



INSPIRING
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OSAYI
ALILE

MOBILISING PRIVATE CAPITAL FOR PUBLIC GOOD

CONTENTS

COVER INTERVIEW

OSAYI ALILE 4

WOMAN EXECUTIVE

Decisions in the Dark:
Leading Without Complete Information 13

FINANCIAL AdviseHER

Seven Signs It Is Time to Get a Financial Professional 15

HER POINT OF VIEW

Every Woman Needs a Sister Circle 17

GENDER INSIGHTS

Gender Matters in Advancing a Non-Kinetic Security Approach 19

WOMAN AT THE HELM

Frehiwot Tamiru 21

WE'VE GOT MEN

Michael Atingi-Ego (PhD) 23

HOLISTIC LIVING

Why Your Greatest Health Investment Is the People Around You 25

TRIBE WITH THE VIBES

The Missed Moments! 27



▶ 15

FINANCIAL AdviseHER

Seven Signs It Is Time to Get
a Financial Professional



▶ 19

GENDER INSIGHTS

Gender Matters in Advancing
a Non-Kinetic Security Approach

04

OSAYI
ALILE

MOBILISING PRIVATE CAPITAL
FOR PUBLIC GOOD



13



25



27





**Kemi
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Welcome!

Dear Readers,

Another week, another opportunity to celebrate another outstanding woman. By the way, how was your week? Mine was interesting. As an Osun State indigene, I followed all that happened at the gubernatorial elections and the summary for me is, firstly, never give up, hold on, it isn't over until it is over. Secondly, a good family is everything and with alignment, impossible is nothing.

Now to our cover guest for this week. It's easy to extend the truth in the belief in the power of sisterhood to her because, transiting from a professional top executive to your sister comes easy to her because she embodies goodness and empathy like a cloak. Well, I can speak for myself. She is indeed an encourager and it has long become her way of life. I admire how she respects growth, celebrates wins, and encourages you through your storms, assuring you, you are not alone.

She is OSAYI ALILE, Chief Executive Officer of ACT Foundation, a leading grant-making nonprofit supporting organisations addressing critical issues across Africa, including health, entrepreneurship, leadership, and environmental sustainability.

You have heard a lot about NGOs, I know, but her perspective will illuminate your understanding further. Have a nice time reading our interview with her.

Here are other articles in this edition:

HER POINT OF VIEW: Every Woman Needs a Sister Circle. By Chinyere Okorocha.

WOMAN EXECUTIVE: Decisions in the Dark: Leading Without Complete Information. By Wola Joseph-Condotti.

FINANCIAL ADVISE HER: Seven Signs It Is Time to Get a Financial Professional. By Sola Adesakin.

GENDER INSIGHTS: Gender Matters in Advancing a Non-Kinetic Security Approach. Asmau Benzies-Leo.

HOLISTIC LIVING: Why Your Greatest Health Investment Is the People Around You. By Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri.

TRIBE WITH THE VIBES: The Missed Moments! By Zainab Aderounmu.

WOMAN AT THE HELM: FREHIWOT TAMIRU, CEO, Ethio Telecom.

WE'VE GOT MEN: MICHAEL ATINGI-EGO (PhD), Governor, Bank of Uganda.

A great week ahead is what we wish you!

Take Care!



COVER INTERVIEW

OSAYI ALILE

MOBILISING PRIVATE CAPITAL
FOR PUBLIC GOOD

Kemi Ajumobi



Osayi Alile is a distinguished leader in nonprofit governance, philanthropy, and social

impact, with more than two decades of experience advancing economic and social development across Africa and globally. She is widely recognised for her strategic leadership, her ability to build cross-sector partnerships, and her commitment to designing sustainable solutions to complex societal challenges.

She currently serves as Chief Executive Officer of ACT Foundation, a leading grant-making nonprofit supporting organisations addressing critical issues across Africa, including health, entrepreneurship, leadership, and environmental sustainability. Under her leadership, the Foundation has achieved a 695% expansion in programme reach, significantly deepening its impact across the continent. She oversees a network of employees, volunteers, and partner organisations, and manages philanthropic initiatives.

In this role, Osayi provides visionary leadership for the Foundation's strategy and partnerships, working closely with governments, corporate institutions, and community organisations to deliver high-impact programmes. Her work has supported initiatives addressing gender-based violence, empowering vulnerable farming households in



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In a sector where credibility can be fragile, we have found that consistency, being the same organisation behind closed doors as we are in public, is what has allowed ACT Foundation to thrive

Northern Nigeria, and improving climate resilience and access to clean water in underserved communities across Africa.

She also served as Co-Administrator of CACOVID, Nigeria's private-sector coalition established to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In this capacity, she helped mobilize resources and coordinate large-scale national interventions, including the distribution of protective equipment to frontline healthcare workers and the establishment of emergency response centers across the country.

Earlier in her career, she served as Executive Director of FATE Foundation, one of Nigeria's leading entrepreneurship development organizations. There, she led strategic transformation efforts, expanded stakeholder partnerships, and strengthened programme evaluation and impact assessment systems, contributing to the growth of entrepreneurial training programs designed to reduce unemployment and support small business development. Beyond her executive roles, Osayi is a respected voice in governance and development. She serves on multiple boards and advisory bodies, including Women in Management, Business and Public Policy (WIMBIZ), Presco Plc, Saro Oil Palm Limited, and Zapphaire Events, among others. She has also contributed to global policy and development conversations through roles with the World Economic Forum, Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE), and the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Her leadership and impact have been recognised through numerous awards and fellowships locally and internationally.

Osayi holds a master's degree in public administration from Rutgers University and a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Lagos. She has completed executive education programmes at leading institutions



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***At ACT
Foundation, our
funding decisions
are guided by a
rigorous
assessment of each
nonprofit's
strategic fit,
potential for
impact and
institutional
strength***

including Harvard Business School, Harvard Kennedy School, Yale University, IMD Switzerland, and Lagos Business School, with a focus on nonprofit leadership, public policy, and strategic governance.

A strategic thinker with an entrepreneurial mindset, Osayi Alile remains deeply committed to strengthening institutions, advancing

inclusive economic growth, and building sustainable development ecosystems that empower individuals and communities across Africa.

► **Creating ACT Foundation's strategy to drive the 695% expansion in programme reach**

That growth did not happen by accident; it came from a deliberate shift in how we thought about scale. Early on, we made a decision to move away from working in isolation and instead build strong partnerships with local and regional nonprofits already embedded in the communities we wanted to reach. Rather than trying to do everything ourselves, we invested in strengthening the capacity of

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We work closely with our grantees to strengthen governance, operations, crisis preparedness and donor-ready systems

organisations already doing good work on the ground, in health, entrepreneurship, environment and leadership. That partnership model allowed us to extend our reach across the continent without losing the depth and quality of impact. We also became more intentional about data, using it to identify where the need was greatest and where our support could unlock the most value. The expansion rate reflects years of building trust with partners, refining our programme design based on evidence, and staying disciplined about our mission even as our footprint grew.

► **Accountability at ACT Foundation and governance practices that has improved foundation's accountability and impact**

Accountability has to be built into the culture of an organisation, not treated as a compliance exercise. For us, we must be ready to operate in honesty and fairness, even without any applause. We collaborate with organisations to drive change, and it is imperative that we stay true to what we set out to achieve. Practically, this means we have strong internal systems for monitoring and evaluating every programme we fund, so that we are measuring outcomes, not just activity. We also hold ourselves accountable to our partners and beneficiaries, not only



to our board and donors. Regular reporting, transparent grant making processes, and a willingness to be honest when a programme is not working as intended have all strengthened trust in what we do. In a sector where credibility can be fragile, we have found that consistency, being the same organisation behind closed doors as we are in public, is what has allowed ACT Foundation to thrive.

► **You certainly receive a lot of proposals. How do you assess which grantees/projects to fund?**

At ACT Foundation, our funding decisions are guided by a rigorous assessment of each nonprofit's strategic

fit, potential for impact and institutional strength. We begin by examining whether the organisation's mission, values and proposed project align with our objectives and focus areas. We then assess its ability to deliver tangible, measurable outcomes, alongside its financial health and long-term sustainability. Leadership, governance and operational capacity are equally important, as they indicate whether the organisation can manage resources effectively and scale its work. Finally, we consider the organisation's commitment to transparency and accountability, ensuring that it operates responsibly and can clearly demonstrate how funds are used and results are achieved.

► Post grant sustainability for organisations chosen

We encourage post-grant sustainability by strengthening each organisation's institutional capacity alongside funding its programmes. Early in ACT Foundation's journey, we recognised that many organisations had deep community reach and strong ideas but lacked the systems needed to absorb funding, scale their impact and remain resilient beyond a grant cycle. That insight shifted our approach from simply financing good work to building the institutions responsible for delivering it.

We work closely with our grantees to strengthen governance, operations, crisis preparedness and donor-ready systems through accelerator programmes, our Knowledge Series and access to volunteer industry experts. These experts provide practical guidance and tools that help organisations diversify their support, maintain operational continuity and navigate growth or disruption. As a result, our partners are equipped to sustain and expand their impact long after our funding ends.

► Critical partnerships for ACT and those instrumental to the organisation's growth and progress

ACT Foundation views the world through the lens of possibility. We strive to build sustainable societies and empower millions across Africa by addressing these growing challenges and vulnerabilities. This vision, however, can only be achieved through collective action.

For too long, the nonprofit sector has operated in silos, focusing on individual missions without recognising the incredible synergies that collaboration can create. Partnerships allow us to combine resources, expertise, and reach, unlocking new possibilities. Imagine environmental organisations working with social justice groups to address the root causes of climate change, or educational nonprofits partnering with healthcare providers for holistic child well-being.

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Partnerships allow us to combine resources, expertise, and reach, unlocking new possibilities

Partnerships are central to our growth because they expand our resources, expertise and reach. Over the past eight years, collaborations with more than 107 organisations across 12 African countries have helped us reach over four million beneficiaries. These nonprofit partners, industry experts and knowledge-sharing platforms, including ACTPod, have strengthened programme delivery, encouraged innovation and amplified our impact across Africa.

► Choosing where to focus investment

First, we look at Resource Availability. We need to ensure we distribute the available funds in a sustainable method so we can support projects long-term.

Second, we prioritise Quality of Impact. We do not just look at the number of people reached; we look at the depth of the change. We ask: Will this project truly transform lives, or is it just a temporary fix?

Finally, we conduct a Partner Assessment. We weigh each organization's record to see who can deliver the best outcomes.



Our goal is to find the right balance which is reaching as many people as possible and maintaining the highest standard of work. This ensures that every money we invest in creates the greatest possible ripple effect in the community.

► Sustaining factor for ACT and surviving through difficult times

The work nonprofits do requires reliable funding, and without it, impact simply stalls. One of the biggest challenges facing organisations today is the lack of funding sustainability. For too long, many nonprofits relied heavily on international aid and donor handouts without diversifying their income. Now that international support has reduced, many are left with very little to fall back on. To build long-term resilience, nonprofits must take strategic action. First, organisations must diversify their funding source so they never depend on a single stream. Second, they must invest in impact storytelling to clearly communicate their value and attract strong partnerships. Finally, nonprofits must actively collaborate with other organisations to share resources and lower



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operational costs. By taking these steps, organisations can secure their future and continue driving meaningful change.

► **In empowering vulnerable farming households in Northern Nigeria, what strategies worked best to build resilience?**

In empowering vulnerable farming households in Northern Nigeria, our most successful strategy was driving a market system development model that transforms subsistence farmers into profitable agribusiness leaders. While at it, we focused on three key areas to build lasting resilience:

First, we strengthened local farmer cooperatives and expanded financial inclusion, giving farming households the structure and capital needed to grow

sustainable businesses.

Second, we integrated climate smart agriculture and market driven systems. This ensured that farmers were not only equipped to handle environmental challenges, but were also directly connected to reliable, profitable markets for their produce.

Finally, we applied a gender transformative approach that intentionally prioritised women and youth. By placing them at the center of agribusiness and entrepreneurship, we helped families

diversify their income, build true economic security, and lift their households out of extreme poverty.

► **What role should nonprofits play versus government and private sector in closing inclusion gaps?**

Nonprofits are the connective tissue. Government sets policy and provides scale, the private sector brings capital and innovation, but nonprofits sit closest to the people and understand the texture of their needs. At ACT Foundation, our role is to strengthen the organisations doing that grassroots work, so that government policy and private sector investment actually land where they are needed most. When all three work in sync, inclusion stops being a talking point and becomes something measurable in people's lives.

► **What's a workplace outcome you're most proud of?**

Watching a small grantee organisation grow into an institution that other nonprofits look up to. That kind of transformation does not happen overnight. It takes years of consistent mentorship and honest feedback, and being able to say we walked with an organisation from an idea to a structure that now employs people, delivers programmes at scale and shapes policy conversations is something I carry with real pride. It reminds me that our job is beyond monetary funding, it is to build institutions that outlast any single partnership.

► **From FATE Foundation to ACT Foundation, what transferable leadership lessons did you take from transforming entrepreneurship development at FATE?**

Early in my career, I learnt that entrepreneurship support only works when it is structured, not scattered. Training, access to finance, and mentorship have to work together, not in isolation. I carried that same discipline into ACT Foundation, building programmes that are intentional and measurable rather than reactive. The lesson was simple but profound: good



intentions without good systems rarely produce lasting impact.

► **How did your view of partnerships evolve between FATE and ACT Foundation?**

My view of partnerships has evolved significantly as my leadership journey expanded across different contexts. Early in my career, partnerships were primarily about strategic resource mobilisation, aligning the right institutions and funders behind critical initiatives to get great ideas off the ground.

Over time, that foundation expanded into a deeper model of co-creation. Today, I view partnerships as a genuine sharing of vision, responsibility, and risk with the organisations we support. At ACT Foundation, we do not operate as distant

funders. We walk alongside our grant partners to build their internal capacity, ensure long-term sustainability, and create impact that far outlives any single funding cycle.

► **What does transparency mean at ACT Foundation—internally and externally?**

Transparency means operating with complete honesty, fairness, and open communication in everything we do, whether people are watching or not. Internally, it means holding ourselves accountable, sharing clear data on our processes, and aligning our team around honest standards.

Externally, it means staying true to our mission with our partners, being open about our impact and resources, and building trust through authentic

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Watching a small grantee organisation grow into an institution that other nonprofits look up to, is a workplace outcome I am proud of

collaboration. Ultimately, transparency is how we ensure that every partnership drives genuine, measurable change.

► **Experiences that shaped your leadership style the most over the last 20+ years**

Growing up in a large family taught me early how to understand people and their differences, and it introduced me to a life shaped by giving. Professionally,



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My view of partnerships has evolved significantly as my leadership journey expanded across different contexts

transitioning across different organisations exposed me to different scales of impact, from working directly with young people, to building systems around entrepreneurs, to ultimately building institutions that support other institutions across borders.

Each stage stretched my thinking and reminded me that leadership is ultimately about people, not positions or titles. The context changed at every turn, but the conviction stayed the same: if you invest in people with intention and consistency, the impact takes care of itself.

► **For emerging leaders in nonprofit governance, what skill should they develop early?**

Listening. Too many young leaders come in eager to prove themselves and end up designing solutions for problems they have not fully understood. The strongest nonprofit leaders I know are the ones who took time early in their careers to genuinely listen to the communities and organisations they serve. Beyond listening, I would add financial literacy. Nonprofit leaders who understand numbers, not just mission, are the ones who build organisations that survive beyond one generous donor or one good year.





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ACT Foundation's "next breakthrough" to deliver

It would be taking our proven impact measurement and storytelling model to an even deeper level across the continent. At ACT Foundation, we already track, document, and communicate the work of our grantees with high standards of excellence. However, the broader non profit sector across Africa still struggles with undocumented impact, often relying on goodwill rather than solid evidence to make the case for funding. Our next breakthrough is to lead the way in building a continent-wide culture of data backed storytelling. By continually elevating how our grantees measure and present their long-term results, we do not

just prove the value of ACT Foundation investments. We strengthen the credibility and funding readiness of the entire African social sector.

One climate or water lesson you wish more organisations understood upfront.

Environmental work cannot be separate from community ownership. Programmes that plant trees or improve water access without involving the community in the design tend to fade once the funding ends. We have seen this across our project delivery. The projects that last are the ones where the community sees the intervention as theirs, not something delivered to them from outside. The lesson is to build local stewardship into the plan from day one, not as an afterthought once the ribbon has been cut.

Being someone passionate about women development and progress, how have you seen gender inclusion change outcomes in entrepreneurship, leadership and governance?

When women are given equal access to capital, training and governance seats, the outcomes are not just fairer, they are stronger. I saw this clearly during my years chairing WIMBIZ, and I continue to see it through ACT Foundation's programmes. Organisations with women in leadership tend to build more resilient and community responsive strategies, because women often bring lived experience of the very gaps we are trying to close.

To that top female executive burdened with unending responsibilities, what do you have to say?

You do not have to carry it all at once, and you do not have to carry it alone. Give yourself permission to delegate, to rest and to ask for help. Build a team you trust, and then actually trust them. The work will still be there tomorrow, but you cannot pour into others from an empty place. Success that costs you your health or your peace is not success, it is a warning.



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Decisions in the Dark: Leading Without Complete Information

Every leadership book I have ever read quietly assumes something that is almost never true.

It assumes you will have the data. Gather the information, weigh the options, run the analysis, and the right answer will more or less reveal itself. It is a lovely idea. And in real leadership, at the levels where the decisions actually matter, it is mostly fiction.

The truth is that the biggest calls you make will almost always be made in the dark. The data will be incomplete. Or it will be contradictory, two credible people looking at the same situation and telling

you opposite things. Or it will be politically charged, where the numbers are technically fine but everybody in the room has a stake in how you read them. And you will still have to decide. That is the job.

The Judgement Nobody Warns You About

Here is the part that took me a while to make peace with. You will be judged, later, by information you did not have at the time. Someone will look back at the decision six months from now, holding facts that had not surfaced yet, and they will ask, quite reasonably, how you did not see it. And you will not be able to fully explain that on

that day, in that room, with what was actually in front of you, the call you made was the right one.

That is not unfair, exactly. It is just the reality of leading. Hindsight always shows up better dressed than foresight. And if you need every decision to look wise in the rear-view mirror, you will freeze, because the only way to guarantee that is to never decide anything at all.

So you have to make peace with this early. You will get some calls wrong. Not because you were careless, but because you were deciding with a partial picture, which is the only kind of picture leadership ever offers you.

Instinct Is Not Magic

People talk about executive instinct as though it were some mystical gift. A gut feeling. A sixth sense. I want to push back on that, because it does a disservice to how it actually works. Instinct is not magic. Instinct is compressed experience.

When a decision needs to be made and half the information is missing, an experienced leader is not guessing. They are drawing, very fast and often without noticing, on hundreds of situations they have seen before. The pattern that felt off last time. The deal that looked perfect and quietly fell apart. The person whose confidence did not match their competence. All of it is filed away, and it fires when a new situation rhymes with an old one.

That is what your gut actually is. It is your years, condensed. Which is also why you should trust it more as you go, and why you should be a little suspicious of it when you are somewhere genuinely new, where you have no experience to compress.

The Most Expensive Decision Is Often No Decision

Now, I have written before that delay is not always denial, that some waiting is genuine preparation. I believe that. But I want to be careful here, because there are two very different kinds of waiting, and leaders confuse them constantly.

There is the wait that prepares. You are gathering something specific, building capacity, letting the right timing arrive. That wait is active, and it is wise.

And then there is the wait that just avoids. You have enough to decide, you know you do, but deciding is uncomfortable, so you call one more meeting. Ask for one more analysis. Wait for a certainty that is never actually coming.

That second kind of delay is one of the most expensive decisions a leader ever

makes, and it is expensive precisely because it does not feel like a decision at all. It feels responsible. But while you wait, the window closes. The good people lose confidence. The problem you could have contained quietly grows into one everybody can see.

Choosing not to decide is still choosing. It just lets the situation choose for you.

A Word From Scripture

When Nehemiah was rebuilding the wall, enemies kept inviting him down to "talk." Four times they called. Four times it was a trap dressed up as a reasonable meeting. His answer has stayed with me for years. "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down."

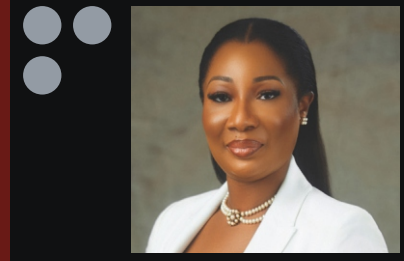
He did not have complete information about their intentions. He could not be certain it was a trap. But he had enough. He read the situation, made the call, and refused to be pulled off the wall into endless deliberation while the real work waited.

He decided in the dark, and he kept building.

Final Thoughts

If you are waiting to feel certain before you decide, you will be waiting a long time. Certainty is not coming. It rarely does, and never on the big things. What you can build instead is this. Enough humility to know your picture is partial. Enough experience, gathered honestly over the years, to read the shape of a thing before all the details arrive. And enough courage to act on a decision you cannot yet prove, and then to own it, whichever way it turns out.

You will not always be right. But a leader who decides thoughtfully in the dark will always be worth more than one who waits, safely and endlessly, for a light that was never going to come on.



Wola Joseph Condotti

Chief Executive Officer,
Eko Power Limited

Wola is the CEO of Eko Power Limited.

Prior to her current role, she was 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.

Wola Joseph Condotti was also 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

7 Signs It Is Time to Get a Financial Professional

By Sola Adesakin

Here are seven signs that this is your season.

1 You have been earning for years and cannot clearly account for where the money has gone. This is not a small thing and it is more common than anyone admits. You have worked for five, ten, fifteen years. The salary has been reasonable, sometimes good. And yet when someone asks what you have built with it, the honest answer is unclear. If your income history does not match your asset position, that gap is not something more budgeting will fix. It is something a professional can help you diagnose and restructure.

2 You hear financial terms online and they confuse rather than clarify you. Mutual funds,

treasury bills, asset allocation, portfolio rebalancing, compound interest. These words are everywhere now, and instead of making you feel empowered they make you feel further behind. A good financial professional does not talk over you. They translate the language into decisions you can actually make. Confusion is not a character flaw. It is a signal that you need a teacher, not another Instagram post.

3 Your income has increased but your financial position has not changed. This is one of the most telling signs. You are earning more than you were three years ago, but your savings have not grown proportionally, your investments are minimal or non-existent, and your lifestyle has quietly absorbed every raise. A professional helps you build a structure that captures income growth before lifestyle does.

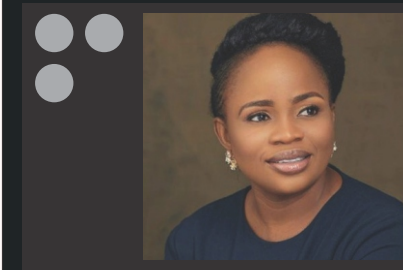
4 You have financial goals but no plan to reach them. You want to buy property. You want to build an investment portfolio. You want to set up something meaningful for your children. These are not vague wishes, they are real intentions, but they have been sitting in the same place for more than a year with no movement. A professional turns intentions into timelines, amounts, and instruments. They make the goal mechanical, not emotional.

5 You avoid looking at your finances because it stresses you. If opening your banking app fills you with anxiety rather than information, something is structurally wrong. Avoidance is not laziness. It is usually a response to feeling overwhelmed by a system you were never taught to navigate. A professional creates a framework that makes your finances legible to you, and legibility reduces anxiety faster than anything else.

6 You are making financial decisions alone that affect more than just you. A home purchase. School fees across multiple years. Supporting aging parents while raising children. Starting a business. These decisions carry weight beyond this month's cash flow, and making them without professional input is like performing surgery on yourself because you once watched a medical documentary. The stakes deserve expertise.

7 You have money sitting idle because you do not know what to do with it. There is cash in your account that has been there for months, uninvested, losing value to inflation, because you are not sure what the right move is and doing nothing feels safer than doing the wrong thing. A professional does not just tell you where to put money. They help you understand why, so the next decision and the one after that becomes yours to make with confidence.

You do your own makeup on ordinary days. But this is not an ordinary day. This is your financial life. Get the professional help.



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 Instructor™ and a member of the Personal Finance Speakers Association.

You would not walk into a room full of people for a major event with makeup you were unsure about. Not because you cannot do your own makeup, you probably do it well enough most days, but because there are moments when the stakes are higher, the look needs to be sharper, and you know that a professional hand will take you from presentable to polished in ways your own hand simply cannot.

Money works the same way. Too many women describe their relationship with money as bad, as though it were a personality trait they were born with rather than a skill they were never

properly taught. Your relationship with money is not bad. It is untrained. And the distance between where you are financially and where you want to be is often not more discipline or more income. It is the right guidance applied at the right time.

You do your own makeup on Tuesday mornings. But for the wedding, the board dinner, the keynote, you bring in someone who does it differently. Your finances deserve the same logic. There are seasons where managing on your own is perfectly adequate, and there are seasons where a professional coach or wealth adviser is the difference between going in circles and genuinely moving forward.

HER POINT OF VIEW



Every Woman Needs a Sister Circle

Chinyere Okorochoa

Men have always understood the power of the boys' club. They play golf together, meet for drinks, belong to clubs, exchange information, recommend one another and build relationships long before they need them.

Women need our own version of this. I call it a sister circle: women who know you, believe in you, tell you the truth, celebrate your victories and help steady you when life does not go according to plan.

And contrary to the tired narrative that "women don't support women," my experience has been quite the opposite. Some of the greatest encouragement, affirmation and support I have received throughout my life and career has come from other women.

You Need Different Sisters for Different Seasons

Not every friend will play the same role, nor should she. You need the cheerleader. The woman who believes in you, sometimes more than you believe in yourself. When you tell her about an opportunity, her instinct is not, "Why her?" but "Why not her?"

You need the comforter. When you don't get the promotion, lose an opportunity or simply have a terrible week, she reminds you that one disappointment does not define you. Then you need the friend who will tell you off.

She loves you enough to say, "You were wrong." Or, "You are overreacting." Or simply, "Stop making excuses and get on with it."

Every successful woman needs someone who is unimpressed by her title. And you need the accountability sister. You told her you were going to apply for

that role, write that book, start that business or ask for the promotion. Three months later, she asks, "So, have you done it?" And she doesn't let you change the subject.

Sometimes Sisterhood Looks Like Karaoke

One of my girlfriend groups has a simple tradition that I absolutely love. Once a month, one of us takes responsibility for organising our "date." We go Dutch and choose something fun to do together.

Sometimes it is dinner at a lovely restaurant. Another month it might be the beach, karaoke, a spa date or even a dance class.

For those few hours, we are not defined by our job titles, deadlines, families or responsibilities. We laugh, talk, catch up and simply enjoy one another.

Another group of girlfriends and I occasionally meet for lunch. We catch up on what is happening in our lives and inevitably talk about our successes, milestones, challenges and next moves.

There is something powerful about sitting at a table where another woman's success does not threaten yours. We celebrate one another. And sometimes that celebration is exactly the fuel you need to keep going.

Sisterhood Is Career Infrastructure

Female friendship is not only good for the soul. It can also be good for your career.

Women share information. We make introductions. We send each other opportunities. We recommend one another for positions, boards and speaking engagements. We share lessons from difficult bosses, negotiations, career transitions and mistakes.

Sometimes a friend sees something in you that you have stopped seeing in

yourself. And when disappointment comes, as it inevitably will, your circle reminds you that your career is bigger than one closed door. That kind of emotional anchoring matters.

But Sisterhood Requires Intention

Adult female friendships do not maintain themselves. Careers become demanding. Children arrive. Parents age. People relocate. Calendars become impossible.

If you are not intentional, women you once spoke to every week can become people you exchange birthday messages with once a year. So create rituals. Our monthly dates work because somebody takes responsibility for making them happen.

Your own ritual might be a quarterly dinner, Sunday walk, WhatsApp group, annual girls' trip or monthly Zoom call. The format doesn't matter. Consistency does. And choose your circle carefully.

Look for women whose values you respect, who can celebrate your success wholeheartedly and who can tell you the truth privately when you need to hear it. Most importantly, become the friend you are looking for.

Make the introduction. Send the opportunity. Show up for the celebration. Make the call after the disappointment. Correct with love. Encourage without flattery. Your sister circle does not need to be large. It simply needs to be real.

Career success can become lonely, particularly as you rise. But you do not have to make the journey alone.

Because from her point of view, every woman needs women in her corner. Find your sisters. Make time for them. Celebrate them loudly. And as you rise, make sure they are rising with you.



Chinyere Okorochoa

Partner in the Law Firm of
JACKSON, ETTI & EDU

With over three decades of experience as a trailblazer in the legal profession, Chinyere Okorochoa has established herself as a leading voice in law, leadership, and career growth for women. As a partner in one of the most prestigious law firms in the country, she has not only navigated the complexities of a competitive industry but has consistently broken barriers to become a sought-after leader, mentor, and advocate for women in the workplace.

Chinyere's career journey is a testament to her resilience, vision, and versatility. She has held numerous leadership positions, served as a director on multiple boards, and is widely admired for her strategic thinking and ability to inspire teams toward excellence. Beyond her professional accomplishments, she has also graced stages as a speaker, sharing insights on leadership, career growth, and the unique challenges women face in their professional lives.

A devoted wife and proud mother of three, Chinyere understands firsthand the challenges of balancing the demands of a thriving career with a fulfilling personal life. Through her own experiences, she has mastered the art of work-life integration, demonstrating that women can achieve extraordinary professional success without sacrificing the joys of family and personal well-being.

Her career development platform, Heels & Ladders, is dedicated to mentoring and guiding women who aspire to redefine success, achieve career mastery, and lead with purpose. Whether you're navigating leadership challenges, striving for balance, or looking to amplify your influence, Chinyere's expertise will help you transform ambition into achievement.

GENDER INSIGHTS

Gender Matters in Advancing a Non-Kinetic Security Approach

Asmau Benzies Leo



Nigeria stands at a critical juncture in its security trajectory. The persistence of insurgency in the Northeast, banditry across the Northwest and North Central, and separatist tensions in the Southeast reflects not only the scale of insecurity but also its deeply rooted structural drivers. These challenges continue to erode livelihoods, weaken social cohesion, and undermine national development. As highlighted in the Terms of Reference for the National Peace Framework, the complexity of Nigeria's security environment demands a comprehensive, coordinated, and inclusive response that goes beyond military interventions.

At the centre of this response is the development of a National Peace Framework led by the Office of the

National Security Adviser (ONSA). As Nigeria's central coordinating hub for national security, ONSA is uniquely positioned to drive a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach that integrates both kinetic and non-kinetic strategies into a unified doctrine. This initiative reflects a strategic shift: from reactive, force-based responses to preventive, inclusive, and institutionally grounded peacebuilding. The need for such a framework is underscored by the limitations of kinetic approaches. While military operations are essential in containing immediate threats, they have not sufficiently addressed the root causes of conflict, such as poverty, marginalisation, weak governance, and social exclusion. The National Peace Framework therefore seeks to reduce overreliance on force by empowering civil institutions, communities, and local actors to play proactive roles in peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

A defining strength of the framework lies in its institutional architecture and the collaborative

process underpinning its development. The Directorate of State Liaison (DSL) within ONSA serves as the focal coordinating body, providing strategic, technical, and management oversight throughout the review and finalisation process. The DSL ensures coherence across national and sub-national actors while facilitating continuous engagement among stakeholders.

The development of the framework is anchored on a multi-layered governance structure that reflects inclusivity, technical rigor, and policy coherence. The inauguration of the Expert Review Team (ERT) to review the framework marked a critical milestone in this process. Comprising leading national and international experts in peacebuilding, security, governance, and gender, the ERT is tasked with reviewing thematic pillars, aligning the framework with regional and continental peace and security architectures, and ensuring that it is both contextually relevant and globally informed. Complementing the ERT is the Technical Working Group (TWG), which serves as a coordination and quality assurance platform. Drawn largely from development partners and key institutions, the TWG provides continuous technical feedback, ensures alignment with existing policies, and facilitates inter-agency collaboration throughout the process. Notably, the TWG includes representation from strategic institutions such as the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) and the SPRiNG Programme, reflecting the integration of national expertise and international support mechanisms.

The Harmonisation and Drafting Team (HDT) plays a pivotal role in consolidating inputs from the ERT and TWG, ensuring that the final framework is coherent, actionable, and aligned with national priorities. The HDT is responsible for synthesising diverse perspectives, conducting literature reviews of existing national and international frameworks, and producing a unified draft that can be validated and adopted.

This layered structure is further strengthened by the active involvement of relevant Ministries, Departments, and Agencies

(MDAs), as well as key security institutions. These include the Defence Headquarters, Department of State Services, Nigeria Police Force, and several federal ministries such as Women Affairs, Justice, Youth Development, and Humanitarian Affairs. Their participation ensures that the framework is not only comprehensive but also implementable across sectors, bridging the gap between policy and practice.

Beyond national actors, the framework benefits from the strategic engagement of regional and international partners, including the European Union Delegation to Nigeria and ECOWAS aligned mechanisms. The requirement for alignment with ECOWAS and African Union peace and security architectures underscores Nigeria's leadership role within the region and ensures that the framework contributes to broader continental stability.

Equally important is the structured process guiding the framework's development. Beginning with the inauguration of the expert teams, the process includes desk reviews, stakeholder consultations, iterative drafting, harmonisation, and validation. This iterative and consultative approach ensures that the framework is grounded in evidence, responsive to stakeholder needs, and reflective of Nigeria's diverse conflict realities.

Central to the success of this framework is its emphasis on non-kinetic approaches, strategies that address the underlying drivers of conflict rather than merely its manifestations. These include governance reforms, access to justice, livelihood support, social protection, and community-based dialogue and reconciliation mechanisms. By focusing on prevention, resilience, and social cohesion, the framework offers a pathway toward sustainable peace. Within this context, gender emerges as a critical cross-cutting priority. The initiative explicitly mandate the integration of Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) across all

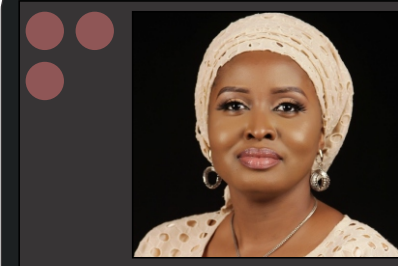
stages of the framework's development. This reflects a growing recognition that peacebuilding efforts are most effective when they are inclusive and representative.

Gender matters because conflict affects men, women, boys, and girls differently, and these differences shape both vulnerabilities and capacities for peace. Women, in particular, are often disproportionately impacted by violence yet remain underrepresented in decision making processes. At the same time, they play vital roles as mediators, community organisers, and agents of social cohesion. Integrating their perspectives enhances the quality and sustainability of peace interventions.

Moreover, the inclusion of women, youth, and other marginalised groups strengthens the legitimacy of the framework and fosters greater community ownership. It ensures that policies are responsive to local realities and that interventions address the needs of those most affected by conflict. By embedding gender and social inclusion into its core design, the National Peace Framework aligns with global best practices and reinforces Nigeria's commitments to inclusive governance.

The National Peace Framework represents more than a policy document, it is a strategic shift in how Nigeria understands and addresses insecurity. By institutionalising a coordinated, inclusive, and non-kinetic approach, it creates the foundation for long-term stability, resilience, and national cohesion.

In a country as diverse and complex as Nigeria, peace cannot be achieved through force alone. It must be built through inclusive institutions, equitable policies, and sustained engagement with communities. The National Peace Framework, driven by ONSA, supported by national and international partners, and strengthened by gender-responsive approaches, offers a credible and transformative pathway toward that goal.



Dr. Asmau Benzies Leo

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

Dr. Asmau Benzies 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.



WOMAN AT THE HELM

Frehiwot Tamiru

CEO, Ethio Telecom

Frehiwot Tamiru is a vibrant and visionary Ethiopian leader, currently serving as the Chief Executive Officer of Ethio Telecom since 2018. Known for her bright personality, technical expertise, and business acumen, Frehiwot has become one of Ethiopia's most admired public sector leaders, driving remarkable growth and modernisation at one of Africa's largest telecom operators.

Born and raised in Addis Ababa, around the Beliere area, Frehiwot began her career at Ethio Telecom immediately after graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems. Over seven years, she rose through the ranks from programmer to Deputy Manager before venturing into entrepreneurship. She founded Doxa IT Technology Plc, leading it successfully for another seven years.

Her journey came full circle when, following a significant political shift in Ethiopia, she was personally called by the Prime Minister to lead Ethio Telecom. Before becoming CEO, she also served as a Board Member of Ethio Telecom.

Frehiwot holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the Open University, UK, complementing her technical background. Her leadership excellence has been recognised internationally receiving several distinguished awards like being named among the 2023 Laureates of Choiseul 100 Africa Economic Leaders of Tomorrow and Honored with the 2022 CEO Awards, celebrated in Ghana and Mauritius.

She also contributed to public service through her work at the

Regional Ministry of Construction, Transport, and Communication in Afar Region.

Under her leadership, Ethio Telecom has achieved significant subscriber and revenue growth, despite increasing competition and industry liberalisation. Her approachable style, clarity in communication, and smart decision-making have earned her widespread love and respect from the Ethiopian public.

She is fully dedicated to her mission and she continues to inspire a new generation of Ethiopian leaders through her resilience, authenticity, and transformational leadership.



WE'VE GOT MEN

Michael Atingi-Ego (PhD)

Governor, Bank of Uganda

Michael was appointed by His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni as Governor of the Bank of Uganda on 16 February 2025. Before that, he served as Deputy Governor of the Bank of Uganda from 23 April 2020.

In his role as Deputy Governor, Michael helped safeguard Uganda's economic stability by supporting efforts to control inflation and maintain foreign exchange stability.

His work earned him recognition from African Banker Magazine, which named him "Central Bank Governor of the Year" in 2022, citing his efforts to rein in inflation while sustaining foreign exchange stability in Uganda.

While on leave from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Michael served as Executive Director of the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute of Eastern and Southern Africa (MEFMI) from September 2018. MEFMI is a multinational capacity-building

institute headquartered in Harare, Zimbabwe.

During his tenure at MEFMI, he led initiatives to keep the institute's offerings responsive to a rapidly changing capacity-building environment, including:

- Upgrading e-learning to suit dynamic needs, such as those created by COVID-19-related social distancing.

- Embedding the Theory of Change into the Monitoring and Evaluation framework to strengthen product effectiveness and value for money.

- Introducing flexible work arrangements to improve staff productivity and work-life balance, enabling sustained service delivery during pandemic-related lockdowns.

- Reviewing operational manuals, procedures, and guidelines to align them with international best practices.

- Strengthening collaboration with capacity-building partners and expanding service delivery to the Lusophone countries through Portuguese-speaking synergies.

Separately, as Deputy Director in the IMF's African Department since June 2008, he contributed significantly to improving the impact of capacity development, including by modernising monetary policy frameworks in developing countries and further strengthening institutional effectiveness.

Having started his career at the BoU in August 1984, he advanced to the role of Executive Director Research. His research and publications focused on macroeconomic and financial policies and statistics. He was an eminent resource in capacity building and a consultant on monetary operations and balance of payments in east, west, and southern Africa.

Michael holds a PhD in Economics from Liverpool University (1996), a MSc. Economics in International Economics and Banking from Cardiff Business School, University of Wales (1991), and a BSc. Economics from Makerere University.

HOLISTIC LIVING



Why Your Greatest Health Investment Is the People Around You

By Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri

Jumoke began the year with a familiar promise: this year would be different. She bought new workout clothes, stocked her kitchen with healthy foods and committed to exercising regularly. Like millions of people, she was determined to become healthier. Yet within weeks the motivation faded, the gym visits stopped and the healthy routines quietly disappeared. It was not because she lacked discipline, time or resources. She was missing something far more powerful, community.

Many of us approach wellbeing as a personal project, believing success depends entirely on willpower. We download fitness apps, purchase supplements and make ambitious resolutions, yet overlook one of the strongest predictors of long-term health: the quality of our relationships. Holistic living reminds us that human beings are not designed to thrive in isolation. Our physical, emotional, mental, social and even spiritual wellbeing are deeply interconnected.

Jumoke worked remotely, lived alone and rarely interacted with neighbours or friends. Without realising it, isolation had become part of her lifestyle. Research has consistently shown that supportive relationships

influence our health behaviours. We are more likely to stay active, eat nourishing meals, manage stress effectively and persevere through setbacks when we are encouraged by people who genuinely care about us.

Health is contagious. So are unhealthy habits. Families influence how children eat, sleep and move. Friends shape our attitudes towards exercise, alcohol, smoking and self-care. Workplaces influence stress levels, productivity and emotional wellbeing. Communities determine whether healthy choices become easy or difficult. The people around us quietly shape the lives we eventually live.

This is why holistic living extends beyond nutrition and exercise. It is about creating an environment where healthy choices are celebrated rather than discouraged. Walking with a friend, cooking together as a family, joining a community exercise group, attending faith gatherings, volunteering and checking on neighbours are all investments in wellbeing. They nourish not only the body but also the mind, relationships and sense of purpose.

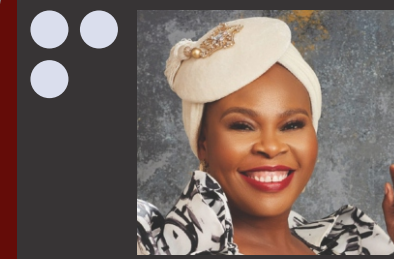
When life becomes difficult, community often becomes our greatest medicine. Encouragement during setbacks strengthens resilience. Accountability

keeps us moving when motivation disappears. Shared victories make healthy living enjoyable rather than exhausting. The journey becomes sustainable because no one is walking alone.

Perhaps the greatest lesson from Jumoke's story is that lasting transformation rarely happens in isolation. Success is easier when surrounded by people who inspire us to become better versions of ourselves. Every conversation that uplifts, every family meal, every walk with a friend and every supportive community is helping to build healthier individuals and stronger societies.

As we rethink what it means to live well, we must move beyond the belief that health belongs only in hospitals and clinics. It begins in our homes, workplaces, schools, neighbourhoods and friendships. It grows where people encourage one another to make better choices every day.

Your greatest investment is not simply the food on your plate or the number of steps on your fitness tracker. It is also the people who walk beside you, encourage you when you stumble and remind you that wellbeing is never a solo journey. Healthy communities create healthy people, and healthy people build healthier nations.



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.

The Missed Moments!

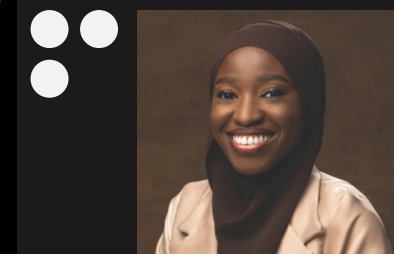
“Why didn't I just stand up to share my idea? If only I had, I would've got the opportunity to manage the project, if only I took the moment. I would have said, 'Ladies and gentlemen...’”

Do you recall a moment you wished you spoke up, or said something differently; those missed moments where you fixate on how you'd have said or done something? If only you had!? I had one of those moments recently. In fact, I have had them so many times. The problem wasn't really a lack of confidence but an aversion to spontaneity. For some of us, it's crucial that we know exactly what we planned to say or do. The key word is plan. There's always a plan, so unexpected moments are often... very unexpected. What makes a spontaneous person that way? Being spontaneous means acting on your intuition without being frozen into inaction by overthinking. It means you're fully at ease with the present, and not encumbered by future anxieties or past failures. Spontaneity may come naturally for people who display high levels of

curiosity and strong desires to explore and experience new events. However, for others, it's anxiety-inducing.

How often do you find yourself taking the exact same route to work everyday, even when there are alternatives? How many times have you visited that restaurant, not because it's your favourite, but because it feels familiar, and you 'just like the taste of your mouth afterwards?' or you just don't want to take chances. I remember my time in Helsinki, I blatantly refused to try a dish I didn't recognise because I had tried something really terrible on day 2, so I stuck to rice and yoghurt. Basically, the brain craves familiarity. It treats familiar patterns as safe zones, and prefers to conserve your energy by sticking to what it recognises.

However, that can also keep your life small, and vanilla-like. I remember once in secondary school, when I realised I'd never been to the staff quarters before. Of course I had no reason to be there, but I was curious. Did I act on it? Absolutely not! I was afraid of the consequences, which underscores the fact that our gravitation toward the familiar stems from the need for safety. The problem isn't our habits



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.

or familiar zones, the problem arises when they keep us from adapting and growing or taking up such crucial moments like those missed moments.

Obviously, there is a thin line between spontaneity and self destruction. The idea isn't to act on whims all the time, but to strike a balance, and recognise moments you can't go home to plan for. You just have to seize them once they appear. But, you also have to train your mind to see such moments. For instance, it's sitting in a different chair from the same one you've sat in the conference room for the past few months. It's taking a different route from the one you've taken for the past many years. It's counting down to 5 when you want to seize a moment before your brain freezes into inaction.

This week, take some time to reflect on your patterns; are they keeping you stuck or helping you stay grounded? Do you need to embrace more security or curiosity? And, most importantly, how will you embrace discomfort without running into hiding?

Woman Executive



Wola Joseph Condotti
Chief Executive Officer, Eko Electricity
Distribution Company

When the Sector is Bigger Than You: Leading in Systemically Broken Industries

There is a kind of leadership burden of running a company inside a sector that is, honestly broken. You inherit ambitious targets. You put together a competent team. You write a credible strategy. And then you spend most of your week fighting problems you did not create, cannot fully fix, and will still somehow be blamed for when they land on the evening news.

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Financial AdviseHER



Sola Adesakin
Founder and Lead Coach,
Smart Stewards

Live for the Right Things: A Smarter Financial Approach for 2026

Every New Year comes with pressure. New goals, expectations. New standards of "success" defined mostly by what people are showing online. But in 2026 is going to be financially different for you, not because you spent louder or tried harder to impress. It will be because you lived for the right things.

Financial progress is less about dramatic results and more about quiet alignment.

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HOLISTIC LIVING



Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri
MD/CEO Pinnacle Medical Services Ltd.

Your Greatest Investment Is the Life You Build Every Day

When Maggie looked in the mirror, she believed the extra weight she had gained was her greatest problem. It was only the visible sign of a life that had quietly drifted out of balance. Stress had replaced rest, convenience had replaced nourishment, and survival had replaced intentional living. Her transformation began not with a miracle diet but with one decision: to care for herself differently. That single decision gradually changed her body, restored her confidence, lifted her mood, strengthened her relationships and gave her a renewed sense of purpose.

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Her Point Of View



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

The "Support Role Cycle". Why So Many Brilliant Women Are Overlooked at Work

Recently, I had a conversation with a female executive that stayed with me long after our meeting ended. On paper, she was exceptional. Highly competent. Dependable. Intelligent. Hardworking. The kind of professional every organisation says it wants. Responsibilities that were often beyond her job description.

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Gender Insights



Asmau Benzie Leo (Ph.D)
ED of the Centre for Nonviolence and Gender
Advocacy in Nigeria (CENGAIN)

Nigeria in 2026: Why True Security Must Have a Woman's Face

As Nigerians step into 2026, one truth remains undeniable: insecurity in Nigeria is not gender neutral. From banditry affected communities in the West to displacement camps in the Northeast, women and girls are not merely collateral victims of conflict—they are deliberately targeted, systematically affected, and often left without access to justice.

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WITH BES



Zainab Aderounmu
Youth Advisor & Ambassador
Delegation of the European Union
to Nigeria & ECOWAS

Nigeria in 2026: Why True Security Must Have a Woman's Face

The New Year has begun and making a sense of what you want may feel overwhelming. You may be tempted to 'see how it goes' instead of setting concrete goals, but I don't recommend because what you don't measure, you can't multiply. On that note, here's a step-by-step process of setting your goals for the new year.

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Published in **The PUNCH** every Tuesday.



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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