

■ The World We Want for Women: Re-echoing the  
Voices of Aspiring Young Girls

■ Why Women Should Take More  
Breaks & Travel More

■ Brows Raised at The Absence of  
Women on The Endocrine Panel

# AMAZONS *...foremost voice for women in Africa and across the globe* WATCH



■ Rehmah Kasale

■ Angela Lee

■ Stephanie Cohn Rupp

DRIVING THE  
**SHE** for **SHE**  
REVOLUTION



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# DRIVING THE SheForShe REVOLUTION

Ample evidence from previous and current research have highlighted the spiralling contributions of women and their involvement in inspiring positive change, impact and investments across the socio-economic ecosystem of the world. These include an audacious army of women who have resolved to create a funding universe that works for women and girls- a mission which according to the premise of Vicki Saunders, CEO of Coralus (formerly SheEO), could become the major source of funding for the next generation of female entrepreneurs. Saunders' idea suggests that "If 1,000 women in a city each invest \$1,000, that's \$1 million available for lending to 10 female-run companies, which could potentially generate a billion dollars for 10,000 female entrepreneurs every year, in perpetuity."

In this edition, we shine the spotlight on such women social impact investors including Angela Lee, an educator, entrepreneur, angel investor, and founder of four startups, including the New

York City-based investor network '37 Angels,' who has been working to reduce the gender gap in angel investing for over a decade. Likewise, Stephanie Cohn Rupp, the CEO of Veris Wealth Partners, with more than 20 years of global impact investing experience, shares her perspective on gender lens investment and its importance in the present-day world.

The inspirational story of Rehmah Kasule, a Ugandan social entrepreneur who just at age 5, employed an audacious approach to starting and stepping into purpose, is one feature, which indicates that this edition is not age restricted. It should be read by young girls with budding and inquisitive minds and upcoming/established women leaders who continue to strive to break through barriers and limitations in a bid to take bold steps towards their future and the future of women generally. After all, although we all, both young and adult women face unique challenges, the factors that define these challenges are relatable and common.

One of such challenges, which was highlighted in Yetunde Asika's ironically titled op-ed, 'Women Are the Biggest Fraudsters,' was the invisible thread that underpin most of the articles in this edition, either implicitly or explicitly. The article highlighted the existence of the imposter syndrome issue, which has become a mental battle for most women who are not just making news across the globe but also addressing diverse challenges that face women and the society at large.

The same Imposter Syndrome (IS) issue resonated and resurfaced in our exclusive interview with Angela Lee where she highlighted that one reason for the gender gap in angel investing is the issue of women feeling under qualified to become an angel investor, which according to her is a recurring issue that women tend to experience in pursuit of different pathways.

However, although notable research highlighted in Victory Enokela's Science communication feature also confirmed the existence of IS in women who have the same qualifications as men, yet feel less qualified to run for a public, political or leadership role; these findings seemed to proffer a solution to this IS impediment- 'the Role Model (RM) Effect.' The fundamental premise of this RM effect suggests that having more women in leadership positions is likely to have a long-term effect on improving the representation of women in leadership spheres.

Although the role model concept is not new in discussions about women leadership representation, the findings highlighted in this feature article were grounded in evidence based research, which indicated that such role model effect holds figurative and practical value for women considering leadership positions such as a political career.

However, Stephanie Cohn, CEO Veris Wealth, USA and one of the interviewees in this edition suggested that one effective approach to progress beyond "the business case for gender lens investing (investing for financial return

while also considering the benefits to women), and alienate the bias around investors backing majorly male entrepreneurs with millions of dollars, is to also create a mind-set kind of revolution through public campaigns and various media to show women truly as financial leaders, not just political leaders, mothers, teachers or academics." Stephanie further proposes that such an approach, which will require both 'inflows of capital and storytelling,' may be the 'real influence' that could change the mindset or psychology in the world of business or venture capital globally and could effectively bend the arc of finance for women and girls.

These thought-provoking approaches re-echo the stories of aspiring young girls submitted for the Amazons Watch Magazine's first ever 'The World We Want for Women (4W)' Short Stories Series. A surge of mixed emotions enveloped me as I read through these insightful pieces from the world's next generation of women. On one hand, I was so excited at the birth of something revolutionary, something that is likely to orchestrate and define the future of women in the coming decades while on the other hand, I experienced an uncontrollable heart-wrenching feeling as I visualised the traumatic and devastating experiences women face in today's world as evident in the stories of these youngsters.

In conclusion, this edition is packed with inspiring stories of women who despite the 'Imposter Syndrome' issue, have dared the impossible and charted paths that continue to bring meaning, empowerment and development to the lives of women worldwide. The underlying message, which seems subtle but could be relevant as a step towards overcoming IS, is to "own your achievements and not transfer the rights of ownership to anyone else." Therefore, this inspiration-rich edition has more than ever triggered a renewed resolve in all of us at Amazons Watch Magazine. We resolve to continually project the stories of women venture capitalists, investors and entrepreneurs who shape the World of Finance, Business and Investments for the benefit of women, girls and global socio-economic development whilst projecting the world we want for women through the lens of young girls.

*Dr. Mrs. Ibifuro Ken-Giami*

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While great care has been taken in the receipt and handling of materials, production and accuracy of content in the magazine, the publishers will not accept any omissions, which may occur. The publishers would like to thank all those companies and individuals who took part in the magazine and wish them every success.



*To be wealthy, powerful,  
or famous does not matter to me.  
Starting a good social ripple that will  
turn into an ocean wave matters  
to me.*



— **Petek Kabakci**

One of the most popular conversations regarding celebrity criticism is 'Social Impact.' There is always the question of whether a celebrity has used their power and influence for good. The new rise of 'influencers' has also called into question the word's actual meaning. What is an influencer? What does one have to do to be categorized as an influencer? According to social media definitions, all one has to do to become an influencer is gather a significant following on a social media platform. Still, like many other things, social media is not always on the same page as the real world.

This edition will discuss real-life influencers, the women and institutions who create social impact in our societies. These women do not always have a significant following, but even though they might, their impact is measured by the effort and the mark they leave in society. The beautiful thing about these social impact investors is that they do not only touch their immediate surroundings, but these women have created ripple effects that will be felt for years to come.

One of the social impact investors featured on the cover of this edition is Rehmah Kasule. I had the privilege of sitting with her and listening to her story. The story of a determined 5-year-old who made sure her voice was heard. Listening to her, it was easy to become enthralled and shocked by how relatable her story was. It was not relatable because of the parallels of our lives; no, it was relatable because she had moments throughout her life where she arrived at crossroads. The crossroad of facing a situation you feel is not right, but the choice of staying silent and oblivious is easier and smoother as opposed to the choice of ruffling feathers. The 'subservient-silent' narrative that has been drilled into our heads since we were little girls is hard to shake off even as we grow into mature women. Rehmah refuses that; she made all the scary choices. She took the path that ruffled feathers, and because of that choice, hundreds of Ugandan women and youth are beneficiaries.

In addition to Rehmah's story and achievements, Amazons Watch Magazine brings you an edition filled with women of power and influence who happen to be renowned social impact investors. Having influence or being an influencer will never be just about the number of people following you on social media. Your legacy will always remain as a popular individual. The question a real influence should aim to answer is whether you invested in the future of your society. Have you created a good ripple in your society? And how can you teach others to do the same? Rehmah's story and the stories of all the amazing women featured in this edition can stand as the perfect guide on how you can be the social impact investor the world needs.

**Tanya Maswaure**, Associate Editor



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# Stephanie Cohn Rupp:

## Expanding The Frontiers Of Gender-Lens Investing Through Social Impact Investment Opportunities

*According to the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), Gender Lens Investing (GLI) is a strategy or approach to investing that takes into consideration gender-based factors across the investment process to advance gender equality and better inform investment decisions.*

*In this edition, Amazons Watch shines the spotlight on Stephanie Cohn Rupp, the Chief Executive Officer of Veris Wealth Partners, with more than 20 years of global impact investing experience. Stephanie has focused on building scalable, profitable, sustainable businesses during her career; based in Denver, USA, she helps lead the firm's impact wealth management and growth strategies, financial performance, and client experience.*

*Stephanie is also a Board Director of the U.S. Sustainable Investment Forum, a member of the ImpactAssets 50 Review Committee, and an advisory board member to Paris-based Investisseurs et Partenaires' investment fund for Education in Africa. In addition, she is a French and U.S. binational and co-authored The ImpactAssets Handbook in 2017 with Jed Emerson.*

*In this exclusive interview, Dr Mrs Ibifuro Ken – Giami, CEO of the Amazons Watch Magazine, sits with Stephanie Cohn Rupp as she shares insights into the social impact investment sector and its prospects for the future. **Excerpts:***

“

*What I liked about the approach and at the time I got into this space through microfinance, is that the poor women that were recipients of these loans were dealt with as businesswomen.*

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**AWM:** From your career trajectory, you have been in the financial services and social impact investment industry for over a decade now. I want to know if social impact investment resonates with you personally, beyond your professional interests and achievements. In other words, I am asking why impact investing and what catalysed your interest in this line of work?

businesses for which they were responsible for. So, it was more of a partnership approach and a "human-to-human and on a much more equal footing than through grants, etc. What particularly interested me throughout my career, from microfinance to gender lens investing, is the empowerment of women, as leaders, as beneficiaries, and that's women and girls. So, the power

of investing you get into; it is looking at non-financial outcomes, and whether it is positive or negative externalities, and trying to target a specific market. In this case, the reason for gender lens investing is that all the data points to the fact that wealth creation, property ownership, political power, etc., have historically concentrated in the hands of men. In my previous career, I worked in impact investing for Pierre Omidyar and led the property rights investing portfolio.

There I discovered that the privately held landmass of the world is 98% owned by men. Unbelievable right? So, if it's not public lands that sovereign governments own, then they are private lands, which are 98% owned by men. I'd say many professionals in this space of investing realise the world of finance is dominated by men, asset ownership is dominated by men. Starting in 2010, Veris Wealth started conducting research on strategies that are targeted towards bringing assets to women as entrepreneurs, Fortune 500 companies that have women CEOs, and boards with at least 30% women, etc. And since 2012, we've seen an incredible explosion of products focused on women.

For example, ElleVest is an asset management firm focused on women in leading roles. But for us, it's not just about women in power and publicly traded companies; it's also for women that we can serve through private debt, loans, consumer loans, board appointments, executive appointments, etcetera. But it is more than that, it is also companies honouring women as mothers through maternity leave.

The United States is the only industrialised country with no federal maternity leave policy. So, if you go on leave, you're considered disabled; so, as a result, you also don't get all your pay, etc. So, it's about women at work, women as entrepreneurs, and then also pay equity. That's the other thing; historically, women are paid about 80 cents on the dollar for men. So, a lot of it is pushing companies



**Stephanie:** Before getting into impact investing, I worked in much more traditional international development organizations, and I found it extremely political and to some extent, condescending. I'm just being succinct here because it was pretty condescending. A lot of approaches to project management for international development were from really from superior hands to inferior hands, and I found that incredibly disturbing. What I liked about the approach and at the time I got into this space through microfinance, is that the poor women that were recipients of these loans were dealt with as businesswomen. They were treated as owners of assets in the

dynamic brought me to think about social and environmental change through business, and thinking of it in terms of everyone has skin in the game versus I am the World Bank, the IMF, the French International, or the bilateral Agency for Development. These organisations do fabulous work, but those, I think, are not meant for sustained economic development. So that was why I wanted to get into social impact investing from a human perspective.

**AWM:** Can you tell us more about gender lens investment and its importance in the present-day world?

**Stephanie:** Gender lens investing is generally having a lens in what type

we invest in to look at pay equity metrics, which is a huge gamut of issues.

**AWM:** Can you tell us more about how your organization, Veris Wealth connects female entrepreneurs with investors generally, or/and female investors in particular?

**Stephanie:** We select investment managers that we consider the best in class. So, there's one degree of separation. And those managers then select the entrepreneurs that they invest in. For example, one of our star Venture Capital managers is an African-American woman who founded an unbelievable fund focused on financing African-American entrepreneurs, and preferably women.

She invests mostly in women of colour in the United States who have thriving businesses and employs women of colour. So, the underlying businesses are not necessarily social impact oriented but could be a chain of restaurants, they could be hairdressers' salons; I mean, it could be a whole slew of things, but they are wealth generators, and they're also targeting a population that we wish to serve. And our clients want more and more of those products.

They don't want to do traditional investing. Although we invest in public markets as well, when it comes to private markets, we want absolutely racial and gender equity throughout everything they do. So, we select the managers, and we're constantly meeting managers. We also have a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) approach to all our investments. So, even if it's an environmental strategy like regenerative agriculture or forest management or whatever the strategy is, we want to target first, and we say it very intentionally, investment managers and underlying entrepreneurs who are people of colour. So, we're trying to shift and correct an institutional wrong that has happened for centuries. There's a very intentional strategy to do that, and that's why our clients come to us.

**AWM:** Does Veris Wealth Partners

have plans to expand its investments into Africa and for African women?

**Stephanie:** Yes, we have more and more demand for non-US market-based investment managers. By the way, I'm also an advisor to a French-based investment firm Investisseurs et Partenaires' investment fund for Education in Africa, which not only focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa, but Francophone Africa specifically, which is the most under-invested part of Africa.

Anglophone Africa has more attention from U.S. investors than francophone or lusophone, but the issue we face at this stage is relationships. We're building those relationships but don't yet have them ready and strong enough. We have a few pipelines of global players that have investments in South Africa, West Africa, and India. So, we have global strategies in place, but we don't yet have an African-focused fund. I'd love to see one on our platform.

**AWM:** For seven consecutive years, Veris Wealth has been honoured by B Corporation on its list of companies voted for the best for world achievement, which is no doubt a major milestone. Can you share some of the steps and strategies the organization utilised that allowed it to attain such heights of recognition, and some lessons investment firms can learn from order social impact?

**Stephanie:** The B lab approach to scoring evolves year after year, but the strength of Veris is that the firm is fully connected and committed to doing traditional and socially responsible investing. So, I think we're recognised for saying, "listen, we're not going to invest in just oil and gas, we're not going to invest in just white men as managers." So, in our investment portfolios, in everything we do, we make sure we see through the lens of social responsibility. The other thing I think that's unusual is that in most financial institutions that are privately held, a majority are not owned by women.

We at Veris are 66% owned by women, and we intend to keep on

promoting women partners. Although we're not yet sufficiently representative of African Americans, we're always looking to diversify our staff. We also want to recruit indigenous Americans, Native Americans, etc. we're not there yet, but that's the goal. That said, we are much more diverse when they benchmark us compared to most financial institutions. Also, we have a selection process now for recruiting for investment that includes various metrics for diversity, which also is most of the time applies to recruiting but not to investments. And we really look to do it across the board, including on vendor management.

**AWM:** There's usually a huge gap between the intention and actual engagement in impact investing due to minimal understanding by individuals and the complexity of the field. With this challenge, can you tell us how Veris Wealth Partners gets private wealth holders to move from empathy and intention to real action?

**Stephanie:** In one of your other questions, you also get to the question implicitly about performance. So, the advantage here is that because we've been doing this for 15 years, we have been able to prove that you can invest with intention around the themes that you care about and not take a haircut, and we use traditional commercial benchmarks.

So, whether it's the MSCI ACWI, the World Index, or the S&P 500, etc., we compare the portfolio performance to a purely financial and completely agnostic metric. As a result, our clients have built confidence in us over the years, and the sector has evolved. Most people now understand that investing this way can give you financial returns as well as have an impact on businesses and society as a whole.

So, whether it's climate change, migratory flows, social justice issues, etc., these are inherent to the type of investments we offer our clients specifically.

The number one reason I think is that people have seen, I'm not taking

a haircut, if I do the right thing. So people have been flocking more into firms like ours, saying, "I want to reduce my carbon footprint in my investments, and I want to live a life of impact through my investment portfolio, and I also want traditional commercial, risk-adjusted returns."

The other reason we have more and more clients coming to us and why it becomes core to their demand to make a social impact investing is because of climate change and climate justice. The fact that the socioeconomic strata where poor individuals live within any country will be affected disproportionately with climate change, has become such an existential risk that many investors realize it doesn't matter if they give money to a good cause.

For instance, if I invest in these extractive companies emitting greenhouse gases, I am still hurting the planet and accelerating what is truly an existential threat to humanity and the planet. So, there's more global consciousness on that issue, regardless of wealth or education.

People are comfortable saying; I'm going to invest with people who care about climate, regardless of the geography. Overall, I think impact investing has become an acceptable norm, and the social issues addressed via impact investing are pressing. So, more people are coming into the sector.

**AWM:** I want to take a cue from your organization's reports on the acceleration of gender lens investment assets in 2018. In your opinion, how do we effectively bend the arc of finance for women and girls? The business case has been made; how do we achieve more impact and push more finance to benefit women and girls?

**Stephanie:** So, I am convinced that the way we do this is through intentional political, almost Machiavellian planning, influence networking, and positioning. So, the business case matters but that's not enough.

To change the mindset of people in society, we need to have global networks of women supporting women; we need to have public campaigns about changing the image of women as not just political leaders because we've seen women presidents and so on, but also as business leaders, investment and finance leaders, so we need magazines, we need television shows, we need real influence, mind-set kind of revolution to show women truly as financial leaders, not just political leaders, not just as mothers, not just as teachers or academics, and through that, we can change the image of women. And to do this, we still have a lot of work to do because the image of leadership and finance is still very male-dominated, regardless of the region.

We have a few female leaders, like Sallie Krawcheck and Christine Lagarde, in the world of finance as central bankers; they are seen as female leaders in finance, but we need more. I believe this will have a trickle-down effect on women as entrepreneurs, bankers, and venture capitalists.

There's a lot of research in the United States coming out of the Kauffman institute that shows that when women as investors or entrepreneurs pitch their funds, they have a more challenging time raising money than men. There's much more bias around investors backing them with millions of dollars. So, we need an influence strategy, and it's required on a global scale. That's my personal opinion.

**AWM:** Hypothetically, what do you believe is the next big thing for gender lens investment in the next five to ten years?

**Stephanie:** Regarding the intersectionality of gender and racial equity, our approach has been to evolve gender equity into racial equity. This stems from a lot of analysis, specifically about the U.S. market.

If you're looking at the

challenge of discrimination against entrepreneurs, you first have the gender divide. So, men are more easily funded by banks, venture capitalists, private equity investors, etc., than women.

And if you look at how women are treated, you find out that the breakdown is really by race on a deeper level. So, we need to support women of colour; we focus on those who are the most discriminated against, at least in our market. In emerging markets, we shouldn't invest only in women as entrepreneurs; telling their stories is just as important. Just investing is great, but if you don't have press about the deals that women entrepreneurs make, if you don't have Netflix films about these women, if you're not elevating the stories of these women entrepreneurs, I don't see how the mindset or psychology in the world of business or venture capital globally would change.

So, we need both flows of capital and storytelling. And that's where leaders in media like you have a role to play. Our firm has \$2 billion in assets under management, which is a drop in the water compared to international capital markets. But when there are stories of successful women, entrepreneurs, and especially women of colour, we need to elevate them; we need to cheer and lead them, highlight them and celebrate them.



*So, the business case matters but that's not enough. To change the mindset of people in society, we need to have global networks of women supporting women; we need to have public campaigns about changing the image of women as not just political leaders because we've seen women presidents and so on, but also as business leaders, investment and finance leaders.*



# "I WAS BORN A VILLAGE GIRL, BUT I REFUSE TO BECOME A VILLAGE WOMAN"

*Rehmah Kasule is a Ugandan social entrepreneur, public speaker, and author. She has excelled in all her humanitarian work, reaching back to her community and changing the lives she has touched. Amazon Watch magazine had the privilege to sit down with her and walk through the milestones that led her to become the legendary social impact investor she is today. Excerpts:*

**AWM:** We can always look you up on LinkedIn, Wikipedia, and Google to find out who Madam Rehmah is. Still, we can never actually know the individual's thoughts and milestones. So, would you please walk us through your journey? What have been your significant milestones?

**Rehmah Kasule:** I always say that I was born a village girl, but I refuse to become a village woman. And that's so important to me because that's where I draw my passion and purpose, supporting other girls to break their intergenerational cycles of poverty.

So, I was born in a little village called Gomba in Uganda. A primarily patriarchal village, where everything is about the male. I am also Muslim, which added another layer of pressure. My culture can be so rigid that they still believe and stick to

what they did years ago.

I grew up feeling like I didn't belong here and didn't have a voice. My mother was always ashamed of me because I always asked 'why.' She would complain, 'why are you asking so many questions?' And I would try to keep quiet, but I couldn't take that. From a young age, I realised there were gender biases. The boys played football while their parents told the girls to fetch water. So I would ask, why aren't we playing? Why shouldn't they go with us?

Personally, one of the significant milestones was at age 5. In my village, there was no kindergarten. The next school was a primary school three miles away. So, they took me to a village teacher in the meantime. I remember one day, I just told my

mom, no, I'm not going back to him because he doesn't know what he's teaching. I didn't know what I was talking about at age 5, but I was sure I could get better. My mother tried to convince me that the other school was too far and I was too young, but I was determined. So, we first went to one school, which was near my home, and it was a Catholic school. They said I would have to attend mass if I was to go to that school. I didn't know anything about discrimination because I was only five years old, but my mom said no, and they never gave me the place.

So, we had to walk further and go to another school. And in this school, they allowed everyone. But they told me to put my hand over my head, and because my arms were small, they told me I was too young



Rehmah Kasule

to study. My poor mother was confused because I was adamant; fortunately, the teacher allowed me to study.

That was a milestone because I spoke up and knew what wasn't good. What is most important in my story is the fact that every little step that I took at age 5, barefoot, three miles to school, every little step brought me to who I am today. That resilience and tenacity are what brought me here. This was a massive milestone for me because it set my trajectory.

The second story is not a milestone but also as important. My father died when I was eight years old. In assembly at the school, they called out orphans (which included children with single parents) to come to collect stationery and uniforms. But the way the teacher said it was so rude that I just decided I was not an orphan. I refused to go to the other side and collect the items. Of course, I got in trouble because my mom asked where the uniform was when I went home. I lied and told her they skipped me, but I couldn't take how that teacher spoke to us. He spoke as if we were nobodies and as if we were hopeless. Today, I always tell people that when we say orphans and vulnerable children, we are already labeling them for the rest of their lives. We must always be sensitive about how we communicate with

others.

My third story is about when I moved from a village to a city school. We never spoke English in the village school; we spoke Luganda, the indigenous language in my community. Suddenly, I found I was with girls who had spoken English since they were babies. And I didn't know any English at the age of twelve. That was also a paradigm shift because I could have dropped out of school then. But I met a girl named Helen.

Helen wasn't my friend, but I made her my friend. And every day after school, we would find a place to sit, and she would teach English. So, the English I speak today came from Helen. Without Helen, I could have been part of the dropout statistics. Learning to read was also important to me. In my village, we grew up with no books, so I never read, everyone just followed what the teacher said, but the first time I read a book, it was by Barbara Taylor Bradford. I read that book and started imagining what the world could offer from being a poor girl. I just knew that the world had opened up for me. I read about New York 5th avenue, and my imagination just blew! I was always thinking about how I would like to see these places. It's all about exposure. Also, readers are leaders; if you don't read, you never get the kind of information beyond your immediate reach, and



*Readers are leaders; if you don't read, you never get the kind of information beyond your immediate reach, and you would never look out the window to find opportunities in other communities and other parts of the world.*



you would never look out the window to find opportunities in other communities and other parts of the world. That's one of my purposes as an author- that children in communities can access relevant and realistic books representing who they are while showing them the future.

**AWM:** Can you walk us through your academic journey?

**Rehmah:** I had a goal in mind, and I went to university. I was a bookworm (nerd) and studied fine art, a tough course. Nevertheless, I saw the vision I wanted, was hopeful and focused, and got a first-class degree in fine arts. This wasn't as easy as it sounds because only four girls in the school's history had received it before me.

Two days after university, I had a job! We had an exhibition where our work was presented without our names as a final project, and people came to look at our art. This artist, a businessman in Uganda, came and asked for my work's owner. Of course, the professor refused to reveal the name, but he insisted. They told him after the exhibition, and he came and instantly gave me a job. So, when my friends were looking for jobs, I already had a job. But the most significant milestone in my career was when I quit my job two years later!

I must say I was crazy, but I had courage! Everyone told me you're



going to fail. You're too young. You don't have the experience. You are just a girl; you're Muslim; you're a woman; all those labels that are not supposed to be negative became negative because they are used to disempower us. They said all that to me. They used those phrases I call dream takers but never affected me.

Since that time, I've never been employed. I've been my own boss. I did that for ten years. Then, I shifted from building brands to shifting mindsets. And I started my non-profit organisation, CEDA international, working in Uganda and the US. We assist girls' education, women's leadership, and entrepreneurship development.

In my non-profit work, we've seen how young people change. I'll tell you a story about Sandra:

Sandra, Batakan, when I met her in 2011, was in rural Uganda. She had almost dropped out of school. Sandra was going to become one of the statistics of child marriages. We assisted her back to school, and she became a rising star. My program was called the Rising Stars Mentoring program. In the programme, I usually start by telling them my story. And then I tell them that when you dream, you achieve. No dream is too big. Your background will not shape your destiny. You have the power to design the future you want. We are go-getters.

And, for me, it was about being authentic with my story and telling them my story to inspire them. I use my power to empower them. Today, Sandra works for Bank of America in New York. She excelled through a lot of academic focus, got a MasterCard foundation scholarship, and went to Duke. The story behind the story is that Sandra transformed her community. Her family and her mom now live in Canada. Her sisters have all gone to universities in the US and UK because she supported them through her decision to remain in school. Sandra started a non-profit organisation in rural Uganda, where she grew up, supporting over 80 women to become entrepreneurs. But here is the thing, some of the women

she's supporting were her classmates. Today they are single mothers because no one guided them or mentored them. And they dropped out of school. So, for me, it emphasises that when you invest in one woman or girl, you are investing in a community, and that's not a cliché, it is a real fact. It's true.

So that's Sandra's story. At another point in my life in 2015, I received a grant from the United Nations Democracy Fund to support women, And I also started with civic education in universities. And along that way, I was so uncomfortable with the quality of women we have in parliament. I decided I needed to mentor women to run for public office and be active in parliament, where we don't have women in numbers. We also have intellectually sound women. I did the mentorship program, and today the current speaker of parliament, a woman, was one of my mentees in 2016. When I met her, she was shy and couldn't speak. We essentially teach public speaking, public etiquette, and how to lobby in parliament. How do you make your voice heard? Today she's a speaker of parliament. That woman is now leading my last story.

I am also passionate about empowering youth and teaching others to become job creators. I started a youth centre in Kawempe,



*Sandra started a non-profit organisation in rural Uganda, where she grew up, supporting over 80 women to become entrepreneurs. Today they are single mothers because no one guided them or mentored them. And they dropped out of school. So, for me, it emphasises that when you invest in one woman or girl, you are investing in a community, and that's not a cliché, it is a real fact. It's true.*



one of Uganda's largest Islam areas. And these are young people who are vulnerable to radicalization and violent extremism. I set up this centre to give them a purpose and a sense of community. And we transformed our whole community with that youth centre, which I ran for five years. And we impacted over 7,000 young people. They created their own businesses. Some went back to school and got employment. So for me, transitioning from school into the world, whether you become an entrepreneur or an employee is so critical because more than ever in Africa, we are looking for value-based leadership, but we can't get it unless we grow young people from a young age with these values.

So, these are stories about my life. And as you can see, it started when I was five, but now it's like what Maya Angelo said: "I come as one, but I stand as 10,000." As for me, behind me now are a million women and girls.

**AWM:** Congratulations on all your awards and accolades! Can you share your favourite and most memorable recognitions with us?

**Rehmah:** I think the most memorable for me was the Goldman Sachs-Fortune Global Women's Leadership Award because I had just had a baby. She was only four months old. It was

done by the Fortune, Most Powerful Women, part of the Fortune 500. So, interacting with those women, the likes of Melinda Gates, was unbelievable. It took a while to grapple that I am one of Fortune's Most Powerful Women. It was humbling for me. It just kept reminding me your background doesn't shape your destiny. It was in California, Laguna beach. Everything was great for the time being.

Another one of my favorites was the Islamic Development Bank, Women in Peace and Development, in 2018. That was very powerful because I had done all this work in peacebuilding. I had never been recognised for that; I didn't see myself as a peace builder because I was doing my job. That recognition was so critical in my life to say, Hey, I'm a peace builder and need to do more of this work.

**AWM:** According to your understanding, who is a peacebuilder, and what does a peace builder do?

**Rehmah:** It's interesting. And it's a great question. People don't realise that women are the biggest peacebuilders, and we start right from home. In our work, we find that most influences come from home, whether perceptions about other religions or social settings. For example, in Uganda, we live in harmony; Christians, Catholics, Protestants, and Muslims are the most dominant. We live in peace. However, we have so many negative biases and perceptions about each other, but that starts from home. So, when looking for peacebuilders, we call them proximate leaders: leaders who are at the bottom; our leading peacebuilders are in our homes and schools, and many of them are teachers. They are the ones who pass this information, and it's not about religion, or even tribes, or gender. Peacebuilding is about building cohesive societies, and we need those peacebuilders at all those levels. I was working specifically on conflict and violent extremism, and radicalization. The mothers, wives, and sisters know when everything goes on, but they'll never speak. We work with them to build peace from home and up.

So really, that's peacebuilding. It's not on the battlefield. It's not holding a gun but building in your communities. Lastly, like when we work in refugee camps, these are already displaced people, but you find a lot of abuse. There's a lot of social isolation and social exclusion. So as peacebuilders, we go in and ask how can we connect them back into the world, even within their refugee camps? How can we empower them to empower themselves? So that's part of this peacebuilding.

One of my philosophies is about going from advocacy and research to action. So, when I talk to people, I tell them the difference between successful and unsuccessful people; they may know what to do, but successful people go out and do it.

The difference is taking action. And so, when I'm speaking to my mentee, young people I mentor, I always give them this riddle:

"There were three birds on an electric wire, and two decided to fly away. How many remained?"

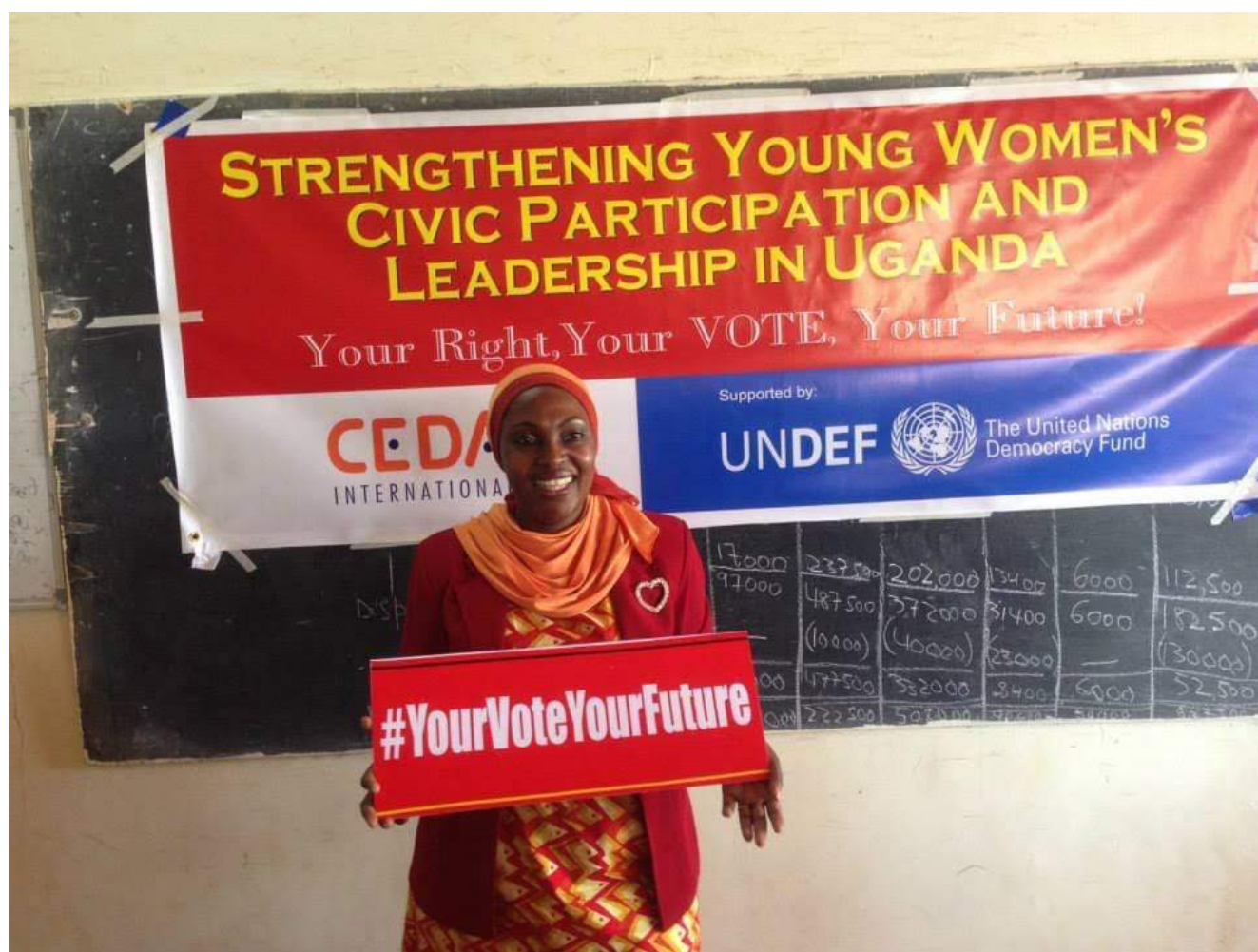
Most people will tell you when the two went, the one followed them, or they got an electric shock or other answers, but the truth is three birds decided to fly away. They made a



“

*Everyone told me you're going to fail. You're too young. You don't have the experience. You are just a girl; you're Muslim; you're a woman; all those labels that are not supposed to be negative became negative because they are used to disempower us. They said all that to me. They used those phrases I call dream takers but never affected me.*

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decision, but they never took action. So that's the difference. We need to empower people to take action so we don't just dream. They'll call us dreamers, yes, we are, but I relay them back to my life story and say if I had never taken action, I wouldn't be where I am today.

**AWM:** On the topic of action, what is the next step for you? What are you currently working on right now?

**Rehmah:** In 2018, I returned to school and received a Master's in peacebuilding. Then, I got an opportunity to go to Harvard for a two-year fellowship. I just decided to renew and learn. I have also been working with and expanding my networks. One of my other passions and projects was coming back to Africa and creating one million employment pathways for young people.

So, I created an organisation called Linkuncubator plus Africa, where we skill people and connect them to resources, mentors, and investment opportunities. I also seek to engage the private sector and the government to build an ecosystem where young entrepreneurs can survive and

thrive.

Finally, I am developing content for children because we need to teach young children as early as three to be readers. I am also writing them in several different languages. I also have it in audio and PDFs to accommodate every child. I am also creating animations for the stories to engage the children visually.

As Africans, we need to change the narrative. We need to write our own stories. No one is going to write our stories for us but us!



# Increasing Diversity & Inclusion in the Investment Ecosystem

■ Angela Lee

*Gender inequality in finance remains a global problem that limits women's financial opportunities and their potential to influence a better future in their communities. In this edition, Amazons Watch magazine (AWM) focuses on spotlighting social impact investment for women empowerment and development with a specific interest in organisations that are committed to empowering women and improving their quality of life through education, social amenities, and infrastructure, among others.*

*In this Amazons Watch exclusive interview, Angela Lee who is an educator, entrepreneur, angel investor, and founder of four startups, including the NYC-based investor network 37 Angels, shares insights on increasing diversity and inclusion in the investment ecosystem. Excerpts:*

**AWM:** Tell us about your entry into the angel investment industry and what inspired the founding of 37 Angels?

**Angela Lee:** I wrote my first angel cheque in 2008. It was for a movie that increased the awareness of mental health in the Asian community, which is an important cause to me. At the time, I didn't know what an angel investor was but, suddenly, I was on these email lists and being sent startup ideas in which to invest.

For the next four years, I became a solo angel, and I was determined to learn as much as I could about the

industry. I was researching everything I could, and googling everything at every event I attended, but I still felt like it was this big black box. And I really wanted to shine a light on that.

In 2012, I decided to start 37 Angels with two interrelated goals: First, to provide a thoughtful approach to learning about startup investing, which we achieve through our signature investing bootcamps that teach people how to be angels and Venture Capitalists. Second, to increase diversity in the ecosystem and reduce the gender gap in angel investing.

**AWM:** How do you define and characterize your approach to investing, and why smaller and less popular start-ups and not unicorn start-ups?

**Angela Lee:** Many of our members are former entrepreneurs (myself included!) who understand the highs and lows of business-building. At a high level, this has greatly influenced our philosophy around angel investing, as we are committed to transparency in communication, efficiency, and founder empathy.

In terms of our investment process, our approach to investing is based on a four-part framework that we refer to as the Four P's – the People, Problem, Progress, and Price. People are the team behind the company, the Problem is the market they are playing in, Progress is how much traction they have, and Price is the deal terms. The first two are the most important to us and in short, we are looking for rockstar teams in attractive markets. Of course, we ultimately are an angel investing

network so we for sure look for and invest in companies we hope to be unicorns!

**AWM:** According to finance experts, women who control a significant amount of wealth are more likely to put their money towards philanthropy than investing. Is this statement true?

**Angela Lee:** It depends on how you define investing. If you specifically mean angel investing, then yes.

**AWM:** 37 Angels was founded centrally to close the gender gap in angel investing. It is about 10 years since you founded this organisation, how has the gender gap evolved in terms of investors who apply to join 37 Angel and the companies that apply to pitch to the network?

**Angela Lee:** When people first hear of our mission, they assume it's a women's-only network, but we've never excluded anyone from joining the network based on their gender – we just look for people who believe in our mission and our values. We have always recognized that our goal of closing the gender gap in investing cannot be achieved without the support of allies. That said, most of our members are women!

From a deal flow perspective, we have always recognized the value and importance of diverse teams.

Looking at the gender gap outside of our network – there's still much work to be done. When I first started the network, only 13% of angel investors were women and we wanted to close the gap from 13% to 50% (hence our name "37" Angels!). These days, it is at around 25% and it has been encouraging to see more groups focused on increasing diversity and inclusion emerging in the ecosystem.

**AWM:** What do you think are some of the major reasons that lead to the gender gap in start-up investing?

**Angela Lee:** I think there are several reasons. The first reason is that women feel like they are not qualified to be early-stage investors. There is a lot of data that shows that women are much less likely to apply to a job that they are underqualified for, but guess what? Everyone is underqualified to be an angel investor! We are investing in nascent technologies, and early-stage startups, and for the most part, there isn't training to learn how to be an angel.

The second reason is that everyone needs role models but, if you watch Shark Tank or Silicon Valley, it's mostly men. And this is a problem that extends beyond startup investing. Women are underrepresented in many industries



*The second reason (for gender gap in start-up investing) is that everyone needs role models but, if you watch Shark Tank or Silicon Valley, it's mostly men. And this is a problem that extends beyond startup investing. Women are underrepresented in many industries - from finance to the STEM fields.*



- from finance to the STEM fields. But, as I mentioned earlier, many groups are emerging across disciplines to close the gender gap in these fields. Some are focused on removing barriers to entry and promotion, while others are focused on improving the climate/working conditions in these industries. Others are committed to strengthening the pipeline of young female talent into these areas where they are underrepresented.

**AWM:** 37 angels exist primarily to educate investors and connect these investors to male and female-founded start-ups, can you share with us some success stories/achievements that your organization has recorded since its inception?

**Angela Lee:** First, I'll share our financial success. We have invested in almost 100 companies out of the 30,000 that we have seen in the last 10 years. In terms of educational success, we have activated over 400 new investors, closing the diversity gap in angel investing one new angel at a time. Our alumnae are also working at VC firms like Greycroft, Dorm Room Fund, High Peaks Ventures, Scout Ventures, Tech Stars, and more!

**AWM:** Are there specific industries or regions that 37 Angels focuses its investments on?

**Angela Lee:** We invest in the US and Canada

**AWM:** Can you tell us about membership in the network itself, the current number, and ongoing benefits?

**Angela Lee:** We have a strong and supportive community of 120 members, which is a benefit in and of itself. Additionally, other benefits include ongoing education (beyond the





Bootcamp), professional development opportunities, a highly curated deal flow (we screen 3000 companies a year to select the 40-50 we introduce to our angels), and networking events.

**AWM:** What are the qualities that investors from 37 angels look for in a start-up to consider prospective and profitable in the long run and worth investing in?

**Angela Lee:** From a people perspective, we are looking for empathetic, data-driven, self-aware founders. From a problem perspective, we look

for a very clear understanding of who the customer is and what problem you are solving for them. In terms of Progress, we are looking for founders to have built a replicable customer acquisition engine.

**AWM:** To project hypothetically, what do you believe is the next big thing for angel investing in the next 5 to 10 years?

**Angela Lee:** I think that we will increasingly see data and AI tools used to help with sourcing founders and diligence start-ups.

# Women Are the Biggest Fraudsters

By Yetunde Asika

While researching, I came across this phrase I had never heard before. "Imposter Syndrome". This psychological phenomenon, known as imposter syndrome, is fascinating. It is the persistent inability to believe that one's success is deserved or has been legitimately achieved as a result of one's efforts or skills despite evidence that you are skilled and successful. Imposter Syndrome (IS) was first recognised and coined by psychologists Suzanna Imes and Pauline Rose Clance and described in their 1970s study where they discovered that a certain mindset existed amongst high-achieving women. This mindset still exists today and is more prevalent in Richly-Hued women (women of colour).

But have no fear, my fellow Richly-Hued queens, you're far from alone, as studies suggest 70% of people experience imposter syndrome at some point in their career. It can affect anyone no matter their social status, work background, skill level, or degree of expertise. Even men get it nowadays.

The problem with impostor syndrome is that, as long as you keep succeeding, you will always think, "what gives me the right to be here?" no matter how much proof there is that you are deserving. And the more you accomplish, you just feel like a fraud. I have seen this often with Nigerian women, and to be honest, I cannot think of a single successful

Nigerian woman who hasn't had at least one person say she doesn't deserve to be there on her own merit. I appreciate that this is not the same as a woman herself feeling like she is a fraud, but I am sure that knowledge of the same must play a role in her psyche, which causes us to overwork ourselves, over-prepare, or work much harder than is necessary to "make sure" nobody finds out we are a fraud. This is clearly unproductive and unhealthy behaviour, and can lead to worsened anxiety and depression.

Unfortunately, in our case, the most common cause of IS for women, at least in Nigeria, is our husbands. Although not all, some husbands put down their wives' achievements and belittle all triumphs they receive, making it so that these high achieving women believe that their accomplishments are



down to luck, chance, connections, or other external factors.

The only thing we Nigerian women need to do is to start owning, accepting, embracing, and celebrating our achievements and capabilities. We need to turn to internal validation rather than give power to external validation. Especially as these wins of ours are proof of our competence, no one should have more power to make you feel good about yourself than you, absolutely no one. We need to start saying, "I am grateful I got myself here" instead of "I got here by luck".

Do not be concerned with anyone's view of your wins, successes, or attainments. Let them call your features "fluff pieces". Let them discredit and belittle your nominations and awards. Let them say or feel whatever makes THEM feel good. It is not important to you. Keep getting the "undeserved" awards that don't mean anything. It is ok. Be that fraudster. Be an imposter. If you are imparting even the tiniest bit of good to just one person as this so-called "fraudster", please keep it up. Refuse to let this lie of a narrative hold you back. No matter how much you feel like you do not belong, don't let that stop you from pursuing your goals. Keep going and refuse to be stopped. "I deserve some accolades! Worldwide".

This op-ed was going to be about child trafficking, organ harvesting, and our failure as a society to protect children, the poor, women, and vulnerable disenfranchised members of our society. Most importantly, I wanted to write what laws we may need to amend to offer better protection for our citizens (#AmendTheLaw). However, I was advised not to write it - "you do not have enough information about it," they said, and I was given all sorts of reasons (that I 100% disagreed with) why I should not write about this a very relevant and important Social Justice issue to me.

In the end, I did not write that article, and I wrote this one instead. Which has now made me wonder if

the reason I did not write that opinion is that I have been convinced I do not know enough about child trafficking and organ harvesting, and I am afraid of being exposed for not being an expert on that matter. Perhaps many others are more experienced and equipped to write about the subject than I am, so I should leave it to them. They say one of the signs of IS is when you downplay your own expertise, even in areas where you are genuinely and clearly more skilled than others. Am I a victim of imposter syndrome? To confirm my suspicions, I read up more on it.

Is it imposter syndrome if all the self-doubt about your capabilities has been planted in your head by a third party? Or is it only IS if the doubt is created all by yourself for no reason?

Is it still IS if you are vocal about feeling that your achievements are through luck instead of being silent about these feelings? If you constantly tell people, "I am just really lucky..." then there is obviously no fear of being found out. Neither is there any element of shame about achieving your goals through luck.

Is it IS if you are not actually being held back by these feelings? After all, the point of this whole thing is that you are constantly achieving and winning all the time.

During my investigations, I was informed that the Dean of Harvard Graduate School of Education would warn her incoming graduate students about this very real problem in her welcome speech. She would assure these post-graduate students that all of them would experience IS, and then she let them know that they were all specifically picked and deserved to be at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The Dean stresses that this feeling is not unusual, especially as society already tells us, and most especially us Richly-Hued women, that we are not as good as the white man. This inevitably will have a real psychological effect on us as women.

I now can't help but ask why when I was asked, "how long have you been writing that piece for?" I

was tempted to say An hour and a half when it took me 3! Does the fact that I felt the need to have been a "natural genius" who writes articles in record time mean that I have the "natural genius" syndrome of IS? I also wonder if the amount of time embellished equates to how much of a fraud I think I am or how much IS I have.

What about the fact that I only calculated the time it took to write the draft? I didn't add the hours it took to edit and reread and reread and reread because God forbid it is not already perfect before I ask my sister to proofread it again for me. Am I over-preparing to make sure that nobody finds out I am a fraud or do I just want to make sure I produce outstanding work?

As I worked myself up into a right frenzy trying to figure out if I am a victim of this IS or not, I decided to delve even deeper and read everything about it that exists. Inevitably convincing myself that I do in fact have IS because only a person who has the "expert syndrome" of IS would do this! However, I would have explained the "expert" syndrome and all the other syndromes if I had the "expert syndrome". Or is the fact that I read everything that exists on the subject, enough to suggest that I have the expert syndrome?

In any case, I may not have been able to help myself, but I hope the following information can help some Richly-Hued Nigerian queens out there.

You probably have IS if you exhibit some of these common signs:

- An inability to realistically assess your competence and skills.
- Attributing your success to external factors.
- Berating your performance.
- Fear that you won't live up to expectations.
- Overachieving.
- Sabotaging your own success.
- Self-doubt.



- Putting all your wins down to luck and being ashamed about that.
- Being silent about your feelings.
- Setting very challenging goals and feeling crushed and disappointed when you fall short.
- Being held back by this mindset because you put off doing anything.

Having read all the signs and being no closer to figuring out if I am a fraud or not, I decided that what I do know is that negative thinking, self-doubt, and self-sabotage can affect many areas of your life. If we want to continue looking younger than we are, then I for one, will not spend another second thinking about IS.

And that is how I contracted IS and then cured myself of it 3 hours later.

Yet, I still wonder if I will submit this piece. I wonder if I will quietly go and pick the original piece I was asked to write. Had I not come across this phrase – Imposter Syndrome, I would not be asking these questions.

Whatever happens, know that you are not alone, and I will assess how I feel if my op-ed is not published. And on the off chance that it does get published, please let me know if it helped even one like-minded woman. So that I may keep doing what I do, Imposter Syndrome or not.

By Yetunde Asika

About the Author:

Yetunde Asika Esquire, LLB Hons and LLM is a Member of The Order of the Federal Republic. She is a Barrister and Solicitor of The Supreme Court of Nigeria.

Yetunde is a social activist for justice & equality, interested in Constitutional Law, Human & People's Rights, Freedom & Responsibilities and Law & Governance.

She is a leader in

the efforts to promote the democratic practice, economic advancement and equality and she has been at the forefront of civil society work globally for years.

Yetunde is desirous to influence social, economic and political change and she has spent more than two decades advocating for women and children.





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# QUEEN ELIZABETH II

## AND HER LEGACY OF SERVICE



“

*I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.*

”

“I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong.” -Her Majesty the Queen.

On her 21st Birthday, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, made a vow of service to the Great Imperial Family, which included the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. The queen took this vow as a youth with all the enthusiasm and hope a 21-year-old princess could muster at that time, and throughout her life, she carried this promise and was committed to fulfilling it until the very last day. On the 8th of September 2022, the Royal Family announced that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth had passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family.

Just 48 days before September 8th, the Queen was photographed meeting Lizz Truss, as she was positioned as the new Prime Minister and the 3rd female to hold such office in the United Kingdom.

It is the role of the Queen to officiate this with a formal meeting, and it is one of the Queen's many responsibilities. Even during this time, when reports of her health were raising concerns, the Queen still played her role in the country's management.

A few months prior, the United Kingdom celebrated her Jubilee, making her as the longest ruling monarch in the history of the nation. The celebration reflected on her years of service, including the responsibilities she undertook in national politics. Over the past few years, it is evident that her role has become advisory and diplomatic, but even in that context, she was an inspirational leader and a constant symbol of a great nation.

If one is to reflect on the previous decades, there is a history of women being sidelined in work, politics and even leading homes. Yet the rule of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth was captivating and unique in every way. Unlike her predecessors, the Queen was a mechanic in the war and played a part in the war, something that was not common at that time. She also reigned and worked alongside three female prime ministers, including the newly instated Liz Truss. History reports that the Queen had a very close relationship with other Prime Ministers, such as Churchill acting as his advisor and confidant. Her interactions with other international heads of state have also gained popularity as this has encouraged healthy relationships between nations and created fantastic diplomatic ties that can never be forgotten. She has also been part of timeless conversations on environmental sustainability.

The Queen also cherished the Commonwealth. When she came into power, most of the Commonwealth was instated through colonisation which has raised much debate. Presently the relationship between the Commonwealth and the Queen has evolved into a partnership rather than a toxic power dynamic where only one party benefits. Now there are scholarships, projects, and other social projects where the UK plays an important role in uplifting other nations and their youth. The Queen has always maintained ties with these nations, leading the other royal family members in initiatives and charities to benefit the less privileged.

Just like any iconic female leader, something that many have been left to remember fondly is her iconic bright outfits. Her designers spoke of how she preferred brighter

colours so that she would stand out just like her bright atmosphere and energy.

There is no doubt that her absence can already be felt and that she played a prominent role in history. She not only kept her promise of service till her last moments but also led and served in exemplary ways. Her rule was not perfect, but it was phenomenal and revolutionary. She was an icon, leader, and our ultimate Amazons Government in Heels representative and role model.

“

*The Queen was a mechanic in the war and played a part in the war, something that was not common at that time. She also reigned and worked alongside three female prime ministers, including the newly instated Liz Truss.*

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# HEART ATTACK SURVIVORS: what to learn from their stories



It was a sad day for 40-year-old Kelly Kleiner and her family. The supposedly happy moment turned sour when Kelly started feeling hot, sick, and so much pain after snow skiing in Missouri. At first, she assumed that the pain she felt was a result of the exercise, but little did she know that it was a heart attack. As she walked towards the restroom at the lodge to get some relief, Kelly slumped to the floor, and she was found by her youngest daughter.

"Time kind of stood still," Kelly recalled.

As she managed to cool down on the restroom floor, a medic arrived. After encountering so much difficulty finding her pulse, the Medic informed Matt (her husband) to bring her to the emergency room, at the hospital that was not too far away. Soon after they arrived, she was hooked to a machine. "My daughters all started running towards the emergency room, trying to get in so they could see me, but I knew if the girls saw me in that state, it would scare them."

Having so much fear about how her daughters would react if they knew what was going on, Kelly requested that

the doctors tell her daughters that she was okay. However, the doctors could not because it was false. Kelly suffered from a heart attack resulting from complete blockage of the blood vessel that supplies blood to the front and left side of the heart.

Kelly's condition was severely complicated, and the hospital didn't have the facilities Kelly condition required. she was transferred using a helicopter to a hospital in Kleiner's hometown Topeka, Kansas. The fact that Kelly never felt any chest pain made her skeptical about the treatment she would be given. I mean, who gets a heart attack without having chest pain?

The cardiologist who treated Kelly, Dr Thomas. J. Doyle recounted that her other arteries were very okay, but it was quite unusual for her left anterior descending artery to suffer such blockage. "We often call it the thief in the night," Doyle said. "Sometimes it just comes out of the blue for otherwise healthy people." On the other hand, there has been a history of heart attacks in Kelly's family. Her

grandfather, two uncles, and a cousin had died as a result of the disease.

After being given a sedative, Kelly remembers Doyle took a catheter to her heart and pulled out the blockage; “he fixed my heart in two seconds; it was instant pain relief,” she said. Furthermore, to aid the regulation of her heart’s rhythm, the doctors inserted an implantable cardioverter defibrillator-pacemaker after some months.

Things were not the same anymore for Kelly. As she tried to go back to teaching fifth grade, it dawned on her that she didn’t have much energy anymore. She also attempted to teach part-time, but it was still overwhelming for her.

“It felt like defeat,” she said. “That’s what made it so hard.”

It was a turning point for Kelly after she attended an American Heart Association Go Red for Women Luncheon one year after her heart attack. The following year, she returned as a guest speaker at the event. Even though life turned around unexpectedly for Kelly, and she can no longer go skiing or hiking, which she once loved to do, she now derives so much joy in scrapbooking, crafting, and reading, and of course, going out for ice cream with her girls.

It was an entirely different story for 33 weeks pregnant Lupita Garcia, who suffered heart attack symptoms. She struggled to breathe for days, accompanied by heart palpitations and chest discomfort. That fateful day, her husband, Samuel Higuera, took her to the hospital in Gilbert, Arizona. “We didn’t think it was anything serious,” he said. “We were talking about where we were going to eat afterwards.”

Garcia was immediately rushed to the emergency room, where she delivered her

baby, who was rushed to the intensive care unit. No one suspected Garcia was suffering from a heart attack until the doctor announced “code blue!” three times, Higuera explained. “I felt the blood rush through my body, and I was just shaking,” he said. “I just started praying. Please God, don’t let this happen to her,” he said.

Garcia’s heart was working at only 10% of its normal function, and her lungs were filled with fluid. The next day, she was connected to a machine that pumped and oxygenated her blood outside her body, and she was transferred to a hospital in Phoenix that would better handle her condition. Garcia was gradually responding to treatment. She could nod, make small movements, open her eyes, and then go back to sleep. 19 days after her daughter, Maia, was born, Garcia was discharged, and for the first time, she was able to hold her baby.

“It took about nine months after Maia was born for me to feel fully recovered and independent,” she said. Being diagnosed with peripartum cardiomyopathy, a rare form of cardiac failure that occurs during the last month of pregnancy or up to five months after giving birth, Garcia continues to do exercise therapy for peripheral artery disease, a narrowing of the arteries in her legs. She takes

frequent walks with Maia, and her husband, Higuera.

According to the American Heart Association, Heart diseases are the number one killer of women. In most movies we watch where we can see a man suddenly grasps his chest and slump, the scenario may not be so dramatic for women.

“Although men and women can experience chest pressure that feels like an elephant sitting their chest, women can experience a heart attack without chest pressure,” said Nieca Goldberg, M.D., medical director for the Joan H. Tisch Center for Women’s Health at NYU’s Langone Medical Center and an American Heart Association volunteer. “Instead, they may experience shortness of breath, pressure, or pain in the lower chest or upper abdomen, dizziness, pains in the arm, lightheadedness or fainting, upper back pressure or extreme fatigue.”

Even when the symptoms are subtle, the outcomes can be lethal, especially if the victim doesn’t get help immediately. Hence, we must pay attention to the signals our bodies give us, and do not hesitate to visit your health care provider anytime you feel something isn’t right with how you feel.





## The World We Want For Women

# Re-echoing the Voices of Aspiring Young Girls

*Amazons Watch Magazine is thrilled to launch a new segment that will project the voices, opinions, and aspirations for the future of women. As a renowned representative for young girls and a voice for women-related causes, we invited several young ladies across the world between the ages of 9 to 15 to feature in the first 'The World We Want for Women (4W)' Short Stories Series.*

*The 4W is a compendium of short stories from young ladies aged 9-25, detailing their vision of the world they want for themselves. This initiative is targeted at girls and young women with lofty ambitions and a dream for the future of women. It is a viable platform for contributing and orchestrating the future of women in the coming decades. Here, we allow them to dream, reach out, and discuss the possibilities of the future and the part we all play to ensure that these next generation of women leaders can grow, thrive and blossom in a world without stereotypical limitations.*

*The young ladies we approached volunteered their thoughts. Some were incredibly detailed and informative, whilst others were straight to the point. Regardless, these women of the future have spoken, and we are here to project their hopes in this first 4W Series, so we all can listen and, in due time, act.*

*Excerpts:*

### "Happiness and Peace"- Denise, South Africa

"I want a society that is close to 'free'. Free of GBV (Gender Based Violence). A society where I don't have to be depressed about walking coming from work at 3 am. Without thinking that I might be raped or kidnapped or that I need my brother to walk me home." -Anonymous, South Africa

"I want to be able to live in a world where I can decide what I want to do with my body. A world where

men do not decide whether I should give birth or not. A world where I feel safe to walk alone at night without having to hold my keys in a certain way so I can protect myself. A world where I'm not seen as a sexual tool regardless of what I'm wearing. A world where I can be myself and not expect to hear « act more ladylike ». A world with equal opportunities and recognition for women just as much as men. A world where I don't have to do five times the amount of work for half the recognition. A world where I don't have to feel small because of my gender. A world where I know I will be heard and taken into consideration. A world where I don't feel like my father has to come with me to the store so that no one follows me back to the car. A world where what I do is not second-guessed just because I'm female. A world where me being in power is no different from a man being in power. A world where I don't have to worry about how my little sister will be viewed by society. A world where I don't have to not want to have children for the sole reason being I know how it is to be female in the world today."

**-Kimberly Nyagondore, Zimbabwe**



"As a woman, I would like a world where women may feel equal. Where they have the freedoms men have exercised for years and, in essence, dissolve their privileges. This freedom or equality would be found once we are no longer viewed as sexual objects when we can exercise our reproductive rights when we can have the same jobs and be paid the same as men."

**-Prisca, Zimbabwe**

"I want a world free from rape worries. A world where women can live freely without worrying about their safety. I want a world where women get to walk in the streets without being worried about being a statistic of women's slaughter. I also want a world where sanitary pads are free so that other women who can't afford to buy them don't have to be worried about not going to work or school, as the sanitary pads will be free. All in all, I want a women-friendly world, a safe environment for the better livelihood of us women."

**-Busisiwe Sikwana, South Africa**

"This world we live in is full of hate and cruelty. Sometimes I wish for a peaceful. Understanding world. One with no violence, crime or blood. A world where people get along. I would want to live in a world where people are not killed. The worst part is that animals are involved. Elephants and rhinos are being killed for ivory. At the end of the day you get your money but what happens to the environment?"

**-Candice, Botswana**

"The kind of world I want to see in the future for women may be based on experiences, observation and stories heard. I would love to see a world that includes women in leadership, participation in active roles, etc. A world where women are respected and valued, being considered as those that are capable of making an impact and change in our communities and nations at large. A world where those empowered women are able to raise a responsible generation that will continue to uphold these values."

**-Anonymous, South Africa**

"I want to grow up in a world where the government cares more about the civilians' wellbeing than their own. I wish issues such as inflation and knife crime or just crime, in general, were not as frequent."

**- Heather, UK**

"A world where men don't exist. Or at least where men's patriarchal and toxic behaviours do not exist. This way, we will have a chance to dream without thinking about how I am a girl and how that may affect my dreams. "

**- Nosipho, South Africa**





# THE MOBILIZATION EFFECT:

## Can Prominent Female Political Leaders Produce More Female Political Candidates?

By Victory Enokela

The equal participation of women in leadership, politics, and government are prerequisites for the development of equal states worldwide. However, despite the slow and uneven progress being made in this regard, data still show that women are largely underrepresented at all decision-making levels worldwide, and achieving gender parity in leadership seems a far-fetched reality.

While Scandinavian countries like Sweden, Norway, and Finland continue to take the lead in the gender equality index, countries such as the United Kingdom, America, and most African countries remain heavily male-dominated across key sectors including politics and public service.

The factors that influence women's underrepresentation in politics and public offices have been categorised into two by most academic research: the "supply-side" and "demand-side" factors. The former involves women's potentially lower confidence/willingness to run for political or public offices, whereas the latter is characterized by voters' and party leaders' prejudices against women in politics.

To address the "supply-side" aspect of women's underrepresentation, various organizations have offered training programs to provide women with knowledge, skills, and networks that awaken and build their interests in political careers. The supply side challenge can be corrected with adequate motivation, which can increase women's willingness to run for public offices.

The more women become open to running for these offices, excel and exceed the expectations of voters and fellow competitors, the more perjure opinions of party members and voters naturally diminish. This is an indication that when women embrace politics, the rest of the world

accepts, respects, and supports their decisions to occupy high-level public seats.

Alongside several steps to increase women's participation in leadership positions ranging from political mentoring, training, seminars on women's political participation, voter education and practical campaign skills, etcetera; it has been found that there is an effective yet overlooked strategy for promoting women in politics.

A recent study published in the American Journal of political science suggests that more women in politics is likely to have a subtler and long-term effect on improving the representation of women in politics. The study focused on the American states for its empirical analyses owing to the country's considerable variation of female candidates as well as women in high-profile offices.

This experimental research gives an exhaustive and evidence-based finding on the potential of prominent women in politics to inspire and thereby increase the number of women that run for political offices. The fundamental event that informs this study took place on November 6, 1990 when Ann Richards was elected governor of Texas in a close, bitter contest against millionaire businessman Clayton Williams. The choice between a man and a woman for the state's highest office greatly influenced the makeup of issues that defined the campaign.

In the six election cycles before 1990, 11% of the candidates running for the state's legislature were women. The next six elections after her victory saw that figure increase to 18%. As a result, a research work by Ladam, Harden, and Windett (2018) postulate that a woman in one of these prominent positions serves as a highly visible role

model for women in the state. They further suggested that such role model effect holds figurative and practical value for women considering a political career. This study produces findings that are important for both academic understandings of women's political representation and socially constructed assessments of the quality of democracy in American politics.

First, it demonstrates that the role model effect is not limited to mass public political behaviour (e.g., voting or involvement in a campaign). It contends that female role models can influence the decision of other women to enter politics directly. Given that women who run for or hold political office have a greater influence on women's substantive representation than members of the general public who become more involved as citizens, indicates that the findings of this study reveal the most politically significant influence of female role models.

Another striking study that supports this finding is that men and women perform equally well in elections (Seltzer, Newman, and Leighton (1997). Despite this, women are not running for office at the same rate as men. According to Fox and Lawless (2011), even when women have the same qualifications as men, they feel less qualified to run. It is safe

to say that before delving into politics, women turn to more

When women see someone, who resembles them in office, they feel more connected to the political system and are more likely to participate in it, though this connection is contingent on party affiliation (Reingold and Harrell 2010).

The fact that women hold only 25% of parliamentary seats worldwide serves as a sobering reminder of how ubiquitous and persistent gender discrimination is. It also reflects the dynamics of power in societies. However, some may wonder why it matters if there are more female politicians and legislators. Why is it important to have more women active in all facets of politics? A simple answer is embedded in the fact that democracy cannot function effectively without adequate representation of women.

Firstly, half of the world's population are women. Therefore, political institutions must be inclusive of the diversity of groups within the population to be democratically legitimate and responsive to all citizens. This calls for more diversity and female representation in national legislatures.

Secondly, people's social,

economic, and racial differences frequently influence their priorities and areas of interest. Female leaders from various backgrounds can therefore bring a wide array of issues to the table for consideration and propose solutions accordingly.

Thirdly, all public systems also gain from diverse representation of people from all walks of life in their political institutions. It enables us to use the population's entire capacity and skill set while establishing policies for the advancement of all.

Research findings such as the above study reveal a different strategy for increasing gender equality and women's representation. This is through the increased political participation of women as a strategy for more women to be encouraged to participate in politics. If we can get more prominent women to model younger women, the causal effect will lead to an increased number of women in government offices and other decision-making levels.

"We need women in civic life; we need women to run for office."

– Dolores Huerta-



# The story of 'The Woman King:'

## A Strong Narrative of Female Strength & Empowerment

By Tanya Maswaure

The moment I watched the trailer, instant goose bumps spread over my body. I witnessed what may have been a typically male-dominated movie, starring black dark skinned women who stood and fought with confidence. The Woman King is one for the books, and the critics agree!

Viola Davis leads a star-studded cast of black excellence and strong female leaders. Like an ancient historical female bodybuilder, the 56-year-old trained younger warriors in the movie. Her zest and fierceness instantly made her one of my favourite characters from the movie.

Before the movie was released, the cast appeared on shows and tours, speaking extensively about their intense exercise routines that led to their chiselled and strong bodies. They trained like actual warriors, something that was often just explored amongst men. From behind the scenes to the moment they hit the screens, these actresses have created a beautiful narrative of female strength and empowerment.

The Woman King has already scored 94% on the Rotten Tomato meter, which is arguably the most trusted measure of quality movies and TV. Likewise, Movie

Critics reached the consensus that this is an iconic production stating- "All Hail Viola Davis, The Woman King rules." The film, only having recently reached the silver screen, has gained much popularity and is driving movie lovers to cinemas across the globe.

The Woman King is the remarkable story of the Agojie, the all-female unit of warriors who protected the African Kingdom of Dahomey in the 1800s with skills and a fierceness, unlike anything the world has ever seen. Inspired by true events, 'The Woman King' follows the emotionally epic journey of General Nanisca (Oscar®-winner Viola Davis) as she trains the next generation of recruits and prepares them for battle against an enemy determined to destroy their way of life.

### Top international critics have exclaimed:

"If you're someone who loves action movies that use "true events" as an entry to a deeper narrative about surviving trauma, defying misogyny and overcoming personal torment in the face, along with all the ass-kicking, then 'The Woman King' is a masterpiece." Melanie MacFarland, TV Critic and Senior Culture Writer

"A huge spectacle... the movie is

African focused but universal in its depiction of greed, suppression and tyranny. A deft team of female artists have masterfully created a feminist allegory that will excite and inform movie lovers for years to come." Dwight Brown, National Publisher Association Film Critic

The Woman King not only has the capability of being one of the best female-directed movies of the year but it is bound to start narratives and inspire young women. The trailer alone features music by Moonchild Sanele, a black South African female artist, and Beyonce. Almost every element of this movie has a black female involved in leading and creating.

Whilst the story of female warriors alone can inspire and educate, the film's creation is one of a kind and something to be celebrated.

The movie is just reaching its peak popularity as some countries are only just screening it this week. Some cinemas in Africa have begun making events around the premiere of this movie, celebrating an African narrative at the box office.

Women across the globe are also filling cinemas in celebration of girl power, especially since this is a movie directed by a black woman. Overall the movie breaks boundaries and starts conversations which is always a sign of good production —we hope Amazons Watch readers get a chance to watch and enjoy this movie.



## ■ Adedoyin Jaiyesimi

### An Embodiment of Passion for People/Society Impact

*Like any good story, it is always inspiring to hear about a heroine who begins with a struggle and makes her way to the top. There's something appealing about a story of growth and improvement, but if the story is not well told, it could lose its value and, most importantly, its' impact. Adedoyin realised this when she began her journey in communications, a journey of fulfillment. Amazons Watch had the honour of sitting down with the author of From Clueless to Success and Co-Founder of Comms Avenue, Adedoyin Jaiyesimi and it was indeed a conversation to remember.*

**AWM:** Your work and successes are documented on the internet, but we would like to know more about the person behind the bio; Who is Adedoyin to you?

**Adedoyin:** The lady behind the name is very introverted; people would dispute that because an introvert normally would not do the kind of work I do, but that is the truth. She firmly believes in God and is passionate about people, women, and Africa. I also love seeing the impact of what I do because I believe God has blessed us with the ability to solve the problems around us. We may not have all the money to do it on a large scale, but I believe that whatever little you can contribute to positive development is very important. I love to read and watch people because when you study people, you realise that people are very complex, so my typical relaxing time is to stay in the park and just watch people and their interactions. I also enjoy spending time with myself, just reflecting and introspecting.

**AWM:** As an avid reader, what is your favourite book?

**Adedoyin:** Now that's a tricky question! It changes from time to time. I read the memoir *My Life in Full* by Indra Nooyi this year and loved it! I loved it because she was frank about the challenges of a woman rising to the top. She was very honest about her challenges on the home front and her parents' support, so I loved that book because of the takeaways. But, if I would say an all-time favourite book of mine, it's *Redeeming Love* by Francine Rivers because it shows you how deeply God looks at us. It makes you realise that God loves you with your imperfections and mistakes and that you can always run back. So, I try to read that every year because it's a refresher for me about God's love and the depth of love which is such a powerful emotion.

**AWM:** Can you tell us more about Comms Avenue and its beginning?

**Adedoyin:** Comms Avenue is a networking platform for communications professionals across Africa, and we currently have 900

members from 18 African countries. The interesting thing about this community is how it started. In 2019 I had an agency that I shut down, but at the end of the year, I began to pivot towards policy and government communications because our government in Nigeria has a visible disconnect between what they say and what the people understand. I felt the government could use communications better to bring people together and build trust, so I started that journey in 2020 because I wasn't an expert. I just tested the waters on LinkedIn and watched where it would take me. So, I decided to share my mistakes, challenges, and things I learned in my three years of running an agency, and people started asking many questions. It became so overwhelming, so I decided to have an event for everybody to come together because I did not have all the answers, so I thought if we talked collaboratively about the challenges, and shared ideas and tips, then we all learned together. Then we fixed the event for the end of March, and as we all know, COVID happened, and I had 50 people registered. Unfortunately, I had to refund money, which meant I made a loss, so I asked myself what to do with these 50 people and decided to create this community.

We started with 50 people, mostly Nigerians, and now we are 900. We started inviting communication experts from Minneapolis and other international organisations. COVID gave people access to a lot of connections. Sometimes I was like a stalker, and I would approach people asking them to share their journeys, and some would resonate with our members, so we continued to grow. We created a mentoring program because we realised some younger professionals wanted mentorship.

You know how the media majorly tell stories about Africa. What we're also trying to do with the community is to break those walls that have been artificially created because, again, the Africa we want will not happen if Africans are not united.

I also do the communications advisory in my book, which is part of

my philosophy of giving back, so that's it in a nutshell.

**AWM:** What major milestones in your journey brought you to where you are now?

**Adedoyin:** I have to go down memory lane. In university, I studied law, and I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life at that point. Then, I came back to Nigeria in 2011 because my family went through a financial situation, so I almost had to start from scratch. Now I had this law degree, and I knew I didn't want to practice, so I had to return to the drawing board.

One day, while reading, I came across an Ethiopian woman working with very little but creating beautiful designs, and I wrote about her. She hadn't seen the story until two years later. She thanked me for writing her story because it inspired her to start again! She shared with me how she had been at such a low point when things didn't work out well, but what I wrote about her gave her courage again. So, for me, something may not seem like a big deal to somebody, but it's such a big deal. This woman encouraged me to take this path and showed me that I could restart.

My greatest milestones have always been when I impacted someone's life. For example, when I started my communications agency, I leaned towards groups that had to do with women. I remember the last assignment I worked on; I had to go into low-income communities across Nigeria to tell the stories of women who got micro loans of about 20,000 Naira, not a lot of money. Still, out of that money, they sent their children to school and started creative revenue businesses, and they had such joy. I also worked with the Bill Gates financial inclusion projects, which also had such a significant impact, and these are only a few of these moments I've had.

**AWM:** What is the next step for you?

**Adedoyin:** I graduated with a master's degree from IE Business School. I am also writing and will continue to impact the lives of many African women and all women worldwide.

# Tomorrow starts today...



Non-contractual Photo

CORPORATE TRAINING | COACHING SERVICES | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | CONSULTANCY & ADVISORY SERVICES

Lifetime Learning & Consulting was set up in 1999 to bridge a gap in quality international corporate training and consultancy in both Mauritius and the African countries. With a team of more than 12 consultants, Lifetime Learning & Consulting focuses on training and consultancy which produces tangible results at the workplace and a Return On Investment (ROI). Our Client includes Multinationals, Government bodies and Charitable Organisations.





# The Exercise Factor in Decreasing the Risks of Age-Related Diseases (ARDs) in Menopausal Women

Medical professionals have long established the relationship between age, bodily stamina and quality of health. However, an inverse relationship between age and health exists, such that as one grows older, there is a decrease in the body's ability to resist disease and infections. Ordinarily, this manifests itself as Age-Related Diseases (ARDs), with effects that usually vary from person to person and largely depend on prevalent lifestyle habits.

Just as we refer to age in numbers, the body also goes through an aging process called cellular aging. Cellular aging is a genetically predetermined process that occurs naturally. The fundamental building blocks of the body are cells. Your cells have the ability to divide, grow, and carry out fundamental biochemical mechanisms. The more cells divide, the older they get. In turn, cells eventually weaken and lose their ability to function properly. As cells age, cellular damage also increases. Thus, the cell becomes less healthy, leading to failure of the biological processes.

Segment Title: Health and Personal

Such cellular damage presents itself through various illnesses, including hearing loss, cataracts and refractive errors, back and neck pain, osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression, and dementia. Aside from the intrinsic factors, many extrinsic factors are proven to positively or negatively affect the aging process of women and therefore, their health quality.

These factors include genetics, lifestyle habits, nutrition and diets, pre-existing medical conditions, attitude towards exercise, literacy, education, access to quality health care facilities, etc. Amongst these factors, building a long-term routine of regular exercise is often considered a great way of decreasing the likelihood of major health challenges in older adults, including women.

Women may, on average live longer than men, but that doesn't necessarily mean they are healthier. Although, older women are affected with the same conditions as men, including heart disease, cancer, and cardiovascular disease, studies reveal that they are at greater risk for many

conditions and are affected differently by many diseases that impact both men and women. Likewise, they often face multiple chronic conditions that affect their daily lives, such as diabetes, hypertension, or arthritis.

One of the most common health-related illnesses that occur in older women is osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is a degenerative joint disease, a condition where the bones become fragile and brittle. Bone tissue is continuously absorbed and replaced by the body. With osteoporosis, new bone creation doesn't keep up with the old bone removal process. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), musculoskeletal conditions, such as low back pain and osteoporosis, are the main causes of disability worldwide and the greatest contributors to the global need for rehabilitation. In the United States, while osteoporosis affects more than 10 million people, and in 2020, it was estimated to affect about 14 million adults over 50, there are 200 million women who have osteoporosis worldwide.

Research suggest that women are more likely to develop osteoarthritis for several reasons. These include changes in hormone levels relative to menopause, differences in the musculoskeletal system and biomechanics of women and men, and higher tendencies of obesity in women. Likewise, women aged 50 to 60 years are 3.5 times more likely to develop hand osteoporosis than men in the same age group. They are also 40% more likely to develop knee osteoporosis and 10% more likely to develop hip osteoporosis than men.

Additional reasons include the fact that the peak bone mass at

skeletal maturity (from 30 to 35 years of age) in women is on average 30% lower than that in men, and rapid decline in bone mass occurs due to oestrogen withdrawal during and after menopause. For these reasons, medication, a healthy diet, consistent and routine-based exercising are all part of the treatment plan to help prevent bone loss or strengthen already brittle bones; and are all the more important for women in preparation for old age.

Preventive and ameliorative strategies for osteoporosis include regular physical activity (particularly weight-bearing exercise), adequate nutrition (particularly calcium and

osteoporotic fracture in postmenopausal women.

In a recent large-scale, community-based and multiple-covariate survey study with more than 30,000 postmenopausal women, it was observed that there is a positive association between regular exercise and the prevention of osteoporosis. This study is the largest community-based investigation to verify the preventive effect of regular physical exercise on the development of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women. Women between the ages of 55-65 years were placed in two groups according to their status of exercise, i.e., no exercise and regular exercise



vitamin D intake), the avoidance of poor living habits that have adverse effects on bone health (such as tobacco use and alcohol intake), and hormone replacement therapy that has been proposed to maintain and achieve peak bone mass.

Among these recommended strategies, regular physical exercise has been indicated to have the most beneficial effects on bone health in older women. It has been considered the most powerful non-pharmaceutical strategy to prevent

groups. Lower risk of osteoporosis was noted in postmenopausal women who engage in regular exercise compared to those without regular exercise.

The study findings suggest that just as different kinds of exercises are suitable for different parts of the body such as sit-ups, pull-ups and squats for strengthening the abdominal muscles; weight-bearing and strength end/or resistance exercises are most suitable for avoiding brittle bones as one ages.

Additionally, aerobics exercise classes have been suggested to significantly improve bone, ligaments, tendons and muscles strength. By stimulating the growth of tiny blood vessels in muscle tissues, such exercises can also help improve the oxygen supply to the muscles, which in turn helps reduce pain experienced by people with muscle stiffness or chronic lower back pain.

Balancing exercises also play an important role in looking after the bones. Working on one's balance can improve stability and prevent falls, which can lead to fractured or broken bones. Types of balance training can include standing on one leg, tai chi, yoga, or balancing on a Bosu (a two-sided fitness tool with one side being a solid flat platform and the other is a soft dome resembling an exercise ball).

Another suggested exercise is dancing, which is not only a good way to maintain bone health, but it is also fun and engaging. Dancing often involves steps of elevation and transferring weight from foot to foot. Descending from these kinds of movements places additional muscle tension and pressure on the bones, which in turn, becomes stronger in reaction to such pressure.

A brisk daily walk is also a great exercise to help build the bone health – and it's good for the heart, too. It is suggested to aim for 30 minutes a day at least four times per week. A treadmill

is an alternative for concerns of uneven or cracked walking pathways. Climbing stairs while walking is another good bone-building exercise; as it can be considered as taking it up a notch in terms of putting increased stress on the muscles and joints to build strength because the process of climbing requires more balance and muscle work than walking does. So, if possible, consider taking the stairs instead of the lift every now and then.

Conclusively, it is known that bodies weaken, strength deteriorates and the skeletal system becomes more frail with age. Given the kind of jobs some women engage in, which is usually sedentary (involves sitting at a spot for hours), the kind of food we eat, and the rapid increase in infectious diseases globally, it is very important that you protect your bodies while gearing towards old age, and of course maintain a lifestyle of exercising. We hope this read inspires you to commit to a daily active life.



# House Plants

## that are Beneficial to the Lungs

By Goodnews Buekor



The lung is a powerful and significant organ that aids our breathing. It helps to purify and enhance the diffusion of oxygen in the blood. Modernization has negatively affected the environment, and the air we breathe is sometimes contaminated. Contaminants from chemicals, dust, pollen, pollutants, and various bacteria, affect the lungs. Furthermore, toxins and seasonal changes in the weather that trigger allergies can be detrimental to the lungs.

An excellent way to promote lung health is by cultivating lung-friendly plants inside the home and offices. The good news is that these plants are easy to grow, and serve perfectly for decoration. Some of these plants include:

### 1. Eucalyptus

Eucalyptus is an evergreen plant commonly used as a natural cold formula and an active ingredient in many expectorant medication. It contains an active compound called eucalyptol, also called cineole, which is effective in relieving cough, fostering sinus passage, and wading off congestion.

According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information, Cineole possesses mucolytic, bronchodilating, and anti-inflammatory properties. It reduces the exacerbation rate in patients suffering from Cognitive Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and relieves symptoms in patients suffering from asthma and rhinosinusitis.

It is important to note that the Eucalyptus plant can grow so tall to about 60 feet (18.29 m) height. Hence, cultivating a smaller size inside a container that can be transferred and planted outside when it outgrows the container will be preferable.





## 2. Oregano

*Origanum Vulgaris*, normally called oregano, belongs to the 'Lamiaceae' family. Its name originated from an ancient Greek word, which means 'joy of mountains.'

Oregano is a perennial herb that grows back year after year. It can be grown indoors and outdoors and is best cultivated in a container due to its invasive nature. In a 2016 Journal published by National Centre for Biotechnology Information, it was reported that Oregano contains carvacrol acid and thymol, which are major active ingredients in Oregano that helps traditionally in the treatment of respiratory disorders.

These substances help to open the respiratory tract and the nasal passage. It is also packed with antioxidants, which boost immunity and protect against colds and other illnesses.



## 3. Lungwort

*Pulmonaria Officinalis*, known as Lungwort, is an herbaceous evergreen plant of *Pulmonaria*. Lungwort is very susceptible to environmental toxins. Hence, the areas where they are found are considered a good indicator of a healthy ecosystem.

According to research carried out in the Department of Inorganic Chemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, Medical University of Lublin, Poland, Lungwort contains high mucilage content, which is beneficial to respiratory health and helps curb asthma and chronic bronchitis. Aside from the respiratory benefit it provides, the plant itself is beautiful and, at the same time, resilient.



## 4. Elderberry plant

Elderberry has dark purple fruit that is rich in antioxidants. It is also known as anthocyanins and has the potential to enhance blood circulation as well as to open the lungs, capillaries, and blood vessels. The elderberry plant is best grown outdoors in soil with a pH of 6 to 8.

Elderberry is traditionally used for the prevention and treatment of common colds, flu, fever, and sinus infection.

## 5. Peppermint

Peppermint is famously known for its minty taste and freshened smell. These are attributed to a specific active ingredient it contains; menthol. Menthol functions as a natural decongestant. It also provides an antihistamine effect, promoting free breathing. In a Journal titled "The effects of menthol isomers on nasal sensation of airflow," published by the National Center for Biotechnology Information, it is suggested that aromatic herbs such as menthol have significant therapeutic potentials in treating respiratory ailments.

Furthermore, due to its antibacterial, antiviral and anti-inflammatory attributes, it helps to decongest clogged sinuses.

Just like oregano, peppermint is also quite invasive, so cultivating it in a container, whether indoors or outdoors, would be preferable. It grows best in well-drained soil and minimal sunlight.

Asides from decoration, these five plants are beneficial to the lungs. Thus, just having them grown in your home can help reduce the chances of having breathing challenges and chest congestion.





# Living with Gluten Intolerance

■ Makaziwe

*"You don't realise how many things have gluten in them until you just want a packet of chips, and the spices in them get you admitted into a hospital!" Makaziwe laughed as she explained to Amazons Watch Associate Editor in an exclusive interview about her journey of living with gluten intolerance. Gluten is such a common element in almost all of our meals. Most of our staple foods almost always include gluten in them, making it a battle for people living with gluten intolerance or celiac disease.*

*In this interview, Makaziwe, who prefers to be called MKay narrated the story of her journey from the moment she received the diagnosis to how she is living and working now. MKay is now a high school teacher and is a living example of how allergies can interfere with your life but simultaneously force you to look into things you never considered.*

**AWM:** When did you realise you couldn't process certain foods?

**MKay:** This is very tricky to answer because gluten is in almost everything we eat, so it took some time for me to realise that there are things I couldn't process. It was actually in 2019 when I realised that I had a lot of sick days and was feeling fatigued, and I was just not well in terms of digestion. I didn't go to the bathroom frequently, and I didn't have regular bowel movements. That worried me a lot! So, I sought a nutritionist, which helped for a while, but then I got hospitalised, and that was when we realised that there was a real issue.

**AWM:** How was the diagnostic process?

**MKay:** I did a multiple-allergy test. So basically, they took specific elements and specimens of known allergies and put them in your system. I reacted heavily to gluten. At first, I thought I had celiac, and then after some tests, it just turned out that I am severely gluten intolerant.

**AWM:** What is the difference between Celiac Disease and Gluten



“

*My favourite safe recipe is brown rice and beans with chicken, but the chicken is only seasoned with salt, peppercorn, and this spice called Mother-in-law that I don't react to. It sounds strange but finding a spice you don't react to is one of the best feelings!*

”

I used to eat before my diagnosis. In the first six months, it was easy because I was afraid of the reactions, and my skin wasn't blistered for some time. I was excited, and I tried some food with gluten, but I did not react as severely. So, for some time, I convinced myself that the doctor must have made a mistake and the diagnosis was wrong, but it all came to a quick end when the symptoms returned. I found myself in the hospital with the same diagnosis. It hasn't been easy adjusting, but I am learning every day.

**AWM:** What's your favourite 'safe recipe'?

**Mkay:** My favourite safe recipe is brown rice and beans with chicken, but the chicken is only seasoned with salt, peppercorn, and this spice called Mother-in-law that I don't react to. It sounds strange but finding a spice you don't react to is one of the best feelings! My favourite snack is popcorn, and it's so much safer. I cannot have corn chips because they have spices with gluten in them. I also love coffee and spaghetti Bolognese made by specific companies that produce gluten-free food. Fortunately, shops with gluten-free foods are multiplying, but they are pretty expensive, so it's an occasional treat.

**AWM:** What advice do you have for other young girls with gluten intolerance?

**Mkay:** As much as you have this allergy, remember to live your life to the fullest and try new things in a safe space. Don't limit yourself too much just because you have an allergy, and remember to be happy and have it in mind that you are not being punished. Try to keep to your diet because if you do not, it will affect you later, trust me. Love yourself and get into a good space where you can live life to the fullest!

Intolerance?

**Mkay:** They are similar, but most Celiac disease patients suffer from Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), a common condition that affects the digestive system, because of it. In my case of Gluten Intolerance, it presents itself in a way similar to being stung by a bee or eating nuts. My eyes swell, and I have a burning rash that makes my skin red.

**AWM:** What other symptoms do you have?

**Mkay:** Besides the rash that I get, I get constipated at times, and I get nauseous and dizzy. On most days, I can't do anything usually because I have a splitting headache all day, of course, I can avoid most of this when I stick to my diet.

**AWM:** When you were diagnosed, what were you most afraid of?

**Mkay:** I was most afraid of losing a lot of weight because, in the beginning, I didn't necessarily know how to manage my allergy. I thought I would not enjoy the finer things of life. I can't just eat out or accept food from friends, and I can't eat at people's houses. I was afraid that my whole lifestyle would change, and I would not be able to enjoy life the way I used to.

**AWM:** Was it easy to adjust, and how did you do it?

**Mkay:** It was not easy! I am still struggling. I sometimes still crave the food



# Colouring your Natural Hair

By Tanya Maswaure

Welcome back to our natural hair series, where we explore and celebrate black natural kinky, curly hair. In this session, we will explore colouring natural hair and how you can do this safely without damage. Similar to the increased interest of individuals cutting their hair during the lockdown, anyone on social media must have seen an increased number of videos of young girls colouring their hair. There is something captivating and exciting about changing your hair; if you feel like doing that, you have the freedom to do so. We just want to make sure that you colour your hair safely.

Unfortunately, the rumours are true; regardless of hair type, a dye can damage your hair. This is why it is absolutely crucial to do research before rushing to buy a box colour and create a DIY YouTube Video. Natural type 4 hair is very sensitive due to its curls and coils. Maintaining your curl pattern is important, so how do we create that striking new look without sacrificing our crown?

Experts say that the best choice for a permanent lighter colour is the salon. Unlike you and your friends, the experts have had years of training and practice with different hair types and know how to take care of them. Colouring your hair with a lighter colour puts your strands at risk. This is because the chemicals in permanent hair dyes enter the hair follicles and react to them, creating different shades. In other cases, the hair must be bleached first for a colour to show more vibrantly. This whole process takes time, patience, and a lot of experience. So, unless you are willing to experiment and take the risk, you should consult a professional to achieve the perfect Pinterest look.

On the other hand, if you are determined to do it on your own, that is alright as well. Let us look at some safe options. The obvious first choice is a

temporary hair dye. On the same shelves, you find the chemical box colours; there are usually temporary hair dyes. These do not go into your hair but sit on the surface, protecting the strand and maintaining the coils. Depending on the product, these colours may last even over 15 washes, and some may just last one wash. This way, you can do more than one colour in a couple of months without sacrificing your hair. In between colours, you will have to maintain your hair-care regimen, including deep conditioning often to protect your hair.

Another option would be to use a box dye alone, opt for darker colours as these may be easier to work with and may not need multiple applications. If you take this option, you must consider buying more than one box because it is better to have more than enough rather than too little.

At the end of the day, it is your hair, and you have every right to wear it however you feel comfortable. There are many ways to change the colour of your hair, including even safer options like wearing a wig or getting coloured extensions and braids. Make sure that you keep your hair healthy and wear it with pride at the end of the day.



# Shaping the Narrative One Story at A Time

By Adedoyin Jaiyesimi



Recently, something remarkable happened in my country. Nigerian track and field athlete Tobi Amusan set a world record at the World Athletics Championships in Oregon. Her win wasn't just personal; it was a national victory. For a nation plunged into a bad news hurricane, Tobi's win felt like a much-needed

break from the cycle of negative news.

The win shone like a ray of hope that resonated in the hearts of Nigerians, and the buzz was everywhere. Everyone rode on that wave of hope from social media posts to think pieces on the power of a vision. And for that day at least, a different narrative about the nation was circulated.

This incident got me thinking. As a communicator, I think a lot about how my work contributes to shaping a narrative, not only in my country but in Africa. I thought about how one win brought to light a story of grit and overcoming the odds, showcasing the resilient Nigerian spirit. Several media platforms amplified this story and were also a source of inspiration for several corporate communications professionals. I should also add that Tobi's win was part of several wins that had women at the forefront.

By now, you may be wondering why all of this is important. I'll tell you.

The Tobi Amusan story showed me the power of a narrative and how communicators are uniquely positioned to champion the voice and cause of the marginalised. A common thread ran through the opinion pieces I read – the emphasis on the true Nigerian spirit. At that moment, it felt great to be a Nigerian. Everyone wanted to be associated with Tobi Amusan, even if that day was the first time they had ever heard about her.

Imagine what we can do with the positive stories that bring hope and a shift in perspective. There's a lot of bad news in the world, and it is often said that bad news sells, but I believe it's time for a change. Yes, there are issues in Africa, but stories of innovation, ingenuity, community, generosity, and love are yet to be fully explored. Who will tell these stories?

What about our women – breaking the mould and shattering ceilings not just across the continent but even globally? Even though we see the shift, we need to tell and amplify these stories. We need to be in control of our narrative, and the communicators in the continent need to be at the forefront of this.

The gift of words is such a powerful yet underrated gift. Through the power of our words and storytelling, we can bring to light causes and people that society has ignored. We can use our words to influence behaviour and stir people toward a course of action that is for the good of the nation and continent. Our words can bring hope and stir beliefs as people see themselves in the represented stories.

I'm tired of the narrative that portrays Africa as being a backward continent – a victim waiting to be saved. I'm tired of seeing the efforts of young people and women downplayed in an environment that restricts their development. While the need for visionary leadership in Africa is non-negotiable, communicators across the continent need to arise to be a voice for what truly matters. We need to be there to advise the government and public sector leaders on what's really important. We need to remind our corporate executives that impact goes beyond handouts – it should be merged into the DNA of corporate organizations.

I am confident in the power of communication, and professionals across Africa can contribute to shaping the narratives that can take us from where we are to where we want to be.

Just as Tobi Amusan was a source of inspiration for this article, I hope this article inspires its readers to think about the role they can play in bringing a shift and making positive contributions to their immediate community – especially communicators.





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**WOVEN INTO THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY**

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# Elvie Breast Pump:

Relieving the burden of breastfeeding





The period of breastfeeding for a mother is not just a moment of bonding for her and her baby. It is also a time to create lasting memories. According to World Health Organization, breastmilk is the perfect food for a newborn. They recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, then up to two years and beyond while introducing additional foods. Though, due to many factors, such as a mother combining work and nursing her baby, getting breast milk readily available may be challenging. However, with Elvie's breast pump invention, breast milk pumping has been made a whole lot easier.

### **Elvie Breast Pump Features**

With its ability to pump over 150ml capacities of milk, the Elvie breast pump comes with the following features:

#### **One pump/motor**

- Two 150ml BPA-free and fridge/freezer/dishwasher safe milk containers/bottles + storage lids
- Two valves, spouts and seals each
- Two breast shields in alternating (24 mm + 28 mm) sizes
- Two nursing bra extenders
- One USB charging cable
- One carry bag
- How It Works

Elvie breast pump is a detachable breast pump that can be tucked into a nursing mother's bra, as it is small and fits in perfectly well. It is wireless (except when it's attached to the charger). This breast pump is a hand-free, cordless, noiseless pump that fits in your bra. It has a sleek design and is linked to an application through Bluetooth, which helps to monitor the milk production and pumping history. This pump makes it easy for one to collect breast milk from anywhere comfortably.

Mothers who are users of this breast pump have remarkable feedback about the pump.

In one Mum's words, "Pumping with the Elvie mostly feels pleasurable—almost like a "flutter feed". It has made thinking about returning to work less daunting, as I know I can pump at work more easily to maintain my supply and provide milk for my daughter while she's at nursery. Another mum, who happens to be a loyal user stated that "Using Elvie Breast Pump has been a total game-changer for me. After a tough start to breastfeeding, my dream to provide my daughter with breastmilk as per the WHO guidelines while being a working mum is starting to look more like a reality."

Following the stigma and discomfort that comes with public breastfeeding, Elvie Breast Pump has you covered completely, as it allows you to pump breast milk comfortably from anywhere. You can also pump enough that can be saved for later. Thanks to Elvie breast pump, the journey of motherhood just got easier.

## 5

# PERFECT WAYS TO GET YOUR KIDS TO LISTEN WITHOUT HAVING TO YELL

By Goodnews Buekor

"No, Jake, you will have to visit your cousin tomorrow. Right now, it's snowing, and it's cold outside. Let's do that tomorrow, okay?" I thought I had just finished talking to my 5-year-old boy for the fourth time. Here he is again, crying that he wants to see Derick, his cousin. I am cut in between yelling at him or just ignoring him.

If you are a parent with kids, this situation is probably not strange at all. Getting kids to listen is something most parents find challenging. Can kids actually listen without you having to yell, threaten or bribe them? Here are five ways, according to experts, to make kids listen while helping you save your pretty voice from yelling.

## 1. Keep your tone in check

Kids also battle with mood swings, and they have a difficult time handling their emotions too. Therefore, yelling at them may not be your best option to make them carry out a certain instruction. Instead of yelling, try addressing the situation more calmly, and they may respond similarly.

"How you say a thing is much more important than what you are actually saying," says paediatrician Kimberly Churbock, MD. "

## 2. Provide alternatives

Giving your kids options makes them presume they are in charge, which isn't the case, as they will still not carry out what they first desired.

"Putting choice and will in the hands of kids can give them a sense of confidence and value for their opinion, it also helps them feel less compelled. Even if you're asking them to do an undesirable task. If your child struggles with bath time, give them the choice of which toy they want to bring into the tub or whether they want bubbles," says Kimberly.

If your child remains adamant, be careful not to give in by attempting to bribe them. By doing this, they will consent to your demands, but it is only because you bribed them. Instead, set boundaries and be strict with them.

## 3. Make a connection with them

Your kids will ignore you if you stay on the balcony, thundering instructions to your child in the living room.

Communication is more effective when there is a connection. Parent educator Pam Leo sums it up perfectly: "The level of cooperation parents get from their children is usually equal to the level of connection children feel with their parents" When our kids feel that we're tuned into their lives, that we see them and that they matter to us, they're more likely to listen to what we have to say.

## 4. Crack jokes and make them loosen up

The atmosphere may become too tense when you want your kids to listen to you and get them to do what you want. This fire-brigade method may not produce the desired result. Giving out instructions in a more comic or silly way will not only make your kids comfortable, but they may likely comply to retain that happy ambience. Who doesn't like peace? "Try saying things in a funny voice, being silly or poking fun at yourself when making requests," Pam suggests.

## 5. Prioritize comprehension

Sometimes, we can pass across information, but information that is not comprehended is as good as you not saying anything at all. No, don't assume your kid understood what was said. How can you tell? Making your kid reiterate what was said will make the information sink in better.

"Have your child repeat back your request after you've made one to ensure that he understands what you're expecting. This is a simple way to make sure everyone is on the same page, allow you to clarify if you're not understood and to ensure that your child actually heard what you were saying," says Dr Churbock.

Coming to terms with the fact that parenting isn't a day's job is one truth we should embrace. However, like every other aspect of our life, we should put in time and effort to make things work. Applying these helpful tips to get your kids to listen will surprise you with how much they can actually cooperate, thus making everyone happy.

# EXCELLENT WAYS TO UPSCALE YOUR BUSINESS, BUSINESS EXPERTS REVEAL



Growing a business is no small task. There is no successful business that was built in a day. Every successful business is a product of lots of planning and investments. It is one thing to start a business and another to ensure it grows and meets the target. Hence, the need to upscale your business cannot be overemphasized.

Here are six strategies business experts from various fields recommend to grow your business and give you your desired outcome.

### 1. Balanced operations and leadership

To grow in business, you must be laser focused, and have strategies that can help you achieve your goals when opportunities present themselves. Improving your operations using measurable and orderly systems that you can constantly reproduce is essential.

"First, become clear on the best way to pursue the opportunity. Then, perfect your operations with measurable, systematic processes you can replicate consistently. Understand what contributes most to your impact at a granular and macro level and maximise that in everything you do," says Brandon Dawson, serial entrepreneur, co-founder, and CEO of Cardone Ventures; founder and CEO of Audigy; host of The B Dawson Show.

Furthermore, building a team with a similar vision and goal is pivotal for any business to grow. Hence, possessing formidable leadership traits is strategic to upscale in business. "Align individual team members' successes with your objectives. Teach them to break through their limiting beliefs so that you can conquer your shared mission together," he says

### 2. Associate with those who have the result you seek

Association is powerful. Surrounding yourself with people who achieved the desired results in a given sector will only make replicating their results easier. Josh Steinberger, founder and CEO of Next Gen Restoration, advises that one should surround yourself with others who have done it. They have already been there, made mistakes, and paid the price. At first, you will need to pay to get in the room with them. But the life-long friendships and partnerships are worth every penny.

### 3. Master the art of traffic and sales

Excelling in business boils down majorly to sales

output and traffic channels. "If you can create an unlimited number of potential customers and convert them with a sales funnel, you can grow your business 10x quickly," says Rudy Mawer, founder and CEO of ROI Machines and RudyMawer.com, Facebook marketing and ad expert. It is not enough to have so much traffic. A critical question is how much of the traffic is converted to sales.

### 4. Dream big

"Have a big vision that becomes magnetic and excites your team to help you accomplish your desired results. Then continue to evolve and think even bigger," says Keri Shull, founder of the Keri Shull Team and co-founder of real estate coaching business HyperFast Agent. As you continue to grow, hire and fire to sustain your vision. You must be ready to make difficult decisions that align with where you are going.

### 5. Provide top-notch delivery

Nothing is as satisfying when a client gets real value from your service. Trust me, they will come back again. "Providing real value to your customers is powerful. Its importance cannot be overstated. Offering a solution to a real problem that people care about will make it much easier to

run a business," says Melanie Perkins, co-founder and CEO of Canva.

### 6. Develop a compelling business culture

A company grows faster when they have an outstanding business culture. Identify your 'why' as a brand, then set measurable goals to achieve that purpose. "To truly realise the power of a unified vision, translate it into a shared vocabulary like a mantra, phrase, cheer, or rallying cry," says Peter Hernandez, president of the Western Region at Douglas Elliman; founder and president of Teles Properties.

A compelling business culture will make your client find you again after every deal. Uphold core values as a brand. "Success requires physical and mental stamina, emotional intelligence, and powerful habits that are reinforced daily across the organisation," he says.

Like a baby, every business that will stand the test of time has to be nurtured and allowed to grow. There is so much to be done to achieve sustainability and growth in business. These helpful tips can go a long way to getting you started—cheers to growth and plenty of profits.



**LIMITED SPACE**


**EUROPEAN ENDOMETRIOSIS LEAGUE (EEL)**

# Endometriosis Masterclass


17th-19th November 2022

HCA The Lister Hospital, Chelsea, London


CEMIG (Centre for Endometriosis and Minimally Invasive Gynaecology)




Christian Becker  
Oxford, UK




Jon Einarsson  
Boston, US



Jörg Keckstein  
Villach, Austria



Shaheen Khazali  
London, UK



Harald Krentel  
Duisburg, Germany

## Brows Raised at The Absence of Women on The Endocrine Panel

By Tanya Maswaure

Although there have been significant increase in women's voices in all avenues of life, it is still shocking to find that decisions and discussions about women are being made without women. Monumental and progressive laws such as Row v Wade are being overturned as if the efforts and voices of women on such matters in history are being erased. A similar argument has risen on the forth-coming Endometriosis Workshop, which involves a panel filled with men and not a single female panelist to speak on a matter that affects women alone. To fully understand the issue, let us delve further into endometriosis.

Endometriosis is a condition where tissue similar to the lining of the womb grows in other places, such as the ovaries and fallopian tubes. Endometriosis can affect women of any age, including teenagers. It's a long-term condition that can have a significant impact on life. - [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

The most common symptom is pain. The pain often happens during your period but can also occur at other times. Endometriosis may also make it harder to get pregnant. According to University College London Hospitals and Women's Health USA, 10% of women worldwide have endometriosis - that's 176 million worldwide. The

prevalence of endometriosis in women with infertility is as high as 30–50%. According to Endometriosis UK, endometriosis is the second most common gynecological condition in the UK. It takes an average of eight years from the start of symptoms for women to receive a diagnosis of the ailment.

Endometriosis growths may swell and bleed like the lining inside your uterus does every month — during your menstrual period. This can cause swelling and pain because the tissue grows and bleeds in an area where it cannot quickly get out of your body.

The growth may also continue to expand and cause problems, such as:

- Blocking your fallopian tubes when growths cover or grow into your ovaries, leading to trapped blood in the ovaries that can form cysts.
- Inflammation (swelling)
- Forming scar tissue and adhesions (a type of tissue that can bind your organs together). This scar tissue may cause pelvic pain and make it hard for you to get pregnant.



- Complications around the small intestine and bladder

With this understanding of the disease, it is clear that women should be part of the conversation. In addition to demonstrating how important and applicable the event will be, the prevalence of the condition statistically indicates that numerous educated women could serve as panelists.

Endometriosis does not discriminate, and some celebrities can testify to it. Whoopi Goldberg, the actress, and television host had endometriosis about 30 years ago but was lucky enough to have good doctors who caught it early and cleared up her symptoms. She created Whoopi & Maya, a line of cannabis products designed to relieve menstrual pain because of her experience. Susan Sarandon, Emma Banton, Cindy Lauper, and Tia Mowry have all been diagnosed with Endometriosis and publicly discussed the topic.

Tia Mowry speaks openly about it on her social media, accompanying posts of her children and stories on her struggles. Celebrities having these conversations have cleared some of the associated stigmas and are inadvertently teaching their followers and fellow women worldwide to do the same. They represent female voices everywhere, whilst the international workshop restricts the female voice as evident in the all-male line up of panelists.

The endometriosis workshop to be held in November of this year 2022, at Lister Hospital in Chelsea, London, aims to give "certified education and training" in diagnosing and treating the condition.

The goal of the workshop is to give "certified education and training" to experts in gynecology. One might then argue that the number of female experts is low, but this is not true because currently, women account for 59% of OB-GYNs; 82% of residents are training to become OB-GYNs. In comparison, men last year comprised just 17% of OB-GYN residents.

Lister Hospital in Chelsea, London, has been chosen as the venue for the event. The organization's board made up of six men and one woman from Europe aims to increase awareness, fund research, and train and educate medical professionals on endometriosis. Many social media users criticized the lack of female specialists on EEL's panel, stating they were "not surprised."

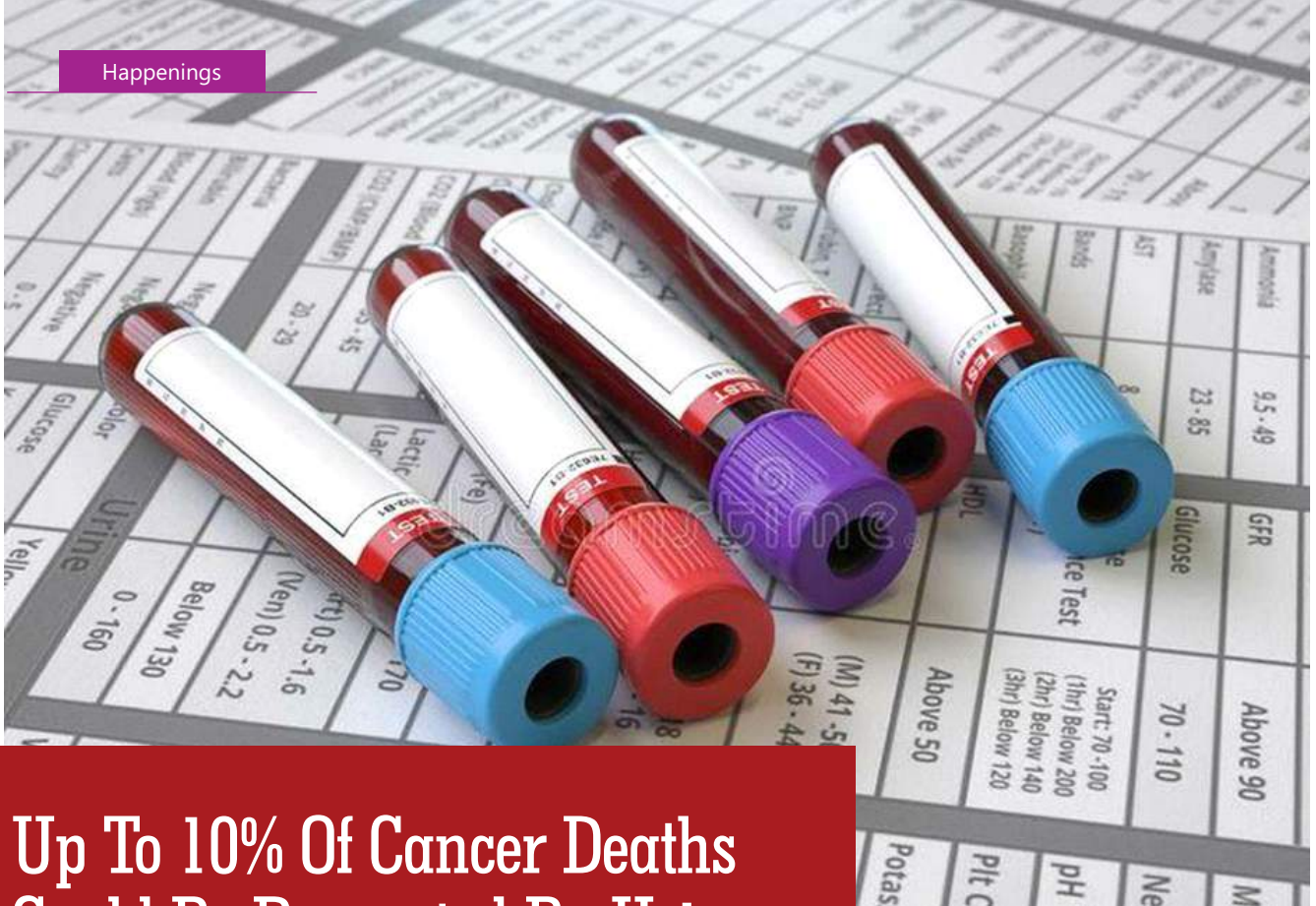
"Given that Europe has female experts, why is this masterclass being conducted by men?" One individual inquired, adding that she was "astonished."

Another person stated that the lack of women on the panel was due to "patriarchy."

"Men have no idea what it's like to live in a feminine body," as a result, they base everything on a masculine physique. But since they believe the male is the standard, they think they know female bodies, writes writer-activist Angharad Masdar.

The request is therefore simple and universal as one would think that since endometriosis is a universal struggle for women internationally, workshops and events addressing this issue, would be more inclusive and accommodate women who have experience on the topic.





# Up To 10% Of Cancer Deaths Could Be Prevented By Using The New NHS Blood Test, A Recent Study Reveals

I was still in high school when my classmate lost her mom to cancer. Poor Tracy was so utterly devastated that it affected her academic performance and as such her grades weren't good enough to get her into the next class. Cancer is the leading cause of death worldwide, accounting for nearly 10 million deaths, or one in six deaths in 2020.

So much effort has been made to put an end to this menace, one of which is a recent finding that seems to ignite glimmers of hope as it is the world's largest trial of a revolutionary new blood test examined by the National Health Service (NHS) to detect cancer.

Reports have it that this test can curb so much as 1 in 10 cancer deaths in the UK by identifying above 50 types of cancer before their initial symptoms develop.

According to the Daily Mail, although there are no results yet, it is hoped that the practice of conducting the test can prevent as much as 10% of the nearly 460 cancer deaths that occur annually in the UK.

US company Grail considers the cancer test as a 'turning point' in how the NHS handles the disease, since it would help detecting and treating for cancer way before symptoms become palpable.

Professor Peter Sasieni, one of the three lead researchers of the trial from King's College London, said: "The potential of this blood test to dramatically cut the number of people who die from cancer is enormous. Of course, if the NHS rolls out the test, we will see some increase in short-term workload from the slightly higher number of referrals for cancer test, but in the long run, there

should also be many savings for the NHS, such as a reduction in the need for chemotherapy and expensive drugs for advanced cancers."

This new test, known as the 'Galleri test,' is a very sensitive test that identifies tiny fragments of DNA associated with cancer which are distributed in the blood. It then detects cancer cells that are existent in the body before symptoms develop, hence this early detection can allow for early treatment.

Cancer Research UK and King's College London, frontliners in this investigation, sent out letters of invitation to people within the age bracket of 50 and 77. Those suspected of having cancer in their blood were referred to a scan within two weeks.

Nonetheless, the results of those who were referred to the hospital in the NHS trial are yet to be disclosed. Early results from the trial are believed to be shared with the NHS in 2024.

According to Cancer Research UK, cancer mortality can be reduced every two minutes when cases are identified and treated early, something the Galleri test hopes to achieve.



# Health Benefits of Smoothies According to Health Experts

Goodnews Buekor



Smoothies are viscous, creamy drinks, usually made from blending a variety of fruits and vegetables mixed with juices, yoghurts, nuts, seeds, non-dairy milk, and other choice ingredients. Some people consume smoothies as part of breakfast in the morning or as an afternoon snack.

Aside from the fact that smoothies are extra delicious, they are packed with vitamins and minerals that are essential to our health.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), adults should consume at least five servings (400 grams) of fruits and vegetables daily. Not a lot of people enjoy eating just fruits, you can switch things up a bit by enjoying a glass of smoothie while still meeting the WHO's recommended daily fruit intake. Also, smoothies are a great way to incorporate fruits to your diet.

Here are some benefits of smoothies according to health experts:

## 1. Enhances Immunity

The body's ability to wade off infections and fight diseases depends on the strength of the immune system. Due to various factors, the immune system can be

weakened. Smoothies include a variety of fruits and vegetables that can boost the immune system. Most especially fruits that contain beta-carotene.

"Vitamin C and beta-carotene helps to strengthen your immune system and synthesizes collagen that aids in the framework of your body," says Laura Michele, a registered dietitian in Brooklyn, New York.

Making smoothies from citrus, berries, grapes, and melons can provide sufficient vitamin C and keep your immune system active.

### 2. Improves digestion

Constipation and bowel upset are widespread challenges people encounter. An appropriate amount of fibre intake helps improve bowel movement. According to the 'Closing America's Fiber Intake Gap' article, although the public is aware of the advantages of fibre intake and some people think that they consume sufficient fibre; national consumption surveys suggest that only about 5% of the surveyed population meets recommendations, and inadequate intake has become a public concern.

The good news is that, smoothies supply sufficient fibre that aids digestion and proper bowel functioning.

"Drinking fruit smoothies can help you reach the recommended fibre intake, 25 grams for women and 38 grams for men," says Laura. "One serving of fruit typically contains two to four grams of fibre, with blackberries, pears, and apples having the highest concentration of five to seven grams per serving."

### 3. Reduces the risk of heart disease

The major cause of heart attacks is Low-density lipoprotein (bad cholesterol) which clogs blood vessels and prevents the free flow of blood to and from the heart. Healthy drinks such as smoothies contain ingredients like oats that are entirely fat-free. Regular exercise combined with adequate consumption of fruits and vegetables can keep heart diseases at bay.

Furthermore, citrus containing fruits, such as grapefruit, oranges, tangerines, and lemons, contain a reasonable proportion of vitamin C, potassium and folate, which helps to keep the heart in perfect condition.

"Potassium supports your heart function and helps maintain normal blood pressure, while folate promotes healthy cells," says Laura. Hence, smoothies made from potassium rich fruits such as bananas is likely to look after the heart.

### 4. Helps in weight control

Smoothies could be used as a meal replacement when trying to lose or maintain a healthy weight. Skipping breakfast is a common habit for those trying to lose weight. However, the aim becomes defeated because they end up eating more meals later. To avoid this, having some smoothie for breakfast can keep you full for a long time, and hence, you won't have to eat so much later on.

A 2012 Nutrition Food Science Journal, published in the National Library of Medicine, noted that those who consumed beverages like smoothies didn't feel hungry for a longer period of time compared to

those who ate whole fruits.

### 5. They are a great source of antioxidants

From time to time, free radicals that cause damage to the cells are released into the body; however, if the body contains a sufficient number of antioxidants, these compounds help to inhibit this reaction.

Smoothies made from blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, cranberries, and grapes are excellent sources of antioxidants. They protect the cells of the body from damage by free radicals.

"Berries and grapes contain particular antioxidants that decrease inflammation and phytonutrients that help fight disease," Laura says.

Smoothies may form part of a balanced diet. However, Nutritionist Kerry Torrens says, "Be sure to focus on lower sugar fruits, emphasizing fresh or frozen produce. Include one or more protein sources like yoghurt, kefir or milk, and healthy fats from nuts, seeds, or avocados." In the NHS Eat Well Guide, it is suggested that "fruit juice and smoothies should be limited to no more than a combined total of 150ml a day."





Laos: the land of a million elephants and acres of unexplored land!

As part of Amazons Watch commitment to our readers, we are always excited to discover and share with you, new resorts that feel like home away from home. After all the hard work and impact you have made in this world, it is important that you catch a breath and relax. Therefore, we've put together the perfect places to unwind on your next vacation- all in one country: Laos! The South Asian Country is ready with open arms to welcome you on your next adventure. Join us as we walk through the history, the highlights, and one of the most famous recipes of Laos.

#### Places to visit

Present-day Laos traces its historic and cultural identity to Lan Xang, which existed from the 14th century to the 18th century as one of the largest kingdoms in Southeast Asia. Since it is the central geographical location in Southeast Asia, the kingdom became a hub for overland trade and as a result, became wealthy economically and culturally. Laos is the perfect place to explore and experience Asian culture.

Since the climate is tropical throughout the year, you can visit Laos anytime. However, if you prefer to cruise on the Mekong River, it is better to travel between November and January when the water levels are higher.

## The Hidden Gem of Asia

By Tanya Maswaure

Laos has an array of places you can schedule in your itinerary to visit. Luang Prabang is a perfect example. At the centre of Luang Prabang is a hill that offers stunning views of the Mekong River. Luang Prabang offers beautiful sights such as temples, palace museums, souvenir shops, and multi-cuisine restaurants. Travelers can explore the city on a rented bicycle. You will also notice that many restaurants are built inside French colonial buildings. Some museums display the fascinating cultures of Northern Laos. Night markets are also quite popular and a great place to enjoy sticky rice, one of our unique feature recipes.

Vang Vieng is another spectacular site that serves as Laos's party hub. There are lots of adventure activities such as mountain climbing and tubing. Though it is small, this place offers the most active vacation. The blue lagoon, Tham Phu Kham (cave of golden crabs), and the Silver Lake are a must-visit.

#### History and Female Politics

Laotian women have long been active participants in Laotian society; they have been involved in politics, driving social transformation and development, engaged in business, and serving as nurses and food producers for the military. However, due to modernization and rural uprooting, pooppoò women have also begun to embrace lifestyles that are foreign to traditional Laotian ideals.

The Lao Women's Union (LWU; Lao: ສະຫະພາບດ້ານຍິງລາວ ) is a women's rights organization established in Laos on July 20, 1955. It was initially called the Lao Patriotic Women's Association but was renamed the Lao Women's Association in 1965 and got its present name at the 1st National Congress in 1984. It has acted as the official leader of the women's movement in Laos since its founding. It is responsible for promoting government policies that benefit women and protecting women's rights within the government while liberating them from traditional norms within



society and involving them in social revolution to promote their overall status and welfare in Laotian society.

People in Laos celebrate the Women's Union Establishment Day annually on July 20. It is one of the country's most important official national holidays, and in recent times, it has gained more significance in the growing international movement for equal rights for women. The story behind this holiday, and why it's so widely celebrated in Laos, is one of the long struggles that eventually granted women their rights and promoted more favourable policies for women. In Laos, the Women's Union Establishment Day national holiday is a symbol of the plight of women and how it can change for the better.

In 1997, Onechanh Thammavong became one of the vice presidents of the National Assembly of Laos. In March 2011, the National Assembly provided a seminar for forty-seven female candidates in advance of the 7th Lao general elections in April 2011 to instill the "significant duties of the national legislature body" in women.

Onechanh Thammavong (Lao: ອຸ່ນເຈົ້າໜັກ; born May 13, 1953) is a Laotian politician and member of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP). She served as the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare in the 6th Government of Laos. She is a former president of

the Lao Women's Union, succeeding Khampheng Boupha in 1988.

The Lao Women's Union held its first national congress in 1984. This was a significant moment in the Union's history, as it helped unify its efforts and saw devising the principal plans for the Union's future projects. The Union holds a national congress every five to seven years. The Lao Women's Union has a membership of over one million, making it one of the country's most vital social and political organizations.

### Cuisine

Lao people were originally migrants from Southern China, composed of many ethnic groups with distinct languages and cultures.

As they moved further South, they brought their traditions along with them. Due to historical Lao migration from the Lao PDR into Thailand and neighbouring countries, Lao cuisine has a much broader recognition globally. Therefore, the best way to try Lao food is by exploring the diversity of cuisines within Laos's borders.

In Laos, food is the most important activity throughout the day. In the local language, it is quite common for people to greet each other by immediately asking, "Have you eaten food?" ("Kin khao laeo bor?"). Lao people take a great passion for sharing traditional dishes with curious travellers; sticky rice is a staple throughout the country. It is a popular saying that Lao citizens eat more sticky rice than anyone else. It is traditionally steamed in a cone-shaped bamboo basket and placed in a covered basket where it is eaten alongside many dishes. In Laos, sticky rice should always be available to eat at any time of the day.

Larb is a complimentary dish for sticky rice. This dish is a type of minced meat salad and is widely considered to be the national dish of Laos. You can find Larb made with chicken, beef, duck, fish, or pork. It is usually flavoured with fish sauce, lime juice, fermented fish juice, ground rice, and fresh herbs. It comes with a few chili peppers, which you can avoid eating if you cannot handle spicy food. (See the recipe below)



Delicious Baguettes (a long, thin type of bread of French origin) are also commonly found on many streets in Laos. This baguette sandwiches largely resemble a Vietnamese Banh Mi, but instead of using cilantro and pickles, the Lao version consists of watercress, grated carrots, and a good amount of chile-garlic sauce. It is a quick meal that you can enjoy on the go for breakfast or lunch.

### Laos Star Recipe: Chicken Larb

Sometimes traveling can be expensive, but we have the next best option! With this staple Laos recipe, you can easily transport your taste buds to the magnificent views and buzzing streets. This is our favourite:

#### Ingredients

- 1 pound of ground chicken
- ½ cup of cooked chicken skin, sliced (found at Asian markets)
- 1 tablespoon of cooking oil
- 1 cup shallots (sliced)
- ¼ cup cilantro (roughly chopped)
- ¼ cup mint (roughly chopped)
- 2 spring onions (sliced)
- 2 Thai chilies (finely sliced)
- white pepper
- 1 cup roasted peanuts (unsalted, chopped roughly)
- 1 lime, juiced
- 2 inches. pieces of lemon grass
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon of crushed dried chilli
- 1 romaine lettuce (optional)

#### Recipe

**Step 1** - Get ready for the scallions, cilantro, spearmint, chilis, lemongrass, and chilis. First, ensure that you have minced the scallions, cilantro, spearmint, and garlic.

**Step 2** - Add the chicken to a pan along with about ½ cup of water. Spread the chicken evenly across the pan. Turn on the heat to medium and bring to a simmer without stirring. Let it simmer for 1 minute before carefully flipping over the ground chicken. Gently break it into small chunks. You're looking for it to clump

together and not turn into mush. Break up any large clumps with the back of a wooden spoon.

After about 5 minutes, when you can see no pink from the chicken, remove from the heat and leave to cool completely.

**Step 3** - Once cooled, drain the excess water from the chicken. Tip the chicken into a bowl. Stir in the shallots, cilantro, mint, spring onions, chilies, kaffir lime leaf, and white pepper. Pour in the dressing and stir well. Next, add in the padaek (fermented fish sauce)

Decant to a serving bowl or platter and scatter generously with the chopped peanuts.

Serve at room temperature with romaine lettuce leaves (optional) to make cups. On the side, serve lime wedges and some fantastic sticky rice.

The fun and adventures in Laos are endless, and we will note this down as one of our favourite travel locations and hope that we have at least convinced you to consider the same. Happy travelling and happy cooking!




# WHY WOMEN SHOULD TAKE More Breaks & Travel More

Although the current global labour force participation rate for women is just under 47%, women are forever competing and working hard to maintain their positions or get promoted. Research has shown that women work harder and produce more than men in workspaces. The gender salary gap is still prevalent in most places, and there remains a "pink tax" that has women making 81.8 percent for the same work performed by men. The reasons why women should take a break are ever-increasing, and it is known that all work and no play is never a good balance. Consequently, in this article, we discuss the importance of travel for women's mental health.

According to a detailed study including several reputable large companies and 3,000 anonymous working men and women, women work 10 per cent harder than men in today's offices. Both men and women complete about 66 per cent of their assigned work. However, women are given 10 per cent more work than men. The fact that women still achieve the same completion rate even with a higher percentage of assigned tasks, indicates they are more industrious regardless of the increased responsibility.

Research in America also shows that 49% of employed women in the United States, including 42% of working mothers, say they are their family's

A group of hikers is walking away from the camera on a dirt trail in a desert landscape. The hikers are wearing backpacks and casual clothing. The background shows rolling hills under a bright sky.

primary breadwinner. Regardless, the same women are responsible for household duties, caring for the sick and elderly, and childcare. These facts alone should show how much work women take on in today's society and are an indication of the much-needed break.

Fortunately, travel statistics show that women are the most frequent travelers, but one might assume that this statistic may not include most of the women we described above. Even if it does, here are some more reasons why women should travel more and take a breather:

Upon closer inspection, the aforementioned travel statistics revealed that women travel more because women are usually in charge of organising family trips. This can easily fall under some of the domestic responsibilities mentioned above and may be the reason why solo travel is becoming more popular.

During solo trips, which involves travelling alone, women are more liberal and independent of responsibilities, giving them the much-needed break. Although there are some safety concerns, such solo travels have been considered worthwhile, especially following the improvement of safety measures across holiday destinations.

Psychologists have also stated that working this hard without taking breaks can lead to significant physical and psychological issues for women. The body is designed to respond to short bursts of stress. When stress is prolonged, and the stress response is triggered repeatedly and regularly, the situation turns into chronic stress. Chronic stress can lead to heart disease, heart attack, high blood pressure and stroke, sleep problems, weight gain, and memory and concentration impairment. These all benefit no one in the long run.

Moreover, vacation days are almost always readily available and women are legally entitled to leave days as are men. However, some people ignore or use them for extra work, which is not advisable. For some companies, such vacation days come with travel discounts which can be beneficial for exploring new places and is likely to hold more benefits than the financial gains gotten from additional stress.

Finally, with all the demands on women, sometimes it is easy to forget that you are essential. You are doing so well, and you are forever pushing the bar. Take a break! Go and see some friends or spend some time alone. Taking a break is something that you should never reschedule or regret.

# The Promise That Transcends Languages: Tara Banjara

By Tanya Maswaure

It was a sight to see as one of the youngest delegates stood up in front of hundreds of people with a bold voice and all the confidence a 17-year-old could muster.

She spoke loud and clear, demanding the attention of everyone in earshot of her. The audience was attentive and captivated by her every word and syllable, yet she did not speak English.

Tara stood in front of ministers, decision-makers, CEOs, and heads of NGOs and demanded everyone's attention, and even though no one understood her, the message was clear. She was not just in attendance as an activist and spokesperson. Tara is a survivor of Child labour, and she knew first-hand solutions to fix it.

At the 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of child labour, Tara Banjara was one of the invited young delegates to be part of the deliberation and the formation of the Durban Call to Action.

The difference between Tara and the other speakers was that she was not only a survivor but also one of the youngest speakers. Moreover, she had practical and working solutions to share because she had eliminated child labour in her village.

From the age of 4, Tara worked in construction. She and other children worked on the road, paving and cleaning around. Tara is from a nomadic community called the Banjara community in Rajasthan, India. They were exposed to dangerous elements as they travelled seeking work and had no protection from harsh weather conditions.

"I worked with my mother day and night, even in the rain, only to return home too exhausted to eat, and the next day we started all over again." So she told us through the translator.

Because she was the oldest of her siblings, she was sent to work so that they had food to eat. She did not even realise that she was a child labourer, "I was just afraid of the cars coming and had to get the work done," she explained.

When we travel on the roads, we often fear for children who play on the road, but it is hard to imagine those same children working to maintain those roads, yet that is the reality Tara lived.

Fortunately, Tara was rescued by Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi and his wife, Sumedha Kailash. This was great news for her, but Tara did not end there. Tara took this as a chance to help many other children like her and

joined the 100 Million campaign at Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation.

Under their guidance, Tara rescued all the children in her village from child labour and became a vocal activist for child education. As a result, she was the first child in her community to complete her primary school education and attend secondary education.

Tara also prevented her sister from getting into child marriage and became an advocate against trafficking and child marriage, as well as child labour. Because of her action, voice, and determination, there is no child labour or child marriage in her village today.

It was no surprise that although no one understood a word of Hindi when Tara stood at the edge of the stage and asked everyone to make a promise to accelerate their actions and eliminate child labour, everyone stood in ovation and listened attentively.

By the time the translator spoke, everyone was moved and ready to take action. Our only hope is that our Promise to Tara does not remain in words, but we can see action in our global community.

After all, if a 17-year-old could do it in her community, what is stopping us from doing the same?

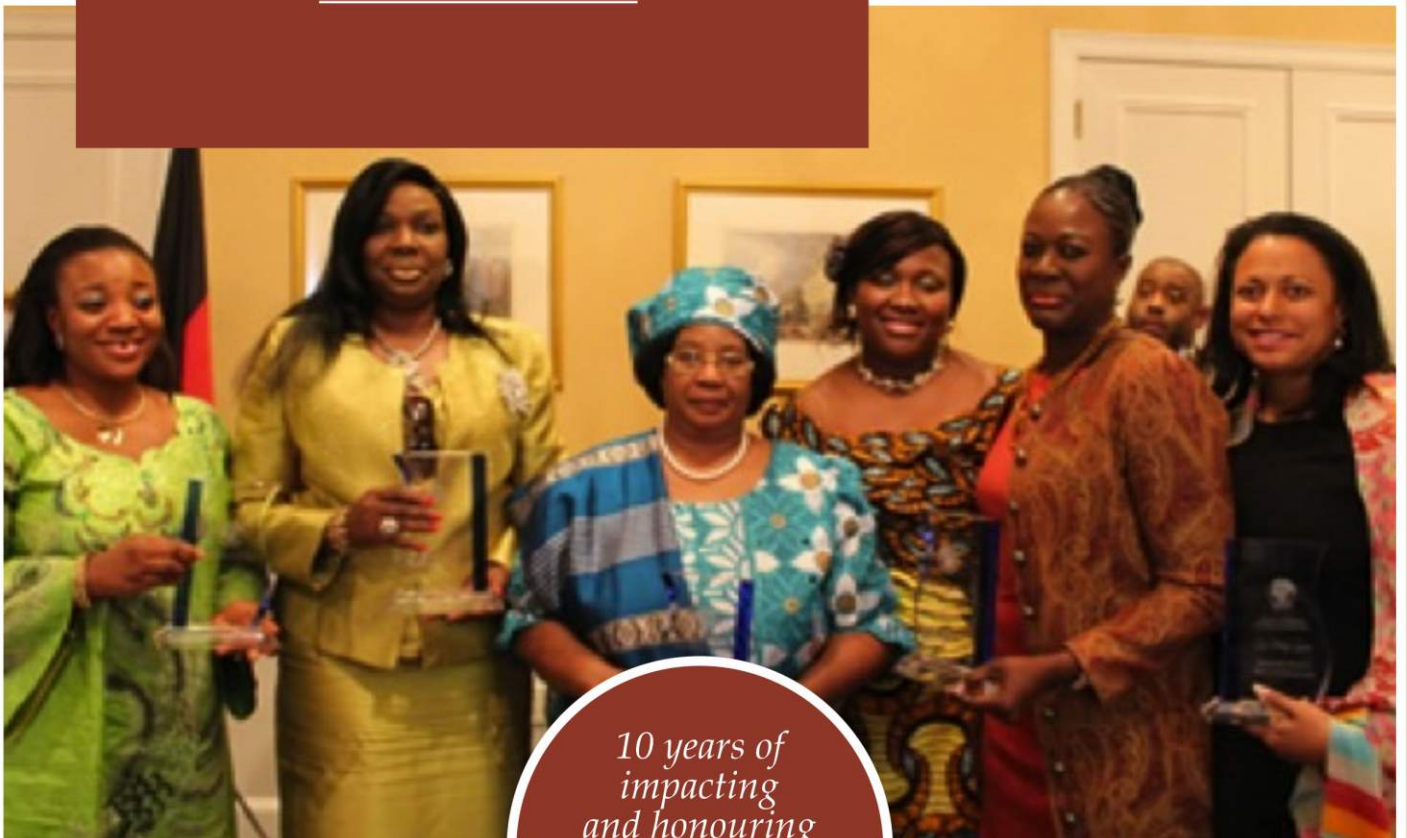


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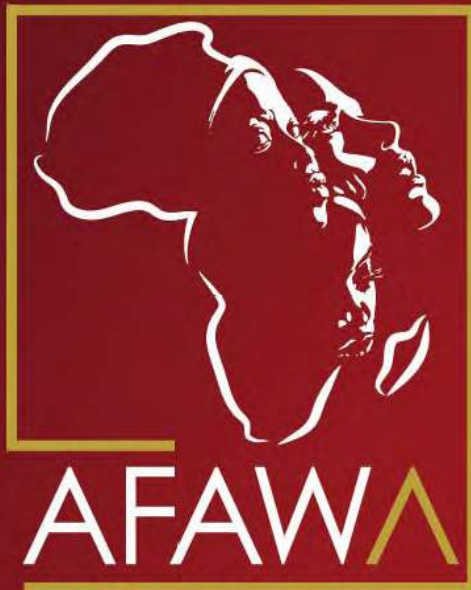


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AFFIRMATIVE FINANCE ACTION  
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AFAWA is a \$300 million risk sharing instrument to unlock \$3 billion in credit for women business in Africa. Building on a network of commercial banks and micro finance institutions, AFAWA will create structural change and a lasting impact for women.