

3RD-4TH NOVEMBER, 2021

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DAY 1: GENDER EQUALITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Breaking the Glass Ceiling

PANEL 1: WOMEN IN MEDIA

Vivianne IHEKWEAZU
Managing Director,
Nigeria Health Watch



Chris UBOSI
Founder/
Managing Director,
Megaelectrics



Biola ALABI
Chief Executive Officer,
Biola Alabi Media



Chamberlain USOH
Producer/News Anchor,
Channels Television



PANEL 2: #HEFORSHE

Dr. Ike ANYA
Co-Founder,
Nigeria Health Watch



Prof. Babatunde IRUKERA
E VC/CEO, Fed. Comp. &
Consumer Prot. Comm.



Dr. Amina BALONI
Hon. Com. for Health,
Kaduna State



Kola AINA
General Partner,
Ventures Platform



PANEL 3: WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Dr. Adaeze OREH
Country Head of Planning,
Research & Statistics,
National Blood Transfusion
Service Commission



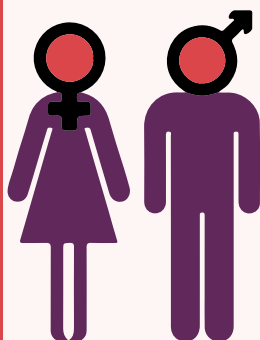
Moky MAKURA
Executive Director,
Africa No Filter



Dr. Abasi ENE-OBONG
Founder/CEO,
54gene



Lanre ADISA
MD/CEO,
Noah's Ark
Communications



#BreakingTheCeilingNaija

Breaking the Glass Ceiling

DAY 1: GENDER EQUALITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

FUTURE OF HEALTH CONFERENCE REPORT

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Vivianne IHEKWEAZU is the managing director of Nigeria Health Watch. She designs and implements health communication and advocacy strategies and campaigns. Her current work centres on nutrition, MNCH, routine immunisation, SRHR and epidemic preparedness and response. She played a key role in NCDC's COVID-19 crisis and emergency risk communications team, working on public health communications, determining messaging priorities and developing public health guidelines.



Dr. Ike ANYA is a consultant in public health medicine and co-founder of Nigeria Health Watch and EpiAFRIC. The honorary lecturer in public health at Imperial College has over 15 years of experience in clinical medicine and public health in Nigeria and the UK. Dr. Anya is a Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health and has taught at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Imperial College, University College London, University of the West of England and Bristol University. He is a TED Global Fellow and co-founder of TEDxEuston.



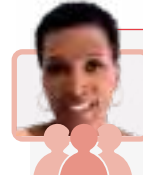
Dr. Adaeze OREH is a consultant family physician, Country Head of Planning, Research and Statistics for Nigeria's National Blood Service Commission and Senior Health Policy Advisor with Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Health. She has over 18 years of private and public healthcare experience. Dr. Oreh advocates for respectful, dignified quality healthcare, health equity, universal health coverage and quality medical education; and spoke on Universal Health Coverage at the 74th UN General Assembly in New York. She is a Fellow of the West African College of Physicians.



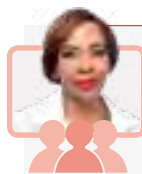
Chris UBOSI has been actively involved in private radio broadcasting in Nigeria since 1993. He was appointed into the core working group on the National Mass Communication Policy Review in 2004 and served under the Electronic Media and ICT Sub-Committee. Ubosi is the founder and managing director of Megalectrics Limited, operators of four radio brands – *Classic FM*, *Beat FM*, *Naija FM* and *Lagos Talks* – with 11 stations in Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt and Ibadan. He sits on the board of several other companies.



Babatunde IRUKERA is chief executive officer at Nigeria's Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC). He has a stellar record of advocacy and representation in competition and consumer protection law. Irukera played key roles in sector-related consumer protection and led the initiative to develop current aviation consumer protection regulations and the Passenger Bill of Rights. At FCCPC, he provides clarity and direction on issues of customer service/protection by promoting a level playing field in Nigeria's marketplace.



Moky MAKURA is the executive director at Africa No Filter, a donor collaborative focused on shifting the African narrative. Previously, she was responsible for building and managing Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's reputation on the continent. The well-known former TV presenter, producer, author, publisher and a successful entrepreneur has a passion to positively project the image of Africa and showcase its heroes and achievements. Makura serves on the advisory boards of five non-profits.



Biola ALABI is an expert in corporate strategies for market entry. She has worked to develop the African technology and entertainment industry. The entrepreneur, investor, producer and founder of Biola Alabi Media – a pan-African strategic corporate advisory – helped transform the African broadcasting and film industry. As managing director of M-Net Africa, she launched seven Africa Magic channels, as well as the Africa Magic Viewers' Choice Awards (AMVCA), widely touted as the 'African Oscars'.



Dr. Mohammed BALONI is a clinician and a public health professional with over 25 years of practice. Her core competencies of communication, drive for results and working with people was honed while doing developmental work. She has worked with governments to improve the health and wellbeing of children and women, by building capacity and transferring technical skills. Dr. Baloni is a team player who leads by building consensus among her team.



Dr. Abasi ENE-OBONG is the founder and chief executive at 54gene, a health technology company. His working experience cuts across leading healthcare organisations. In 2019, he was listed as 1 of 30 most innovative entrepreneurs in African by Quartz Africa. A year later, he was recognised as a Nigerian hero in the fight against COVID-19 by *ThisDay* and included in *Fortune's* 40 under 40 most influential people in healthcare. Recently, he also received recognition for his contributions towards accelerating solutions to global healthcare problems.



Chamberlain USOH is an award-winning TV presenter and journalist with Channels Television. As a news editor, he works with reporters across Nigeria and beyond. Usuh doubles as the supervising producer and head of the AM Department in charge of the breakfast programme *Sunrise Daily* at the TV house. He is one of the renowned Under 40 TV Anchors in Nigeria. The recipient of several awards is goal-oriented and is recognised for his focus on high quality delivery.



Kola AINA is a seasoned investor, entrepreneur, non-executive director and company chair with passion for start-ups' growth. He brings demonstrable success from leading investment in over 70 companies in Africa, India and USA. His expertise cuts across venture capital, technology, media, agriculture, infrastructure, publishing, real estate and the arts. Through Ventures Platform Foundation, the solutions creator works on advocacy, research and social impact initiatives that support youth entrepreneurship and innovation.



Lanre ADISA founded Noah's Ark Communications, one of West Africa's leading independent agencies, in 2008. Through his involvement in the Nigerian creative community he is passionately inspiring and grooming the next generation. He is the chairman of the Lagos Advertising and Ideas Festival (LAIF) Management Board and was on the jury of the African Crystals Festival (2016) and the Cannes Lions (2018). The member of the Loeries Committee also served as the president of the Heritage Jury of the debut Pitcher Awards.

2:00 p.m. - 2:10 p.m.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW
OF THE 2021 FUTURE OF HEALTH
CONFERENCE

- **Vivianne Ihekweazu**,
Managing Director,
Nigeria Health Watch



2:10 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

VIDEO: **WOMEN IN MEDIA**



2:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

PANEL 1 :

Women in Media

KEY ISSUES:

- Women's representation in media
- Impact of women's representation in media on sustainable development
- Challenges faced by women in media
- Recommendations to improve the current media landscape around gender issues

MODERATOR:

- **Vivianne Ihekweazu**,
Managing Director,
Nigeria Health Watch

PANELISTS:

- **Chris Ubosi**
Founder/Managing Director,
Megalectrics
- **Biola Alabi**
Chief Executive Officer,
Biola Alabi Media
- **Chamberlain Usoh**
Producer/Anchor,
Channels Television



3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

QUESTION
AND ANSWERS



3:15 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.

VIDEO: **#HEFORSHE**



3:20 p.m. - 4:05 p.m.

PANEL 2 :

#HeForShe

KEY ISSUES:

- Achievements made around the world on gender equality.
- Challenges faced with men's support for gender equality
- The need to have men as allies in strengthening gender equality at all levels
- Creating an enabling environment for women and girls to thrive alongside men and boys

MODERATOR:

- **Dr. Ike Anya**
Co-founder,
Nigeria Health Watch

PANELISTS:

- **Dr. Amina Mohammed Baloni**
Commissioner for Health,
Kaduna State
- **Kola Aina**
General Partner,
Ventures Platform
- **Prof. Babatunde Irukera**
Executive Vice Chairman/CEO,
Federal Competition and
Consumer Protection Commission



4:05 p.m. - 4:20 p.m.

QUESTION
AND ANSWERS



4:20 p.m. - 4:25 p.m.

VIDEO:
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



4:25 p.m. - 5:10 p.m.

PANEL 3 :

Women in Leadership

KEY ISSUES:

- Challenges women face in getting and retaining leadership positions
- Current success stories of individuals, organisations and governments that are advancing the cause of women in leadership
- Challenges in women in leadership that individuals, organisations and governments can adopt to advance the cause of women in leadership

MODERATOR:

- **Dr. Adaeze Oreh**
Country Head of Planning,
Research and Statistics,
National Blood Transfusion
Service (NBTS)

PANELISTS:

- **Lanre Adisa**
MD/Chief Creative Officer,
Noah's Ark Communications
- **Dr. Abasi Ene-Obong**
Founder/CEO, 54gene
- **Moky Makura**
Executive Director, Africa No Filter



5:10 p.m. - 5:25 p.m.

QUESTION
AND ANSWERS



5:25 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

RECAP AND CLOSING REMARKS

- **Vivianne Ihekweazu**,
Managing Director,
Nigeria Health Watch



Delving into gender equality

Economic participation, access to basic and higher education and health, and political representation provide a framework for young girls and women to break glass ceilings wherever they may find themselves.

Gender equality is a fundamental human right of everyone and it is a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Over the past few years, the number of in-school children has increased and the number of girls that are forced into early marriage has reduced.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 – provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. Gender equality lies at the heart of the Agenda which recognises that achieving gender equality is a human right. While being a goal in its own right, gender equality cuts across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and is reflected in 45 targets and 54 indicators for the SDGs.

Globally, women have fewer opportunities for economic participation than men, less access to basic and higher education, greater health and safety risks, and less political representation. Women remain unrepresented in leadership positions in finance, politics and governance. Women serve as Heads of State or Government in only 22 countries, while 119 countries have never had a woman leader. In addition, as discussed during the 26th UN Climate Change Conference, women are bearing a disproportionate burden of the climate crisis.

Nigeria is not left behind in the fight for gender equality. In 2006, Nigeria developed a National Gender Policy (NGP) designed to build a just society devoid of discrimination, harness the full potential of all social groups regardless of sex or circumstance, promote and protect the health, social, economic, and political well-being of all citizens to achieve equitable rapid economic growth, etc. However, 15 years after its creation, the policy has not been implemented.

The two-day moderated panel discussion styled 2021 Future of Health Conference delved into '**Gender Equality for Sustainable Development**' on the first day. The next day '**Gender Equality for Women's Health**' dominated the discourse. The theme, **Breaking Glass Ceilings** set the tone for spotlighting gender equality issues that were often overlooked or even evaded.

On **Day One**, the conference highlighted the **need to make women's representation in media more inclusive and develop more gender-balanced news stories**. Additionally, the conversations dealt with **how men could support women's representation in male dominated leadership spaces** as well as **amplify the critical importance of women in leadership** as a driver of improved gender equality. **Day Two** was about **how gender inequality and gender bias accounted for irregular access to health care, education and other basic needs for women and girls**. The resulting influences on their health seeking behaviour and wellbeing, that negatively impacted their health outcomes were brought to the fore.

The virtual conference provided a platform for diverse experts to add their voices to the impact of gender equality in their sectors, and present recommendations at different levels to promote gender equality. Speakers addressed the issue of gender equality from different angles, and how it ultimately layered up to addressing the implications of gender inequality. Participants proffered solutions on how gender equality could lead to sustainable development and better quality of care for women who have been historically disadvantaged. Panellists called to attention actionable points that would enable young girls and women 'break glass ceilings' wherever they found themselves.





"We need to ensure equality and equitable participation of girls in all aspects of our economy - listening to their voices always."

'Sustainable development cannot be achieved without gender equality'

► **VIVIANNE IHEKWEAZU: MANAGING DIRECTOR, NIGERIA HEALTH WATCH**

VIVIANNE IHEKWEAZU, managing director at Nigeria Health Watch set the tone for the virtual conference discussions by stating that sustainable development without gender equality is futile: **"Sustainable development cannot be achieved without gender equality and the stakes are much higher now that COVID-19 has impacted all countries globally."**

She adds that there is a need to ensure equality and equitable participation of girls in all aspects of Nigeria's economy. She talked about the progress the country has made in reducing the gaps between girls and boys in school enrollment rates and literacy outcomes. And warned that gender equality urgently addressed should and prioritised if Nigeria wants to achieve SDG Goal 5 by 2030: **'For Nigeria, progress has been slow because the country still accounts for 23% of global maternal deaths.'**

By way of previews to all three sessions for the day, Ihekweazu revealed that the **Women in Media** panel would look at the implications of women's comparative lower involvement in media. Developments around the impact of this on the way news is reported and how issues that affect women are reported would be at the core of deliberations for the session.

The **#HeForShe** session was previewed as a global movement that called on men to stand in solidarity with women and as a united force for gender equality. **"As you know, men are more likely to be in leadership positions globally, accounting for 76 per cent of senior leadership positions,"** Ihekweazu said.

In outlining the high points for the **Women in Leadership** session, she alluded to the continued underrepresentation of women at the decision making level in areas of policy, business and community life as a case point for the session. She asserted: **"A very recent example we found with COVID-19, where women accounted for 70% of the global health workforce at the frontline but were not well represented on response task forces around the world with Nigeria not been different."**



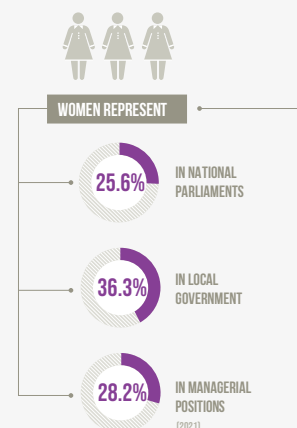
► WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

THE SUSTAINABLE GOALS REPORT 2021



ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

WOMEN'S EQUAL PARTICIPATION
IN DECISION-MAKING IS CRUCIAL FOR
COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY,
BUT GENDER PARITY REMAINS FAR OFF



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

PERSISTS AT UNACCEPTABLY HIGH LEVELS AND
IS INTENSIFIED BY THE PANDEMIC



1 in 3 WOMEN (736 MILLION)
HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO
PHYSICAL AND/OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE AT LEAST ONCE
IN THEIR LIFETIME SINCE THE AGE OF 15
(2000-2018)

UP TO **10 MILLION GIRLS**

**WILL BE AT RISK
OF CHILD MARRIAGE**

OVER THE NEXT DECADE
AS A RESULT OF COVID-19

IN ADDITION TO THE **100 MILLION**
WHO WERE **PROJECTED TO BECOME**
CHILD BRIDES BEFORE THE PANDEMIC

**PANDEMIC IS ADDING TO THE BURDEN OF
UNPAID DOMESTIC AND CARE WORK**
AND SQUEEZING WOMEN OUT OF THE LABOUR FORCE

WOMEN ALREADY SPEND
ABOUT 2.5 TIMES
AS MANY HOURS AS MEN
ON UNPAID DOMESTIC AND
CARE WORK





CHRIS UBOSI

FOUNDER/MD, MEGAELECTRICS,
on how stories created,
presented and researched
by females have the edge to
challenge existing societal
stereotypes that are male-
driven:

**"Seeing women
in media creates
a better sense of
connection so it
positively impacts
the ability to reach
a wider audience.
Having editors,
producers, or
presenters who
are females and
who are sharing
experiences
with 50% of the
population impacts
reach."**



CHAMBERLAIN USOH

PRODUCER/NEWS ANCHOR,
CHANNELS TELEVISION, on
prioritising women issues:

**"There are tons
of men who do
not prioritise
women's issues
– not because
they do not want
to but because
they do not have
good orientation.
It is okay to
educate male
children that
there is nothing
wrong in valuing
the opinions
of their female
counterparts."**



DR. AMINA BALONI,

COMMISSIONER FOR
HEALTH, KADUNA STATE, on
prioritisation of girl-child
education in the state:

**"We have a law in
Kaduna that says
all children must
be educated up to
basic education
which means 6
years of primary
and 3 years of
junior secondary
school and there is
legislation there to
prosecute parents
or caregivers that
do not adhere.
It keeps the girls in
school and provides
them with some
skills."**



MOKY MAKURA

FOUNDER, AFRICA NO
FILTER, on how to help
women know their rights
in the workplace:

**"If you see
that women
are not well
represented,
say something.
When
people start
understanding
that it is not
okay, that is
when we will
see a change."**



LANRE ADISA

MD/CEO, NOAH'S ARK
COMMUNICATIONS, on
how to be alive to the
biological needs of
women:

**"Policies
should
be made
to ensure
women do
not have
any sort of
disadvantage
as a result
of their
biological
needs."**



BIOLA ALABI

CEO, BIOLA ALABI MEDIA,
on the need for women
voices in the news:

**"We need both
sides of the
stories, we need
both sides of
the opinions
and we need to
change the way
we report on
women's issues,
and the only way
to do that is to
get in the room."**



**PROF. BABATUNDE
IRUKERA**

EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIRMAN/
CEO, FEDERAL COMPETITION
AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
COMMISSION (FCCPC), on balancing
workplace teams:

**"There is no
empirical evidence
that men are likely
to be better at
doing some work
than women. I am
convinced about
that, both from my
experience growing
up and in my
workplace."**



KOLA AINA

FOUNDER AT VENTURE CAPITAL
on incorporating the concept of
HeForShe:

**"For us, solidarity is
providing more capital
to women when we
can such that they go
on to be role models
but hopefully become
investors themselves.
We are deploying
risk capital that has
to deliver a return.
We are not doing this
because we like the
sound of it or because
we want to get a
hashtag. We do not
reduce our criteria in
any way."**



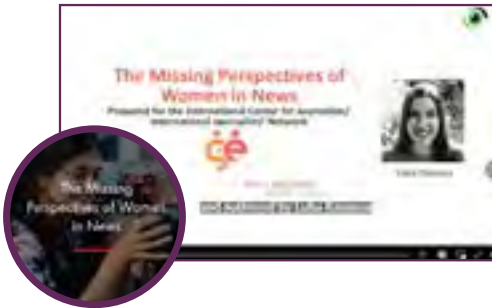
DR. ABASI ENE-OBONG

CEO, 54GENE,
on women making the
transition to leadership
positions in the health sector:

**"Let's improve
maternity policies,
provide that space
where they can feel
safe to bring the
kids to a working
environment and
we make provisions
for that in 54gene.
If we begin to
adopt such that it
makes it easier to
balance both then
we would see more
women making that
transition."**



SESSION 1: Women in Media



▶ WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

'MISSING PERSPECTIVES OF WOMEN IN NEWS' REPORT

Commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and authored by Luba Kassova, *The Missing Perspectives of Women in News* examines women's representation in newsrooms, news gathering, and news coverage in India, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, the UK, and the US.

Analysing three audiences – journalists, decision makers, and the public – the report seeks to understand the status of women in the news media through the political, economic, socio-cultural, regulatory, technological and news consumption contexts of each country.

The report finds that women's representation in the news has flat-lined in the 21st century. This alarming marginalisation is clear in all areas of the news media: women are underrepresented in newsroom leadership, gender equality stories are going untold, and men remain the vast majority of quoted experts and sources.

These issues are particularly clear in 2020. An accompanying special report, *The Missing Perspectives of Women in COVID-19 News*, finds that though women are disproportionately affected by the economic, social and political impacts of COVID-19, coverage of the virus remains dominated by male voices.

To address the challenges uncovered by this research, the report offers 50 evidence-based recommendations and a checklist for newsrooms to use as they work to increase women's representation, challenge biases and work to achieve gender parity. With these recommendations, the journalism industry can further its work to uplift women's voices and create a more diverse, free global news landscape.

*SOURCE: WWW.IJN.ORG



“Women should be encouraged to seek opportunities in media. There should be training amongst journalists to discourage the current stereotypes and patriarchal ways. Professional societies should be encouraged to put female members forward as resource people.”

✚ UBOSI: 'A SHARP RISE IN FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN THE MEDIA'

CHRIS UBOSI, founder and managing director at Megalectrics, asserted that women were doing a lot in media and entertainment over the past decade: “If a snapshot was taken of what it is now and compared to the last 20 years, the drastic upsurge would be noticed.”

He gives a roll-call of women who he believes are pointers to the increased female representation in the media space in recent times. Lady Maiden Alex-Ibru (publisher, *The Guardian Newspapers*), Ijeoma Nwogwugwu (Arise TV), Tosin Dokpesi (MD, AIT), Linda Ikeji (lindaikejisblog.com), Bolanle Austen-Peters (movie director), Mosunmola 'Mo' Abudu (EbonyLife TV), Kemi Adetiba (filmmaker, television and music video director), Bola Alabi (former head of M-net Africa), Nkiru 'Kiki' Mordi (radio personality and investigative journalist), Stephanie Busari (CNN Lagos Bureau), and Kadaria Ahmed (journalist and CEO, RadioNow 95.3 FM) all make Ubosi's list.

► Challenges encountered whilst venturing into the media sector and before becoming a game-changer and leading female figure in media:



Most times when women want to enter into most sectors predominantly dominated by men, women face different challenges. It is important to find the right people.

ALABI: **'WOMEN MUST ALSO BE READY TO SET UP ON THEIR OWN'**

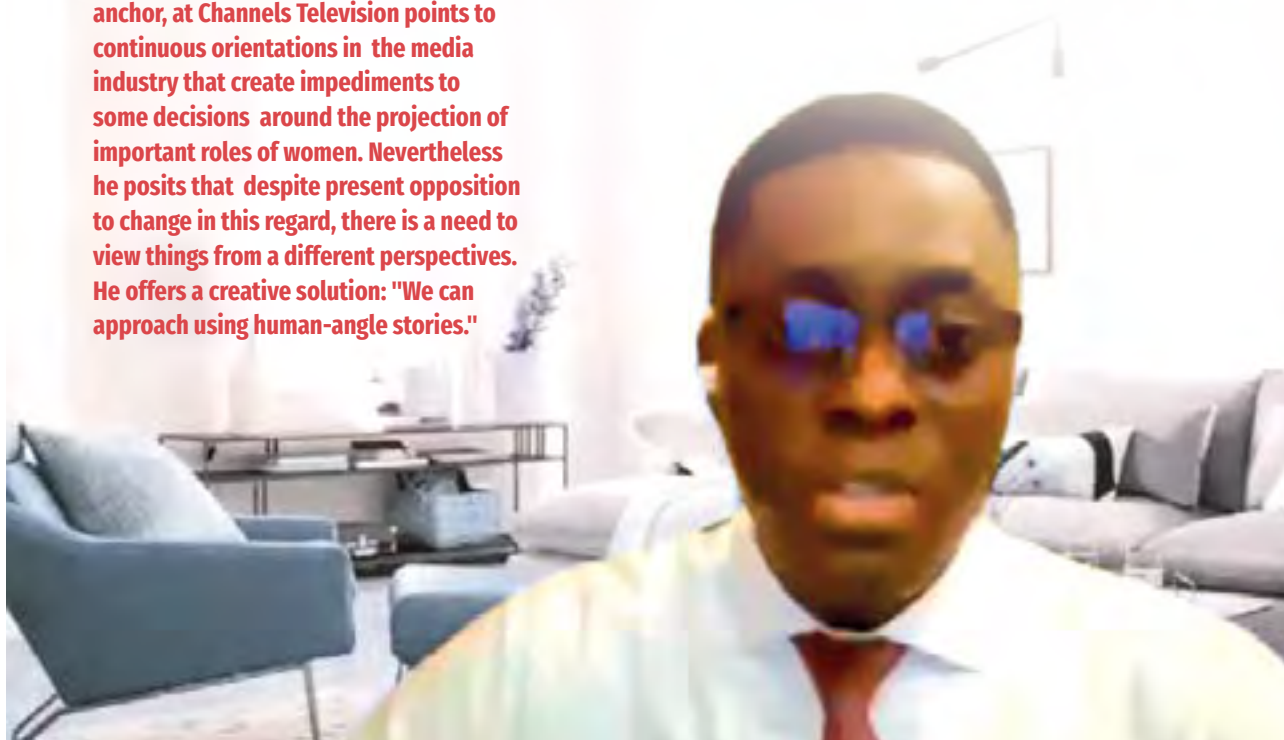
BIOLA ALABI, chief executive officer at Biola Alabi Media stressed the importance of finding the right people as media has so many different elements to it: **"Women must be able to make people around them understand what they are doing so people can help them progress and prevail past challenges."** This, she says, is key to understand, navigate and pursue leadership opportunities in the industry.

She posits that women must also be ready to set up on their own but assures that amidst the challenges, there are opportunities to rise, build other people, and fill more positions with women. **"Becoming a leader within big organisations is very challenging and it is important to find the right partnerships, leadership levels in order to help build a good structure for contesting top positions,"** she reiterated.

She stressed on the great need for women to be represented in these conversations from a policy perspective. She believes this will help change the language around sexual and reproductive health conversations. For her, more men need to get on board so that right contexts and narratives are told. She picks on how in-vitro fertilisation stories are told on screen as quick fixes and sounds a note of caution: **"If there is a misrepresentation of these processes, people will think that these are very short processes. Besides just talking about the ceilings, what are the topics that should be well addressed? These aspects are important to properly represent women's stories, advocate for equity and shape the future of health care for women."**

► Projection of the important roles women and girls play in society in TV shows and programming:

✚ **CHAMBERLAIN USOH, producer and news anchor, at Channels Television points to continuous orientations in the media industry that create impediments to some decisions around the projection of important roles of women. Nevertheless he posits that despite present opposition to change in this regard, there is a need to view things from a different perspectives. He offers a creative solution: "We can approach using human-angle stories."**



“The more we give women opportunities to practice, the more confident they become. As you invite women on to be experts, ensure that they understand the salient points and the issues to address – in a comfortable environment.”

BIOLA ALABI, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AT BIOLA ALABI MEDIA



WHAT'S IN PLACE...

'BOARD COMPOSITION AND GENDER DIVERSITY: COMPARISON OF TURKISH AND NIGERIAN LISTED COMPANIES' REPORT, 2014



The findings of this research – [doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.112](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.112) – carried out by Irgeşener and Abubakar Balarabe Karaye in 102 Turkish and 94 Nigerian companies in 2014 are not statistically significant but the results suggest important implications. **Underrepresentation of female directors is still common:** for more than half (52%) of the Turkish companies represented in the sample, no female directors were appointed in the boards. Although, the situation is better for the companies represented in the Nigerian sample, still 32% of these companies do not appoint female directors.

EXPANDING THE INFLUENCE OF WOMEN IN MEDIA

According to **CHRIS UBOSI**, the steps that would bring to attention engage and expand influence of women in media include:

- Getting more women involved in media. In this regard, he urges women to be inspired by highly successful women organizations like the International Women's Contact (IWC) – a socio-cultural club that is focused on fostering contacts and friendship among ladies. **“Women should be encouraged to seek opportunities in media. There should be training amongst journalists to discourage the stereotypes and patriarchal ways in which this is currently researched and presented. Professional societies should be encouraged to put female members forward as resource people,”** he adds.
- Encouraging female practitioners to seek mentorship from females in the industry.
- Using policies to create a conducive working space for women. **“Issues like maternity leave, safety at work, equitable treatment, and pay parity should be well discussed,”** he advocates.



► Measures in place to provide platforms for women in media to showcase skills and work:

ALABI: 'WOMEN NEED TO BE MEDIA CONFIDENT'

BIOLA ALABI is of the opinion that having more women in media changes the way issues are addressed. The **chief executive at Biola Alabi Media** makes a case for women to be resource persons if issues around physical abuse and domestic violence are on the front burner. In this regard, she is emphatic that focus should be to give women the ingredients to be media confident- to give their opinions: **“the more we give women opportunities to practice, the more confident they become. As you invite women on to be experts, ensure that they understand the salient points, and the issues to address in a comfortable environment.”**

Alabi called for the timing of shows and media events to be looked into to make it easier for women to showcase their expertise and work. Her concerns are succinct **“Some shows start as early as 6 a.m. and a lot of women have to finish house chores in the morning.”** Nevertheless, she is pacified by the new normal: **“Luckily interviews and shows can be done virtually now.”**

On mentorship, Alabi beckons on women to embrace collaborations, share insights and embrace opportunities: **“Women come to me on film production, we work together, develop the business plan, develop ideas, brainstorm on how to ensure these films are profitable.”**

As the brain behind *Grooming for Greatness*, – where women and men receive mentorship over a year – she points out that mentorship requires capital in order to be empowering. And offers a note of advice to all discerning hearts and ears: **“When climbing higher, set the ladder right so it can pick up the next person.”**

But just what are the key tools to be employed by young women to help to navigate the way women are perceived in society? Alabi pinpoints continuous practice, reading and investing in oneself as ways in which women can be media confident. She opens up: **"I hated speaking in public, it was something I dreaded doing. I started practising more, I started training, watching a lot more public speakers. It is good to practice, you do not have to be in a studio to start putting your YouTube videos up."**

She identifies the prevalence of multiple media tools, platforms and channels as a big opportunity: **"We can do whatever it is we want to do. We can learn to be better writers, journalists, film producers online. Empowering people to use their language as a communication tool is also something everyone should start doing."**

On how some of these gender roles impact women's desires to get more involved in media, Alabi offers negotiation as the shot in the arm. Her insider view is revealing: **"It is the same thing with navigating with bosses because if there is an opportunity for a night or evening show, negotiation is needed on how to achieve that while doing other works. Women are in charge of their careers so they have to let people around them know what they want and what they aim to achieve. It is good to be clear in all the actions in case of an opportunity that is wrong timing. It is good to negotiate that with superiors. Promotions are negotiated also."**

"Women are breaking down barriers every day, for example, Dr. Okonjo-Iweala is the first woman WTO president, and that had to be negotiated. It certainly was not handed over just like that. Real campaigns were done to get that role. Internal campaigns have to be done. It's important to know that we have to be the architect. We have to learn the ability to negotiate very well, so we can play the game so well."

BIOLA ALABI, CEO, BIOLA ALABI MEDIA

► **Processes in place to ensure that women are featured as experts in news stories and that their perspectives are also heard:**

USOH: "IT IS OKAY TO VALUE THE OPINIONS OF FEMALE COUNTERPARTS"

Chamberlain Usuh believes that involving men in these conversations would break barriers, remove stereotypes and minimise frustrations around policies that would ensure that women are given their voice on news stories. **"There are tons of men who do not prioritise women's issues not because they do not want to but because they do not have good orientation. It is okay to educate male children that there is nothing wrong in valuing the opinions of their female counterparts."**

Usuh calls on message and programme design experts to play their key roles as these can affect the delivery of desired impacts of several integrated processes to help women fit into the scheme of things. He asserts: **"Leaders should deliberately lookout for females and try to balance it all out. They should also try to maintain gender balance because it only makes sense to have a lot of that introduced into our conversations daily. Women should be listened to on how we can help them make an impact."**

But just how do we lead a cultural shift in current newsrooms to ensure that women's voices are heard and women issues are given the needed attention? Usuh provides some insights and attests to the current struggles of women in newsrooms: **"Women are not finding it easy rising to be editors due to the gruesome working hours and family roles they have to play. A lot of care should be taken when sending female reporters out to certain events."** Despite admitting to the slow progress in leading the cultural change in news rooms, he points to some measures that can be leveraged on to ensure that the needed progress is achieved. **"In the society that we live in, there are push-backs on some of those matters in terms of the laws that exist. Focus should be on the kind of laws to be passed and how to ensure that these kinds of issues are prioritised,"** he advises. Despite the odds, he is enthusiastic that consistent engagements such as the 'Breaking the Glass Ceiling' themed conference would make editors, reporters and news directors to know that **"certain things are okay to be factored into the news script because they deserve to be there."**



SESSION 2: #HeForShe



► WHAT HAS BEEN DONE:

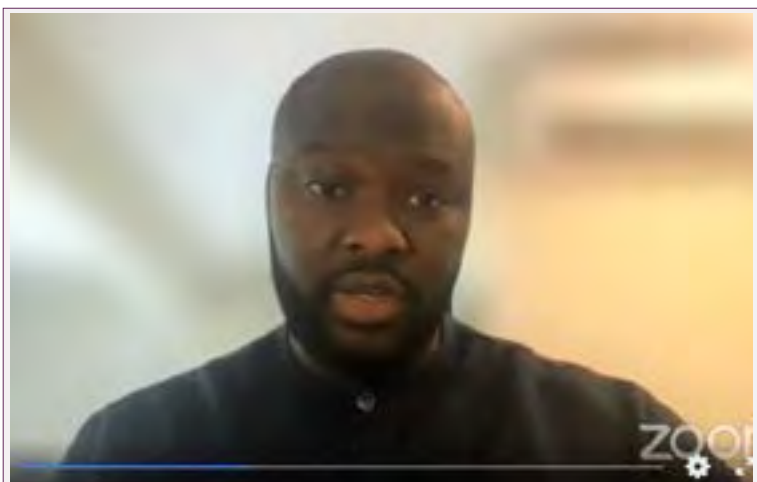
HEFORSHE: 'A SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT FOR GENDER EQUALITY'



The world is at a turning point. People everywhere understand and support the idea of gender equality. They know it is not just a women's issue – it is a human rights issue. **HeForShe** is an invitation for men and people of all genders to stand in solidarity with women to create a bold, visible and united force for gender equality. Since its launch by Emma Watson, **HeForShe** has become a community of millions of activists, subject to more than 3 billion conversations on social media per year, and working with world leaders to develop solutions for some of gender equality's biggest challenges. The men of **HeForShe** are not on the sidelines. They work with women and with each other to build businesses, raise families, and give back to their communities.

The year 2021 accentuated gender, racial and economic inequalities. In this context, **HeForShe** is bringing together the most ambitious leaders from across government, the corporate world, and the third sector to launch the **HeForShe Alliance**. **HeForShe** champions will spearhead transformative change that demonstrates the value of allies and accelerate progress on gender equality and achievement of the united nations sustainable development goals.

Like other human rights and social justice movements, gender equality requires action across all of society. The clarion call is one of commitment from **HeForShe** – to take action, and inspire millions of others to create meaningful change in communities.



AINA: 'RECOGNISE THAT WE CAN'T HAVE A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH TO AGENDAS'

✚ Extents of gender equality considerations when assessing potential new business ventures or investments:

For KOLA AINA, founder and General Partner at Ventures Park, it is good business to back female founding businesses. Beyond that, he notes that it is good to assess issues around gender and discrimination when evaluating companies for investment purposes. **"It is good to ensure that we hold founders accountable for gender equality and ensuring that the rights of women are protected in the workplace,"** he outlines. He posits that this can be tracked via policies and points out that offering policy templates to portfolio companies to adopt can be a key driver. In this regard, Aina highlights the female-only track that supports and accelerates the development of female engineering talent launched by Digital Explorers as an example. **"This was done because there is less bias in venture capital in general and a huge need for a supply of female founders - and that starts from an early stage,"** he revealed.

► **Ways that organizations can promote gender rights issues as they relate to consumers and standing up for female colleagues on gender equality issues:**



“
I was made to understand that there is only one claim to fame and that is seniority, not gender.”

PROF. IRUKERA: 'ORGANISATIONS HAVE TO BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT PROTECTING FEMALE MEMBERS OF THEIR TEAM'

Speaking from personal experiences, PROF. BABATUNDE IRUKERA, chief executive officer at the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) highlights that there is no empirical evidence that supports the fact that men are likely to be better at doing some work than women. **“In the investigations, we do [at FCCPC] sometimes, we need to catch up with the female members of the investigative teams,”** he discloses. Prof. Irukera advises organisations to imbibe gender equality initiatives: **“It falls on organisations to be intentional about protecting female members of their teams because there are times when the people you are confronting operate in the mindset of the weaker gender. To balance the scorecard, you may need to take certain initiatives to level the plain field.”**

His personal convictions in the line of duty are also along same lines: **“I feel I have a lot more work to do to equalise my teams – by bringing in more men as the teams that I have worked closest with are dominated by women. I am on the lookout for men who are keenly interested in competition regulation so that I will balance the space.”**

► **Impact of women's participation in governance in Kaduna State and how this has affected emerging policies in the state:**

+ **DR. AMINA BALONI**, Honourable Commissioner for Health, Kaduna State disclosed that initiatives like the Kaduna's State Women Empowerment Fund – administered to women that need economic support – and the various girl child education initiatives make for a more responsive governance in the state.

“It is very important that the voices of women are there first when the issues come up. It gives a different perspective,” Dr. Baloni asserts. She offers some benefits of her assertion: **“Let's say there is a policy that is about education, it takes a woman to understand the limitations of that policy and how it disadvantages girls and other women.”** In that instance, she believes women's perspectives would help create the enabling environment for women participation.



► Incorporating the concept of #HeForShe and challenges faced:

AINA: 'WE HAVE A VERY IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THE PICTURE OF GENDER EQUALITY'

Straightaway, KOLA AINA acknowledges that capital is a catalyst for incorporating the concept of #HeForShe. **"Because we trade in capital and provide early-stage catalytic capital, we recognise that we have a very important opportunity to not just show solidarity but also boil the ocean in ways that hopefully improves the picture of gender equality for generations to come,"** the founder at Ventures Platform opens up. But how does this play out? **"I have engaged in a discussion with some of my colleagues and the guys were ashamed to recognise how there is a bias not just in Nigeria but across the venture capital industry,"** Aina says. He asserts that it is a lot easier for men to gain access to funding and so funding female founders is a golden opportunity to create role models. **"In some cases, if they become successful, they go on to be major investors themselves and fund more female founders,"** he enthused.

But what is the greatest challenge faced while trying to act as a catalyst in this sense? Aina points to a period in 2020 where the venture capital system suffered several gender-related discriminations and sexual harassment. He berates social media tendencies of arriving at hasty conclusions and admits that there is a need to be responsive to gender-related discrimination, without arriving at judgments too quickly. Aina cautions: **"You have to strike a balance because the mob is often going crazy on social media. How do we address these issues especially when things go wrong with our portfolio companies or in other scenarios?"**

How do we balance the need to go through a process and ensure that we are responsive and also not run the risks of the social media debacle?"



"We have to raise our boys differently. We have to encourage them to see women as equally able to participate and perform. Fathers and husbands have to support their daughters and wives respectively. Women should also advocate for themselves."

DR. AMINA BALONI, COMMISSIONER FOR HEALTH, KADUNA STATE

► Addressing the challenges of women's participation in leadership in healthcare and roles for male advocates:

DR. BALONI: 'THERE IS A NEED TO WORK ON PREVAILING CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS'

DR. AMINA BALONI, Commissioner for Health, Kaduna State, comes clean about the barriers to women's participation in health in her domain. She puts the blame squarely on cultural and social-economic factors. **"Women going to school is not prioritized,"** she starts off. She proceeds to pinpoint a direct consequence of that non-prioritisation of women's education: **"So that means they are poorly educated and have fewer opportunities."** And was not letting off yet: **"Others are the stereotypes. We have a patriarchal society that doesn't listen to women. Misinterpretation of religion insists that women should be relegated when it is not so. We have male dominance as well in leadership positions in communities, religions, and society."**

Dr. Baloni acknowledges the severe impacts of these norms: **"This translates to disadvantages to women as they do not have opportunities for financial access. They are expected to be looking after the homes."** Consequently, she calls for some action at policy level to reverse the trend: **"This needs deliberate policies that prioritise girl child education. We have to have deliberate empowerment policies for those that are unable to access finance."**

Dr. Baloni firmly believes that there is a need to work on prevailing cultural perceptions and norms. She is excited about how men can pitch in along these lines: **"I would like to say that the He For She movement is perfect for this because men have to advocate for women."** Her joy is well understood when she reveals further that the Governor of Kaduna State, Nasir el Rufai, is an advocate for women. **"He believes women should be given opportunities and he frequently puts women in positions where they can show that they can perform and become role models for other young girls. This is so that men can see that women in power can achieve great things."**

SESSION 3: Women in Leadership



► BACKGROUNDS...

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



Globally, countries are increasing their female representation. Most countries in Africa have quota systems that ensure adequate representation of women in government positions. This has a telling effect in nations like Rwanda – where women currently hold positions in 61.25% of parliament – and Senegal, the most diverse in West Africa, 41.82%.

Ethiopia in 2018 elected its first female president, **Sahle-Work Zewde**, just 13 years after the election of the first female president on the African continent, Liberia's **Ellen Johnson Sirleaf** in 2005. These statistics highlight the lack of diversity in Nigerian politics and how much increase is needed in the number of women in positions of leadership.

Currently, there are only 7 out of 109 senators (6.42%) and 22 out of 360 members (0.06%) of the House of Representatives who are women – demonstrating incredibly low levels of gender diversity. Within Nigeria's Presidential Task Force for COVID-19 (PTF), only 2 of the 12 members (0.17%) are women.

Nevertheless, the private sector has demonstrated that Nigeria can show diversity in leadership. Sectors like banking, have taken big strides. Six leading banks had women as managing directors or chief executive officers in 2021 - Citibank Nigeria (**Ireti Samuel- Ogbu**), Unity Bank (**Tomi Somefun**), Fidelity Bank (**Nneka Onyeali-Ikpe**), Guaranty Trust Bank (**Miriam Olusanya**), First City Monument Bank (**Yemisi Edun**) and Suntrust Bank (**Halima Buba**). Developments like these should be applauded and the public sector should be encouraged to set systems in place to emulate this diversity.



MAKURA: 'IF I HAD BEEN A MAN, I WOULD HAVE GOTTEN TO WHERE I AM MUCH QUICKER'

✚ How being a woman has shaped leadership roles across these diverse settings:

MOKYA MAKURA has held leadership roles from media to philanthropy. She is currently leading her third non-governmental organisation - **Africa No Filter** - so she can tell you how her leadership stints would have been more exciting: **"If I had been a man I would have gotten to where I am today much quicker,"** she says without any hesitations. But clarifies that it is not the environment, nor necessarily about external forces: **"It is also about me as a woman. I had to prioritise family."**

So just how did this shape her? She recounts the downsides of her leadership journey: **"There are certain times I doubted my abilities and that has limited my career in terms of where I could be if I had done certain things. But it was a very different time then."** Nonetheless, Makura also offers a ray of light to lift droopy hearts: **"There are just a lot more role models now that can inspire you and give you the confidence boost you require."**

► **Challenges that women face in attaining leadership positions in the health care space and how these can be mitigated:**

DR ENE-OBONG: 'DESIGN A CONDUCTIVE WORKPLACE FOR WOMEN'

DR. ABASI ENE-OBONG has no doubts about the major roles women play in society, family, business and politics. Therefore, his clarion call is terse: **"It is the responsibility of men and women to ensure that women rise and take that role."** Nevertheless, he is not ignorant of the inherent challenges in leading because he is the **founder and chief executive officer at 54gene**, a leading company in the health care space.

He gives some backgrounds: **"Going through schools from the university, masters and Ph.D. programmes, there were always more girls in class but then in the workplace it does not always translate. So there is a disconnect that occurs somewhere."** A disconnect he spotlights with precision: **"It is assumed that women are meant to take care of the kids. Society and culture have put so much on the woman that sometimes, she is just trying to do all of that. It is difficult to then begin to prioritise work."** He cites the issue of maternal leave that makes organisations 'lose' women for a period of time and also makes it difficult for women to actually continue to have longevity in the workplace.

"Those are some of the things we need to start changing," Dr. Ene-Obong emphasises as he believes that is the reason we don't see as many women in the workplace. **"Let's improve maternity policies and provide that space where they can feel safe to bring the kids to a working environment,"** he admonishes. He is certain that these policies will be worthwhile: **"If we begin to adopt such environments that make it easier to balance both, then we would see more women making that transition."**



💬
'Society and culture have put so much on the woman that sometimes, she is just trying to do all of that. It is difficult to then begin to prioritise work.'



► **Compelling arguments that have influenced the way people think around women and leadership:**

ADISA: 'POLICIES SHOULD ENSURE THAT WOMEN DO NOT HAVE ANY SORT OF DISADVANTAGE'

LANRE ADISA embarked on a personal count of his peers and colleagues in the integrated marketing communications sector but could not come up with actual numbers or their forays. What happened? The managing director and chief creative officer at Noah's Ark Communications pinpoints prevailing systems: **"It does not mean they were not talented. They were very talented."**

WHAT'S IN PLACE...

'THE WOMEN ADVERTISING INITIATIVE'

The Women Advertising Initiative exists in Nigeria to encourage women to stay on in advertising – despite the many challenges they may face as women in the industry.

'3% MOVEMENT IN THE ADVERTISING WORLD'

There is a 3% movement in the advertising world which states that in terms of creative leadership, only 3% of females have attained the height of other men. In the US and in other parts of the world they are beginning to see a difference.

I think, it is about the kind of system we have built over time - the perception that has led to certain kinds of behaviours."

He then tells the story of how a former female colleague hoped her being pregnant would put him off from wanting to bring her on board a new venture despite the fact that he was very much interested in her skills. **"It is a big concern for women going on maternity leave for three months. It has a kind of negative impact on how they rise in the system because their male colleagues are not going on maternity leaves - so they have more opportunities to showcase their expertise,"** he reiterates.

His call is for everyone to be alive to the biological and family needs of women in a way that doesn't stop them from being who they are 'because it is the fairest thing to do'. In his own words: **"Policies should be made to ensure women do not have any sort of disadvantage as a result of their biological needs."**

Very fitting words?



"I think it is when we start looking at policymaking at macro and micro levels that we start looking at what we can do beyond just what individual companies and organisations can achieve."

LANRE ADISA
MD/CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER,
NOAH'S ARK COMMUNICATIONS

► How well do women know their rights in the workplace in telling when their rights are being trampled in the workplace?

MAKURA: 'WE HAVE TO BE DELIBERATE ABOUT WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP'

MOKY MAKURA, executive director at Africa No Filter, does not think women go out of their way to find out what is due to them. Her reasons are not far-fetched: **"I think in countries like Nigeria people are just happy to have a job."** But she is not about to go into despair: **"There is something I feel we can all do which I term as 'if-you-see-something, say-something'."**

The task here is that if you see that women are not well represented, speak up, and say something. **"When people start understanding that it is not okay, that is when we will see a change,"** she adds. And brings her point home: **"Women are amazing, yes. But we are talking about women in leadership and we have to be deliberate about that."**



'Women are amazing, yes. But we are talking about women in leadership and we have to be deliberate about that.'

MOKY MAKURA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT AFRICA NO FILTER

DAY 1 TAKEAWAYS

- Increasing the visibility and availability of female role models as experts and decision makers on how news is portrayed
- Media houses are responsible for implementing policies that address issues like maternity leave, safety at work, equitable treatment, and pay parity for women in the media.
- It is imperative to increase the number of women who can stand to favourably compete in the marketplace. Some of the ways to achieve these include women in leadership mentoring women, increasing the visibility of female experts through deliberate action by the media, and continuously identifying and rejecting gender stereotypes
- Men and women should be champions of gender equality, and this must be consistent in policy and practice across sectors
- Leaders in global businesses agree that any industry that doesn't give women equal opportunity to rise to the top of their careers because of their biological needs is operating at a loss.

Africa CDC	Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention
AIT	Africa Independent Television
CNN	Cable News Network
FHC	Future of Health Conference
FCCPC	Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
ICT	Information and communications and technology
LMICs	Low and middle income countries
MNCH	Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health
NACA	National Agency for the Control of HIV/AIDS
NCDC	Nigeria Centre for Disease Control
NGP	National Gender Policy
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UHC	Universal Healthcare Coverage
WTO	World Trade Organisation



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