

# WORK PLACE ROLE MODELS: THE IMPACT OF ROLE MODELS IN ADVANCING THE PROFESSIONAL AMBITIONS OF WOMEN IN THE DRC.

HANNAH CUNNEEN, HOLLY KRUEGER AND BRIDIE LAPLACE

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*The representation of women working in the private sector in the DRC, regardless of role and sector, is important because it ensures that diverse perspectives are brought to the table, considered and integrated into business decisions which directly and indirectly impact the lives of millions of poor women and men in the DRC. It also influences social norms and shapes what younger generations (particularly adolescent girls) imagine to be possible.*

**A role model is a person whose behaviour, example or success is or can be emulated by others, especially by younger people.** To better understand the potential impact of role models on the career ambition of younger women in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Elan and Essor, FCDO's private sector development programmes conducted participatory research examining the three questions below with young women and their role models in the agriculture, finance and renewable energy sectors across Kivu region and in Kinshasa.



## Who are professional role models?

- Both women and men are professional role models for younger women in the agriculture, energy and finance sectors but there is a stronger narrative and recognition for women role models in the agriculture and finance sectors
- Most younger women see themselves as role models to other young women
- The profiles of professional role models vary depending on sector
- Though role models are selected for different reasons depending on sector, role models were seen as frequently demonstrating courage and proactively provided feedback as well as positive reinforcement.
- Soft-skills such as ways of working with others, collaboration, and listening were also identified as characteristics of role models
- Role models are admired for their success and ways of working both inside and outside of the workplace.



## What is the impact of professional role models?

- Role models have positive impact on the voice and career advancement of younger women by boosting their confidence, encouraging them to reinforce or upgrade their skills or seize new a new position or opportunity
- They also have positive impact on professional performance and ambition
- Young, professional women often found themselves replicating the behaviour of their role models.



## How can the positive impact of professional role models be amplified?

- Recognize, reward and support workplace role models. Most role models were uninformed of their important position
- Raise the profile and create opportunities for role models to share their experiences. Most respondents said that their workplace did not offer initiatives or programs to support workplace role models
- Create a conducive environment for professional advancement of young women
- Challenge restrictive and or harmful social norms.

The study findings confirmed the research hypothesis that role models have a positive impact on the representation of women and specifically on the career aspirations of younger Congolese women. The study also suggests that in the current context of the global pandemic and in consideration of the widespread and devastating impact of the pandemic on the Congolese economy, the burden of which disproportionately falls on the shoulder of women, the influence and encouragement of professional role models may be even more important in helping young women navigate this unprecedented time and remain in the workforce. These insights are intended to help the DRC private sector and private sector development programmes better understand the diverse range and sources of role models, and their contribution to changes in perception of young Congolese women and their business potential and career ambition. Actionable recommendations for both audiences are included at the end of the study.

**To explore the hypothesis that role models have a positive impact on the representation of women and specifically on the career aspirations of younger Congolese women, FCDO's private sector development programs, Elan and Essor, have conducted joint participatory research with young women in three sectors: renewable energy (private and public sector), finance (private sector) and agriculture (private sector). The findings will be shared with private sector actors and development programmes with the objective of shining light on the diverse range and sources of role models and their contribution to changes in perception of young Congolese women and their business potential and career ambition.**

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The research combined a literature review with in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with economically-active younger women and their role models from Kinshasa, and North and South Kivu. The primary research was conducted by two women researchers and managed by Elan's Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) advisor (a woman) with support from Elan's and Eссор's International GESI advisor (a woman) and Elan's and Eссор's respective monitoring and evaluation managers (two men). At the start of each FGD and IDI, the researchers engaged the respondent(s) in a discussion of the concept of the workplace role model. The researcher then followed the interview guide which was comprised of open-ended questions (annex).

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The target respondents for this research were young (15-35), economically active women from the three sectors. The age range of 15-35 is the definition provided by the DRC government. The median age of the respondents was towards the high end of the youth age range and in one case exceeded it.

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The trade-offs between the in-depth nature of qualitative research and statistical generalizability of large sample quantities research was considered and due to the probing nature of the study, the researchers opted for qualitative research methods. Other considerations and limitations include the reliance on programme partners to supply respondent contact lists and a limited body of literature on the subject-matter. Appropriate measures were taken by the researcher team to minimize the potential for harm such as the use of women researcher and conform with ethical considerations. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents.

The table reflects the demographic information of the 48 in-depth interviews conducted. Respondents ranged in age from 17-40.

## Professional Congolese women

	Number respondents	Median age	Education	Marital status (majority)	Children (majority)	Disability
Agriculture /Kivus	17	29	Ranged from primary - university	Married	Children	Small minority
Energy (private sector)/ Kivus	14	25	Majority university educated	Single	No children	Small minority
Energy (public sector)/Ki nshasa	5	38	Not reported	Married	Children	None
Finance/ Kinshasa	12	32	Not reported	Married	Children	Small minority

## Role models

Agriculture/ (Kivus)	9 (3 women, 6 men)	33	Not reported	Not married (small majority)	Children (small majority)	Not reported
Energy (private sector)/ Kivus	8 (5 women, 3 men)	29	Not reported	Single	No children	Not reported
Finance/ (Kinshasa)	18 (12 women, 6 men)	33	Not reported	Majority married	Children	Not reported

The findings below correspond to three overarching research questions aimed at understanding the impact that workplace role models, women and men, have on the personal perception of career potential of young Congolese women.



## Who are professional role models?

This area of inquiry sought to better understand the profile, characteristics and relationship between workplace role models and the respondents in selected sectors.

▶ **Both women and men serve as influential workplace role models to young women but there is a stronger tendency in the agriculture and finance sectors towards women role models.**

The cross-sectoral research revealed that young women view both women and men as influential workplace role models. In the agriculture and finance sectors, however, there was a tendency for women role models. This may, however, be the result of structure of the organization or company, particularly in the case of the agriculture sector where respondents were selected from several women-led cooperatives.

▶ **Most young women see themselves as role models to other young women.**

Most respondents across the two locations and three sectors viewed themselves as a role model for others and said that they desired to be a role model for others. The minority that stated that they did not see themselves as a role model or did not want to be viewed as a role model referenced perceived shortcomings such as poor professional networks or not being a public person.

The agriculture cohort in particular presented as being eager to support others' career ambitions.



*"To give the best of myself to other young people. To give the best of myself to other young entrepreneurs."*

- Agriculture respondent

*"Yes [I would like to be considered a role model], to provide my little knowledge to other people and teach them about New Agricultural Practices."*

- Agriculture respondent

## The profile of workplace role models varies by sector but a preference for older and university education role models was cross-cutting.

The actual profile of workplace role models varied some by sector but, with the exception of the renewable energy cohort in the Kivus, respondents recalled that their role models generally are married with children and university educated. Unsurprisingly, the role model profile, in general, tended to mirror that of the respondent cohort.

Sector/Cohort	Role model profile	Respondent cohort profile
<b>Agriculture /Kivus</b>	Aged between 30 and 50, married with children and mostly university educated	Age range from 17-35 with a median and mode of 29 years old. The large majority of respondents are married, with a small minority identifying as single, less than a third. A large majority have children and of that group a large majority has two or more children. Education levels varied from primary to university.
<b>Energy (private sector)/ Kivus</b>	aged between 25-30 years old, single and university educated	Age from 19-35 with a median and mode of 25 years old. A large majority of respondents were single and a minority of them had children.
<b>Energy (public sector)/Kinshasa</b>	aged between 50-60 years old, married and university educated	Age range from 30-45 with a median of 38 years old. All respondents had children and a large majority were married.
<b>Finance/ Kinshasa</b>	Aged between 40-50, married with children and university educated	Age range from 27-37 with a median and mode of 32 years old. The large majority of respondents are married. A small minority are single and one respondent was divorced. A large majority have children and of that group a large majority has two or more children.

Role models are admired for their determination, success and ways of working inside and outside of the work place.

### Femme courageuse

The strength of character to face danger, suffering, difficult circumstances. Courage is also to undertake a task with ardor. Courage is still having the energy, the strength to take action (Larousse dictionary).

The concept of a strong and/or courageous woman (femme forte ou femme courageuse) was a frequently cited characteristic of role models. It was also a trait that some respondents mentioned would like to exhibit more of in their own careers.



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*“She is a strong, determined, devoted woman, she has ideas, she defends them, she does not give up and works hard until she obtains results that she sets for herself.”*

- *Public sector energy respondent*

Soft-skills such as ways of working with others, collaboration, and listening were also identified suggesting that a role model's approach to working and working with others is as important as their outputs or achievements reached in their professional capacity.

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*“Despite her high level, she facilitates communication.”*

- *Finance respondent*

In the finance and agriculture sectors, respondents highlighted the ability of their role models to succeed in both professional and family/community spheres suggesting that these young women are looking for guidance on how to juggle social norms and expectations with their own career ambition.

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*“She shows us the way to live well in society.”*

- *Agriculture respondent*

*“Home life does not prevent her [from] achieving results.”*

- *Finance respondent*

Many respondents recalled that they realised they have identified a role model once they began seeking their advice, following their examples, or comparing their work to those of their role models.

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*“[I knew he had become a role model] when I started to take his advice and put it into practice. [...I knew] when I started to compare myself to him at work.”*

- *Private sector energy*



### **Most professional role models are uninformed of their privileged status.**

Across the three sectors, only a minority of those identified as role models were informed by the respondent that they had been identified as role models. The research did not examine why a young woman may or may not inform her role model of their position but this disconnect may represent a lost opportunity for role models to be formally acknowledge and supported to facilitate even more knowledge transfer and confidence building;

**This area of inquiry explored the perceived impact of role models on young women. Respondents were asked about whether their role model(s) supported their (and other women's) voice and career advancement and whether their role model had inspired them to take on a new role or position.**

A theme that emerged from the research on the energy and finance sectors was how impactful receiving informal positive feedback was in building women's confidence, which ultimately gave women the assurance to dedicate energy to build their careers and/or attempt new business opportunities or diversification strategies.

Role models who provide positive feedback acted as a form of confidence boost. One respondent outlined that their role model was willing to back them with other senior representatives or other women, thereby raising their voice - " *Yes, she advocates for us with the authorities*"

A majority of respondents across the three sectors felt that their role models support their (and other women's) voice and career advancement at the workplace. Women role models received more favourable response to this question than men role models.

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*"[She supports us] by showing us how to do a great job to improve our performance. She also gives us training."*

- Private sector energy respondent

*"[She] accepts and encourages my ideas in the different activities."*

- Agriculture respondent

*"[My role models] want to see me progress in my activities. They push me to advance further in the coffee sector."*

- Agriculture respondent

*"He often follows up on my work and he always supports my work."*

- Private sector energy respondent

*"He listens to our grief and supports our ideas."*

- Private sector energy respondent

The public sector energy cohort, however, qualified their positive responses to this question by sharing that their role models supported their voice and advancement within the boundaries of workplace norms.

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*"Yes, but in an objective manner; professionalism is essential."*

- Public sector energy respondent

## Role models inspire and encourage young women to improve their professional performance.

The positive impact of professional role models is wide ranging from boosting confidence to motivating young women to participate in trainings and re-entering education to upskill.



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*"He made me aware to go back to school."*

- Private sector energy respondent

*"She encouraged me to join the team and thanks to her advice, I am now an ambassador."*

- Private sector energy respondent

*"[They recommended that I] follow the trainings and take part in workshops, forums and all national and international activities [relating to the sector]."*

- Agriculture respondent

*"She encouraged me to join the village savings and credit association to save money so that I can save the money I earn from farming."*

- Agriculture respondent

“

*"She shows us how to manage our farms. She makes me participate in different trainings on good agricultural practices."*

- Agriculture respondent

*"When I have a problem with my work, she helps me solve it."*
















- Private sector energy respondent

**What is notable is that role models are encouraging young women to address widely recognised constraints to their economic participation such as confidence, professional networks and skill development.**



women farming in DRC

## SUMMARY OF THE REPORTED IMPACT OF ROLE MODELS

	Agriculture	Energy	Energy	Finance
	Kivus	Kinshasa	Kivus	Kinshasa
Boost confidence /Kivus				
Inspire career ambition				
Motivate to seize opportunities and/or innovate				
Improve professional performance				
Attend training/upskill				
Join or create new professional groups				

***In light of the current global COVID-19 pandemic, the research also covered the impact of COVID-19. Specific questions included the impact of COVID-19 on the respondents' career ambition and choices and whether the pandemic had impacted their relationship with their role model(s).***



**Negative impact on professional ambition and career choices in sectors with waning customer demand due to COVID-19.**

In the agriculture and (private) energy sectors, respondents expressed concern about the impact of COVID-19, particularly on declining customer demand and or ability to pay for their respective products, coffee and household renewable energy products. Respondents from these sectors also raised concerns about the risks of infection associated with the social nature of their work. Respondents from the agriculture sector reported a cessation of activities during this period.



*"Our partners have been blocked. There was no way to sell our products. No information and no movement."*

- Agriculture respondent

*"We were afraid of being contaminated and of infecting others."*

- Agriculture respondent

Those working in the finance sector stated that they had not been noticeably affected by COVID19 in the workplace at the time of interviewing.



**But it has not impacted their relationship with their role model.**

The majority of respondents, however, have stated that COVID-19 has not affected their relationship with their role models, as many connect by phone – calls, WhatsApp and social media were frequently mentioned modes of communication. In the few instances where COVID-19 has impacted the relationship it is due to mobility restrictions and an inability to access their role models.



*"Because they were far from us, there was no way to meet and exchange our experiences."*

- Agriculture respondent

*This line of questioning explored how companies and private sector development programs can amplify the positive impact of role models. Specific questions covered whether the respondents' employer had any workplace initiatives to promote role models or mentor programs and how role models, women and men, could be better supported in the workplace. An additional question on the overall workplace conduciveness for women's advancement was included.*



## Recognize, reward and support workplace role models.

Role models are influential and impact the performance and perceptions of young women. However, only a minority of respondents, primarily from the finance sector, reported that their workplace had an initiative in place to promote role models or mentors but that it was limited to new employees only.

To address this gap, respondents recommended that role models be recognized and rewarded. Several respondents even went as far as suggesting that workplace role models receive a promotion, prize or financial incentive as a means to raise their profile and incentivize them to continue being role models.

In the agricultural sector, recommendations to support role models took on a very practical bent and focused on helping the role models further succeed in business. Recommendation to support both women and men role models centred upon providing training and specific inputs such as tools, coffee processing machines, or a workspace, access to financing options, and access to new markets.



*"Look for a market for her to sell our products."*

- Agriculture respondent

*"Give the tools necessary to process coffee [cherries]."*

- Agriculture respondent



## **Raise the profile and create opportunities for role models to share their experiences.**

Respondents from across the three sectors recommended that role models be made more visible and have opportunities to share their experiences.

*"When we have meetings with young leaders, give the floor to these role models as coaches in order to awaken the young ladies and boost them."*

- Public sector energy respondent

*"In meetings, share experiences with women role models who have supported young women for certain opportunities and invite young women to approach these role models and benefit from their strengths."*

- Public sector energy respondent



## **Create a conducive environment for professional advancement of young women.**

When asked whether their work environment supported the pursuit of their ambitions and professional development, responses were mixed. A majority of respondents from the financial sector reported a conducive environment. This could be the result of the presence of role model and mentorship programs. At the same time, a majority of respondents from the public and private sector energy and agricultural sectors reported an unconducive environment.

### **Leading example from the finance sector**

A majority of the finance respondents reported that their employer had a program to support role models/mentors and almost all respondents felt that their work environment supported the pursuit of their ambition and professional development. Several mentioned that women occupied important decision-making positions within their financial institutions.

*"Yes [I feel it is a supportive workplace], there are a lot of women at decision-making posts and at a very high level."*

*"Yes, [...] since I joined and I know that if I master certain things with the necessary training and skills, there will be the possibility of accessing other opportunities if there are vacancies."*

*"Yes, other women are promoted and important positions occupied."*



## **Challenge restrictive or harmful social norms.**

Tackling the restrictive or harmful social norms is an important part of creating a conducive environment for professional advancement. A majority of respondents across sectors felt that young women faced greater barriers to workforce participation and professional advancement than men. Negative perceptions of women's professional capabilities were widespread and most pronounced in the public sector energy and agriculture sectors.



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*“It is obvious that women are from the outset seen as having less ability, hence the ongoing challenges to prove their skills and abilities.”*

- public sector energy respondent

*“Yes, because society considers that women are naturally weak. If a woman is looking for support, we believe that it is weak.”*

- public sector energy respondent

*“Men think women reason with their hearts and not with their heads, you have to prove them wrong.”*

- Public sector energy respondent

*“Women are minimized. They do not have access to positions of responsibility. Men do not accept their qualities. Men think that women cannot take over positions of responsibility.”*

- Agriculture respondent

*“Women have lots of family responsibilities. Men do not like when women work.”*

- Agriculture respondent

Young women farmers in eastern Congo, in particular, face a multitude of obstacles. Many provided specific examples of the ways in which family responsibilities and discriminatory practices inhibit a women's ability to participate economically.

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*“Women are not considered in the society, [they] do not have access to land, [they're] not in a decision-making position, [they are] blocked economically [and their economic] activities do not grow.”*

- Agriculture respondent

*“Women have lots of family responsibilities. Men do not like when women work.”*

- Agriculture respondent

Negative views of (some) women were even shared by the respondents themselves. In the private sector energy cohort, for example, some respondents, slightly less than half, felt that women were not always necessarily suitable or interested to succeed professionally. Some comments suggested that women were not able to succeed professionally due to their lack of education - sometimes a result of women getting married or starting a family - or, instead opting to forego education, instead preferring to seek out financial support through marriage.

“

*“Women do not like to study because if they find a husband they directly abandon studies.”*

- Private sector energy respondent



# ADVICE FROM ROLE MODELS ON HOW CAN WORKPLACES AND PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AMPLIFY THEIR IMPACT

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## Provide training and incentives

The role model respondents do not believe their workplaces actively support their work as role models. Some felt, however, that their workplace could support them by offering training on how to be a role model or salary increases and benefits. While others were sceptical about what their employer could offer. Agricultural role models were more optimistic about the value of efforts by their workplace to support role models than the renewable energy role models.

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*"Yes, by raising the salary, by giving certain advantages"*

- Renewable energy role model

*"Yes, by training me more on my role as a role model"*

- Agriculture role model

## Raise the profile, skills and position of young women in Congolese society.

There was, however, much more consensus about the potential for private sector development programmes like Elan and Essor to positively impact the advancement of young Congolese women. The potential for confirmation bias should be noted. All of the renewable energy role models and all but one agricultural role model respondent responded positively. Role models cited job creation, training and support for broader women's empowerment initiatives.

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*"Yes, by helping young women to have consideration in society, and to promote professional values of young women, to promote entrepreneurship among women."*

- Renewable energy role model

*"Yes, by organizing activities that can help women get involved in some way and level sense of empowerment."*

- Renewable energy role model

*"By training young women on job creation and being autonomous."*

- Renewable energy role model

*"Yes, by supporting small businesses and formalizing businesses through a one-stop shop."*

- Agriculture role model

The table below summarises recommendations for businesses and institutions and development programs. The recommendations draw upon the study findings and the researchers' experience in advancing gender equality in the DRC.

Recommendations	Businesses/institutions	Development programmes
<b>Recognize, reward and support workplace role models.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider introducing initiative to formally acknowledge and support workplace role models</li> <li>Conduct staff survey to determine how best to design the initiative and support existing role models</li> <li>If already have an initiative, conduct survey to assess strengths and weakness of current initiative</li> <li>Develop indicators and collect data to track impact of investments in supporting role models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage partners to introduce formal role model/mentorship programs</li> <li>Communicate business advantages of recognizing and supporting workplace role models</li> <li>Make resources available to businesses via local business associations on the basics of how to identify a role model, and then support them to further promote others through mentorship programmes</li> <li>Make resources available to businesses via local business associations on how to develop and track SMART indicators</li> </ul>
<b>Raise the profile and create opportunities for role models to share their experiences and skills.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intentionally raise the profile of self-identified and nominated workplace role models</li> <li>Incentivize role models to share experiences with younger employees</li> <li>Plan time in meetings, events, etc. for role models to share experience including experience with balancing home and work life and overcoming restrictive social norms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the different activities and platforms supported or created through the program and consider which are most useful to raise the profile of sector role models</li> <li>Look for everyday opportunities to raise the profile of role models and have them share their experiences</li> <li>Ensure the representation of a diversity of role models at programme sponsored events, activities, meetings, etc.</li> </ul>

Recommendations	Businesses/institutions	Development programmes
<p><b>Create a conducive environment for professional advancement of young women.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a gender audit and address identified areas of improvement through a measurable action plan</li> <li>• Listen to employees, women and men, and be responsive (where possible) to their concerns</li> <li>• Engage men and women employees in advancing gender equality including creating formal GESI champions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide technical assistance to businesses/institutions seeking to conduct gender audit and improve weaknesses through a measurable action plan</li> <li>• Support national and local campaigns on engaging men (and women) in advancing gender quality</li> <li>• Conduct and make available research on how DRC businesses/institutions can improve the work environment for the professional advancement of young women</li> </ul>
<p><b>Challenge restrictive or harmful social norms.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate how restrictive or harmful social norms are impacting the lives of women and men employees</li> <li>• Prioritise the norms which are feasible within the scope of the business, have high potential for impact but low risk of sanctions (particularly for women)</li> <li>• Ask development programmes for support in tackling the restrictive social norms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide technical assistance to businesses/institutions seeking to tackle restrictive social norms</li> <li>• Conduct and make available research on restrictive and harmful social norms in the DRC and how they negatively impact the performance of businesses and institutions</li> </ul>

The cross-sector research shows that role models, women and men, have an important impact on the perception of their career aspirations and potential for advancement. Considering the widespread and devastating impact of the pandemic on the Congolese economy, the burden of which disproportionately falls on the shoulder of women, the influential role of role models may be even more important in helping young women navigate this unprecedented time and remain in the workforce.

Despite the lack of formal business support for role models or mentorship programs, workplace role models, through their actions and positive feedback, have boosted the confidence of young women sales agents, inspired career ambition, improved professional performance and encouraged the seizure of new professional opportunities and/or joining new professional groups and networks. Moreover, a majority reported that their respective role models actively supported their voice and career advancement at the workplace.

These are important findings because they support the research hypothesis that professional role models, women and men, are important for furthering the career aspirations and advancement of young Congolese women; essential elements for increasing the representation of women the DRC private sector.

The study findings also suggest that there are several proverbial 'low hanging fruits' for businesses, institutions and development programmes alike such as recognizing, rewarding and supporting role models, raising their profile and creating opportunities for them to share their respective experiences which, if seized, could result in improved professional performance of young women employees among other positive outcomes for individuals and businesses alike. The challenges facing young professional Congolese women, however, are numerous and some are beyond the direct influence of role models. Consequently, the study findings point to the importance of not just bolstering role models but also addressing underlying issues such as the workplace environment and restrictive social norms.

## Annex

# Role model in-depth interviews data collection template

**Date:**

**Time and location of interview:**

**Name of interviewer:**

**Has the interviewee given verbal consent:**

Questions	Answers	Probe questions	Answers
<b>0. Demographic information</b>			
Name			
Age			
Job/position/Role			
Marital status			
Number of children			
Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?			
Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?			
Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?			
Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?			
<b>1. Who are influential professional role models for young, economically active Congolese women, and why?</b>			
Do you have (a) professional role model(s)?			
Are they female or male?			
Age?			

Marital status?			
Number of children?			
Education level?			
Are they aware that you have identified them as a role model?		If no, why?	
How did you meet/become aware of your role model?			
Do you communicate with your role model(s)?		If so how (e.g. in person, whatsapp, facebook, etc.)?	
<b>2. What are the characteristics of these female role models?</b>			
What are the characteristics of your professional role(s) that inspire or motivate you?			
Has your role model actively supported your (or other women's) <u>voices in the work place</u> ?		If yes, how?  What was the reaction (if any) of other people in the workplace?	
Has your role model actively supported your (or other women's) <u>career advancement</u> ?		If yes, how?  What was the reaction (if any) of other people in the workplace?	
<b>3. What are the characteristics of these male role models?</b>			
If you have (a) male role model(s), what are the characteristics that they have that inspire or motivate you?			
Has your role model actively supported your (or other women's) voices in the work place?		If yes, how?  What was the reaction (if any) of other people in the workplace?	
Has your role model actively supported your (or other		If yes, how?	

women's) career advancement?		What was the reaction (if any) of other people in the workplace?	
<b>4. For whom are these young women role models themselves?</b>			
Do you think that you are a role model for others in a professional setting?		Why/why not?	
What characteristics do you believe you would need to possess to become a role model?			
Would you like to be considered a role model?		If yes, why?  If no, why not?	
<b>5. What constraints do young women face in economic participation and career advancement?</b>			
In your experience, do young women face additional constraints to <u>economic participation</u> in the DRC/Kinshasa/Goma?		Please provide some examples.	
In your experience, do young women face additional constraints to <u>career opportunities and advancement</u> in the DRC/Kinshasa/Goma?		Please provide some examples.	
How do these constraints differ for men?			
<b>6. What opportunities do young women see for their economic participation and career advancement?</b>			
What possibilities do you see there being for young women to increase their <u>economic participation</u> in DRC/Kinshasa/Goma?		Why?	
What possibilities do you see there being for young women to improve their <u>career progression/advancement</u> opportunities in DRC/Kinshasa/Goma?		Why?	

<b>7. (How) do these role models, women and men, influence the perception of business potential and career ambition?</b>			
How do role models make you feel about your business potential, career potential and/or your professional ambitions?		Why?	
Are there specific things that your male/female role models encourage or inspire to change or try in your role, business or business idea?			
<b>8. (How) do these role models influence perceptions of confidence in pursuing role changes</b>			
Are there specific things that your male/female role models encourage or inspire you to change or try (e.g. formalize membership in a group/contract/income, new position, participating in training, seek better working conditions, increase status/position, advocate for more responsive services)?		If yes, how did they promote or inspire that?	
<b>9. (How) has the role and or influence of these female or male role models changed during the COVID-19 era?</b>			
Has your relationship with your professional role model changed during or as a result of COVID19?		If so, why? How?	
What is the impact of COVID-19 on the influence of 'role models'?			
<b>10. How can development programmes like Elan and Eссор amplify the positive influence (reduce the constraints) of these female and male 'role models'</b>			
Do you think that development programmes can support or promote female role models to improve women's career and business opportunities?		If so, how?	



Do you think that development programmes can support or promote male role models to improve women's career and business opportunities?		If so, how?	
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