

SISPIRATION

Issue 6

How Omowunmi
Oyedotun is
Helping Families
Navigate
Citizenship by
Birth

TREAT YOUR TIME
AND ATTENTION
LIKE A CAPITAL
RESOURCE

THE NGO
ILLUSION:
WHEN WE LOOK
FUNDED BUT
FEEL BROKE

OSAYI
ALLE

The Social
Capital Issue



*Shaping Sustainable Systems for
Africa's Social Impact Future*



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Sispiration Magazine is a monthly digital and print publication from Social Impact Steward (SIS), dedicated to celebrating the achievements, voices, and impact of women across the globe.

Each issue blends insightful features that inspire women to lead with purpose, create meaningful change and connect with opportunities for growth.



Editor's *Note*

In Between

The second quarter didn't ease us in. It arrived with speed.

One minute you're setting intentions for the year, feeling like you have time to figure things out, and the next, you're deep in execution, adjusting plans, chasing timelines, showing up in rooms you prayed for, and realizing those rooms require a different version of you.

That's the space this edition of Sispiration was born from.

I've been thinking a lot about what it means to actually be in your becoming, as there have been many instances in the first quarter of this year in which I have come into contact with that word.

Does it mean stretching, recalibrating, improving, or an entire metamorphosing of you, your thoughts, and your mind?

Sometimes, we question if we're doing enough, while still doing so much.

Every woman featured here is doing her work in her own way, with her fair share of pressures. Some are clear on the path ahead, others are figuring it out as they go. But what connects them all is this: they showed up.

If you've been feeling like the year is moving faster than you planned, like you're playing catch-up with your own goals, or like there's more you should be doing, I want you to pause on that thought for a second.

You're not behind. You're in it. Being "in it" requires a different kind of grace. It requires you to acknowledge the effort, not just the outcomes.

As you go through these pages, I don't want you to just admire the stories. I want you to locate yourself within them. In the ambition, and even in the uncertainty.

Please keep building, even if it doesn't look like how you imagined at the start of the year.

And you know what? You and I have one thing in common.

We're still very much in motion.

With gratitude and love,

If you've been feeling like the year is moving faster than you planned, like you're playing catch-up with your own goals, or like there's more you should be doing, I want you to pause on that thought for a second.

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SispirationMagazine

LIFE HACKS FOR CHANGE AGENTS

TREAT YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION LIKE A CAPITAL RESOURCE

By Princess Amarah



"Most of the time, it's not even "important" things stealing our attention. It's just whatever is available in our realm of invited distractions: a message, a notification, even the urge to check something random on social media that turns into ten minutes of scrolling".

How Constant Accessibility to People, Platforms, and Requests Could Silently Drain Your Level of Productivity

I don't think people realise how much access they give away, or subconsciously. Every single message that pops up on our screen, our first instinct is to open it immediately. The habit of getting on random, casual calls that last minutes, sometimes hours, taking up time meant for other things, is very common these days. Not to mention the unhealthy habit of checking platforms you were just on five minutes ago. These are cumulative patterns that have formed over time, and if we're being Honest, most of us are guilty of them.

The Cost of Access

Giving your time to a task is one thing but dedicating your attention to it is something else entirely. Most of the time, it's not even "important" things stealing our attention. It's just whatever is available in our realm of invited distractions: a message, a notification, even the urge to check something random on social media that turns into ten minutes of scrolling.

Scattered Attention

These habits are often not questioned or taken seriously when they occur, but can take a significant toll over time. We lose the ability to stay dedicated to one thing for a long time because our attention span is now in shambles. It causes your nervous system to get acclimated to the constant bursts of dopamine, rendering you unable to give attention to one task and be productive at it.

Another reason this keeps happening, especially regarding giving unplanned time and attention to people and requests, is that being accessible can feel quite good. It often makes us feel needed. But that the same openness and accessibility are what make it hard to do anything that actually requires depth.

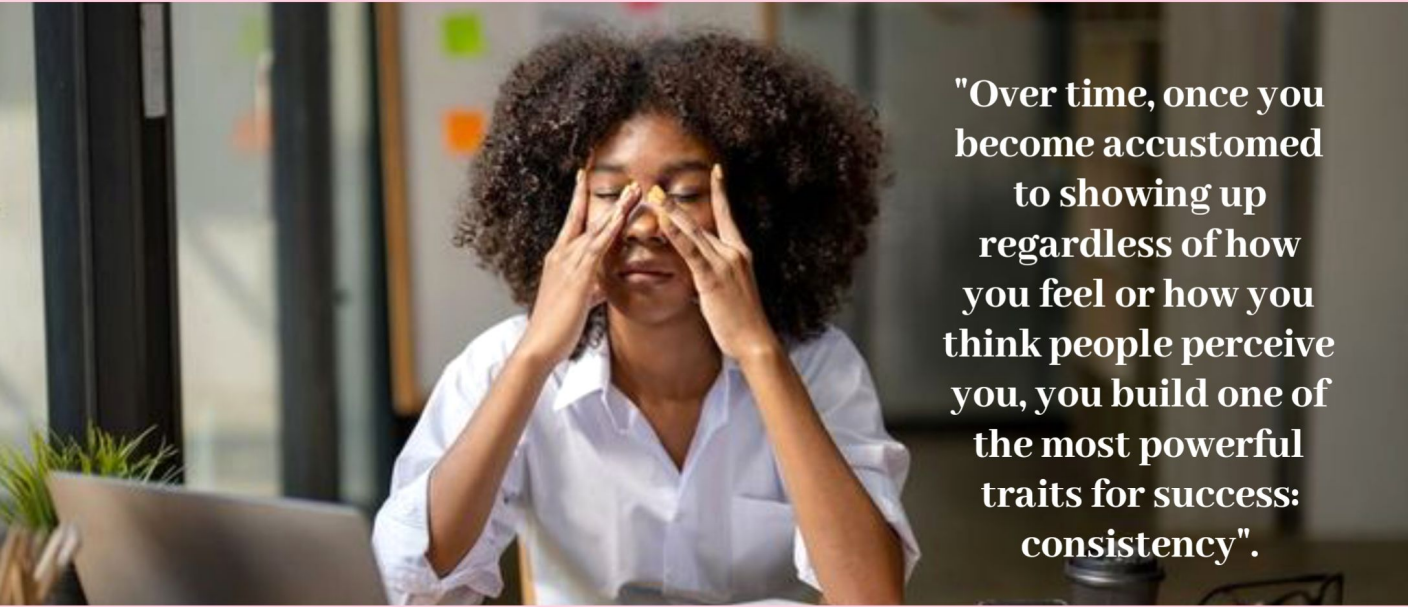
The Productivity Illusion

The ironic part is that a lot of this is self-inflicted. When everything gets a response, your physiological state begins to react like everything is equally important, even though your mind knows it's not. That's where the idea of treating your attention like capital comes in. Practically deciding not to trade your attention for something you know isn't worth it in that moment. You wouldn't spend business capital carelessly and then act surprised when it finishes. But with attention, that's exactly what happens.

The moment you start prioritising what gets your time and attention like it's business capital, you'll notice the difference almost immediately. You'll be able to stay on a task longer.

Sit With *The Embarrassment*

Early Discomfort is an Expected Indicator of Change and Progress.



"Over time, once you become accustomed to showing up regardless of how you feel or how you think people perceive you, you build one of the most powerful traits for success: consistency".

The Embarrassment phase

There's a very humbling phase most people are likely to go through when doing anything new, and quite frankly, it's not flattering at all. I'm referring to the phase where you've done what you should to kickstart a venture, but it's not quite giving what you thought it would give yet.

What most people do but shouldn't

Having put in the efforts, your intentions are clear, but when it comes to the output, questionable. It's not at the point where you can call it a failure or a success either. You're still somewhere in the middle, a place that is hard to defend and even harder to be confident about. You're likely going to be conscious of what your friends and family would be thinking about this "crazy idea" you decided to invest time and resources into. You're also likely questioning yourself at this point as well, whether you made the right decision or not.

Truth about growth

We'll refer to this as the embarrassment phase. It's an era you have to sit with, by yourself, and for yourself. But it gets really uncomfortable. So what do most people do? They start editing themselves. They lose faith in their original structure and question their choices. Nobody enjoys looking like they're still figuring things out because the media is flooded with people who seem to be making it big, and it looks easy for them.

What delayed gratification really looks like

It messes with your confidence a bit. Makes you second-guess things you were previously sure about. You have to realize that you don't get to a point where everything looks perfect without first passing through a phase where it's a bit... underwhelming.

There will always be times when you don't meet the standard you have in your head while pursuing any goal. The mistake is thinking you're supposed to skip that preparation phase or change something about it. But sis, you're not.

Consistency over confidence

You're supposed to sit with it. Running from it or shrinking yourself to be less valuable will only delay or distort the natural process it needs to take. Your confidence to perform might waver, but it's important to remember that consistency is a better guarantee for success than confidence is. You don't need to feel 100% pumped to keep putting in the effort. You can't afford to build a habit of stepping back the moment something makes you uncomfortable.

Over time, once you become accustomed to showing up regardless of how you feel or how you think people perceive you, you build one of the most powerful traits for success: consistency.

Final Note

Of course, it could look and feel a bit embarrassing at first, but that's literally the point. That discomfort is not an indication that something is going wrong. It's a typical occurrence, indicating that something is maturing. That you're operating outside of what is familiar, outside of what you've been used to. So instead of reacting to that feeling every time it shows up, if you can allow yourself to be in that in-between without immediately trying to clean it up, you'll definitely start to spot some progress or areas of improvement soon enough.



Funding Forward

The NGO Illusion:

When we look funded but feel broke (part3)

By Chidera James Edeh

A SIX-PART FUNDING FORWARD SERIES ON THE TRUTH BEHIND IMPACT OPTICS, FUNDING FATIGUE, AND THE FUTURE OF NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

Invisible Labour

Financial resources represent only one aspect of the challenge. A report from Springer highlights that local NGO leaders in Nigeria frequently encounter hidden monetary constraints, such as foregone income and unpaid professional time, which are not widely recognised or documented

Founders forgo market wages to ensure mission continuity and absorb risks that remain unacknowledged. (Fagbemi et al., 2024) Reflecting on these sacrifices can deepen our understanding of the personal trade-offs inherent in nonprofit leadership

The second dimension is emotional labour. Leaders manage expectations with funders and communities, motivate teams amid uncertainty, and personally bear institutional pressure. When programs stall, founders experience both operational and moral responsibility.

Interviews and reports in the nonprofit sector indicate that founders frequently engage in narrative labour by curating success stories to maintain their organisations' legitimacy. This involves managing social media, keeping donors informed, and sustaining community confidence even during challenging periods. For example, posting an Instagram reel of cheerful volunteers may follow long nights of hard work and personal sacrifice. Founders not only run organisations; they also safeguard their credibility.

To outsiders, this labour is invisible. It creates the impression that comfort and organisation are synonymous with wealth. (Challenges and Opportunities Facing African NGOs in 2025)

Community and Founder Roles

The reality is that both founders and the community contribute to the illusion that founders ultimately endure. In seeking to protect their organisations, leaders often prioritise optics over transparency. The community perpetuates the myth by accepting these appearances, and recognising the roles of all parties encourages shared responsibility and collaborative problem-solving.

Founders conceal their struggles because vulnerability is commonly seen as a sign of incompetence. According to the West Africa Civil Society Institute, some Nigerian NGO founders operate in situations where strong financial management and monitoring systems are lacking. This situation can lead founders to maintain a strong narrative of Success in protecting legitimacy, apologise for the overheads due to the public perceptions, and quietly absorb pressure, as leadership in the sector is frequently associated with personal sacrifice rather than organisational sustainability. Over time, this performance becomes part of their identity. Communities cease giving support, partners assume capacity, and funders interpret resilience as self-sufficiency.

In summary, leaders often manage perception rather than prioritise endurance. What might change if founders valued endurance before optics? By posing this question, we open pathways toward systemic change and enable a discourse that prioritises long-term sustainability over superficial success. The tragedy is that the myth does not strengthen organisations; it isolates them.

FUNDING FORWARD



Reclaiming the Story Without Apology

For founders, reclaiming the narrative requires prioritising long-term viability over individual projects. Leadership time, coordination, infrastructure, and well-being are essential production costs. Transparency should be integrated into organisational design as a core strength. Identifying real costs is a leadership responsibility. For example, starting a budget meeting by stating your hourly rate can highlight the actual cost of leadership. Aligning governance with self-care can legitimise budget lines for health and capacity. Board oversight should include ensuring founders' well-being as a fiduciary duty, thereby strengthening the organisation's legitimacy and resilience.

It also necessitates shifting the language from 'hustle' to 'endurance.' Founders should focus on building systems rather than relying on individual heroics. An NGO's credibility derives from its sustainable structure, not from the exhaustion of its leader.

For communities, this shift involves distinguishing access from ownership

Chidera Sandra James-Edch is a social innovator and global health advocate dedicated to empowering communities across Africa. With a background in Human Physiology from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and additional training in Project Management in Global Health from the University of Washington, USA, she blends community-driven innovation to bridge gaps in health access, digital equity, and social impact. A three-time grant winner, Chidera is the Founder and Executive Director of Her Period Slay Care Initiative and Laurenxia Global, where she has led cross-sector programs and campaigns impacting over 10,000 adolescents and women

Community and Founder Roles

An NGO leader managing resources is not inherently wealthy. Support should be relational rather than extractive, and respect for the mission must include recognition of capacity limits.

For funders, the work extends beyond providing funds for specific interventions and moves toward supporting entire institutions. Trust-based philanthropy, multi-year support, and operational investment acknowledge that people, not projects, are the primary drivers of impact. By adopting a partnership-oriented vocabulary and viewing themselves as 'co-engineers of endurance,' funders can envision mutual stewardship. This approach fosters deeper commitment, shifting from episodic contributions to ongoing collaboration. When funders invest in the health of leadership, they help stabilise ecosystems rather than merely supporting temporary events, ultimately cultivating resilience and sustainability in the organisations they support.

Across all three groups, the shared goal for founders, communities, and funders is to move from admiring appearances to investing in endurance.



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COVER STORY



In this edition of Sispiration Magazine, we feature **Osayi Alile, Chief Executive Officer of ACT Foundation**, a leading voice in African philanthropy and social sector leadership. Through her “Ask Osayi” series, she has become a trusted curator of practical leadership insight, bridging the gap between theory and the everyday realities faced by emerging leaders in the social impact space.

In this conversation, she reflects on nonprofit governance, sustainable funding models, impact measurement, and the evolving nature of collaboration across Africa’s development ecosystem. Drawing from her extensive experience serving on boards and supporting over 85 nonprofits through the ACT Foundation, she challenges common misconceptions about passion-led leadership and emphasizes the need for structure, accountability, and intergenerational thinking. Her Perspectives offer a grounded yet forward-looking lens on how African Nonprofits and social entrepreneurs can build resilience and scale meaningful, lasting impact across communities

OSAYI ALILE

Shaping Sustainable
Systems for Africa's
Social Impact Future



Your "Ask Osayi" series positions you as a knowledge curator for women leaders and social entrepreneurs. What gaps in leadership discourse were you hoping to fill with this platform?

When I started the "Ask Osayi," series, I had one mission; I wanted to bridge the gap between high-level leadership theory and the everyday realities of leaders in the social sector. Emerging leaders need a safe, accessible space to ask tough, practical questions about governance, work-life balance, and resilience. This platform allows me to curate real-world experiences into actionable advice, empowering the next generation to lead with confidence and clarity.

What are the most misunderstood aspects of nonprofit leadership that you have had to address in your conversations with emerging leaders?

The biggest misconception is that the social sector does not require the same operational and strategic rigor as the corporate world. Emerging leaders often believe that passion alone is enough to run a nonprofit. In reality, to attract funding and create measurable, systemic change, we need strong governance, transparency, and strategic planning. Passion is the fuel, but structure drives the vehicle.

ACT Foundation has funded over 85 nonprofits across Africa (and counting) What frameworks or criteria guide your funding decisions beyond traditional Grant metrics?

Some of the major elements ACT Foundation looks out for before funding non-profits and local organisations include:

Mission and Alignment: We ensure the non-profit's mission aligns with our objectives and values and projects fall within the radar of our focus areas.

Impact and Outcomes: We assess the organization's ability to create tangible and measurable positive impact.

Financial Stability: We evaluate the non-profit's financial health and sustainability.

Organizational Capacity: We review the leadership, We review the leadership, governance, and operational capabilities of the organization.

Transparency and Accountability: Lastly, we ensure the non-profit is transparent in its operations and accountable for its actions.

You serve on several boards. What makes an effective board in the social sector, and what important factor can you say is missing in most boards, or what do you think is one important factor boards must not overlook?

An effective board in the social sector goes far beyond governance and compliance; it operates as a collaborative engine for systemic change. It is most effective when it brings together diverse perspectives, shared values, and a unified vision to tackle complex challenges. However, the one factor that boards must not overlook is the depth of authentic relationships and trust among the members.

In my experience, relationships are a currency we spend every day. It is easy for a board to become strictly and transaction-focused viewing meetings merely as a scorecard financial operational oversight.

When that happens, The human element is lost. Without a foundation of trust, respect, and a generous spirit, it becomes incredibly difficult to navigate the turbulent challenges of the social sector. Board members must be able to hold one another to their word, show up during the storms without obligation, and communicate with emotional intelligence.

Additionally, boards often overlook intentional succession and the inclusion of younger voices. If we do not actively bridge generations and bring new Perspectives on the table, the impact we build today will not be sustained tomorrow.

A board that prioritizes authentic trust, values collaboration, and intentionally passing the baton is not just providing oversight, it is securing a lasting, generational legacy

You've spoken about women creating opportunities for younger women. Which you seem very passionate about. What structures do you think are needed to institutionalize women-to-women mentorship and sponsorship?

To institutionalize mentorship, I recommend we move beyond informal chats, the coffee hangouts, lunch and dinner meetings, and build structured frameworks within our organizations. This means creating formal sponsorship programs that pair emerging female leaders with executive sponsors who will actively advocate for their advancement.

We also need to establish clear accountability metrics, where senior leaders are evaluated on how well they develop and support the next generation of women.

What are the most common strategic mistakes social entrepreneurs make When scaling impact? and How can these be avoided?

The most common mistake I see is trying to scale an idea based on passion alone without putting the right internal structures in place. Many social entrepreneurs assume that if a program works in one community, it will automatically work everywhere. To avoid this, you must ensure that your governance, accountability metrics, and team capacity are strong before expanding.

Another major mistake is relying entirely on short-term grants without building a sustainable funding model. To avoid this, it is crucial to diversify your funding through corporate and individual partnerships, crowdfunding campaigns, and long-term sustainability plans. Finally, many make the mistake of working in isolation. We cannot do the work alone. We must always leverage collaborations with the private sector, and government agencies.



How should African nonprofits rethink impact measurement beyond donor reporting?

I think impact should not be about how much is given; but rather, about what changed because of what was given. Nonprofits must begin to focus on clear outcomes in any area of their intervention: better health, more jobs, an eco-friendly environment, and stronger organizations.

I strongly advise nonprofits to measure the success of their projects through three simple pillars:

- Reach: Who did you touch?
- Outcomes: What shifted for these recipients?
- Efficiency: Was the resource used wisely?

In the mix of these, priority should be given to capacity building. Track how your team utilizes the funds given to them and then use storytelling to bring the numbers to life. It is high time they began to focus on the transformation that happened as a result of putting their stake in a community of need.

What is one idea in social change, particularly in Africa that you believe is overdue for disruption?

The idea that social change in Africa is just about giving out handouts is long overdue for disruption. For too long, we have treated communities as passive receivers of aid rather than active partners in their own growth. We need to move away from short-term relief and focus on sustainable empowerment. At ACT Foundation, we believe in equipping individuals and communities with the capacity, skills, and resources to build economic independence. People need to take charge of their future, and they can't achieve that through one-off programs. Hence, we must disrupt the cycle of dependency by fostering entrepreneurship and sustainable practices that outlast our initial interventions.

Please share with us a myth in the social impact space that you strongly disagree with?

A myth I strongly disagree with is that you have to work in isolation to make a difference, or that only large, established organizations can drive meaningful change. The truth is that the most sustainable impact happens at the grassroots level through authentic, generous relationships. It takes an open spirit to share networks and knowledge across generations, and no single person or organization can tackle our continent's challenges alone. We need collaboration and connective intelligence to build strong, lasting ecosystems.

Is there a particular cause you think deserves more attention in Africa right now?

If yes, please tell us what you think it is. Yes, absolutely. The cause I believe deserves far more attention in Africa right now is the intentional empowerment of the youth and the next generation through intergenerational collaboration and knowledge sharing. In my two decades of leadership, I have learned that no single person or organization can tackle Africa's challenges alone because the scale and interconnectedness of the issues are too vast. To build sustainable impact, we must focus on:

- **Intergenerational Mentorship:** It is our responsibility to pass the baton, or else the impact we build today will fade tomorrow. We must actively support and fund youth-led projects in entrepreneurship, health, environment, and leadership.
- **Connective Intelligence:** We need the skill of intentionally bringing together the right individuals, resources, knowledge, and networks to solve problems and create a wider impact.
- **Authentic and Generous Relationships:** Building networks based on integrity, a generous spirit, and authenticity creates a bond that feels natural and sustaining.



Without the flow of wisdom downward and energy upward, we risk repeating cycles, wasting resources, and leaving gaps when leaders age out. By investing in intergenerational ties, we transfer ideas, accelerate innovation, and build a lasting legacy.

What trends are you seeing in philanthropy and corporate social responsibility in Africa today?

Today, we are seeing a great shift from ad-hoc corporate philanthropy to structured, sustainable impact. Companies are moving away from random donations and are now aligning their CSR initiatives with larger goals, such as environmental sustainability, digital literacy, and community health. There is also a stronger emphasis on collaboration which is a great move

to bring together different organizations and resources to tackle challenges that no single entity could solve it alone.

In your opinion, what makes collaborations truly impactful rather than just transactional?

I have seen the transactional style up close: the quick handshake, the business card swap, the "let's connect" that really meant "what can you do for me right now?" It felt hollow, and honestly, it rarely led anywhere lasting. The relationships that stuck, the ones that opened real doors and turned into collaborations that changed lives, were the ones built slowly, with no scorecard in sight.

Effective collaboration allows any nonprofit to achieve greater impact through innovation and creativity. It is crucial to identify and collaborate with organizations and individuals who align with your mission and offer valuable innovation and platforms.

“Emerging leaders need a safe, accessible space to ask tough, practical questions about governance, work-life balance, and resilience.”

To achieve this shift, we must decide not to be transactional. This will mean you give first, genuinely, and that without keeping tally. This may also mean you show up not to pitch or ask for favors all the time. And when you do show up, you listen, you offer a helping hand; a word of encouragement, a resource that might help someone else's project.

Collaboration is a currency that nonprofits must spend wisely. We must not only seek meaningful collaborations but also be willing to support other nonprofits. Together, we can engineer the progress we desire towards a sustainable future.

LEVEL UP

BENCHMARK YOURSELF AGAINST TOMORROW, NOT TODAY

Your True Competition is Your Possible Future Self, Not the Peers.

Imagine running a race where you're constantly looking left and right, comparing everything you're doing with the speed, pace, style, and patterns of the runners beside you, rather than focusing on the finish line or the end goal. That's exactly what a lot of us find ourselves doing today, without even realising.

The pressure for success is more prominent in this generation than ever before, especially amongst youths, and that's not necessarily a bad thing because we have so many young people achieving great things these days. However, there's a thin line between genuine admiration and toxic comparison; one can actually help a person improve, and the other chips away at your sense of self. I'll let you guess which is which.

The next time you feel a pull to compare yourself, I suggest pausing and reminding yourself of these few things.

You don't know their full story

You are comparing your entire reality to a carefully packaged public post of someone else's life. You were not there for their low moments. It is, at its core, an uneven comparison. People reveal to the public only what they want the public to know, especially on social media. The next time you see someone's post and you're about to compare your entire life to think of all the different layers of your life that you never posted on social media, apply the same logic to everyone else.



Tendency to Lose Sight of Your Unique Goal

I've recently observed something interesting. With the rise of social media, a large part of society has lost its sense of individuality. People no longer have unique mannerisms. Everyone's style is the same. A lot of people have lost sight of their genuine interests and passions. People are finding themselves feeling so unfulfilled with their lives because they subconsciously didn't ever sit down to discover what they wanted to pursue, their paths, their focus, their "finished line". We're not all coming from the same place or heading in the same direction.

There is only one person you need to constantly care about progress and where they are at in life, and that person is none other than YOU. Picture yourself in a room with your past, present, and desired future self. Look at your past self, everything she had to go through, the decisions she made, and the actions she took to get to where she is today, which is your current self. Then turn your attention to that current self, think of all the things you're doing, how you're acting, whether you're doing better or worse than your past self. Ask yourself whether that past self will be proud of your current self based on how you're choosing to live your life.

If you must compare, do it properly

Your goal at all times is to make sure you're progressing, make sure you're conducting yourself in ways that are better than your past, because that's how you're going to achieve your desired future self. At this point, make yourself understand that the result of your future self is heavily reliant on how your present self is navigating things. Look at all the actions and decisions you're making and ask yourself whether they are helping you take further steps into becoming your desired future self. This is the best way to carry out proper self-comparison that will help you achieve productive and healthy results, and that will be one of the most effective ways to truly level up.



**How Omowumi
Oyedotun Is Helping
Families Navigate
Citizenship by Birth
Through International
Birth Planning**

Founder's Story



Omowumi Oyedotun founded Birth Like a Queen after recognising that many families were unaware of how early planning could influence their children's future mobility and global opportunities. What began as a desire to help parents better understand international birth options has grown into a consultancy that guides families through carefully planned birth journeys abroad

Through Birth Like a Queen, she helps families navigate the legal, logistical, and documentation processes involved in international birth and citizenship by birth, ensuring that every step is handled responsibly and in compliance with the laws of each country.

Her work focuses on helping parents make thoughtful decisions about their children's future access, travel freedom, and opportunities in an increasingly connected world. Since then, her work has supported the birth journeys of over 400 babies, guiding families from across Africa and Europe through carefully planned international births. Through Birth Like a Queen, she coordinates key aspects of the process including travel planning, hospital arrangements, accommodation, and post-birth documentation.





HER STORY UNSCRIPTED

OJOMA

The story of a 16 year old survivor (Part 5)

HHe looked like he had been waiting for this moment all his life. He looked like a monster. And then, it looked like the dream I had. Before I knew it, he grabbed me, put me on the floor, unbuttoned my dress,

and started kissing me everywhere. I wanted to scream. I wanted to fight. I did nothing but zone out of the scene. I thought of my parents, I thought of my siblings, I thought of happy times. I only started crying again when I felt something forced inside me, but he covered my mouth.

His face killed me every time I looked at it, so I closed my eyes instead. I could hear his heartbeat, I could not feel mine, but I could hear him say things into my ear, which I later understood to be “moaning.” I heard him say, “You like it harder?” But I was mute. Minutes later, I watched him get off me, satisfied. I heard his last warning, but I couldn’t really make out what he was saying, I only saw the knife he pointed at me. But I knew better than to talk to anyone about what happened that night, including Aunty Chidinma who came to check in the next morning. After the encounter with him, he didn’t come to my house again until my parents returned. He acted as if nothing had happened. He even said hello to me, but I didn’t respond.

Iye asked if I couldn’t greet him. I just muttered good afternoon and went into my room to draw.

I was good at drawing, but I only did that whenever I was nervous or sad. A few weeks later, I had to drop by his house. My mum sent me there before she left for the market. I met Uncle Ifeanyi outside.

I delivered my mum’s message to him, but he asked me to give them the inside. Again, I believed him. I went inside and called out to his siblings, but no one responded. I went to the back and still found none; on my way out, I saw him walking in. I had dropped the bag on the table. He looked at the table, then back at me, and asked why I had been avoiding him. “I...I am not avoiding you, I’ve been busy.” I said back. He smiled, touched my hair, and said he could sense I was afraid of him.

He apologised for not making the other day enjoyable, hugged me, and promised never to do that again. Not touch me, but ensured I enjoyed making out with him. He kissed me while touching my body, and I couldn’t help but give in. Since the day he raped me, it felt like a veil was removed from my eyes. And whatever happened at his house, was the beginning of years of being his sex partner. I allowed him to do whatever he wanted to me. Well, not like a 12-year-old girl had a choice in this situation. I had always to say I enjoyed it whenever we were making out. I didn’t. I was just afraid that he would hurt my siblings and me. I was looking out for them, and after all, I was the ‘Ada’...
To be continued

Peace Ojochenemi Oguche is a final year student of the Faculty of Law, University of Lagos. She is a survivor of gender based violence, a public speaker, writer, and a civil rights activist focused on women and the girl child. Peace is passionate about SDGs 5 & 10

QUOTE WALL

Inspiring words from women making a bold impact



Iyanla Vanzant
(Iyanla Vanzant is an American inspirational speaker, lawyer, author, life coach, and television personality)

“Your willingness to look at your darkness is what empowers you.”



Angelique Kidjo

“You can fall, but you can also rise.”



Alice Walker
(American novelist and short story writer)

“The best way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any.”



Kerry Washington
(American Washington)

“I realized I don't have to be perfect. All I have to do is show up and enjoy the messy, imperfect, and beautiful journey of my life.”



Madam C.J. Walker
(American entrepreneur, philanthropist, and political and social activist)

“Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them.”



Marva Collins
(Pioneering American educator)

“Trust yourself. Think for yourself. Act for yourself. Speak for yourself. Be yourself. Imitation is suicide.”



Dr. Mae Jemison (American engineer, physician, and former NASA astronaut)

“Never limit yourself because of others' limited imagination; never limit others because of your own limited imagination.”



Audre Lorde
(Beninese musician, actress, and activist)

“When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.”

THE VOICE OF COLOR

Using Colors Strategically to Convey Confidence in a Professional Setting

The saying "How you dress is the way you will be addressed", has undoubtedly proved itself over time, but while style is often at the forefront of people's minds when it comes to making an impression, Color is also an important element that is often overlooked.

Dopamine dressing is a concept that uses colors in clothing to intentionally influence emotions, boost confidence, and communicate subtle messages. Selecting clothing colors helps align your appearance with desired moods or professional, social goals. Here's how a few colors could play out in professional settings:



BLACK

The color black signals authority, discipline, and composure. This is the go-to when you want to be taken seriously. However, when it's not styled appropriately, it can also make people perceive you as unapproachable. For an attempt to soften it, you can pair it with cream, soft grey, and other muted tones.



BLUE

Blue naturally creates a sense of reassurance, builds trust, and reliability with others. Deep navy blue has a sense of calm intelligence to it, professional but also inviting, while lighter shades can feel more open and put people more at ease.



RED

This color instantly grabs people's eyes and attention, making it ideal for moments you want to be seen and heard. It signals boldness and intensity. To avoid being too overpowering, pairing it with other colors can often be a more appealing option. A red blazer over a neutral base presents as very strong and intentional.



OTHER COLOR

Other colors can also make strong impressions when used well. Emerald Green suggests growth and quiet authority. White projects clarity and a sense of structure, often associated with fresh starts. Purple leans into creativity, wisdom, and a touch of luxury. Orange brings warmth and sociability, but needs to be used carefully to avoid looking too loud.



LIFESTYLE

8 ESSENTIALS EVERY MODERN WOMAN SHOULD HAVE

IN HER HANDBAG

Some bags serve just an aesthetic and accessory purpose, and some handbags basically run a woman's day. For a modern woman, a properly curated handbag is like a survival kit. It houses the items that protect her time, her comfort, and her peace. Let's step away a bit from the obvious items like phones and wallets, and let me give you 8 items that are commonly overlooked but should be an essential in every modern woman's handbag

- 

1 SAFETY PIN OR MINI SEWING PIN
Sounds old school but it saves lives (or outfits). Having this can make a broken strap, loose button, or wardrobe malfunction easily manageable.
- 

2 MENTHOL CANDY OR GUM
Fresh breath is a silent confidence booster, especially after meals, meetings, or a long conversation.
- 

3 SMALL FOLDABLE SHOPPING BAG
For unexpected purchases or groceries. It saves you from carrying items awkwardly or paying for extra nylon bags.
- 

4 TISSUES OR WET WIPES
These are quick and versatile essentials for daily hygiene, quick clean-ups, or unexpected spills.
- 

5 HEAD TIE OR HAIR CLIP
Weather, stress, or long hours can turn a neat hair look into discomfort. A simple hair tie or clip can quickly fix your appearance and comfort without much effort.
- 

6 HEADPHONES AND EARPHONES
Crucial for watching videos, listening to music, taking calls, or simply canceling out noise when needed. It creates a personal space even in crowded environments.
- 

7 LIP BALM OR LIP GLOSS
Dry lips can instantly cause an unappealing and uncomfortable appearance. Moisturized lips keep you looking fresh and feeling put together.
- 

8 BLOTting PAPER OR COMPACT POWDER SHEET
Instead of constantly redoing your makeup, this helps control shine and keeps your face fresh in hot and long days out.



PREVENTIVE HEALTH SCREENING

Every Woman Should Not Ignore

Every woman needs to be intentional about her health, especially in a time when many women are constantly caring for others while neglecting themselves. Between family responsibilities, work obligations, social commitments, and community involvement, women often spend so much time attending to everyone else that they fail to notice the subtle signs their bodies give when something is wrong.

Imagine a woman caring for her husband, children, siblings, parents, in-laws, and even extended family members, all while managing work responsibilities and maintaining social and religious commitments. In the middle of meeting everyone's needs, she ignores persistent fatigue, discomfort, unusual pain, or other warning signs. By the time she finally pays attention, the condition has progressed into something serious, requiring surgery and intensive treatment. Suddenly, she is faced with a life-changing diagnosis such as cancer, while still trying to carry the weight of her responsibilities. Sadly, this reality is common among many women.

Understanding the Female Body

Biologically, a woman's body goes through continuous changes from infancy to old age. From birth, the number of eggs in the female body gradually reduces through childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and eventually menopause. Throughout these stages, hormones regulate growth, reproduction, emotions, and overall health.

Hormones such as estrogen, progesterone, follicle-stimulating hormone, and luteinizing hormone play major roles in a woman's development. Among them, estrogen is particularly important because it influences many physical and reproductive changes in the body. As women age, hormonal shifts can affect different aspects of their health, making regular checkups and self-awareness extremely important.



Dr. Olufunmilola Mojuyinola (Dr. Mo) is the Founder of Smood Feminine Consult, ABOCare Initiative, and GynoglowwithDrMo. A sought-after speaker, consultant gynaecologist, and board-certified As a lifestyle medicine physician with over 20 years of expertise, she has transformed the practice of preventive medicine into an art. As the pioneer of the Lifestyle Medicine Clinic at the Maternal and Child Centre, she has set the standard for integrating lifestyle medicine into women's healthcare. She is a member of the Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of Nigeria (SOGON), Gynae Oncology Society of Nigeria (GOSON), and the Society of Lifestyle Medicine of Nigeria (SOLONg)

Recognising Early Warning Signs

Women should pay close attention to the parts of the body that make them physiologically unique, especially the breasts and reproductive organs. Changes such as breast lumps, unusual discharge, persistent pelvic pain, irregular bleeding, or unexplained fatigue should never be ignored.

The body often gives warning signs long before a condition becomes severe. Paying attention early can make a significant difference in treatment, recovery, and overall well-being.

Prioritising Self-Care

Women are natural caregivers, but caring for others should not come at the expense of personal health. Prioritising regular medical checkups, proper rest, healthy nutrition, and emotional well-being is not selfish; it is necessary.

To be continued



QUIZ: ARE YOU REALLY OPPORTUNITY-SAVVY?



1

A women empowerment program says: "No business idea needed, just vibes." You think...

- A. Finally, my destiny has arrived
- B. That sounds suspiciously unserious
- C. Let me apply before they change their mind
- D. What is "vibes" in Naira

2

You see a "grant opportunity" online asking you to pay ₦10,000 to apply. What do you do?

- A. Pay immediately before it closes
- B. Forward it to friends so they don't miss out
- C. Pause. Real opportunities don't sell applications like airtime
- D. Ask them to reduce it to ₦5,000

3

Why do serious organizations fund women-led businesses?

- A. Because it looks good on Instagram reports
- B. Because women are just being helped
- C. Because it strengthens economies and communities
- D. Because someone was feeling generous that day

4

If an opportunity message has "URGENT!!! LAST CHANCE!!!" in all caps, you should:

- A. Panic and apply immediately
- B. Screenshot and send to everyone
- C. Check properly before reacting
- D. Assume your destiny is calling



LIGHT RIDDLE ROUND (DON'T OVERTHINK IT)

- 1 I am not money, but I can bring it. I am not a job, but I can open doors. Some people ignore me until they see others succeed. What am I? ?
- 2 I look like opportunity. I sound like urgency. But I often disappear after collecting trust. I live online and move fast in WhatsApp groups. What am I? ?
- 3 The more you understand me, the less you depend on luck. I don't shout. I don't post. But I change lives quietly. What am I? ?

FUN ZONE: QUICK TRUTH CHECK

- Not every "funding opportunity" is real
- If it sounds too easy, it probably is
- Women don't lack opportunities, they often lack access to the right ones
- Reading terms and details is not optional, it's survival
- I will stop forwarding opportunities I haven't checked



**GAWIM
LEADERSHIP
SUMMIT 2026**

**Sustaining Leadership:
From Practice to
Boardroom**

The 2026 edition of the Global Africa Women in Medicine (GAWIM) Leadership Summit was not positioned as a routine professional gathering, but as a deliberate response to a long-standing gap: how women in healthcare transition from participation to power.



Held on March 21, 2026, at Park Inn by Radisson Abeokuta, the summit brought together women across medicine, leadership, and health innovation under the theme “Sustaining Leadership: From Practice to Boardroom.” From the outset, the focus was clear. Women are already present across hospitals, research institutions, public health systems, and academia. The real question is what it takes to move from presence to influence, and from influence to decision-making spaces.

A central issue explored was the persistent gap between the large number of women in the healthcare workforce and their limited representation in senior and board-level leadership. This was discussed not as an abstract concern, but as a structural reality shaped by systems, access, and visibility.





Speakers emphasized that leadership is not simply earned through competence alone. Advancement is also influenced by networks, institutional design, and positioning factors that often do not favor women. Barriers such as limited sponsorship, reduced visibility, and systemic bias were addressed directly.

The summit highlighted “sustaining leadership” as more than just entering leadership roles, but also the ability to hold and expand them over time. This requires a shift beyond technical expertise into strategic navigation, presence, and governance readiness.

Mentorship and sponsorship were also strongly emphasized with a particular focus on the distinction between guidance and advocacy. While mentorship offers support, sponsorship actively opens doors and creates access to opportunities that drive advancement.

Conversations also acknowledged the realities that women in medicine face in balancing career progression with societal and personal expectations, calling for systems that recognize these complexities rather than ignore them. Importantly, the responsibility for change was placed not only on individuals, but on institutions to build clearer, fairer leadership pipelines.

The summit underscored that the next phase should focus on securing, sustaining, and reshaping leadership where decisions are made.



ONLY
12%

THAT ONE NUMBER
FROM ABIDJAN
SAYS EVERYTHING

WOMEN, RIGHT, POWER
PROGRESS



The AfDB marked International Women's Day with a high-level dialogue on women's rights and economic justice. What came out of the room was harder to ignore than the usual conference proceedings.

Here is the number that should have made everyone in that auditorium uncomfortable in Côte d'Ivoire, women hold roughly 12 percent of registered land certificates. Not because of any law that bars them from ownership, the legal framework technically allows it. But because of everything else. The distance to a land registry. The family pressure that routes inheritance around daughters. The loan that never gets approved because there is no title deed to offer as collateral. Twelve percent is the arithmetic of all of that, added up.

It came from Judge Fatou Diakité, President of the Association of Magistrates of Côte d'Ivoire, speaking at the African Development Bank's "Justice for Her" dialogue held on March 6th in Abidjan. The event was the Bank's main commemoration of International Women's Day 2026, and to their credit, they did not spend it congratulating themselves. The conversation was direct in a way these things often are not.

The AfDB's Senior Vice-President, Marie-Laure Akin-Olugbade, made the case in economic terms, deliberately, it seemed, for the people in the room who still need women's empowerment dressed up as a growth argument before they'll take it seriously. When women can't access land, finance, or basic legal protection, she said, the loss isn't just theirs. Economies slow down. Productivity shrinks. Everyone pays for it.

"Africa's development cannot accelerate sustainably if half of its potential remains underutilized. And that potential is in African women."

Côte d'Ivoire's Minister of Women, Nassénéba Touré, said the same thing more plainly. Half of Africa's potential is sitting unused. Which is a polite way of saying, we have been wasting it.

What made the dialogue interesting was who was in the room. Alongside the Bank officials and government ministers was a traditional leader, Danho Akradji, and his presence mattered more than his speaking time might suggest. Because the conversation kept returning to the same honest problem laws change faster than the systems that are supposed to enforce them. A woman in a rural community who doesn't know her rights, can't afford a lawyer, and lives three hours from the nearest court is not protected by a constitution she can't access. Real reform must extend beyond the capital.

The Bank also used the occasion to launch a month-long "Gender in Focus" series, featuring stories from the field about how its development projects are actually benefiting women across the continent. Whether it turns into something sustained or fades quietly after the month ends, only the follow-through will tell.

But that 12 percent figure, that one keeps pulling at you. Not because it's shocking, exactly. Anyone paying attention already knew the gap was wide. It's that someone stood up in a formal setting, with a minister and a senior vice-president on the same stage, and said it out loud with no softening around it. Sometimes that's where things start to shift. You stop talking around a number and start talking about what it will actually take to change it.



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Powered Growth Masterclass

The Powered Growth Masterclass, convened by Gladys Ameh, is a transformative experience designed to equip women with the clarity, tools, and mindset required for intentional growth across key areas of life.



Held in both Lagos and Abuja, the Masterclass brought together a dynamic community of women committed to evolving beyond limitations and stepping fully into purpose. Each session was thoughtfully curated to address critical pillars of growth; career advancement, financial intelligence, spirituality, and meaningful relationships. Creating a well-rounded and deeply impactful experience.

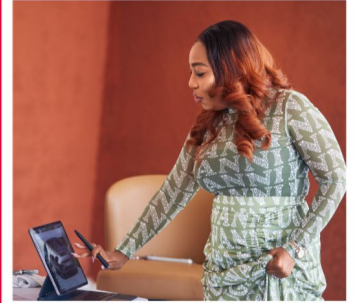




What set the Powered Growth Masterclass apart was not just the quality of conversations, but the intentionality of the room. It was a space where real stories were shared, practical insights were gained, and genuine connections were formed. Participants left not only inspired, but also equipped with actionable steps to drive personal and professional transformation.

From planning to execution, the Masterclass embodied excellence, structure, and purpose, reflecting a strong commitment to delivering value and fostering lasting impact.

The Lagos and Abuja editions mark the beginning of a growing movement, one that is shaping a generation of women who are choosing to grow deliberately, lead confidently, and live purposefully.



Rising Force



Wawira Njiru

The Intersection of Food Security,
Education, and Scalable Social Impact.

Wawira Njiru is a Kenyan social entrepreneur whose work sits at the intersection of food security, public health, and community development. She is best known as the founder of Food for Education, an organization focused on providing affordable and nutritious meals to primary school children in Kenya.

Njiru's work is driven by a clear and practical understanding of how access to food directly impacts education outcomes. In many low-income communities, the lack of consistent meals contributes to absenteeism, poor concentration, and long-term disengagement from school. Her approach addresses this gap by building a structured, scalable feeding program that supports both students and their families without positioning the service as charity alone.

Food for Education operates a model that combines subsidized meals with operational efficiency. By centralizing food production and using technology to streamline payments and distribution, the organization has been able to serve hundreds of thousands of meals daily while maintaining relatively low costs. This focus on systems and scale distinguishes Njiru's work from smaller, short-term feeding initiatives, positioning it as a long-term solution rather than a temporary intervention.

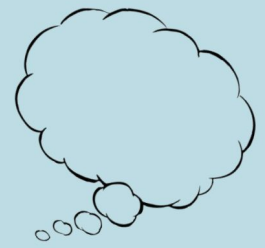
Njiru's efforts have gained international recognition. In 2021, she was named a laureate of the Global Citizen Prize, highlighting her contribution to advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in areas related to hunger and education. She has also been recognized by organizations such as the World Economic Forum, where she was selected as a Young Global Leader, further establishing her presence within global development conversations.

What stands out in Njiru's work is the emphasis on sustainability and structure. Rather than relying solely on donations, her model incorporates cost-sharing mechanisms that allow families to contribute small amounts toward meals, reinforcing both dignity and continuity. At the same time, partnerships with governments and private sector stakeholders enable the organization to expand its reach without compromising operational stability.

As conversations around food systems and educational access continue to evolve, Njiru represents a growing group of African leaders building solutions that are both locally grounded and globally relevant. Her work demonstrates how targeted interventions, when designed with scale and efficiency in mind, can address deeply rooted social challenges while remaining adaptable to changing economic and policy environments.

DEAR SIS

Is Social Media Presence Now More Impactful Than the Impactful Work Itself?



DEAR SIS

I work with a growing nonprofit organization, and lately it feels like the pressure to have a proactive social media presence is becoming just as important as, if not more important than, the actual work we do on the ground. We spend a lot of time creating content, documenting activities, and trying to stay visible because that's what attracts donors, partners, and even beneficiaries. But sometimes, it feels like the real essence of what we do is lost, and the impact is almost performative. Organizations are doing incredible work without being too loud about it on social media, but it seems they get overlooked because they are not as visible. Meanwhile, others with a strong online presence seem to gain more attention, funding, and credibility, even when their work isn't necessarily as impactful. It's starting to feel like if it's not posted, it didn't happen. And honestly, it's exhausting trying to balance meaningful work with constant social media expectations. Has social media presence become more important than the work itself? And how do we strike the right balance without losing the integrity of what we do?

- Communications Lead, Growing Nonprofit

DEAR CHANGE MAKER,

Right now, the organisations that are seen are often the ones that get the opportunities. That doesn't necessarily mean they're doing the most impactful work; it just means people can see and therefore know what they're doing. And in a space where donors and partners are constantly deciding who to trust, visibility carries quite some weight.

So no, social media hasn't become more important than the work itself, but it has become harder to ignore and is also a valuable tool.

That said, there's a line you should try not to cross. The moment your work starts being shaped by what will look good online, instead of what will actually help people, your priorities are getting misplaced.

What you described as your impact feeling performative is usually the first sign of that misplaced priority. And it's a dangerous place to stay, because it slowly drains both your team and the quality of your work. It means you might be beginning to prioritise what will look good online over what actually needs to be done or what you really need to exhibit. You might find yourself wanting to speed up moments that typically should take time, reducing your impactful work and experiences into content.

That's actually not sustainable, however, completely stepping away from online visibility isn't the answer either. If people don't understand your work, they can't support it. The idea is to try not to be extreme on either side; being totally invisible wouldn't necessarily protect your integrity, but can even limit your reach.

So the balance is that your work should lead, be impactful, and retain its core purpose while your social media presence should communicate just that.

Do the work properly and efficiently, then show it, visibly and honestly.

Also, Not everything needs to be documented, not every activity needs to become content, and not every story needs to be shared with the yearn for virality. You should be able to choose what stays private and what becomes public.

It also helps to stop treating social media like a constant, real-time responsibility. You don't have to be posting every moment to be relevant. Capture what you need during your work, then share it in a strategic and thoughtful way. That alone can reduce a lot of the pressure.

And one more thing, don't measure your organisation against others based on what you see online. You're only seeing what they choose to show. That's not the full picture.

At the end of the day, the work is still what's most important. Social media just influences who notices it. Your job isn't to compete for the most virality and popularity; it's to make sure that your work is reaching and communicating to the right audience.

Sis is rooting for you.
With purpose,
SIS

Dear SIS is a segment where we respond to questions from our community, gathered through our channels. To have your question featured, kindly send an email to sis@socialimpactsteward.com

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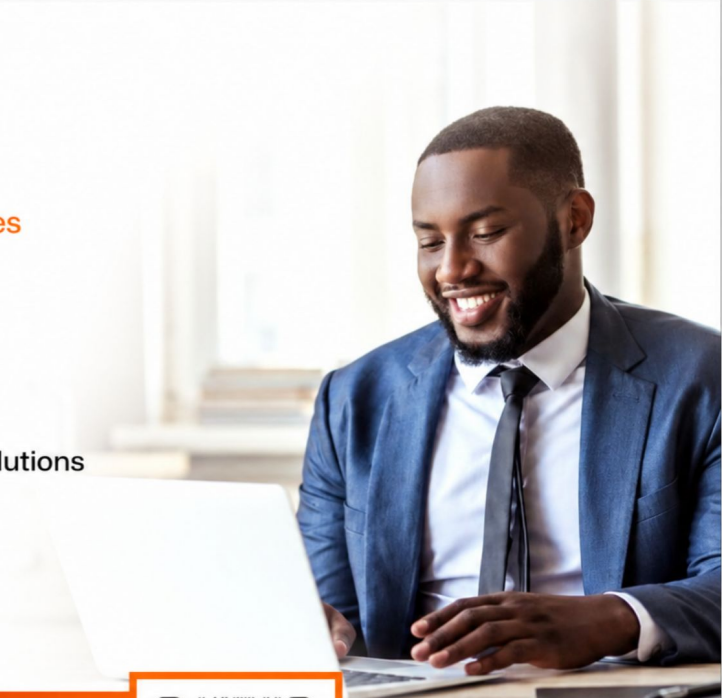
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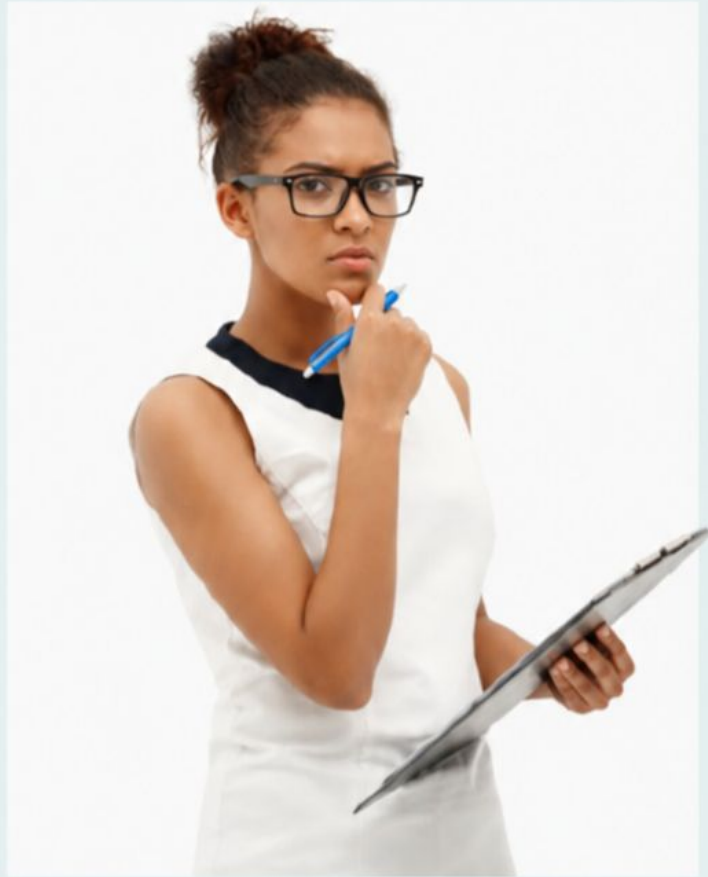
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SIS Impact Nugget

People don't like to hear this, but being excellent in private will only take you so far. At some point, you have to be seen. The right people need to know what you do. Also, not everything deserves your energy. Some things are just habits you haven't questioned yet. Once you start cutting those out, you realise you were never as "busy" as you thought, just occupied. And please stop

waiting to feel ready. That feeling is unreliable. If you keep listening to it, you'll keep delaying your own life without even realising it.



?

QUIZ AND RIDDLES

ANSWERS CORNER



Quiz Answers

- 1 C
- 2 B
- 3 C
- 4 C



Quiz Answers

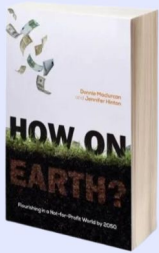
- 1 Opportunity
- 2 Scam / fake opportunity
- 3 Knowledge / Awareness



Knowledge is power. Knowledge fuels confidence, leadership, and impact. If you are a woman leading an organization, building a career, advocating for change, or simply evolving into a better version of yourself, the right resources can shape your journey.

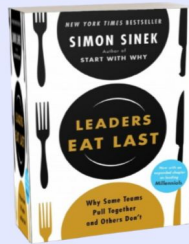
Our editor has curated a selection of books, podcasts, and documentaries that inspire women, deepen understanding of social impact, and offer practical insights for nonprofit leaders, entrepreneurs, and advocates across Africa and beyond. These knowledge tools are tested and trusted and will form a major part of your growth, reflection, and action.

Books



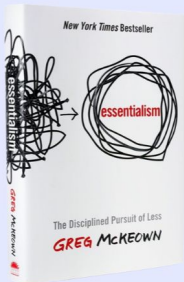
How on Earth: Flourishing in a Not-for-Profit World by 2050 - Jennifer Hinton & Donnie MacLurean

Explores the concept of a not-for-profit-driven economy and provides a broader framework for considering sustainability, impact, and long-term systems change beyond traditional business models.



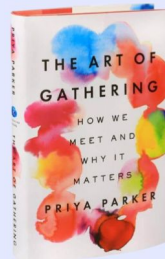
Leaders Eat Last – Simon Sinek

Explores leadership through trust, team culture, and responsibility, very applicable in mission-driven work.



Greg McKeown - Essentialism

A practical guide to focus and prioritisation, especially useful for leaders dealing with limited resources.



The Art of Gathering – Priya Parker

Useful for community building, stakeholder engagement, and event-based fundraising.

Podcasts

Think BIG for Africa Podcast by Ekene Banye
Brings in conversations with African leaders across sectors, offering insight into entrepreneurship, policy, and development challenges across the continent.

Leading Ladies by Sara Fernandez
Highlights historical and contemporary African women leaders, offering both inspiration and context around women's contributions to leadership across the continent.

The Charity CEO Podcast by Dhivya O'Connor
Features conversations with nonprofit leaders sharing real operational challenges, leadership lessons, and insights on scaling impact across different regions.

Storytellers and Changemakers by Eme Bassey
Focused on storytelling for impact, this podcast offers practical strategies for nonprofits on fundraising, communication, and building a stronger community

Documentaries

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind – directed by Chiwetel Ejiofor
Based on a true story from Malawi, this film explores grassroots innovation and the role of local solutions in addressing systemic challenges.

The Invisible War – directed by Kirby Dick, produced by Regina K. Scully (Artemis Rising Foundation)
Investigates systemic issues of sexual assault within the U.S. military, demonstrating how documentary storytelling can influence policy and public discourse.

Pray the Devil Back to Hell – directed by Gini Reticker
Documents the role of Liberian women's peace movements, led by Leymah Gbowee, showing collective action and grassroots organising at scale.

On Her Shoulders – directed by Alexandria Bombach
Follows Nadia Murad and her advocacy work, highlighting the emotional and political demands of representing a cause globally.

Pray the Devil Back to Hell – directed by Gini Reticker
Examines menstrual health initiatives in India and how grassroots efforts create economic and social empowerment for women



Grants and Opportunities for Women

Here are some grant opportunities to explore!

1. Alitheia IDF - A gender-lens private equity fund investing in women-owned businesses in Africa, supported by the European Investment Bank.
<https://gfmd.info/funding/funding-for-women-led-initiatives-in-africa/>

2. Women for Zero Hunger 2026 - A program aimed at African NGOs, associations, and foundations, providing project funding and a 6-month support program for economic empowerment in the food sector.
<https://wia-philanthropy.co/women-for-zero-hunger-2026-call-for-applications-for-african-ngos/>

3. Flourish Africa Grant: Targeted at female entrepreneurs in Nigeria, this N1.3 billion initiative provides training and grants of up to N3 million to support startup-stage businesses. <https://www.flourishafrika.co/programmes/flourish-africa-grant/>

4. L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Sub-Saharan Africa: This

The program supports women researchers in life, physical, and engineering sciences, with C10,000 for PhD students and C15,000 for post-doctoral students
<https://www.forwomeninscience.com/challenge/show/157>

5. Feminist Review Trust: Funds projects that support women's rights and gender justice globally.
<https://feminist-review-trust.com>

6. Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation: Funds early-stage nonprofits and social enterprises (multi-year support).
<https://www.drkfoundation.org>

7. Ford Foundation: Funds large-scale social justice, gender equality, and development programs.
<https://www.fordfoundation.org>

8. African Women for Change Network. Provides flexible grants for women-led initiatives.
<https://africanwomenforchange.org>

9. Jana Robeyst Trust Fund Funds conservation and community projects in Sub-Saharan Africa.
<https://janatrustfund.org>

10. Africa's Business Heroes: Entrepreneur competition with \$1.5M shared funding + mentorships
<https://africabusinessheroes.org>

Awards & Competitions

11. AWIEF Awards (Africa Women Innovation & Entrepreneurship Forum)
<https://awief.org/awards>

12. Empretec Women in Business Awards (UN Trade & Development)
<https://unctad.org/topi/enterprise-development/Empretec/women-in-business-awards>

13. ELOY Awards (Exquisite Lady of the Year Awards)
<https://www.eloyawards.com>

14. African Achievers Awards
<https://africanachieversawards.org>

15. Global Citizen Prize
<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/prize>

16. UN Women Awards / Spotlight Initiative Awards
<https://www.unwomen.org>

17. Africa's Business Heroes (Jack Ma Foundation)
<https://africabusinessheroes.org>

18. She Leads Africa Accelerator & Pitch Competition
<https://sheleadsafrica.org>

19. SME100 Africa 25 Under 25 Awards
<https://sme100africa.org>

20. Unlock Her Future Prize (Bicester Collection)
<https://www.thebicestercollection.com>

21. Standard Chartered EmpowerHer
<https://lnkd.in/dVTSWRKE>

22. Future Africa Leaders Award (FALA)
<https://futureafricaleadersfoundation.org>

23. Women Funded Innovation Grants (EU WE-Africa Programme)
<https://www.we-africa.org>

24. Schwab Foundation Social Entrepreneurs Awards
<https://www.schwabfound.org>

25. AfriLabs Funding Opportunities
<https://www.afrilabs.com>

26. MIT Solve Global Challenges
<https://solve.mit.edu>

27. Resolution Project Fellowship
<https://resolutionproject.org>

28. Commonwealth Youth Awards
<https://thecommonwealth.org>

29. Skoll World Forum Awards
<https://skoll.org>

30. Zayed Sustainability Prize
<https://www.zayedustainabilityprize.com>

\$56 Million Menstrual App Privacy Settlement Moves Forward: Judge Grants Preliminary Approval in Major Digital Health Case



A U.S. federal judge has granted preliminary approval to a proposed \$56 million settlement in a class action lawsuit involving the menstrual tracking app developed by Flo Health, marking a significant step in one of the most closely watched digital privacy cases in recent years.

The lawsuit alleged that the app shared users' sensitive reproductive health data, including menstrual cycles and pregnancy-related information, with third parties such as Google and Meta Platforms without proper consent. The alleged data transfers reportedly occurred between 2016 and 2019, despite assurances that user information would remain private.

The settlement, which still requires final court approval, would provide compensation to millions of affected U.S. users. Neither Flo Health nor Google has admitted wrongdoing, but both have agreed to resolve the claims financially.



Consent, Privacy, and the Limits of Digital Trust: What the Case Signals for Health Data Platforms

At the center of the case is a growing legal and ethical question: what does informed consent mean in digital health environments where personal data is continuously collected and processed?

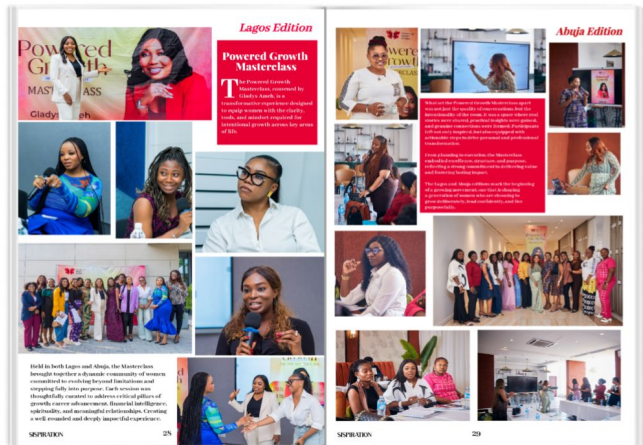
The plaintiffs argued that users were led to believe their information was confidential, only to later discover it may have been shared through embedded tracking tools used for analytics and advertising purposes. The data in question was described in court filings as deeply sensitive, tied directly to users' reproductive health and private medical experiences.

The case reflects a wider shift in how digital health platforms are being scrutinized. As health apps become more integrated into everyday life, expectations around privacy are rising, particularly where intimate health data is concerned.

With preliminary approval now granted, the settlement moves closer to finalization. If approved, eligible users will be able to submit compensation claims.

Beyond the financial resolution, the case reinforces a broader industry message: in digital health, trust is not implied, it must be actively protected, clearly communicated, and legally upheld.

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