

50 MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN AFRICA 2026



Africapitol Ventures is a research and listing non-profit organization based in East Africa's hub, Nairobi Kenya.

Our mission is to share the success stories of the people and institutions in Africa, and changing the narrative of the continent through comprehensive ranking of personalities and organizations across different fields in Africa.

Africapitol started when our founder and his friends, seated somewhere, were asking each other who their role models were. When no one was mentioning people from Africa, our founders decided to show fellow youth that there are people in Africa who can be role models. And that's how Africapitol started in June 2022.




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OUR CURRENT PROGRAMS

50 MOST INFLUENTIAL MEN IN AFRICA

50 MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN AFRICA

50 MOST INFLUENTIAL MEN IN KENYA

50 MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN KENYA

50 MOST INFLUENTIAL CEOs IN KENYA



DR. AUDI - CEO, AFRICAPITOL VENTURES

In 2005, when I was just 10 years old, I lost my mother.

She was a remarkable woman—intelligent, resilient, compassionate, and deeply committed to her family and community. She was a nurse by profession, an entrepreneur by passion, and a woman whose strength held many lives together. Yet, despite all that she was, I watched her carry a quiet burden that many never saw. She often called herself *"Under Pressure."*

At that age, I did not fully understand the depth of those words. But over time, I came to realize that behind them was a woman who gave endlessly, sacrificed constantly, and yet rarely felt truly seen or appreciated for all that she carried. That realization shaped me.

It planted in me a lifelong mission: to celebrate people while they are still alive; and most especially, to honor women whose contributions often go unnoticed despite their extraordinary impact. This mission became the heartbeat of our work.

Since 2022, we have proudly celebrated women in Kenya, recognizing those whose leadership, innovation, and resilience continue to shape industries and communities. What began as a national initiative has now grown into something far greater.

I am honored to present this **Premier Edition of the 50 Most Influential Women in Africa 2026** — a continental platform that expands our vision from Kenya to the whole of Africa.

This milestone is not simply the launch of a publication; it is the continuation of a promise. A promise that women who lead, build, serve, create, and inspire will not go unnoticed.

To every woman featured in this year's edition, congratulations. Your achievements represent excellence, courage, and the limitless possibilities of African leadership. Your stories remind us that influence is not only about titles, but about impact.

This year's honorees stand as symbols of what Africa can become when women are empowered, supported, and celebrated.

As we unveil this premier continental edition, we are reminded of an essential truth: appreciation is not a luxury — it is a necessity. Too often, society waits until contributions are no longer present before offering recognition. We must change that narrative. We must celebrate our leaders, our builders, and our visionaries while they are here to receive their flowers.

Women, in particular, have long carried the weight of families, businesses, institutions, and nations; often under immense pressure, yet with unmatched grace. They deserve not only acknowledgment, but intentional celebration.

This publication is our way of saying: *we see you, we value you, and we honor your contribution to Africa's story.*

To every reader, partner, and supporter of this mission; thank you for standing with us as we continue to build a culture of appreciation across the continent.

And to my late mother; your story lives on in this work. Your life gave birth to a mission that now celebrates women across Africa. May this edition be a tribute to every woman who has ever carried greatness quietly, and a reminder that their impact matters.

Together, let us continue to give people their flowers while they are still alive.



50 MOST INFLUENTIAL WOMEN IN AFRICA 2026

Celebrating Africa's Women of Influence in 2026

The *50 Most Influential Women in Africa 2026* by Africapitol Ventures is more than a recognition list, it is a powerful reflection of the evolving leadership landscape across the African continent. It showcases women whose work is shaping governments, industries, institutions, and communities, while redefining what influence means in modern Africa.

Spanning 20 countries and multiple sectors, the publication highlights a dynamic mix of presidents, vice presidents, chief executives, founders, financiers, jurists, creatives, and global policy leaders. Together, these women represent the strength, resilience, and innovation driving Africa's progress in 2026.

Geographically, the list reflects both established and emerging hubs of female leadership. Nigeria leads in representation, followed by Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda, illustrating the breadth of women's influence across West, East, Southern, and North Africa.

Beyond statistics, the publication sends a broader message: Africa's future is being shaped by women who lead with vision, competence, and courage. Their achievements serve not only as recognition of excellence, but also as inspiration for the next generation of leaders across the continent.

This publication is a reminder that inclusive leadership is no longer aspirational, it is essential. The women featured here are not simply participating in Africa's growth story; they are defining it.



AFRICA'S WOMEN OF INFLUENCE 2026

CATEGORIES



1. CORPORATE LEADERSHIP & FINANCE

- CEOs
- Bank Executives
- Board Chairs

2. GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC SERVICE

- Presidents
- Vice Presidents
- Chief Justices

3. ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION

- Founders
- Innovators
- Startups

4. INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY

- UN Leaders
- WTO / AU Officials
- Global Advocates

5. MEDIA, LITERATURE, & CULTURE

- Authors
- Filmmakers
- Media Executives
- Cultural Icons

Country	Count
Nigeria	15
Kenya	8
Tanzania	4
Rwanda	4
Namibia	2
Uganda	3
Ghana	2
DR Congo	1
Algeria	1
Egypt	1
South Sudan	1
Zambia	1
Benin	1
Sierra Leone	1
Botswana	1
South Africa	1
Gambia	1
Morocco	1
Ethiopia	1

Regional Insight

- **West Africa leads**, driven heavily by **Nigeria**
- **East Africa follows strongly**, especially **Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda**
- **Southern Africa** has representation through Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, and Zambia
- **North Africa** appears through Egypt, Algeria and Morocco



DR. NETUMBO NANDI
PRESIDENT - REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
NAMIBIA



JESSICA ALUPO
VICE PRESIDENT - REPUBLIC OF UGANDA
UGANDA



AMINA J. MOHAMED
DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL - UNITED NATIONS
NIGERIA



DR. NETUMBO NANDI
PRESIDENT - REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
NAMIBIA



MARIAM CHABI
VICE PRESIDENT - REPUBLIC OF BENIN
BENIN



NAANA JANE OPOKU
VICE PRESIDENT - REPUBLIC OF GHANA
GHANA



IBUKUN AWOSIKA
IBUKUN AWOSIKA LEADERSHIP ACADEMY
NIGERIA



MUTALE NALUMANGO
VICE PRESIDENT - REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
ZAMBIA



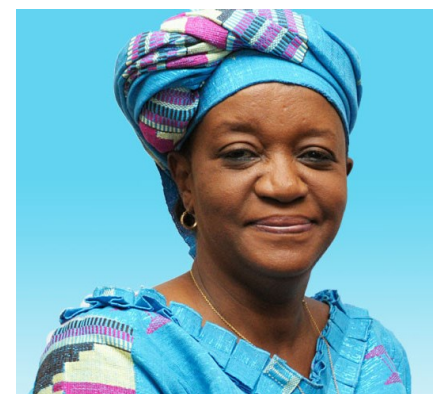
REBECCA MABIOR
VICE PRESIDENT - REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN
SOUTH SUDAN



DR. NETUMBO NANDI
CHAIRPERSON - AFRICA FINANCE CORPORATION
NIGERIA



MARTHA KOOME
CHIEF JUSTICE - REPUBLIC OF KENYA
KENYA



ZAINAB H. BANGURA
DIRECTOR GENERAL - UNITED NATIONS OFFICE, NAIROBI
SIERRA LEONE



SYLVIA MULINGE
CEO - MTN UGANDA
KENYA



FOLORUNSHO ALAKIJA
GROUP MD - ROSE OF SHARON GROUP
NIGERIA



MALANGU KABEDI
GOVERNOR - CENTRAL BANK OF CONGO
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



DALIA KHORSHID
GROUP CEO - BELTONE HOLDING
EGYPT



KEABETSWE PHEKO
MANAGING DIRECTOR - ABSA BOTSWANA
BOTSWANA



RUTH ZAIPUNA
CEO - NMB BANK
TANZANIA



KANAYO AWANI
EXECUTIVE VP - AFREXIMBANK
NIGERIA



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CHAIRPERSON - AVON HEALTHCARE
NIGERIA



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CEO - DELOITTE EAST AFRICA
KENYA



DR. EMZOR C. OKOLI
CEO - EMZOR PHARMACEUTICALS
NIGERIA



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CEO - VIVO FASHION GROUP
KENYA



MPUMI MADISA
CEO - BIDVEST GROUP
SOUTH AFRICA



DR. JULIE GICHURU
FOUNDER - AFRICA LEADERSHIP AND DIALOGUE
KENYA



MELIKA BEDRI
CEO - ZAMZAM BANK
ETHIOPIA



NAZIHA BELKEZIZ
CHAIRPERSON & CEO - BANQUE CENTRALE POPULAIRE SA
MOROCCO



NANGULA KAULUMA
CEO & RETAIL OFFICER - FNB NAMIBIA
NAMIBIA



NJILAN SENGHORE
MD - TRUST BANK PLC
GAMBIA



PATIENCE E. AKYIANU
GROUP CEO - HOLLARD GHANA
GHANA



SARAH ARAPTA
MD/CEO - CITIBANK UGANDA
UGANDA



CLAIRE AKAMANZI
CEO - NBA AFRICA
RWANDA



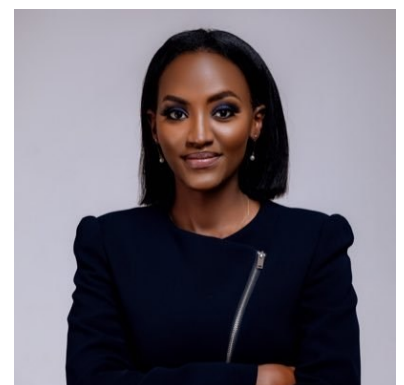
DR. PATRICIA MURUGAMI
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KENYA



PATIENCE MUTESI
MD/CEO - BPR BANK RWANDA PLC
RWANDA



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FOUNDER - THE MOVERS' SOCIETY
KENYA



IRIS IRUMVA
FOUNDER/CEO - LEAD ACCESS
RWANDA



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CEO - BROOKLYN CITY COLLEGE
UGANDA/SOUTH AFRICA



ADAORA UMEOJI
GROUP MD/CEO - ZENITH BANK
NIGERIA



YVONNE MANZI
CEO - RWANDAIR
RWANDA



NANGULA KAULUMA
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON - AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION
ALGERIA



HALIMA BUBA
MD/CEO - SUN TRUST BANK PLC
NIGERIA



FLAVIANA MATATA
CEO - LAVY PRODUCTS
TANZANIA



CHIMAMANDA NGOZI
AUTHOR
NIGERIA



ARESE UGWU
AUTHOR/FILMMAKER
NIGERIA



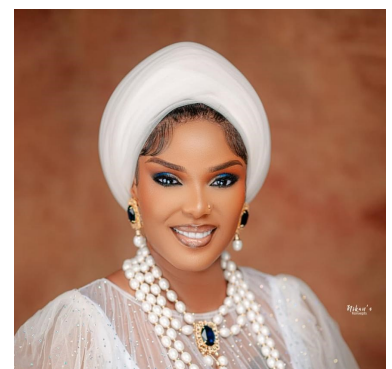
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KENYA



ZAMARADI MKETEMA
CEO - ZAMARADI MEDIA
TANZANIA



MO ABUDU
CEO - EBONY LIFE MEDIA
NIGERIA



IYABO OJO
VETERAN ACTRESS & FILMMAKER
NIGERIA



FATEMA DEWJI
MARKETING DIRECTOR - METL GROUP
TANZANIA



JOYCE DANIELS
TRIBE LEADER - MONEY MAKING MOUTH TRIBE
NIGERIA

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Alphabetical List by Name

NAME	ROLE / TITLE	COUNTRY
Adaora Umeoji	Group MD/CEO - Zenith Bank	Nigeria
Amina J. Mohamed	Deputy Secretary General - United Nations	Nigeria
Anne Muraya	CEO - Deloitte East Africa	Kenya
Arese Ugwu	Author/Filmmaker	Nigeria
Chimamanda Ngozi	Author	Nigeria
Claire Akamanzi	CEO - NBA Africa	Rwanda
Dalia Khorshid	Group CEO - Beltone Holding	Egypt
Dr. Awele Ulemule	Chairperson - Avon Healthcare	Nigeria
Dr. Julie Gichuru	Founder/President - Africa Leadership and Dialogue Institute	Kenya
Dr. Netumbo Nandi	President - Republic of Namibia	Namibia
Dr. Patricia Murugami	Founder/CEO - BTL Group	Kenya
Dr. Stella C. Okoli	Founder/CEO - Emzor Pharmaceutical	Nigeria
Fatema Dewji	Marketing Director - METL Group	Tanzania
Flaviana Matata	CEO - Lavy Products	Tanzania
Folorunsho Alakija	Group MD - Rose of Sharon Group	Nigeria
Halima Buba	MD/CEO - Sun Trust Bank Plc	Nigeria
Ibukun Awosika	Chair - Ibukun Awosika Leadership Academy	Nigeria
Ireti Samuel	Chairperson - Africa Finance Corporation	Nigeria
Iris Irumva	Founder/CEO - Lead Access	Rwanda
Ivy Wanjiru	Founder - The Movers' Society	Kenya

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NAME	ROLE/TITLE	COUNTRY
Iyabo Ojo	Veteran Actress & Filmmaker	Nigeria
Jessica Alupo	Vice President - Republic of Uganda	Uganda
Joyce Daniels	Tribe Leader - Money Making Mouth Tribe	Nigeria
Kanayo Awani	Executive Vice President - Afreximbank	Nigeria
Keabetswe Pheko	Managing Director - Absa Botswana	Botswana
Lulu Hassan	Media Personality / Entrepreneur / Philanthropist	Kenya
Malangu Kabedi	Governor - Central Bank of Congo	DR Congo
Mariam Chabi	Vice President - Republic of Benin	Benin
Martha Koome	Chief Justice - Republic of Kenya	Kenya
Melika Bedri	CEO - Zamzam Bank	Ethiopia
Mo Abudu	CEO - EbonyLife Media	Nigeria
Mpumi Madisa	CEO - Bidvest Group	South Africa
Mutale Nalumango	Vice President - Republic of Zambia	Zambia
Naana Jane Opoku	Vice President - Republic of Ghana	Ghana
Nangula Kauluma	CEO & Retail Officer - FNB Namibia Holdings	Namibia
Naziha Belkeziz	Chairperson & CEO - Banque Centrale Populaire SA	Morocco
Ngozi Okonjo	Director General - World Trade Organization	Nigeria
Njilan Senghore	MD - Trust Bank Plc	Gambia
Patience E. Akyianu	Group CEO - Hollard Ghana	Ghana
Patience Mutesi	MD/CEO - BPR Bank Rwanda Plc	Rwanda
Rebecca Mabior	Vice President - Republic of South Sudan	South Sudan
Ruth Zaipuna	CEO - NMB Bank Plc	Tanzania
Sarah Arapta	MD/CEO - Citibank Uganda	Uganda
Selma Malika	Deputy Chairperson - African Union Commission	Algeria
Sylvia Mulinge	CEO - MTN Uganda	Kenya
Wandia Gichuru	CEO - Vivo Fashion Group	Kenya
Yvonne Manzi	CEO - RwandAir	Rwanda
Zainab H. Bangura	Director General - United Nations Office, Nairobi	Sierra Leone
Zamaradi Mketema	CEO - Zamaradi Media	Tanzania
Zarinah Hassan	CEO - Brooklyn City College	Uganda/South Africa



50 Most Influential Women in Kenya 2024 Award Gala Dinner at KICC, Nairobi



50 Most Influential Men in Kenya 2024 Award Gala Dinner at KICC, Nairobi



50 Most Influential CEOs in Kenya 2024 Award Gala Dinner at Vila Rosa Kempinski, Nairobi



50 Most Influential Women in Kenya 2025 Award Gala Dinner at Argyle Grand Hotel, Nairobi

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