

# AMAZONS WATCH

The Global Voice for Women's Development, Leadership, and Impact

ISSUE 10.2



## UNSTOPPABLE

The Rise of Fearless Women

Code Red: Cracking the Male-Dominated Matrix

Power Dressing: What Successful Women Wear & Why

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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

## Breaking Boundaries: Celebrating the Unstoppable Power of Fearless Women



**B**reaking Boundaries: Celebrating the Unstoppable Power of Fearless Women

There are moments in history when the world witnesses transformations driven by sheer willpower, relentless courage, and unwavering belief in the extraordinary potential within ordinary individuals.

When Blossom, our spirited and dedicated editor, first shared her vision for celebrating fearless women, it resonated immediately. Yet, I sensed an even deeper narrative unfolding. I felt compelled to reframe it—moving beyond mere fearlessness toward an even more profound state: being unstoppable. This is a condition in which one's purpose and inner power intertwine, redefining what is possible. Blossom was not simply curating narratives about courage or resilience; she was authentically sharing her own journey. She was

not just stepping into a role but stepping fully into her potential and her power.

This realization captured precisely the essence we sought to spotlight. Recognizing and fully embracing our inherent potential enables us to rise above limitations, rewrite narratives, and emerge unstoppable.

Across the globe, countless women exemplify this phenomenon. From the Americas, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez boldly asserts, "They'll tell you you're too loud, that you need to wait your turn and ask the right people for permission. Do it anyway." Her political journey illustrates the transformative impact of courageously claiming space traditionally denied to women.

In Europe, Greta Thunberg emerged as a force in environmental activism, declaring, "We can't save the world by playing by the rules, because the rules have to be changed."

Her fearless confrontation of global leaders inspires us all to challenge conventional boundaries.

From the Middle East, Nadia Murad transformed her harrowing experiences into a global fight against injustice, profoundly stating, "I want to be the last girl in the world with a story like mine." Her bravery and determination demonstrate the powerful potential of turning pain into global purpose.

In Asia, Phoolan Devi, known as the 'Bandit Queen,' shifted from victimhood to advocacy, declaring, "I would rather die than live without dignity." Her fearless fight for marginalized communities exemplifies the transformative strength found when one steps fully into their potential.

South Asia's Malala Yousafzai poignantly declared, "I raise up my voice—not so I can shout, but so those without a voice can be heard." Her bravery amid adversity



is a testament to the unstoppable momentum true fearlessness can ignite. Likewise, Africa's Wangari Maathai took a resolute stand to protect Kenya's environment and women's rights, saying, "It's the little things citizens do. That's what will make the difference. My little thing is planting trees." Her unwavering courage created a lasting impact that continues to inspire global movements.

These stories reinforce a universal narrative: true fearlessness empowers women worldwide to become unstoppable forces for change. This is the essence of empowerment—transforming ordinary actions into extraordinary legacies.

Therefore, this special edition, 'The Unstoppable: The Rise of Fearless

Women,' explores the experiences, triumphs, and insights of women worldwide who have consciously embraced their true power, shattered barriers, and set new standards. It celebrates resilience and illustrates how courageous actions foster collective progress, creating pathways for future generations.

As you journey through this special edition, may you discover the inspiration, courage, and resolve to transcend limitations, recognize your inherent strength, and ultimately realize your own unstoppable potential.

Warm regards,

*Dr. (Mrs.) Ibifuro Ken - Giami*  
Publisher

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# Breaking Stereotypes: The Women Who Said 'Watch Me'

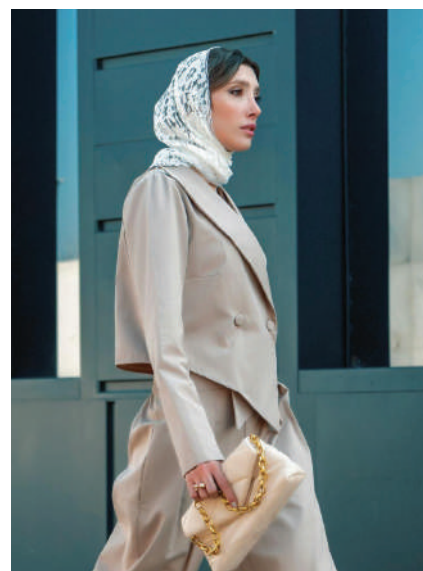
She walked into the boardroom, her heels clicking against the polished floor. The room was filled with men in dark suits, their eyes scanning her as if she were an unexpected guest rather than the leader of the meeting. One of them smirked, leaned back in his chair, and whispered to his colleague, "Let's see if she can handle this."

Oh, she handled it.

By the end of the meeting, her strategy had not only silenced the skeptics but set the company on a trajectory for record-

breaking growth. She didn't need to say, "I told you so." Her success had already done the talking.

This is not just one woman's story. It's the story of millions of women who have been doubted, dismissed, or deemed unfit for roles they were born to lead. From corporate boardrooms to political offices, scientific labs to sports arenas, women around the world have faced the same obstacles. And each time, they've responded with the same unshakable resolve: "Watch me."





**Women-led businesses generate twice as much revenue per dollar invested compared to those led by men (BCG, 2023), yet only 2.3% of venture capital funding goes to female-led startups (Harvard Business Review, 2023). Despite this, they continue to succeed—proving that leadership isn't about gender but vision, resilience, and results**

### The Lies Women Were Told

For centuries, society crafted narratives that kept women in predefined roles—caregivers, assistants, supporters, but never the main players. Women were told they were too emotional to lead, too delicate for science, too soft for business, too nurturing for politics.

Yet, the numbers tell a different story. Women make up 47.7% of the global workforce, yet hold only 29% of senior management positions. (World Economic Forum, 2023) In STEM, despite their rising numbers, women occupy just 28% of leadership roles. (UNESCO, 2023) In politics, only 26.5% of parliamentary seats globally are held by women. (IPU, 2024)

These statistics don't reflect women's capability—they reflect the barriers placed in their way. But cracks are forming in the glass ceiling, and those who once underestimated women are now witnessing a revolution.

### Changing the Face of Leadership

For years, leadership was a boys' club, and any woman who dared to enter was met with resistance. But today, women are running the boardrooms, founding billion-dollar companies, and leading industries once dominated by men.

Women-led businesses generate twice as much revenue per dollar invested compared to those led by men (BCG, 2023), yet only 2.3% of venture capital funding goes to female-led startups (Harvard Business Review, 2023). Despite this, they continue to succeed—proving that leadership isn't about gender but vision, resilience, and results.

A vivid example is the growing number of women CEOs at major global corporations. In 2024, more women are leading Fortune 500 companies than ever before, with female CEOs making up 10.4% of the list. This is still a small

## I THE FEARLESS FACTOR—WOMEN WHO OWN THE FUTURE

percentage, but the numbers are rising, and the impact is undeniable. Women in executive roles prioritize inclusivity, employee well-being, and sustainable growth, which has led to long-term success for many organizations.

In science and technology, the myth that men are “naturally better” at math, coding, or engineering is crumbling. Women now make up 33% of the global scientific workforce (UNESCO, 2024), and the number of women in engineering and tech degrees has increased by 50% in the last decade. But despite these advancements, they remain underrepresented in executive roles, showing that talent has never been the issue—opportunity has.

### The Political Power Shift

Politics, one of the toughest arenas for women, is also changing. More women than ever are in presidential and prime ministerial positions, and female representation in parliaments has risen by 8% in the last decade. (IPU, 2024) Women leaders are passing groundbreaking policies on gender equality, education, and economic reform, proving that governance thrives when women have a seat at the table.

Studies have shown that countries led by women often have stronger economic growth, lower corruption levels, and better healthcare policies. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted this—nations with female leaders had some of the lowest mortality rates and most effective public health responses.

Even in countries where women face significant political resistance, they continue to rise. In Africa, female parliamentarians are driving change, with Rwanda leading the world in gender representation, where 61% of parliamentary seats

are held by women.

The message is clear: When women lead, societies thrive.

### Shattering Expectations in Sports and Media

The world of sports was once a men’s game. Women athletes were sidelined, underfunded, and underpaid. But today, they are dominating global competitions and demanding equal pay, media coverage, and sponsorship deals. The 2023 Women’s World Cup broke viewership records, proving that women’s sports are just as thrilling—and profitable—as men’s. The final match had over 2 billion viewers, making it one of the most-watched sporting events in history. This is not just about visibility; it’s about respect, recognition, and financial equality.

Tennis legends, marathon runners, and Olympic champions are speaking out, pushing for pay parity, better training facilities, and increased investment in women’s sports. And they’re winning. The U.S. women’s soccer team fought a six-year battle for equal pay—and they won.

In entertainment and media, women are also reclaiming their space. Female directors, producers, and authors are reshaping narratives, telling stories that challenge outdated norms. Hollywood’s top-grossing films increasingly feature female protagonists, and female artists dominate global music charts. The message is clear: Women are no longer waiting for opportunities—they are creating them.





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### **The Next Generation of Trailblazers**

As these women break barriers, they are paving the way for the next generation—girls who will grow up seeing women in power as the norm, not the exception. Global literacy rates for women have risen to 87%, and more young women are entering fields once dominated by men.

Mentorship programs and leadership initiatives are helping close gender gaps, ensuring that the next wave of female leaders won't have to fight the same battles. The goal is no longer just breaking barriers—it's eliminating them entirely.

Education is playing a major role in this shift. Girls' enrollment in STEM programs has increased by 35% worldwide, and more universities are creating initiatives to support female entrepreneurs and innovators. These investments will create a ripple effect, ensuring that the progress made today does not fade tomorrow.

### **The Revolution is Now**

Women have spent centuries being told what they can and cannot do. But those days are over. They are leading nations, building empires, winning championships, revolutionizing industries, and making history.

And the best part? They are just getting started.

So, to the women reading this:

If you have ever been underestimated—prove them wrong.

If you have ever been told you don't belong—take up space.

If someone doubts your abilities—let your success be your response.

Because the women of today are not waiting for permission.

They are looking at the world and saying, "Watch me."

# Future Shock: How Women Are Taking Over Politics, Tech & Finance

She sat in the boardroom, surrounded by skeptical eyes. The weight of expectations pressed down on her, but she refused to shrink. Instead, she straightened her back, took a deep breath, and spoke with conviction. The moment was a turning point, not just for her, but for every woman watching.

Across the globe, women are stepping into arenas where they were once told they did not belong, proving that leadership, innovation, and governance have no gender. These women are not just participants in their industries—they are pioneers and revolutionaries. Their leadership is shaping the future, and their impact will be felt for decades to come.

Women are no longer knocking on the doors of power; they are kicking them wide open. From politics and finance to technology

and governance, they are not just making history—they are changing the future.

## Political Powerhouses Leading the Way



**Dina Boluarte – President of Peru**

In a country with a long history of male-dominated politics, Dina Boluarte shattered the ultimate glass ceiling by becoming Peru's first female president in 2022. Stepping into office at a time of political instability, she has faced

resistance and opposition but has remained firm in her commitment to economic reforms, social justice, and strengthening democratic institutions. Her leadership is proof that women not only belong in politics but can also thrive in high-pressure roles that shape the future of nations.



**Sandra Mason – President of Barbados**

When Sandra Mason was elected as the first President of Barbados, she didn't just take office, she ushered in a new era

# H.E. Dominique Ouattara: The Powerhouse Behind Côte d'Ivoire's Women and Child Empowerment Revolution



## A Legacy of Transformation

The sun was setting over a bustling market in Abidjan, where women diligently arranged their stalls, selling fresh produce, handmade crafts, and textiles. Among them was Aïssata, a mother of three, who smiled as she recounted how a microloan had changed her life. “Before FAFCI, I struggled to feed my children. Now, I run my own small business, and my children go to school,” she said with pride. This story is just one of thousands that showcase the impact of Dominique Ouattara, the First Lady of Côte d'Ivoire, whose dedication to women, children, and vulnerable communities has transformed countless lives.

## A Leader with a Vision

Dominique Ouattara, born Dominique Claudine Nouvian on December 16, 1953, in Constantine, has long been an advocate for

# Mutinta Hichilema: A Beacon of Hope Redefining the Power of Compassionate Leadership



## A Tearful Encounter in a Quiet Village

On a warm, dusty afternoon in a remote Zambian village, an elderly woman, eyes shimmering with hope and anxiety, approached a figure known throughout Zambia for her compassion. Holding tightly to the delicate hand of her teenage granddaughter, the grandmother whispered earnestly to Mutinta Hichilema, Zambia's First Lady, "She dreams of being a doctor, but we have nothing." Mutinta knelt, gently clasping the girl's hands, her words resonating deeply: "Dreams should never be limited by circumstances."

## From Humble Beginnings to the Nation's Heart

Long before her title as Zambia's First Lady, Mutinta had quietly supported numerous underprivileged children's education alongside her husband, President Hakainde Hichilema. When Hakainde assumed the presidency on August 24, 2021, Mutinta gracefully stepped into the spotlight, determined to amplify her passion for social justice and humanitarian work.

# The Woman at the Well: H.E. Fatoumatta Bah Barrow's Extraordinary Journey of Hope and Transformation



## Under the Blazing Gambian Sun

The scorching sun beat relentlessly upon the dusty village of Kanilai, yet the faces around the new borehole glowed with joy. Women, cradling infants, smiled in relief, whispering prayers of gratitude. Just months ago, obtaining clean water meant miles of arduous daily journeys. Today, through the efforts of one dedicated woman and her foundation, the seemingly impossible had become reality.

## Seeds of Compassion: From Businesswoman to First Lady

Fatoumatta Bah Barrow had always been driven by an inner call to serve others. Long before her husband became the president in 2017, Fatoumatta honed her skills in business and marketing, preparing her for the challenges ahead. When she stepped into the role of First Lady of The Gambia, she immediately saw an opportunity to elevate lives beyond politics—through action.

# Ann Marie Davis: The Heartbeat of Change



**The Moment That Defined a Mission**  
The auditorium buzzed with anticipation, falling instantly silent as Ann Marie Davis stepped onto the stage. Her compassionate gaze moved across faces filled with expectation and hope. Her mind drifted back to that defining moment: a fragile young girl, no older than ten, sitting quietly in the corner of a shelter, tightly gripping a worn teddy bear. The child's fear was palpable. Davis had knelt beside her, whispered gently, "We must wipe every tear from every eye. And even if we reach one, we would have done much." From that instant, Davis knew her life's purpose was clear—empowering the vulnerable and advocating for the voiceless.

## **From Finance to Frontline Activism**

Ann Marie Davis's path was never conventional. Though trained as a Chartered Accountant in London, her heart yearned for more. With a powerful drive for justice and empathy, she left the world of numbers behind, stepping courageously into activism. Her commitment to women and children transformed her into one of The Bahamas' most influential advocates, tirelessly championing social change, economic empowerment, and gender equality. Championing a New Era for Women Since 2010, Davis has been a

# From Wall Street to West Africa: Solange Amichia's Mission to Transform Côte d'Ivoire



It was during a milestone birthday celebration in 2010 that Mrs. Solange Amichia had a profound realization. Having spent years abroad, she returned to Côte d'Ivoire for a short visit, expecting a nostalgic reunion with childhood friends and family. However, reconnecting with former classmates who had become influential leaders ignited a sense of duty in her.

"I fell in love with my country again," she recalled. "I had spent years in Paris and New York mastering global financial systems, yet I realized that Côte d'Ivoire needed people like me—people with international experience who could contribute to its growth. That's when I decided to come back."

Now the CEO of the Investment Promotion Center (CEPIC), Côte d'Ivoire's national agency for investment facilitation, she is leading a mission to transform the country's investment landscape. In an exclusive interview with Dr. Ibifuro Ken-Giami, she shared insights on leadership, resilience, and economic development.

# Breaking Barriers: The Inspiring Journey of Dagmawit Moges Bekele



## A Woman Alone in the Room

Dagmawit Moges Bekele took a deep breath and stepped into the room, the only woman amidst powerful men deciding Ethiopia's transport and logistics system. Her presence was met with silent skepticism. Yet, she chose to focus not on their doubts but on her readiness. "That day," she recalls during an exclusive interview with the Global Power Women Award Committee, "I realized leadership isn't about mere presence—it's about influencing outcomes through knowledge and preparation."

## The Roots of Leadership

Dagmawit Moges Bekele's passion for public service began long before her influential roles in government. It took root during her high school years, when she first set her sights on becoming student council president. The experience of preparing for leadership at such a young age sparked a deep interest in making a difference through service and governance. Equipped with degrees in Public Administration and Development Management, and Public Management and Policy from Addis Ababa University, Dagmawit's commitment to lifelong learning only deepened. She believes that education is the foundation

# From Trials to Triumph: How Roseanne Onyia is Advancing Medical Research for a Healthier Africa



“Healthcare should not be a privilege; it should be a right for all, regardless of where they live or how much they earn.”

Roseanne Onyia’s compelling conviction echoes beyond mere words—it shapes every aspect of her groundbreaking work in clinical research, transforming lives across Africa. But what happens when potentially life-saving breakthroughs never reach those most in need? Onyia confronts this harsh reality every day, determined to ensure no African community is left behind.

## The Moment That Changed Everything

In a small clinic tucked away amidst Lagos’ bustling streets, a mother anxiously rocks her feverish child, her hope pinned to a clinic supported by clinical research initiatives spearheaded by Roseanne Onyia.

This emotional snapshot is more than an anecdote—it encapsulates Onyia’s powerful vision: bridging scientific innovation and everyday healthcare.

# The Woman Behind the Revolution: Dr. Mandas Marikanda's Quest for Economic Justice



“Financial inclusion is not just about access to credit; it’s about economic independence and dignity for women and marginalized communities.” – Dr. Mandas Marikanda.

## A Vision Born from the Margins

It was never merely about finance for Dr. Mandas Marikanda. Growing up surrounded by stark economic disparities, she envisioned a future where women and underserved communities could claim their rightful economic place, a future powered by dignity and independence. Today, she stands as a beacon of hope and change in Zimbabwe and beyond.

## Breaking Ground and Breaking Barriers

As CEO of the Zimbabwe Women’s Microfinance Bank (ZWMB), the first women-centric microfinance institution in the Southern African Development Community, Dr. Marikanda’s mission is clear and bold: ensuring that no woman or marginalized community remains outside the economic fold. Her

# Breaking Barriers: Eng. Ziria Tibalwa Waako's Journey to the Top



As a young girl in Senior 2, Ziria Tibalwa Waako stood at a crossroads. She peered into the future, knowing she didn't belong in the average-performing stream. Her heart was set on sciences—the elite path for the brightest students. Determined, she made a bold decision: she would be among the best. That choice, made in a small classroom years ago, set her on a trajectory to become one of the most influential female engineers in Uganda.

In an exclusive virtual interview with Dr. Ibifuro Ken-Giami, Eng. Ziria Tibalwa Waako radiated joy as she spoke about her journey as a female engineer. She recalled pivotal moments that shaped her career, from choosing an engineering path early on to balancing technical expertise with leadership training.

"I always knew I couldn't settle for less," she shared with a smile. "That mindset has driven me all the way to where I am today."

Her passion for engineering is evident—not just in her technical achievements but in the way she speaks about the industry. Having climbed the ranks to become the Director of Technical Regulation for the electricity supply industry, she

# Marième Ngom: The Powerhouse Transforming Senegal's Real Estate and Championing Women's Leadership



It was a warm afternoon in Dakar when Marième Ngom stepped into a community center filled with young women eager to hear her speak. The room buzzed with anticipation as she shared her journey, not just as the Managing Director of Sertem Property Management, but as a woman who had defied expectations in Senegal's competitive real estate sector. As she recounted her early struggles and triumphs, her message was clear: success is not just about personal achievement but about lifting others along the way. For the women and children in the audience, she wasn't just a corporate leader; she was a beacon of hope and an advocate for their futures.

## **Championing Sustainability in Real Estate**

Marième Ngom has redefined what it means to lead in the real estate industry. At the helm of Sertem Property Management, she has driven sustainable urban

# Breaking Barriers in Energy: Fatoumata Sanogo's Trailblazing Leadership at PETROCI



The smell of crude oil mixed with the heat of the midday sun as workers scrambled around a failing drilling rig. Tension hung in the air. The operation was at a standstill, and every minute lost meant potential millions in revenue slipping away. Engineers muttered under their breath, debating their next move.

**Then, a calm yet commanding voice cut through the chaos.**

Fatoumata Sanogo stepped forward, her protective gear dusted with the residue of the field, her eyes scanning the control panel with the precision of an expert. Without hesitation, she pointed to a recalibration issue that had been overlooked. A few swift adjustments later, the machines roared back to life. The team—many of whom had never worked under a female leader—exchanged glances of newfound respect.

This was not the first time Sanogo had turned a challenging moment into a defining victory, and it certainly wouldn't be the last.