sharon was a regional director, she realized that she was entering an executive role without the necessary executive skills. She was invited to be a part of the Women's Leadership Accelerator. The program provided education in essential skills like budgeting, communication, conflict resolution, and managing up. She was not surprised that the program empowered her as a woman and that she learned how to work better alongside her male colleagues. What she didn't expect was how much spiritual depth she would gain.

She learned one of the most valuable things a leader can do is lead themselves. Serving in this role while also being a wife and a mother, Sharon thought that pouring out all of her energy everywhere all of the time was productive and necessary. Instead, the Women's Leadership Accelerator taught her the importance of solitude and taking time to rest. A spiritually healthy leader not only sets her team up for success, but makes a way to hear the callings of the Holy Spirit more clearly, not only for herself, but for her team as well. Not only does the Women's Leadership Accelerator teach practical skills, it provides a community of women who encourage one another throughout the world. As female leaders rise out of the program, they are empowered to take risks and try new challenges, all while encouraging women around them to do the same.

**In January, Sharon and three other women who completed the program made history when they became the first women to be promoted to vice president in Young Life Africa.**

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# Partner with her!

## *Sponsor Staff*

Develop deep cross-cultural friendships that support the mission of kids in Africa meeting Christ.

## *Join a Regional Team*

Engage with others to support a country or region of ministry.

## *Go to Africa*

Go and see these women's ministries in Africa in person!

Contact Morgan Dermott or Dyan Larmey to learn more.

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**YL younglife.**

Africa | Middle East | India

[africa.younglife.org](http://africa.younglife.org)

