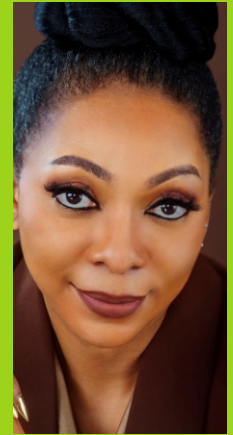




INSPIRING WOMAN AFRICA

EDITION 10, 21ST OCTOBER 2025



Meet the
Speakers

Inspiring
Woman
Africa Series

14

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**Kemi
Ajumobi**

Publisher/Editor-in-Chief, IWA Magazine
Founder/Group CEO, IWA Group
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Welcome!

Dear Readers,

It is another edition of IWA and this edition is special to us because we are announcing the 14th edition of our annual women's conference. Trust me when I say it will be an event to remember. We are excited to announce that our KEYNOTE SPEAKER is H.E Madam SAHLE-WORK ZEWDE, Former President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Our speakers are top notch and they are ready! The question is, Are you? I advise you to register on time and secure your seats because once we are full to intended capacity, registration closes. All the information you need is in this edition. Visit www.theiwagroup.com to register and see you on the 11th of December. This edition isn't only about our conference, as usual, we have other articles you will enjoy reading. Meet our speakers.

KEYNOTE: H.E Madam Sahle-Work Zewde
Former President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

GUEST OF HONOUR: Imaan Sulaiman Ibrahim
H.E Hon. Minister of Women Affairs & Social Development

Other speakers:

Kemi Ajumobi
Convener, IWA Conference/ Group CEO, IWA

Moruf Oseni
MD/CEO, WEMA Bank Plc

Carlos Rojas-Arbulú
Deputy High Commissioner, Embassy Of Canada, Nigeria

Tonye Patrick Cole, mni
Co-Founder, Sahara Group

Obafemi Banigbe
CEO T2 (Former 9 Mobile)

Chinwe Iloghala
Acting MD/CEO of NOVA Bank

Aishah Ndanusa Ahmad
Former Deputy Gov. CBN
Soniya Asusu Nupe

Dr. Nkiru Olumide-Ojo (PhD)
International Corporate Executive
Founder, The LightHouse Network

Dr. Busola Tejumola (PhD)
Executive Head, General Entertainment Channels, MultiChoice Group

Hon. Munira Suleiman Tanimu
Majority Leader Kaduna State 10th Assembly

Patricia Obozuwa
Managing Director, Nigeria Global Reputation Management Project

Folake Soetan
CEO, Ikeja Electric

Abe Jawando
Executive Senior Sales Director, Mary Kay Cosmetics

Chinyere Okorocho
Partner & Overall Head of Sectors at Jackson, Etti & Edu

MC: Kayode Okikiolu
TV Anchor, Channels Television

MODERATORS

Ugochukwu Obi-Chukwu
Founder/CEO of Nairametrics

Ozim Ibeziako
Executive General Counsel, Africa, GE Vernova

Abiola Adediran
Partner at Genea Family Office



Meet the Speakers

Inspiring Woman Africa Series 14

At Inspiring Woman Africa (IWA) Group, we believe in the value that connections bring and so we have created a platform where women can learn from each other, tell their stories, and have access to crucial information and resources that will ensure they excel in every facet of their lives.

It is the 14th edition of our annual conference. Trust me when I say this one, you must not miss. You will be hearing from distinguished speakers who are ready to pour out their heart. Our keynote is a woman of substance whose life is loaded with firsts. She is the immediate past President of Ethiopia and the first female to be one. What a feat I dare say! She was President from 2018-2024. She is a phenomenal woman who embodies our theme. She is H.E Madam Sahle-Work Zewde. I can't wait to hear her pour out to us all from her wealth of rich wisdom. IWA is excited she is coming to Nigeria. Are you ready?

Have you been wondering what treat to give to your staff for great work done in 2025? Do you need that event where they can come to and get inspired for 2026? Are you a CEO who wants to chart your own path of excellence as you prepare for 2026? As an individual or couple, are you searching for that programme to inspire you to your next level? The IWA Conference is a must for you to attend. All

these questions and more will be attended to. It is a table of 8, you can form your girl group and sit together. Get your colleagues and enjoy a fantastic event in a beautiful ambience where you will learn, think, plan your New Year, eat, win gifts and also have fun. Ask those who have attended, they will tell you. This year is on a whole new level. Don't say I didn't tell you. Book your seat before you hear Sold Out!

THEME: LEADERSHIP REDEFINED: CHARTING NEW PATHS TO EXCELLENCE

DATE: 11th Of December, 2025

TIME: 10am Prompt

VENUE: Civic Centre, Grand Hall, Ozumba Mbadiwe, VI, Lagos

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► Kemi Ajumobi

FOUNDER/GROUP CEO, INSPIRING WOMAN AFRICA (IWA)
CONVENER, IWA CONFERENCE

Kemi Ajumobi is the Founder/Group CEO of Inspiring Woman Africa (IWA) Group (www.theiwagroup.com) Publisher and Editor-In-Chief of IWA Magazine, and Convener of the IWA Conference, now in its 14th year. This signature event brings together distinguished women to learn, network, and share experiences that inspire others.

With 18 years (and counting) in the media industry, Kemi is a multi-award-

winning journalist, previously served diligently as Founding Editor of a top notch women's magazine at a leading financial daily in West Africa. She is deeply passionate about health awareness, youth empowerment, women's development, advocacy, and social advancement.

Her impact spans across platforms — from radio programmes (*Inspiring Woman with Kemi on 92.3 Inspiration FM and 99.3 Nigeria Info*) to Instagram talk shows (*Inspiring Woman Series With Kemi Ajumobi*), she has also moderated sessions at high-profile events, including the African Diaspora

Heritage Month Celebration at the U.S. Congress, Washington D.C.

In 2013, she produced and directed her first documentary on people living with HIV/AIDS, titled '*Why HIV/AIDS Cannot Be Ignored*.' She was also featured in DRY, a film by award-winning actress and producer Stephanie Linus, which tackled issues of underage marriage and Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF).

Kemi Ajumobi is the host of #THEEXCLUSIVEWITHKEMI, a show where she speaks with leading men and women who share deeply personal and exclusive stories.

Her creativity and leadership extend beyond journalism. She is a counselor, music minister, public speaker, poet, anchor. Her single "It Is You" is available on major digital platforms in both audio and video formats.

She has received multiple recognitions, including:

- Recipient of the G.A.M.E. Award (2014) for her contribution to women's development
- Winner of NHEA's Healthcare Media Excellence Award (Print category) in 2014
- Smart Stewards Award for Excellence in Media (2023)
- One of the 100 Most Inspiring Women in Nigeria
- Named among the 25 Most Powerful Women in Journalism, Nigeria (2024) by Women In Journalism Africa
- One of the 50 Most Influential African Women (2024) by Leading Ladies Africa
- One of Mogullettes Africa's 100 Most Inspiring Women in Nigeria
- Recognised among 100 Women Creating A Better Africa by WeForGood International
- She is an ALI Fellow



► Keynote Speaker

Madam Sahle-Work Zewde

FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA

Sahle-Work Zewde, the first woman to hold the office, served as President of Ethiopia from 2018 to 2024. Born in Addis Ababa in 1950, she studied natural science in France before starting her career as a public relations officer at the Ministry of Education.

In 1989, she became the second woman to be appointed as an Ethiopian ambassador, serving in

Senegal and five neighboring countries. She later served as Ambassador to Djibouti (1993-2002), Ambassador to France, and Permanent Representative to UNESCO./ 2002-2006. She was also Ethiopia's Permanent Representative to the African Union.

Her extensive United Nations career started in 2009 as the first African woman Special Representative of the Secretary-General-SRSG at the UN peace-building office in the Central African Republic in 2009.

She was appointed Under-Secretary-General and first Director-General of the UN Office at Nairobi in 2011. During that time she served as mediator in the political crisis in Malawi. She was appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to the African Union.

She is fluent in Amharic, French and English.



► Guest Of Honour

H.E Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim fsi

HONOURABLE MINISTER OF WOMEN AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Hon Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim fsi is an international expert and thought leader in security, conflict resolution, humanitarian and disaster management, development and migration governance. She is driven by a passion to tackle critical and legacy issues impacting women, children, and vulnerable populations, and has dedicated her career to promoting inclusive development, stability, and social equity. Between 2019 and 2023, she served as a member of the Nasarawa State Investment and Economic Advisory Council, where

she showcased her policy acumen and strategic insight, contributing significantly to the state's development agenda while supporting efforts that delivered over \$1 billion in investments.

Serving as Special Adviser on Strategic Communication and Partnerships to the Minister of State for Education in 2020, she championed the Alternate School Programme, which earned the commendation of the highest policy decision making body in Nigeria – the Federal Executive Council, and continues to be a strategic initiative for reducing the number of out-of-school children in Nigeria. In December 2020, Hon Imaan's exceptional leadership was recognised as she assumed the role

of Director-General of The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP).

In recognition of her reform expertise, and commitment to national security and stability, she was appointed in August 2023, as a Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to the Ministry of Police Affairs (State), making her the First Female Minister of Police Affairs.

She is a fellow of Nigeria Security Institute, a Certified Personnel Management Professional, and a Certified SAP HCM Consultant, amongst other certifications. Imaan is a visiting lecturer at the Sultan Maccido Institute for Peace, Leadership, and Development Studies in the University of Abuja, where she teaches postgraduate students about global migration governance and national security.

She also serves as a visiting lecturer at the University of Rome in Italy, contributing her expertise and insights to an international academic audience. Imaan holds a degree in Sociology from the University of Abuja, and a Master's of Business Administration (MBA) and a Master's of Art in Management (MA), both from Webster University, St Louis, Missouri (London Campus).

She is presently engaged in pursuing a Doctoral degree in Security and Strategic Studies at the prestigious Nigeria Defence Academy. With numerous awards locally and internationally under her belt in recognition of her dedication to impactful change,

As the Minister of Women Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, she is working tirelessly to create a future where every woman, child, and marginalised person in Nigeria can thrive with purpose, equality, and opportunity.



► Speaker

Moruf Oseni

MANAGING DIRECTOR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
WEMA BANK PLC

Moruf Oseni is the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Wema Bank Plc. He has over 25 years of cognate experience, with more than 16 years at Senior to Executive Management levels.

He joined Wema Bank in June 2012 as an Executive Director. He has been part of the Bank's Executive Management team since the transformation program began in 2012 and played a major role in the execution of the turnaround program of the Bank. He was responsible for the launch of ALAT – Nigeria's 1st Digital Bank that has received multiple local and global accolades.

Following six (6) years as an Executive Director, Moruf then served as the Deputy Managing Director for four (4) years, with responsibility for several strategic functions in the bank including – Operations, Information Technology, Treasury, Retail, and Digital. Moruf also served as the Executive Compliance Officer of the Bank. He took over as the substantive MD/CEO of Wema Bank on April 1, 2023.

Before joining Wema Bank, Moruf was the CEO of MG Ineso Limited, a principal investment and financial advisory firm. Prior to MG Ineso, Moruf was a Vice President at Renaissance Capital, and an Associate at Salomon Brothers/Citigroup Global Markets in London.

Moruf is a member of the Board of Nigeria Inter-Bank Settlement System

Plc. (NIBSS). He is also the Chairman of AFRIGO, the National Domestic Card Company (a subsidiary of NIBSS).

Moruf holds an MBA degree from the Institut European d'Administration des Affaires (INSEAD) in France, a master's in finance (MiF) from the London Business School, and a B.Sc. in Computer Engineering from Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Nigeria. He is also an alumnus of both the Advanced Management Program (AMP) of the Harvard Business School and King's College, Lagos. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (FCIBN), a member of the Institute of Directors (IoD), and a member of the Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM).



► Speaker

Carlos Rojas-Arbulú

DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER, EMBASSY OF CANADA, NIGERIA

Carlos Rojas-Arbulú has 22 years of international experience including - 16 years leading multidisciplinary teams- and has worked in 8 countries across 3 continents: Americas, Africa and Asia.

In Canada, he held the position of Senior Departmental Advisor to two Ministers of International Cooperation & La Francophonie (2015-2017); Director of the Environment Division (2014-2015); Deputy Director,

Corporate Social Responsibility & National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (2007-2010); and played leading roles within the Central America and Caribbean (2003-2005) and Mexico (2000-2003) divisions.

As a Canadian diplomat, he held the positions of Consul and Head of Trade & Investment program at the Canadian Consulate General in Mumbai, India in 2019-2020; Head of the International Assistance program at the Canadian Embassy in Haiti (2017-2019); Regional Head of the commercial program (West Africa) at the Canadian

Embassy in Senegal (2010-2014); Head of the Commercial Program at the Canadian Embassy in Guatemala (2005-2007). He has also had assignments in Mexico and Peru with the Canadian government and in Nicaragua with the Canadian private sector.

Recognised as an effective fluent communicator in French, English and Spanish (with beginners level Portuguese), he is a committed, motivated individual with a strong work ethic. Rojas-Arbulú holds degrees from Concordia University and McGill University in Canada.



Speaker

Tonye Patrick Cole, mni

CO-FOUNDER, SAHARA GROUP

Tonye Patrick Cole, mni, is a visionary energy entrepreneur, politician, policy advisor, and philanthropist.

He was born in January 1967 in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. He is a merit honours graduate in Architecture from the University of Lagos and served in Osun State for his National Youth Service.

He is a Member of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, a Fellow of the Blavatnik

School of Government, University of Oxford and an alumnus of Harvard Business School.

He also recently completed at the Blavatnik School of Government (University of Oxford): Cyber Security Fundamentals for Leadership.

From 1990 to 1992, Tonye worked with architectural firm Grupo Quatro SA in Goiania, Brazil. On his return to Nigeria, he was employed by Brazilian engineering firm Empresa Sul Americana de Montagens S.A. (EMSA) from 1993 to 1996 before co-founding Sahara Group in 1996.

The Sahara Group is an energy conglomerate present in 42 countries, employing over 5,000 people, with an annual turnover of US\$15 billion. Tonye led the Group's global expansion and upheld its corporate governance values as well as setting up the Sahara Foundation.

In 2018, he resigned from Sahara to contest for political office.

Political Career

In 2018 and 2023 he contested as the gubernatorial candidate for the office of Governor of Rivers State under the All Progressives Congress (APC).

His entrepreneurial ventures include:

- Fibreworld Telecommunications Ltd
- Fibreoptic networks across Nigeria
- Cole Tech Hub (CTEC) – Innovation hub in Port Harcourt
- Genzeric Ltd – AI solutions firm
- CIA Cyber Advisory (UK) – Cybersecurity implementation and advisory
- Fringe Infrastructure Ltd – 72-rack Data Center in Lagos
- Sahel Resources – Mining and precious metal trading company

He has various national assignments and roles locally and internationally. Tonye Cole is the Founder of: The Nehemiah Youth Empowerment Initiative, The Nehemiah Leadership Institute, Behavioural Health Institute and The R.E.A.C.H. Nigeria Foundation.

He is on several Boards, and supports Down Syndrome Foundation, The Compassionate Centre, Port Harcourt and Bethesda School for the Blind, Lagos.

He is a motivational speaker, ordained minister, and published author. Tonye is married to Dr. Sylvia Cole and they have three children.



► **Speaker**

Obafemi Banigbe

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER T2

Obafemi Banigbe is an accomplished technology executive, entrepreneur, consultant, and influential figure with a proven track record of steering technological innovations and strategic initiatives throughout various pivotal markets across Africa. Possessing extensive experience at the C-suite level, he brings a profound comprehension of the intricate African business landscape, emphasizing the critical translation of business objectives and commercial imperatives into comprehensive strategies that drive successful execution.

With over two decades of leadership

experience in the telecom industry, he is dedicated to driving transformation and innovation. As the CEO of Emerging Market Telecommunication Company trading as 9 Mobile (Now T2), he leads a talented team committed to turning around their organisation, enhancing operational efficiency, and delivering exceptional value to their customers.

At T2, he is leading comprehensive transformation programmes to revitalise and reposition their company in the market. He is building and nurturing high-performance teams that are agile, customer-focused, and aligned with their vision. He is driving innovation through strategic investments in new technologies and digital solutions, while also enhancing customer experience by delivering

reliable, high-quality services that meet evolving needs.

His career is marked by a proven track record of steering companies through challenging times, fostering a culture of excellence, and implementing strategic initiatives that result in sustainable growth. His expertise lies in strategic planning, operational restructuring, and leveraging cutting-edge technology to create competitive advantages.

His leadership philosophy centers on transparency, collaboration, and relentless pursuit of excellence. Obafemi believes in empowering his team, fostering an inclusive workplace, and maintaining strong stakeholder relationships to achieve their strategic goals.



► Speaker

Chinwe Iloghalu

ACTING MD/CEO OF NOVA BANK

Chinwe Iloghalu is the Acting MD/CEO of NOVA Bank. Prior to her appointment, Chinwe had served as the Executive Director of Institutional & Commercial Banking at NOVA Bank. She also served as the Executive Director, Lagos & Corporate Bank at Polaris Bank.

She is a consummate professional of over 27 years' experience with several awards in recognition for her contribution to the growth of the organizations where she has worked including Equatorial Trust Bank, Ecobank Nigeria Plc., Zenith Bank Plc, Fidelity Bank Plc, and Polaris Bank.

Chinwe has core-banking experience in diverse areas of banking including Operations, Marketing, Credit, Retail,

Consumer, Corporate, and Commercial Banking, and has been involved in the structuring of transactions in various sectors including Oil & Gas, Manufacturing, Telecommunication, Power, Infrastructure, Aviation, Real estate, Agric & Exports, Fintech, Public Sector, amongst others.

She has attended executive management programs at Said Business School, University of Oxford, The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Emeritus Institute of Management, Lagos Business School, Columbia Business School, London Business School, London School of Business and Finance, and Harvard Business School, amongst others.

Chinwe holds a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Industrial Chemistry from the University of Benin, an MBA from Esut Business School, and a

Master of Sciences (M.Sc.) degree in Marketing Communications from the School of Media and Communication, Pan-Atlantic University.

She is a Fellow of The Institute of Credit Administration, Honorary Senior Member of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria, Member of notable professional bodies including the Nigerian Institute of Management, and the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations, amongst others.

Chinwe brings a fresh perspective to banking relationships by building strong networks, leveraging business connections, and creating value, which brings to bear the delivery of maximum results.



Speaker

Aishah Ndanusa Ahmad

FORMER DEPUTY GOV. CBN
SONIYA ASUSU NUPE

A trailblazer, her name is written indelibly in Nigeria's history as the first female Deputy Governor for Financial System Stability at the Central Bank of Nigeria, serving from 2018 to 2023. In that role, she shepherded landmark reforms — including the enactment of the banks and Other Financial Institutions Act. She steered Nigeria's financial system with courage through the turbulence of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring resilience while fostering record growth in digital transactions and credit to the real economy.

Aishah's work in financial inclusion has left a lasting legacy. By pioneering

Nigeria's first International Financial Inclusion Conference and mobilising a national coalition, she achieved the highest recorded increase in access — lifting financial inclusion by 11 percentage points to 74%. For this and more, she has been recognised on the global stage, addressing world leaders at the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings, Harvard Kennedy School, and the University of Oxford.

Aishah's service extends far beyond regulation. She has chaired critical national institutions and projects, including the Nigeria Interbank Settlement System and the National Arts Theatre Renovation. Today, she serves on global boards such as the Financial Alliance for Women and SOS Children's Villages International, where she was chairperson in Nigeria.

She also contributed to the work of the Islamic Financial Services Board (IFSB).

Aishah earned degrees in Accounting from the University of Abuja (Second Class Upper), an MBA in Finance from the University of Lagos, and a Master's in Finance and Management from Cranfield School of Management in the United Kingdom. She is also a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA), a Chartered Alternative Investment Analyst (CAIA), and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria.

Her commitment to gender equity is deeply personal and widely impactful. She institutionalised women's leadership as a priority at the Central Bank, hosting events annually, directly mentored more than 600 female policymakers and helped ensure an unprecedented rise of female chief executives in Nigeria's banks. Through WIMBIZ's Big Sister Programme, she has touched the lives of thousands of young girls across Nigeria.

Aishah has also brought development home to Niger State: securing hostels, water systems, and other infrastructure for schools; revitalising the Gbobbli Game Reserve; and supporting farmers with agricultural finance.

She continues to bridge finance, governance and advocacy and remains a tireless champion of inclusion, equity, and empowerment, through her work as Founder of LMFI Group, Bridgforte and the Amfani Zhibba Foundation.

For a lifetime of integrity, service, and transformative leadership, Aishah Ndanusa Ahmad was conferred with the traditional title of Soniya Asusu Nupe — an honour that affirms her place as a treasured pillar of the Nupe Kingdom, custodian of heritage, and beacon of prosperity for Niger State and for Nigeria.



► Speaker

Dr. Nkiru Olumide-Ojo (PhD)

INTERNATIONAL CORPORATE EXECUTIVE
FOUNDER, THE LIGHTHOUSE NETWORK

Dr. Nkiru Olumide-Ojo (PhD) is a seasoned corporate executive with over 20 years of experience driving the growth and management of multinational brands across international markets and key sectors, including Financial Services, Aviation, Telecommunications, and Oil & Gas. Currently, she leads Marketing, Corporate Communications and Corporate Social Impact efforts for a financial services firm in South Africa, managing cross-border teams across Africa and offshore regions to deliver measurable results. A dedicated advocate for social transformation, Dr. Olumide-Ojo is the founder of The LightHouse Network, an impact-driven agency

focused on marketplace readiness and Leadership Development for youth and Women. She extends her mentorship efforts to young women professionals through her initiative, The Working Girl Circle, empowering them to navigate and excel in their careers.

Dr. Olumide-Ojo's governance expertise includes serving on boards in both commercial and non-commercial capacities. A corporate trainer and frequent conference speaker, she has delivered impactful presentations at high-profile events such as the Forbes Africa Women's Summit, London Advertising Week, and the Africa Public Relations Conference. Her thought leadership is further recognised through her role as a judge in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) category at the Cannes Creative Festival, France. Over the years, she has earned

numerous accolades, including being named twice among Lagos State's Top 100 Women Making Impact and recognized by Leading Ladies Africa as one of Africa's Top 50 Leading Corporate Women.

Dr. Olumide-Ojo holds a PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, and advanced degrees from Kingston University, Surrey, UK, and the University of Calabar, Nigeria. She is also an accomplished author of two seminal works: *Pressure Cooker: Lessons for Women at Work* and *Step Forward: A Marketplace Readiness Guide for Youths*.

Dr. Olumide-Ojo's strategic leadership, social impact initiatives, and thought leadership continue to inspire and shape the next generation of professionals and leaders across the continent.



► Speaker

Dr. Busola Tejumola (PhD)

EXECUTIVE HEAD, GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT CHANNELS, MULTICHOICE GROUP

Dr. Busola Tejumola is a visionary content strategist and media executive with over 20 years of experience across the media and IT industries. Currently serving as the Executive Head, General Entertainment Channels, MultiChoice Group, she oversees Channels across all markets for the Multichoice group. She previously served as Executive Head, Content and Channels, West Africa, where for over four years she led the creative and strategic direction of Africa Magic's seven Nigerian channels and Akwaaba Magic's Ghanaian channel on DStv and Gotv.

A driving force behind some of Africa's most successful entertainment

properties, Dr. Tejumola has overseen acclaimed productions including Big Brother Naija, Nigerian Idol and the Africa Magic Viewers' Choice Awards (AMVCAs), both of which have boosted audience engagement, subscriber growth, and advertising revenue across the continent. She also spearheaded the refresh of Africa Magic's content slate, fostering new opportunities for African storytellers, producers, and on-screen talent.

Recognized among the 100 Most Influential People of African Descent (MIPAD) in 2021 and listed by Forbes Afrique among the Top 50 Women in Management in Africa, Dr. Tejumola holds a Ph.D. in Management Information Systems and Computing from Brunel University, London, and a Master's degree in Management Information Systems from the

University of Surrey.

In 2023, she was elected a distinguished member of the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, solidifying her influence in global television programming.

Beyond her professional achievements, Dr. Tejumola is passionate about empowering women and youth across Africa. Through the MultiChoice Women's Forum and various mentorship initiatives, she champions leadership development, skills advancement, and inclusion in the creative and technology sectors.

Dr. Busola Tejumola continues to redefine African storytelling on the global stage, championing creativity, innovation, and cultural authenticity.



► Speaker

Hon. Munira Suleiman Tanimu

MAJORITY LEADER KADUNA STATE 10TH ASSEMBLY

Munira Suleiman Tanimu is an entrepreneur, a politician, a passionate philanthropist, and a mother. She is currently the majority leader of the Kaduna State 10th Assembly. She is the sole female representative in Kaduna State House Assembly and the entire North West, serving the people of Lere East Constituency in Lere Local Government, Kaduna State. She is the first female majority leader in the history of Kaduna state and in the entire north-west Nigeria.

With a solid political foundation, Munira's commitment to public service is driven by a deep desire to contribute to Nigeria's transformation. Her political engagement stems from a personal mission to effect meaningful change in a country in urgent need of progress. Through her non-governmental organisation, Green Heart Impact Foundation, her extensive philanthropic efforts focus on alleviating poverty and empowering women and children, underscoring her commitment to enhancing the lives of everyday Nigerians.

Munira envisions impactful reforms across education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, and women/youth empowerment. Inspired by figures such

as her father, Honourable Suleiman Tanimu, who was a former House of Representatives member in the 90s, the late H.E Aisha Jummai Alhassan (Mama Taraba) and Senator Aishatu Binani, whose fearless advocacy and strategic approach have influenced her own political journey. She is intensely aware of the need for greater female political participation.

Munira also believes that more women should step forward to actively participate in governance, policymaking, and leadership at all levels. She is committed to encouraging and mentoring women to take bold steps toward breaking barriers and reshaping the narrative of female leadership in Nigeria.



Speaker

Patricia Obozuwa

MANAGING DIRECTOR, NIGERIA GLOBAL
REPUTATION MANAGEMENT PROJECT

Patricia Obozuwa is the Managing Director of the Nigeria Global Reputation Management Project, the country's official initiative dedicated to shaping and projecting a powerful, positive, and unified image of Nigeria globally.

Most recently, she was the Vice President, Public Affairs, Communications & Sustainability, Africa at The Coca-Cola Company appointed in December 2020. There, she led a team responsible for Government Affairs, thought leadership, sustainability, media relations, and corporate communications for the company across the African continent. During her time in this role, She established a new sustainability strategy for Coca-

Cola Africa. And in January 2022, she launched the sustainability platform JAMII to streamline and increase the impact of the company's sustainability program around waste management, water stewardship, and economic empowerment of women and youth. She led the Coca-Cola Africa organization to achieve the highest corporate reputation score in the company globally for two consecutive years (2021 and 2022).

Prior to her role at Coca-Cola, she was the Chief Communications & Public Affairs Officer for GE Africa – a position she started in April 2012 when she built the communications and public affairs function. She established GE Africa's corporate social responsibility platform, GE Kujenga in 2014. And in 2016, Patricia established the 'GE Lagos Garage' a hub for advanced manufacturing skills development that has produced over

2,400 graduates in Nigeria. She was the founding co-hub leader of the GE Women's Network for Sub-Saharan Africa.

Prior to joining GE, she was Head, External Relations, Nigeria and Corporate Communication Leader, Sub-Saharan Africa at Procter & Gamble (P&G). Before joining P&G in 2005, Patricia was the Arts and Sponsorship Manager for the British Council in Nigeria.

Patricia is a Non-Executive Director of The Water Trust (US-Headquartered Non-Profit Organization). She is also on the Advisory Council for ImpactHer, a non-profit that empowers African female entrepreneurs.

She is passionate about women's empowerment, personal branding and telling Africa's full story.



► Speaker

Folake Soetan

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, IKEJA ELECTRIC

Folake Soetan is a visionary business leader with over two decades of exceptional impact across the Aviation, Oil & Gas, and Power sectors. With a solid foundation in Finance from the University of Lagos, complemented by the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School Executive Education, she combines deep commercial acumen with strategic foresight.

She began her career in aviation, where she led revenue optimisation initiatives that significantly expanded market share. At Sahara Group, she played a pivotal role in building SO Aviation into a top-tier player across West Africa, elevating the business from 7th to 3rd position in the market within a short span.

In 2015, she joined Ikeja Electric, where her transformational leadership

quickly propelled her from Deputy Chief Commercial Officer to Chief Executive Officer. Her tenure has been defined by innovation, resilience, and results.

One of her hallmark achievements includes pioneering the bilateral power initiative under the willing seller-willing buyer model with her team, delivering over 20 hours of power daily to residential clusters in Lagos State. This bold move laid the groundwork for the successful launch of Nigeria's service-based tariff regime, a turning point in the country's power sector.

Under her stewardship, Ikeja Electric has experienced unprecedented growth. She has led a landmark reduction in Aggregate Technical, Commercial, and Collection (ATC&C) loss by over 50%, while driving digital transformation and operational excellence. These efforts have earned the company industry recognition,

including "Best Electricity Distribution Company" and "Most Gender Diverse Utility Company" at the 2022 Nigeria Power Sector Awards.

Folake also oversaw the company's successful attainment of globally recognised certifications including ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management System), ISO 14001:2015 (Environmental Management System), and ISO 45001:2018 (Occupational Health & Safety Management System) affirming her commitment to quality, safety, and customer satisfaction.

Beyond the boardroom, she is deeply committed to mentoring the next generation of leaders, particularly women and youth, through her active involvement in Women in Energy Network (WIEN) and Women in Management, Business, and Public Service (WIMBIZ). In 2022, she was named one of Eko 100 Women by Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu for her advocacy for equity and inclusion.



► Speaker

Abe Jawando

EXECUTIVE SENIOR SALES DIRECTOR,
MARY KAY COSMETICS

Abe Jawando is a Nigerian-born lawyer, business coach, and strategist whose career exemplifies leadership and revolutionary impact. Transitioning from investment banking to a purpose-driven path, Abe is a Future Executive Senior Sales Director with Mary Kay Cosmetics. For over 20 years, she has built and led a thriving Mary Kay team, mentoring and empowering over 500 women to achieve excellence and resilience in entrepreneurship.

As part of her Mary Kay journey, Abe developed a transformative framework that merges the power of beauty with entrepreneurial growth, enabling women to redefine success and create sustainable wealth. This innovative approach has led to remarkable team milestones and personal accolades, including the No. 1 Team Builder

Award and three consecutive Top 3 Sales Director Awards, reflecting her exceptional leadership and dedication.

Beyond her corporate success, Abe founded The Mentoring Room, a global platform inspiring women to embrace leadership and achieve breakthroughs in all aspects of life. Her passion lies in equipping women to become leaders of leaders promoting change across communities and nations.

Abe serves on the Fashion Souk Global Strategic Team, (International arm of Fashion Souk Nigeria) as Business Strategist where her innovative strategies connect African fashion and beauty brands to global markets, providing entrepreneurs with access to global opportunities.

Her philanthropic efforts shine through Victoria's Smile Foundation and its "20Smiles420Years Campaign," an initiative supporting underserved

pregnant women in rural Nigeria while ensuring their children receive lifelong education. Her unwavering commitment to maternal health and education exemplifies her belief in the power of access and opportunity to break the cycles of poverty.

Abe is also the author of the Throne Room Whispers Gratitude Journal, a tool that has inspired countless individuals to embrace daily gratitude as a path to resilience and personal transformation. Through her annual 66Days Gratitude Journal Challenge, she encourages participants worldwide to experience the power of intentional gratitude in their daily lives.

As a Women for Africa Award finalist, she has also served as a member of the Mary Kay UK Advisory Board for many years. Abe's mission is clear: "Empowered women build thriving families, vibrant communities, and strong nations."



► Speaker

Chinyere Okorocha

PARTNER & THE OVERALL HEAD OF SECTORS
AT JACKSON, ETTI & EDU

A seasoned legal professional with over three decades of experience, with a strong expertise in Intellectual Property law, and a passion for building strategic, industry-focused legal solutions that deliver measurable value to clients.

Her legal career began at a firm where she specialised and became an expert in Intellectual Property law—managing trademarks, patents, and designs portfolios for multinationals, from prosecution to contentious disputes and brand protection strategies. As a founding member of Etti, Edu & Co. (now Jackson, Etti & Edu), she helped build the firm's Intellectual Property department from the ground up, creating core structures, and shaping the firm's international visibility.

She currently serves as a Partner and

the overall Head of Sectors at Jackson, Etti & Edu, where she leads the firm's sector strategy across six core industries. In this role, she aligns sector goals with market trends, oversees cross-sector collaboration, and works closely with sector heads and practice groups to ensure industry relevance, client satisfaction, and revenue growth. Her leadership has helped drive the firm's evolution from sector-focused to sector-expert—positioning them to deliver bespoke, commercially grounded solutions.

Concurrently, she serves as Sector Head for Health & Pharmaceuticals, where she leads a multidisciplinary team, oversees client engagement strategies and develops the annual sector outlook. In recognition of her leadership in the medico-legal space, she was appointed to the Executive Committee of the Healthcare Federation of Nigeria, first as Treasurer (2022–2025) and now as Publicity Secretary (2025–Present).

She recently completed a successful tenure as Chairperson of the Nigerian Bar Association Women Forum (2022–2024), where she led national expansion efforts, introduced the forum's first operational manual and leadership retreat, and championed female representation across the legal profession.

Beyond the legal space, she is also the Founder of Heels & Ladders—a career mentorship club committed to helping ambitious women achieve accelerated career growth through clarity, confidence, and strategic execution.

A regular speaker and moderator at legal, intellectual property, healthcare, and leadership events, Chinyere speaks on topics including IP law, medico-legal issues, women's empowerment, and leadership development. Her professional journey continues to be driven by impact, innovation, and the belief that women can thrive—at the bar, in the boardroom, and beyond.



Kayode Okikiolu

TV ANCHOR, CHANNELS TELEVISION

Kayode Okikiolu is a TV Anchor with Africa's News leader Channels Television.

He has co-hosted one of the most watched breakfast shows on the continent, Sunrise Daily and anchored the flagship News At 10, as well as other Primetime shows.

Today, you can watch him interview National and Global newsmakers,

including top UN Officials, Diplomats, Governors, Ministers, Lawmakers and everyday people on The Morning Brief

As a member of largest demographic in Nigeria, the Youths he continues to highlight issues that concern them.

Before TV, he worked as a Radio Presenter at The Beat 97.9fm & Salt 98.1fm for 4 years.

Kayode studied Psychology at the prestigious University of Ibadan and is an Associate of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (CIPM).



► Moderator

Ugochukwu Obi-Chukwu
FOUNDER/CEO OF NAIRAMETRICS

Ugochukwu "Ugodre" Obi-Chukwu is the Founder and CEO of Nairametrics Financial

Advocates, a leading authority on Nigeria's financial and economic sectors.

A Chartered Accountant with extensive experience, Ugodre has spearheaded significant business transformations and strategic reorganisations,

enhancing operational efficiency and profitability. His experience in covering the capital market, the economy and geopolitics makes him one of the leading resource persons for delivering macro-economic insights.

His leadership at Nairametrics has transformed the platform into a globally recognised source for economic analysis and financial literacy.

Ugodre is an eloquent speaker and host of popular financial radio shows on

Lagos Talks 91.3FM and Classic FM 97.3FM. Ugo also hosts several influential podcast shows covering the capital markets and investor education.

His influential work in the financial sector has earned him several awards and recognitions.



Moderator

Ozim Ibeziako

EXECUTIVE GENERAL COUNSEL,
AFRICA, GE VERNOVA

Ozim Ifeoma Ibeziako is a commercial and energy lawyer with twenty-four years industry experience. She is currently working with GE Vernova as the Executive General Counsel for Africa, with the overall responsibility for GEV's brand, legal and compliance risk mitigation in the 23 countries where GEV has a footprint in sub-Saharan Africa.

She is best described as a business lawyer, with multi-jurisdictional expertise in the energy industry, commercial transactions, corporate

practice, regulatory compliance, legal advisory services, project finance, localisation, joint ventures and business development.

Ozim graduated from the University of Nigeria in 1998 and was called to the Nigerian Bar in October 2000. She was also admitted as a Solicitor of England & Wales in 2011 and obtained LLM in Energy Law & Policy, (2007/2008) and MBA in International Business Transactions (2008/2009) from the Centre for Energy, Mineral Law and Policy, University of Dundee, Scotland.

Part of what makes her job exciting is the fact that she works on sustainable projects across Africa, impacting lives and adding great value to the

continent, which translates to global win for both investors, customers, and consumers. She sees the challenges facing the region as opportunities for better collaboration, sharing best practices, and lessons learnt, to improve the regulatory climate, stir the economy, and attract the right investment to drive growth.

Ozim also volunteers in her local church, supports charities that promote the cause of the girl-child, and provides scholarships to indigent children. She is a strong advocate for women and is on the Global Advisory Committee of the GE Vernova Women's Network, where she works with other women and allies to elevate and inspire others to success.



► Moderator

Abiola Adediran

PARTNER AT GENEVA FAMILY OFFICE

Abiola Adediran is a Family Business Advisor and one of Nigeria's finest corporate finance and business strategy experts with nearly 2 decades of work experience that cuts across investment banking, consulting, private equity, wealth and family office management.

She was the Group Chief Financial Officer of Coronation Group, a leading investment management group in Africa. She was very instrumental to the set up and running of Tengen Family Office (a Single-Family Office)

which served the interests of the families represented. She was involved in developing business strategy for existing and new businesses, corporate finance and funding strategy, investment due diligence, driving value creation for the ecosystem and engaging with the families in managing their affairs.

Prior to that, she was a Manager at KPMG Professional Services, a leading (Big 4) global consulting firm, where she delivered remarkable results to all her clients and promoted the image of the Firm.

She is currently a Partner at Geneva Family Office, an independent boutique multi-family office delivering

innovative wealth management and family advisory services to ultra-high networth individuals and family businesses to preserve their wealth and legacy.

She is also the Founder and Managing Consultant of Midridge International, a pan-African strategy consulting and financial advisory firm supporting and facilitating the growth of businesses across Africa.

Abiola Adediran is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria, a certified Management Consultant, a PRINCE2-certified Project Manager from APMG International, UK and she holds an MBA with specialism in Finance from Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University, Scotland. She is a member of the Chartered Institute of Directors of Nigeria (CIoD).

Abiola currently sits on the board of growing businesses as well as serves as a mentor to various leading entrepreneurship organisations in Nigeria like the FATE Foundation, Awesome Treasures Foundation, Women in Management and Business (WIMBIZ), Women in Africa (WIA), She Leads Africa, amongst others.

She is a keynote speaker, author, trainer, mentor, and has been featured on various popular media platforms.

She is a member of the Forbes Business Council where she is collaborating with global leaders and contributing to the development of businesses and economies around the world.

She is a passionate visionary with a deep commitment to redefine and make a positive difference on the African continent and beyond by leading innovative change, and creating enduring legacies for the next generation.

She is happily married with two adorable children.

WOMAN EXECUTIVE

Rise and Rebuild: Leadership Lessons from Broken Places

By Wola Joseph-Condotti



here are moments in leadership and in life when everything crumbles.

The business you built suffers a blow. The team you trusted unravels. The deal you were certain of falls through. A personal crisis collides with professional responsibility. The ground beneath you shifts. The silence is deafening. And for a brief, gut-wrenching moment, you wonder:

"Can I recover from this?"

This is not the leadership of podiums and press releases. This is the leadership forged in ashes and anguish. And it is here, in

these broken places, that some of the most powerful leaders are born.

When the Wall is in Ruins

The story of Nehemiah is one of the most profound blueprints for recovery in Scripture. He was not a prophet or a warrior, he was a cupbearer, an executive assistant to a king who heard that the walls of Jerusalem were in ruins. But rather than shrug it off, he wept, fasted, prayed, and then acted. He asked for permission. He rallied the people. He faced opposition. And with burnt stones, trembling

hands, and divine help, he rebuilt the wall. What makes Nehemiah remarkable is not that he built something. It is that he built again after it had been broken.

The Truth About Breaking

Many leadership journeys do not just involve building, they involve breaking. You lose people you thought were permanent. You make decisions that do not work out. You are betrayed, or burnt out, or blindsided. And suddenly, the life you curated no longer looks like the one you are living. This does not make you a bad

leader. It makes you a human one. Sometimes, God allows what we built to break so He can refine who we are becoming. Because brokenness, when yielded, births a deeper authority. One that is not just strategic but spiritual. One that knows what it is to weep over ruins and still rise to build again.

Job's Restoration

Consider Job, a man described as blameless and upright. He lost it all: wealth, health, family, reputation. Everything. Not because he failed, but because he

was being tested. Yet, even in loss, Job refused to curse God. He wrestled, he questioned, but he never let go of faith. And the Bible says: The Lord restored Job's fortunes and gave him twice as much as he had before. (Job 42:10). This is the kind of restoration only God can author. But it comes to those who stay in position, in the place of prayer. Even in pain.

Leadership in the Rubble

If you are in a season where something has collapsed, personally, professionally, spiritually, let me say this: You are not disqualified. You are not too broken to lead. You are not too weary to rebuild. You are not too far gone for God to restore. Nehemiah did not rebuild alone. Job did not heal alone. And neither will you. But you must start. With one brick. One step. One prayer. Even if your hands are trembling and your heart is sore.

Rebuilding With Wisdom

Here are a few lessons I have learnt from my own seasons of rebuilding:

- ▶ **Do not ignore what is broken.** Name it. Mourn it. Let God meet you in it.
- ▶ **Ask for help.** Even strong leaders need reinforcements.
- ▶ **Keep building. Even when mocked.** Opposition is often confirmation.
- ▶ **Anchor your hope in God, not outcomes.** Restoration looks different for everyone.
- ▶ **Your scars are not shameful.** They are evidence of survival and a source of strength.

Final Thoughts

Leadership is not just about building empires. It is about rebuilding lives, starting with your own. So if your wall is in ruins, take heart. God specializes in restoration. The stones may be burnt, but they are still usable. Your story may be bruised, but it is not over. You will rise. You will rebuild. And the ruins will not define you. The restoration will.



Wola Joseph Condotti

Group MD/CEO of West Power & Gas Limited

Wola is the Group MD/CEO of West Power & Gas Limited, the parent company of Eko Electricity Distribution PLC (EKEDP) and six other affiliate companies with interests in both conventional and renewable energy sectors. In addition to this role, she serves as the Director of the Power and Renewable Division at the Women in Energy Network (WIEN) in a non-executive capacity.

Prior to her current role, Wola was the pioneer Chief, Legal & Company Secretariat at EKEDP. During her tenure, she also held multiple key positions simultaneously including Head of Regulatory Compliance, Chief Human Resources and Administration Officer, Supervising Chief of the Customer Service Department, and Data Protection Officer. Her previous experience includes roles as General Counsel/Company Secretariat Lagoon Home Savings and Loans, and Legal Associate at Banwo & Ighodalo.

Wola holds a law degree from the University of Ibadan, an LLM in International Finance Law from Harvard Law School, and an MBA from INSEAD Business School. She is also an International Finance Corporation (World Bank) Board Evaluation Certified Professional and Corporate Governance Trainer.

Wola's achievements have earned widespread recognition. Most recently, she received the inaugural Leadership Excellence Award of the Year at the Legal Era Africa Awards 2024, becoming the first-ever recipient of this category. The award celebrated her historic transition from General Counsel to Group MD/CEO, a milestone applauded for redefining leadership pathways in the legal profession.

She is a member of the Institute of Directors and the Society for Corporate Governance Nigeria. Additionally, she is an associate member of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators of Nigeria, and Women in Management, Business, and Public Service.

FINANCIAL AdviseHER

The **Five** Ways Investing Shapes Your Financial Future

By Sola Adesakin



Whether you save or invest, or you don't, time will still pass. The truth is, life doesn't pause for indecision. A new

year will come, five years will roll by, and time will do what time always does, move forward. The real question is: when those years arrive, where will they meet you? Investing is one of the smartest ways to make sure time works for you, not against you. You may not control everything: the economy, inflation, or market swings, but you can control your discipline, your goals, and your attitude toward growth. Here are five powerful ways investing shapes your financial future, and why starting or ramping up now is non-negotiable.

1. Investing multiplies your time, not just your money

When you invest, you give your money an assignment — to grow while you sleep. The earlier you start, the more time becomes your ally. This is called the compound effect, and it's how wealth quietly builds. Imagine investing N50,000 monthly for 10 years in a moderately growing fund. With compounding, that small consistency will become millions. You didn't work extra hours, your money did. That's what smart investing does, it buys your future time back.

2. Investing protects your money from losing value

Inflation is a silent thief. Every year, it reduces what your money can buy. If you keep cash idle, you're unknowingly volunteering it to lose value. Investing is how you fight back. By putting your money into assets that can grow — stocks, mutual funds, real estate, or even a business, you protect your purchasing power. You may not outpace inflation every single year, but over time, you'll stay ahead of it.

3. Investing forces you to think long-term

It's easy to spend when you're not looking ahead. But once you start investing, your mindset changes. You start asking better questions: What will my future self thank

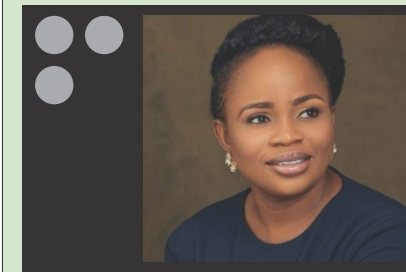
me for? What legacy do I want to build? This mental shift from spending to building is where true wealth begins. Investing teaches patience, vision, and responsibility. You stop reacting and start planning.

4. Investing gives you options

Money itself isn't freedom, options are. The ability to choose where to live, what to do, how to work, and when to rest. When you invest, you're buying future flexibility. You're building a cushion that gives you confidence to make bold moves, start a business, take a career break, travel, or retire early. Wealth isn't about luxury; it's about choice.

5. Investing builds confidence and purpose

There's something deeply empowering about watching your financial discipline pay off. It builds trust in yourself. You start believing that your dreams are not just valid, they're achievable. And beyond the numbers, investing aligns you with purpose. You begin to see money as a tool, for impact, for generosity, for legacy. Time will pass, with or without your permission. So start where you are. It doesn't have to be perfect or big, it just has to be consistent. Because five years from now, you'll either wish you started today or be grateful that you did.



By Sola Adesakin

Founder and Lead Coach,
Smart Stewards

Sola Adesakin is a highly respected wealth coach and chartered accountant with over two decades of transformative impact in the finance industry. As the visionary founder of Smart Stewards Financial Advisory Limited and Smart Stewards Advisory LLC, she has revolutionized the financial wellbeing of countless individuals and businesses across 40 countries. Her methodical approach to 'make-manage-multiply' money principles has elevated many from financial stress to prosperity, and mediocrity to exceptional achievement.

Sola is a strong supporter of SDG5 and SDG10, as she seeks to close the gender gap and reduce inequality through financial education, financial technology, and access to funding. Sola's dedication to achieving gender equality and reducing inequality is evident in her work as an alumna of the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs, an initiative of the US Embassy in Nigeria, and the Cherie Blair Foundation's Road to Growth Program. She is also an alumna of Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women program and a member of the Select Global Women in Tech (SGWIT) Mentorship Network of the United States of America. Through the FRUIT Foundation, which she serves as Founder and CEO, she has partnered with the US consulate in Nigeria to champion the economic empowerment of women, assisting them to start and scale their business ventures.

Her impressive academic credentials include a BSc and an MBA degree from Oxford Brookes University and Edinburgh Business School, respectively. She is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants of the United Kingdom (ACCA), and a member of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA). In addition to her impressive credentials, Sola Adesakin is also a Certified Financial Education InstructorSM and a member of the Personal Finance Speakers Association.

GENDER INSIGHTS

Scaling Without Sacrifice: How Women Can Build Without Burning Out

Abiola Adediran



In today's fast-paced world, many women are rewriting the script of success. We want both: the freedom that financial independence brings and the joy that

comes from time-rich living—whether that's with our families, our wellness, or our purpose. But somewhere between running businesses, nurturing homes, and chasing audacious dreams, burnout creeps in. And with it, the illusion that we must choose between scaling and serenity.

As an executive coach who works closely with women entrepreneurs and career leaders, I've seen firsthand how this tension plays out. The desire to build something significant—something that creates wealth, freedom, and impact—is often accompanied by the pressure to do it all. But here's the truth I've come to embrace: you can build without burning out. You just have to be strategic about it.

One of the biggest mindset shifts I teach is this: balance is not about equal time—it's about intentional presence.

There will be seasons where your business needs more of you, and seasons where your family takes center stage. The goal is not to strive for perfection in every area all the time, but to be fully present wherever you are. That requires setting clear boundaries, honouring your values, and knowing what matters most in each season.

For many women I coach, their definition of wealth includes time freedom, peace of mind, and the ability to show up for the people they love. If your business model doesn't support that, it's time to redesign—not just the business, but your vision of success.

We often build businesses that depend on our

presence to function, forgetting that true financial independence requires systems, not just stamina. This is where many women fall into the trap of hustle. We

If your business can't function without you, you don't own a business—you own a demanding job.

Scaling sustainably means delegating and trusting your team, building systems and automations, creating recurring income models, and pricing for value, not just time. One of the most liberating questions I ask my clients is: "Can your business pay you while you rest?" If not, then we start there.

Financial stress is one of the biggest contributors to burnout. And often, women delay facing their numbers because of fear, shame, or simply not knowing where to start. But power comes from clarity. You need to know what your business is really costing you (in time, money, energy), what your personal wealth goals are (financial independence number, legacy goals, giving targets), and what your exit plan looks like.

When you understand your numbers, you can scale with confidence. You can make decisions not out of fear or scarcity, but out of strategy. As women, we often give without replenishing. But your energy is an asset—it needs to be managed like capital.

This means scheduling rest as seriously as you schedule meetings. It means having a wealth team—not just accountants and lawyers, but coaches, therapists, nannies, and whoever else you need to function at your best.

Scaling is not just about more revenue. It's about building a life that feels as good as it looks on paper.

I know there's a subtle pressure, especially in the social media age, to perform success. But at the end of the day, your wealth journey is not for Instagram—it's for impact.

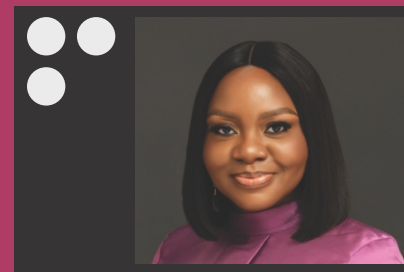
Ask yourself: What do I want my children or

future heirs to remember about me? That I was always busy? Or that I built something meaningful and made time for what truly mattered?

When you focus on legacy, you make different decisions. You build with the end in mind. You scale not for noise, but for longevity.

So scale your business. Grow your wealth.

But do it with structure, clarity, and intention. That's how we build not just successful businesses—but sustainable, generational wealth.


Abiola Adediran

Partner at Genea Family
Office

Abiola Adediran is a Family Business Advisor and one of Nigeria's finest corporate finance and business strategy experts with nearly 2 decades of work experience that cuts across investment banking, consulting, private equity, wealth and family office management.

She was the Group Chief Financial Officer of Coronation Group, a leading investment management group in Africa. She was very instrumental to the set up and running of Tengen Family Office (a Single-Family Office) which served the interests of the families represented.

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Abiola Adediran is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria, a certified Management Consultant, a PRINCE2-certified Project Manager from APMG International, UK and she holds an MBA with specialism in Finance from Edinburgh Business School, Heriot-Watt University, Scotland. She is a member of the Chartered Institute of Directors of Nigeria (CIoD).

Abiola currently sits on the board of growing businesses as well as serves as a mentor to various leading entrepreneurship organisations in Nigeria. She is a member of the Forbes Business Council and is happily married with two adorable children.

MADE FOR MORE

The Nudge That Won't Leave You Alone

By Ifeoma Chuks-Adizue

Have you ever found yourself in a season where everything seems fine, yet something inside you feels unsettled?

The job is good. The family is well. You're ticking the boxes you once prayed for. You're deeply grateful...truly grateful...and yet, beneath that gratitude, there's a quiet stirring that keeps whispering: "There's more."

Most career women try to silence this stirring, calling it "a phase," blaming stress or even reminding themselves to be more thankful. Yet no matter how hard they try, the restlessness lingers. This is because sometimes, that unease isn't a problem to fix but a nudge from God. His gentle way of saying, "You've grown here. It's time to move higher."

If you read my earlier column, "The Stirring You Can't Ignore," I shared three signs that show you're ready to step into God's bigger assignment. This week, let's go a step further into why and what to do when the nudge won't leave you alone.

Ready? Let's dive in...



The nudge comes when REDIRECTION is required. Sometimes God stirs your spirit because you've fulfilled an assignment and Heaven is signaling that it's time for a new one.

Here, the peace and grace that once marked a season starts to fade and no matter how hard you try to stay, something in you just knows it's time to move. If that's where you are, stop fighting to revive what God has already completed.

The restlessness may not be about something ending but about something beginning.

The Nudge comes when PREPARATION is needed. At other times, God stirs not to push out but to prepare you for what's ahead.

Think young Moses. He saw his people's pain and felt the urge to help, most likely because the stirring had begun. Yet it wasn't time for action. It was a season of preparation - to replace impulsiveness with patience and strength with humility. Virtues he would later master in the wilderness before leading Israel.

So if the doors haven't opened yet, don't mistake delay for denial. The stirring may not be pushing you out but pulling you deeper into maturity for what's next.

The Nudge comes when ACTIVATION is due or overdue. Sometimes, the stirring means the time for action has come. You've prayed, prepared and processed and Heaven is saying, "GO!!" That idea won't leave because it's time to give it life.

Other times, the stirring means you've already delayed obedience. That instruction keeps resurfacing...in prayer, in conversation, in your thoughts...because Heaven won't let you forget what you were born to do.

Here are 5 things to do when you sense the nudge and it's just not going away.

1. Pause and Partner With God To Discern What

Before you rush into action, pause long enough to listen. Ask God what He is calling you to in this season of your life? What past instructions, dreams, ideas have been left undone - are they still relevant?

2. Assess What Is Needed

Write down what you sense God is leading you to build or birth, then identify what it would take to start the minimum viable version of it. What will it require of you? Do you need new knowledge, refined skills, or mentorship? What would it cost financially? What kind of support would you need to launch it without jeopardizing what you've already built? How much time must you intentionally carve out to birth this instruction - weekly, daily or monthly?

Document it all. Clarity grows as you write it all out.

3. Secure the Support You Need

Purpose work can't thrive in isolation. You will definitely need spiritual, relational and practical support. Pray for the right helpers and partners...people who carry the same heart and can help you bring structure to the vision. Whether that's a VA for support, a coach for guidance and accountability or a praying friend, build your circle intentionally.

4. Start Where You Are

Don't wait for the "perfect" moment. God's instructions rarely wait for convenient timing. Begin right where you are - in your workplace, your church, your alumni network and on social media.

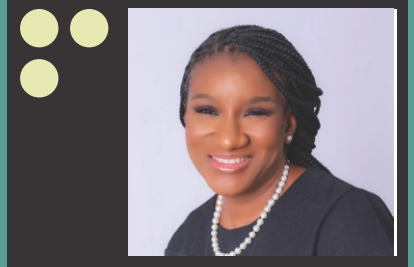
Start small... scale fast. Remember, obedience is the seed of acceleration. I still remember the first time I shared my thoughts, it wasn't on a big stage but in a simple article sent to my colleagues at work. That small act became the seed for what is now a movement of over 30,000 career women discovering and birthing their MORE.

5. Always Review Progress with Him

The same God who began the work is the One who will sustain it. Don't run ahead of grace. Take time to pause, pray and review your next steps with Him regularly. Like we learn in Galatians 3:3, it's foolish to continue in the flesh what you received in the Spirit. Long story short...stay aligned, stay yielded and keep walking at Heaven's pace.

So, if the stirring hasn't left you alone, maybe it's not supposed to! Good thing is that you now know WHY and WHAT to do...

So, until next week, keep saying YES to your MORE!



By Ifeoma Chuks-Adizue

Managing Director Africa
at Global Citizen

Ifeoma Chuks-Adizue, fondly known as Iphie, is a seasoned professional with a rare mix of experience in brand management, sales, media and over 20 years' experience building global brands across Africa.

Iphie is the Managing Director Africa at Global Citizen - an international advocacy organisation focused on ending extreme poverty now.

Prior to this role, Iphie was the Executive Director Commercial at CAP PLC, makers of Dulux Paint where she led the Sales and Marketing teams to quadruple the business in 4 years.

A graduate of Economics from the University of Jos, Iphie started her career with Procter & Gamble Nigeria where she held several leadership positions, before moving to Cadbury Nigeria, then CAP PLC, and now Global Citizen.

Iphie Chuks-Adizue is the author of two books - The Uncommon Woman and Made for More, and is Founding President of the Uncommon Woman Movement,

She is a wife, mother of three children and recipient of several awards, the most recent being the Exceptional Leader of Excellence Award from the Global Women Economic Forum.



WOMAN AT THE HELM

Bimbo Onakomaiya

MD/CEO of Peakthrust Insurance Brokers Ltd
President, Professional Insurance Ladies Association (PILA)

Bimbo Onakomaiya is an Economist by training, and she possesses an analytical mind, which is required in the management of a financially oriented company in a highly competitive environment.

A Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute of London with a career in insurance spanning over 35 years. Bimbo's career started as an Associate, Hill Samuel Life Investment Services, Wales, United Kingdom before relocating to Nigeria, joining NICON Insurance in 1987 and becoming the company's first female fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute London

(FCII). Trailblazing for the ten-year service in Nicon Insurance, she honed her skills in special risks, marine, oil, energy and reinsurance classes of insurance.

She moved to Anderson to open the consulting world to the insurance industry and vis-versa, thus enhancing partnerships that have now spanned decades.

From there she worked with Unic Insurance Plc. She later became AGM (Oil & Energy), where she was until December 2002 before becoming the pioneer Managing Director/CEO of Peakthrust Insurance Brokers Ltd from 2003 till date.

Her experience as a special risks underwriter in oil and energy as well as marine insurances has enabled her to interact at very high government and multinational

levels with the institutional power brokers and decision makers that have impacted Nigeria.

Her job as a direct marketer has helped her hold discussions with top executives when bid specifications have had to be submitted and defended.

A beneficiary of the Total Quality Management training, Bimbo believes in putting in one's best and doing things right the first time.

Faced with the challenges of working alongside any team of top professionals in a growing economy with a very great sense of social responsibility, she pledges to apply responsible and appropriate expertise with the highest level of commitment and dedication to achieve the overall goal of re-enforcing the company, the management of any organisation in which she is

positioned, and its top echelon as a socially responsive, organisation of repute for the overall benefit of all relevant stakeholders.

Bimbo is a Governing Council Member, Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria and the President of Professional Insurance Ladies Association (PILA), the first female professional body in Nigeria established in 1973, which is an affiliate of the Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN), encompassing all the chartered female insurance professionals in Nigeria.

PILA serves as an advocacy group to promote gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities in the insurance sub-sector of the financial services industry. The association is keenly concerned with promoting forthrightness in women in the insurance industry.

WE'VE GOT MEN

Ronald Adams

Vice President, Deepwater Assets/MD SNEPCo

Ronald Adams is a senior energy sector executive

with more than three decades' experience across the upstream, midstream, and downstream sectors of the energy industry. He has held senior leadership positions in general management, operations, engineering and business development throughout Trinidad and Tobago and North America.

Ronald Adams is the very first national of Trinidad and Tobago to hold the position of Chief Executive Officer at Atlantic LNG, after its more than 20 years of operation. Prior to assuming this role, Ronald served at Shell Trinidad and Tobago Ltd., in the capacity of General Manager, Upstream Assets having responsibility for several key areas of the business, including production, facilities and

wells management, integrated activity planning, logistics and engineering management. He has also worked extensively in various roles within the downstream petrochemical sector in the Pt. Lisas Industrial Estate, including at the National Gas Company, where he served as Vice President Operations.

He is a proven transformational leader with an ability to quickly grasp key business drivers and develop strategies to drive excellence by building focused, aligned, and high-performing teams to achieve corporate and business objectives and targets.

Adams has well-established relationships with regional and global energy industry leaders. He also has extensive executive and board membership experience in both the private and public sectors, which has enhanced his

ability to guide the delivery of corporate strategy within the framework of good corporate governance. He previously served as Director on the Boards of the Environmental Management Authority and the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards. Currently, he serves as Director on the Boards of the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago, United Way of Trinidad and Tobago, the National Energy Skills Center, and the Point Lisas Energy Association committee of CEOs. He is the Board Chair at All On, an impact investment company seeded by Shell with a bold mission to accelerate access to affordable, reliable off-grid clean energy solutions for underserved communities across Nigeria.

Shell established All On in 2016 as an independent, Nigerian, non-profit organisation (limited by guarantee). As a unique

impact investor dedicated to off-grid energy, All On aims to accelerate the development of Nigeria's off-grid energy market by: Facilitating the creation and delivery of clean energy solutions in underserved and unserved communities in Nigeria, prioritising the Niger Delta. Secondly, creating an enabling environment for businesses in the sector and thirdly, providing technical and other non-financial support to off-grid energy businesses.

Adams holds a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from the University of the West Indies, of which he has been recognised as a Distinguished Alumnus. He also holds an MBA with a specialisation in Strategic Planning from Heriot-Watt University (Edinburgh School of Business). He is also a proud alumnus of Queen's Royal College (QRC).

HOLISTIC LIVING

Rest as Medicine – The science and spirituality of quality sleep

By Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri

If your body were a smartphone, sleep would be the overnight charging that powers you for the next day. Without it, no matter how new or advanced the device, the battery runs low, the apps crash, and the system lags. In the same way, rest is not a luxury, it is your body's most essential maintenance tool. For centuries, cultures worldwide have understood rest not only as physical necessity but also as a sacred act. In the Bible, God rested on the seventh day. In the Qur'an, night is described as a

covering, a time for repose. Both science and spirituality agree deep, restorative sleep is medicine for the mind, body, and soul.

The Science of Sleep as Medicine

When you close your eyes at night, your body is far from idle. Sleep is when your brain sorts and stores memories, your cells repair themselves, and your immune system strengthens its defenses. According to the National Sleep Foundation, adults need 7–9 hours of quality sleep. Skimping on it weakens

immunity, raises stress hormone levels, increases the risk of heart disease and diabetes, and dulls mental focus. Chronic sleep deprivation is now considered as harmful as smoking in terms of its long-term health impact. During deep sleep, your body releases growth hormone, which repairs muscles and tissues. Your brain also undergoes a cleansing process through the glymphatic system, flushing out toxins that, if left behind, can contribute to memory problems and degenerative diseases.

The Spiritual Dimension of Rest

Beyond the biology, rest has always been woven into human spiritual life. Ancient traditions saw sleep not just as recovery but as renewal, a time when the soul reconnects with the divine. In Christianity, rest is linked with trust: Laying down to sleep is an act of surrender, acknowledging that you are not the one holding the world together overnight. In Islam, night prayers and mindful preparation for bed are ways to end the day in peace, aligning body and spirit. When approached mindfully, sleep becomes a form of worship, a way to honor the body God has given you.

Why Nigerians Are Sleeping Less

From Lagos to Kano, the pressures of urban living, economic demands, and

digital distractions are stealing hours of rest. Many people work late into the night, while others spend precious bedtime scrolling through endless videos and messages.

The result? A nation running on empty—short-tempered drivers, forgetful employees, anxious students, and overworked parents all linked by one thing: exhaustion.

How to Restore Rest in a Fast-Paced World

1. **Create a Sleep Sanctuary** – Your bedroom should signal peace. Dim the lights, reduce clutter, and keep electronics out of reach.
2. **Set a Consistent Sleep Schedule** – Go to bed and wake up at the same time daily, even on weekends.
3. **Digital Sunset** – Turn off screens at least an hour before bed. The blue light from devices delays melatonin, the hormone that signals sleep.
4. **Mindful Evening Rituals** – Pray, read, or practice deep breathing to transition from busyness to restfulness.
5. **Watch What You Consume** – Avoid caffeine, heavy meals, and excess sugar in the evening.

The Power Nap – A Midday Reset

Even if you can't get 8 hours at night, a short 15–20-minute nap in the afternoon can boost alertness, mood, and memory. Be careful not to nap too long, as this can interfere with night sleep.

The Bigger Picture – Rest as Resistance

In a culture that glorifies hustle, choosing to rest is a radical act. It says; my value is not measured by constant output. Just as you wouldn't drive a car non-stop without refueling, you shouldn't expect your body to perform endlessly without quality rest. Sleep is not time wasted, it is time invested in your health, your purpose, and your peace. When you honour rest, you wake not just refreshed but renewed—ready to think clearly, love deeply, and live fully. Whether you see it through the lens of science or spirituality, rest remains one of life's greatest healers. Tonight, when you lay your head on the pillow, remember this is not just the end of your day—it's the medicine your tomorrow depends on.



Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri

Psychiatrist-In-Chief at Pinnacle Medical Services

Dr. MAYMUNAH YUSUF KADIRI (aka DR. MAY) popularly referred to as "The Celebrity Shrink," is a multiple award winning Mental Health Physician, Advocate & Coach. She is the convener of "The Mental Health Conference" and the Medical Director and Psychiatrist-In-Chief at Pinnacle Medical Services, Nigeria's leading and foremost Psychology and Mental health clinic prominent in the application of innovative clinical approaches in the management/treatment of a wide range of psychological, emotional, and behavioral related disorders.

Dr. Kadiri is a dynamic Consultant Neuro- Psychiatrist and a Fellow of the National Post Graduate Medical College of Nigeria (FMCPSych) with almost 20 years' experience as a practicing Physician. She is a trained and certified Rational Emotive and Cognitive Behavioural Therapist from Albert Ellis Institute, New York, USA. She is also a certified Trauma Counsellor and Neurofeedback Practitioner.

Dr. Kadiri has wide experience in psycho-therapeutic techniques and has perfected her skills whilst in private practice and whilst working for a variety of organizations. She is a recognized radio and television guest Psychiatrist and Psychotherapist. She also contributes to articles published in magazines and newspapers.

She is the only Nigerian with the 14Ps.....Physician, Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Psychotherapist, Practitioner (NLP, BFB, NFB), Public Speaker, Published Author, Producer (movies), Proficient Coach, Parent, Philanthropist, People oriented, Public Health Advocate and Passionate about God and life.

The founder of Pinnacle Health Radio, African's #1 online health radio and a non for profit organization, "Pinnacle Medicals SPEAKOUT Initiative" which is geared towards creating Mental Health literacy in Nigeria and beyond.

The Executive producer of award winning movies, Pepper soup (focused on drug abuse) and Little Drops of Happy (focused on depression, postpartum depression and suicide) and creator of the most innovative mental health app in Africa, HOW BODI.



TRIBE WITH THE VIBES

In Pursuit of Excellence

By Zainab Aderounmu



I've always really wondered what it meant to be an excellent person or to

strive to attain excellence. Yes, doing things at the highest point attainable or at the best form possible. But how is that different from perfectionism?

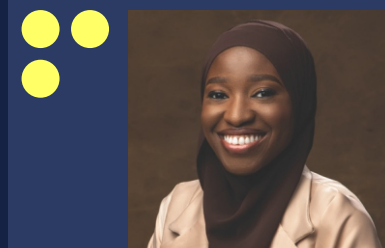
Last week, I met an accomplished man whose presence and short interaction exemplified what excellence means in practical terms.

It was the launch of the Nigerian University of Technology and Management's tech research report and Dr Folarin was the presenter. As the host, I had done a bit of a background check on him and I knew who he was before, so his friendliness was a refreshing idea.

He had arrived early to check the slides and found them to be a little unsatisfactory. The fonts were tiny and each slide was crammed. So, he insisted that corrections be made immediately. Now, what struck me was how he punctuated every sentence with 'excellent' after every correction.

'Excellent'. That word kept ringing in my mind. How many times have you thought of excellence as a divine virtue bestowed on some people by God, or an inborn trait rather than a daily commitment to the best, even in simple tasks?

That interaction lingered with me for days and when I thought I met an excellent person, I met another person who embodied it in a simple moment. I hosted at the National Head Girl Conference and I couldn't stop thinking of the female photographer for the event, Ms. Chika. She wouldn't let a single hair out of line in a picture. I remember the group we took; we had to stand



Zainab Aderounmu

Zainab Aderounmu A. W. is a First Class graduate of English Language and the Overall Best Graduating Student from the Lagos State University, Lagos Nigeria. She's a professional Master of Ceremonies, known as 'The Hijabi Compere', a public speaking coach and Communications Professional. She is currently a Youth advisor to the European Union where she doubles as the Spokesperson and Head of Communications & PR for the Youth Sounding Board.

for a lot of minutes because she insisted on personally rearranging everyone in the picture.

I realised that excellence isn't something you miraculously attain, neither is it flawlessness, it's mindfulness. Attention to details, and a deep care about the outcome of a task. While perfectionism seeks approval, excellence seeks impact. How would this turn out? Would it look like the best? Is this the best we can do? Excellence is paying attention to the littlest things daily, every day in every task.

Excellence shows up in the mundane; how a speaker rehearses one more time before the big stage, how a leader sees no sunk costs and reworks the strategy if it's not birthing results, how a writer overhauls her first draft in pursuit of a better one. It's not about giving your best only when people are watching but even in your corners.

As you change the world this week, I'll leave you with this quote by Martin Luther King; "If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michael Angelo painted, or Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well."

Let's talk about it

The Girl I Am, The Change I Lead: Honouring the Strength of the African Girl

Asmau Benzie Leo

Each year on October 11, the world pauses to honour the International Day of the Girl Child, a moment not merely for celebration, but for sober reflection, bold commitment, and renewed resolve. This global commemoration shines a light on the challenges girls' face, the inequities they endure, and the immense promise they hold.

In this year 2025, the theme chosen is "The Girl I Am, The Change I Lead: Girls on the Frontlines of Crisis." It is a powerful declaration: girls are not passive subjects of history, they are catalysts of transformation, even in the harshest conditions. They stand at the intersection of multiple crises, conflict, climate disruption, economic instability, health emergencies; yet in many of these spaces, girls are rising, resisting, leading.

Why This Day Matters

The International Day of the Girl Child was inaugurated by the United Nations in 2012 to amplify attention to issues girls face worldwide: access to education, justice, health, protection from discrimination, child marriage, and more. It reminds us that gender inequality is not just a women's issue, it is a barrier to human progress and dignity.

For African societies, and Nigeria in particular, the day carries special weight. Across many parts of the continent, the girl child frequently becomes the most vulnerable in

times of crisis: drought, conflict, displacement, pandemics, or economic collapse. In those moments, her schooling is interrupted, her safety threatened, and her future endangered. The 2025 theme insists that even in crisis, girls lead; they become first responders, caregivers, innovators, advocates, peacemakers.

The Nigerian Girl Child: Between Promise and Peril

In Nigeria, the paradox is stark. On one hand, there are powerful stories to tell. A young student from Yobe State recently emerged best in English among tens of thousands globally, evidence to what Nigerian girls can achieve when given opportunities. In many communities, girls are now founding tech hubs, leading environmental and climate change initiatives, campaigning against gender-based violence, and forging their own path in male dominated spaces. Yet behind these victories lies what some call a "leaky pipeline". As girls grow older, more drop out of school; are forced to marry early, unsafe sanitary conditions, gendered expectations, and insecurity chip away at their potential. Many regions in Nigeria remain unsafe for girls to commute to school because of insecurity as kidnapping, insurgency, and communal strife all disproportionately affect young girls.

In Africa broadly, harmful practices such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, and discrimination persist despite laws prohibiting them. The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child has called on states to strengthen enforcement, defend girls' rights to education, and ensure girls' voices are



heard in all decision making.

Thus, the girl child in Nigeria and Africa stands at a crossroads of tremendous possibility and persistent challenge. Her success depends not just on her resilience, but on the collective will from the families, communities, governments, institutions, and civil society as a whole.

The Future in Her Hands: What Must Come Next

Commemorating the day is more than symbolism; it must be a commitment to ensure girls' rights are protected and their leadership capabilities and agency built. To make the 2025 theme resonate beyond rhetoric, we must translate it into concrete change by:

1. Invest in Safe, Inclusive Education: This is to ensure that every girl regardless of

location has access to quality schooling. That means building safe infrastructure, providing sanitary facilities, training gender-sensitive teachers, and eliminating financial barriers to her education.

2. Protect Her in Crisis Situations: When emergencies strike, girls should not be invisible. Emergency response frameworks must include gender-sensitive programming as safe shelters, psychosocial support, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse to enable continuity of learning.

3. Uphold and Enforce her Rights: Laws such as child protection laws (Child Rights Acts), anti-violence legislation, and child marriage prohibitions (VAPP Act) must be implemented, not just passed. These legal frameworks must align across all states, and local enforcement must be

strengthened.

4. Elevate Her Voice and Leadership: Girls must be included in decisions that affect them, from school boards to community groups, to national platforms. Young women leaders already exist, they just need space, mentorship, and support.

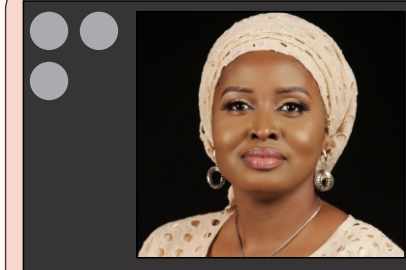
5. Shift Social Norms in favor of Girls: Deep seated gender biases and harmful customs will not vanish overnight. But public campaigns, advocacy efforts through community dialogues, men's engagement, faith and cultural leaders' involvement can serve as levers for this change.

6. Harness Innovation and Technology: Digital tools can empower girls by offering remote learning, connecting them to mentors, providing safe reporting channels for GBV, and giving platforms for advocacy.

Though it has come and gone, but International Day of the Girl Child must not merely affirm what girls deserve, but we must act for what they need. The Nigerian girl child must not just exist with future promise but must be a present force. From rural villages to urban centers, she is designing solutions, raising awareness, speaking truth to power. In her story, we see courage, persistence, vision.

To the girls: you are worthy. You are leaders. You are change-makers. To the adults; parents, political leaders, educators, citizens, your responsibility is great, but your opportunity is greater. When you lift a girl, you lift a community. When you free her from constraint, you set a nation free.

Today, we honour "The Girl I Am, The Change I Lead." May her steps echo in schools, halls of government, and hearts across Nigeria and Africa. Whenever we celebrate the girl child every October 11, let it not pass as a headline, but it must mark a turning point toward equality, dignity, and opportunity for every girl, everywhere.



Dr. Asmau Benzie Leo

Executive Director,
Centre for Nonviolence and
Gender Advocacy in Nigeria
(CENGAIN)

Dr. Asmau Benzie Leo is a development practitioner with extensive national and international expertise in gender equality, peace-building, governance, and humanitarian action.

She holds a PhD in Public Governance and Leadership, a Master's degree in Conflict Management and Peace Studies, and executive certifications from leading institutions including Howard University, Harvard University and Glasgow Caledonian University.

As Executive Director of the Centre for Non-violence and Gender Advocacy in Nigeria (CENGAIN), she has led ground-breaking advocacy initiatives on women's political participation, gender-based violence prevention, and security sector reform across multiple World Bank, UN and EU-supported projects.

Internationally, Dr. Leo has represented civil society at the United Nations, contributed to regional dialogues on Women, Peace and Security, and partnered with global networks advancing gender justice and inclusive governance.

She is a UN Recognised Global Ambassador on Women, Peace and Security. Her expertise bridges grassroots action with policy advocacy, making her a respected voice in advancing gender equality and sustainable peace in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

GARB & GLAM

The Evolution of Pants in the Nigerian Fashion Industry

By Yolanda Okereke

There was a time when pants were more than just a fashion choice — they were a statement. A quiet rebellion wrapped in fabric, a symbol of identity, power, and self-definition. In Nigeria, the story of pants isn't just about hemlines and silhouettes; it's a story of culture, courage, and creativity — told through generations of designers, dreamers, and daring women.

FROM TRADITION TO TRANSITION

Before fashion week runways and red carpets, there was the sokoto — the traditional trouser worn by men across the North — wide, functional, and full of heritage. For women, however, the idea of trousers once bordered on taboo. Femininity was wrapped in iro, buba, and layers of elegance. But like every good fashion story, change began quietly — and then, all at once.

The 1960s and '70s brought with them a bold new energy. Nigeria was young, free, and fearless. Western influences collided beautifully with African expression. From the groovy flares of Fela's queens to the tailored pants of university fashionistas, women began embracing trousers as an emblem of modern independence. Pants became political — a way to say, "I am here, and I define my own femininity." Power Dressing Reimagined



By the early 2000s, Nigerian fashion had found its stride. The rise of the power woman — executives, media moguls, and style icons — gave birth to a new sartorial era. Enter the pantsuit: bold shoulders, crisp lines, and unapologetic elegance.

Designers like Mai Atafo redefined corporate chic with sharply tailored fits, Lisa Folawiyo infused Ankara into contemporary cuts, and Lanre DaSilva Ajayi made femininity powerful again. Women like Rita Dominic, Toke Makinwa, and Genevieve Nnaji turned the pantsuit into the new evening gown — commanding attention not just with beauty, but with presence.



The Nigerian woman no longer dressed to blend in; she dressed to take up space.

THE STREETWEAR REVOLUTION

Then came the millennials — and they changed everything. Streetwear became the language of the youth, and pants became their canvas of rebellion and self-expression. Designers like Orange Culture, Tokyo James, and I.N Official blurred the lines between masculine and feminine, creating pants that challenged gender norms and celebrated fluidity. Joggers, cargo pants, palazzos, and culottes redefined what it meant to be stylish in Lagos. The new generation wasn't just following trends — they were setting them.

As Adebayo Oke-Lawal of Orange Culture once said, "Fashion is freedom. It's how we tell the world who we are before we even speak." That spirit of freedom is what pants have come to represent in Nigerian fashion — a daring blend of comfort,

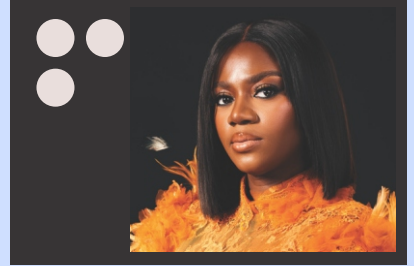
confidence, and culture.

FROM LAGOS TO THE WORLD

Today, Nigerian fashion stands on global stages — from Lagos Fashion Week to Paris and Milan — with pants leading the movement. Tailored trousers in aso-oke, adire, and metallic Ankara prints have become signature looks, celebrating the continent's artistry with a modern twist. Designers like Emmy Kasbit and Atafo are reimagining tradition through tailoring, giving pants a new cultural vocabulary that speaks to both the past and the future. The Nigerian designer no longer asks for global relevance — they define it.

THE FUTURE IS FLUID

The next chapter of pants in Nigerian fashion is one of inclusivity, sustainability, and identity. Beyond gender and beyond trend, it's about



Yolanda Okereke

Founder & Head of The Rani Company

Yolanda Okereke is a visionary fashion entrepreneur and respected industry leader, known for her exceptional work as a Costume Designer and Creative Producer in Film and Television. With over a decade of experience, she has consistently shaped the visual identity of some of Nollywood's most iconic productions, earning a reputation for her artistic depth, organisational precision, and bold storytelling through costume.

She is the Founder and Head of The Rani Company, a leading costume design and styling firm, and The Wardrobe Shack, a costume rental house serving high-profile film and television projects across Nigeria. Rani Gisele was launched while studying Chemical Engineering at university.

Her extensive credits include critically acclaimed projects such as Netflix's Blood Sisters and Òlótùré, as well as The Wedding Party, King of Boys, La Femme Anjola, The Set Up, and Day of Destiny.

Her contributions have earned her nominations at the Africa Movie Academy Awards and the Africa Magic Viewers' Choice Awards, and she was recently awarded Best Fashion Collaboration Film at FAME Week Africa, where she celebrated Nigerian costume design through a dedicated showcase.

creating silhouettes that move with the body — and speak to the soul. From the traditional sokoto to the high-waisted power pant, from adire culottes to experimental streetwear, pants have evolved from rebellion to representation. They've become a mirror of how far Nigerian fashion has come — bold, expressive, and unstoppable.

In Nigeria, pants are no longer just worn. They're lived in. They're danced in. They're conquered in. They are, simply put, a revolution stitched in style.



A Journey Through Traditional Beauty & Flavor

Inside Clay Food Shop & The Henna Place

“Together, Clay Food Shop and The Henna Place offer more than services. They offer belonging. A place where tradition is not just preserved, but honored, elevated, and shared”

Clayfoodshop

Clay Food Shop is more than just a restaurant, it's a cultural experience. Known for its traditional elegance and modern interpretations of Northern Nigerian cuisine, Clay is a destination for food lovers who seek authenticity in every bite.

From their signature ram suya to rich native sauces, tigernut juice, and wholesome masa, every meal evokes the comfort of tradition.

📍 @clayfoodshoplagos

: +234909 554 4990

The Henna Place

Established in 2014, The Henna Place is Nigeria's leading traditional spa, bringing centuries old Moroccan, Northern Nigeria and Arab beauty rituals into the general wellness market. Specializing in Moroccan hammam treatments, sugar waxing, herbal hair care, and intricate henna designs, the spa provides a deeply relaxing and culturally rich self care experience.

With multiple branches across Nigeria, including three branches in Lagos, The Henna Place has become a go-to destination for brides, beauty lovers, and women seeking intentional, soul-restoring care from head to toe, it's a place to cleanse, unwind, and reconnect with yourself the traditional way.

📍 @Thehennaplace

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