

**BUSINESS DAY**

# WOMEN'S HIGHLIGHTS

JUNE 20, 2025



## ADEOLU ADEWUMI-ZER

Afro-optimist empowering  
Africa for growth, impact

# Polo AVENUE

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# EDITOR'S NOTE



**A** great day it is and as usual, we have a beautiful edition of Women's Hub for you this week. On our cover is ADEOLU ADEWUMI-ZER, an Afro-optimist empowering Africa for growth and impact. She is a global strategist and has championed African excellence for over twenty-five years. She is the founder of ZER Consulting Africa, and her book 'Afro-Optimism Unleashed' empowers readers with the tools to unleash their inner Afro-optimist and unlock supercharged business growth. It achieved Amazon international best-seller status, reaching #1 in the USA, #3 in France and #4 in the UK. Reading what several people had to say about the best-seller is indeed motivating. We had an amazing time interviewing Adeolu, but we also shared some reviews of the book with you. Enjoy!

Here are other articles in this edition:

- 3 Financial Mindsets You Must Juggle for a Healthier Money Life.
- Beyond Tech: Why Africa's Competitive Edge Lies in Digital Well-being.
- Boosting Immune Health Naturally.
- From Blockchain to Boarding Pass: UAE's Stablecoin Innovation Takes Off.
- The Subtle Undermining of Professional Women.
- When Success Doesn't Feel Like You Thought It Would.

Sarabell Couture is a distinguished name in the world of luxury fashion, renowned for their exquisite bespoke and bridal wear. We share some of their stunning outfits in this edition.

This week, we teach you how to make braised chicken in coconut milk and cranberry orange scones. Follow our instructions and thank us later.

Next week is just around the corner, don't miss us too much ...just before you say "Where did they go?" we will be right here...again!

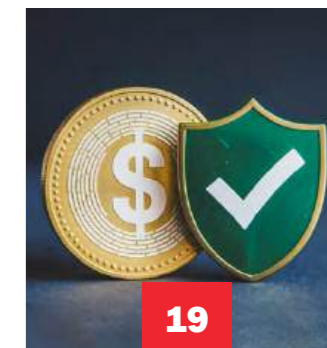
Take care!

**Kemi Ajumobi**

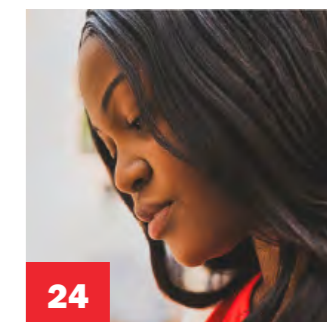
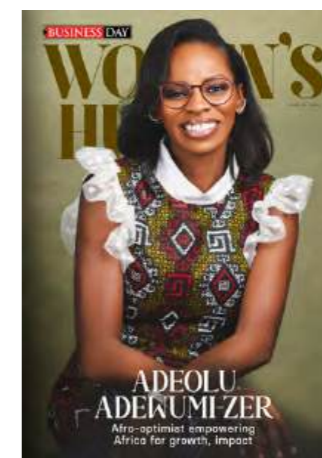
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# ADEOLU ADEWUMI-ZER

Afro-optimist empowering  
Africa for growth, impact

K E M I A J U M O B I



**AFRO-OPTIMISM MEANS  
ACKNOWLEDGING OUR  
CONTINENT'S COMPLEXITIES  
WHILE FIRMLY BELIEVING IN  
ITS IMMENSE POTENTIAL FOR  
GROWTH, INNOVATION, AND  
POSITIVE TRANSFORMATION**

Adeolu Adewumi-Zer, a renowned Afro-optimist, is a global strategist and has championed African excellence for over twenty-five years. As the founder of ZER Consulting Africa, she empowers leaders and businesses across the continent to achieve sustainable growth and impact. Having spearheaded strategic growth initiatives across Africa, before leading a major financial institution in Nigeria, Adeolu's strategic insights and unwavering commitment to excellence have earned her numerous accolades. *Afro-Optimism Unleashed*, the new book Adeolu Adewumi-Zer, empowers readers with the tools to unleash their inner Afro-optimist and unlock supercharged business growth. It achieved Amazon international best-seller status, reaching #1 in the USA, #3 in France and #4 in the UK. It is currently available on Amazon, many international online bookshops and locally in Nigeria via Rovingheights Books. A mother of two global Africans, her Afro-optimism extends beyond business as she advocates for financial inclusion, gender equality, and quality education.



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**AFRO-OPTIMISM IS  
THE ROCKET FUEL  
IGNITING AFRICA'S  
ENTREPRENEURIAL  
SPIRIT**

**Can you elaborate on your concept of Afro-optimism and what it means for you personally and professionally?**

**A**fro-optimism is a foundational mindset and a powerful mandate for Africa. Personally, it means acknowledging our continent's complexities while firmly believing in its immense potential for growth, innovation, and positive transformation. It's choosing hope over cynicism and feeling deep pride in our identity and achievements. I see myself as a realistic optimist because I focus on our continent's progress, even while recognizing evidence to the contrary. This belief fuels my unwavering commitment to excellence.

Professionally, Afro-optimism is the rocket fuel igniting Africa's entrepreneurial spirit. It compels my firm ZER Consulting Africa to empower African leaders and businesses to SCALE African excellence to the global stage. This mindset shifts focus from limitations to opportunities, inspiring context-specific solutions that create lasting impact and a future we can all be proud of. It's about taking action, backing our people, and fostering enterprises that are both highly successful and deeply impactful.

**What inspired you to establish ZER Consulting Africa, and what has been the most rewarding aspect of running this organisation?**

My inspiration to establish ZER Consulting Africa (ZER) stemmed from a clear observation upon my return to the continent in 2017: Africa is brimming with talent and innovative ideas, often hampered by a lack of exposure and experience. After over two decades building successful companies for others, I realised it was time to invest my drive and passion into building something for my children and the next generation of African leaders. ZER became my answer to providing that strategic guidance, lever-

aging my global experience to empower African businesses.

The most rewarding aspect is undoubtedly the impact we make. It's the "fun" of being passionate about what I do, the "flexibility" entrepreneurship offers, with the entire team working remotely, and the "freedom" to choose clients who truly align with our purpose. Seeing African businesses scale up, create jobs, attract funding, and transform communities, embodying "African excellence" on the global stage – that's truly what brings me the greatest satisfaction.

**Share one of the most successful sustainable growth initiatives you've implemented across Africa and the impact it had?**

One of the most successful sustainable growth initiatives I spearheaded was driving the acquisition strategy for a major global insurer across Africa. This involved identifying key markets and orchestrating transformative deals to consolidate their pan-African presence. A pivotal example was signing a significant deal in East Africa, which was instrumental in expanding access to financial services across key East African markets, and part of consolidating the global insurer's pan-African presence.



**ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL SUSTAINABLE GROWTH INITIATIVES I SPEARHEADED WAS DRIVING THE ACQUISITION STRATEGY FOR A MAJOR GLOBAL INSURER ACROSS AFRICA**

My role involved pouring significant capital – a substantial half-billion euros – into the heart of Africa, directly contributing to financial inclusion and market consolidation. This initiative not only propelled

the global institution's growth but also demonstrated how strategic investment can unlock immense potential for the continent. It created a platform for enhanced financial inclusion and showcased Africa's readiness for large-scale, impactful partnerships, truly scaling African excellence on the global stage.



**AFRICA IS BRIMMING WITH TALENT AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS, OFTEN HAMPERED BY A LACK OF EXPOSURE AND EXPERIENCE**

**What is your vision for Africa in the nearest future, and what role do you see ZER Consulting Africa playing in that future?**

My vision for Africa in the nearest future is one where our continent is not just recognised, but celebrated, as a global leader in innovation, sustainable growth, and excellence. I see a future where African businesses are actively driving positive social transformation, and our youthful population, the largest globally, is fully empowered to realise its immense potential. This is the "new Africa" that fuels my Afro-optimism.

ZER is purpose-built to play a pivotal role in this future. We aim to be the strategic partner empowering African leaders and businesses to SCALE their African excellence. Through our proprietary framework, we'll continue to provide strategic clarity, foster the talent, cultivate the ethical leadership, strengthen the governance, and facilitate the financial and social capital needed to ensure these



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**TECHNOLOGY IS NOT JUST INFLUENCING, IT'S REDEFINING THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS IN AFRICA**

businesses not only thrive commercially but also contribute significantly to our continent's economic prosperity and social progress. We are dedicated to nurturing the next generation of global Africans.

**How do you see technology influencing the future of business in Africa, particularly in terms of innovation and scalability?**

Technology is not just influencing, it's redefining the future of business in Africa. It's the ultimate equaliser, offering unprecedented innovation and scalability. We're seeing a vibrant digital revolution, particularly driven by mobile technology, transforming every sector from financial services to healthcare and education. Mobile money, for instance, has unlocked

financial inclusion for millions, enabling entirely new business models.

For innovation, technology allows African entrepreneurs to develop context-specific solutions that directly address local challenges at scale. It reduces geographical barriers, fosters connectivity, and provides access to global insights. For scalability, digital platforms and data analytics enable businesses to reach wider markets, streamline operations, and manage growth far more efficiently than ever before. African businesses leveraging generative AI, e-commerce, and mobile payment systems aren't just adapting; they're leapfrogging traditional development stages, proving that tech-driven innovation is our fastest path to global competitiveness and sustainable impact.

**What advice do you have for top corporate women who are transiting in their career?**

For top corporate women navigating career transitions, my primary advice is to embrace your authentic self – unapologetically. Stepping into new leadership often brings imposter syndrome; that nagging voice asking if you truly belong. But your unique

perspective, shaped by your journey as an African woman, is your superpower. Don't try to fit a mold; leverage your strengths and bring your whole self to the table. Your authentic voice and style will attract your "tribe" and amplify your impact.

Secondly, prioritise ruthless self-care and set boundaries. The pressure to be everything to everyone is immense. Learn to say "no" without guilt, even to worthwhile initiatives that conflict with your priorities. This isn't weakness; it's a critical leadership skill that prevents burnout and ensures sustainable effectiveness.

Finally, cultivate your network relentlessly, before you need it. These

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**FOR TOP CORPORATE WOMEN NAVIGATING CAREER TRANSITIONS, MY PRIMARY ADVICE IS TO EMBRACE YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF – UNAPOLOGETICALLY**



**YOUR AUTHENTIC  
VOICE AND STYLE  
WILL ATTRACT  
YOUR "TRIBE" AND  
AMPLIFY YOUR  
IMPACT**

relationships provide invaluable support, mentorship, and opportunities, proving that true resilience is often built through strong community.

**When did you know it was time to write your book, what should people look out for when reading and what has the impact been so far?**

Although I had resisted for years, I knew it was finally time to write *Afro-Optimism Unleashed* when I was confronted with the words: "the book that will change your life is not the one that you read, but the one that you write". Following a period of deep introspection after my last corporate role, an epiphany crystallised: it was time to create something foundational for the next generation of African leaders, a practical roadmap to scale their vision and impact beyond individual consulting engagements. Having spent over two decades building successful companies for others, I understood that writing this book was my next crucial step in paying it forward.

When reading, look for the practical, actionable SCALE framework – a roadmap grounded in real-world African realities, blending global best practices with local insights. Also, embrace the underlying message of Afro-optimism – a mindset of belief in Africa's immense potential, even amidst challenges.

The impact so far has been incredibly rewarding: beyond becoming an international best-seller on Amazon and an International Book Awards finalist, the most fulfilling is feedback from leaders across Africa and the diaspora who call it a

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**HAVING SPENT OVER TWO DECADES BUILDING SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES FOR OTHERS, I UNDERSTOOD THAT WRITING THIS BOOK WAS MY NEXT CRUCIAL STEP IN PAYING IT FORWARD**

game-changer, affirming that our message of African excellence resonates globally, even in today's pessimistic environment.

**Concluding words**

To all African entrepreneurs and leaders, remember: Africa's time is unequivocally now. We possess the talent, the drive, and the resilience to build a future of unparal-

leled excellence. It won't always be easy, but with purpose-driven innovation, strong communities, and ethical leadership, we can truly achieve anything.

My hope is that *Afro-Optimism Unleashed*, and the work of ZER Consulting Africa, serve as a powerful catalyst for you. Embrace the challenge, believe deeply in yourselves, and leverage our SCALE framework to transform your vision into tangible impact. Let's continue to shape a brighter future for the continent, together.

Finally, join the #ZERnation movement – because by combining business brilliance with a deep commitment to social change, we have the power to create a lasting legacy for generations to come.

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**TO ALL AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURS AND LEADERS, REMEMBER: AFRICA'S TIME IS UNEQUIVOCALLY NOW**



# Book Review: Afro-Optimism Unleashed



"Afro-Optimism Unleashed is a book that is propelling a movement. Adeolu captures the urgency and opportunity of African enterprise with clarity, heart, and strategy. From leadership to governance and capital raising, each chapter offers real-world lessons grounded in local context but globally relevant. As contributors to Chapter 8, which focuses on growth capital and investment-readiness, we were honoured to lend our voice to a conversation that matters deeply to African founders and funders. This is a book for entrepreneurs serious about scale, and for investors seeking genuine insight into Africa's next generation of business leaders. It's practical, affirming, and unflinchingly honest. A much-needed addition to the growing chorus of Africa's call to action."

**Seun Oshunkoya, Principal Partner,**  
Westwood Investment Consultancy (Nigeria)

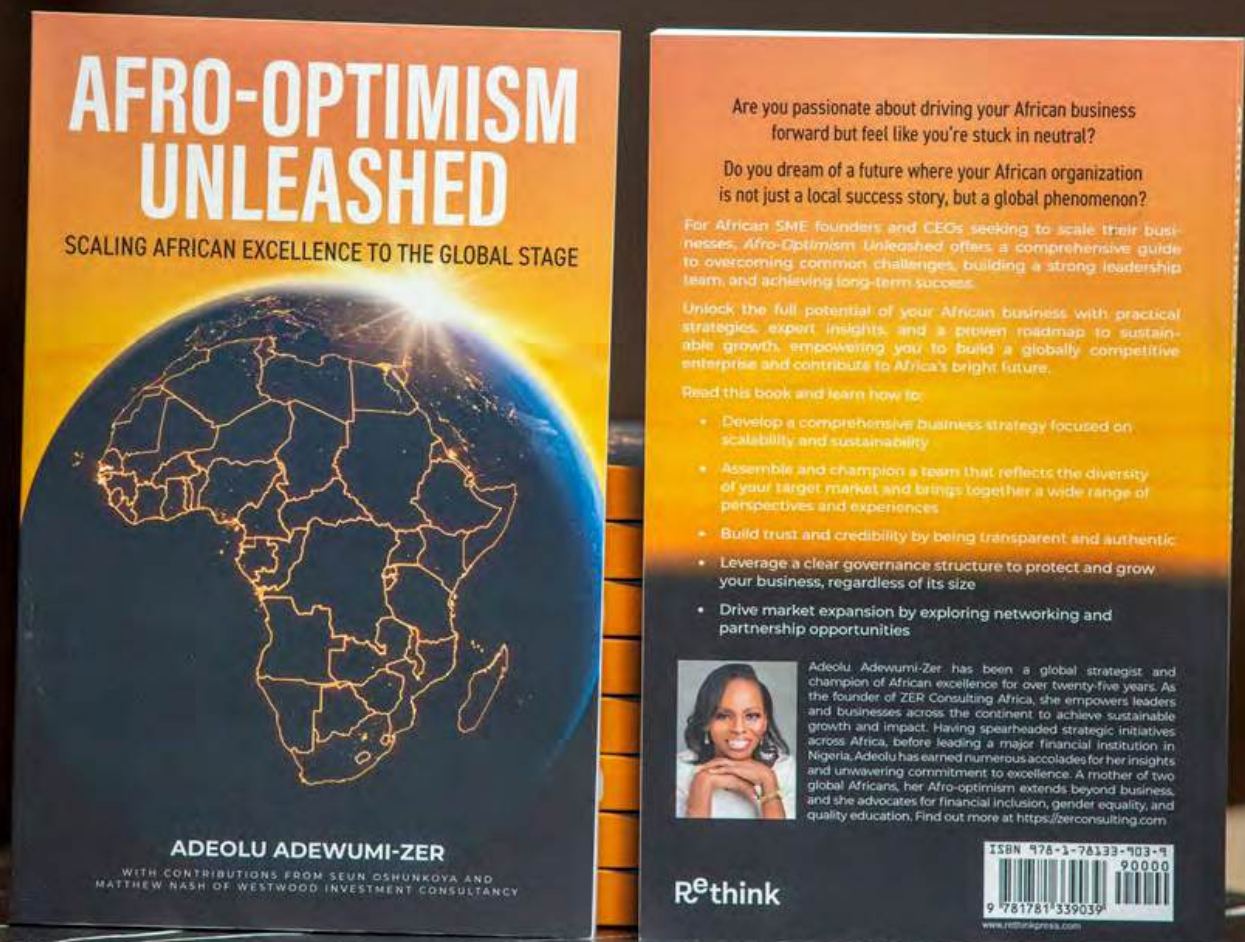
"Afro-Optimism Unleashed is a bold and inspiring blueprint for entrepreneurs who believe in Africa's future. I particularly loved how Adeolu blends deep insight with practical strategies, especially through her powerful SCALE framework: Strategize, Champion,

Accelerate, Leverage, Expand. I was impacted by the way she connects purpose, governance, and growth in a manner that feels truly tailored to the African context. What struck me most is her insistence that Afro-optimism isn't just a mindset, it's a responsibility. Her message is clear: we must lead with excellence and expand with intention. This isn't just a book about business; it's about building legacies and changing narratives, and I could not drop it once I started. I'm profoundly grateful for this work."

**Grace Waniko-Omolaiye**

Head Claims Management, Hygeia HMO (Nigeria)

"As an African entrepreneur deeply invested in building solutions for our continent, Afro-Optimism Unleashed felt like a personal letter to me. Adeolu doesn't just share hope; she presents a clear and actionable roadmap for scaling African excellence to the global stage. Reading this book felt like a direct challenge to aim higher, think bigger, and fully embrace the power and potential we already possess as Africans. It reminded me that our stories, innovations, and businesses are not only locally relevant, but they also hold



global significance. The insights reinforced my belief that Africa's future will be shaped by bold, value-driven leaders who are unapologetically optimistic and relentlessly committed to excellence. This book is both a mirror and a compass: it reflects our potential and points us toward what is possible. I plan to add Afro-Optimism Unleashed to my annual January reading list to guide my ambitions and the growth of my businesses."

#### Oghenetega Iortim

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Figorr (Nigeria)

"Afro-Optimism Unleashed is a powerful and practical guide that helped me rethink my business and leadership journey. Adeolu's emphasis on "glocalisation" reminded me that success starts with impact at home. Her insights encouraged me to focus less on chasing every trend and more on what matters to my local market and community. The section on personal branding—highlighting leaders like Richard Branson and Oprah Winfrey—was a wake-up call. It helped me realise how important it is to build a brand rooted in purpose and authenticity. But the most significant shift came from her "ONE Thing" concept, where she challenges us to define what drives everything we do. That helped me clarify my strategy, reduce distractions, and stay focused. Through her book and guidance, Adeolu didn't just motivate me, she gave me the tools to lead with clarity and build a business that reflects ambition and purpose."

#### Malik Shaffy Lizinde

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, kina Rwanda (Rwanda)

"Adeolu's Afro-Optimism Unleashed should be mandatory reading for every aspiring leader—on the continent and beyond. As someone who has spent most of his life as an expat and half of his 30-year career in Africa, I don't just share her enthusiasm, I feel like I've been waiting for this book my whole professional life. Adeolu masterfully blends global perspective with local purpose, offering a fresh, heartfelt, and profoundly actionable vision for Africa's future. Her call for leaders who think globally but act with local soul is timely, especially in today's turbulent geopolitical climate. With wisdom wrapped in warmth, and insights delivered like a trusted friend with proven experience, her message is clear: Africa's potential isn't just raw—it's ready and, with the right mindset, limitless. This is more than a book—it's a blueprint for the bold future Africa deserves and together with its people can achieve."

#### Tom Kocsis

President and Chief Executive Officer, RAFI Microfinance (Philippines)

"What makes Afro-Optimism Unleashed a must-read is that it touches on the power of ambition, rooted in Ubuntu, building a global mindset without losing our roots, defining African excellence through legacy. Whether you're a founder, a policymaker, or a curious reader, Afro-Optimism Unleashed equips you with the mindset and tools to build, collaborate, and thrive. This book serves as an invitation for every ambitious African and friend of Africa to believe in our collective power, to invest in our people, and to demand excellence. If you believe in the spirit of Ubuntu, and you're ready to "rewrite your story, own your power, and create a legacy that inspires generations," then this book is an indispensable guide."

#### Eunice Ayuma

Executive Director, Bosivs (Kenya)

"Afro-Optimism Unleashed is a robust insight and manifesto into the African entrepreneurial capacity and capabilities by Adeolu. Afro-Optimism Unleashed holds back nothing into unleashing organic insights and consequent growth trajectories towards repeating open boundaries within the African entrepreneurial mindsets. Adeolu's incisive wisdom, thoroughness and experience pushes her thoughts straight into a manual for an uninhibited and unlimited passion for entrepreneurship. In Afro-Optimism Unleashed, Adeolu has crafted a compelling way forward for Africa's future into entrepreneurial challenges. It is not only timely, but thought-provoking, as it is inspiring to action."

#### Chief Dickie Ulu M.CoD FERP

Past Chairman, Allianz Insurance (Nigeria)

"Adeolu's Afro-Optimism Unleashed is more than a book; it is a life manual that every person of African descent should own, read, and reference regularly. She begins with her compelling story—a young Nigerian woman taken from her homeland early, who was yet always yearning to reconnect. This makes her the perfect voice for Afro-optimism, a concept that may seem paradoxical at first but is deeply rooted in resilience, progress, and the celebration of African identity. Adeolu embodies Afro-optimism not just in theory but in practice, and her book offers thought-provoking reflections alongside practical strategies like SCALE and shared value in business. These principles empower African businesses to scale, build excellence, and thrive globally. I highly recommend this book to entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, and anyone passionate about Africa's future. Now is the time for Africans to harness their resources and potential. Afro-Optimism Unleashed will inspire a renewed vision and purpose."

#### Etemore Glover

Chief Executive Officer, Impact Investors' Foundation (Nigeria)

"Afro-Optimism Unleashed resonated with me as someone passionate about Africa's growth and entrepreneurship. Adeolu's insights, drawn from decades of experience across the continent, offer both a visionary and practical guide to scaling African excellence globally. Her SCALE Framework—Strategy, Championing Excellence, Accelerating Leadership, Leveraging Governance, and Expanding Impact—speaks to a clear roadmap to apply in my own organization. What stuck with me most was her emphasis on mindset: the call to believe in Africa's immense potential despite the challenges. I found the book empowering, especially in how it balances ambition with a strong grounding in local realities. It's rare to find a book that both inspires and equips you with actionable tools, but this one does. Afro-Optimism Unleashed reminded me that with purpose-driven leadership and a global perspective, African businesses can truly lead on the world stage. It's a must-read for anyone committed to rewriting Africa's narrative through enterprise."

#### Mfon Akintujoye

Head Branch Services, First Bank of Nigeria (Nigeria)

"Afro-Optimism Unleashed is a powerful and inspiring read filled with actionable advice and real-life experiences that resonate deeply. It's designed to build globally-minded leaders on the continent. The book challenges you to think big, stay hopeful, and take bold steps toward building and scaling impactful ventures in Africa. It felt less like reading and more like being guided by someone who truly understands the journey. For anyone curious about the book or eager to grow in leadership and entrepreneurship, this is one you shouldn't miss."

#### William Nwogbo

Chief Executive Officer, ProDevs Outsourcing (Nigeria)

"When I first picked up Afro-Optimism Unleashed, I wasn't looking for a feel-good narrative or another abstract vision of Africa's future. I was looking for something practical, honest, and bold. Adeolu delivered all three. This book is not just a call to action, it's a well-mapped pathway. Adeolu blends her personal journey with sharp insights on leadership, accountability, and the power of local solutions. Her SCALE model struck a chord with me immediately. It offers the kind of framework that entrepreneurs like me are constantly trying to build in real time, often through trial and error. At Winock, we've begun embedding the SCALE model into our leadership framework. We've aligned strategy discussions across subsidiaries with our group-level vision, redefined accountability structures through clearer KPIs and audit trails, and we're now working intentionally on building a culture that reinforces long-term thinking over short-term hustle. Execution remains the true test, and we're treating it not as a checkbox, but as a daily commitment. This book reminded me that Afro-optimism isn't a hashtag, it's a philosophy. One that requires courage, competence, and a refusal to compromise on excellence just because the ter-

rain is tough. It's a message that deserves more than applause. It deserves adoption."

#### Sanmi Lajuwomi

Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Winock Solar (Nigeria)

"Afro-Optimism Unleashed is a must-read for any African entrepreneur aspiring to make a global impact. Adeolu's insights on cultivating a global mindset and building strong networks are invaluable. The practical guidance and real-world examples make this book both inspiring and actionable. I highly recommend it to anyone looking to scale their vision and achieve sustainable success."

#### Bode Pedro

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Casava (Nigeria)

"Afro-Optimism Unleashed is a must-read for any African entrepreneur aspiring to make a global impact. Adeolu's insights on cultivating a global mindset and building strong networks are invaluable. The practical guidance and real-world examples make this book both inspiring and actionable. I highly recommend it to anyone looking to scale their vision and achieve sustainable success."

#### Derrick Edem Akpalu

PhD, Chief Executive Officer and Co-founder, Revna Biosciences (Ghana)

"Afro-Optimism Unleashed was a refreshing read, even for a non-native English speaker like me. It's well-structured and full of engaging stories and practical insights. It definitely refuelled my commitment to the development of our communities and making a positive impact on people's lives. I highly recommend it to African business leaders and anyone considering returning to Africa. It's a valuable resource for navigating and transforming the challenges into opportunities for the continent."

#### Ibrahim Coulibaly

Managing Director, Finafrica Assurances (Senegal)

## PERSONAL FINANCE



# 3 FINANCIAL MINDSETS YOU MUST JUGGLE FOR A HEALTHIER MONEY LIFE

SOLA ADESAKIN

**W**hen it comes to personal finance, many of us are unknowingly caught in a tug-of-war between the past, the present, and the future. But to achieve real financial growth and peace of mind, you need to learn how to juggle all three wisely. Let's break it down.

## 1 Let Go of the Financial Past

Here's the truth: you cannot invest in the past. It holds no return, only the weight of bad money decisions, debts, and financial regret. And while debt isn't inherently evil, when unmanaged, it acts like an anchor that keeps you stuck.

Are you still paying off a loan from a lifestyle choice you don't even enjoy anymore or carrying debt from impulsive shopping? It's time to take stock, make a repayment plan, and move on. Focus on reducing or eliminating bad debt (especially high-interest consumer debt). The goal isn't shame; it's freedom.

## 2 Master the Present With Financial Calm

Today's choices determine tomorrow's realities. In a high-inflation environment, it's tempting to live in survival mode. But reacting emotionally to money often leads to more financial stress.

Instead, take control of the present:

Create a budget you can stick to, no matter your income level.

Audit your subscriptions and lifestyle costs (do you really need four streaming platforms?).

Build a small emergency fund to avoid future panic borrowing.

This is about making present-day financial decisions that give you peace, not panic.

Start a 30-day expense tracker. You might be surprised at how much "invisible spending" is draining your peace of mind.

## 3 Build Boldly for the Future

Your financial future won't magically improve—it must be intentionally constructed. And no, you don't have to wait until you "earn more" to start investing or saving. Begin now, no matter how small.

### Here's how you can future-proof your finances:

Start saving 10,000 monthly towards your retirement or children's education.

Buy mutual funds, ETFs, or stocks.

Invest in soft skills (like digital tools, courses, or personal branding) that can increase your earning power.

### Also, don't forget to protect your future:

Get a life or health insurance plan, especially if you have dependants.

Create a simple will or estate plan—even if it's just to guide how your assets should be handled.

Automate your savings and investments—out of sight, out of temptation.

A healthy financial life isn't about perfection or overnight riches. It's about maintaining a delicate but doable balance between making peace with the past, mastering the present, and building for the future.

### So as you assess your finances this week, ask yourself:

What money decision from the past is still costing me today?

Am I making present-day choices that offer me peace or pressure?

What am I actively doing to make my financial future better than my present?

Remember, balance, not busyness, is the real financial flex. Don't just hustle. Make your money count at every stage.



**Sola Adesakin (FCA, FCCA CPA MBA)** is a Personal/Business Finance Coach and Chartered Accountant with over 20 years of hands-on experience. She is passionate about helping people understand the "make-manage-multiply money" message, maximize their resources, achieve their crucial financial milestones and build true wealth through the concept of financial planning. As a financial enthusiast, Sola is an advocate for SDG5 and SDG10, with a firm belief in achieving gender equality and reducing inequality via financial literacy and access to funding. Sola is the author of currently eight (published books and several unpublished articles in the public domain). She has recently been admitted into the Forbes Coaching Council, as she continues to leverage global alliances and partnerships to amplify the money message around the world.

## BLOCKCHAIN

# FROM BLOCKCHAIN TO BOARDING PASS: UAE'S STABLECOIN INNOVATION TAKES OFF

OGE ANENE



The United Arab Emirates has taken a major step in translating blockchain technology into real-world utility. In a first for the region, Air Arabia now accepts AE Coin, a regulated stablecoin backed 1:1 by the UAE dirham, for flight bookings.

This move isn't a pilot test it's a functional integration that allows travelers to book tickets through the AEC Wallet, issued by Al Maryah Bank (MBank), offering on-chain payments, instant settlement, and low transaction fees. It marks a significant moment for both stablecoin adoption and the future of regulated digital payments globally.

Unlike speculative tokens, AE Coin is built for utility. It's backed by dirhams held in reserve and approved by the Central Bank of the UAE. That approval sets it apart: it gives users confidence, institutions clarity, and developers a real-world sandbox for innovation. But aviation is only the beginning.

The UAE has been quietly laying the groundwork for a robust digital asset ecosystem. From bank-issued stablecoins to regulated dollar-backed tokens, financial institutions in the country are moving in lockstep with regulators to modernize payments and expand digital finance access. The upcoming launch of the UAE's digital dirham (CBDC) further demonstrates the country's commitment to building blockchain-based infrastructure, not just discussing it.

What makes this approach different is execution. Payments, banking, and even AI infrastructure are being connected on-chain, not through hype, but through policy-backed innovation and commercial partnerships. The UAE isn't positioning Web3 as a futuristic ambition. It's being built into its financial systems today.

#### Why This Matters for Africa

For African nations exploring the future of money, the UAE's model offers valuable lessons. It shows what's possible when stablecoins are backed, regulated, and tied to real economic use cases. Instead of waiting for adoption to happen, the UAE is designing for it from the start, through regulatory clarity, institutional support, and public-private collaboration.

Many African countries are still in the early stages of digital currency development. Some, like Nigeria, have launched CBDCs but continue to face adoption challenges. Others are cautiously watching global trends. The UAE's progress offers an alternative path: one that balances innovation with trust, and experimentation with structure.

As the lines blur between traditional finance and blockchain-powered infrastructure, one thing is clear: stablecoins are no longer just a narrative. They're becoming the rails for real-world payments. And countries that build early, with the right safeguards, may gain a first-mover advantage.

The question now isn't whether stablecoins will shape the future of money, it's who will shape them best.



**Oge Anene** is a lawyer, called to the Nigerian Bar in 2012. As a blockchain lawyer, at the forefront of blockchain tech investments, she plays a pivotal role as a consultant to companies entering the world of blockchain and asset tokenisation. Oge is committed to unraveling the emerging opportunities within blockchain, with a specific focus on real-world asset tokenisation. Through executive training and workshops, she is part of a team that paves the way for this innovative venture to thrive in Africa. Oge is a certified NLP practitioner and holds a certificate in cognitive behaviour therapy.

# BEYOND TECH: WHY AFRICA'S COMPETITIVE EDGE LIES IN DIGITAL WELLBEING

AMAKA IBEJI

**A**s International Picnic Day encourages us to step away from screens and reconnect with one another, it also offers a timely metaphor for the shift African boards must make toward Digital Wellbeing. For years, digital transformation has been synonymous with adopting new technologies and expanding markets, but as Africa advances toward a digital future, it is essential to recognise that sustainable progress depends not only on innovation but also on the people who drive it. Now, more than ever, leaders must balance the drive for technological advancement with a conscious commitment to human well-being, ensuring that artificial intelligence and other digital tools enhance, rather than deplete, our most valuable resource: our people.

Digital Well-being is about intentionally fostering a healthy relationship with technology so that it supports, rather than

undermines, our work and personal lives. This concept extends beyond individual habits to the cultures and governance structures that shape digital interactions within organisations. The urgency of this issue is highlighted by troubling statistics: over 80% of East African employees report moderate to extreme stress, with many experiencing fatigue, low motivation, and difficulty focusing symptoms that lead to reduced productivity, or "presenteeism".

The expectation to be always available, respond to emails at all hours, and endure back-to-back virtual meetings blurs the line between work and home, intensifying stress and disproportionately impacting women, who often balance professional and caregiving roles. These pressures erode morale, increase absenteeism and turnover, and ultimately harm organisational performance. As one expert observed, productivity should never come at the expense of wellbeing; when well-being declines, innovation falters and morale drops. Leaders must create environments where technology empowers rather than overwhelms.

The responsibility for championing digital well-being rests squarely with African boards. This is not just an HR issue but a strategic imperative that affects competitive advantage and long-term sustainability. Boards must first address their own digital literacy, as research shows fewer than half of global companies have a board member with a technology background, and the figure is likely even lower in Africa. The real success of digital transformation lies not in the technology itself but in the human flourishing it enables. Boards must be equipped to guide technology discussions that go beyond compliance and risk, embracing innovation and prioritizing the human experience. Just as some cities are developing digital rights governance frameworks to protect rights in digital spaces, African corporations should adopt holistic approaches that safeguard both people and progress.

Building a foundation for digital wellbeing begins with a commitment to core values such as privacy, equality, and self-determination, integrating these principles into every aspect of digital strategy. This means establishing strong data protection policies, ensuring transparency about data use, and putting safeguards in place to prevent misuse. It also requires acknowledging that, without careful governance,

digital technologies can deepen existing inequalities.

Structures that support these commitments might include appointing digital human rights champions or creating advisory councils with diverse voices to encourage engagement and cooperation. In practice, this means embedding digital well-being across all departments and ensuring that technology leaders consider both innovation and its ethical, human impact. As has been wisely noted, a well-rested mind is the ultimate driver of innovation.

Practical tools to support digital well-being span several areas, from bridging the digital divide by providing infrastructure and training, to empowering employees with control over their personal data and educating them about data rights. For AI and automated decision-making, transparency and accountability are vital: organisations must publish clear policies, assess risks, and invite external audits. Leaders should also set boundaries for technology use, encourage digital breaks, and discourage excessive working hours, since productivity drops significantly beyond 50 hours a week. This approach redefines workplace relationships, ensuring that technology enhances rather than replaces genuine human connection, and helps combat isolation, especially in hybrid work settings. Given Africa's unique challenges, including limited digital infrastructure and inconsistent regulation, these conversations and actions are even more important.

The call to action for African organisational leaders is unmistakable: foster a culture where digital tools serve people, not the other way around. This requires redefining urgency, setting clear communication expectations, and encouraging employees to disconnect and recharge.

Investing in wellbeing is not just a moral choice but a strategic one, yielding measurable improvements in morale, engagement, and productivity. As we cherish moments of shared joy and connection, let's bring that same spirit into our boardrooms.

Imagine the potential if we celebrated work-life balance with the same enthusiasm as quarterly profits. Every board should ask: Are we sacrificing wellbeing for productivity? Do our digital strategies include metrics for human impact? Who is responsible for ethical technology over-

sight? These questions are essential for long-term competitiveness and trust.

By making digital well-being a core principle of governance, African boards can lead the way, ensuring the continent's digital progress is rooted in human flourishing, resilience, and sustainable, inclusive growth. Digital transformation without digital well-being is a short-sighted strategy. African leaders must champion both because when people thrive, organisations win.



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## PERSONAL HEALTH

# BOOSTING IMMUNE HEALTH NATURALLY

DR. MAYMUNAH YUSUF KADIRI



**K**emi sat at her desk, sipping her third cup of coffee for the day. She had been feeling under the weather recently constant fatigue, frequent colds, and sluggishness. At first, she thought it was just work stress, but after falling sick twice in one month, she began to worry.

One evening, while on a call with her older sister, she mentioned how often she had been feeling weak. Her sister, a nutritionist, asked about her daily habits and lifestyle. As they talked, Kemi realised she hadn't been paying much attention to her immune health. She rarely exercised, ate mostly processed foods, and got minimal sleep. It was time for a change.

## Understanding the Immune System

The immune system is the body's defense mechanism against infections, viruses, and diseases. It comprises a network of organs, cells, and proteins that work together to protect the body from harmful pathogens. When the immune system is weakened, the body becomes more susceptible to illnesses, leading to frequent colds, slow healing, and overall fatigue.

Several factors influence immune health, including diet, lifestyle, stress levels, and sleep. Understanding these factors can help individuals make informed choices that enhance their body's natural defenses.

## What Led to It?

After reflecting on her lifestyle, Kemi identified some key factors affecting her immune system:

## Poor Nutrition

Kemi frequently ate fast food and processed meals, which lacked essential vitamins and minerals needed to support her immune system. She rarely consumed fresh fruits and vegetables, which are rich in antioxidants and essential nutrients that help the body fight infections.

## Lack of Physical Activity

She had a sedentary lifestyle, spending most of her day sitting at her desk and barely engaging in any form of exercise. Physical activity plays a crucial role in boosting immunity by promoting healthy circulation, which allows immune cells to move freely throughout the body.

## Chronic Stress

Work deadlines and personal responsibilities kept her constantly stressed, which weakened her immune response over time. Chronic stress triggers the release of cortisol, a hormone that, when present in high levels for prolonged periods, suppresses the immune system.

## Sleep Deprivation

Late-night binge-watching and irregular sleep patterns left her feeling exhausted and contributed to her frequent illnesses. Sleep is essential for the body's ability to repair and regenerate immune cells.

## Taking Charge of Her Immune Health

Determined to improve her well-being, Kemi committed to strengthening her immune system through natural and sustainable habits:

## Eating a Nutrient-Rich Diet

Kemi replaced processed foods with whole, nutrient-dense options like leafy greens, citrus fruits, nuts, and lean proteins. She also increased her water intake to keep her body hydrated.

Some key nutrients she focused on included:

- **Vitamin C:** Found in oranges, bell peppers, and strawberries, vitamin C is known for its immune-boosting properties.
- **Vitamin D:** Obtained from sunlight and foods like fatty fish and fortified dairy, vitamin D plays a vital role in immune regulation.

- **Zinc:** Found in nuts, seeds, and legumes, zinc supports immune cell function and wound healing.

- **Probiotics:** Present in yogurt, kefir, and fermented foods, probiotics improve gut health, which is closely linked to immune function.

## Incorporating Regular Exercise

Kemi started with simple routines, like stretching in the morning and taking evening walks. Gradually, she included light home workouts and yoga sessions. Exercise helps boost immunity by improving circulation, reducing stress, and promoting overall well-being.

## Managing Stress Effectively

To reduce stress, she practiced mindfulness and deep breathing exercises. She also made time for hobbies and activities that brought her joy, such as painting and listening to music. Finding ways to unwind allowed her body to focus on healing and maintaining a strong immune response.

## Prioritising Rest

Kemi established a bedtime routine, ensuring she got at least seven hours of quality sleep each night. She reduced screen time before bed and practiced relaxation techniques to improve sleep quality. Adequate rest allows the immune system to function optimally, repairing and regenerating cells.

## The Outcome

After a few months, Kemi noticed significant changes, she felt more energised, her concentration improved, and she fell sick less frequently. Her small, consistent efforts had strengthened her immune system and overall well-being. She also noticed a positive shift in her mood and mental clarity, reinforcing the connection between physical health and emotional well-being.

## Things to Know About Immune Health

A strong immune system is essential for protecting the body against infections and illnesses. Proper nutrition, regular exercise, stress management, and adequate sleep all play crucial roles in maintaining a healthy immune response.

Additional Tips for a Strong Immune System:

- **Get fresh air and sunlight:** Exposure to natural light helps regulate the body's circadian rhythm and supports vitamin D production.

- **Practice good hygiene:** Washing hands frequently and maintaining cleanliness helps prevent the spread of infections.

- **Stay socially connected:** Positive social interactions and laughter have been shown to boost immunity.

Like Kemi, making intentional lifestyle changes can help boost your immune system naturally. Small, daily habits can lead to long-term health benefits because taking care of your body today means a healthier future ahead.



**Dr. Maymunah Yusuf Kadiri (Aka Dr. May)** is popularly referred to as "The Celebrity Shrink." She is a multiple award winning mental health Physician, advocate and coach. She is the Medical Director and Psychiatrist-In-Chief at Pinnacle Medical Services, Nigeria, prominent in the application of innovative clinical approaches in the management/treatment of a wide range of psychological, emotional, and behavioral related disorders. Dr. Kadiri is a Consultant Neuro-Psychiatrist with almost 20 years' experience as a practicing Physician. She is a trained and certified Rational Emotive and Cognitive Behavioural Therapist from Albert Ellis Institute, New York, USA. She is also a certified Trauma Counsellor and Neurofeedback Practitioner.

# When success doesn't feel like you thought it would

NIKE FOLAGBADE

**Y**ou hit a goal. You get the job. You finish the project. You finally launch the thing you've been dreaming about for years. But when it happens, it feels... weird. You're proud, yes. But something's missing. And you can't even explain it because on paper, everything looks great.

Success isn't always the high we imagine it to be. Sometimes, it's sobering. Sometimes, it's lonely. Sometimes, it brings up parts of you that feel completely unprepared for the new level you've stepped into.

I remember a time I reached a huge milestone I had worked years for. I thought I'd feel deeply satisfied. But I felt numb. Then tired. Then confused. And honestly, a little guilty for not feeling more grateful.

Here's what I've come to understand:

Success will expose everything you haven't healed. It brings up insecurities, fears, and imposter syndrome in ways you might not expect. Why? Because it challenges the version of you that was used to striving. Now you're here, and you don't know how to be without the chase.

Things success might stir up that no one warned you about:

- **The fear of losing it:** You finally have what you wanted, and now you're anxious about keeping it.
- **Survivor's guilt:** You made it, but others around you are still struggling and you don't know how to carry that tension.
- **Loneliness:** Your circle might shift, and some people may start to treat you differently.
- **The identity gap:** You're no longer who you were before, but you are still on the journey of becoming.

It's easy to keep moving the goalpost when you're used to surviving but real growth requires sitting in the "now." Not the next. That awkward middle between accomplishment and alignment. You can be successful and still feel the need to recalibrate. That doesn't mean you're ungrateful. It means you're self-aware.

**How to ground yourself when success feels strange:**

- Pause before you plan the next thing. Give yourself time to feel this season before jumping to the next milestone.
- Celebrate internally, not just externally. Ask: "What did this cost me emotionally?" "What did I learn about myself?"
- Check in with your values. Is this success aligned with the life you actually want or just what you thought you were supposed to want?
- Let yourself evolve. Sometimes success shows you what you don't want to do again. That's valid too.

**The truth is:** success is just another chapter. It doesn't always come with euphoria or clarity. Sometimes it comes with questions you didn't even know you needed to ask. And that's okay.

You're allowed to feel proud and a little lost. You're allowed to outgrow the goal once you've reached it. You're allowed to shift your definition of success as you grow. You don't need to pretend it's perfect.

If you feel the need to address your current feelings, let's talk over a session, send an email to [hello@nikefolagbade.com](mailto:hello@nikefolagbade.com)



**Nike Folagbade** is a family life coach and counsellor. She is the founder of Nike Folagbade International.

She's a Master Practitioner of Neuro-Linguistic Programming and Results Coach; an Associate of Family Systems Engineering and a certified emotional intelligence and anger management coach. Equally, she's a SYMBIS facilitator, who helps engaged and married couples prepare for the 'before and after' of their marriages.

Nike has written over seven books including 'Get The Ring', 'Untold Secrets That Wreck Marriages', to mention a few. Her signature course, Warrior Brides Network, has created a movement of single and married women (in over 10 countries) please visit her website [www.nikefolagbade.com](http://www.nikefolagbade.com)

She is also the founder of the 'Love and Life Hub' platform that equips singles and married with the right knowledge on love, dating, marriage and purpose.

# THE SUBTLE UNDERMINING OF PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

EKEMINI  
AKPAKPAN



**P**icture this: your company is organising a team retreat, a product launch, or a strategy session. As roles are being assigned, you notice a familiar pattern - women are steered toward managing logistics, preparing refreshments, or handling decorations, while men are tapped to lead presentations, run tech, or coordinate with leadership. In

another scene, you're in a meeting and, without hesitation, eyes turn to the nearest woman to take notes, serve coffee, or tidy up afterwards.

Scenarios like these may seem minor - almost too mundane to mention. But they're not. They are symptoms of a deeper, structural issue that quietly limits how far women can go in the workplace. They

reflect a reality in which outdated gender roles are still dictating whose contributions are seen, valued, and rewarded.

This article explores how gender role expectations - often unspoken, yet widely accepted - undermine women's authority, stall their growth, and dilute the collective potential of teams and organisations.

## The Lingering Grip of Gender Roles

The dictionary defines gender roles as “the role or behaviour considered being appropriate to a particular gender as determined by prevailing cultural norms.” In everyday terms, gender roles tell us what men and women are supposed to do. Over generations, these roles have become deeply embedded in how society functions - from the household to the boardroom.

So, while women now occupy leadership positions, sit on boards, and run businesses, the remnants of these gendered expectations continue to surface in subtle and insidious ways. A female executive might still be the one asked to “just help organise the snacks,” while her male subordinates run the strategy meeting. A mid-level female manager might be consistently tasked with “people-centered” duties, while her male peers are given high-visibility projects.

**The message is clear:** women are expected to serve, while men are expected to lead.

## The Real Cost of Gendered Expectations at Work

The damage done by gender roles in the workplace goes far beyond inconvenience or mild annoyance. They actively undermine women's career progression, self-perception, and access to opportunity. Here's how:

### 1 They reinforce stereotypes that limit women's potential

When women are consistently expected to perform support tasks, it cements the idea that nurturing and “helping” is their natural role regardless of their skillset or aspirations. This not only limits what others expect from women, but eventually, what women begin to expect from themselves.

### 2 They waste talent

Every time a strategic thinker is pulled into coordinating lunch instead of leading a client meeting, an opportunity is lost - not just for the individual, but for the organisation. Misaligned tasking is a silent productivity killer.

### 3 They distort professional perceptions

Over time, colleagues unconsciously associate women with administrative roles even when they are senior in title. This under-

mines credibility, affects performance evaluations, and influences who gets promoted, mentored, or trusted with bigger responsibilities.

### 4 They increase the invisible workload

From the home to the office, women often carry the emotional and logistical burden of keeping things running smoothly. At work, this shows up as unrecognised, unpaid labour that drains time and energy better spent on strategic outputs.

### 5 They slow the path to equality

According to the World Economic Forum, we are still over a century away from closing the global gender gap. Every time we reinforce the belief that women and men are “naturally” suited for different tasks, we push that finish line even further away.

## So, What Can Women Do?

Navigating gender role expectations at work is a tightrope walk especially for women who are ambitious, visible, and don't want to be labelled “difficult.” But there are ways to resist the pull of old norms while still advancing professionally:

### Set boundaries early

Be clear about your priorities and politely decline tasks that don't align with your role or growth trajectory. Establishing expectations from the start protects your time and reinforces your professional identity.

### Redirect, don't just reject

If someone asks you to take on a stereotypical task, offer a redirection: “I'm currently focused on preparing the business case for next quarter. Would you like me to support with that instead?” This shifts the narrative from helper to leader.

### Back up other women

When you see another woman being boxed into a gendered role, step in. Suggest a rotation or propose someone else based on skill not gender. Solidarity among women is a quiet but powerful form of resistance.

### Engage leadership

If the pattern is widespread, raise it with HR or leadership - not as a complaint, but as a culture conversation. Propose

practical fixes: rotating task assignments, clearer role scopes, and team norms that emphasise equity.

## Final Thoughts

Gender roles in the workplace are not just outdated—they are actively harmful. They diminish women's visibility, suppress leadership potential, and limit organisational innovation. Dismantling them requires more than policy shifts. It calls for a collective unlearning of who we think should do what and why.

Women are not here to soften the workplace or make it run quietly in the background. We are here to lead, to shape, and to thrive. It's time our workplace structures caught up.



Ekemini Akpakpan is the Executive Secretary of Women in Successful Careers, where she serves as the Strategic and Operational Lead. As a trailblazing social impact leader with 13 years of non-profit management experience, she has previously held strategic management roles within the social impact sector, where she built the institutional capacity of non-profit organisations. As a subcontractor for Heifer International, she served as a consultant in developing their Africa gender strategy. Her strategic management experience contributes significantly to designing results-based programming in the gender space.



**MEALS TO ENJOY**  
By ImmaculateBites

# BRAISED CHICKEN IN COCONUT MILK



**B**raised chicken in coconut milk is not your average weeknight chicken. We're talking fall-off-the-bone tender, swimming in a rich coconut milk sauce that's liquid gold. Add in some potatoes and carrots, and boom—comfort food meets tropical vibes in the easiest one-pot dinner of your dreams.

## Ingredients

- 1 4-5 pound (2-2.5k) whole chicken
- 1 tablespoon (15-20g) salt (adjust to preference or replace it with Creole salt)
- 1 teaspoon (2-3g) white pepper
- 3-4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon (5g) grated ginger
- 1 tablespoon (6g) minced thyme
- 1½ tablespoons (7-9g) finely diced lemongrass
- ½-1 medium onion, diced
- 2-3 tablespoons neutral-flavored oil (canola, vegetable, or any oil with a high smoke point)
- 2 teaspoons (5g) smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon (2-3g)
- ½-1 teaspoon (1g) cayenne pepper or more
- 1 15-ounce can coconut milk (regular or light)

- 1 cup (235-240ml) chicken broth (or water; more as needed)
- 1-2 pounds (450-900g) new potatoes

## Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
- Rinse the chicken inside and out, then pat it dry with paper towels. Rub inside the cavity, the skin, and under the skin where possible with salt and white pepper, seasoning it uniformly. Replace the salt with Creole salt if desired.
- In a small bowl, combine garlic, ginger, thyme, lemongrass, and onion with a tablespoon of oil or coconut milk.
- Generously baste the cavity of the chicken with half of the lemongrass mixture, apply some of the liquid to the exterior of the chicken, and then refrigerate until ready to cook.
- When ready to cook, heat the cooking oil in a Dutch oven (preferably with a tight-fitting cover) over medium heat.
- Place the chicken breast side up and brown it for 3-5 minutes until the skin is crispy. Carefully flip the chicken using tongs and crisp the other side for another 4-5 minutes. It usually takes me 10-12 minutes total time to brown it, depending on the size of the chicken.
- Remove the chicken from the Dutch oven and put it on a large plate. Pour off

excess fat, leaving about 2 tablespoons in the bottom.

- Mix the remaining lemongrass mixture with paprika, curry powder, and cayenne pepper, and sauté until fragrant (about a minute). Be careful to avoid burning it.
- Add coconut milk and broth. Return the chicken to the pot and bring to a boil.
- Finally, cover the pot, place it in the oven, and let it braise, basting occasionally with its own juices until the chicken is tender. It usually takes 75-90 minutes to reach an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C).
- Let the chicken rest for about 10 minutes, then carve and serve it over rice with the sauce and vegetable sides. Garnish with cilantro or fresh parsley.

## Tips & Notes

- Feel free to replace the whole chicken with 4-5 pounds of bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs.
- Use leftover chicken in spring rolls for an ideal leftover makeover.
- For a slow cooker version, remove the chicken's skin, sauté the seasonings, and slow cook it with the rest of the ingredients for 4-7 hours.
- Please note that the nutritional information is a rough estimate and can vary significantly based on the products used in the recipe.



# CRANBERRY ORANGE SCONES

**C**ranberry Orange Scones – Making homemade tartly sweet, melt-in-your-mouth scones is not hard. So breathe easy and crank up the oven for the perfect breakfast or snack. Cranberries and orange zest get together for an unforgettable fall flavor that will surely be a holiday hit.

## Ingredients

### Orange Cranberry Scones

- 2½ cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoon orange zest, zest from about one orange
- 8 tablespoon unsalted butter, cold (or frozen) and cut in small chunks
- ½ cup dried cranberry
- ½ cup heavy cream, plus more for brushing the scones
- 2 large egg

### Orange Glaze

- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- 2-3 tablespoon orange juice
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar, sifted
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened

### Instructions

- Orange Cranberry Scones
- Preheat oven to 400°F/205°C.

- Whisk flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, and orange zest in a large mixing bowl.
- Quickly cut butter into flour mixture using your fingertips until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs; this might take about 3 to 5 minutes. Alternatively, you can use a pastry cutter to blend in the butter.
- Carefully mix in the dried cranberries. (You can use fresh or frozen if you prefer.)
- Make a well in the center of the bowl and add heavy cream and eggs. Stir with hands or rubber spatula until it forms a rough ball; do not over mix, about one minute.
- Transfer dough onto a floured board or surface; then knead about 3-4 times- just enough for it to come together.
- Gently press the dough down to 1 inch thick, use a 2-inch round cookie cutter or a glass to cut out the scones into thick circles, press remaining scraps into another whole piece, and cut again until the dough has been used up. You can also cut dough into eight wedges, liking traditional scones using a knife or bench scraper.
- Bake at 400°F/205°C for 15-20 minutes or more until lightly browned. Start checking after 12 minutes.
- Remove, let it cool on a wire rack for about 5 minutes and serve warm or let it cool completely before proceeding with glaze.

### Orange Glaze

- Whisk together orange juice, orange zest, confectioner's sugar, and softened butter in a small bowl until smooth.
- Add more sugar or juice, if needed, to your reach desired consistency. It should be slightly thick.

- Glaze the cooled scones and let them sit for about a minute before serving.

### Tips & Notes

- Freeze the butter before grating or chopping it. In fact, have all the ingredients as cold as possible before throwing them all together. The results will be lighter and fluffier.
- You can chill the scones 15 minutes before baking to help them keep their shape.
- In my recipe, I use my hands to mix in the butter. However, if you have a pastry cutter, you can use it instead so that the butter doesn't warm up before you're done.
- Make mini scones by cutting each triangle into two triangles, and reduce the baking time by just a tad.
- Please remember that the nutritional information is a rough estimate and can vary significantly based on the products used in the recipe.



# SARABELL COUTURE

Sarabell Couture is a distinguished name in the world of luxury fashion, renowned for their exquisite bespoke and bridal wear. Founded on the principles of craftsmanship, elegance, and personalised service, Sarabell Couture creates one-of-a-kind pieces that celebrate individuality and timeless beauty.

With a passion for artistry and a commitment to exceptional quality, the brand uses only the finest fabrics and intricate detailing.

They use luxurious textures and innovative design elements. They blend classic elegance with contemporary aesthetics. Each collection tells a story, embracing the beauty of femininity while pushing the boundaries of modern fashion.

With a growing following among brides and fashion enthusiasts alike, Sarabell Couture continues to captivate and inspire with their dedication to bespoke luxury, ensuring that every piece is as unique as the individual it adorns.

At Sarabell Couture, fashion is not just about clothing; it's about creating memories and celebrating life's most cherished moments. Whether it's a dream wedding, a glamorous gala, or a special occasion, Sarabell Couture promises to deliver a fashion experience that is unforgettable and utterly sublime.







*Photo: Frenk*







JIDE **K** KOLA









*Felix Crown*



# GLAM & GENUINE

## FASHION PIECES



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