

RISING
WOMAN

AFRICA

Rising Woman Africa

2020/2021
Edition



"Kandaka Factory"

Rising Woman Africa is dedicated to the women in my life. To my mother, Josephine Uzoamaka Aningo, aka Baby Flamingo, aka Mighty Joe; my first Rising Woman and outlier. The most interesting, multifaceted and complex woman I know, who never quits. My sisters Nneka and Uchenna, my lodestars.

Thank you.

Oni Aningo

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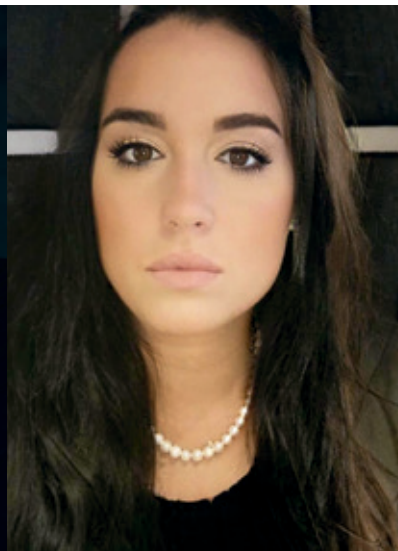
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In my silence,
I roar.

In our silences,
we will
all roar.

Oni Aningo

*Executive Director,
Global Group Media and Creator,
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In an interview in 2009, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said, "Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception." Over a decade has passed since those prolific words were spoken, and Ginsburg's passing gave us time to pause and reflect on the progress women around the world have made in those places where impactful decisions are being made.

The 2020 U.S. election was historical for many reasons, but for Kamala Harris in particular. She becomes the first woman, the first Black, and the first Asian American vice president. For many, Harris has become not just a role model, but an affirmation of the power and place of women and people of color. A fact that has become relevant not just in the U.S., but globally and in Africa as well.

The public service sector is one essential sector in which women need to be at the table making decisions. Worldwide, more women have stepped up and into roles as heads of governments, heads of state, and parliamentarians, but progress has been slow. According to UN Women, only 11 women serve as heads of state and 12 as heads of government. That represents only 5 to 6 percent of the world's highest offices. On a parliamentary level, women hold 24.3 percent of all national parliamentarians, up from 11.3 percent in 1995. There are notable exceptions such as Rwanda that boasts the highest number of women in parliament worldwide with 61.3 percent holding seats in the lower house.

Throughout Africa, more women are answering the call to public service at all levels of government. Many are holding key ministerial roles and making decisions in areas such as Social Affairs, Family, Children, Youth, Elderly, Disabled, Environment, Natural Resources, Energy, Employment, Labor, Vocational Training, and Trade & Industry. Others are involving themselves in local government roles.

UN Women has presented a growing body of evidence that the political decision-making processes have improved under the leadership of women. Their ability to work across party lines through women's caucuses in often combative environments has led to the decline of gender-based violence, improvements in parental leave and childcare policies, and gender-equality laws.

Their contributions are making a difference and that is why empowering and encouraging women to participate more fully in the public sphere is so essential. While there are major structural, legal, and social barriers that women must still overcome to serve, the benefits of women in government are undeniable.

**Now is the time for
women to run for public
office at all levels.**



"Mother Sudan is watching"



Redefining gender roles

Being present, loving, and emotionally available are not incompatible with being a man. We all live within contexts, our views are developed within those contexts, and may be relevant within them. As contexts change, our views may need to change, as might our behaviors. A new person evolves within these paradigm shifts.

Society has determined sometimes rigid roles and perceptions of gender, and we are socialized to accept and believe them. Many women identify with society's prescription of a woman's place, sometimes more strongly than men, and so inhibit themselves and those they have some control over, such as their children. It is more difficult to free or influence someone whose mind is self-imprisoned and who chooses to operate within the confines of the limited world they understand. They vilify those who seek to expand their thinking, often out of insecurity and a fear of what the strange new world will bring. As Charles Darwin stated adapt or die. Mental, psychological, emotional, and spiritual evolution are inevitable. Both men and women must evolve to survive.

Perhaps men put too much pressure on themselves to follow society's definitions of breadwinner, strong man, enforcer of good behavior, family mouthpiece, and leader in every sphere. Modern day life and pressures as well as the increasingly visible and relevant roles of women, are forcing a redefinition of traditional gender roles. The best survival proposition is to embrace flexible gender roles decided by ability and circumstance.

Can men shake off their egos and the confines of a patriarchal society to accept this recipe for survival? Can women accept they may no longer find security in the home, as increasingly difficult financial circumstances demand their contributions? These role expansions and reversals are difficult. Couples should do what works for them and not be obsessed with socially determined gender roles.

Contributor,
Ifema I. Idigbe



Fatou Bensouda



*Chief Prosecutor,
International Criminal Court,
The Hague Netherlands*

You have spent years advocating for justice and in particular, championing women and children who have experienced violence in times of war and conflict. How has that experience affected you? It has focused my resolve. Everyone deserves a life free from violence and from the fear of violence. Sexual and gender-based crimes are among the greatest scourges afflicting society throughout successive armed conflicts. Rape is a deadly, effective, and merciless weapon of war. It humiliates. It ostracizes. It destroys community ties and can extinguish the spirit of its victims. Its primary victims are women and girls. But neither youth, nor age, nor gender offer protection against sexual violence. Ridding the world of these crimes should be a top global priority for the 21st century, and my office will play its part.

What do you think are some of African women's obstacles in reaching their fullest potential? Women in Africa and worldwide face daunting obstacles. But women also have immense internal strength. I have listened to women and young girls who have been raped, whose families were brutalized, robbed of everything, who lost their homes, whose communities were terrorized and shattered. I have marveled at their courage, dignity, and sheer life force. I said once that our young women are the future of Africa. Already, strong, competent, powerful, resourceful women are leading countries, international organizations, global civil society movements. Women remain at the very heart of our communities.

How can women become more empowered? I am asked this question often in relation to my own role as ICC Prosecutor. Empowerment and self-belief are key. I am proud to be a woman, an African, and a mother. Throughout my career, I have encouraged women, and especially African women, to seize opportunities and believe in themselves and in their true potential. I don't believe in glass ceilings, but broken glass.

Do you have personal icons of empowered women that you admire? What sets them apart? I do not have to look far to see powerful and compassionate role models, starting with my mother and the wonderful women of my own family who cared for me, taught, and inspired me. I have long admired the strong, pioneering spirit of African women such as Graça Machel, Navi Pillay, and the late Wangari Maathai. I also admire my late father who believed in gender parity and education for all. The women's empowerment movement needs more men champions of gender equality.

Hajiya Maryam Mairo Aminu Tambuwal

What are the main challenge that humanitarian aid organizations like the MMAWT Legacy initiative are going to face in the future? The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the policies and procedures of humanitarian aid organizations across the globe and the MMAWT Legacy Initiative is not left out. Our activities are community based and require a lot of inter-personal interactions with our beneficiaries in local communities. Our work is tailored towards impacting the lives of people in some of the remotest rural communities. Our target demography usually does not have access to internet or other technological infrastructure that the Post-COVID 19 work space will require and this in itself, has posed a new challenge that we have to solve. Deploying the use of technology in our work and making beneficiaries understand the “new normal” is a huge challenge but MAWT Legacy Initiative is going back to the drawing board to restructure our implementation procedures

How do we move from always providing humanitarian emergency assistance to planting seed of long-term development within humanitarian programs? I think we need to change our view of the term “Humanitarian Assistance”. I understand that providing food stuff, medical supplies and other emergency relief items should be our first response to a humanitarian crisis situation but after this initial response, I always ask:

what's next?



**First Lady Sokoto State
and Founder, MMAWT Legacy
Initiative, Nigeria**

Humanitarian aid and responses should be designed towards ensuring that the beneficiaries are able to fend for themselves after a period of time. It's not dignifying and humane to make people constantly dependent on your programs. This philosophy is what informs our programs at the MMAWT Legacy Initiative. If you look at some of the work we do, especially in the areas of providing community health support, education, fighting desertification, economic empowerment, reforming juvenile delinquents and policy advocacy, you will realize that they are all geared towards positioning our beneficiaries in our program communities for self-reliance.

How do you see the role of the private sector as a partner in innovation for humanitarian work? The private sector has a lot to offer in terms of funding humanitarian aid innovations. In planning CSR initiatives, private organizations often try to carry out activities themselves and this is often counter-productive. Humanitarian organizations are working in different fields towards sustainable development. I think the private sector should tap into the expertise and technical know-how of these humanitarian organization so as to have a more impactful CSR.

The 'ASK' Addressing the Gender Gap in Negotiations

When it comes to negotiating, does gender matter? We would like to think that it does not, but the reality is quite different. Both men and women are capable of negotiating, but it would be shortsighted not to acknowledge that there are a number of differences that exist between the sexes.

Girls from a young age in many cultures are raised to be accommodating and nurturing of relationships and others. Historically, such behaviors have been viewed as less than effective in negotiations. Instead, competitiveness and assertiveness, often associated with boys and men, have been applauded as indicators of effective negotiation. Often, women have been prodded to be “more like men” if they wanted to be successful negotiators, but that may be short-sighted.

Such differences have resulted in disparities. A survey by Ranstad USA found that roughly 60% of women have never negotiated with an employer over pay. This is in line with a Robert Half poll that showed only 45% of women, compared to 68% of men were likely to negotiate their salary. While women are negotiating more than they have in the past, men continue to negotiate for pay at higher rates. Monetarily, the gender differences tended to be notably smaller, but as the data suggests, added up over time.

While competitiveness and assertiveness were effective in distributive bargaining where a mindset of “win-lose” dominated, today’s reality favors a more integrative bargaining approach. An approach that prefers a “win-win” mindset where cooperativeness, collaboration, and long-term relationship building are sought after strengths. As a result, women are becoming more astute negotiators because they are embracing those inherent strengths.

More organizations are seeing the potential of women as strong negotiators and are utilizing women in key negotiations both in the private and public sectors. Those organizations are also providing training and development opportunities for women to ensure they succeed. An investment likely to ensure a win-win scenario for all involved.

Africa's Frontier Women in STEM

*How Women are
Impacting STEM
in Africa*

Strides

Over 14 million people die annually in Africa due to the short supply of essentials like blood and oxygen. When Temie Giwa-Tubosun launched LifeBank, a medical distribution company that uses data, technology, and a smart logistics system to deliver blood from labs to hospitals across Nigeria, her goal was specifically to change the statistics. Since its launch, LifeBank has delivered over 19,000 units to 400+ hospitals and saved the lives of 6,500 people in the process.

Across the continent in Uganda, Brenda Katwesigye runs Wazi Vision, a company that provides virtual reality eye testing kits for communities that do not have optometrists or access to affordable eye-care services. Meanwhile, in Namibia, Loide Uushona is spearheading one of the country's youngest-owned medical science laboratories, ProQuest, alongside her co-founder, Pendapala Shiyuka.

Many of the stories of women who have ventured into the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) field in Africa reflect the sensibilities of female innovators as well as their grit and determination to excel in a male-dominated industry.

Diversity and inclusion

On International Women's Day in 2019, TechCabal explored diversity in the technology industry through a portrait series and exhibition, Tech Women Lagos. The series profiled 50 women within Lagos' technology ecosystem. Tech Women Lagos is one of the most recent efforts to create a centralized platform that profiles women in STEM and serves as a clarion call for the next generation of girls to consider careers in technology.

Fifty women, though commendable, represent only a fraction of African women in technology and do not particularly account for women in science or engineering fields. Based on figures from research carried out by UNESCO, only 30% of professionals in the sciences in Sub-Saharan Africa are women. That is a huge gap.

Conversations around closing this gender gap, often lean towards showcasing female STEM leaders and role models, as well as making science and technology courses more attractive for young women. However, without the right policies in place, women might pursue science-oriented professions, but they will be less likely to last long in the field or advance to leadership roles.

Making a case for more women in STEM

Jobs of the future will largely be based on artificial intelligence and automation, placing tech-savvy candidates in the perfect position to snag roles in engineering, software development, and scientific research. If women fail to prepare for that future by actively pursuing and participating in STEM, those opportunities will be missed.

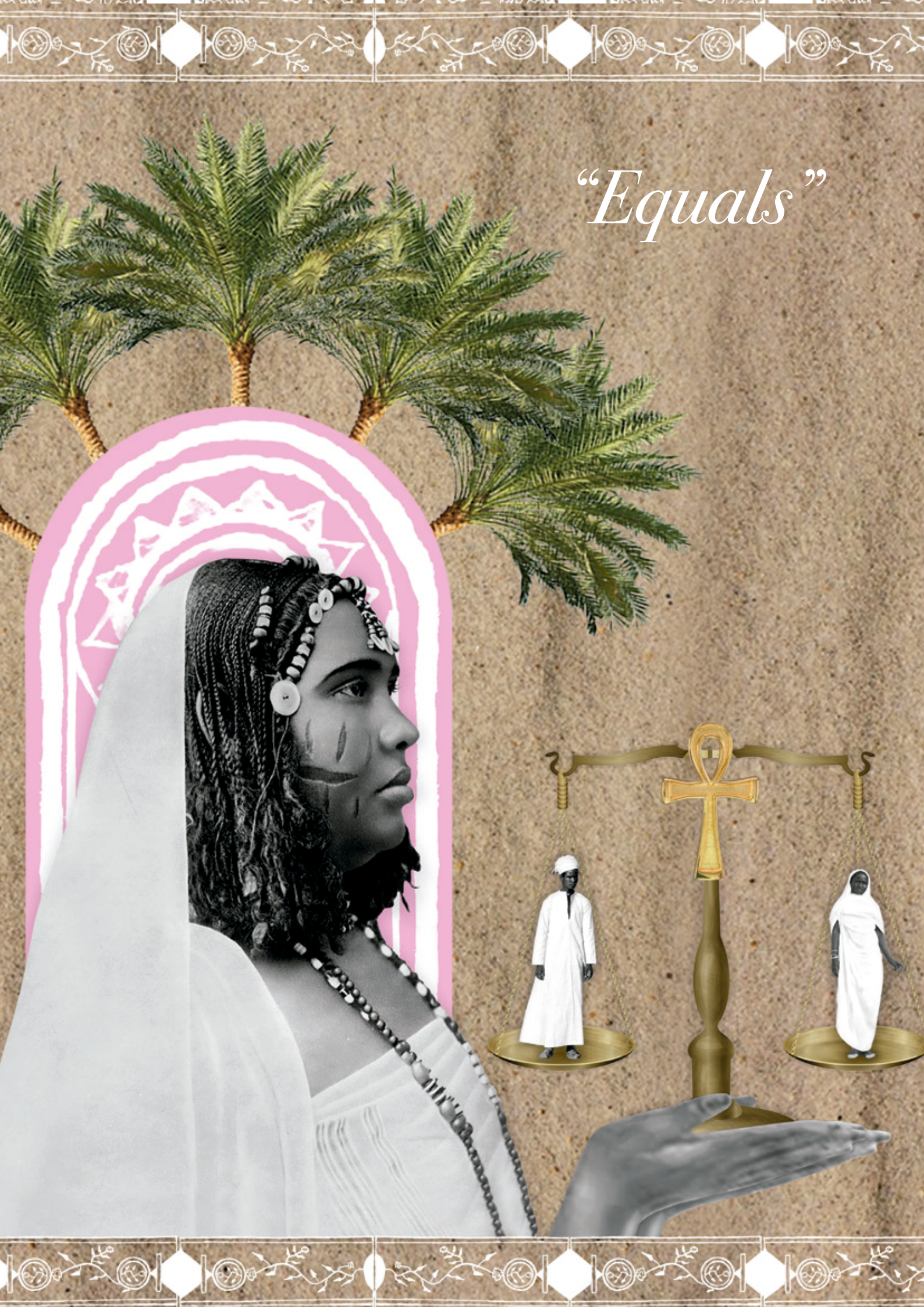
Thankfully, there's a growing list of initiatives that are working to encourage more young women to join the industry and support them in pursuing STEM careers.

In Ghana, for example, a social entrepreneur, Ernestina Appiah, spearheads Ghana Code Club where she trains children on how to make computer games and websites. Abisoye Ajayi-Akinfolarin, on the other hand, runs GirlsCoding for young girls living in underserved communities in Nigeria. On a smaller scale, Ire Aderinokun, Nigeria's first female Google Developer Expert, has granted full scholarships to women to obtain nano degrees on Udacity.

Other initiatives such as the Working to Advance Science and Technology Education for African Women (WAAW) Foundation and the UNESCO STEM and Gender Advancement (SAGA) projects reach a wider network of women and have collectively trained thousands of women across the continent.

The support systems already exist, and more are being formed. Significant strides have been made, but the road ahead to recognizing and empowering women in STEM is a long one.

“Equals”



Her Excellency Dr. Ipalibo Harry Banigo

The Deputy Governor of Rivers State, Nigeria

Nigeria has made strides in its accessibility to healthcare. What else needs to be done? The health systems overall need to be better developed with adequate infrastructure and appropriate funding. Manpower training and retraining is poorly structured and does not meet the demands of a functional health system. A number of preventive care services such as health education, antenatal services, infant and child health services, and care for the elderly should be available in the primary health centers with good service delivery to reduce the burden on secondary and tertiary health care. Finally, adequate supervision and coordination is necessary to avoid wastages in terms of time and resources

Youth are an integral part of creating any type of sustainable development in Nigeria. How can we engage them more politically and economically? In May 2018, the President of Nigeria gave his assent to the passing into Law of the Not Too Young to Run bill which sought to reduce the age limit for candidates who desire to run for elective offices encouraging more youth participation. Over 30% of our voting populations are youths but rather than realize that they have a right to vote and be voted for, they are being drawn into violent activities such as cultism, kidnapping, and ballot snatching.

Awareness, education, and orientation to understand that there is a benefit gained from youth active participation in politics is needed. Governments also need to create more employment opportunities for the youth as well as entrepreneurial programs and training institutes.

To encourage youth development, I founded the Caywood Brown Foundation (CBF) in 2006 to provide a platform to mentor youths. For the past 14 years, CBF has conducted free skills training programs and drug rehabilitation programs. In January 2020, the Office of the Deputy Governor (ODG) organized a six-week free skills acquisition program on 13 different skills for 4,000 youths from three sister local government areas in Rivers State.



What are some of the challenges in efforts to eliminate violence against young girls and women? In 2015, I founded the Protect the Girl-Child Initiative to push for the protection of the rights of girls. During the course of our work, we have noted a lack of awareness on actions to take if sexually abused, bribery of members of victim's family, fear of stigma, unwillingness of the family members of a victim to pursue the case in court, and poverty.

KENZA BOUNJOU

Partner, Dentons Sayarh & Menjira,
Morocco

Is it possible to effectively address global issues like climate change, SDGs, and inequality on a local level? The consolidation of local initiatives can increase the probability of seeing concrete results at a global level. My native country, Morocco, stands as a global leader in sustainability, primarily thanks to its supportive legal and regulatory framework to achieve the SDGs. This offers hope on key development issues such as the fight against hunger and gender equality and has resulted in a positive impact on local communities.

Morocco has also championed climate change at the African continent level, notably due to its very large-scale integrated program for producing electricity from renewable energy sources, including the world's largest concentrated solar power plant in Ouarzazate. Featured frequently among the world's most environment-friendly countries, Morocco serves as an inspiring example in the region, demonstrating that local efforts matter.

Where do you see Africa's greatest opportunities for effecting change in sectors such as agribusiness, clean energy, and access to finance? These interdependent sectors represent some of the most complex challenges. International organizations have been sounding the alarm for a while over the risk of a health crisis, mainly due to the succession of cyclones, drought, and torrential rains that are the consequences of global warming. The COVID-19 crisis has also worsened the situation of food insecurity.

An in-depth assessment to define a new agricultural model on the continent should be encouraged. This new model can help Africa feed Africa. With the relevant legal and tax reforms, the improvement of transport infrastructure, greener energy, and incentives for financial institutions to invest in these development pillars, Africa has the potential to build a highly competitive agribusiness industry.

This initiative should also consider the availability of young and innovative entrepreneurship, one of Africa's greatest assets, which can help create a viable and successful model for rapid industrialization and propel the continent's growth.

How is Dentons uniquely positioned to assist Africa in looking inward for solutions to pressing socio-economic issues? Dentons is the world's largest law firm and has the largest footprint in Africa. We have recently launched a Sustainable Investment Practice to assist global corporations, financial institutions, and public bodies in developing and executing sustainable investment strategies. Furthermore, our firm has a strong experience in renewable energy, infrastructure and environment including the drafting of regulatory frameworks in emerging markets.



Netsanet Fekadu Belay

Photographer, Ethiopia

I am an Ethiopian photographer with an academic background in experimental pharmacology. While some may say this is an unusual combination, others who value a balance between enslavement by rules and the joy of freedom can relate to me in a heartbeat. I have always wanted to be a storyteller, but I did not know how to. I did not believe that I had the storyteller's voice or eloquence. During my teenage years, I found my unique voice. Through photography, I was able to distill the most precious moments of seemingly mundane activities into the most powerful of images. I see capturing images as finding the small pieces of a puzzle that complete the bigger picture of my reality, our realities.

Africa is a quiet volcano bubbling with many untold stories. Stories of majestic ancient civilizations, examples of dignity personified, and amazing personal accounts of resilience abound. The lives of Africans best told by Africans capture our hearts. My work is to preach to all of the endless beauty, passion, and colorful vibrations that are at the core of Africa's inimitable set of cultures and identities.

This is evident in my recent collaboration on the book *My real name* is by a talented Nigerian author Onyinyechuwku Aningo, who beautifully captured candid moments and observations of humanity. She spoke to how we are forced to redefine our identity just to fit in while highlighting the importance of awakened consciousness in reclaiming and celebrating our identities.

In my ongoing book project *Charms of the Nile*, I document the ancient art of Ethiopian Jewelry making. My hope is to invite others to marvel at the authenticity and splendor of deeply meaningful culture, while being reminded of the elegance and simplicity that lies behind it. In this era of globalization, these stories told through images will play a significant role in starting cultural conservations and youth involvement in the revival of such authentic craftsmanship.



CLOSING
THE GENDER

Investment Gap

Securing Funding for Women-Owned Businesses

In 2014, Cherae Robinson, founder, and CEO of Tastemakers Africa beat 11 other finalists to win She Leads Africa's first pitch competition. Her business was funded with \$10,000, which she used to hire her first employee—a full-time developer, and also release the beta version for Tastemakers Africa later that year. In its second edition, OmoAlata, a 100% organic packaged blended pepper mix also secured \$10,000 as well as direct access to investors and international media coverage.

Funding is said to be the second biggest hurdle entrepreneurs face. For women in Africa, the struggle is real. "If I were to apply for a loan, as a woman under 30 without a husband, I would be profiled as high risk to financing," Kitawa Wemo, the founder and Director of Mama Ventures confessed to *Forbes*. Based on a report by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rate of female entrepreneurship globally, and yet, a lack of funds causes many women to shut down operations.

On the bright side, a recent report by Briter Bridges revealed that 27% of funding in healthcare went to women. In May 2018, PiggyVest, a savings and investment platform for Nigerians raised \$1.1 million seed funding exclusively from the local Nigerian investment community. Zambian microfinance startup Lupiya also raised a \$1 million funding round from Enygma Ventures, in August. A \$6.8 million fund launched late last year with a focus on investing in women entrepreneurs in the SADC region. In August, a Ghana-based platform for freelance management consultants, Africa Foresight Group (AFG), raised a seed funding round worth over US \$700,000, according to Disrupt Africa.

Progress, although slow, is steadily on the rise. Maya Horgan Famodu, for instance, has been working towards bringing some of the world's top investors together to invest in African startups. Her venture capital fund, Ingressive Capital is focused on early-stage African tech and recently completed its \$10 million fund.

Other venture capital firms and entrepreneurship training platforms such as The Graça Machel Trust (GMT), Tony Elumelu Entrepreneurship Program, and MEST Africa initiative also offer funding to founders across Africa and present equal opportunities for women.

At this point, it is safe to say that the future is bright for female founders if they keep pushing.

BEYOND



THE FRAME





Helen Isibor-Epega

*Singer-songwriter, composer,
performance artist, Founding
member Venus Bushires and
creator of Opera in Pidgin,
Nigeria and the UK*

What does African culture mean to you?

I am an African. This is a huge part of my identity. I have been an African in Africa and have been an African from afar. In Africa, I tend to consider myself a person, a being, an energy. I am also a well-traveled global citizen. Outside Africa, especially if I'm considered an ethnic minority, I am more aware of being an African, a Nigerian woman, a black woman.

Africa, her people, customs, history, traditions, and indeed culture, music, and art are as rich, diverse, nurturing, energetic, optimistic, resourceful, and creative as her flora and fauna. Africa is not a homogenous continent and no two countries or tribes are mirror images of each other. This is fantastic! An advantage, not a disadvantage.

African culture to me is the point where the wonderful ways we express and celebrate our vibrant and dynamic cultures through our arts and craft, music, literature and poetry, engineering, fashion, design, languages, folklore and passing down of history, beliefs, traditions, cuisines, sense of community, entrepreneurial spirit, the joy of life, pride in ourselves and respect for our elderly meet. Yet, there is also a sadness I have come to identify with African culture. One of shared pain, frustration, and struggles that are local, global, social, economic, and political.

We need to exercise the social and political will to actively and purposefully reach out to each other to engage culturally, economically, politically, intellectually, and spiritually. We need to bring all our diversity to the table. When we do so along with greater openness, understanding and the will to learn about each other, we will exchange ideas meaningfully and purposefully. Through more interconnections on the micro and macro levels, Africa would be able to generate a surplus to meet all her needs.

Africa has fed and fueled the world. Her resources have powered the world's technological advancements. Her pyramids, ancient texts, languages, art, literature, music, fashion, and creativity have threaded the world's history through time. Until all of us on this planet come together to recognize and celebrate the true greatness of Africa, no one person or nation can achieve their full potential.

We are all Africans.



<http://ezplore.eu/2020/11/12>

"Monuments on their doorstep flattened"



"Carry me home"

Roberta Annan

*Founder,
Annan Capital Partners,
Ghana*



How has ACP boosted the representation of women in entrepreneurship? Since leaving the United Nations in 2012 to set up Annan Capital Partners (ACP), I have leveraged my expertise and global networks to create lasting solutions to boosting the representation of women in entrepreneurship. To that end, I collaborated with the Impact Fund for African Creatives to address the lack of capital and management necessary to leverage the power of African creative and innovative industries. As a result, an investment was established through a €100 million Impact Investment Reverse Fund. In conjunction with the Women Investment and Empowerment Group (WEIG), I boosted entrepreneurship among women by establishing a stimulus fund to provide relief to female entrepreneurs in the fashion industry to boost creativity and innovation amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

What are some of the barriers women entrepreneurs face and how can they be addressed? I believe the major barrier women entrepreneurs face is the lack of a support network to achieve success in business. It is imperative for us to develop and build a comprehensive support network for women in entrepreneurship as well as provide platforms that will equip women with the requisite competencies and capital as ACP in conjunction with AFF are committed to doing.

Why is financial independence especially for women so important? Financial independence means three things. It is having control of your finances, having the ability to support yourself financially, and having the knowledge to make informed financial decisions for yourself. The road to financial independence requires a feasible plan to achieve your financial goals. It is underpinned by discipline and consistency. Financial independence is imperative for a woman because it paves the way for you to be responsible as it makes you adopt a more proactive approach to life.



Adeline Akufo-Addo Kufuor



Founder, The Lotte & CEO Women's Empowerment and Investment Group (WEIG), Ghana

What types of interventions work when it comes to promoting women's entrepreneurship and business growth?

Women's entrepreneurship is critical to the growth engine of every economy. This represents the premise on which the Women's Empowerment and Investment Group (WEIG) was established. WEIG and The Lotte Accra were established to inject capital into potential lucrative medium and small-scale enterprises and address the challenges regarding women entrepreneurship.

WEIG through strategic partnerships has provided robust investment and capitalization delivery mechanisms for African women in business. We have established the "Kayayei project", a project championed by The Lotte in partnership with Adonai Child Development Foundation (ACDF) and the African Fashion Foundation (AFF) to pair young street females with great talent in the fashion accessory and garment industry in West Africa for a life-changing skills exchange program to ensure continuity in creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Often, women entrepreneurs suffer from mindset constraints, i.e. a tendency to be more risk-averse than their male counterparts, which can be an obstacle. How do we change that? The overall thinking that informs the setting up of a business is what drives the business to achieve its fullest potential. An inadequate support network and a lack of start-up capital are what accounts for this mindset constraint in women as opposed to men. It is imperative for institutions to assist in capital provision and be devoted to providing adequate and robust support networks for female entrepreneurs. This challenge is what set the tone for the establishment of WEIG.

Luxury is usually not synonymous with Africa. Tell us more about how we are negating that stereotype with The Lotte, your product line offerings, and what you hope to achieve with it.

I believe luxury originates from Africa. The Lotte is a beacon of artistic impression and curated merchandise. We believe in expanding markets through targeted branding of our products, signature customer experiences, installations, and our distinctive social media voice.

Our product offerings range from art to apparel, accessories, home (furniture and interiors), and cosmetics. At The Lotte, we represent the eclectic taste, style, and culture of the Neo-African.



"When my community was attacked by herdsmen in 2017, my family and I fled for safety to a nearby community. We returned after a year and 3 months.

On the 31st of October 2018, my husband went to tap palm wine in the bush but did not return. 4 days after he went missing some members of our community searched for him and discovered his lifeless body in the bush.

The men who found him saw some Fulani men close to his corpse.

He was stabbed and left to die.

My husband used to take care of me and my 7 children before he died, now I have to struggle to provide for my family.

I think of him so much, I miss him everyday."

Deborah Danjuma, 40, Kaduna, Nigeria.

On the 24th of December 2016, some herdsmen launched an attack in Goska Village in Jema'a LGA, Kaduna State which led to the loss of lives and properties in the area. Despite military presence in the area, there has been silent killings by suspected herdsmen in the community almost on a yearly basis.

Critical investment
is needed in
educating women
and girls

Stanley Ndambakuwa, Obama Scholar at the Obama Foundation and President & CEO, African Community Fund for Education Group which has created 100 scholarships for young girls in Zimbabwe.

Today, there are 130 million girls between the ages of 6 and 17 unable to finish school. Another 15 million school-age girls will never enter a classroom in sub-Saharan Africa.

On July 4, 2019, I walked into the remote rural community of Musena, located in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. What I saw was an all too familiar sight, a lack of educational opportunity, particularly for girls. Having been raised in a semi-rural community and a family of girls, I intimately understood this challenge.

I created the African Community Fund for Education Group (ACFE) to provide girls with an education. I spent a month in 2019 visiting roughly 200 households in the Midlands province and learning the stories of young women and their families, before awarding ACFE scholarships. During one visit, I met Ndakaziva Muraugwa, a 29 years-old, unemployed, mother of three children. She did not meet any of the criteria for a scholarship as I was targeting girls between the ages of 13 and 18. However, after listening to her story, I made an exception.

Ndakaziva showed me how women and young girls are committed to investing in themselves if given the opportunity. After a roller coaster ride of childhood marriage and the inability to go to school because of tuition costs, Ndakaziva had become another number in a community where 90 percent of children cannot afford to go to school. She wanted to become a teacher as a girl, but it had not been within her reach.

After receiving a scholarship from ACFE, Ndakaziva returned to school, fast-tracked her progress by skipping a grade, and qualified for the final year of a high school equivalent. In November 2020, she indicated she was ready to take her final year examinations in December.

Amid a vicious pandemic, Ndakaziva and many other girls like Elizabeth Bandera, Joanah Mapisa, and Menia Musiiwa are defying long walking distances, hunger, poverty, and a lack of necessities to make it to school. They tell me, "education is the only way they can invest in their futures." By educating young girls, we can eliminate the most enduring threat to African girls – poverty. Education will improve income among women and girls, enhance economic development, and demonstrate a reduction in rural poverty and abuse among women of all ages.

Deloris P. Jordan

Founder, James R. Foundation,
Co-founder, Michael Jordan Foundation,
& Founder, Kenya Women & Children's
Wellness Centre (KWCWC), Kenya & USA

Deloris Jordan on Building a Gender Violence Recovery Center in Kenya

by Tiffany Huang

"God gave me a platform and I wanted to use it to reach out to help others," Deloris Jordan says as she explains her 30-year career in philanthropy. Mrs. Jordan is the matriarch who not only gave the world basketball's greatest star but advocates for the livelihoods of women and children at the age of 79. As Michael Jordan testified during his 2009 Basketball Hall of Fame speech, "My mom never stays still. You think I'm busy? She's always on the go."

Mrs. Jordan is taking on her most ambitious project yet in Kenya to build a Gender Violence Recovery Centre (GVRC), to be fully launched in 2023. She is conscious of how international aid can be perceived negatively, saying, "There are organizations that want to bring back more than what they leave. I want to leave something. I don't want to bring anything back."

Mrs. Jordan has demonstrated her gumption and patience to enact social change, having built her career block by block. She helped form the Michael Jordan Foundation in 1989 before launching the James R. Jordan Boys & Girls Club and Family Life Center in 1996 to honor her late husband. Since 2000, Mrs. Jordan has established and served as President of the James R. Jordan Foundation (JRJF), which provides academic support to underprivileged children. In 2010, she created the Kenya Women and Children's Wellness Centre (KWCWC), which has managed community programs and training to combat gender-based violence (GBV).



This center was established following a trip in 1993, where Mrs. Jordan and a group of American students visited Kenya's Maasai Mara tribe and discovered no Maasai girls were present because they were not receiving an education.

The GVRC will fall under KWCWC and has been under development for two years. Phase 1, launching in April 2021, includes six buildings. Two buildings will be a "family village" for critically ill families to receive urgent support. Mrs. Jordan is in talks with partners for two additional buildings for GBV counseling and training for men and women. Finally, two buildings will be constructed to provide data analysis and research.

"We are building medical facilities in Phase 2 with other global partners." Mrs. Jordan says. Launching in 2023, these facilities will include a modern forensics lab with DNA testing capabilities, which presently does not exist in East Africa. She thanks the Kenyan government, saying, "We wouldn't have been able to get anything done without their support."

As the GVRC ramps up, Mrs. Jordan says, "I would love to have more females to sit around the table with me, especially more Black, African and other women representing diversity...it's not about who has money. It's about passion. I want to see who can work with me to achieve long term results and sustainability."



Josina Machel

Her Vision Against Gender-Based Violence

By Tiffany Huang

Daughter of political titans, Josina Machel is combating gender-based violence (GBV), a cause that is personal to her. Josina is the daughter of Samora Machel, the late liberation hero and first President of Mozambique, and Graça Machel, former First Lady of both Mozambique and South Africa, and Minister of Education and Culture of Mozambique.

Josina prefaces her story by stating, “Gender-based violence happens across race, education, and socioeconomic backgrounds.” Not only is Josina a survivor of GBV, but the evidence of this violence is displayed on her face. On 17 October 2015, Josina Machel lost her right eye after Rofino Licuco, her partner of three years, threw two punches at her face and one at the back of her head. While the trauma of GBV tends to be invisible in the long term, Josina’s eye is essential to the way she represents herself to the world. In 2016, she founded The Kuhluka Movement, a non-profit civil society organization dedicated to disrupting cultural norms that oppress women, eradicating GBV, and supporting survivors of domestic abuse.

Josina’s case remains in contention. “People expected me to receive preferential treatment, but I was treated like any other woman. I was revictimized, and my abuser was protected,” Josina says. In February 2017, the Ka-Pfuma Municipal District Court in Maputo convicted Rofino Licuco to three years and four months of detention, to be suspended with the condition of a \$2.8 million payment for damages. Licuco appealed his case to the Higher Appeals Court, which absolved him of all charges on 12 June 2020. On 5 August 2020, Josina Machel filed an appeal to the Supreme Court, which is now due to rule on the appeal.

“GBV is a societal issue where the role of women is to be subservient and the receivers of abuse, and men have impunity,” Josina states. She acknowledges that GBV is often perceived as physical violence, but claims, “Thousands of women have broken hearts, because they are victims of verbal, emotional, and financial abuse, and they don’t know that they are being abused.”



**Activist and Founder,
The Kuhluka Movement,
Mozambique**

Established in 2016, The Kuhluka Movement has distributed 2,400 free Dignity Packs for survivors to police stations across Mozambique and South Africa. Each contain fresh clothes and written advice to survivors on how to best file their cases. The Kuhluka Movement has also trained 15 women to serve in their Circles of Support initiative, which offers counseling for survivors. Following Licuco’s absolution at the Higher Appeals Court, Josina has also launched a social media campaign with the hashtag #Justice4AllWomxn to document unresolved cases of GBV across Africa, establish organizational alliances, and identify policies that hinder justice for survivors.

Moving forward, The Kuhluka Movement aims to distribute 20,000 Dignity Packs yearly in Mozambique and South Africa and scale their Circles of Support initiative to train 40 counselors across both countries by the end of 2021. Josina hopes women who receive Dignity Packs can readily enroll in the Circles of Support initiative to receive holistic support. The organization is also fundraising to build a Healing Center in 2022, where survivors can receive safe shelter.

Yvette Gayle

Co-Founder, Africa Creative Agency,
South Africa & United States

With a career spanning more than three decades, Yvette Gayle has worked for industry leaders including Interscope, Geffen, A&M Records, and Columbia Records Sony Music. She has also served as a publicist and personal advisor to many of the entertainment industry's biggest and brightest names such as 50 Cents, Mary J. Blige, Destiny's Child, Lauryn Hill, Robin Thicke, Timbaland, and French Montana. In Africa, she is currently working with Nasty C, Pearl Thusi, Amanda Black, Sauti Sol, and Celeste Ntuli.

Your work has been focused on Africa and building a bridge across cultures. Tell us about those projects and the impact on African talent. My work with the Essence brand specifically has been gratifying. We have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to curate the first African-focused Super Lounge, Jam Africa, at the 2019 Essence Music Festival New Orleans. We brought artists including Nasty C, Vanessa MDee, Sauti Sol, Rayvanny, and Celeste Ntuli to the U.S. I am especially excited about our Nasty C signing to Def Jam US. We also launched our first documentary with Netflix, Zulu Man with Some Power documenting Nasty C's journey and exploration of Japan.

What can we expect from ACA in Africa? I think you can expect the same passion and dedication that I have given to the industry all these years. In fact, I think you can expect more as we build our company to expand and develop our talent roster on the continent.

Our publishing division ACP is projected to grow significantly. In conjunction with Netflix, we provided the music supervision and scoring for the first two African original series, *Queen Sono* and *Blood and Water*. We hope opportunities like this will open more doors for our producers and artists.

Africa has so much to offer the world and our mission is to be able to connect the dots and bridge the gap between Africa and the world.



Pearl Thusi

Acclaimed Actress,
South Africa

Collaborations within the Continent is imperative to Africa's development

In *Queen Sono*, Netflix's first African original series, Pearl Thusi plays the role of a daring secret agent. Having undertaken a series of training before production, a prepared Thusi embodied the role, with its thrill, suspense and melancholy. Released in February 2020, the South African crime drama series has since received positive reviews by critics. Thusi has starred in several films and TV shows including the No. 1 *Ladies' Detective Agency* and *Quantico*.

The conversations around the importance of Africans taking center stage regarding shaping the narratives on the continent has been ongoing, and Thusi has been contributing her voice and skill to this vision. "You don't have to go to the west to do great work, it can be done together, right here in Africa," she says.

The key is to work with like-minded partners, one of which includes her management team at Africa Creative Agency, the South Africa based firm helping Pearl realize her 'made by Africans' vision, which is led by co-founder, Yvette Gayle. The pair just launched their Black Rose artisan candle and soap collection through Gayle's home fragrance company, The Sitota Collection.

Collaboration is vital in the film industry and in other life's endeavours. "It is important to realize the power of the collective. All of us in Africa should start working together as one, and with the pandemic, we see the importance of an intra-Africa within the trade, transport, logistics, and creative sectors as well. This can push the African narrative forward."



Ruth Dresselgn Deneke

*Candidate Law & Business Master
Program at Bucerius Law School,
Germany & Ethiopia*

Africa Must Invest In Its Healthcare Sector

Ruth Dresselgn Deneke is a pharmacist, passionate pan African youth activist with more than a decade of multinational experience in the Healthcare-Life Science sector. She is a chartering member of Rotary Club of Addis Ababa Arada and has held leadership roles in several African CSOs. She is a candidate in a Law and Business Master program at Bucerius Law School in cooperation with the WHU-Otto Beisheim School of Management in Germany.

Ethiopia is ranked as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, but its healthcare sector still suffers from the lack of proper infrastructure, essential health coverage and trained personnel. The severe healthcare workforce scarcity to workforce demand also adds to the variety of challenges the Ethiopian healthcare system faces. Therefore, it is no surprise that during the current pandemic, Ethiopia, like many African countries, cannot handle the burden of care.

I am currently leading an Infection Prevention Control project that supports Ethiopia's healthcare providers. This project ensures sustainability approaches focused on training, capacity building by contributions towards a sanitizer manufacturing plant, and supplying selected teaching hospitals with urgent personal protective equipment (PPE). Africa should invest and be self-sustaining in health care sectors.

My ambition through my foundation is to be a change catalyst in Africa by combining scientific knowledge with shared value concepts to respond to the critical and social needs of society. My guiding principle comes from the African Ubuntu philosophy, 'I am because we all are'. We must all reach beyond our individual selves for the collective of us all.



Juliana Vicente

*Director, Producer, Writer,
& Founder, Preta Porte Filmes,
Brazil*

Her current project *Afronta!* streaming on Netflix presents contemporary black artists, thinkers, and entrepreneurs reflecting on how black Brazilians have created a growing network and generated autonomy to change today's reality and create tomorrow's.

Congratulations on the Netflix distribution of *Afronta!* How important is it for Africans and Afro Brazilians and its creative talents to be involved in the narratives and production of their content? It is crucial. If Africans and Afro-Brazilians are not at the helm of all of our narratives, we will continue to fall prey to lost identities, and wrong ideas not only from others but about ourselves, and our cultures, histories, strengths, pride and mistakes, alike. This is fatal and must stop. We need to harness our content and understand financing within creative projects as well. I always emphasize the longevity and sustainability of our projects while remaining true to yourself. As a producer, writer and director, it is not easy, but we must study, learn and take risks and responsibility for our narratives. I am so proud of how far Africa especially as seen in Nigeria and South Africa. The next step is synergy and collaborations across continents, which I am excited about.

What is next? We are finishing a few projects, which were developed over a long period of time such as the feature documentary 'Dialogue with Ruth Souza', about the first black female actor in Brazil to appear on stage, cinema and television; a project I have been filming for over 10 years. These projects follow my own maturity as a director where I experiment and take more risks. I am currently developing work with Brazil's biggest rap group, Racionais MCs. This project began in 2012 when we won an award for clip of the year on MTV Brazil.

I am telling the story of the last 30 years of their lives and of Brazil; a perspective of Brazilian Black history. This is what Racionais means to us. I feel as if I am in a position of great responsibility and commitment to our recent history, and I believe that the development of Preta Portê Films and Escola da Preta is also part of this commitment. Because of the lack of content for Afro-Brazilians who find themselves surrounded by constant racism, we are developing *Afrontinha!*, which is a version of *Afronta!* with children and for children, because this next generation has a lot to teach as well as learn.



Gurushi Wein (Where is my money?)

Rinu Oduala

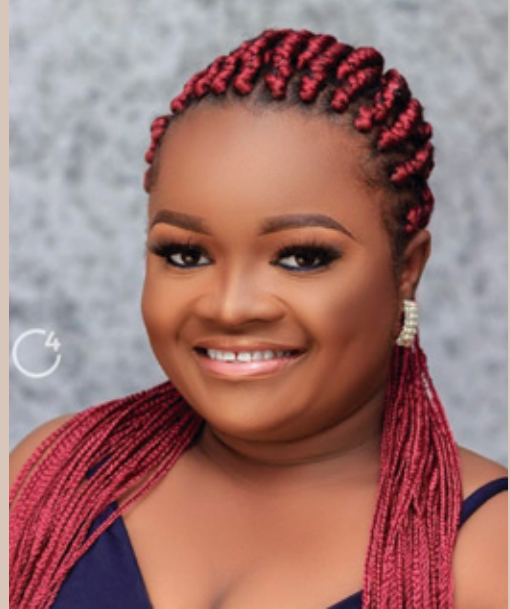
*Brand Strategist and Social Justice Advocate,
End SARS (Special Anti-Robbery Squad),
Nigeria*

What was the purpose of the Lagos State Panel of Inquiry and why did you leave? We conducted hearings on police brutality in Lagos. The findings, along with victim compensation recommendations, if applicable, were given to the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice of Lagos State.

The youth reps withdrew because arrests of protesters were being made and bank accounts were frozen. We decided to recuse until protesters were released and a suit filed in the court against the freezing of those bank accounts.

Your work has always been passionately focused on Nigeria and its citizens. What instilled such activism? A desire to see myself and others excel and to work in our Motherland without fear. A desire to have a safe and peaceful land where full potentials can be brought to fruition. I hope to ignite the hopes of millions of youths who have lost hope in this nation.

What are your plans moving forward? Moving forward, I will focus on helping youth become more involved in good governance and social activism.



Modupe 'Moe' Odele

*Partner, Vazi Legal,
Nigeria*



During the End SARS protests, Modupe 'Moe' Odele, a tech attorney and Adetola Onayemi, a lawyer, worked together to oversee the legal logistics of the protest. They put out a call for lawyer volunteers and over 700 people responded. They organized training over Zoom and donations for legal aid from the Feminist Coalition were channeled to meet their needs. Odele says people were responsive and felt accountable with information online to help the team when lawyers were needed. They helped release almost 300 protesters unjustly detained, but she stressed that the real impact was from the unquantifiable number of people who were not detained because the police knew that they would not be left behind. There would be free legal aid to support them.

Moe isn't new to using social media for activism. At 23, she worked with Internally Displaced Persons in Yola at the height of the Boko Haram insurgency to provide emergency relief materials through funds raised on social media. This prompted her interest in social activism.

Women Supporting #ENDSARS, Nigeria's Largest Protest Movement in Recent History

Jola Ayeye
Member of the Feminist Coalition



Odunayo Eweniyi
Co-founder of the Feminist Coalition



Damilola Odufuwa
Co-founder of the Feminist Coalition



A few days into the End SARS protests, a woman was shot in the mouth by a police officer in Lagos. On social media, people were demanding justice. At first, Damilola Odufuwa and Odunayo Eweniyi thought of joining the protest like everyone else, Odufuwa recounts, during a conversation with *Rising Woman Africa*. However, Eweniyi decided they needed to do more, “to support the people’s right to peaceful assembly that will lead to accountability by the government. This will need focus and planning, and I felt myself and our members were prepared.” In 2018, they created Wine and Whine, a network that provides a safe space for women and tackles issues specific to them. They reached out to other founding members of the Feminist Coalition, a group the duo founded in July 2020 from a need to have a team of exceptional women who were passionate about changing the country and the role of women in it. Their aim was to “champion equality for Nigerian women by focusing on three pillars: women’s rights and safety, financial equality for women, and political and legislative power for women.”

People had started taking up different roles, speaking and protesting and documenting the End SARS movement. Founding members of FemCo recognized that it would be more impactful to organize around the protests. “Everything happened quickly,” Odufuwa says. Over an hour phone call, they decided that supporting the safety and wellbeing of the people exercising their constitutional rights to peacefully protest during End SARS would be their first project, and everyone stepped up. Besides their dedication in their individual lives and work, these women shared one thing: a vision of a Nigeria where equality for all people is a reality in our laws and everyday lives.

The Feminist Coalition website was up, the logo was used as a display picture by thousands across the world, the protests gained more momentum, and Jack Dorsey, Twitter co-founder and CEO, supported the movement with several tweets and an #EndSARS logo. FemCo received donations from across the world and presided over the logistic needs of peaceful protesters: medical, legal, food, safety. “It was organic and decentralized,” says Odufuwa. “Our major concern was peace and safety. We thought if the safety and needs of the protesters were taken care of, they would remain peaceful.”

Other exceptional members include Oluwaseun Ayodeji Osowobi, founder of Stand to End Rape (S.T.E.R), an important voice in the fight against rape and gender-based violence; award winning journalists Kiki Mordi and Laila Johnson; Fakhriyyah Hashim, who started Arewa Me Too and North Normal initiative; Jola Ayeye, a media personality with a passion in policy, reform, governance, and community advocacy, who stressed the “coalescence around a common goal, where Nigerians focused on the collective efforts and not themselves alone.” The co-host of “I Said What I Said” podcast, Ayeye has contributed to and driven conversations on social media on different topics such as youth participation in politics and engagement of citizens on the local and state government level. As an experienced youth organizer, she urged young people not to forget their power. “All you have is your voice, and so it is your duty to raise your voice.” On several occasions, she has helped crowdfund to meet people’s medical and domestic needs.

The strides FemCo made during the protests were swift and organic, because the protests were a culmination of years of personal and professional work and experience. Odufuwa, with vast experience in media, currently works as head of PR for Africa at Binance, the world’s largest cryptocurrency exchange. Eweniyi is the co-founder and COO of Piggyvest, an online savings and investment platform. When FemCo’s payment link with Flutterwave, a fintech firm, was deactivated, these women’s expertise in the industry made it easy for them to set up a bitcoin donation link without much interruptions.

“The fight for women’s rights requires money and power,” Odufuwa says, “and women should have access to financial opportunities. Freedom for all is our collective motivation.”





