

Women & the Future of Hunting in Africa

How do we make safari hunting more welcoming for 50% of us?

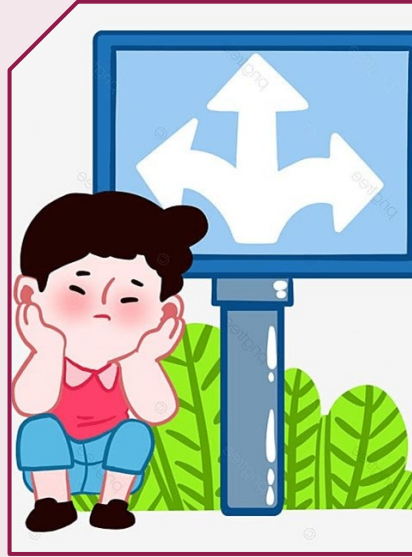
By Francine Barchett, Cornell University



Remember These 3 Questions:



1) Who Is the Customer?



2) What Do They Want?



3) Is the Industry Ready?

Order of Presentation

01



Setting the Stage:

Introduction & Importance of Female Hunters to Safari Hunting

02



Lessons from Today, Strategies for Tomorrow:

Women are the Fastest Growing Demographic of New Hunters in the US...but Has This Carried over to Africa?

03



It Ain't Easy:

3 Key Barriers to Increasing Female Safari Hunting Participation

04



Case Studies:

Lessons from Namibia, the Golf & Country Club Industry, and "Becoming an Outdoorswoman" US Program

05



Path Forward:

Practical Applications and Recommendations

06



Ask away!

Q&A:

Case

Path



01

Setting the Stage

How many of you know a woman who hunts?



01

Setting the Stage

How many of you know a woman who hunts?...

“If Mom hunts,
everybody
hunts.”

Agree? Disagree?





Demand for Hunting in African Wildlife Economy

How can hunting and
hunters in Africa
evolve as part of
Africa's wildlife
economy?

Counter
increasingly
negative
Western
attitudes toward
hunting

Adapt business
model to embrace
social and cultural
touchpoints (e.g.,
foodies, adventure
& cultural tourists)

Develop market
strategy to reach
non-traditional
hunting clients
(e.g., women,
minorities)



Marketing Myopia

Sustained growth depends on how broadly you define your business—and how carefully you gauge your customers' needs. by Theodore Levitt

From the Magazine (July–August 2004)

- Every industry is a growth industry at some point - they have the best product and focus on selling, selling, selling
- But what happens when the market itself changes (e.g., railroads in 1900s)?
- Industries that evolve are customer-oriented instead of product-oriented (Who is the customer and what do they *really* want?)

Remember These 3 Questions:



1) Who Is the Customer?



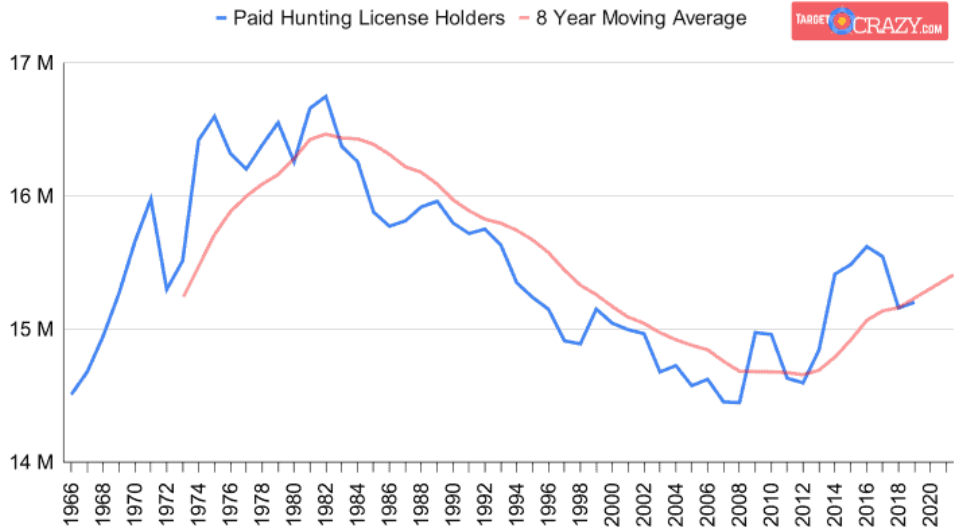
2) What Do They Want?



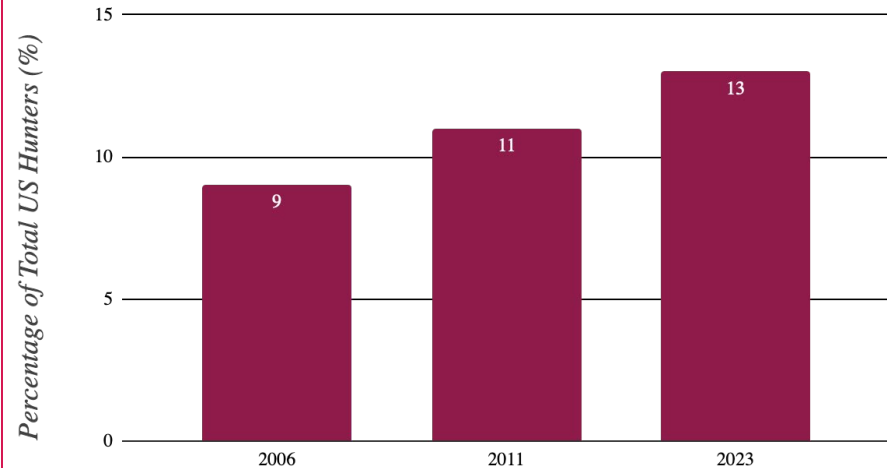
3) Is the Industry Ready?

Hunters as a Share of the US Population Is Declining, Yet Female Participation Is Increasing!

USFWS Paid Hunting License Holders 1966 - 2019 (Apportionment 1968-2021)



Women Hunters, 2006 to Present



I Studied Female Hunters, Including by Becoming One

- No prior hunting experience
- Since beginning of PhD program in 2021, participated in several hunting recruitment-retention-reactivation (R3) programs
- 1st individual female hunting client at hunting concession in Mozambique!
- Have interviewed and observed female PHs, hunting apprentices, and American hunting clients across Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Namibia
- Also, photo and web-based study on African hunting outfitters' marketing communications

...and established/host the
International Hunting
Discussion Forum!

When you tryna get that
work life balance





20-Second Plug: International Hunting Discussion Forum!

- **Origins:** Formed in July 2022, the forum gathers the world's leading experts in hunting and conservation to hold frank discussions about the evolution of the hunting industry in Africa and globally
- **Membership:** includes 40 members from 15 countries and 3 continents, of whom there are representatives from 25 institutions and 8 leading universities
- **Sponsorship:** Cornell University, African Wildlife Economy Institute, University of Florida

4-Tiered Purpose:

1. *Discuss diverse stakeholder perspectives about hunting's drivers and challenges through local and international lenses*
2. *Facilitate space for inquiry and collaboration in research about hunting and engagement that addresses gaps in knowledge*
3. *Provide a non-judgmental space where existing paradigms around hunting and hunters can be openly, honestly, and frankly questioned*
4. *Provide opportunity for young and mid-career practitioners and scholars to engage with senior-level conservationists and policymakers in issues around sustainability and resilience in hunting*





Science Advances

6 NOVEMBER 2022



Lessons from Today, Strategies for Tomorrow

02

Women are the Fastest
Growing Demographic of New
Hunters in the US...but Has
This Carried over to Africa?





Focus on Hunting, Focus on Women Going Hunting

March 8, 2022



Laird Hamberlin,
CEO of SCI

“ As I was thinking about the Hunting pillar, it occurred to me that SCI has been the most consistent organization on earth when it comes to protecting ALL hunting by ALL hunters. Then I recalled recent studies that have indicated a growing number of female hunters around the world. Of course, I thought to myself. That is self-evident.

But is it obvious for other hunters and non-hunters? If not, it soon will be because SCI is going to focus more sharply on women in hunting and promoting women in hunting more completely, starting right now. As certainly as history is on our side in this recognition and celebration of women in hunting, the future of all hunting absolutely hinges on the phenomenon in which women maintain their rightful spot in hunting.

”

Female Hunters: Opportunity for Growth in Safari Hunting Industry

Fastest Growing Demographic of New Hunters in US

- More likely than men to be motivated by meat, cultural and nature-based experiences when choosing to hunt
- Currently make up 10-15% of US hunters

Meanwhile, overall hunting participation rates in the US are declining

- Decline in hunters threatens state fish and wildlife agencies' funding structure (60-80% of budgets)

Important: what happens in America has ripple effects abroad. At present, most hunting clients in Africa are from the US.





Most Animal Rights Activists are Women.

Both among hunters & non-hunters, women tend to view wildlife differently than men, with mutualistic (seeing wildlife as individuals) values toward wildlife rather than utilitarian (seeing wildlife as intended primarily for human use) values



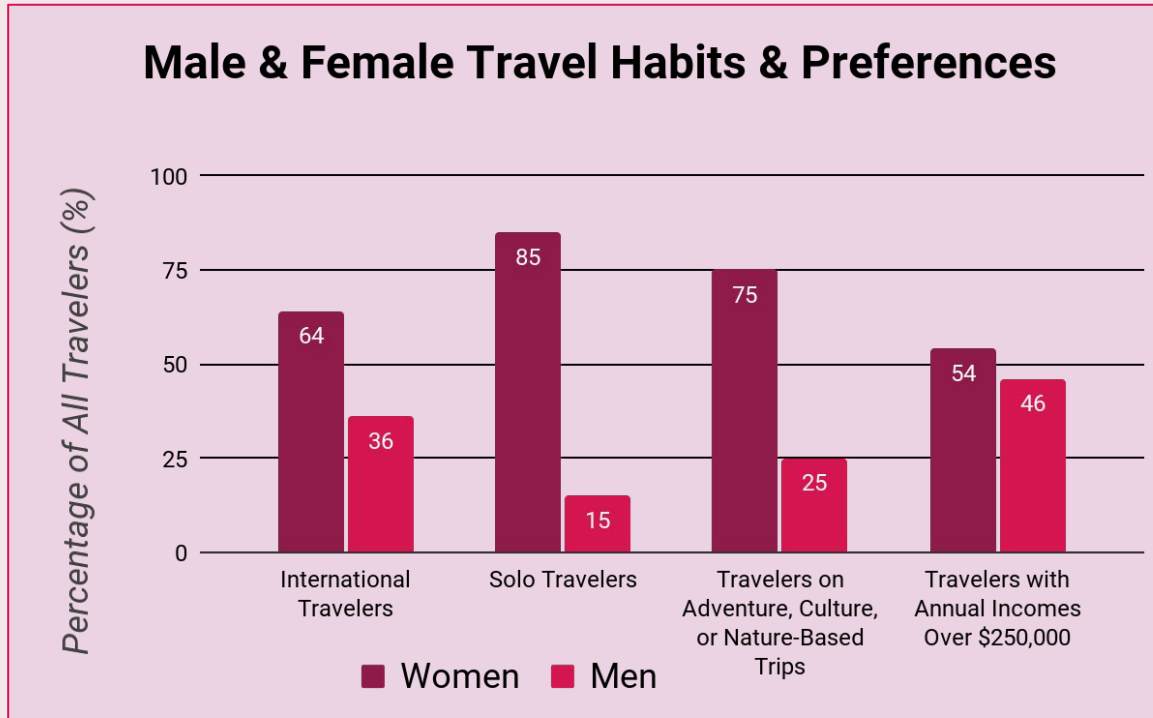
All the More Reason the
Safari Hunting Industry
Must Reach Women!



Most Animal Rights Activists are Women.

Both among hunters & non-hunters, women tend to view wildlife differently than men, with mutualistic (seeing wildlife as individuals) values toward wildlife rather than domination (seeing wildlife primarily for human use) values

As International Travelers... Women Are in a League of Their Own



Women in Camo: How Does Hunting Compare with Other Outdoor Industries?

	Female Participation	Male Participation
Running	49%	51%
Hiking	48%	52%
Camping	45%	55%
Skiing	44%	56%
Snowboarding	38%	62%
Backpacking	34%	66%
Flyfishing	30%	70%
Hunting	10-15%	85-90%

Might #SheHunts be a Passing Trend?

- We often expect men to be hunters, but are surprised when women do hunt
- Examples of ancient Greece (Artemis) and ancient Rome (shoutout to SCI's Diana Award!)
- In study of 391 hunter-forager tribes around the world, women:
 - Participated in hunts 79% of the time
 - Hunted game of all sizes
 - Hunted even when they had child-rearing responsibilities
 - Developed own specialized hunting toolkits and strategies distinct from men

RESEARCH ARTICLE

PLOS ONE

The Myth of Man the Hunter: Women's contribution to the hunt across ethnographic contexts

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*Former US
Republican
Vice
Presidential
Candidate
Sarah Palin*

But how
does all
this relate
to safari
hunting in
Africa?



03

It Ain't Easy

3 Key Barriers to Increasing Female Safari Hunting Participation







Status Update on Female Safari Hunters

(Unsurprising) findings from the field: **Share of women who safari hunt is far less than men**

Reasonably confident that increased hunting participation among women in the US has resulted in **more female hunting clients to Africa, yet barriers to entry remain high.**

3 Constraints to Growth among Female Safari Hunters:

1. Safety & comfort in the outdoors
 2. Expectations of female hunters
 3. Experience-based motivations
- 
- 

Key Constraint #1: Safety & Comfort



When Nature Calls



Personal Safety



A Lack of Female PHs

When Nature Calls

- One of top barriers to entry for women in outdoor activities is lavatory and hygienic needs
- 89% of outdoorswomen noted in a survey that their participation in adventure sports is affected by menstruation and its cramps/illnesses (Prince & Annison, 2023)
- Experience of needing to defecate outside is particularly acute in hunting and fishing industries, where women may be outdoors, in remote areas, and spending extended time with male peers



Personal Safety

- Safety is generally a much higher concern for females traveling abroad than men, as evinced by findings in the hotel industry
- 2-3 weeks outdoors with a male PH (stranger in new country, professional at killing) can be a significant undertaking and risk, from a female perspective
- Barriers like this can be especially challenging for women who are traveling solo!



A Lack of Female PHs

- **Question:** How many female PHs are in all of Africa?
 - **Answer:** 1 in Zimbabwe, 5 in Namibia, 1 in Tanzania, depending on who I ask, ~20 in South Africa
- **Question:** But, how many PHs are in all of Africa?

Key Point: if hunting with other women makes female hunting clients feel more comfortable or safe, the severe lack of female PHs in Africa is a constraint for industry growth.



Tanya Blake, the sole female PH in Zimbabwe

Key Constraint #2: Expectations of Female Hunters



The Female
Hunter “Brand”



Not the
Message, but
the Messenger



Clothing
Concerns

The Female Hunter “Brand”

- Women are depicted and understood as animal rights activists, wives, or daughters
- “Outdoorswoman” and “woman hunter” put in quotations by many writers as well as hunting companies
- Can women be safari hunters, or will they always be the exception?



Not the Message, but the Messenger

- Men act as gatekeepers to hunting activities and most women who hunt are socialized into hunting by men
- So do women *really* resonate better with women when deciding whether or not to go hunting?
 - There are insights from the successful Becoming an Outdoorswoman, which has been implemented in 38 US states and 6 Canadian provinces





Do Female Hunters Experience Something Similar to Minority Hunters

“ There’s no shortage of minorities interested in hunting. Just go right downstairs [of my place]. Six men drove 12 hours from Detroit all the way down here to Georgia to spend two days with me just to be introduced [to hunting]. They’re not the only ones. The message is more important than the messenger, but sometimes having somebody [who looks] like myself pays dividends. ”

- **Jason (pseudonym)**
Owner of television company and consultancy dedicated to increasing minority participation in hunting

Clothing Concerns

- Tanya Blake, Zimbabwe's only female PH, noted the practicalities of choosing appropriate hunting attire for African safaris
- What is portrayed in media and worn by prominent female hunting figures may not suit practical needs in Africa and its more culturally conservative dressing standards
- Clothing concerns are the top concerns posed by current female hunting apprentices in Zimbabwe



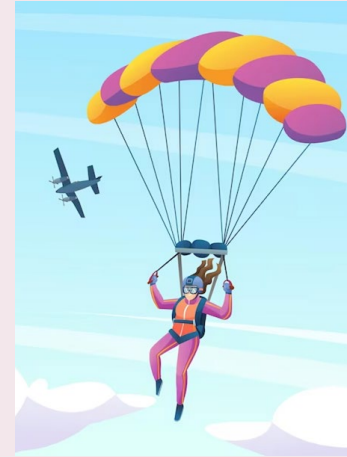
Key Constraint #3: Experience-Based Motivations



Meat



Family &
Relationships



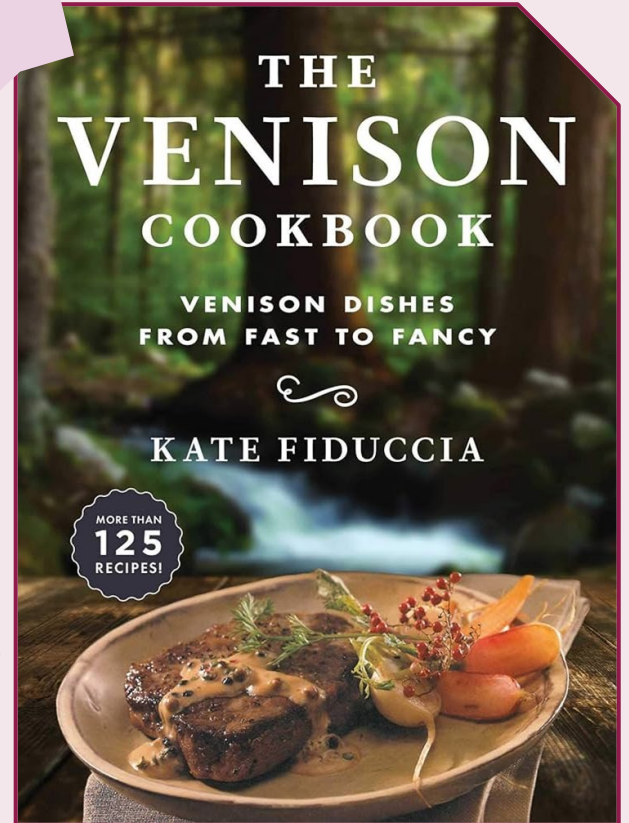
Culture, Nature,
& Adventure

Meat Motivations

- Numerous studies suggest that women are slightly more motivated by the food aspect of hunting than men
- On the other hand, men place slightly more value on hunting as a sporting activity
- Many female hunters have created game meat cookbooks and blogs and become influencers in this sub-industry

Jennifer Danella

missallie's
KITCHEN



Family & Relationship Motivations

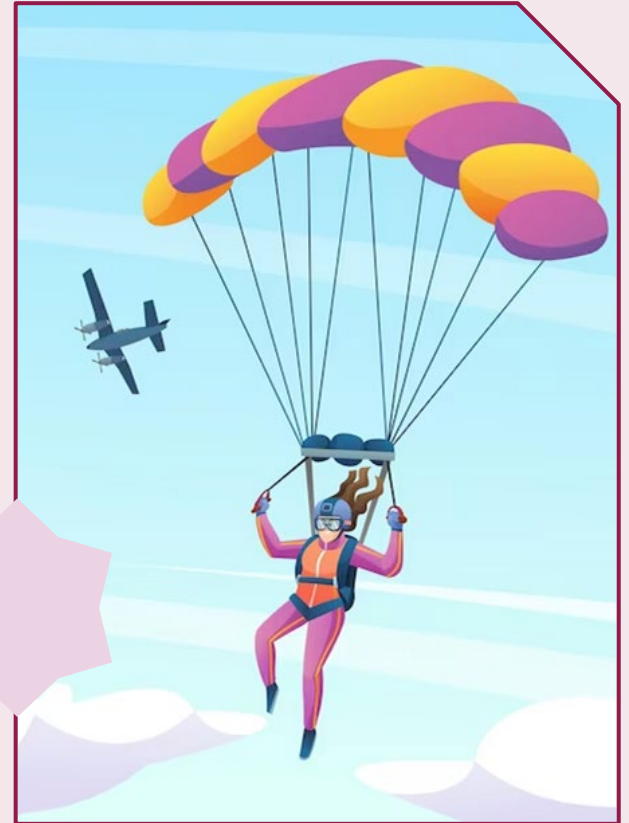
- Studies of female hunters in Texas, complemented by my research on hunting outfitter websites, suggest an unsurprising result: **women may more likely participate in hunting if it is a family activity**
- Women tend to be more “affiliative” than men, and thus they may hunt to develop and strengthen personal relationships





Culture, Nature, & Adventure Motivations

- Female hunting clients tend to be more interested in interacting with rural communities and culture and nature-based education activities that complement hunting
- In these domains, African hunting operators studied were severely lacking
- Also recall: women often think of—and relate to—wildlife differently (e.g., animal welfare, mutualistic values)
 - **These trends apply to both female hunters and non-hunters (includes animal rights activists!!)**



Remember These 3 Questions:



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2) What Do They Want?



3) Is the Industry Ready?

04

Case Studies

Lessons from Namibia, the Golf & Country Club Industry, and “Becoming an Outdoorswoman” US Program



Lessons from the Country Club Industry



Decline of Country Clubs & Golf

- Country clubs experienced a 20% drop in attendance between 1990-2014
- Golf participation numbers also declined, especially among youth

Rethinking Business Strategy

- National Club Association took note and contracted researchers to help it rethink its business strategy

Who Is the Customer?

- Country clubs traditionally attracted men, and their focus was almost exclusively on golf
- But, could country clubs reach new markets, including women? Families? Millennials/Gen Z?

What Do They Want?

- Researchers found that customers ultimately visit country clubs for community, not golf
- Different demographics of customers seek different experiences

Is the Industry Ready?

- Country clubs significantly pivoted their offerings to include family-friendly activities, casual dining options, wellness amenities, etc.
- 63% of clubs that adapted have experienced growth



Lessons from Becoming an Outdoorswoman

Purpose

Offers 1-3 day hands-on outdoor skills workshops for adult women in casual, non-threatening environments

Results

Run in 40 US states and 6 Canadian provinces;
300,000+ women trained since 1991



Value Addition

Women face unique barriers to entry in the outdoors, so women mentoring women can help address that

A Problem

No Becoming an Outdoorswoman: Hunting Safari exists, even though women have international immersion opportunities for other outdoor activities!

Lessons from Aru Game Lodges, Namibia



PHs Danene and Gysbert van der Westhuyzen, owners of Aru Game Lodges

- **Reconsidered Business Strategy: *What do customers really want?***
 - Not just the hunt, but to “Lose Yourself in Namibia”
 - An increasingly urbanized world seeks to reconnect with nature
- **Product is Customer-Focused:**
 - A World-class hunt
 - Equal opportunities for cultural immersion, meat preparation, and adventure sports
 - Products cater to men, women, and the entire family
- **One-of-a-Kind Product Offerings**
 - Veld to Fork (geared toward women)
 - Youth Conservation Camp



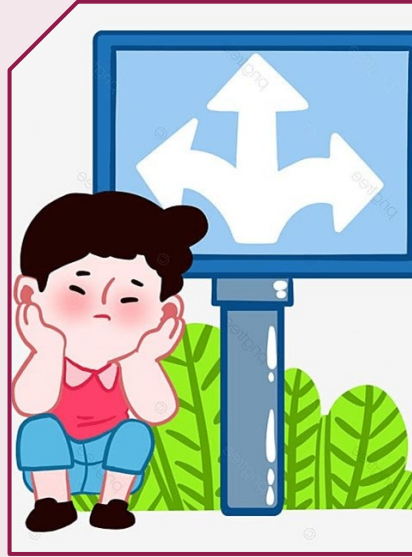
FROM THE VELD

Recipes & reflections from Namibia

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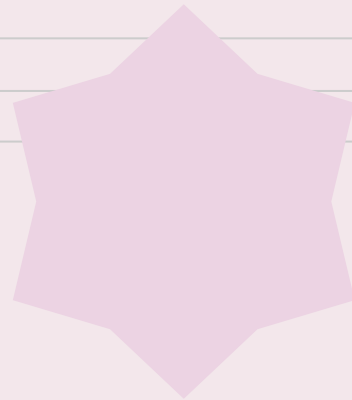
3) Is the Industry Ready?



Path Forward

05

Practical Applications &
Recommendations



Women are the Fastest Growing Demographic of New Hunters in the US

**Women
Are Here
to Stay**

Female hunting participation doesn't appear to be fading anytime soon

**It's Still a
Man's
World**

That reality is unlikely to change anytime soon

**There Are
Ripple
Effects
Abroad**

Most safari hunters are American, so growth in female hunters means potential for growth in Africa

3 Key Constraints to Growth among Female Safari Hunters



Safety & Comfort



Expectations of
Female Hunters



Experience-Based
Motivations

Remember These 3 Questions:



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Practical Recommendations

- **Recruit Female PHs:** African PH associations and governments might consider creating programs both to recruit AND retain female PHs
- **Incubate a Becoming an Outdoorswoman: Hunting Safari:** this and similar programs hold immense potential in exposing women to safari hunting while demystifying negative perceptions on “trophy hunting”
- **Facilitate Industry-Wide Dialogue:** Men and women across the industry might discuss how African hunting experiences can be most safe, comfortable, and welcoming for everyone
- **Reconceptualize the Hunting Product:** African hunting operators might consider the hunt as one part of a bigger experience. Diversifying the hunting sector can make Africa’s wildlife economy more resilient.
- **Support Follow-Up Research:** the way business works is, you test a product before it goes out to market! This is a call for partnership with me!

Meet Kirsten, a 20-year-old hunting apprentice from Zimbabwe.

“ When I was first getting into it [training to become a professional hunter], I heard a lot of people say, go get a trade first. Go to the university and come back and do this. When it [the hunting industry] ends, you're going to want something else behind you. [That all] confused me. Why do [they] just assume it's going to end? I think if it ends, it's going to be a big problem [for conservation and livelihoods].

Like everyone in the industry, I hope it [the industry] stays the same, but not the same. I want to see it evolved a lot more, like with women and that sort of stuff. I think if it becomes more inclusive, it would be better. We need to find a way to make it known to the world [in the way] I know.

I don't believe it will end. I think there's a lot of people fighting for it. So I've put everything into this because I believe it's going to stay. There's a lot of people behind it. [They're] not just going to let it go, not without a fight.

”



Thanks!



Do you have any questions?

Ms. Francine Barchett

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Checkout my article,
**She Learns to Hunt:
American Insights,
African Applications**
by scanning this QR
code!

