

...NOT IN THISDAY STYLE? THEN YOU'RE NOT IN STYLE

THISDAY Style

SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2024



DAISY DANJUMA



UJU IFEJIKA



NNEKA ONYEALI IKPE



OBY EZEKWESILI



ASISAT OSHOALA



TEMS



NGOZI OKONJO IWEALA



KOFO AKINKUGBE



ODUNAYO EWENIYI



ELOHOR AIBONI



ADESUWA DOZIE



OLUFOLAKE ABDULRAZAQ



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50 LEADING LADIES INSPIRING GREATNESS

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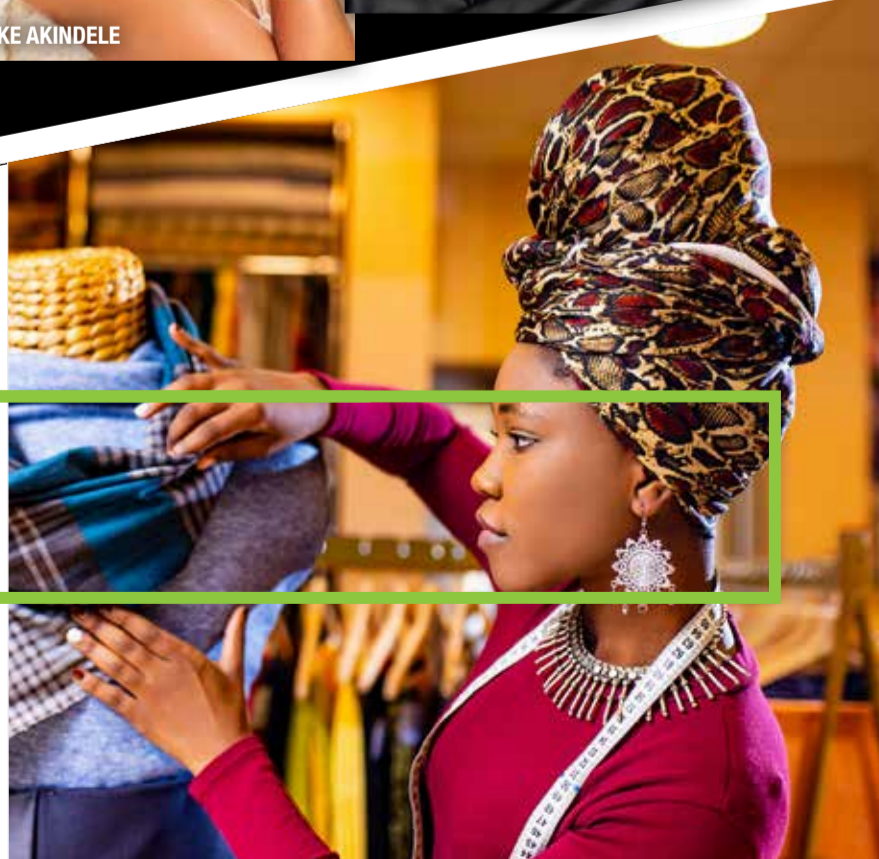
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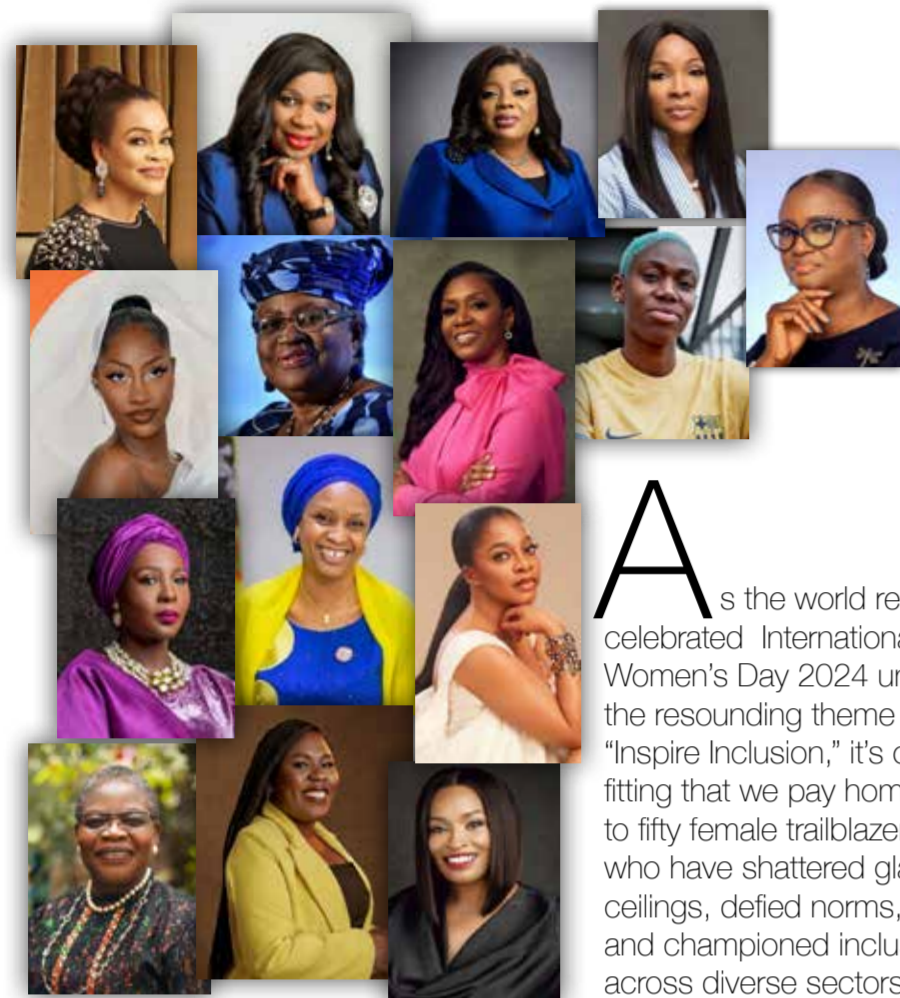
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COVER NOTE



As the world recently celebrated International Women's Day 2024 under the resounding theme of "Inspire Inclusion," it's only fitting that we pay homage to fifty female trailblazers who have shattered glass ceilings, defied norms, and championed inclusivity across diverse sectors.

Lifestyle & Fashion

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THIS DAY Style

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EDITOR'S LETTER



EXECUTIVE EDITOR

We Rise by Lifting Others.

This year, as part of International Women's Day celebrations, I am particularly pleased to present a list of 50 leading women who have excelled in their field and paved the way for others to follow. Yes, I know these lists have become a norm, but what truly warms my heart is the increasing inclusion of younger women each year. Seeing these young ladies come into their own and win on their terms fills me with immense pride.

You know, it's almost rarely talked about on platforms. But there is an unspoken misunderstanding among women, the younger generation claiming not to receive enough support from the older ones. Now, while this argument is a hill, some young women are willing to die on. Some others will disagree. I, for one, stand as a product of the countless women who have mentored and supported me professionally and personally throughout my journey. My personal experience, however, is not a reason to dismiss the existence of the issue or its complexities. As we all know, gender-related challenges often defy simple explanations, and the reasons why women may or may not support each other are varied and nuanced. However, rather than delving into the intricacies of that, I would much prefer to focus on the positive change that is underway.

Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said it best when she said, "There is a special place in hell for women who don't help other women," and I believe this has served as a poignant reminder of the collective shift in mindset among women. It echoes the sentiment that supporting and uplifting one another is not just an option but a duty we owe to ourselves and future generations.

Fortunately, we are witnessing a wave of women who believe in helping one another and actively engage in doing so. From highly placed women to the woman next door, women across the globe are championing the cause of female empowerment and setting examples for us all to follow, and it's just so beautiful to see.

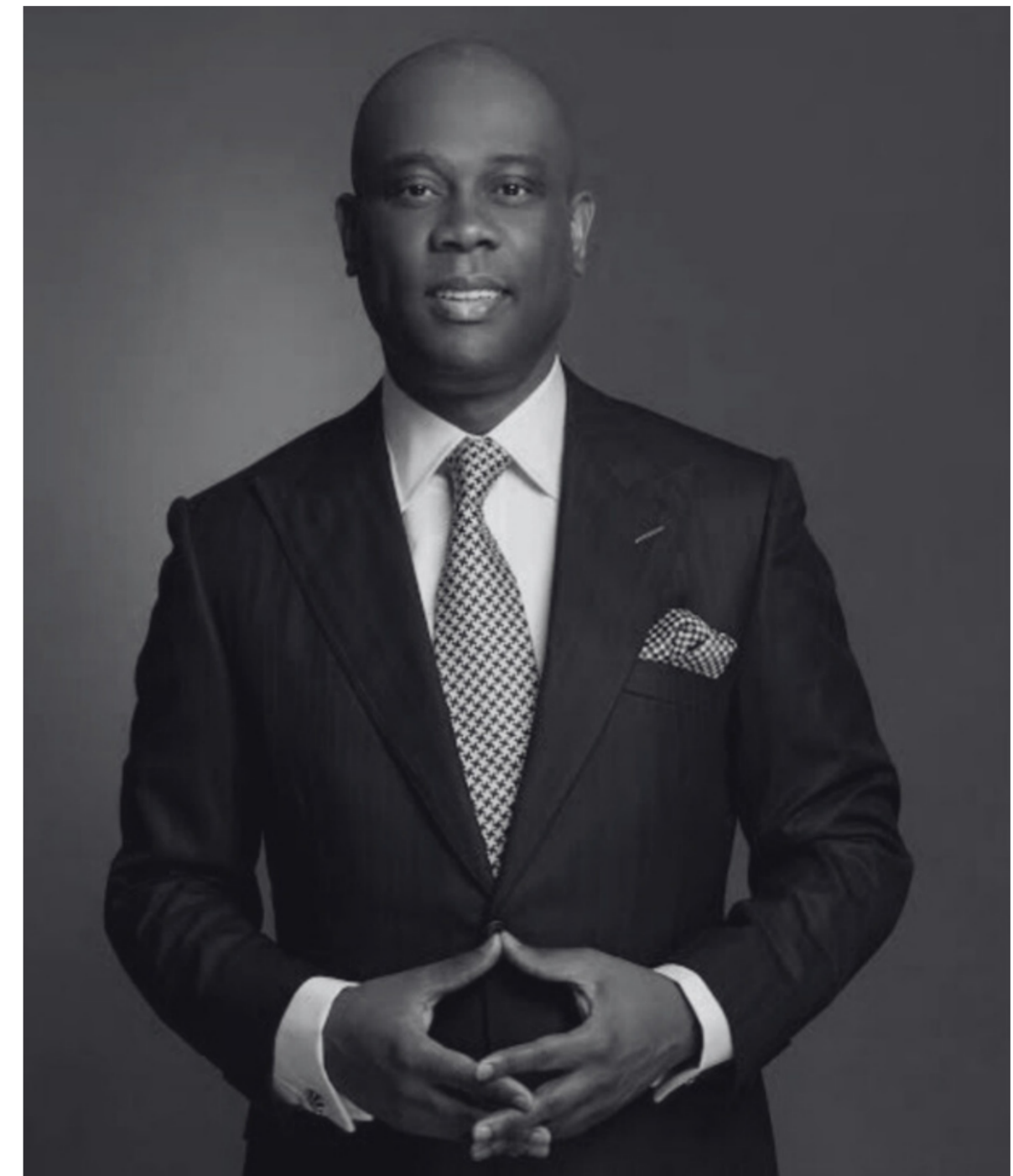
The younger generations, notably millennials and Generation Z, are also leading the charge in supporting women in the workforce. Their proactive approach and commitment to inclusivity bode well for the future of our workplaces.

Ladies, it's time to dispel the notion that there's only room for a few women at the top. Contrary to what we've been taught, there's an abundance of opportunities for every woman to thrive and succeed. Really, there is.

To every woman reading this, take this as your cue to be the change we wish to see. Let's all celebrate, uplift, and inspire one another and do our part in creating a future where every woman can rise to her full potential.

Love,
Konye

Unfinished Hero



Dr. Herbert Wigwe

Group Chief Executive Officer
Access Holdings

#RememberingHerbertWigwe



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Embrace Imperfection
Let's face it—perfection is overrated. As a mum, you're juggling a million things at once, and it's okay if everything doesn't always go according to plan. Embrace the chaos, laugh at the mess, and remember you're doing your best.

Prioritise Sleep
It's tempting to stay up late trying to tackle that never-ending to-do list but skimping on sleep will leave you feeling more stressed and irritable. Make sleep a priority by establishing a bedtime routine and creating a relaxing sleep environment. Your body—and your family—will thank you for it.

Say No
As mums, we often feel the pressure to say yes to every request that comes our way. But it's important to recognise your limits and learn to say no when you're feeling overwhelmed. Your time and energy are valuable, so feel free to prioritise yourself.

Find Your Tribe
Surround yourself with other mums who understand the struggles and joys of motherhood. Whether it's just a group chat with your closest friends, having a support system can make all the difference.

Make Time for Yourself
Carve out some time in your busy schedule just for you. Whether it's a 15-minute meditation session, a solo walk around the block, or a bubble bath after the kids are in bed, find something that rejuvenates your spirit and makes you feel like yourself again.

Get Moving
Exercise is not only good for your physical health but also your mental well-being. Find ways to incorporate movement into your daily routine, whether it's a dance party with the kids, a yoga class, or a quick work-



THE BUSY MUM'S GUIDE TO SELF-CARE: BECAUSE YOU DESERVE A MOMENT TOO!

By Bukola Amoboye

Life as a mum is a whirlwind of activity. You are juggling endless to-do lists, shuttling the kids to school, managing household chores, and possibly holding down a job. It's a nonstop rollercoaster ride that can leave even the most resilient mums exhausted and overwhelmed. And amidst the chaos of motherhood, there's one thing that often gets pushed to the bottom of the list: self-care.

Self-care is not just a luxury reserved for those with endless free time; it's a vital necessity for every mum out there. Taking care of yourself isn't selfish—it's essential for your well-being and your ability to show up as the best version of yourself for your family. So, if you find yourself constantly putting your needs on the back burner, it's time to hit the pause button and give yourself the TLC you deserve. Here's your ultimate guide to self-care for busy moms:



out video during naptime.

Indulge in Little Luxuries
Treat yourself to small indulgences that bring you joy—a cup of your favourite tea, a piece of chocolate, or a few moments spent reading a book. It's the little things that can make a big difference in your day.

Unplug
Take a break from screens and



social media, even if it's just for an hour each day. Use that time to connect with your family, engage in a hobby, or simply enjoy the present moment.

Practice Gratitude
It's easy to get caught up in the chaos of everyday life and forget to appreciate the little things. Take a moment each day to reflect on what you're grateful for, whether it's a warm hug



from your child or a beautiful sunset.

Seek Professional Help if Needed
If you're feeling overwhelmed or struggling to cope, don't hesitate to ask for help. Whether it's talking to a therapist, joining a support group, or seeking guidance from your healthcare provider, there's no shame in asking for support when you need it.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: Polo celebrates its 2024 Power Women



On this auspicious occasion of International Women's Day 2024, the global community comes together to celebrate the achievements of women worldwide. Spearheaded by the United Nations, this year's theme, "Inspire Inclusion," serves as a powerful reminder of the imperative to foster diverse and inclusive environments where every individual, regardless of gender, can thrive.

In Nigeria, the spirit of empowerment and resilience is embodied through initiatives such as the Polo Power Woman Initiative. Founded by Polo Limited, a trailblazer in Nigeria's luxury goods landscape, this initiative is dedicated to honouring women who have defied the odds, surmounted challenges, and emerged as beacons of success across various sectors.

As Executive Director of Polo Limited, Jennifer Obayuwana is a driving force behind the Polo Power Woman Initiative. With her leadership, Polo Limited, in solidarity with the United Nations, acknowledges 20 remarkable female icons in Nigeria reshaping the economic landscape and leaving an indelible mark nationally and internationally. These women embody a strong sense of identity and purpose.

As we celebrate this year's International Women's Day, we must not only honour the achievements of these extraordinary women but also commit ourselves to creating a world where every individual, regardless of gender, can fulfill their potential and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable future. Together, we must inspire inclusion, celebrate diversity, and empower women to shape a brighter tomorrow for generations to come.



OPINION

CHANGING THE PERCEPTION AROUND SURROGACY, MOTHERHOOD AND STARTING A FAMILY.

Despite its growing relevance, surrogacy remains shrouded in misconceptions and cultural taboos, leaving many would-be parents in a state of limbo.

In Nigeria, the journey to parenthood often follows a traditional route, deeply rooted in cultural expectations and societal norms.

It begins with marriage and then childbirth. Within this cultural context, reproduction is often seen as the most important aspect of family life, and the inability of a woman to conceive within a short period after marriage can lead to anxiety and social stigma. In some cases, this pressure drives desperate decisions, including the illegal practice of buying babies.

However, over the past few decades, there has been a shift in perspectives, offering women alternative paths to motherhood. Options such as IVF, adoption, and, more recently, surrogacy have emerged, providing hope for couples struggling with infertility. Surrogacy, in particular, has gained international attention, with ongoing efforts to establish best practices and regulations. While these alternatives offer potential solutions, the social stigma surrounding them often prevents many from accessing them.

Surrogacy itself has ancient roots, with biblical references dating back to the relationship between Jacob, Rachel, Leah, Bilhah, and Zilpah. However, it wasn't until the late 1970s that assisted reproduction through surrogacy gained legal recognition and sparked debates on its ethical and moral implications.

Defined as a situation where a woman carries a pregnancy for commissioning parents and relinquishes parental rights after birth, surrogacy can take various forms—genetic or gestational, commercial or non-commercial, domestic or international. The debate surrounding its acceptability often centres on concerns of exploitation and commercialisation.

Globally, it has offered a ray of hope to countless individuals struggling with infertility and those with medical conditions that make pregnancy risky, but in Nigeria, the conversation around the topic is often muted, clouded by myths, and lacks adequate legal framework, leaving potential parents and surrogates in a precarious position.

Yet, beneath the surface of societal judgment, surrogacy is silently thriving in Nigeria, as evidenced by the online presence of young women offering themselves as surrogate mothers and agencies matching them with commissioning parents.

Many couples, driven by the profound desire to experience parenthood, are quietly exploring this option. The story of Ngozi, a Lagos-based banker, is a case in point. After years of unsuccessful

ful fertility treatments, Ngozi and her husband turned to surrogacy. "It was our last resort," she shares. "We faced criticism and a lack of understanding from our families, but the desire to hold our baby was stronger than any taboo." Ngozi's story mirrors that of many Nigerians who have had to navigate the murky waters of surrogacy in silence. Dr Amina, a fertility specialist in Abuja, also notes, "The demand for surrogacy is growing in Nigeria. What we need is open conversation and effective regulation to protect all parties involved."

The reluctance to discuss surrogacy openly in Nigeria stems from several factors, including religious beliefs, misconceptions about the process, and fears about the ethical implications. In many communities, the inability to conceive is wrongly perceived as a failure, and opting for surrogacy is seen as a deviation from the norm. Breaking these barriers requires education and sensitisation. "We need to understand that surrogacy is not about 'outsourcing' motherhood," explains Dr. Amina. "It's about providing an opportunity for those who otherwise might not be able to experience the joys of parenthood."

The legal aspect is another crucial element. Currently, Nigeria lacks comprehensive legislation regulating surrogacy, leading to potential legal and ethical complexities. A clear legal framework would not only protect the rights of the surrogate and the intended parents but also provide a structure for the practice.

Globally, there are inspiring examples of how surrogacy has transformed lives. In the U.S., celebrities like Kim Kardashian and Sarah Jessica Parker have openly shared their surrogacy journeys, challenging stereotypes and sparking conversations.

Properly regulated surrogacy has the potential to provide a legal and ethical framework for addressing infertility while curbing illegal practices like baby trafficking and unauthorised adoptions.

As one surrogate mother shared, "Being a surrogate mother has been a deeply fulfilling experience. Knowing that I've helped a couple achieve their dream of parenthood is incredibly rewarding." This sentiment echoes the reasons why surrogacy should be embraced as a viable option for starting a family. It offers hope and fulfilment to couples struggling with infertility, allowing them to experience the joys of parenthood while also providing a solution to the societal challenges surrounding fertility and reproduction.

As society evolves, so too should the perceptions of family and motherhood. Surrogacy isn't just about having a child; it's about hope, love and a legitimate, albeit non-traditional, path to parenthood.



CREATING AN UNFORGETTABLE MOTHER'S DAY EXPERIENCE

When Mother's Day rolls around, many of us rush to the nearest store to pick up a classic gift: flowers, chocolates, or perhaps a nice piece of jewellery. While these gestures are appreciated, they can sometimes feel a bit impersonal, and they don't always capture the unique bond we share with our mothers. This Mother's Day, why not break the mould and plan an experience that will foster lasting memories and deepen the connection you share with your mom?

By Funke Babs-Kufeki



Discover the Art of Cooking Together

Is there a recipe that's been in your family for generations? Or maybe a dish your mom has always wanted to try but never had the chance to make? Spend the day cooking together! Turn it into a fun adventure: shop for ingredients together at the market, pick out a special bottle of wine, and then enjoy the fruits of your labour with a candlelit dinner.

A Trip Down Memory Lane

Create a personalised memory book before Mother's Day. Gather old photos, letters, and mementoes that highlight special moments in your life together. On Mother's Day, take a trip down memory lane by going through this book together. Share stories, reminisce about good times, and let her tell you things you might not have known about these memories.

Nature's Retreat

If your mom loves the outdoors, plan a day trip to a scenic location. Whether visiting an art gallery, a day at the beach, or a quiet picnic in a beautiful garden, being in nature can be incredibly rejuvenating and offer a peaceful environment for heartfelt conversations.

A Creative Escape

For the mom who enjoys being creative, consider a painting class. Engaging in a creative activity together stimulates

the mind and offers plenty of opportunities for laughter and lighthearted fun. It's not about the end product but the experience and memories you create together.

Learn Together

Is there something new your mum has always wanted to learn? Maybe it's a language, a dance style, or perhaps how to play an instrument. Enroll in a class together. Learning something new can be a humbling and bonding experience, especially when you're doing it with someone you love.

A Day of Pampering

Instead of sending her to a spa, join her. Book a day where you both can get massages, facials, or manicures. It's a fantastic way to relax and spend time together, letting the stresses of daily life melt away.

Home Movie Night

Organise a movie night at home, but with a twist. Select movies that were her favourites when she was your age or movies that hold special significance to your family. Set up a cosy space with blankets, popcorn, and her favourite snacks. It's a simple yet intimate way to bond over shared interests.



IRIS APFEL: A FASHION LIFE WELL LIVED.

Iris Apfel, the irrepressible icon of fashion, textiles, and interior design, has left a void in the fashion world at the age of 102. News of her passing has sent ripples of sorrow throughout the industry, leaving admirers reflecting on her remarkable life and legacy.

Born in the heart of New York City on August 29, 1921, to Samuel and Sadye Barrel, Iris's journey began in an environment steeped in style—her mother owned a boutique, perhaps foreshadowing her future in fashion. Her rise to fame began in 2005 when the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute in New York City hosted a show titled "Rara Avis" (Latin for "rare bird"). The exhibition celebrated her style as "witty and exuberantly idiosyncratic," showcasing her unique flair. This recognition catapulted her into the limelight, leading to numerous collaborations and endorsements. She became the face of brands like M.A.C. cosmetics and Kate Spade, created her own accessories and jewellery line for the Home Shopping Network, and even inspired a Barbie doll in her likeness. This adventure into the fashion world would also extend to various product lines, including a collaboration with H&M that sold out in minutes, a makeup line with Ciaté London, an eyewear collection with Zenni, and a partnership with Ruggable on floor coverings. At this point, she branded herself as the "accidental icon," a fitting title for her 2018 book that encapsulated her style musings and memories.

Alongside her flamboyant presence in the fashion world, Iris was a connoisseur of textiles and antique fabrics. Together with her husband Carl, she co-owned Old World Weavers, a textile manufacturing company known for its exquisite restoration work, including projects at the White House for six U.S. presidents. Her roster of high-profile clients included names like Estee Lauder and Greta Garbo.

As time went on, Iris became famous for her irreverent and eye-catching outfits. Her style was a harmonious blend of haute couture and oversized costume jewellery. Her iconic look, complete with big, round, black-rimmed glasses, bright red lipstick, and signature short white hair, ensured she was constantly the centre of attention in every room she walked into.

Her influence will continue to extend, and in her later years, she embraced social media, amassing millions of followers on platforms like Instagram and TikTok. Her mantra, "More is more & Less is a Bore," resonated with fans around the globe, inspiring them to embrace their individuality.

She died on March 1 2024. Her death was confirmed by her commercial agent, Lori Sale. No cause of death was given. It was also announced on her verified Instagram page, which a day earlier had celebrated the Leap Day which represented her 102nd-and-a-half birthday.

As we mourn the fashion icon, Iris, we celebrate not just a fashion legend but a woman who lived her truth with every vibrant thread she wore. Her story is one of daring to be different, finding beauty in the unconventional, and colouring outside the lines in the most spectacular way. Iris Apfel may have left us, but her spirit, encapsulated in her bold choices and fearless attitude, will continue to inspire generations to come.



ESEOSA ANENNIH



NKIRU ANUMUDU



RENI FOLAWIYO

HOW TO PUT YOUR OWN SPIN ON THE LATEST FASHION TRENDS

For most fashion lovers, there's a magnetic pull towards staying at the forefront of trends. Yet, what distinguishes individuals is their knack for infusing these trends with their unique creative essence, turning the mundane into the magnificent. Gone are the days of generic fashion dictations. Today, it's all about celebrating individuality and boldly displaying it through your sartorial selections. But how do you inject your personal flair into the latest trends?

Mix and Match with Abandon

Forget the rules of yesteryears; today's fashion is all about breaking boundaries and blurring lines. Experiment with unexpected combinations, like pairing a vintage floral blouse with edgy leather pants or layering a sleek blazer over a whimsical tulle skirt. The key is to trust your instincts and let your imagination run wild. After all, it's the unexpected juxtapositions that often yield the most striking results.

Accessorise with Style

Accessories are the ultimate game-changers when it comes to personalising your look. Instead of playing it safe with tried-and-tested pieces, dare to be bold with statement jewellery, quirky handbags, and eye-catching footwear. Whether it's a pair of oversized sunglasses or a stack of chunky bracelets, let your accessories do the talking and infuse your ensemble with personality.

Customise and DIY

Tap into your inner artist by customising your clothing and accessories. From embroidery and patchwork to tie-dye and hand-painted designs, there's no limit to the creative possibilities. Not only will you breathe new life into old pieces, but you'll also imbue them with a sense of authenticity that can't be replicated.

Embrace Eclectic Influences

Draw inspiration from diverse sources—art and music to travel and culture. Infuse elements of your favourite subcultures—bohemian, punk, or retro—into your wardrobe, and watch as your style takes on a new dimension. Mix and match prints, textures, and silhouettes from different eras and regions to create an eclectic look that is undeniably you.

Play with Proportions

Don't be afraid to play with proportions and silhouettes to create visual interest and drama. Experiment with oversized pieces or layer different lengths and volumes for a dynamic effect. Playing with scale and proportion allows you to create a sense of balance and harmony that elevates even the simplest of outfits.

Craft a Signature Look

Channel your inner icon and develop a signature look that sets you apart from the crowd. Whether it's a bold red lip, a dramatic cat-eye, or a penchant for statement outerwear, find elements that resonate with your personality and make them your own.

Embrace Imperfection

Remember, fashion is not about perfection; it's about self-expression. Embrace the beauty of imperfection and celebrate the quirks and idiosyncrasies that make you who you are. These subtle imperfections add character and charm to your look, making it uniquely yours.



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50 LEADING LADIES

INSPIRING GREATNESS

As the world recently celebrated International Women's Day 2024 under the resounding theme of "Inspire Inclusion," it's only fitting that we pay homage to fifty female trailblazers who have shattered glass ceilings, defied norms, and championed inclusivity across diverse sectors. Each woman in this feature represents not just achievements in her field but also the courage and resilience that have become synonymous with womanhood. These 50 profiles are windows into lives that challenge the status quo, break barriers, and tell stories of struggles, experiences and wins. From powerful politicians to fearless activists and global entrepreneurs to award-winning artists redefining genres, these women are not just making history—they are shaping a brighter, more equitable future.

POLITICS, GOVERNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE

Oluremi Tinubu

First Lady of Nigeria

Oluremi Tinubu has held the esteemed title of First Lady of Nigeria since 2023, offering unwavering support to President Bola Tinubu. Her illustrious journey into public service commenced as the First Lady of Lagos State from 1999 to 2007, marked by a trail of impactful initiatives. With a foundation in Education from the University of Ife and accolades, including the National Certificate of Education in Botany and Zoology from Adeyemi College of Education, her academic prowess shines brightly. Beyond the ceremonial, she founded the New Era Foundation, a platform dedicated to transforming the lives of youth and advocating for environmental health. Tinubu's political finesse blossomed during her twelve-year tenure in the Nigerian Senate, representing Lagos Central with vigour. Her legislative endeavours championed pivotal reforms and spearheaded initiatives like the Youth Empowerment and Skill Acquisition Scheme. Her distinguished leadership and impactful community work have garnered accolades, including the prestigious Eko Excellence Award and the honour of being named the most impactful female Senator at the International Women's Day Summit in 2021.



Amina J. Mohammed

Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

Amina J. Mohammed, the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group stands tall as a global luminary in leadership. Her journey commenced as Nigeria's Minister of Environment, where she spearheaded crucial climate action and environmental protection efforts. A pivotal chapter unfolded in 2012 when Mohammed assumed the role of Special Adviser to former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, instrumental in shaping the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. Grounded in grassroots projects in Nigeria, she tirelessly advocated for accessible education and social services. Her academic laurels, adorned with honorary doctorates and international recognition, attest to her enduring influence in international development.



Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Director General of the World Trade Organisation

Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, a trailblazer in global finance and development, assumed the esteemed position of WTO Director-General in March 2021, marking the pinnacle of a four-decade-long journey marked by diversity and impact. Formerly Chair of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and an esteemed member of the Boards of Standard Chartered PLC and Twitter Inc., she has consistently pushed boundaries. As Nigeria's Finance Minister, she orchestrated significant reforms, deftly navigating the country through intricate economic landscapes. Notably, her efforts in debt negotiations and anti-corruption initiatives have left an indelible mark. Globally recognised, she has graced Forbes' Top 100 Most Powerful Women and TIME's Most Influential People lists. Her tenure at the World Bank as Managing Director witnessed her championing initiatives for low-income countries, while her historic candidacy for the World Bank Group's presidency in 2012 remains a watershed moment in global finance.



Hannatu Musawa

Minister of Art, Culture and the Creative Economy

Born into a politically influential family, Musawa's journey transcends law and politics. Educated in the UK, with advanced degrees in marine affairs and oil and gas law, she boasts credentials as a solicitor in England and Wales and a prominent legal practitioner in Nigeria. As the Principal Partner at Hanney Musawa and Associates, her legal acumen has earned widespread acclaim. Her role in the administration promises a fresh perspective and dynamic approach to nurturing Nigeria's burgeoning cultural and entertainment sectors. Her appointment as Minister of Art, Culture and the Creative Economy heralds a new era for Nigeria's entertainment landscape.



Hadiza Bala Usman

Special Adviser to the President on Policy Coordination

Currently, the Special Adviser to the President on Policy Coordination, Hadiza Bala Usman, is renowned for her transformative leadership skills. She made history as the first female Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), breathing new life into the institution's 63-year legacy. Prior to this, her significant contributions at the Bureau of Public Enterprises and the UNDP, focusing on project implementation for the Federal Capital Territory Administration, showcased her leadership prowess. Her tenure as Chief of Staff to the Executive Governor of Kaduna State further underscored her exemplary leadership skills. Bala Usman's unwavering commitment to governance, the education of the girl child, and women's emancipation consistently earns her accolades and admiration. Her appointment as Minister of Art, Culture and the Creative Economy heralds a new era for Nigeria's entertainment landscape.



Olufolake Abdulrasaq

First Lady Kwara State and Chairperson of the Nigerian Governors Forum

Before her current role as the esteemed First Lady of Kwara State and the Chairperson of the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum, Olufolake Abdulrasaq was an accomplished diplomat who served the nation for three commendable decades. Her career was marked by significant contributions to Nigeria's diplomatic landscape, where she was instrumental in launching campaigns and shaping legislation that positively affect women, youths, and children. As First Lady, she founded the Ajike People Support Centre, a haven that provides vital assistance, opportunities, and support to the underserved members of society. Her leadership focuses on tackling critical challenges related to health care, education, poverty eradication, and advancing gender equality. In her role as the Chairperson of the Nigeria Governors' Wives Forum, she orchestrates collaborative endeavours with fellow First Ladies across the nation, amplifying their collective advocacy and spearheading significant initiatives that affect enduring progress in Nigeria.



Doris Uzoka-Anite

Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment

Dr Doris Uzoka-Anite, Nigeria's Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, embodies leadership with a clear vision for economic growth. Her transition from medicine to finance, highlighted by her tenure at Zenith Bank and later as Commissioner for Finance in her home state, underscores her versatility and adeptness in handling diverse portfolios. Her current role as Minister is characterised by an unyielding commitment to fostering investment, bolstering local industry capacity, and expanding exports to fuel job creation and economic prosperity. Recognised as a thought leader, she actively contributes to numerous presidential committees and professional organisations, solidifying her status as a key figure in Nigeria's economic landscape.



Tariye Gbadegesin

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the Climate Investment Funds (CIF)

Tariye Gbadegesin, a powerhouse bridging continents as a Nigerian-US national, made history by becoming the first African to assume the prestigious role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the Climate Investment Funds (CIF). With an impressive track record spanning over two decades in investing across developing economies, Tariye spearheads one of the globe's most substantial multilateral climate funds, boasting an impressive \$11 billion in pledges. Her visionary leadership is poised to drive pioneering initiatives in clean energy transitions, nature-based solutions, and resilience across more than 70 developing countries.



Damilola Ogunbiyi

CEO and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All, and Co-Chair of UN-Energy

Damilola Ogunbiyi stands at the forefront of the global energy landscape as the CEO of Sustainable Energy for All and the beacon behind UN-Energy. Her leadership is defined by her groundbreaking accomplishments as the first female Managing Director of the Nigerian Rural Electrification Agency. Here, she orchestrated the Nigerian Electrification Project—a monumental \$550 million initiative paving the way for a solar-powered Nigeria.

Ogunbiyi's strategic vision also birthed the Energizing Education Programme, ensuring uninterrupted electricity flows through the veins of federal universities and teaching hospitals. Not one to rest on her laurels, she conceived the Energizing Economies Initiative, lighting up the business dreams of over a million SMEs.

With a track record that includes serving as the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Power and spearheading the Power Sector Recovery Programme, Damilola's influence is profound.



Bolaji Agbede

Acting CEO of Access Holdings Plc

Bolaji Agbede, a distinguished figure in banking, steps into the limelight as the acting CEO of Access Holdings Plc. Her journey, commencing in 1992, weaves a rich tapestry of roles at GTBank and as CEO of a consulting firm before joining Access Bank in 2003. Bolaji's ascent from assistant general manager to executive director reflects her unparalleled expertise and leadership skills. An alumna of the University of Lagos, her academic and professional journey epitomises determination and excellence.



Bukola Smith

Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of FSDH Merchant Bank

Bukola Smith, FSDH Merchant Bank's MD/CEO since April 2021, brings an impressive 29-year banking career marked by strategic leadership and innovation. Previously at FCMB, she led numerous divisions to stellar achievements, including propelling the SME team to industry leadership. Her initiatives, like the SheVentures platform, demonstrate her commitment to empowering female entrepreneurs. Bukola's expertise extends across various banking sectors, solidifying her reputation as a formidable force in the industry. Her academic achievements from the University of Lagos and Alliance Manchester Business School further highlight her distinguished career.



BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Nneka Onyeali-Ikpe

Managing Director/CEO of Fidelity Bank

Shattering glass ceilings, Nneka Onyeali-Ikpe ascends as Fidelity Bank Plc's first female CEO, a testament to her 30-plus years of resilience and excellence in banking. Joining Fidelity Bank in 2015, her journey culminated in her historic appointment as MD/CEO in 2021. With degrees from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka and King's College London, Nneka's academic foundation paved the way for a career adorned with accomplishments. A Harvard and Wharton alumna, she also holds an honorary doctorate from UNN and the prestigious Officer of the Order of the Niger. Her vast experience includes pivotal roles at Zenith and Standard Chartered Bank, where she mastered negotiating complex deals across various sectors. Renowned for her visionary leadership, Nneka significantly bolstered Fidelity Bank's profitability and spearheaded groundbreaking initiatives like PayGate Plus.



Yemisi Edun

Managing Director of First City Monument Bank

Yemisi Edun's stewardship as MD/CEO of First City Monument Bank (FCMB) since 2021 has been transformative, focusing on SME lending and propelling the bank into the international spotlight for its role in economic growth. Under her guidance, FCMB has championed lending initiatives, particularly empowering over 50,000 women-owned businesses. Yemisi's innovative approach to leveraging digital channels and AI for loan disbursement has revolutionised customer experience and financial inclusion, solidifying her status as a banking trailblazer.



Chinwe Egwim

Chief Economist at Coronation Merchant Bank

As the Chief Economist at Coronation Merchant Bank, Chinwe Egwim's role is pivotal in shaping economic strategies and insights. Her impressive journey includes leading positions at FBNQuest Merchant Bank and active involvement in WIMBIZ. Chinwe's election to the Association of Professional Women Bankers and her role in the Presidential Fiscal Policy and Tax Reforms Committee highlight her influence in the banking and economic sectors.



Kofo Akinkugbe

CEO of SecureID

Meet Kofo Akinkugbe, a trailblazing techpreneur whose journey from mathematics and banking led to the creation of SecureID, Africa's go-to provider of smartcard solutions. Her passion for innovation shines through in SecureID's groundbreaking technology, which is certified by industry giants like Visa, MasterCard, and Verve. With a creative vision and forward-thinking approach, Kofo continues to inspire change and set new standards in the business landscape.



Nkiru Anumudu

Chairperson & CEO, Globe Motors

Nkiru Anumudu has emerged as a formidable force in the automotive world. After the passing of her husband, Willie Anumudu, a renowned billionaire businessman and Chairman of Globe Motors, Nkiru courageously stepped up to steer the company. Today, she is perhaps the most prominent female auto dealer in Nigeria, breaking barriers and setting new standards in a traditionally male-dominated industry. Her exceptional and distinctive fashion sense is also worth noting.



Joke Bakare

Founder, Medplus Pharmacy

In 1993, Pharmacist Joke Bakare embarked on a groundbreaking venture, founding Medplus, Nigeria's premier pharmacy-led health and beauty retail chain. Her pioneering spirit and commitment to excellence have transformed Medplus into a trusted source for genuine products and superior service. Today, with 42 outlets nationwide, Joke's entrepreneurial prowess continues to revolutionise the healthcare sector, delivering holistic wellness solutions to consumers across Nigeria.



Miriam Olusanya

Managing Director of Guaranty Trust Bank

As GTBank's first female MD, Miriam Olusanya epitomises women's empowerment in the banking sector. Her 23-year tenure is a testament to her versatility and expertise across diverse roles. A GTBank veteran since 1998, Miriam's rise from an executive trainee to the pinnacle of leadership underscores her exceptional capabilities. An alumna of the University of Ibadan and the University of Liverpool, her academic background in Pharmacy and Finance underscores her unique blend of analytical and financial acumen.



Emem Usoro

Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria

Emem Usoro's trajectory in banking, spanning over two decades, culminated in her prestigious role as Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria. Her tenure at UBA as Executive Director, overseeing seven regional banks, exemplified her strategic prowess and leadership excellence. Emem's academic credentials, including a B.Sc. from the University of Uyo and an MBA from Obafemi Awolowo University, complemented by her Harvard and Lagos Business School experiences, have equipped her for this high-profile role.



Udo Okonjo

CEO/Vice Chairman of Fine and Country West Africa

As the CEO/Vice Chairman of Fine and Country West Africa, Udo Okonjo doesn't just navigate the Nigerian real estate market; she shapes it. But her impact doesn't stop there. Udo is on a mission to ignite possibilities, especially for women, through her annual Refined Investor Series, where she unveils the secrets of financial freedom and business success.

A sought-after global speaker, Udo graces stages worldwide, captivating audiences with her insights on leadership, entrepreneurship, and women's empowerment. From local gatherings to prestigious platforms, Udo champions the advancement of women in business and the transformative power of visionary leadership.

OIL AND GAS

Uju Ifejika

Chairperson/CEO of Britannia-U Nigeria Limited

Catherine Uju Ifejika, a powerhouse in Nigeria's oil and gas sector, defied conventions to become the CEO of Britannia-U Nigeria Limited (BUNL) and Britannia-U Ghana (BUGL). As one of Africa's wealthiest and most influential women, Catherine's journey from Texaco to Chevron showcases her resilience and determination. Under her leadership, Britannia-U has achieved remarkable milestones, from upstream exploration to refining and trading. Catherine's visionary leadership and numerous accolades speak volumes about her unwavering commitment to excellence.



Daisy Danjuma

Executive Vice Chairman, South Atlantic Petroleum

When she isn't politicking, she sits atop South Atlantic Petroleum, holding sway as Executive Vice Chairman. Senator Daisy Ehanire Danjuma's illustrious career spans over four decades, from her beginnings as a State Counsel to her tenure as a distinguished Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Her commitment to women and children's rights, showcased through her leadership roles in the ECOWAS Parliament and Senate Committee, reflects her tireless advocacy for social justice. Senator Danjuma's legacy as a legal luminary and champion of human rights continues to inspire generations.



Folorunsho Alakija

Entrepreneur, Philanthropist and Vice Chairman Famfa Oil Limited

Currently holding the position of Vice-Chairman of Famfa Oil Limited, Folorunsho Alakija is regarded as one of the wealthiest black women in the world. Famfa Limited, Alakija's business, was granted a licence to explore oil on OPL 216, a 617,000-acre region. She signed a joint venture agreement with Star Deep Water Petroleum Limited, a Texaco subsidiary, giving them forty per cent of her total ownership and authorising them as technical consultants for exploration. When she struck oil, the government tried to acquire a 50% stake in the firm, but Alakija launched a lawsuit and triumphed. Today, Forbes magazine ranks her as the 96th most powerful woman in the world and the 2nd richest woman in Africa. She is also a philanthropist; she established the Rose of Sharon Foundation, empowering many widows, orphans, and underprivileged people.



Adesuwa Dozie

Vice Chairman of Exxon Mobil

As the first female chairman of ExxonMobil affiliates in Nigeria, Adesuwa Dozie's appointment marks a historic moment in corporate leadership. With over two decades of experience as a trusted legal advisor, she brings a wealth of expertise to her role, driving growth and fostering inclusive environments. Adesuwa's passion for empowering diverse talent is evident in her dedication to building strong corporate governance cultures across Africa.



Elohor Aiboni

MD, Shell Nigeria Exploration & Production Company (SNEPCo)

Engr. Elohor Juliana Aiboni's journey to becoming the Managing Director of Shell Nigeria Exploration & Production Company (SNEPCo) is a testament to her exceptional leadership and expertise. With a background in Chemical Engineering and a Master's degree in Integrated Environmental Management, Elohor brings a wealth of knowledge to the oil and gas sector. Her role in leading SNEPCo and her contributions to organisations like Women in Energy, Nigeria (WIEN) underscore her dedication to driving positive change in the industry.



Winifred Akpani

CEO and Founder of Northwest Petroleum & Gas Limited

Nigerian businesswoman and entrepreneur Winifred Akpani is well-known for contributing to the oil and gas sector. In addition to being the CEO and founder of Northwest Petroleum & Gas Limited, a Nigerian-based indigenous petroleum products marketing firm, she is a professional accountant. Under her management, Northwest Petroleum evolved into an important player in the Nigerian oil and gas sector, and to support its activities, Akpani made significant investments in the growth of its human resources and infrastructure. Her oil and gas company is involved in petroleum product distribution, retail, and storage; it is also heavily involved in the industry's downstream sector. Akpani has been recognised as one of Nigeria's most prosperous businesswomen and has won numerous awards and prizes for her contributions to the growth of the nation's economy. She also participates in a number of charitable endeavours, focusing mostly on education, where she supports the schooling of several impoverished Nigerian children.



Amy Jadesimi

CEO of the Lagos Deep Offshore Logistics Base (LADOL)

Operating inside a free trade zone in Lagos, Lagos Deep Offshore Logistics Base (LADOL) is the biggest logistics and engineering facility in West Africa. Dr. Amy Jadesimi is the woman CEO directing its affairs. In addition to employing over ten thousand people, Dr Amy sees that LADOL extends its services to non-oil industry sectors, leveraging the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Jadesimi has received several honours, including the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leader Award. Dr. Jadesimi, as she is addressed, is a medical doctor with training from Oxford. She worked at Goldman Sachs and attended the Stanford Graduate School of Business before advancing through the ranks of LADOL, a company her father, Oladipo Jadesimi, established in 2000.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Adia Sowho

Chief Marketing Officer, MTN

Adia Sowho, who has established a reputation as a problem solver in Nigeria's commercial, tech, and media sectors, is the Chief Marketing Officer of MTN Nigeria. She has successfully designed, built and scaled tech-driven platform companies in emerging markets, delivering +\$100M businesses.

She was the VP of Growth and Managing Director in Nigeria for Migo (formerly Mines.io), a machine learning-powered digital instant credit platform. Prior to that, she was the Director of Digital Business at 9mobile (formerly Etisalat Nigeria), where she was responsible for partnering with startups to deliver mobile content, advertising, and financial and API services.

Having worked in the fields of technology, financial services, and mobile content development, her current goals are to encourage more young women to pursue careers in technology and to change the tech culture in Nigeria.



Odunayo Eweniyi

Co-Founder & COO PiggyVest.

Odunayo Eweniyi is a successful digital startup specialist who is making waves in Nigeria. She is also well-known for her advocacy of women's and girls' empowerment, having contributed to the over \$1 million in funds raised in support of the #EndSARS movement, a youth-led campaign against police brutality in her nation. Additionally, she founded Wine & Whine Nigeria and the Feminist Coalition, two non-profits dedicated to women's emancipation. Ms. Eweniyi is a co-founder of Piggyvest, FirstCheck Africa, and PushCV, among other software startups.

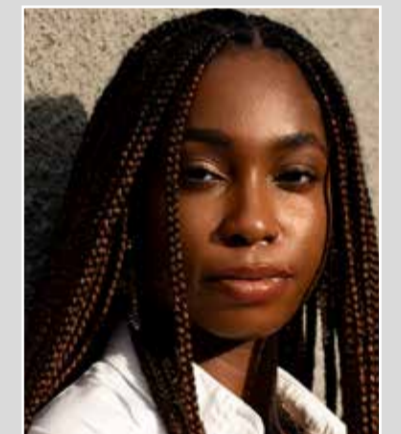


Damilola Odunfuwa

Tech Entrepreneur, Co-founder & CEO Backdrop. Co-founder Feminist Coalition

Damilola is a woman-rights activist, tech entrepreneur, and communication professional whose work combines gender equality, travel, and technology. She is one of the co-founders of the travel and social networking app Backdrop, which helps users discover and share stunning locations. Along with being a co-founder of the Feminist Coalition, she is an advocate for women's equality in Nigeria, primarily focusing on financial independence, education, and the representation of women in public office.

Damilola had previously held positions as the head of public relations at Binance, the largest cryptocurrency exchange in the world, and a social media producer at CNN Africa.



SPORTS

Tobi Amusan

Nigerian track and field athlete

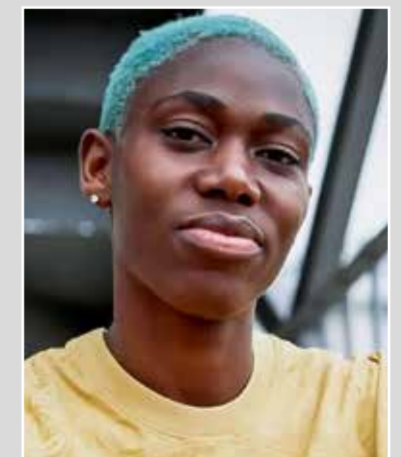
Amusan rose to prominence with her impressive performance in the 100-metre women's hurdles race. With a time of 12.12 seconds, she is the current world record holder in the 100-metre hurdles. This remarkable accomplishment was made in Eugene, Oregon, in 2022 during the women's 100-metre hurdles semifinal. She is the first Nigerian to hold a world record in athletics by reaching this milestone. Amusan is also the current 100-metre hurdle champion for both Africa and the Commonwealth. She was crowned the Diamond League champion in 2021.



Asisat Osouala

Nigerian professional footballer

Asisat is a striker for Barcelona, a European football club, and the Nigerian women's national team, the Super Falcons. She is a dominant force in women's football in Nigeria and internationally. She became the first African woman to participate in England's premier women's league when she joined Liverpool in the Women's Super League in 2015. She was named the 2014 FIFA U-20 World Player of the Year. She was awarded the rank of Member of the Order of the Niger that same year by former Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan. Oshoala received a September nomination for the 2023 Women's Ballon d'Or. Her sixth victory came three months later when she was named the African Women's Footballer of the Year.



FASHION, ARTS, CULTURE, MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT

COVER

Funke Akindele

Actress, Director & Producer at FAAN

Funke Akindele is undoubtedly one of the most well-known figures in the Nigerian film industry. She is frequently praised for her diversity and creativity and is recognised for having created one of the most memorable characters in recent times, Jenifa. Funke's journey as an actress began in 1998 when she starred in the sitcom I Need to Know. She then transitioned fully into the Nollywood movie industry and, in 2009, was recognised for her acting prowess and awarded the Africa Movie Academy Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role. Since then, the actress has been on a steady uphill climb. She recently made history with her latest film, "A Tribe Called Judah." The movie earned a whopping sum of 1 billion naira at the Nigerian box office in three weeks, making it the fastest Nollywood movie to achieve this feat.



TEMS

Music Artist

Tems, renowned for her reflective songs and soulful voice, offers an appealing sound that combines Afro-fusion, neo-soul, and R&B. Her expressive delivery and calming voice have drawn comparisons to legendary performers like Sade and Erykah Badu. With the release of her breakthrough hit song "Mr Rebel" in 2018, Tems became well-known, and since then, she has released a number of critically acclaimed tracks. She is the first Nigerian female artist to be nominated for an Oscar Award.



Folake Akindele

Fashion Designer, Creative Director and Founder Tiffany Amber Lifestyle

Folake launched Tiffany Amber in 1998, a revolutionary fashion brand. In no time, her passion was skillfully transformed into an iconic African brand that has achieved extraordinary worldwide recognition. Since then, Folake has been a cultural ambassador for Africa by boldly showcasing Nigerian designs on the most renowned runways worldwide. Her dedication to innovation and quality has won her several honours and awards.

In 2022, Folake launched Tiffany Amber Gardens, a haven tucked away from the busy daily life of Lagos where the Tiffany Amber Flagship Boutique, Tiffany Amber Cafe, and Tiffany Amber Spa are housed, extending the brand's products beyond goods to include services and immersive experiences. Folake's commitment to the expansion and sustainability of the fashion business, combined with her admiration for African women and culture, has solidified her place in the industry.



Chimamanda Adichie

Author

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a Nigerian writer whose works range from novels to short stories to nonfiction. She has remained an advocate for gender equality in Nigeria and across the world. From being sampled by Beyonce to giving insightful talks to having huge motion pictures made out of her novels and writing thought-provoking speeches, Chimamanda constantly redefines the notion of what and who an author should be.



Ayra Starr

Music Artist

Rising Afro-pop musician Ayra Starr made her musical debut in 2021 with her self-titled EP. Since then, fans have been captivated by her distinct sound and fresh approach to music. Ayra's songs resonate with a younger audience, often dealing with self-discovery, love, and personal development themes. In her short time in the music industry, Ayra Starr has already worked with leading Nigerian and international musicians to create several well-known singles, including "Rush," "Bloody Samaritan," and "Sabability."



Mo Abudu

Media Personality and CEO of Ebony Life Group

Mo Abudu isn't just a name in the Nigerian film industry; she's a force to be reckoned with. At the helm of EbonyLife Media, she's the mastermind behind ventures that are as diverse as they are impactful. She's also the driving force behind EbonyLife Studios and EbonyLife Films, responsible for producing some of Nigeria's highest-grossing movies. In a recent groundbreaking move, she teamed up with none other than Idris Elba's Green Door Pictures. This powerful alliance is set to usher in a new era of film and television projects.



Kemi Adetiba

Filmmaker, Television Director and Music Video Director

Kemi Adetiba is a renowned filmmaker in Africa, acclaimed for her work with some of the continent's biggest stars. Additionally, she has directed commercials for various international brands. Her debut feature film, "The Wedding Party," released in 2016, set records as the first Nigerian movie to earn over 400 million naira. Following this success, her next film, "King of Boys," quickly gained popularity and sparked the KOB Army movement. The eagerly awaited sequel, "KOB2," released in 2021 as a Netflix original, further elevated her profile. Last year, Adetiba announced on social media that she had started pre-production for the much-anticipated "King of Boys 3."



Lisa Folawiyo

Fashion Designer and Creative Director Lisa Folawiyo

Lisa Folawiyo is regarded as a veteran fashion designer in the Nigerian fashion industry. Originally trained as a lawyer, Folawiyo came to fashion without formal training. She founded her line, Lisa Folawiyo—previously known as Jewel by Lisa—in 2005.

She is renowned for her opulent interpretation of women's accessories and ready-to-wear. She is well known for her creative, vibrant designs that combine trends with Ankara influences, contemporary tailoring, and elaborate accents like hand embellishments.



Uche Pedro

Founder and CEO of BellaNaija

Entrepreneur Uche Pedro is one of Nigeria's foremost mediapreneurs. She founded and serves as CEO of BellaNaija, a media tech company that produces lifestyle and entertainment content. BellaNaija's collection of businesses, BellaNaija.com, BellaNaija Weddings, and BellaNaija Style, has evolved under her direction to become the most significant social presence on the African continent, generating more than 100 million impressions monthly. Uche received the Forbes Woman Africa New Media Award in March 2019 for her creative influence on African media. Many bloggers today see her as an inspiration and are making strides to learn from her business strategy.



Reni Folawiyo

Fashion Entrepreneur, Founder, Alara

Reni Folawiyo is a celebrated cultural entrepreneur known for her pivotal role in crafting and influencing modern African aesthetics. She is also the founder and director of Alara, Africa's premier hub for culture, fashion, art, culinary arts, and design architecturally crafted by the famous Sir David Adjaye. Reni is a trendsetter and fashion icon. Her guidance and influence have been instrumental in shaping the careers of numerous leading creatives across Africa.



Ruth Osime

Host, PERSPECTIVES, Arise Tv

Ruth Osime is the anchor of Arise News TV's program "Perspective" and the former editor of ThisDay Style Magazine. Renowned for her commitment to excellence and a sharp eye for identifying talent, Ruth played a pivotal role in elevating ThisDay Style Magazine to new heights. During her editorship, she was instrumental in discovering new talents and giving established personalities a platform to gain international recognition. Under her leadership at Style, the magazine's cover became a symbol of prestige, highly sought after by socialites and celebrities alike. Her legacy in shaping media and fashion narratives continues to be influential today.



Rolake Akinkugbe-Filani

Chief Commercial Officer and Divisional Director of Mixta Africa & Host of Business Week Arise TV News

With over 15 years of experience, Rolake is recognised for her strategic leadership in financing, investing, and scaling businesses within Africa. Before her tenure at Mixta Africa, she was the Senior Africa Advisor for the IFU Danish Investment Fund, facilitating robust partnerships and identifying portfolio opportunities in both private and public sectors. Her previous roles include Head of Energy at FBN Capital and FBNQuest Merchant Bank from 2014 to 2019, where she led client coverage and origination for energy and infrastructure clients, successfully securing debt and equity capital.

She presently hosts the highly regarded weekend business programme BusinessWeek on the pan-African news network Arise News. She most recently covered the channel's coverage of energy, infrastructure, the economy, and investment issues at the Davos World Economic Forum in 2024.



Ayo Mairo-Ese

Compere & Anchor Arise News TV

Ayo Mairo-Ese is a broadcaster, event compere, and public speaker. She co-anchors The Morning Show, the foremost morning programme in Nigeria, on Arise News Channel. Throughout her years in broadcast media, she has had the chance to conduct thought-provoking conversations with renowned guests, including thought leaders, industry captains, and other high-profile local and international personalities. She advocates for promoting and empowering Nigerian women, using her media platform to support them as much as possible. She is also a role model for women and young people, serving as a "Super Mentor" for the First City Monument Bank (FCMB) and is a highly sought-after conference speaker.



Banke Kuku-Lawson

Creative Director and Founder Banke Kuku

Banke Kuku Lawson, the driving force behind her namesake life-style brand, Banke Kuku, is a notable figure in Nigeria's women's fashion world. She initially gained recognition with designs that seamlessly transitioned her interior design aesthetics into fashion. She is known for collections that are celebrated for their vibrant colours, masterful textile patterns, and an elegant blend of contemporary and traditional elements; Banke has carved a unique niche. Her signature style is a luxurious take on loungewear, deeply influenced by her experiences living in both Lagos and London. Her creations have captivated women and celebrities globally, earning acclaim and adoration for their standout appeal.



ACTIVISM AND SOCIAL WORK

Kemi Ibru

Founder | Women at Risk International Foundation

Dr. Kemi DaSilva-Ibru is a public health physician, specialist, and researcher dedicated to enhancing the well-being of women and girls through her medical practice, social activism, and public advocacy. As the founder of the nonprofit organisation WARIF, she addresses the pervasive issues of rape, child trafficking, and gender-based violence in Nigeria. Dr. DaSilva-Ibru's efforts have earned her international acclaim as a leading expert in women's health. Her mission is to create a world devoid of gender-based and sexual violence, enabling all women and girls to lead joyful and fulfilling lives.



Oby Ezekwesili

Economic Policy Expert and Advocate for Transparency, Accountability, and Good Governance.

Dr. Oby Ezekwesili is a leading advocate for social justice in Africa. She has used her influence to tackle corruption, extremism, and violence against women. She earned the nickname "Madam Due Process" for her unyielding efforts to eliminate corruption and malpractice in Nigeria's public procurement and contracting processes. As a co-founder of Transparency International, she gained global recognition for her contributions to the development of anti-corruption strategies now widely adopted by various countries. Additionally, Dr. Ezekwesili made significant strides in her role as Nigeria's former Federal Minister of Solid Minerals, where she was instrumental in rejuvenating the mining sector, attracting mining investors, and boosting its profitability. Her subsequent tenure as Minister of Education in 2006 marked a transformative period in Nigeria's educational system.

Ezekwesili used the Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG) advocacy group to draw global attention to the plight of all persons whom terrorists have abducted from Nigeria's northern region. She was instrumental to the start of the viral #Advocacy and #BringBackOurGirls Campaign on social media, which trended internationally.



Ann-Kio Briggs

Nigerian Human Rights Activist Founder and Director of Agape Birthrights



Ann-Kio Briggs is an environmentalist and human rights activist known for her leading role in the Niger Delta self-determination movement. She is the founder and executive director of Agape Birthrights, a non-governmental organisation focused on environmental, developmental, political, and human rights advocacy. Her work has been pivotal in voicing the concerns of the Niger Delta region. Briggs also plays a significant role in the Ijaw Republican Assembly, where she has been a prominent advocate for justice, equity, and fairness for communities affected by Nigeria's oil and gas industry. As of 2011, she served as the spokesperson for both the Ijaw Republican Assembly (IRA) and the United Niger Delta Energy Development Security Strategy (UNDEDSS). Over the past 23 years, Briggs has been instrumental in keeping the issues of Nigeria's oil-producing regions at the forefront of national conversations. Through her organisation, she has contributed to documenting and addressing oil spillages and has been a steadfast fighter against injustice and marginalisation in developing areas.

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