

Mansa Nettey: A Radiant Force Transforming Banking and Empowering Women



Mansa Nettey
CEO, Standard Chartered
Bank, Ghana

In the vibrant heart of Accra, where the hustle and bustle of life meets the whispers of dreams, Mansa Nettey's journey began. As a young girl, she often wondered and got mesmerised by the entrepreneurial spirit of the women around her. Each encounter fueled her imagination and sparked a desire to create meaningful change. "I always dreamed of a world where women held equal power in every sphere," she reflects, her smile radiant with determination. It was this passion that propelled her toward a future she would soon help shape.

A Dreamer with a Purpose

Mansa's childhood was marked by a thirst for knowledge that set her apart. While her peers played, she immersed herself in books, each one a portal to new ideas and possibilities. Her early fascination with finance, sparked by stories of powerful women who broke barriers, ignited a fire within her—a fire that would light the way for many others. The aspirations of a young girl from Accra were about to take flight, driven by an unwavering belief in her potential.

Rising Above

After completing her education at the University of Ghana, where she studied Economics and Psychology, Mansa embarked on a journey into the banking world, a realm often dominated by men. "Walking into that corporate environment felt like stepping into a battlefield," she recalls. Undeterred, she embraced the challenge with grace and resilience, driven by the belief that women could redefine success in the industry. Her ambition was not merely personal; it was a clarion call for all women aspiring to break through the glass ceiling.

Her career at Standard Chartered Bank began with humble yet powerful steps. As a relationship manager, she made waves, showcasing her unique insights and nurturing client relationships with empathy and understanding. Mansa's keen ability to forge connections and her innovative approach to problem-solving quickly distinguished her in a crowded field. Her dedication propelled her up the ranks, leading her to become the first female CEO of Standard Chartered Bank Ghana in 2017. "That moment felt surreal; it was a victory for every woman who dared to dream," she beams, her pride evident. Mansa's ascent is a testament to her resilience and vision, embodying the essence of female empowerment.

A Champion for Women: A Heartfelt Mission

Mansa Nettey's commitment to empowering women extends far beyond her role as CEO. Her journey is intertwined with initiatives aimed at uplifting women in banking and beyond. One of her most cherished achievements is the Women in Technology (WiT) program, which she established to support female entrepreneurs. "When I see young women flourishing and turning their ideas into successful ventures, it fills my heart with joy," she shares, her eyes sparkling with hope.

Through the WiT initiative, Mansa provides mentorship and access to resources for women who aspire to enter the tech field—a sector where female representation remains alarmingly low. By championing this cause, she not only nurtures the talents of young women but also promotes the importance of diversity in innovation. Her belief is firm: a world enriched with diverse perspectives is a world destined for greatness.

Mansa's advocacy resonates at conferences like Women in Mining Ghana, where she passionately speaks about the need for women's voices to be amplified in leadership roles. "This isn't merely about numbers; it's about fostering a culture where women are valued for their contributions," she passionately asserts, inspiring attendees to take



Breaking Barriers with Technology: Olive Birungi Lumonya's Vision for Aviation and Women Empowerment

Olive Birungi Lumonya
Deputy Director General, Civil Aviation, Uganda



*As the lights dimmed over the vast hall of the **Global Power Women Conference** in 2024, a powerful presence filled the stage. **Olive Birungi Lumonya**, the Deputy Director General of the Uganda Civil Aviation Authority, sat among influential women panelists, each a trailblazer in diverse sectors such as finance, technology, and social advocacy. This panel discussion was more than just another conversation; it was a heartfelt declaration of the future, igniting hope and inspiration.*

Seated confidently among her peers, Lumonya was ready to deliver a message that would resonate deeply—how technology and aviation, two inseparable twins, are transforming not only industries but also the lives of women across the globe.

Who is Olive Birungi Lumonya?

From the heart of Uganda, Olive Lumonya has emerged as a transformative leader, dedicated to uplifting women and children through education, mentorship, and advocacy. Her life story, marked by resilience and ambition, is a beacon of hope for countless individuals striving for a better future. Her initiatives and leadership roles have been pivotal in driving positive change in Uganda and beyond.

Empowerment Through Education: Olive's journey began with a strong belief in the power of education. Growing up in a village where opportunities for girls were scarce, she realized early on that education could be the key to breaking free from the limitations of her environment. Fueled by a desire to create change, Olive pursued her studies with unmatched determination.

Lumonya holds a Master's degree in Business Administration from the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI) and a Bachelor's degree in Mass Communication from Makerere University. She is also a chartered marketer, a certified balanced scorecard champion, and an African Board Fellow. These qualifications laid the foundation for her illustrious career, enabling her to blend business acumen with a passion for social change.



Her commitment to learning became the cornerstone of her work, particularly in empowering women and children. Olive's educational journey not only shaped her leadership abilities but also became a source of inspiration for those she would later mentor and guide.

Aviation & Technology: Inseparable Twins

At the GPWC 2024 conference, Olive said "Technology and aviation are inseparable," with her voice warm yet authoritative. "They're twins—inseparable in every way." Her words carried the wisdom of a seasoned leader who had witnessed firsthand the transformative power of innovation in one of the most critical global industries.

She spoke passionately about the role of technology in reducing the operational costs of the aviation sector. "The innovations we see today are not just about making flying faster or more comfortable," she explained. "It's about making travel affordable for everyone, especially in regions like ours where aviation plays a key role in economic empowerment."

As Lumonya described the technical advancements—like fuel-efficient aircraft and automated systems that enhance both safety and cost-effectiveness—her vision became clear. These weren't merely technological upgrades; they were lifelines for industries reliant on tourism and travel. "Imagine a plane that burns less fuel and flies faster. It means more people can afford to travel. This drives economic growth in countries like Uganda, where tourism is a pillar of our economy. More tourists mean more jobs—hotels, restaurants, local businesses, all of it." Her calm yet passionate voice left no doubt that the future of aviation was deeply intertwined with economic empowerment.

Filomena Mendes Gonçalves: Cape Verde's Guardian of Health and Compassion



Dr. Filomena Gonçalves
Minister of Health,
Cape Verde

The room was quiet, but there was an unmistakable energy in the air as Filomena Mendes Gonçalves sat across from Dr. Ibifuro Ken-Giami, Executive Director and Publisher of Amazons Watch Magazine. Cape Verde's Minister of Health, Filomena, is a picture of grace and determination. Throughout their conversation, the layers of Filomena's inspiring journey unfold, revealing the complexities of a woman whose life has been shaped by profound personal loss, steadfast ambition, and an unshakable commitment to her country.

A Daughter's Promise

Filomena's story begins in the dusty streets of her childhood, where life was simple but often marked by the harsh realities of loss. She was still a young girl when her mother passed away, a tragedy that left an indelible scar.

"I lost my mother very early," she recounts softly, her voice filled with both nostalgia and a quiet sadness. "I remember standing by her side, helpless, knowing that there was nothing anyone could do to save her."

That moment was pivotal for Filomena, a catalyst that would set her on a path of purpose. "I made a promise to myself that day," she says, her voice steady with conviction. "I vowed that I would one day work to ensure that no child would have to feel the same helplessness I did."

This promise has guided her through the many chapters of her life, from her studies in law to her rise in politics, and eventually to her position as Cape Verde's leading health advocate. Every achievement, every milestone would serve as a tribute to that early vow—a vow shaped by love, loss, and hope for a brighter future.

A Journey Shaped by Justice

Although her early ambition was to become a doctor, Filomena's journey took a detour when she pursued law at the University of Coimbra in Portugal. But even as she immersed herself in the intricacies of legal theory, the memory of her mother remained a guiding light.

"Law and medicine may seem worlds apart, but for me, they both represent the same thing—helping people, protecting the vulnerable," she shares with a smile.

After returning to Cape Verde, Filomena quickly rose through the ranks of politics. As a member of the Movement for Democracy (MpD), she made it her mission to advocate for women's rights, social justice, and healthcare reform. It was during her time as a member of the Network of Women Parliamentarians in the ECOWAS Parliament that her passion for health equity truly blossomed.

"I remember visiting communities where women and children were suffering from preventable diseases," she recalls, her voice tinged with frustration. "It was heartbreaking to see people struggling simply because they didn't have access to basic healthcare."

Filomena's work in parliament was marked by her tireless advocacy for the rights of women and children, particularly in the face of challenges like clandestine migration and human trafficking. Her ability to combine empathy with strategic action quickly earned her a reputation as a force to be reckoned with.

As her political career advanced, so did her influence. Filomena continued to push for reforms that would have a lasting impact on the health and well-being of her people. It was this blend of compassion, legal acumen, and an unwavering commitment to social justice that eventually led her to her current role.





COVER

COVER

Legends in Leadership: The Power Women Revolution

"The question isn't who is going to let me; it's who is going to stop me." – Ayn Rand

Across the world, women are rewriting the rules of leadership, proving time and again that there is nothing standing in their way. These visionary leaders are not just pushing boundaries, they are

shattering them, creating new paths where none existed before. Women today are not waiting for permission to lead; they are demanding their place at the table and building their own. From politics to business and global advocacy, they are showing the world that true leadership is not defined by gender but by vision,

resilience, and an unwavering commitment to justice. This is the era of unstoppable women, leaders who are blazing a trail for future generations, transforming the way we think about power and progress. More than just influencers, they are the architects of a new, inclusive world.

Breaking the Mold

The idea of women in leadership has evolved dramatically over the past few decades. What was once an exception is now becoming a defining feature of today's global leadership landscape. Women are leading nations, directing major corporations, and spearheading social movements with the sort of poise and courage that is inspiring millions.

In the United States, **Kamala Harris** etched her name in history as the first female Vice President, breaking formidable barriers as the first Black woman and the first woman of South Asian descent to hold this prestigious office. Her ascent to the White House is a powerful testament to her resilience, unwavering commitment, and steadfast pursuit of equality and justice.

Beyond her historic role as Vice President, Kamala's courage and ambition shone through her bid to

become the first female President of the United States. Though she ultimately did not secure the presidency, her determination to shatter yet another glass ceiling reflected her enduring belief in the possibility of a more inclusive and equitable future. Her strength in embracing this challenge, even in the face of monumental odds, stands as an inspiration to countless individuals across the globe.



Across the world, women are rewriting the rules of leadership, proving time and again that there is nothing standing in their way. These visionary leaders are not just pushing boundaries, they are shattering them, creating new paths where none existed before



EDITOR'S DESK

Unleashed: The Fearless Women's Revolution

"What if I fail? Oh, but my darling, what if you fly?"

Fellow dreamers and seekers of greatness, have you ever asked yourself that question? I know I have. In this edition, *Unstoppable: The Rise of the Fearless Women*, we are not just asking; we are answering with a resounding "We fly!"

I remember the exact moment I chose to stop waiting for certain permission. Fear was there, whispering doubts, reminding me of all the reasons to hold back. But I stepped forward anyway. And in that instant, I discovered something life-changing; fear may never disappear, but courage makes it powerless.

This isn't just a magazine; it's a warm embrace, a shared whisper of encouragement, and a powerful chorus of voices rising together. We are here to celebrate the incredible, unstoppable force that is womanhood and to ignite the spark within each of us to soar to new heights.

This edition of *Amazons Watch Magazine* is for every woman standing at the edge of her breakthrough. It's for the dreamers, the doers, the disruptors. It's for YOU.

Dear women, the world is calling for our unique blend of strength, compassion, and vision. Now is our moment to step into our power, to rewrite the laws, and to build a future where every woman's voice is heard, valued, and amplified.

Imagine women shattering glass ceilings, redefining industries, and leading with unwavering confidence. In these pages, you'll meet the women who are changing the world. Their stories are a testament to our collective power.

From boardrooms to battlefields, from technology to politics, women are making history every day. This edition is dedicated to the trailblazers who looked at a closed door and said, "Watch me break it open." You'll meet women who are reshaping industries, cracking the male-dominated matrix, and

proving that leadership has no gender.

This edition has been blessed with intimate conversations with incredible women who are shaping our world: H.E. Mrs. Dominique Ouattara (First Lady of Côte d'Ivoire), H.E. Mutinta Hichilema (First Lady of Zambia), H.E. Mrs. Fatoumatta Bah Barrow (First Lady of the Gambia), and Mrs. Ann Marie Davis, who embody the heart of leadership. And the amazing Mrs. Solange Amichia, Mrs. Dagmawit Moges Bekele, Fatoumata Sanogo, Roseanna Onya, Dr. Mandas Marikanda, Ms. Marieme Ngom, and Engr. Ziria Tibalwa Waako, who are examples of women who are breaking down barriers. These are the stories that will inspire you to embrace your own fearless journey.

We also bring exclusive insights from phenomenal women leading across sectors, from investment and energy to peacebuilding and microfinance, proving that women are not waiting for permission to lead.





The Power of the Invisible: Women Who Made a Difference without a Spotlight

“We don’t need saving, we just need the space.”

— OHCHR Spotlight, 2024

In the dusty courtyard of a small village school in South Sudan, a woman named Aluel stands between two groups of men ready to fight over land. With nothing but her voice and her reputation as a farmer who feeds dozens of families, she persuades both sides to sit under the shade of a tree and talk. That day, more than 200 families avoided displacement

because of her courage. Yet her story never made the headlines.

Across the world in rural India, Leela wakes before dawn, tending her fields and then gathering a group of young girls in a makeshift classroom under a mango tree. She teaches them to read using pages from discarded newspapers. For those girls, Leela is

Grace, Grit, and Global Impact: The Inspiring Journey of Dr. Fatima Maada Bio



Defying Destiny

At just ten years old, Fatima Jabbe was told her life path had already been decided—an arranged marriage. But she said no. That defiance became the cornerstone of her mission: refusing to let girls be silenced or stripped of choice.

Today, that little girl is Her Excellency, Dr. Fatima Maada Bio, First Lady of Sierra Leone and President of the Organisation of African First Ladies for Development (OAFILD). She often reminds the world:

"I was married at ten. I had no say. But today, I am the voice for girls who are silenced. My story is their story, and my fight is for them."

Born into the Mandingo tribe in Sierra Leone, Fatima's rebellion against child marriage became a life-long calling. By sixteen, she was already giving back through philanthropy. Later, London opened new doors: she earned a BA in Performing Arts from Roehampton Institute and a degree in Journalism from the University of Arts, London. Her beginnings did not define her destiny, they fueled it.

H.E. Dr. Lucrecia Peinado: A Life of Healing, Leadership, and Service



Healing in the Midst of Loss

On a humid morning in the Guatemalan highlands, Dr. Lucrecia Peinado was summoned to a rural clinic where a young mother faced life-threatening complications during childbirth. For hours, she worked tirelessly until both mother and child survived. Through tears, the grandmother whispered: "You didn't just save my daughter; you restored our hope."

That moment reflects what has defined Peinado's life: healing not just bodies, but restoring dignity and hope. Decades later, as First Lady of Guatemala, she continues this mission, expanding it from the operating room to the national stage.

Roots of Service

Born in 1961 in Guatemala City, Lucrecia grew up in a family where service was a calling. With evangelical pastors as grandparents, she absorbed lessons on empathy, justice, and dignity. Her passion for science led her to the Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, where she trained as a physician and surgeon, later specializing in anesthesiology and health

The Power to Empower: H.E. Mrs. Ann Marie Davis and Her Fight for Justice, Dignity, and Economic Resilience



A Mantra that Moves Nations

“Even if we reach them one by one, we would have achieved much.”

This guiding belief is not just a phrase for Mrs. Ann Marie Davis, Spouse of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, it is the heartbeat of her leadership. Every initiative she drives, whether planting breadfruit trees for food security or advocating for women entrepreneurs, is rooted in this conviction that even the smallest act of empowerment can create waves of transformation.

Her role as First Lady has transcended ceremony. She has leveraged her office as a platform for structural change, linking compassion to economic dignity, and proving that equity is more than charity, it is nation building.

From Finance to Advocacy

Mrs. Davis's journey reflects discipline, resilience, and vision. Trained in finance, she studied at the London School of Accountancy and

A First Lady for a New Generation: The Transformative Journey of H.E. Mrs. Lavinia Valbonesi



During the 2023 presidential campaign in Ecuador, while Daniel Noboa, the young candidate vying for the presidency, spoke passionately to a restless crowd about the future of his country, eyes turned again and again to the woman standing quietly at his side. Dressed in her now-iconic white outfit symbolizing peace, Lavinia Valbonesi radiated calm confidence. In the middle of the rally, a mother approached her with trembling hands, whispering a painful story of abuse and neglect. The weight of the woman's words brought tears to Lavinia's eyes. She held the woman's hand tightly, leaned in, and promised she would not only listen but fight for women like her.

That moment became a turning point in her public identity. She was no longer just the glamorous young wife of a political candidate. She was a listener, a comforter, and a leader in her own right. She was, for many Ecuadorians, the voice of a generation that believed compassion, resilience, and digital influence could rewrite the story of women in Ecuador.