

237 WOMEN ON THE MOVE

EDITION N°001/25

KATE KANYI FOTSO

*Pioneering Transformation in
Africa's Cocoa Sector and
Championing Women's
Empowerment"*

RUN WITH PURPOSE

Opportunities for women



2025: ELECTION YEAR

TOP 5 WOMEN

SET TO INFLUENCE CAMEROON'S POLITICAL FUTURE.

WOTM

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Local and global opportunities for
women and girls

 **WILD**
Network
Leadership for social impact

The Future of Leadership

2025 Women's Global
Leadership Forum

May 8th
In-person
Washington, DC

May 13-15th
Online
Live programming
in 25 time zones



**"KATE FOTSO: PIONEERING
TRANSFORMATION IN AFRICA'S
COCOA SECTOR AND
CHAMPIONING WOMEN'S
EMPOWERMENT"**



EDITORS NOTE

As we step into 2025, we find ourselves at a pivotal moment in history where the voices of women in politics are resonating louder than ever before. Women are no longer just participants in political discourse; they are leading it, shaping policies, and breaking down barriers that once seemed insurmountable. The year 2025 is elections year in Cameroon and of course civic responsibility should be a huge concern for Cameroonian women. We celebrate the remarkable strides women have made in governance over the years and highlight the vast opportunities that lie ahead for those who dare to step into the arena.

From local governments to international summits, women are claiming their seats at decision-making tables and challenging the status quo. Their leadership is not defined by gender, but by vision, resilience, and a commitment to justice and equality. Whether in the corridors of power or grassroots movements, women are rewriting the political narrative, proving that leadership knows no gender.

This issue not only celebrates these trailblazing women but also addresses the opportunities for future generations. The road to political empowerment is paved with challenges, from systemic bias to unequal access to resources. However, the increasing visibility of women in politics is opening doors for others to follow in their footsteps. From mentorship programs to policy reforms that encourage women's participation, the opportunities are multiplying.



Linda Nkeh Ngobesing

EDITOR IN CHIEF

As we look forward to 2025 and beyond, let us remember that the fight for equality and opportunity is far from over. Women have proven time and again that they are not just capable of leading—they are essential to creating the world we want to live in. Together, we can continue to forge a future where every woman, everywhere, has the opportunity to lead, to inspire, and to make a lasting impact in politics. This year, let's not only celebrate the women who have made history, but also those who are on the brink of doing so. They are not just the leaders of tomorrow—they are the leaders of today.

Here's to the women who are making moves, breaking barriers, and inspiring change.

Happy 2025

GLOBAL COMMUNITY TO MARK 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF BEIJING DECLARATION AT CSW69 IN NEW YORK



In 2025, the global community will commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a landmark framework for advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women. This significant milestone will be marked during the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69), set to take place from March 10 to 21, 2025, at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The session will focus on the review and appraisal of the progress made in implementing the Beijing Declaration, including the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. Discussions will also explore the current challenges impeding the achievement of gender equality, as well as the role of the Beijing Platform for Action in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



Representatives from UN Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions will be in attendance to participate in these critical dialogues. In preparation for the session, states have been called to conduct comprehensive national-level reviews to assess the progress achieved and the obstacles faced in advancing gender equality.

The Bureau for the 69th session will play a key role in facilitating the session's preparation and ensuring its success. The Bureau will be led by H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz M. Alwasil (Saudi Arabia), Chair of the Asia and Pacific States Group, and supported by Vice-Chairs from various regional groups: H.E. Ms. Maritza Chan Valverde (Costa Rica), Ms. Robin Maria de Vogel (Netherlands), Ms. Dúnia Eloisa Pires do Canto (Cabo Verde), and Ms. Nataliia Mudrenko (Ukraine).

This anniversary session offers a critical opportunity to take stock of achievements, reflect on challenges, and set the stage for further progress in realizing the full potential of the Beijing Declaration in shaping a gender-equal world.



AFWID 2025, 18 DELEGATES REPRESENT CAMEROON



By Scholar MALOKE

The third edition of the African Women in Dialogue (AfWID), a forum that brings together more than 1,000 women from all walks of life across the 55 countries of the African continent, will begin on January 27 in Johannesburg, South Africa. This initiative, founded by former South African first lady Zanele Mbeki and the Women's Development Business (WDB) Trust, created in 1991 to empower women and rural communities, is convening the 3rd edition of the forum.

The Cameroonian delegation, consisting of 18 women according to Dr. Zoneziwoh Mbondgulo-Wondieh, Central African subregional coordinator and member of the AfWID steering committee, is drawn from different walks of life. These include buyam sellams, educators, medical professionals, entrepreneurs, farmers, researchers, puff puff sellers, and Beijing veterans, among others. Dr. Zoneziwoh, who has held several preparatory meetings with the delegates, says, "The Cameroonian and Central African Region delegations are taking their rich and unique experiences and knowledge to AfWID, where they will share and learn from sisters coming from other parts of the African continent."

For some of the participants, like Musi Moureen, a teacher and student at the University of Bamenda, taking part in AfWID 2025 will be a unique experience. "I am so humbled to be a participant alongside women of such caliber from all over the continent. I imagine the grandeur, the conversations, and the takeaways. I'm really excited and feeling good," Musi Moureen says. As for her expectations, she hopes to come back enriched with ideas that can positively impact her community and nation. She also wishes to improve her knowledge on gender issues, understand the economic and socio-political problems women face, and explore solutions. Coming from a crisis region, Musi also plans to share experiences on women and health challenges, particularly during crisis periods.



Another participant, Muma Bih Yvonne, sees the forum as an opportunity for women to speak for and about themselves, to face their realities as women of the continent. "We need to put on the table real issues that affect African women and talk in one voice, planning for the future as one person," she says.

The one-week event, running from January 27 to 31, will also serve as a platform to network, share ideas, and commit to working together in solidarity and sisterhood to overcome the daily challenges they face.

On the sidelines of the activities, the Cameroonian and Central African subregional delegations will organize a discussion on January 29 titled, "Why conflicts remain a persistent norm across the continent, and what have been the failures of Africa's peacebuilding architecture? What role do women peacebuilders and peace movements play in championing peace?" This session will be led and moderated by Women for a Change Cameroon (WFAC).



THE **Power** LIST

"Women Shaping Cameroon's Political Future: Leaders to Watch Ahead of 2025 elections"

As the republic of Cameroon prepares for the 2025 presidential elections, 237 women on the move takes a look at the influence of women in decision making shaping policies and driving change in Cameroon. From legislative battles to international diplomacy, women are increasingly leading the charge in some of the most important political arenas. In this article, we highlight five women whose voices and actions are reshaping the political landscape in Cameroon.

These leaders—whether they are seasoned politicians or rising stars—are setting new standards and paving the way for future generations of women in governance.



"BREAKING BARRIERS: THE LEADERSHIP AND LEGACY OF KAH WALLA IN CAMEROONIAN POLITICS"

Edith Kahbang Walla, known as Kah Walla, made history in the 2011 Cameroonian presidential election as the first woman to run for the office. Despite finishing 6th with 0.72% of the vote, her campaign, under the slogan "The Time is Now!", highlighted issues such as corruption, human rights violations, and the need for political change, causes she continues to champion.

Born in 1965 in Ibadan, Nigeria, Kah Walla began her political career in 2008 with the Social Democratic Front (SDF), where she was elected to the Douala I municipal council and joined the national executive committee. After a political disagreement, she joined the Cameroon People's Party (CPP) and became its president, running as the party's candidate in the 2011 presidential election.

Kah Walla is also the founder of the citizen movement "Cameroon ô Bosso" and the coordinator of the "Stand Up for Cameroon" platform, which launched the "Black Fridays" movement in 2013 to protest poor governance.

In addition to her political activism, Kah Walla is a successful entrepreneur. She founded Stratégies!, a leadership and management firm, in 1995 and is involved in consulting and agricultural projects focused on women's empowerment and sustainable development. Recognized internationally, she was named by the World Bank in 2007 as one of seven women improving the business environment in Cameroon and was ranked among the top 150 women shaping the world by Newsweek and The Daily Beast in 2010.



We have got to offer ourselves—and the world—something better than this. We have got to show that Cameroon has something else to offer.

"HERMINE PATRICIA TOMAINO NDAM NJOYA: A TRAILBLAZER IN CAMEROONIAN POLITICS, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND ADVOCACY"



"Je ne suis pas à l'Assemblée pour y figurer, ni pour m'amuser. J'ai été élue par des centaines de populations qui attendent que notre projet puisse être connu de tout le monde"

Hermine Patricia Tomaino Ndam Njoya, born on January 26, is a Cameroonian politician, entrepreneur, and author. She earned her law degree in 1990 and a master's in public law in 1992 from the University of Yaounde.

Currently a member of parliament for the Democratic Union of Cameroon (UDC), she has served as president of the Association of Cameroonian Women in Coffee (AFECC) since 2016. She is also a specialist in organizational training and has coordinated projects such as the HIV/AIDS and Children Task Force at the World Conference of Religions for Peace/Hope for African Children Initiative and the PACDDU program with the Cameroon-European Union cooperation.

As an entrepreneur, Ndam Njoya leads one of Cameroon's largest private coffee plantations, ANJ, in Koutié, West Region. She has been the chair of the Gender Promotion Committee at the African and Madagascar Robusta Coffee Agency (ACRAM) since 2013.

An author, her works include *L'Enfer rose*, *Les élections bancales*, and *Les Coquelicots de l'Espoir*, published in 2016. Ndam Njoya entered politics in 1991, joining the UDC and participating in opposition marches for multiparty politics. Elected as a member of parliament for Noun in 2007, she currently serves as secretary of the committee on constitutional laws, human rights, and justice in the National Assembly and is the spokesperson for UDC MPs.

She is the first female candidate to announce her bid for the 2025 presidential election in Cameroon.

"MAITRE ALICE NKOM: CHAMPION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEFENDER OF THE VULNERABLE IN CAMEROON"



"I was threatened many times but I didn't give up. People used to throw stones at me but I continued the fight and now the threats have faded. People have to understand that this is a fight for human dignity."

Maitre Alice Nkom, a 79-year-old seasoned and award-winning attorney, is renowned for her tireless defense of vulnerable populations, including low-income individuals, political prisoners, women, and the LGBTQ community. Born and raised in Poutkak, Cameroon, she later pursued higher education at the University of Toulouse, France, completing her degree at the Federal University of Cameroon in 1968.

At just 24, Nkom made history as Cameroon's first female French-speaking attorney in 1969. For decades, she worked with one of the country's most prestigious law firms. However, in 2003, after 34 years of legal practice, Nkom's career took a pivotal turn when she founded the Association for the Defense of Homosexuality (ADEFHO), providing legal support to LGBTQ individuals in Cameroon.

Her unwavering commitment to human rights has earned her international recognition, including accolades like "African of the Year" (2012, The New Yorker), the Amnesty Human Rights Award (2013), and the Mousse and Stop Homophobia Freedom of Association Award (2018). Despite facing numerous threats, she continues to be a fierce advocate for justice. Nkom currently chairs Redhac (Network of Human Rights Defenders in Central Africa).

MICHELLE NDOKI: THE FEARLESS LAWYER AND POLITICAL LEADER

Michelle Ndoki, a dynamic Cameroonian lawyer and activist, is a woman to watch in the political arena in 2025. Born on March 31, 1973, in France to Cameroonian parents, Ndoki's early life laid the foundation for a career defined by intellect, resilience, and a commitment to justice. After earning a graduate diploma in private law with a focus on business law, she returned to Cameroon in 1997, where she built a successful career as a corporate lawyer. Her legal expertise quickly earned her respect, and she went on to work for prestigious companies like Orange and Guinness, before returning to the bar in 2015.

However, Ndoki's true calling would lie beyond the courtroom. As an advocate for human rights, she became heavily involved in Cameroon's political and civil society movements. In 2016, she joined the Mouvement pour la Renaissance du Cameroun (MRC), led by Maurice Kamto, where she quickly became an influential member, rising to the role of Vice President of the MRC's women's wing.

Ndoki gained national attention during the 2019 protests, when she was shot and injured by police during a demonstration calling for political reforms. Despite the violent crackdown, she continued her activism, demonstrating incredible resilience in the face of danger. Her defiance of the regime was further underscored when she refused to appear in court to protest the detention conditions of her comrades, forcing the police to drag her into court. She was arrested in February 2019 and spent over eight months in detention before being released in October of the same year, alongside other political detainees. Though Ndoki took a step back from party politics after her release, particularly following the MRC's decision to boycott the 2020 legislative elections, her voice has remained a powerful force in Cameroonian politics. Her calls for a "new stage" in the fight for democracy



**« Nous entendons faire
que la voix du citoyen
lambda soit entendue et
respectée »**,

, while controversial, demonstrate her forward-thinking approach to political change. Ndoki has consistently reiterated her commitment to the values of the MRC, particularly the pursuit of freedom and democratic reforms, and her desire to see Cameroon develop into a more just and equitable society.

Despite her absence from the public eye in recent years, Ndoki has continued to stand up for the rights of political prisoners and those facing injustice in Cameroon. In 2020, she was nominated as "Politician of the Year" at the CamerounWeb Awards, a testament to her ongoing influence and importance in the political landscape.

As Cameroon navigates its complex political future, Michelle Ndoki's blend of legal expertise, courage, and unwavering commitment to change makes her a formidable figure to watch.

There is no female governor out of the ten governors in the ten regions of the country. There is a need for more women to take charge and occupy decision making roles in the country



Empowering Voices: Nancy Saiboh's is committed to Good Governance and Electoral Inclusion

Nancy Saiboh is a trailblazer in the fight for transparency, accountability, and youth engagement in Africa's governance. As the Co-Founder and CEO of Actions for Development and Empowerment (ADE), a non-profit organization that actively involves young people in the development process, she is championing a more inclusive and responsible approach to governance. Through ADE, Nancy empowers young people to hold their governments accountable, ensuring they have a voice in shaping the future of their communities and countries.

With over nine years of experience in social justice and community advocacy, Nancy's focus remains on the intersection of public accountability and the law, particularly how it can improve the socio-economic well-being of vulnerable groups—especially women, youth, and marginalized communities. As the National Director of Follow The Money – Cameroon, she leads efforts to ensure accountability in public procurement processes and the allocation of public funds for community and social development projects.

Nancy's leadership extends far beyond Cameroon's borders. In 2022, she engaged in a high-level debate on democracy and governance during French President Emmanuel Macron's visit to Cameroon, representing the voices of young civil society organizations. She also represented Cameroon at the 2018 African Youth Congress on Anti-Corruption, hosted in Nigeria, underscoring her influence on the international stage.



One of her most recent initiatives, MyVoteMyVoice, is an ambitious project aimed at increasing electoral participation among underrepresented groups in Cameroon, particularly women, youth, and people with disabilities. This initiative was officially launched by ADE in November 2024, with the support of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). In a country where voter apathy is high, especially among youth and marginalized populations, MyVoteMyVoice seeks to address this challenge by raising awareness about the importance of voting and civic responsibility. The project's core objectives are to inform and encourage the electoral participation of underrepresented groups, increase civic engagement, and tackle the root causes of low voter turnout.

Through training sessions, information campaigns, and local mobilizations, ADE plans to register over 10,000 new voters by the 2025 elections, ensuring a more representative and active electorate. The ultimate goal is to empower citizens—regardless of gender, age, or ability—to have their voices heard and contribute to shaping the future of Cameroon.

Nancy Saiboh's work continues to inspire a generation of women leaders in politics, and her dedication to youth advocacy and public accountability is transforming the political landscape in Cameroon and beyond. Through her leadership, ADE and initiatives like MyVoteMyVoice are ensuring that marginalized communities are not only heard, but also empowered to create meaningful change.

"KATE FOTSO: LEADING CHANGE IN AFRICA'S COCOA INDUSTRY AND EMPOWERING WOMEN"

Kate Fotso is not just a successful business leader—she is a trailblazer who is reshaping the landscape of African agribusiness and advocating for women's leadership in every corner of the industry. As CEO of Telcar Cocoa, Fotso has taken a family-owned business and turned it into a regional powerhouse, rejuvenating Cameroon's cocoa market and promoting sustainable, fair trade practices that have set the standard for the industry. Yet her impact goes far beyond the bottom line; she is deeply committed to fostering social change, economic empowerment, and community development.

Fotso's leadership philosophy is rooted in the belief that empowering women is the key to unlocking long-term, inclusive growth. Through her mentorship programs, she actively invests in young women entering the agribusiness sector, offering them the tools, guidance, and support needed to rise into leadership roles. She is particularly focused on young women in cocoa farming, providing opportunities to break into a traditionally male-dominated field. Her advocacy for women in agriculture goes hand in hand with her efforts to create more robust market networks for certified cocoa farmers, ultimately improving financial stability for producers and helping strengthen local economies.



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Her support for Cameroon's cocoa farmers goes beyond market access. Through Telcar Cocoa, Fotso has helped to establish structured networks that foster fair trade and ensure farmers receive competitive prices for their harvests. This focus on sustainability is not just about the environment but about building a solid foundation for the long-term economic health of farming communities. By empowering farmers to have a stake in the future of the cocoa industry, she is creating a more resilient, self-sustaining sector that uplifts entire communities.

In addition to her work with women and farmers, Fotso's leadership has placed Cameroonian cocoa on the global map, showcasing it as a product of high quality and ethical farming practices. Through strategic partnerships and a commitment to innovation, she has opened new markets and increased the visibility of African cocoa in the global supply chain, all while ensuring that local farmers benefit directly from these expanded opportunities.

What sets Kate Fotso apart is her ability to merge business acumen with a deep sense of social responsibility. She has redefined what success looks like in African agribusiness, proving that growth, innovation, and sustainability can go hand in hand. Her story is one of resilience, creativity, and unwavering determination. She has navigated the challenges of leading a family business in a competitive, globalized market, and in doing so, has paved the way for future generations of women entrepreneurs and community leaders.

Through her work, Kate Fotso has not only transformed Telcar Cocoa but has become a symbol of empowerment and change for women in leadership across Africa. By tackling challenges head-on, supporting the next generation of leaders, and fostering economic development, she is creating a lasting legacy of transformation that will resonate for years to come. Her impact reaches far beyond business—it is a testament to the power of leadership that prioritizes people, sustainability, and empowerment for all.

VÉRONIQUE EBENYE EPANGUÉ: A TRAILBLAZER IN CENTRAL AFRICA'S LOGISTICS SECTOR



In a world where logistics is essential to economic growth and market integration, Véronique Ebenye Epangué stands out as a leading figure in Central Africa. With over 20 years of experience at global logistics giant DHL, she has become a symbol of resilience, expertise, and determination, inspiring a new generation of African professionals.

Véronique's journey began in 1999 when she joined DHL Express as an intern. Her sharp focus on customer relations and professionalism propelled her through various strategic roles. In 2009, she moved to DHL Global Forwarding as a Sales Manager, where she refined her skills in business development and account management. By 2016, she was appointed Head of Sales & Customer Service, overseeing teams to enhance customer satisfaction and boost the company's commercial performance.

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In January 2020, she reached a pivotal point in her career when she became Country Manager of DHL Global Forwarding in Cameroon. In this role, Véronique leads the company's operations in the region, developing strategies to meet local demands and strengthening DHL's position as a logistics leader. Despite challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, she navigated her team through crises while fostering innovative solutions.

Véronique is among the few women leading in a traditionally male-dominated industry, and her career reflects a broader trend of increasing recognition of female talent in Africa. Her success is a powerful testament to the potential of African leaders to turn challenges into opportunities. As she continues to drive DHL's growth in Central Africa, Véronique Ebenye Epangué remains a true role model for aspiring professionals across the continent.

RUN WITH PURPOSE

Local and global opportunities for women and girls



The Future of Leadership

2025 Women's Global Leadership Forum

2025 Women Innovators & Leaders Development (WILD) Women's Global Leadership Forum

Application Deadline: February 16, 2025

Are you an ambitious early-to-mid-career woman in global development looking to elevate your leadership skills? The 2025 Women Innovators & Leaders Development (WILD) Women's Global Leadership Forum is the perfect opportunity for you! This transformative program is designed to equip emerging female leaders with the tools, resources, and network needed to excel in senior leadership roles.

Program Overview

The WILD Fellowship Program offers an exceptional experience for 15 selected women, providing you with:

- Personalized Leadership Development: Tailored coaching to enhance your skills
- Access to Exclusive Learning Hubs: Gain knowledge from world-class resources.
- Global Networking Opportunities: Connect with a diverse group of changemakers.
- Public Speaking Exposure: Build your visibility and influence.
- Participation in the Women's Global Leadership Forum (online): A unique space to engage with fellow leaders and experts from around the globe.

Benefits

Leadership Development Tools: Equip yourself with the skills to lead at the highest levels.

Personalized Coaching: Receive one-on-one guidance tailored to your leadership goals.

Global Network of Changemakers: Be part of an international community of like-minded women making a difference.

Selection Criteria

To apply, please submit the following:

1. Completed application form.
2. Personal statement (max. 500 words).
3. Updated resume/CV.
4. Recommendation letter.

Important Dates

Application Deadline: February 16, 2025

Selection Notification: March 7, 2025

Program Start: April 2025

Global Forum Dates: May 13-15, 2025 (Online)

Graduation: September 2025

How to Apply

For more information and to submit your application, visit the official webpage for the 2025 Women Innovators & Leaders Development (WILD) Women's Global Leadership Forum.

Take the next step in your leadership journey and join a global community of inspiring women who are shaping the future. Apply today!

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*Empowering Women Entrepreneurs: Apply for the Women Entrepreneurs Award 2025
Deadline to Apply: February 18, 2025*



Are you a female entrepreneur leading a business focused on sustainable solutions in health or food security? This is your chance to elevate your venture to new heights! The Women Entrepreneurs Award 2025 is seeking 15 innovative women entrepreneurs from Asia Pacific, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East who are tackling some of the world's most pressing challenges.

Why Should You Apply?

€25,000 in Cash Support: Receive funding to scale your sustainable business and accelerate growth.

6-Month Accelerator Program: Gain valuable mentorship and resources to propel your business forward.

Global Visibility: Boost your brand's visibility through strategic communication activities.

Join a Global Network: Connect with the Bayer Foundation's alumni community and the Impact Hub Network to expand your reach and influence.

RUN WITH PURPOSE

Who Should Apply?

The award is open to women-led enterprises that are focused on creating innovative solutions in health or food security, with a commitment to long-term sustainability. If your business is dedicated to making a meaningful impact and solving global challenges, we want to hear from you.



Key Benefits for Winners:

- Financial Support to grow your enterprise.
- Accelerated Growth with expert guidance
- Enhanced Global Recognition through exposure.
- Networking with a community of like-minded changemakers.

This is an incredible opportunity to take your idea to the next level. The Women Entrepreneurs Award 2025 will provide you with the support, resources, and global recognition you need to create lasting impact. Apply today to become one of the 15 winners who will shape the future of health and food security!

Apply now and make your mark on the world!

www.237womenonthemove.org

