

# Women in Technology Conference addresses challenges in ICT industry

The World Economic Forum's *Annual Gender Gap Report* shows slow progress and minimal change in many countries worldwide; it estimates gender parity globally may now be over 170 years away. Previously, they estimated an 80-year timeframe, then it was 120 years. Women comprise 55% of the country's entire workforce, yet only 20% of ICT professionals are women.

To address these challenges faced by the industry, Standard Bank and co-sponsor Liberty hosted the Women in Technology Conference at the Protea Hotel, Melrose Arch.

"This conference hopes to make a difference by providing a platform for women in technology and those aspiring to enter this field to meet, engage, and exchange ideas and experiences," said Nicole Borges, head of IT investments CIB from Standard Bank.

“ *"Closing the gender gap in the tech space requires inspiring young women and girls at their very tender age"*

[@MmakiJ #SBWomenInTech pic.twitter.com/QTkCCYul2A](#)— SB BizBanking (@SB\_BizConnect) [October 19, 2017](#) ”

The conference saw panel discussions as well as keynote speakers addressing how access to market opportunities can be created.

"We cannot miss this opportunity to grow this market, or be too slow to close the gender gap. It is crucial that the gateway to innovation and change is opened, and the levels of equality in the world of technology are improved," said Jaysree Naidoo head of Standard Bank Incubator.

"Innovation, leading to new forms of technology, has opened up opportunities for women in Africa. It is up to us to grasp those opportunities, and we hope this conference will assist in closing gender gaps and inspiring women entrepreneurs to drive change through technology," concluded Naidoo.