

MAR, 2022



+  
BAO 30  
Inspiring  
Women  
#Breaking  
TheBias

# IZIN AKIOYA

Multidisciplinary | Marketing Expert | Author





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

04 Founder's Note

05 Fact sheet

07 Interview with Izin Akioya

12 The End Fund

31 Emuejevoke Akpokodje

33 Steam Education

34 Where Shame goes

35 Building a community of empowered women with the power of ROAR

32 Interview with Phillip Scott

14 NTDs Sustainability & The END FUND

16 Dream VC, A Remote Venture Capital Institute

19 30 Inspiring women #Breakingthebias

30 Avila Diana Chidume: Tackling inequality and improving representation within the creative industry

39 Equipping the African Child with Technology and Creative Skills

41 The Egyptian state's policies towards digital transformation contributed to our business growth

43 Corporate Executive Spotlight

**BAO**  
BUSINESS | AFRICA | ONLINE

## Team

**Founder:**  
Alaba Ayinuola

**Design & Layout:**  
Ismail Oluwaseun

**HR/Partner:**  
Bolaji Adelani

**Technology (Consultant):**  
Damilare Adelodun

**Contributing Consultant:**  
Heath Muchena

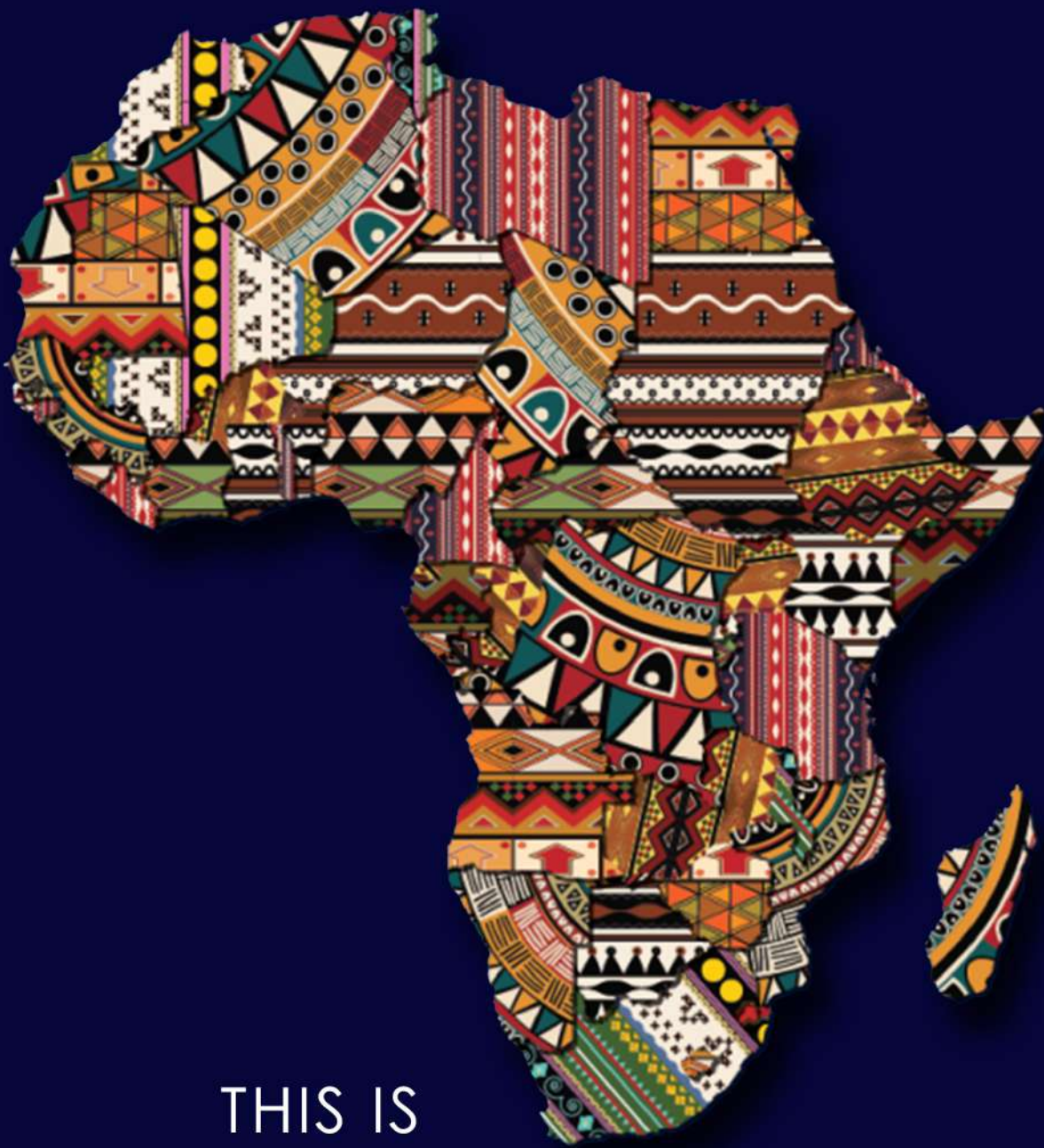
**Production (Consultant):**  
Yinka Egbetokun

**Contributor:**  
Promise Uyai

**BAO 30**  
Inspiring Women  
*#BreakTheBias*







THIS IS  
**AFRICA**





# Founder's Note

**Alaba Ayinuola**

*Founder & CEO (Business Africa Online)*

Let me begin this brief note with the remarkable thought of Juliana Rotich, co-founder of Ushahidi, in Kenya, that says, "I am guided each day by these three questions: 'What are you fixing?' 'What are you making?' and 'Who are you helping?'" This thought affirms to a large extent why we do what we do at Business Africa Online (BAO) for the continent of Africa. We wake up daily with this question top in our heart, mind and to-do list of how we enhance and elevate the work of the titans behind the new narrative of a rising Africa. Simply because we recognize we all have a role to play in the Africa that we dream of.

It is with utmost pride I write to you dear African business ecosystem of founders, executives, investors and other stakeholders who daily put in the work and setting the pace for progress for our continent both in Africa and in the diaspora. You are the fuel that energizes our hope and confidence in Africa, as the continent that will eventually determine the future for the world especially in terms of talents, ideas and innovation for a better world. We see immense potential in you and we are driven by the need to see a greater number of success stories that compete globally and lead whatever sector they play in.

Business Africa Online (BAO) with the vision to "Powering the entrepreneurial mindset" is fully committed to your success, and in the famous philosophy of Ubuntu, 'I am because we are'. Like we have done over the past couple of years of establishment, we are committed to the sustainable growth and development of Africa's entrepreneurial and social impact ecosystems through our reporting and rich content of the massive progress by emerging leaders in this space. A journey that began some couple of years ago, have seen its tentacles spreading across the continent and the diaspora.

While we are confident about the future of Africa through your invaluable contribution, we also identify with the challenges you confront daily, from economy to policy, governance, poor infrastructure and global changes, and as a media company, we are not exempted as well, but we have continued to surmount these challenges through the conviction of the "why" behind our vision, why we are doing what we do. Which is simply, if Africa must experience growth and leap into the future with the rest of the world, only Africans can bring about that reality. No foreign investment, governments, NGO or donor can have the best interest of Africa more than Africans.

As I bring this to a close, while a lot has changed in just a couple of years in how we engage the business and social ecosystems in Africa, what has not changed remains our commitment to pushing further every milestone of excellence through insightful and capacity building content for Africa's progress. Thus, we want to keep showcasing African (social) entrepreneurs that are thriving in their own right to inspire others coming behind who may be contemplating throwing in the towel. We invite you to be part of this movement of 'Powering the entrepreneurial mindset'.



## TUNISIA

## Fact Sheet

• Hammamet

**Capital**  
Tunis

Tunis is the capital and largest city in Tunisia. The city is situated at the shallow Lake of Tunis, an inlet of the Gulf of Tunis. It's home to a centuries-old medina and the Bardo, an archaeology museum. Other tourist attractions include: Zaytuna Mosque, Byrsa Hill, etc.

**Population**  
11,879,088 (2020)<sup>1</sup>

Tunisia's 2020 population is estimated at **11,879,088** people according to UN data. It ranks number 79 in the list of countries (and dependencies) by population. The population density is 76 per Km<sup>2</sup>. **Median age is 32.8 years.**

**Language(s)**  
• Arabic**Currency / GDP**  
Tunisian Dinar (TND)  
**GDP: 38.8 billion USD (2019)<sup>2</sup>****Exchange Rate**  
1\$ = 2.7 TND<sup>3</sup>**Top Tourism Sites**

- El Djem Amphitheater
- Carthage
- Carthage

**Busiest Int'l Airport(s)**

- Tunis - Carthage International Airport (TUN)
- Djerba - Zarzis International Airport (NNN)
- Sfax - Thyna International Airport (SFA)

**Major Airline(s)**

- Tunisair
- TunisAir Expressx
- Tunisavia

**Visa Openness Ranking 2019**#27 out of 54<sup>4</sup>

- Visa Free Entry - 21 African countries
- Visa On Arrival - None
- Visa Before Entry - 32 African countries

**Travel & Tourism**

In 2019, travel & tourism accounted for 13.9% of Tunisia's total GDP. International visitors spent a total of USD 2.8 billion and over 373,500 jobs were created.<sup>4</sup>

**Commodities Traded<sup>5</sup>****Exports**

- Insulated Wire
- Non-Knit Men's Suits
- Pure Olive Oil
- Non-Knit Women's Suits

**Imports**

- Refined Petroleum
- Low-voltage Protection Equipment
- Insulated Wire

**COVID-19 Health & Safety Tips**

1. Wash and disinfect your hands regularly with soap and water or an alcohol based sanitizer.
2. Always wear a mask or face covering when you go out or travel.
3. Adhere to health and safety guidelines.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/tunisia-population/> <sup>2</sup> <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ecb.int/press/pr/2020/04/20200414/Annex1.html#TND> <sup>4</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351111111\\_Economic\\_Impact\\_of\\_COVID-19\\_in\\_Tunisia](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351111111_Economic_Impact_of_COVID-19_in_Tunisia)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.wco.worldbank.org/country/tun> <sup>6</sup> <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/2619-visa-openness-index-report>

Adefunke Adeyemi<sup>®</sup>

Adefunke Adeyemi



@funkiadeyemi

DISCLAIMER: The author bears no responsibility or liability for the accuracy of the information provided above or any other matter appearing on this page. All views, thoughts, or opinions expressed in the content of this fact sheet are solely that of the author.



# Pineapple



From Nigeria, For Africa And The World...

Available on



 Pineapple TV  
 pineapple\_tv\_ng

 Pineapple\_TV\_ng  
 pineapple Tv

 [WWW.PINEAPPLETV.COM](http://WWW.PINEAPPLETV.COM)





*Interview with*  
**IZIN AKIOYA**

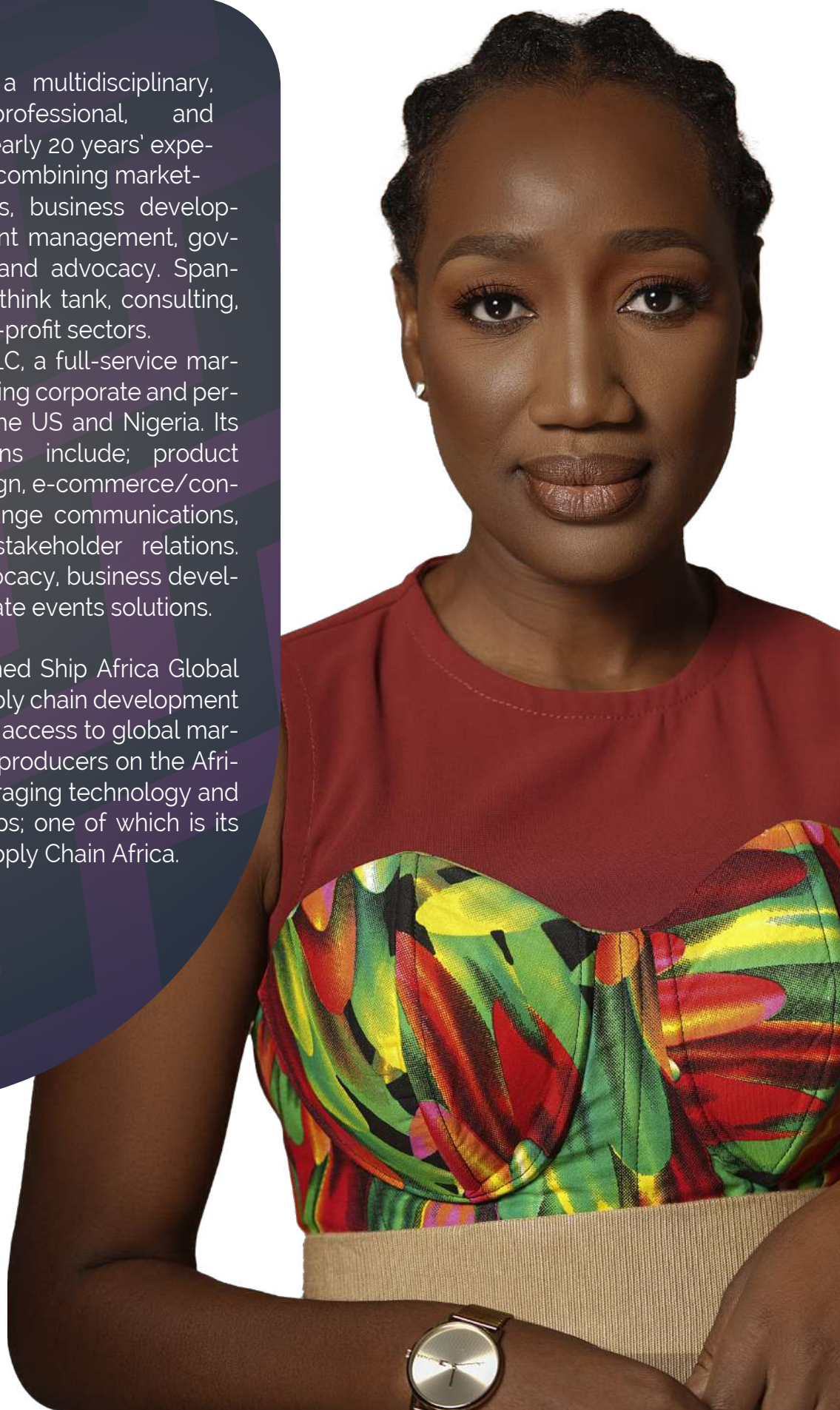
*Multidisciplinary, Marketing Expert, Author  
Founder @ Identiti LLC  
Founder @ Ship Africa Global LLC*



## Interview with Izin Akioya

Izin Akioya is a multidisciplinary, marketing professional, and author. With nearly 20 years' experience in roles combining marketing communications, business development, strategy, talent management, government relations, and advocacy. Spanning across FMCG, think tank, consulting, advertising and non-profit sectors. Izin leads Identiti LLC, a full-service marketing practice, serving corporate and personality brands in the US and Nigeria. Its full-service solutions include; product ideation, brand design, e-commerce/content marketing, change communications, government and stakeholder relations. They also offer advocacy, business development and corporate events solutions.

She recently launched Ship Africa Global LLC, to support supply chain development in Africa; accelerate access to global markets for indigenous producers on the African continent. Leveraging technology and strategic partnerships; one of which is its partnership with Supply Chain Africa.





## Interview with Izin Akioya

### ***Could you briefly tell us about your career-path till now?***

My pre-tertiary career commenced about 20 years ago as a sales representative at Park n Shop, now SPAR. One of the few supermarket chains in Lagos, Nigeria at the time. I consequently maintained several part-time jobs while pursuing a full time undergraduate degree in Economics at the University of Lagos. Culminating in a board executive role with a global non-profit (AIESEC) in my graduating year. That early career entry has been the bed-rock of my career growth.

I have had the fortune of a multidisciplinary career, working for and consulting with brands in the fast-moving consumer goods, think-tank, consulting and advertising sectors. In technical and operations combination roles. My work in advocacy fortunately contributed to value added tax policy reform in Nigeria. And I look forward to even more global impact anchored on a practice that embeds change-making along every step.

### ***How has your purpose, mission and values shaped your journey thus far?***

Purpose often means that one needs to step out of comfort zones, and adapt a lifelong learning approach. For me, finding room for purpose within my profession initially required industry switching, and a whole new learning journey across related disciplines. The curiosity, intent, and commitment to making that move is the basis of my multi-disciplinary capability. It is behind my ability to effectively support a diverse range of clients, with little or no transition gaps.

My accomplishments in advocacy communications are in direct response to a

desire to drive "transformative, empathic and sustainable change". A phrase that has become my life's mission. Making the industry switch, setting up a change consulting in 2017 despite little references to the practice in Nigeria, has led to new knowledge and expertise that has strengthened my acumen and contributions.

### ***At what point did you launch Supply Chain Africa? What is it set to achieve?***

Ship Africa Global LLC was launched in 2020 in response to a gap I witnessed multiplying in product exporting/shipping within Africa, and from Africa to global markets. Today, that gap remains a limitation to the continent's export potentials. Due to the absence of affordable logistics, low production and value chain capacity and poor market entry knowledge. Our intent is to bridge these gaps, through partnerships, and technology that supports low cost, readily accessible market access. My dream is to see the realization of the AfCTFA's intent to facilitate trade within the continent. And to engineer global market expression for African made products and brands.





## Interview with Izin Akioya

***You recently launched two great books. Please tell us more about them and what inspired you to write?***

Mum, Find Love Again, was written to provide guidance on personal identity. A pursuit that I find critical for success in the world we live in. In the book, I share transformational life practices interwoven with true life stories. I explore shame culture, ageism and sexism. Show the play of stereotypes on esteem and attainment, and empower the reader with transformative life practices. The second book "Lili" is a collection of poetry, prose and music, celebrating love, reclaiming identity, affirming mastery and the value of solitude.

Both books drive toward the same defining message. "The singular, critical pursuit of personal identity and purpose in alignment with it". Coming from a culture of shaming, biases and stereotypes. Seeing their impact on my own behavior, behaviors in my society, and the inherent limitations they subconsciously confer. I felt a burden to bring a perspective on life and living that helps people to break out of self-limiting dependencies and belief systems. By

teaching purpose and identity. I hope to enable people to embrace their own truths and find attainment in language and paths suited to them, defined by them.

***This month hosts the International Women's Day. What are your thoughts on this year's theme: #BreakTheBias?***

I could easily swap my book title Mum, Find Love Again for #BreakTheBias. The inherent messages are so in sync that I feel opportune to have launched my book this year. Ageism, sexism, inequalities, racism, abuse, are all steeped in biases. Biases remain the leading root cause of non-inclusion, and therefore sit at the heart of a sustainable gender equity strategy. Progress in gender equity, progress in attaining women's rights over the coming decades will be contingent on how much progress is made. In dismantling unconscious biases and nuances that drive unequal behaviors and societies.

Affirmative action and increased access to education will provide more women with economic security and opportunity. Yet, these women will continue to contend with traditions, lifestyles and faith sys-

tems that entrench biases. As we #BreakTheBias, we redefine culture and shape a new meaning of life and living. I am excited to be alive in these times. I am more excited for a future where #BreakTheBias will no longer be necessary.

***What was the biggest "no" you heard in your career, and what did you learn from it?***

Being told that I had to stay on "one path" only, in order to have a successful career has definitely been the biggest NO. To do otherwise, I had to commit to a whole new learning journey. I had to learn that necessity of failure, which was something I was not raised to accommodate. Embracing learning became a way to validate my interests. And inadvertently brought me closer to communities and new relationships that helped me to stay on track.

***Getting Behind One's Dreams is a Crucial Part of Validating***



If you really want to be something, if you put the work behind becoming that something, you soon find the connections and community that enable you to become it. Getting behind one's dreams is a crucial part of validating, or invalidating them. At best you launch into a new lease of life, at worst, you decide against the idea. Either way, you grow exponentially. This may sometimes mean that one may not "look" successful by the typical signals/markers of attainment. But overtime, I have seen the choice to grow horizontally. Rather than vertically culminate in a solid professional position, options and opportunity.

***What lasting impact do you hope to have on the industry?***

Three words "transformative, empathic, sustainable change" on people and business.

***What advice do you have for female executives and entrepreneurs?***

Learning never stops, embrace lifelong learning, get in the forefront of new innovation.



***Education will Provide more women with Economic Security & Opportunity***



# WHAT IS THE END FUND?

The END Fund is the only private, philanthropic initiative dedicated to controlling and eliminating the five most common neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), which affect over 1.5 billion people globally.

VALUE OF TREATMENTS  
DELIVERED\*

**\$1.36B**

NUMBER OF  
TREATMENTS\*

**724M**



PEOPLE TREATED  
IN 2018

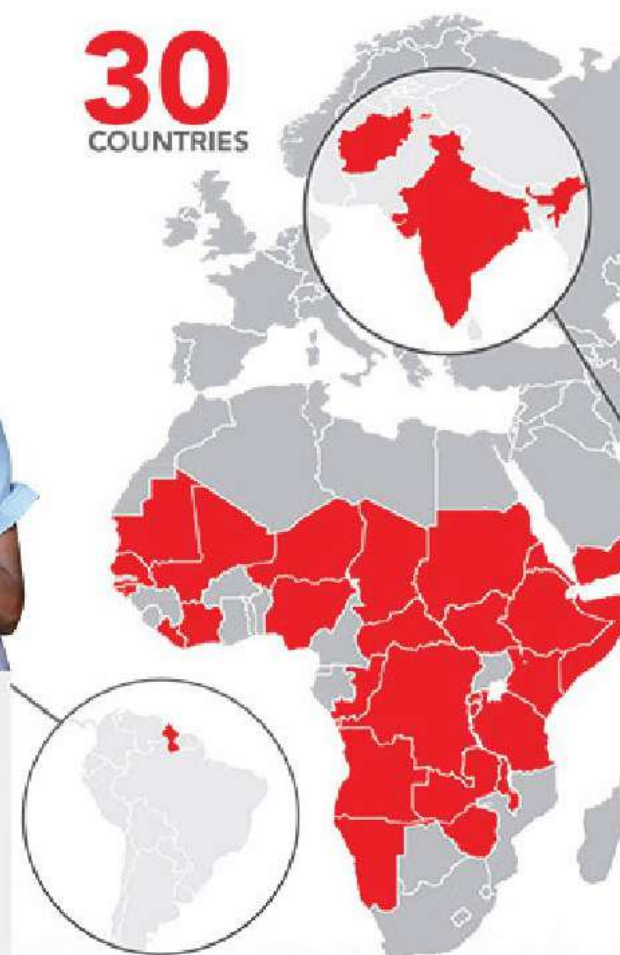
MORE THAN

**134M**



WHERE WE WORKED\*

**30**  
COUNTRIES



## WE INVEST IN ENDING:



**INTESTINAL WORMS** Over 1.5 Billion People in Need of Treatment



**SCHISTOSOMIASIS** 220 Million People in Need of Treatment



**LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS** 894 Million People in Need of Treatment



**TRACHOMA** 157 Million People in Need of Treatment



**RIVER BLINDNESS** 205 Million People in Need of Treatment

\* Numbers reflected from 2012-2018.





# HOW WE WORK



## MISSION

To control and eliminate the most prevalent neglected diseases among the world's poorest and most vulnerable people.

## VISION

To ensure people at risk of NTDs can live healthy and prosperous lives.



# NTDs

## Sustainability & The END FUND

There is a plethora of health challenges currently plaguing the world, a glaring example of which is the protracted COVID-19 pandemic. Others, such as the neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), are not as much as in the spotlight; though they should be – NTDs affect about **1.7 billion people globally**, including more than 1 billion children.



40% of this global burden is borne by Africa, and in Nigeria alone, recent figures from the World Health Organisation indicate that about 166 million people – 4 out of every 5 – are in need of treatment for at least one NTD. Yet these diseases – the most common of which are intestinal worms' disease, lymphatic filariasis (better known by its advanced form of elephantiasis), onchocerciasis (river blindness), schistosomiasis (also known as bilharzia), and trachoma; remain marginalized and insufficiently addressed. Some of the stark facts on NTDs make it implausible that these diseases are still relatively obscure in 2022. In addition to the worrisome statistics highlighted above, NTDs cause more than 170,000 deaths every year. For those that survive illnesses from NTDs, they may still have to grapple with

severe pain, long-term disabilities and stigmatization.

Furthermore, many of those who are affected by advanced forms of these diseases are trapped in a cycle of poverty as they are rendered incapable of providing for themselves or their families. Of note today especially, is the fact that women are biologically vulnerable, physically impacted and socially subjugated as a result of these neglected diseases; and nowhere is this truer than in Africa.

Notwithstanding the significant prevalence of NTDs, treatment for these diseases is relatively inexpensive and uncomplicated to administer. For as little as US\$0.50 per person per year, people affected by NTDs can access treatment for the five most common NTDs highlighted above.

“**NTDs cause more than 170,000 deaths every year**”



At the End Fund, I work with private and public sectors to drive country ownership of the mission to control and ultimately end neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), and this remit is intrinsically woven into the sustainability of our work. Country ownership means that governments, communities, and citizens – be they natural or legal (corporates); are responsible and responsive drivers of development programs.

This facilitates the sustainability of such programs, by harnessing optimal public-private-developmental organisations' frameworks which drive scale, scope and speed of the programs; and that ultimately secure truly sustainable development – in this specific context, development driven by the elimination of the most common NTDs.

We believe that by working together and engaging across sectors, we can meet the related 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and achieve the World Health Organisation NTD roadmap - decreasing the number of people requiring interventions for NTDs by 90%, sustaining the attainment of this target, and continuing the progress towards health and prosperity by decreasing the health-related drivers of poverty for a stronger, healthier future with no one left behind.

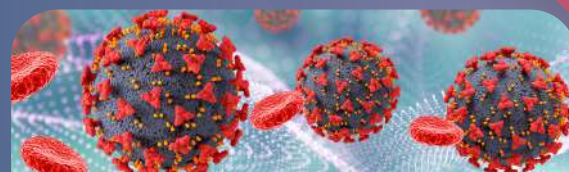
# NTDs

## Sustainability & The END FUND



**Oyetola Oduyemi**

Senior Director,  
Public Affairs for Africa,  
The END Fund



# BUILDING YOUR LAUNCHPAD INTO VENTURE INVESTING

Dream VC is an **investor accelerator** and **community-driven educational platform** providing rigorous remote programmes centered specifically around **venture capital** across **Africa's startup ecosystems**.

Register Interest for 2022

## ***Dream VC, A Remote Venture Capital Institute Doubles Down on Catalyzing Africa's Aspiring Investors Pipeline***

Above: Dream VC Homepage. Source: <https://www.dream-vc.com/>

Dream VC is an investor accelerator and community-driven educational platform providing rigorous remote programs centered specifically around venture capital across Africa's startup ecosystems. Their educational programs help passionate individuals get the knowledge, the experience and the network they need to get started in Venture Capital or land top roles at VC funds around Africa.

After launching a small scale programme in 2021, they are now back, at a much larger scale, and with success to show for their efforts. More than 90% of the fellows who graduated from the inaugural programme went on break into venture capital; with some joining new and established firms such as Ajim Capital, Akribos Capital, LoftyInc Wennovate, Oui Capital, and Lateral Capital - while others are busy writing checks as angels or setting up their syndicates and funds in emerging ecosystems like Mozambique, Côte D'Ivoire, Rwanda, and others.

Now, Dream VC is running a massive expansion with their 2022 programs and is keen to engage, educate and upskill a much larger untapped investor talent pool, hoping to become 'The Go-To Launchpad For Aspiring Investors in Africa'. This year they are running 2 programs equipped with an impressive 500h+ of content and more than triple the contact hours fellows get with the Dream VC staff.

**Above: Dream VC Co-Founders Cindy Ai and Mark Kleyner are active ecosystem builders, advisors and investors in African startups. Source: Dream VC.**

The 2022 programs are set to run from June to September (for the "Launch into Venture Capital") and from June to October (for the "Investor Accelerator") programs. The first is a foundational VC fellowship for young working professionals keen on pipelining into entry-level positions in VC or other investment firms. At the same time, the latter is geared towards experienced professionals [with a significant operator, entrepreneurial, or advisory background] who have the capital and network to pivot into an ecosystem-building VC career.



### **Launch into VC Fellowship Overview**



- Fellows who take part in Dream VC's Launch into VC will get access to live and recorded weekly training sessions and project assignments emulating real work done by VC analysts and associates. Fellows will also partake in engaging workshops and community-led upskilling mixers, and exclusive panel discussions with top African VCs and serial entrepreneurs on finding the best deals, gender lens investing and more.
- Launch into Venture Capital is a foundational program. While the programme has a set of recommended backgrounds, the incredible talent potential, knowledge potential and capital potential: There are no pre-defined academic or investing experience requirements for the program.
- Dream VC's fellows grow together as a community. All Dream VC fellows remain an indefinite part of the wider Dream VC community. Beyond active socials, Dream VC aims to provide mentorship to the fellows, pairing inbound LVC fellows with former Dream VC Graduates, allowing the new cohorts to foster ties, build connections and overcome existing challenges in the space.
- The programme aims to build a talent pipeline of promising young investors that are intimately familiar with the pain points of the communities they grew up in and can drive change in the venture capital industry through an Africa-centric lens.

### **Investor Accelerator Fellowship Overview**

- The Investor Accelerator is Dream VC's programme oriented at creating the VC leaders of tomorrow. Through the programme, Dream VC aims to help launch or accelerate the careers of experienced operators, founders, working professionals and African enthusiasts interested in catapulting into the Venture Capital Investment World, as investors, startup advisors or ecosystem builders.
  - Fellows who participate in the Investor Accelerator will be taught actively, with multiple live sessions every week, occurring on evenings and weekends to engage the fellows.
  - As a much more extensive, and intensive programme- this one promises to last 20+ weeks, with over 800h of content, spread across strategic block-based learning and complemented by a range of panels with top industry leaders like GPs and Executives in many VC firms actively investing in or based out of African markets.
  - While the programme is not set up for any one persona, key to this is the nuance of understanding VC in Africa - and this is what Dream VC offers, giving fellows exclusive access to fireside chats, panels and networking opportunities with leading professionals from Ecosystem Leaders Championing African-Focused Funds today.
- In 2021, amid global VC growth, Africa tech grew faster than any other region with 2x the activity of last year and more than 3x the amount invested: 681 rounds of fundraising brought in a total of \$5.2 Billion in equity, with a further ~\$800m in debt, to a total of ~724 startup deals.

"Despite this, most people don't look into the origins of that funding and don't think of investment changes at a system-wide level. The majority, 95%+ of working professionals, operators and wealth owners across the continent and in the diaspora are not exposed to the startup ecosystems across Africa. And we're keen to change that," says Cindy Ai, Co-Founder & programmeDirector of Dream VC."

A core focus of Dream VC is to empower and enable individuals from all walks of life to better plug into the startup ecosystems. This is done via their highly comprehensive program to generate 'The Next Generation of African VCs'. The median age of the African population is still under 20, and despite the ongoing digital transformation, there still exists a massive youth unemployment issue in multiple countries around the continent. Many of these are talented, ambitious young individuals who are left out, and many of them are now turning to entrepreneurship.

The last few years have seen exponential growth in entrepreneurial adoption, and this is only further enabled by rapid increases in the publicity of startups and startup founders - but the investment world has dragged behind. Even as funding has increased, most of this has been concentrated in select deals (48% of total funding for startups in Africa went to just 12 companies),

and over 50% of investors are international.

"People are saying entrepreneurship can help to catapult countries across the continent into digital transformation, but this simply cannot happen without an equivalent level of support from the private capital sector," adds Mark Kleyner, Dream VC's other Co-Founder and programmeDirector.

This is where Dream VC see themselves plugging in, teaching fellows across both programs with an immersive 0 to 100 knowledge acceleration about the VC space, covering everything from Deal Sourcing and Due Diligence to the varied ways VCs can add value and support companies throughout their investment, exploring complicated topics like Syndication, Angel and VC investments and even the legalities of setting up VC Funds or Angel Groups to invest in African startups.

"There are so many passionate individuals we meet from countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania...really across the continent, who have the passion to help startups and can bring that experience to bear. Many are multidisciplinary - and could well form the backbone of the new innovation economy, growing across the continent. However, these individuals are often entirely disconnected from

the VC world," comments Mark. Even while this talent pool lacks the knowledge of how to leverage their skills - funds, family offices, and investment houses alike continue to pattern match - hiring top talent from global business schools and often looking abroad, outside the continent, for new talent, even as many struggles to recruit top talent locally. Dream VC hopes to change that and turn the tide.

**Applications for both programs go live on March 8th** and will be processed on a rolling basis until the final deadline on **May 1st 2022 at 11:59 pm GMT**. The Launch into Venture Capital Fellowship specifically also has an **Early Bird Deadline on April 1st, 2022 at 11:59 pm GMT** in addition to the final deadline on May 1st. Interested applicants can find more about both programme applications here.

The programs are expected to be extremely competitive, so prospective fellows are highly encouraged to apply early. Although Dream VC's core programs are paid, several generous scholarships are available, so highly motivated applicants who need financial support are still strongly encouraged to apply.





BAO

30 Inspiring Women  
#BreakingTheBias

HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2022



SPONSORED BY

ARUWA  
CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

FLUX  
GROUP



BUKZONE



# BAO 30

## Inspiring Women

### #BreakTheBias



### **Ruwayda Redfearn**

**Deloitte Africa CEO**

"International Women's Day is a timely reminder of the progress made over the past few decades around the advancement of women and improving gender parity. The day is also an opportunity to remind each other of the work that still needs to be done to realise the global goal of gender equality. I would like to urge all boards and management teams to be conscious of the role and power of their decisions in advancing gender parity and be conscious and deliberate in their efforts. This year, we commit to #Break-theBias of class, roles, geography and expectations, and as a leader, I continuously challenge myself to promote gender parity as a business and social imperative.



### **Dr. Anino Emuwa**

**Managing Director, Avandis Consulting  
& Founder Africa Women CEOs**

Gender-balanced leadership is essential for inclusive economic development, societal advancement and the sustainability of our planet. Whilst women and men make great leaders, women face systemic barriers – from unconscious bias to cultural constraints and negative perceptions. We need to #BreakThatBias for the well-being of mankind. Happy International Women's Day!



### **Fatima Alimohamed**

**CEO of African Brand Warrior**

"We are in 2022 and still asking for a world that is free of bias, discrimination and stereotypes. Clearly, there is some resistance for this not to have already happened. We know that half the sky is held up by women. So why can't we live in an inclusive world by elevating women's visibility instead of having us predominantly hidden?"

We all need to take action to #BreakTheBias and question society and demand more from them. We must break the bias and increase access to equity, safety, justice and recognition for every woman. We must not only celebrate every aspect of the social, economic and political achievements of women, every single day. But we must campaign for equality and openly call out gender bias. We must #BreakTheBias NOW!





# BAO 30

## Inspiring Women

### #BreakTheBias



### **Ngozi Oyewole**

**MD/CEO, NOXIE LIMITED (Nigeria)**

In the early stages of my entrepreneurial journey where I had to pitch for funds for my business. I was poorly served because I was perceived as inferior to men in terms of having the necessary abilities to lead a business. I was expected to display communal traits to fulfill my female gender role, as a nurturer which are in contrast to the leadership role's requirement for agentic traits.

I embarked on self development, got myself a coach, grew my confidence, expanded my knowledge, through networking and by joining social organizations increased my net worth.



### **Serah Katusya**

**Managing Director, GroupM East and Central Africa  
& SSA Coordination Lead.**

This song is a reminder to what we are as women, what I am as a woman, and despite all the beat down we get we keep rising, we keep winning, and with every stone thrown, we build up.

Even as women break glass ceilings all around me, as a woman, the fight to be seen for who I am and what I bring to the table without bias is one I am still fighting. I still have to point out and stand against patriarchy every day, and even with so much education on this matter, there is still so much to be done.



### **Joy Harrison-Abiola**

**Practice Administrator Dentons-ACAS-LAW**

I was 16 and just gained admission into the University. My brother who was a year older was already in University. I could not wait to join him but a shadow was cast over my dreams. My father could not afford our fees. The advice when he went to borrow money from a good friend was, "let your daughter stay back. She will only get married anyway." Well my Dad did not take the advice.



# BAO 30

Inspiring Women

#BreakTheBias



## Adesuwa Okunbo Rhodes

**Partner ARUWA Capital Management (Nigeria)**

At Aruwa Capital we are very excited to be breaking this bias by having more women as capital allocators and empowering the next generation of female entrepreneurs by encouraging women to create their own tables rather than asking for a seat.



## Vumile Msweli

**Founder of Hesed Consulting**

In celebrating International Women's Day and reflecting on #BreakingTheBias as a career coach it is natural that I consider the workplace. I think of biases like female bosses are terrible or that women have glass ceilings and at times even glass cliffs. The use of the phrase "she is shattering the glass ceiling" is a popular term used to describe the pioneering of women and minorities into spheres they historically could not engage in. However there is now a new phenomenon which is referred to as glass cliffs. Glass Cliffs are when women are brought in to save the day when organizations have been led to dire situations by their predecessors, often men.



## Dr Tebogo Mashifana

**Head of Department: Chemical Engineering Technology, University of Johannesburg**

'We are in 2022 and still asking for a world that is free of bias, discrimination and stereotypes. Clearly, there is some resistance for this not to have already happened. We know that half the sky is held up by women. So why can't we live in an inclusive world by elevating women's visibility instead of having us predominantly hidden?'

We all need to take action to #BreakTheBias and question society and demand more from them. We must break the bias and increase access to equity, safety, justice and recognition for every woman. We must not only celebrate every aspect of the social, economic and political achievements of women, every single day. But we must campaign for equality and openly call out gender bias. We must #BreakTheBias NOW!





# BAO 30

Inspiring Women

#BreakTheBias



## Dr. Christine Izuakor

**Cyber Culture Hacker & Founder/CEO, Cyber Pop-up**

"I'm excited about the #BreakingTheBias campaign because I believe that the first step to breaking bias is consciousness. A lot of bias is unconscious and you cannot break a habit you don't even know exists. This campaign is a great start to shining a light on various elements of bias impacting women across domains. It's only then that we can do something to change it. Happy International Women's Day!"



## Dr. Adama Kalokoh

**Founder of Impact Sierra Leone**

#BreakingTheBias - This theme resonates with me so deeply because we all deserve a seat at the table. It does not stop there, we also deserve the right for our voices to be respectfully heard in and out of the boardroom. The time is now for the world to recognize that gender equality is not an option but an absolute necessity.

As a proud descendant of Sierra Leone, West Africa and founder of Impact Sierra Leone organization. I have insight on gender issues both in the United States and in West Africa. There seems to be a common factor between the two regions in terms of far less opportunities for women as compared to men. The playing field has yet to be leveled because we see too often that a woman's skills or experiences are considered less important than her gender.



## Izin Akioya

**Multidisciplinary, Marketing Expert, Author / Founder @ Identiti LLC  
Founder @ Ship Africa Global LLC**

I could easily swap my book title Mum, Find Love Again for #BreakTheBias. The inherent messages are so in sync that I feel opportune to have launched my book this year. Ageism, sexism, inequalities, racism, abuse, are all steeped in biases. Biases remain the leading root cause of non-inclusion, and therefore sit at the heart of a sustainable gender equity strategy. Progress in gender equity, progress in attaining women's rights over the coming decades will be contingent on how much progress is made. In dismantling unconscious biases and nuances that drive unequal behaviors and societies.



# BAO 30

Inspiring Women

#BreakTheBias



## Oyetola Oduyemi

*Senior Director Public Affairs for The END Fund*

This International Women's Day commemoration is another wonderful opportunity to celebrate women the world over. In the last one year, women have yet again shone brightly – while showing the world that our gender is not a barrier to success, and so should not be treated as such. I'd like to highlight just a few of these sterling examples:

The extraordinary Mrs. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala who emerged as the Director General of the World Trade Organisation in March last year, from a final shortlist comprising two phenomenal women;



## Mariam Kamel

*Angel Investor*

With female entrepreneurship on the rise globally, it is no surprise that Africa boasts one of the highest regional proportions of female entrepreneurs, where 1 in 4 women run their own business. We can visibly see evidence of this in our daily lives. Yet the participation of female entrepreneurs in the tech startup ecosystem remains challenged by limited resources and access to funding. Those that have succeeded in #breakingthebias demonstrate that employing women's skills and innovation can serve to disrupt markets in financial services, healthcare, transportation, e-commerce, agriculture, among other sectors, all in a way that propels positive changes throughout the continent. Year on year, female founders and cofounders challenge the status quo by increasing the investments raised for their startups despite the overwhelming obstacles they face around funding.



## Chinedu Rita Rosa

*Wine Export Consultant | Founder & CEO Vines By Rosa*

International Women's day is a day to reflect and take account, our progress as Women Celebrating Women from every works of life and culture. With a special emphasis on Breaking the Bias, that as women, we face everyday. Enjoying our femininity and embracing our power, knowing that every obstacle that stands in our way can be overcome. Standing up Tall, Proud and as Equals in our own rights with no Bias and barriers to keep us from our goals.





# BAO 30

Inspiring Women

#BreakTheBias



## **Morenike George Taylor**

**Group MD, Flux Group**

We live in an imperfect world and the sooner we understand that the better. We can start working on how to improve and one area that we need to focus is to remove the bias against women. Women have traditionally been viewed as the weaker sex. We have more men as Presidents, Vice Presidents, CEOs of companies and Members of Parliament than women. This needs to change. Women have the power, potential and prowess to excel in any role. More women should be considered for roles in top leadership. It's time to break the bias



## **Abimbola Adebakin**

**CEO Advantage Health Africa**

I look forward to a world that is truly diverse, equitable, and inclusive. Women are so powerful when we choose to step into the fullness of our strengths and capabilities. And we have got to create a more enabling environment for women to do just that. We must empower and encourage more women to show up, speak up and show forth.

Women must also begin to take the plunge and show up where it matters. We need more women to take their place everywhere, with skills as their superpower. The world is more beautiful when we all show up and work together. The outcome is indeed unfathomable when we all, no matter race, gender or social class, can show up in our truest, empowered form.



## **Onyeka K. Akpaida**

**RM, Africa Women's World Banking & CIO**

Feeling like an Elephant trapped in the body of an Ant, having great potential without the architecture, strategy or replication structure to actualize it; I spent my formative years seeing women give up their dreams and aspirations to raise children and the "shaming" of the very few who dared to tow the unusual path of seeking for more. I never believed a woman could have it all! Suddenly, the tides are changing, women are refusing to bow to the shackles and oppression of stereotypes and cultural norms; we are protesting, collaborating, leaning in, bringing our seat to tables we were not invited to, building unicorns and ensuring no one is left behind. Now, I see them- the women who show up with their authenticity, showing us that we can have it all and being okay with not having it all at the same time.



# BAO 30

Inspiring Women

#BreakTheBias



## **Temi Marcella Awogboro**

**Founder, Investor & Board Director**

Regardless of gender, International Women's Day (IWD) 2022 is a beautiful moment to reflect on and celebrate the strides made in women empowerment globally. However, gender biases and stereotypes remain deeply ingrained in our families, homes, societies and organizations, influencing the way we see and treat our girls and women.

In today's world, women do two-thirds of the world's work yet receive ten per cent of its income and own just one per cent of the means of production. Women and girls around the world still do not fully experience equal rights and their potential as economic, social and sustainable development change agents remains vastly untapped.



## **Lisa Hurley**

**Editor-At-Large of Linked Inclusion™**

This year's theme is "Break The Bias." It's goal is to help us "imagine a gender-equal world free of bias, stereotypes and discrimination. A world that's diverse, equitable, and inclusive. A world where difference is valued and celebrated." So, on this International Women's Day, I invite you to absolutely strike a pose. But I remind us all that after that, we must actually do the work. We can pose, and we can post, but we must also make sure that women are safe, are seen, are paid equitably, and more. The work is the path forward to help us #BreakTheBias.



## **Saibatu Mansaray**

**Former White House Executive, US Army Officer (Rtd) & Philanthropist**

As an African and Muslim woman who moved to the United States at 20 years of age and immediately joined the United States Army. I understand the bias I carried with me into a foreign land and the military. Everyday, questioning myself given my background. But my determination to overcome my self-imposed bias and that of those around me, pushed me to over perform and prove that I am supposed to be here and will leave a mark. I got system support in the military as a woman to compete and complete military training courses that were mostly male dominated. I remember being in a few extremely challenging military courses with very high attrition rates. But upon graduation I was the only woman standing alongside the men.





# BAO 30

## Inspiring Women

### #BreakTheBias



### **Margaret Adekunle**

**Founder & CEO, CLC Secured Visa**

I am woman who is fearless and unbelievably strong. There are so many forces that work against Black female entrepreneurs. Access to capital and support is the biggest piece. The society can make things extremely difficult for Black female professional/business owners in different ways such as being labelled "unpromotable" because of who you are not which has nothing to do with your skills or maliciously cancelling a business contract which is well planned out. Against all odds, Black woman are strong, smart and have the ability to wither the storm and come out stronger and more successful.



### **Vuyolwethu Dubese**

**MEAL and Innovation Consultant, Angel Investor**

I operate at the intersection of democratising capital to African female founders. Designing the impact of that capital and ensuring that women (and small businesses) are funnelled to the top through strategic partnerships. This year's International Women's Day theme #BreakingTheBias is a way to highlight the opportunities available to enable women to break the bias. And to connect them to enablers of these ecosystems who have (and continue to) trail brazed. Network(ing) is one of the currencies you can give women to trade equitably.



### **Victoria Trochoux**

**Serial Entrepreneur & Keynote Speaker**

We are a human force that nurtures and uplifts the world. Let us not wait to be hailed for our grace, courage and determination. As Talleyrand aptly said, "Where so many men have failed, a woman can succeed."

Therefore, let's break the prejudices and stereotypes, let's be masters of our destiny because there's a bigger dream for us. #BreakTheBias



# BAO 30

Inspiring Women

#BreakTheBias



## Perpetual Kendi

**Founder ADDLESTON PR & Laute Luxury Wines**

Imagine a world free of bias, stereotypes, and discrimination, a world where difference is valued and celebrated. Where we collectively #BreakTheBias. There are key terms used. Conscious and unconscious bias. The term "unconscious bias" describes our tendency to classify others through characteristics that are not valid.

We can break the bias in our communities, workplaces, schools, colleges and universities. As we celebrate women this year, breaking bias is limited to our mental attention and we can all #breakconscious and unconscious bias towards our women.



## Sally Kimangu

**CEO, Destination Imagination Africa**

Individually, I think we're all responsible for the way we think and the way we behave - all day, every day. As women, it's high time to let go of the stereotypical and societal beliefs that we have clung onto which is limiting our impact in society and the world at large.

Change is the only thing that remains to be constant, with reference to this year's theme as we commemorate International Women's Day - 2022, I believe we can break bias in our communities, workplaces, schools, universities and all works of life. We just need to make conscious efforts in order for us to move ahead and level the playing field.



## Onyinye Udokporo

**CEO & Founder, Enrich Learning**

This year's international women's day theme, #BreakingTheBias is a significant one. Why? Because for as long as I can remember, there has always been one, or in some cases, several bias against women. For me personally, being the first-born child and a female (often referred to as 'Ada') in an Igbo family is enough for me to have all the odds stacked against me. Luckily my parents are modern, liberal, progressives who have always wanted me to break the mold and do what, culturally, is not considered the norm for women and girls.





# BAO 30

## Inspiring Women

### #BreakTheBias



### **Paulette Watson**

*MD/Founder, Academy Achievers*

This year's International Women's day theme: #BreakingTheBias is really important for me as a black woman and also the #BeMe digital inclusion program of raising one million females aspiration in Science Technology engineering maths related careers.

#BreakingTheBias is all about ensuring that our black girls are the ones who create and design the algorithms so that we can rid the oppressive algorithms, unrealistic and unconscious biases that plague our tech community. Let's make it happen #BreakingTheBias #BeMe



### **Hermine Mbondo**

*founder of B4brand*

As the founder of B4brand, a storytelling-driven marketing agency based in Toronto, Canada, breaking unconscious bias in marketing and advertising is a commitment to create truly diverse and inclusive content from an authentic voice that resonates with the audience. This goes far beyond simply using diverse imagery and brands must challenge existing stereotypes and biases to do better in order to build genuine connections with their audience.



### **Natalie Nkembuh**

*Founder of Evolve Media Holdings*

Women can move mountains when they work together to support each other, co-create and give everyone the opportunity to take a step further towards attaining set goals. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked. An inclusive society where women feel at home just like men in key roles and decision-making positions, at the level of access to institutions and finance will go a long way to ensure this.





## Avila Diana Chidume:

*Tackling inequality and improving representation within the creative industry*

**A**vila Diana Chidume is a creative entrepreneur and the founder of a greeting card company, a dream she had nursed since age 6. Growing up she struggled to find diverse cards, so she would make them herself using crayons and scrap paper. Avila.Diana is well known for its diverse, inclusive and representative designs on greeting cards, gifts and stationary items. The designs are made with people from ethnic minority minority backgrounds, the LGBTQ+ community and people living with disabilities in mind.

*Avila.Diana believes that everyone deserves to see themselves within everyday items and gifts.*

Avila Diana Chidume started Avila.Diana in 2018 during my second year of Law school. Her goal is to overcome stereotypes and change the world's perceptions on under-represented communities. This was achieved with the help of her brothers, mom's living room table initially, and her remaining £32 for that semester. This was during a difficult period where she struggled with mental health issues. Which inspired her first card design, 'Daily Reminder'. The design selling out at her first market stall was the motivation she needed to not only continue with the business. But also work on her mental health.

Avila Diana Chidume is also an artist and an advocate for better mental health support within the Black community.

In 2021, she merged Avila.Diana with Kutenda (The world's first 'online marketplace platforming cards and gifts designed by artists and entrepreneurs from marginalised groups'- Business Insider). She truly believes that the only way to tackle inequality and improve representation within the creative industry is to give a platform to talented but historically marginalised artist. Avila.Diana is a brand built to celebrate diversity and representation. With the majority of these cards designed by artists from these backgrounds.

Avila has always been passionate about helping people and has been trying to figure out how best to do so. She is very outspoken about her beliefs and mission on inclusivity with people. Inclusivity and its benefits. She engages people in topics which are uncomfortable such as race and mental health amongst the Black community. Avila is passionate about highlighting marginalized creatives creating their own diverse cards from different communities and celebrating their work. Her love for human rights and art have led her to where she is today.





# Emuejevoke Akpokodje

*A Chef, Food and Beverage Photographer and Cinematographer creating tasty cuisines*

Emuejevoke Akpokodje, more known by everyone as Chef Kodje, is a Chef as well as a Food and Beverage Photographer and a Cinematographer. Her passion in this field can be seen in the standard of her finished products.

She has two (2) and half years' experience in restaurant management which she gained as a restaurateur (2019-2021). Emuejevoke was the Co-founder and Head Chef of Play "et" Dine Restaurant & Café which was located in Warri, Delta State.

Her need for more knowledge, upgrade and self-development drove her to seek more. She is currently undergoing a one (1) year extensive standard culinary training in the best culinary school in Nigeria - Red Dish Chronicles. Emuejevoke is also on the Professional Chefs Diploma Combination Program. The goal is to enable her to create tasty and exquisite meals of multiple cui-

sines and deliver word class gastronomic services anywhere in the world. Chef Kodje is also a Food and Beverage Photographer. The satisfaction she gets after preparing a wonderful dish and staring at the beautifully plated meal made her explore the photography world. So she can tell lovely gastronomic tales with still and motion photography.

Emuejevoke Akpokodje has participated in several courses which include Food safety and hygiene in the catering industry. Also, Food styling – The Art of plating, Dark mood photography for culinary projects, iPhone photography and many more.

In summary, Emeujevoke Akpokodje (Chef Kodje) is a self-driven professional. Who has a distinctive ability to explore new knowledge areas about the culinary world.



# ***Emuejevoke Akpokodje***

*A Chef, Food and Beverage  
Photographer and Cinematographer  
creating tasty cuisines*



Sally Kimangu on

# STEAM Education



Sally Kimangu on STEAM Education

The youngest participant in the conference's art and performance track last year, Hyejun designed her installation to use interactive technology with light and movement, soft robotics, and auxetic structures to convey an awareness of breath in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. "I was inspired by the changing perception of breath, specifically how it had a positive connotation before the pandemic—for example, life and energy—and a more negative significance for people since," Hyejun said. We are at a point where it is not only possible, but imperative that we facilitate learning environments that are fluid, dynamic, and relevant. STEAM EDUCATION revolves around learning and using the idea that "Science and Technology are interpreted through Engineering and the (social, language, physical, musical and fine) Arts, all based in elements of Mathematics." STEAM education results in students who take thoughtful risks, engage in experiential learning, persist in problem-solving, embrace collaboration, and work through the creative process. These are the innovators, educators, leaders, and learners of the 21st century! Destination Imagination (DI) is a project based, kid-driven program that teaches kids to be innovative problem solvers. Our

main aim is to inspire and equip students to become the next generation of innovators and leaders. Using STEAM, teams of students collaborate, think outside the box and create unique solutions to one of seven different challenges in preparation for a fun, problem-solving competition. DI provides unique educational experiences across seven project based Challenge types—Technical, Scientific, Engineering, Fine Arts, Improvisational, Service Learning, and Early Learning.

Over the years in education, we've been working with the presumption of teaching to ensure our students get a "good job". But what does that look like? At Destination Imagination, we believe that integrating concepts, topics, standards and assessments is a powerful way to disrupt the typical course of events for our students and to help change the merry-go-round of "school." So we can finally remove the brick walls and classroom doors to get at the heart of learning. By doing so, we prepare students for jobs that don't even exist.



**Sally Kimangu**

# Where Shame Goes...

Izin Akioya



where shame goes, there you find  
us carried in our pockets  
along with our beliefs, our dogma  
becoming nemesis, becoming  
creed becoming self-stories  
the shame we breed the same we  
live by the shame that kills us

...

east to west, north to south,  
there shame goes how it must be,  
how it must look all steeping,  
steeped, living, by shame sit like  
that, stand like that, eat like that,  
walk like that and when we do not?  
shame shame shame, shame

...

where shame goes, there we are  
reminisce of roman generals, feral,  
unyielding going so far, untamable  
generation to generation sailing  
freely, at its own bidding now in  
charge of the man who once held it

...

living with us this shame going ahead  
this shame now on the inside now handi-  
cap, now bondage sidestepping through  
life, honoring shame

...

where shame goes, we let it where it  
doesn't, we do not legacies formed and  
reformed for man, by man, a legacy of  
shame? a legacy of pain?  
can yet become a legacy of love,  
inclusion, liberation

...

where shame goes, there you find us  
where love goes, there you find us  
by man, for man for today, and galaxies  
to come



# AKUNYILI-PARR CHIDIOGO

## Building a community of empowered women with the power of ROAR



Chidiogo Akunyili-Parr is the Founder of She ROARs, a community of empowered women across the world unleashing our ROAR. She is the Chief Community & Communications officer at Ubuntu Foundation driving the Ubuntu communities around the world to anchor the spirit and values of Ubuntu. She is a World Economic Forum Global Leadership Fellow. A fellow at the Harambe Entrepreneur Alliance; An Atlantic Dialogue Emerging Leader. And Associate Fellow of Nigerian Leadership Initiative.

Named '100 most inspiring women in Nigeria' by The Guardian. '100 most influential Young Africans' by Africa Youth Awards. '100 most Influential Nigerians' by Avance Media. And 'Young Professional of the Year' by Future Awards Africa. Chidiogo draws from over 15

years of professional experience in Community building; Business development; Intercultural dialogue; Strategy and Management consulting. Having lived and worked across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, North America and Europe. Speaking 7 of the world's languages including Chinese, English, French, German, Igbo, Italian and Spanish. Invaluable tools that bridge lives, people and their global realities.

Chidiogo Akunyili-Parr is also a writer, speaker, storyteller, and movement builder. Who is impacting the global narrative based on her belief and championing the power of people to change the world. Her philosophy is founded on the humanist African concept of Ubuntu: 'I am because we are' upholding and celebrating our shared humanity.

Her recently released book: 'I am Because We Are: An African Mother's Fight for the Soul of a Nation' illuminates the role of kinship, family, and the individual's place in society. While revealing a life of courage, how community shaped it, and the web of humanity that binds us all.

She holds a B.A. International Relations & Political Science, UPenn & Sciences Po Paris; M.A. International Relations & Economics, SAIS Johns Hopkins; Executive Leadership Program, Master in Global Leadership, World Economic Forum with certificates from INSEAD, Columbia University, Wharton School, London Business School, China Europe International Business School, and Cornell Tech.

# Lisa Hurley:

*Doing The Work, Staying  
The Course, Getting The Rest*



Lisa Hurley (also known as HappyHappyPhoenix) is an activist, writer, and speaker whose work focuses on anti-racism, texturism, and destigmatizing introversion. She is also a passionate and outspoken advocate for inclusion, equity, and gender equality. As stated emphatically on her LinkedIn profile, Ms. Hurley believes that:

***“Black Lives Matter | Black Joy Matters | Black Hair Is Professional | Rest Is Resistance.”***

Lisa is the Editor-At-Large of Linked Inclusion™, co-host of Real Talk on Racism, co-host of The Introvert Sisters podcast, and a contributing writer for No White Saviors. She has been quoted/featured in Forbes, Essence, Teen Vogue, and Fast Company, and on the iconic Nasdaq screen in Times Square New York. Lisa is also a member of the Black Speakers Collection, and was selected as one of pocstock's The Future of Black America Top 50 Leaders for 2022.

With every company she partners with, or initiative that she is a part of, Lisa's goal is to re-frame narratives about Black people and “The Black Experience.” As she recently stated in an article on the topic of Black Love:



*"The prevailing narratives about Blackness in general are a.) mostly told by non-Black people, and b. rooted in trauma. However the Black experience is not monolithic. We are multidimensional. We do all the things. We think all the thoughts. We set all the trends. We learn about all the cultures. We feel all the feelings. (So no: anger is not the only one.)"*

Although she is clearly a believer in "doing the work," Lisa is also an advocate of "getting the rest."

*"Staying the course is important. Focus and consistency matter. But Black people, and especially Black women, should be given the grace to simply exist and flourish without constantly having to provide labor, teach Google-able things, exert themselves, and prove their worth. This is why reclaiming one's time through regular and intentional rest is essential. The goal of all this activism is not only so that we can live equitably, but also peacefully, gracefully, healthily, and abundantly. And that starts with being centered and rested. Rest is required. **Rest is resistance.**"*

### **About Linked Inclusion**

Linked Inclusion was created by Padraic McFreen, one of the founding fathers of modern tech. It is a black-founded social change platform designed to solve for DEI + W: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion + Wellness, resetting the narrative of traditional DEI beyond well-intended window dressing or performative strategic measures. The platform is open to historically excluded individuals and communities, as well as to corporate executives who are choosing to be at the forefront of making their company cultures more inclusive. Linked Inclusion has won three Anthem Awards in recognition of their groundbreaking work in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Responsible Technology.

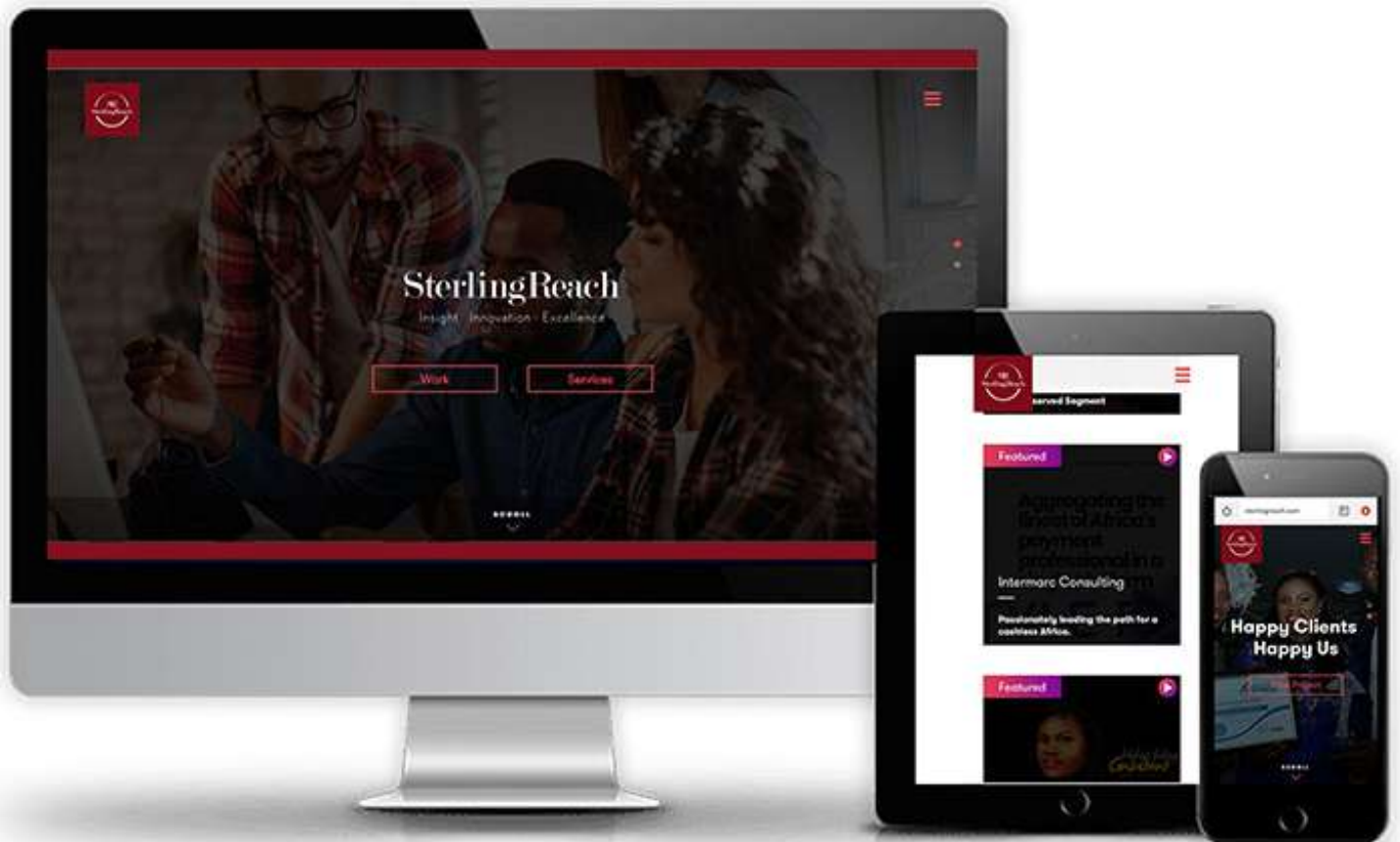
Why Did You Partner With Linked Inclusion?

*"When I was approached to join Linked Inclusion, I realized that it was a company with whose mission I completely aligned. Discussions and progress around DEI are vital, but healing – Wellness – must be a part of every equation. Health is foundational to thriving as a human being. As a healer myself (in addition to my activism work, I am also a Reiki Master) the company's focus on wellness, on the necessity of centering healing from racial trauma, resonated strongly with me. I knew that as part of my life's work, I had to make my contribution to the company's success."*

Lisa is always interested in sharing meaningful conversations. Feel free to connect with her on social media.

SR  
SterlingReach

• Insight • Innovation • Excellence



*We are  
The Start ups  
& SME's  
Choice*

*Web*

*PR*

*Marketing*

*Advisory*

*E-reputation*

*Content*



+234 8137010250

+2348096365657



alaba@sterlingreach.com



www.sterlingreach.com



# Oluwadamilola Soyombo:

## Equipping the African Child with Technology and Creative Skills

Skooqs is an e-learning platform focused on providing African children with access to technology and creative courses at a young age.

The Skooqs product is for kids between age 5-18 years looking to learn creative skills.

### How It Started

3 years ago Oluwadamilola Soyombo founded TCKZone, a not-for-profit organization. Whose goal is to introduce kids in African rural communities to technology and other STEM fields. Thereby increasing the number of young minds in technology and preparing for the Future. Little did she know that she would move on to building Skooqs, the first online learning platform. Where African children can get access to technology and creative courses at a young age.

When the global pandemic (COVID-19) struck and everyone was going online. She knew immediately that they needed to go online as well in order to reach more children with these skills. Immediately, they launched zoom and telegram STEM training sessions. And recorded 3x growth in the number of kids trained compared to physical sessions.

Oluwadamilola applied for a venture building program "STEMIn Africa Venture Challenge" as TCKZone.



However, the feedback they got said, “We love what you are doing for African kids, and we absolutely love your team. However, we would need the business to have a sustainable business model”. In that meeting they got two options;

Option 1: Can you come up with a business model within 5 days and if we love it you can proceed in the program. Option 2: We can end the conversation here, and thanks for applying.

At that moment, Oluwadamilola took up the challenge, and with my team, mentors, friends, advisors, and with prayers, we were able to deliberate on different ideas and eventually came up with Skooqs.

### ***Awards & Achievements***

Mid-early July 2021, Skooqs qualified for the STEMIn venture program, and after 3 months it emerged the winner in October. Skooqs, also won the Injini Edtech, virtual Bootcamp in November same year.

Skooqs participated and won the Lagos Small Business Summit Pitch Competition by SME100Africa and Softcom.

The E-Learning platform was also selected for the WITI program by Standard Chartered Bank and won a grant of 5 million Naira. In the space of 5 months, Skooqs have moved from just being an idea to having the product live, with courses, instructors, early users, and schools.

So when you think about African kids learning 21st-century skills, Skooqs is a go-to platform.

### ***Founder***

Oluwadamilola Soyombo is the Founder of Skooqs and a 25under25 an award-winning UI/UX Designer. Backed by eight years of experience working in the technology environment building products. Oluwadamilola holds a Bachelor's of Science in Computer Science from the University of Agriculture, Ogun State, Nigeria. She is a successful product designer with experience working in that capacity across several industries on 3 continents.







## **The Egyptian state's policies towards digital transformation contributed to our business growth**

OPay is one of the most prominent companies that have appeared on the electronic payments scene in Egypt as a result of these policies followed by the Egyptian state. It is also considered one of the fastest growing companies in the Egyptian market since its first launch in Egypt at the start of 2021, OPay Group quickly gained the confidence of thousands of merchants that utilize its points of sale (POS) to collect bills and other payments.

The report mentioned that "OPay" Group was founded in 2018, and risen to become a top financial services provider, operating in Nigeria, Egypt, and Pakistan, the company's early success is credited to its dedication to making financial services accessible to everyone, and now the group is eyeing expansion across the rest of the Middle East and North Africa this year.

This remarkable development achieved by OPay is due to the integrated services it provides to its customers, in addition to the ease of access to them, as the registration on the application or the electronic portal is done in smooth and fast steps, OPay is also becoming a major driver of financial inclusion in Africa, managing to fast track the adoption of digital services through cashless and contactless payments while also improving financial and information security. In particular, OPay's mobile payment service provides a convenient financial solution to the unbanked population in Africa, with 160 million active users currently generating around \$3 billion in monthly transactions





**160 million**  
active users currently  
generating around  
**\$3 billion**  
in monthly transactions

The international "OPay" group confirmed that it provides a suite of bespoke, customer-centric financial solutions that include offline and online payment options and a digital wallet service using the power of AI. OPay's online gateway (OPay checkout) hosts a set of high-quality services, integrated solutions, and an excellent commission scheme, which enable small- and medium-sized businesses to achieve profit growth.

For customers, OPay delivers an easier way to pay bills and other expenses through an app available on iOS as well as Google Play.

OPay Group's continued success follows a \$400 million funding round last August, which increased the company's valuation to \$2 billion. The successful round motivated OPay to venture towards territories in North Africa - particularly Egypt, where the group has achieved monumental success in less than a year, delivering the best possible financial solutions for customers, merchants, and small and medium businesses, and OPay plans to expand to more territories by the end of the year, including the U.A.E. It also aims to enhance its current suite of financial services and adapt to new security standards to keep customer data safe and secure.





## Corporate Executive

#spotlight



**Joy Harrison-Abiola**  
MCMi FSM

Joy Harrison-Abiola is a leading legal management professional with over 23 years in the industry. She is the Practice Administrator of Dentons-ACAS-Law, providing strategic oversight to all the business support

functions of the Firm. In this role, Joy plans, coordinates, directs, and is responsible for high level leadership in areas of finance management, business technology, process, and operations management, client and business development, talent management, etc. She acts as an advisor to the Partnership, providing subject matter input into strategy formation and implementation. She sets and monitors performance and operational metrics for the firm. Her passion is to increase organizational efficiency and to “get everyone to work at their peak.”

In 2008, Joy was instrumental in putting together the first law firm management development program (MDP) at the Lagos Business School (“LBS”) Pan African University in collaboration with the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) Illinois USA. She possesses a demonstrated track record in advocating and interacting with law firm leaders to institutionalize business best practices in their law firms. Joy believes that management in a law firm is not an appendage, but it is core. For law firms to survive and thrive, they must pay attention to developing the multidisciplinary skills and competences required to run a successful business.

**“Joy Believes That Management In A Law Firm Is Not An Appendage”**

Joy is a columnist with ThisDay Newspaper, her column, "From the Back Office" explores what law firms need to do to remain competitive and relevant in today's economic climate. It also looks at ways to re-engineer and awaken the dynamics of the contribution of the legal management professionals, to better position them to provide practical solutions to the challenges facing law business. She has authored articles like, New Wigs – Surviving the First Years, Any Vision for your Practice? Covid-19 and Keeping Staff Loyalty. A Firm of Lateral Thinkers. Workforce Productivity, Coronavirus, and the Performance Evaluation Process

Joy is the President of the Association of Law Firm Administrators, Nigeria ("ALAN"). ALAN is a professional association that exists to provide support and to enhance the development of professionals responsible for the operational management of law firms. ALAN is affiliated with the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA), Illinois, USA. Since its inception in 2008, in fulfillment of its objectives, ALAN has been organizing learning forums, seminars, capacity building and networking events for law firm managers, partners, lawyers, etc. She is a member of the International Relations Committee (Africa) - Association of Legal Administrators Illinois USA. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Strategic Management Nigeria (ISMN). She is the Executive Director of Catalyst for Peace and Justice ("CPJ"), a faith-based NGO with a mission to empower citizens, especially the vulnerable to work for peace, equality, and social justice. She is also a member of the Advisory Board of Business Africa Online – a pan-African online media platform, powering the entrepreneurial and social impact mindset.

Joy is also the Founder of Jenet-Serem Empowerment Foundation ("JEF"), targeted at adopting and supporting primary schools in rural areas. The goal of JEF is to make education the priority for every child, especially in the rural areas, by supporting regular back to school projects.



**Corporate  
Executive**  
*#spotlight*

**Joy Harrison-Abiola**  
(Practice Administrator  
of Dentons-ACAS-Law)





For Advert And Sponsorship Call:

**+2348137010250 or +2348096365657**

Email: **[editor@businessafricaonline.com](mailto:editor@businessafricaonline.com)**

Website: **[www.businessafricaonline.com](http://www.businessafricaonline.com)**