

## WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

### *First Ladies Initiative*



GEORGE W. BUSH  
INSTITUTE



## WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Empowering women worldwide by promoting access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunity, and supporting First Ladies from around the world in using their unique platforms effectively.

## BACKGROUND

First Ladies use their unique platforms to promote issues and programs that improve the lives of women and children in their countries. Mrs. Bush announced and launched the Bush Institute's First Ladies Initiative at the African First Ladies Summit in Tanzania in July 2013. The Initiative supports First Ladies by partnering with them to advance critical interventions for women and children through the fostering of public-private partnerships. The Initiative connects First Ladies and their staff to funding partners (corporations, non-profits, and non-governmental organizations) with aligned purposes. Additionally, the Initiative prepares First Ladies' Senior Advisors and staff by providing technical training and capacity building opportunities.

Since the First Ladies Initiative launched in 2013, the Bush Institute has continued to act in a convening, networking, and training capacity to support First Ladies in using their unique platforms to improve the lives of women and children. Notable program highlights include:

### *2015 Global Women's Network: A Summit of Ideas, Innovation, and Partnerships*

Welcoming over 250 guests from 20 countries around the world, the 2015 Global Women's Network event convened First Ladies, their Senior Advisors, donors, and public and private sector leaders at the Bush Center in Dallas, TX. The summit highlighted effective public-private partnerships that address critical issues affecting women and girls.

### *Investing in Our Future at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit*

On August 6, 2014, the Office of the First Lady, the George W. Bush Institute, and the U.S. Department of State hosted *Investing in Our Future at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit*, a day-long spouses forum at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The forum brought together First Lady Michelle Obama, Mrs. Laura Bush, African First Ladies from nearly 30 countries, public and private sector partners, and other leading experts to discuss sustainable interventions advancing the status of women and girls in Africa.

**"Investments in the success of women are investments that pay off."**

**- Mrs. Laura Bush**

### Senior Advisor Trainings

One of the ways the First Ladies Initiative supports First Ladies is by helping to prepare Senior Advisors through capacity-building training sessions. Welcoming a robust list of content experts from the private, non-profit, and public sectors, recent trainings have been hosted in Washington, D.C., New York City, Johannesburg, and Dallas.

### "The Role and Influence of First Ladies" Research Project

With funding by ExxonMobil, the Bush Institute is working with the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) to conduct research on the role and influence of past and current First Ladies in advancing women's and children's empowerment. Addressing a significant research white space, this project identifies and analyzes the factors that contribute to, as well as inhibit a First Lady from, leveraging her platform to invest in women's and children's rights and empowerment

### First Ladies Collaborative Meetings

First Ladies Initiative events allow First Ladies to grow their networks, identify sustainable interventions, and create introductions that may serve as a catalyst for future partnerships. Since 2013, the Bush Institute has regularly convened First Ladies and select organizations for private roundtables and luncheons to discuss important issue areas for women and children, including health, education, and economic opportunity.

## PROGRAM IMPACT

To date:

- Over 40 current and former First Ladies have participated in Bush Institute Summits, roundtables, partnership meetings, and other program activities.
- 12 countries from Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean have participated in capacity-building training sessions.

For more information on the First Ladies Initiative, please contact Natalie Gonnella-Platts.

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