

DR. ADAMA KALOKOH

*most distinguished woman
change-maker in Africa*



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CONTENT IS KING: How to Enthroned and Maintain Its Kingship in Your Business

Editor's NOTE

When I was growing up, there was so much commitment to me as a girl child as to what to do, what not to do, when to tone things down, when to keep quiet, how to clean, stay coordinated, stay put, and the likes of other do's and don'ts.

I would always hear stuff like, you can be what you want to be but don't acquire too much. TONE IT DOWN, especially when you want to get married. It bothers me to see that the life of a girl child is always reduced to marriage.

And if you ask me, I will tell you there is more to the girl child than marriage. There are skills to be learned, ideas to be launched, and posts to be occupied. Perhaps you'd say we have women everywhere already? Well, what about the rural parts that still force a 16-year-old to be married to a 33-year-old man in exchange for food, money, or the littlest thing like palm wine?

I guess that's why I agree with what our star icon for this magazine edition said concerning the fight for women's inclusion in society.

According to her "The fight for women's inclusion must never end and needs to be championed by every citizen... at every level from the executive office to the most remote village in rural West Africa."

"We need more awareness, resources and policies set in place... through training, women equality group... and within the workplace." Says Dr Adama Kalokoh.

On the other hand, for this issue, Cem Perdar gives a succinct insight into the evolution of the e-commerce business model in Africa.

Joy Eki Omovie focused on how business owners can place and pace themselves through content creation and marketing.

And to wrap it up, through Oluwatomisin Olowoyo's pen, you also get to see one of Sierra Leone's most beautiful beaches, in case you need a place to unwind and rejuvenate during winter for the new year.

I really do hope you get inspired, motivated, entertained, and learn a thing or two as you go through the pages of this magazine. Cheers!

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The Evolution of E-commerce Business Model in Africa

During last February and March, I visited Nigeria and Kenya respectively for business purposes. One of the important things that caught my attention during these visits was the clear increase in the number of motorcycle couriers on the roads and the abundance of advertisements for e-commerce applications.

The pandemic has also boosted the industry. The ensuing lockdown has led to an increase in the use of e-commerce platforms as online shopping has become a necessity rather than a preference. This has led to a corresponding surge in digital and economic transformation. With the spread of e-commerce in African markets, consumers have begun to discover the pleasure of having the products they ordered delivered to their doorsteps in just a few hours, without leaving their comfort zone.

Except for South Africa, which has a fairly well-developed formal retailing industry, all other African countries have relatively underdeveloped formal retailing. Nevertheless, the widespread use of online retail or e-commerce is creating new opportunities in Africa. The continent's e-commerce market is creating a novel shopping experience, especially for the region's growing middle class. Sellers can now expand their geographic reach to target more customers,



and buyers now have more options. Having more choices means they can get more value from the purchases and shopping that works best for them. The industry has seen growth driven by Jumia, Konga, Takealot and other players in Sub Saharan Africa.

When we look at the current figures, in spite of serious growth in the Sub-Saharan region, there are also serious handicaps due to the infrastructure and mindset realities of Africa. E-commerce is worthless without payment and money collection. As of 2020, around 55% of African adults did not have any bank accounts, despite

the fact that some technology firms continue to introduce payment alternatives to meet consumer demands.

On the other hand, internet usage at home is still not very common. The fact that internet prices in some countries are very high due to global inflation and that smartphone prices are unreachable is amongst the main factors that slow down the development of e-commerce in Africa. The basis of e-commerce requires the use of money in electronic environment. However, cash means trust and power in Africa. This makes the African people somewhat shy towards electronic payment systems and slows the spread of e-commerce.

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Statista did a survey in several African countries, asking e-commerce users in Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya what kind of items they prefer to purchase online. In all of these countries, digital shoppers reported buying clothing, shoes and consumer electronics online. However, despite the incredible growth, online shopping in Africa still lags behind the global average, even in Africa's busy markets.



1

Number of digital buyers in Africa has more than doubled between 2015-2021

2

Population of Africa was 1,37 billion in 2021, however this figure is predicted to rise to 2.5 billion in 2050.

3

It is estimated that the internet user population in Africa will reach 860 million by 2030.

4

It is thought that mobile internet usage in Africa will catch up with the total internet usage traffic by 2040.

5

In 2021, 37% of online shopping in Africa consists of textile products, 33% electronic products, 17% food and 13.5% other products.

Here are the top 3 e-commerce companies in Africa according to Statista. Now let's take a closer look at the top three e-commerce companies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Note that the key metrics used to select these top three e-commerce platforms are primarily website traffic and engagement as reported by Statista. The report is from 2021.

Jumia: Jumia received the most web traffic in 2021 than any other e-commerce platform in Africa. The company reportedly had 23.3 million monthly visits during the period.

Takealot.com: South African e-commerce platform is the second most visited e-commerce page in Africa. The monthly average visit figure is 10.5 million.

Konga: A Nigeria origin e-commerce platform that is at the third ranking. Data collected by Statista shows that Konga's website has 2.3 million monthly website visits.

By: Cem Perdar



River

NUMBER 2

BEACH: A Paradise on its Own





Photo: Unsplash.com, Getty Images, Africa
and others. All rights reserved.



River No. 2 Beach, is one of Sierra Leone's most beautiful beaches and it's one of the best beaches in Africa and even the world. River Number 2 is the name of the river that flows into the ocean on the Western Area Peninsula and the beach's name.

This beautiful piece of paradise is in a quiet location about 10 miles south of bustling Freetown, surrounded by mangrove forests, with stunning white sandy beaches and crystal clear waters. A tranquil seaside destination with great swimming, scenic views, and delicious food all in one place.





Walk in shallow, crystal clear waters and swim in gentle waves in perfect conditions for a swim. The tempting water does not contain any sharp stones, so it is safe for families. Swim past colourful fishing boats in the lagoon and have fun adventures with the locals.

The beach is popular with tourists and locals.

A perfect place to celebrate birthdays, weddings, trips and family trips.





There are many things you can do at River No. 2. Take a guided forest walk, go fishing with fishermen on a colourful boat, or take an exciting boat trip to the Banana and Turtle Islands. Or take a walk on the beach, read a book in the shade or enjoy the beautiful sunset in the evening.



When it comes to food, the beach offers many interesting options. As expected, seafood is abundant. Depending on the season, there are many types of fish, shrimp, lobster, crab, etc.

You can also enjoy fresh coconuts and mangoes for breakfast or dessert. After a wonderful experience on the beach, you can shop for unforgettable gifts and souvenirs at locally owned handicraft boutiques.



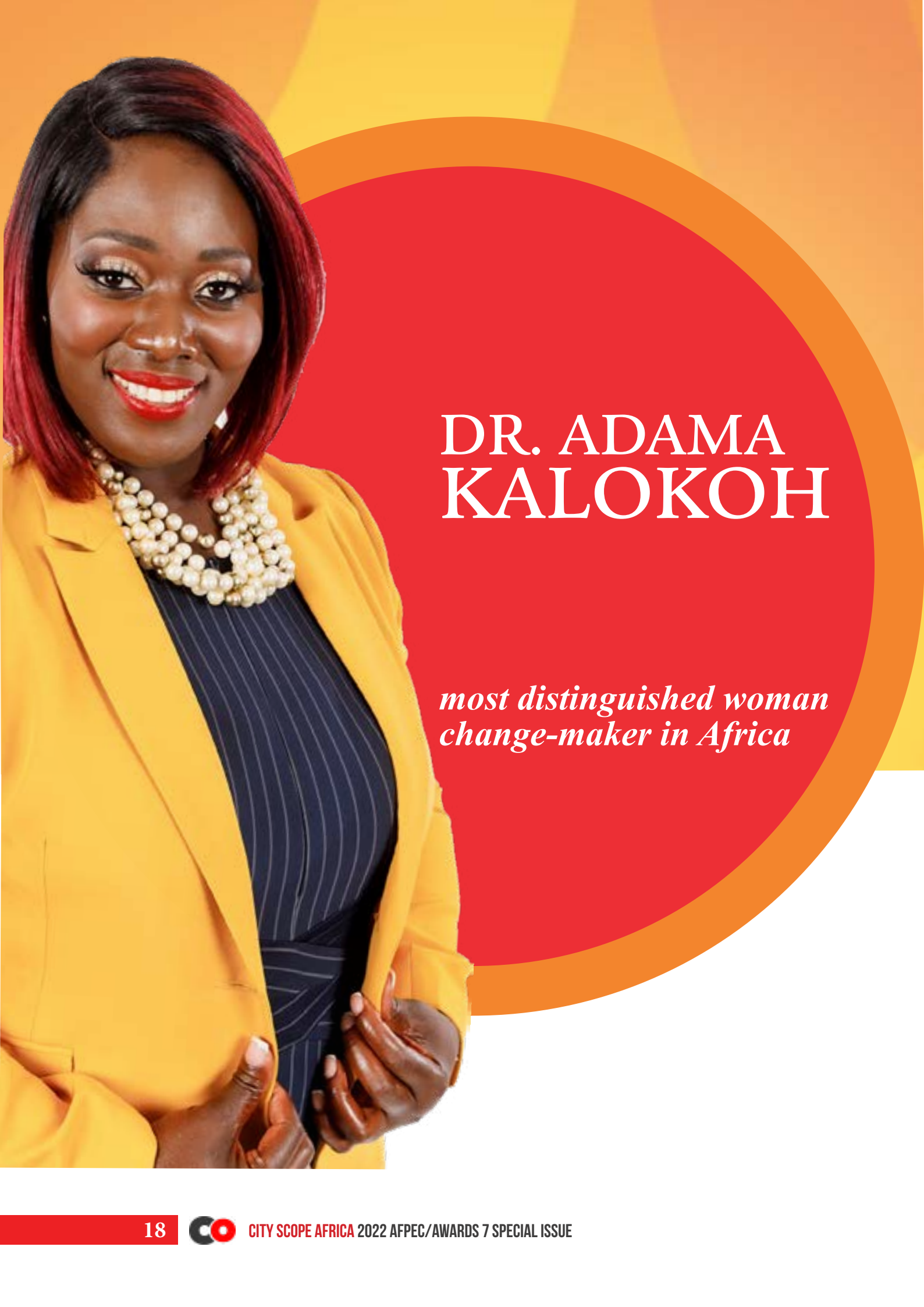
It's no surprise that the beach is popular with locals and tourists alike, it's a perfect place for birthdays, vacations, family trips and relaxation. Surrounded by mountains, this beautiful nature is an incredible must-see. No wonder this beach was chosen as the location for Bounty's Taste of Paradise commercial. Temperatures hover around 29°C in December and January, making it a perfect winter destination.



Credit: raddisonhotels.com, g5daily.com

Photos: Manda S. Kpenge, Facebook: River number 2, Pinterest

Written by: Oluwatomisin Olowoyo



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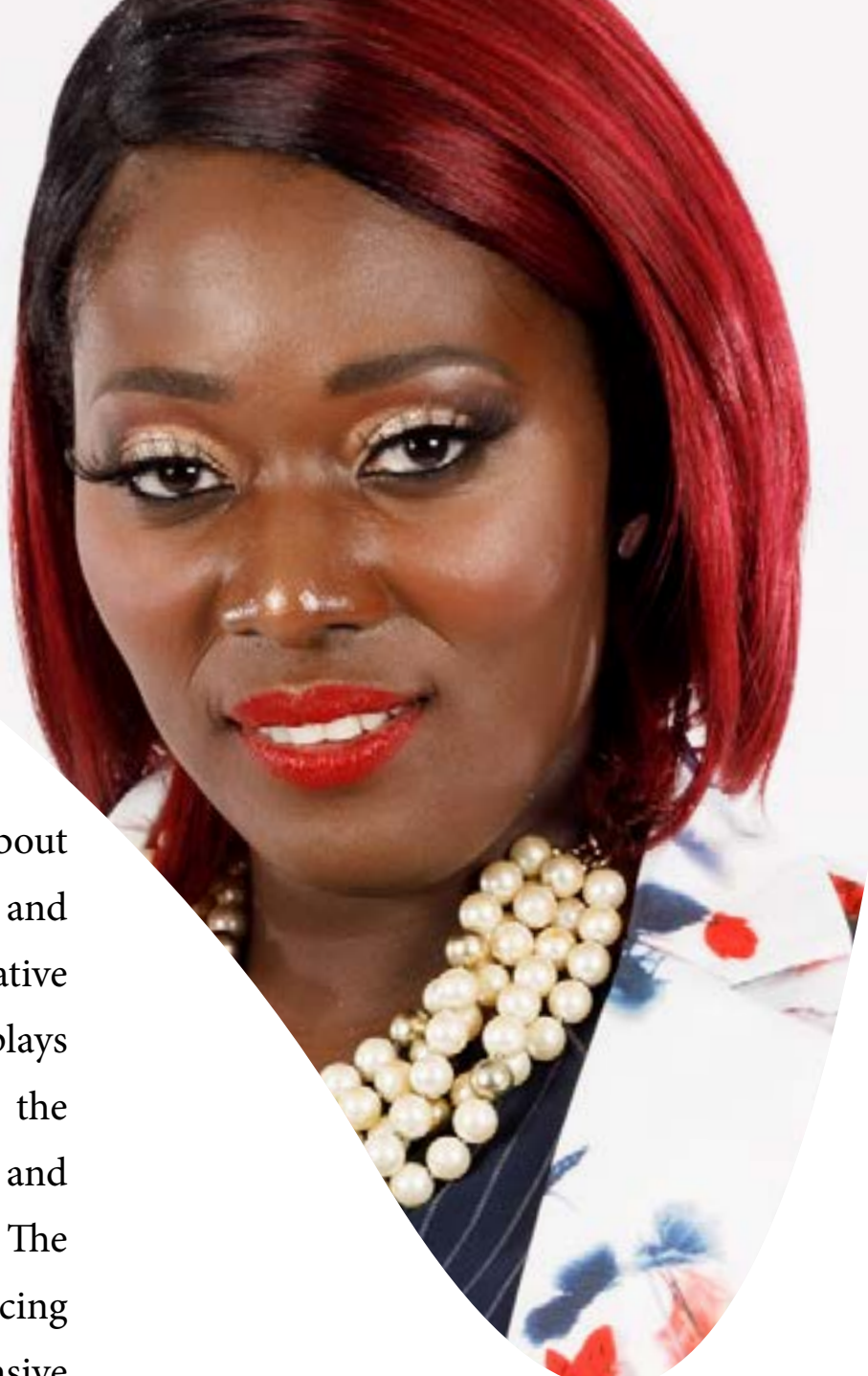


PROFILE

Dr. Adama Kalokoh, Chair, Global Goodwill Ambassadors Foundation (GGAF), is the Founder of Impact Sierra Leone @impact_sierra_leone, an organization founded to reduce socioeconomic challenges in Sierra Leone through empowerment, education, and building strong partnerships with the Diaspora community. She has won multiple awards for her humanitarian work, is a trail-blazing author, and received recognition in Sierra Leone and the U.S as a Brand Ambassador and a Female Empowerment Entrepreneur. Additionally, she supports the US National Guard Bureau as a Business Operations Analyst. As a solution-oriented professional, she has utilized



strong business skills to consistently provide innovative solutions to civilian/military customers served for complex issues and of applying technology to solve problems. She is recognized for using a hands-on approach, strong interpersonal and leadership skills, and is a strong believer in working well with team members to ensure the achievement of business outcomes. She is a recipient of the 2022 African Business Professionals and Entrepreneurs Conference/Awards (Special Recognition Category).

A portrait of a woman with vibrant red hair, wearing a white jacket with a blue and red floral pattern and a multi-strand pearl necklace. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

In her interview, she talked about her NGO, Impact Sierra Leone and the role her Seeds of Life initiative with Community Farming plays in alleviating poverty among the people of Foindu Village and by extension, Sierra Leone. The exclusive also touched on sourcing funds for her capital-intensive NGO, to promote Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), her humanitarian project, Defend Them Young Orphanage, the girl child and women rights and her strides in the business Ecosystem for Africa and global good.

...and lots more

What role would you say your parents played in your success story?

My parents are essential to my success story. My parents Mr James Conteh and Harriett Memuna Sesay, migrated here in the late '70s looking to better themselves and achieve the "American dream". My parents bore five children all

in the USA, myself included. We were each given the names of our grandparents. I am proudly the namesake for my maternal grandmother, Ya Adama Kamara of Konta village in the Northern Provinces of Sierra Leone. My parents instilled in me a deep sense of pride and appreciation for their Sierra Leonean heritage. Like many of their fellow Sierra Leonean counterparts, they sought to make a name for themselves within the African community.

As I look back, I got my first taste of humanitarian service from my parents as a little girl. I can

still remember the Saturday gatherings at our place with many of my aunts and uncles coming together under the group called 'Sacoma'. This group really served as a network for all Sierra Leone migrants to the DC area that was particularly from Yonibana. My father was an active member and always believed that you should help those who are less fortunate.



Although my love for Sierra Leone was not as strong in my early years, it was the death of my father in 1997 which triggered in me a strong love and desire to do great things for Sierra Leone.

I felt a strong sense of duty to honor his memory by impacting and making a difference. After many years of serving in many nonprofit groups, I decided in 2019 that it was time to leap out on my own so I can serve in a greater capacity, thus Impact Sierra Leone was born. As the founder of this organization, I've been



able to work with great people to serve orphans, farmers, students, women, and young girls. I can say proudly that I was born in the US but nurtured in Africa.

Would you say you're being brought up in the United States shaped your life differently than it would if you were brought up in Sierra Leone?

Being born in the United States provided me with far more opportunities to succeed as a woman of color. However, it's my

African roots that truly shaped the woman I have become and led me to be a global servant leader. Firstly, I consider it a true blessing to know my roots, my heritage, and my family history. Knowing my roots has truly guided my purpose and led me to my life purpose. My advice to first-generation born is to love your culture enough to want to help improve your country. For those Sierra Leone descendants, we must unite as one so we can restore it to its former glory.



My hope is that my mission will inspire other descendants of Africa to embrace their culture and positively impact their home country. I have a responsibility to be a voice, to raise my voice and to inspire others to help the causes in Africa. As descendants, we really serve as a bridge and connection between our United States culture and our African culture.



Would you say growing up in the United States opened you up to some privileges?

I can say that being born in the United States (U.S) had its advantages when it comes to receiving quality education and access to more resources. In the U.S, we are privileged to have a strong middle class with many opportunities to become entrepreneurs with striving businesses. Like many of us living in America, I was privileged with having access to necessities that many all over the world greatly lack. In addition, the healthcare system is more robust in America than those in Africa which contributed to my total wellness in performing my best. I was privileged to join the U.S Air Force where I served as a Dietary Technician and developed a passion for public health/wellness.

Kindly talk us through the transition from the United States to Sierra Leone. Was it a bittersweet transition? How would you describe it?

When I visited Sierra Leone in December 2003, my life forever changed for the better and my passion for international development was born. My first visit to Sierra Leone was so emotional but was a moment in time I will never forget. I can still remember exiting the plane as I could feel the warmest sun on my face walking into the Lungi



Airport. Meeting family members and breathing the African sun was memorable. I was fearful and thrilled at the same time. My fears were put at bay when after going through security, I was met with a big sign saying, “Welcome Adama Conteh”. Within a short time, I was welcomed with claps and cheers from my aunts and uncles in the waiting area.

I felt so special at that moment because I knew I was finally home. I visited so many relatives and each ensured to give me a gift of some sort-this is how they

welcome visitors. Additionally, if I didn't receive gifts, everyone was eager to feed me some delicious authentic cuisine which included groundnut soup, fry stew and plantains, jollof rice, cassava leaves and my all-time favorite, potato leaves soup.

As we travelled through Freetown, I was amazed at how festive the place was at night. I was quickly reminded that the best time to visit is during the Christmas holiday in December. I was not fortunate enough to meet any of my grandparents alive. During this first visit, I pleaded with family members to make sure I visit the gravesites of both my maternal/paternal grandparents. I visited more than six villages from my father's birth home to my mother's birth home.

Though my journey to the village was a bumpy ride and quite dusty, reaching my destination



was priceless. I was told stories of family members who died. There were lots of tears and tons of pictures. I can remember visiting the graves sites for my paternal grandmother and great-grandmother. Their graves are in front of the home my father built. This home was bombed by rebels during the 10-year civil

war but was still standing. At each gravesite, special prayers were offered and included kola nuts and water. Although I am Christian, I did not hesitate to join hands in prayer with my Muslim family. Visiting my maternal grandmother's village

was so unforgettable. I was so proud to bear the name of my grandmother. My eyes were opened as I saw how much I took for granted such as regular electricity and access to fresh clean drinking water. When I returned from my visit, I instantly realized that as a



daughter of Sierra Leone, I have a responsibility to use my American ties to advance the causes of the motherland. My visit was also bittersweet as I witnessed a beautiful country that has suffered too many pains over

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the years leading to a struggling economy. My deep appreciation for Sierra Leone led me to visit three consecutive visits and then again from 2019 until the present.

“

I knew in my heart that any community service I was to do in the future would have to benefit Sierra Leone. Since 2003, I've been able to lead several fundraising efforts to support local and rural communities in Sierra Leone. Realizing there was so much more to do to help, I have completely embraced my true purpose which was to empower Sierra Leone.

As a global leader, would you say that the chains of barrier for women are being broken and women are no longer seen as inferior?

As a proud descendant of Sierra Leone, West Africa, and founder of Impact Sierra Leone organization, I have insight into gender issues both in the United



States and in West Africa. It is true that we have come a long way in breaking barriers for women, but we have so much more work to be done. There seems to be a common factor between the two regions and that is there are far

less opportunities for women as compared to men.

I saw firsthand when I visited rural villages in Sierra Leone that many of the women are silenced and limited to domestic work. I join in the fight against injustices, stereotypes, discrimination, and inhumanity due to gender by promoting empowerment programs.

By empowering other women to have a voice, we are impacting the future generation of leaders who will ensure a world of inclusiveness and equality where all are valued. I strive to promote gender equality in all our projects. ***Our Seeds of Life initiative includes a special Women's Farm project that engages women in growing crops while learning skills. I stand proud to give voice to women and girls and empower them through skills training and mentorship. I feel proud to be a voice and advocate***

for women and children in Sierra Leone.



I chose, as my primary focus, to help support women and girls in rural areas because of their huge lack of resources and access to services.



Do you think the fight for women's inclusion will ever end?

The fight for women's inclusion must never end and needs to be championed by every citizen. Breaking the bias must happen at every level from the executive office to the most remote village in rural West Africa. The playing field has yet to be levelled because we see too often that a women's skills or experiences are considered less important than her gender. We need more awareness, resources and policies set in place and this can be done via training workshops, women's equality groups, social media platforms and within the workplace. To address gender equality, ISL launched a Women's Farm Collaborative in 2022. This project would not be possible if it were not for the support of other women on my team who see the value in making sure that women have a voice and a seat

at the table when decisions are made on the local, national, and international levels. Much like how we won the war on slavery and overcame many setbacks from the Civil Rights Movement, we can win the war on Women's Inequality and do it Together. Let us stand up, raise our voices, act and join forces to erase gender inequality worldwide.

Sierra Leone is known for its early achievements in the fields of medicine, law and education. Would you say these breakthrough foundations made it easier for you to keep up with all you are doing now, all those achievements are just pen on paper?

I'm always proud to know that Sierra Leone was known as the "Athens of West Africa." Fourah Bay College (University of Sierra Leone) was established in 1827 and produced some of the brightest scholars. These achievements and foundations are so critical

to the work I am doing with Impact Sierra Leone. Education, Medicine, and Law are essential to our mission of reducing socioeconomic challenges in Sierra Leone. These foundations also inspire us to raise future leaders in medicine, law and education.

Our current initiative called Seeds of Life allow us to reach students and provide them with a solid foundation to help them reach their greatest potential.



Where would you say your career on healthy living is in all of this?

Health and wellness have been a big passion of mine for many years. Healthy living is essential to leading a productive life. Despite this, there are many in the world experiencing poor health due to a lack of necessities such as clean drinking water. Public Health is so important to me because it helps improve the lives of others.

In my current capacity as Founding CEO for Impact Sierra Leone, I've had the wonderful opportunity of helping to improve the lives of many young children and staff members by adding more produce to their diets. Through my influence on social media, I've been able to connect a primary school with a Farming program which donates healthy produce to the school each month. It's so exciting to know that children who once survived on mainly rice and soup can now





eat a balanced diet and grow much healthier

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Since completing my undergraduate degree in Public Health, I developed a desire to close the gaps in health disparities, especially within Africa. I chose as part of our mission at Impact Sierra Leone (ISL) to include initiatives that improved the health outcomes of those in need.



Our current Seeds of Life initiative is helping ISL to promote health and wellness among 250 students attending school, their families, and other members of the Foindu Village Community.

For many, especially children, access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene not only keeps them alive and healthy, but also helps them to do well in school, reduces inequalities, and creates a brighter future. A healthy mind will learn better and thrive. In addition, better sanitation will ensure better experiences at the marketplaces and keep workers healthy. Additionally, we are using other means to promote wellness by developing nutrition posters with the benefits of various fruits and vegetables.

One of our mottos at ISL is “*Our Wellness Matters*”. In addition, I’ve managed a Facebook Page called “*Wellness Inspiration by Adama*” for the last two years. I post

healthy recipes, nutrition facts, fitness tips and other wellness resources & topics. *Every person deserves a chance at a healthy life which begins with access to food, water, and breathable air.*

You have the opportunity of being the chairperson for the Global Goodwill Ambassador’s Foundation. Will you say you are maximizing this role enough to provide cultural insights about your country?

In everything I do as a global leader, I use my voice and platform to provide cultural insights about Sierra Leone. As a proud descendant of Sierra Leone, I have a duty to bring awareness to issues affecting my home country.

Since becoming chairperson for Global Goodwill Ambassador, I’ve been able to highlight many organizations and humanitarians making an impact in Sierra Leone.

“

My role as a descendant of Sierra Leone and a Global Goodwill Ambassador is a big reason for my passion in helping others and in international development.

I have always loved and valued being connected to Sierra Leone. Under my leadership and vision, strategic partnerships and alliances have been established in Sierra Leone and around the world. Sierra Leone is a country rich in culture and traditions.

Although our focus has been to reduce poverty through our projects, I have ensured to





share the beauty of our culture and give voice to the voiceless. ISL has partnered with several international organizations on joint initiatives to better understand and appreciate the contributions of and similarities between Sierra Leone and the diaspora.

Some of the organizations that ISL is working with include farming and agriculture organizations, churches and schools. ISL is also using digital platforms to share the culture and history of Sierra Leone. I vowed to myself that upon returning to the US, I would not allow society to classify Sierra Leone as a doomed country. I decided to share the greatness of my country with the world. I have used many photos to share my story, my culture, and the beauty of my people with the world via several Social Media outlets. I consider myself a major influencer of Sierra Leone as a Diasporan and for several years, I've made positive contributions to promote its culture.



Would you say you owe these achievements all to yourself or you had mentors that held your hand through your career journey?

Along my journey of success, there have been incredible people who have nurtured my career growth. My parents were my first mentors and encouraged me to always follow my heart. My parents always

inspired me and my siblings to not only work hard but to make sure we help others along the way. They planted a desire in me to serve at a young age. Their hard work as immigrants to the U.S was very admirable, and I vowed to ensure their labor would not be in vain.



There was a myriad of teachers who poured into me the importance of education. For this reason, education is a major part of Impact Sierra Leone's mission. While in college, I was selected as an AmeriCorps fellow where I served two years as Volunteer Director for an organization called Hope Worldwide. I learned so much about the nonprofit sector from the organization's director. I've been fortunate to come across many great individuals who recognized my passion for humanity and community service.

Just to name a few, Mrs Pamela Luckett, Executive Director for Hope Worldwide Mid-Atlantic influenced me greatly when I was an AmeriCorps Fellow, she was technically my first boss but taught me so much about working with people and being excellent in my service: the late Bernadette Kamara, Executive Director for Sierra Leone Relief

and Development Outreach influenced me in changing lives in Sierra Leone and taught me how to be compassionate; Mr David W. Anderson played a major role in my professional development and taught me the value of good networking and nurturing my skills; the late Ambassador Foday Mansaray influenced me in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) as I defend the rights of the girl child, I learned the core values of leadership and service during my years in the U.S Air Force.

Over the years, I have met incredible people who shared the same passions of empowerment and wellness and became mentors.

What would you say your role as the vice chairman and marketing specialist of "Me Against Poverty, Inc" played in its success?

In this role, I utilized my skills in event planning, organizational development, and project management in meeting our mission of eradicating poverty. My role as Vice Chairman and Marketing Specialist had a huge impact on much of the group's success. It gave me an opportunity to work hands-on with projects in Sierra Leone. I participated in tactical and ad-hoc meetings, executed online fundraising strategies, initiatives and goals. I also successfully developed content for the website and promotional toolkits for donors, organized online fundraising, identified, and communicate with high-profile donors, provide grant-writing support; developed media and marketing materials such as brochures, bookmarks, press releases, flyers, and other communication materials.

Our mission at Me Against Poverty (MAP) was to empower





underprivileged Sierra Leoneans by providing educational assistance to help communities in Sierra Leone thrive and break the cycle of poverty. I brought many valuable skills to this organization which resulted in many achievements. MAP launched its first building project and scholarship fund, held three successful fundraisers, and established a strong relationship with its partners, the Organization of Peace, Reconciliation and Development in Sierra Leone (OPARDSL) and Kiva, an online non-profit lending program. I was very instrumental in the organization's achievement in the following:

- Built and strengthened relationships among members of the community
- Raised computer and overall literacy rates at the Yonibana Secondary School by 10%
- Ensured that female students benefitted just as equally as male students and adults from the services and training that the center provided

You wear so many hats and you are excelling in all, how do you do this without losing yourself?

The main key to my journey has been a strong belief in God, in my passion, in my purpose and in my destiny. I always maintain a positive outlook on life which has led me. My whole journey is connected to my Sierra Leonean roots for which I am extremely proud. My close family and friends have been so supportive of my work and play a big role in my staying grounded. I truly believe that my humanitarian work is making a difference in the world. I always remember my “Why” and it keeps me motivated even on the most difficult parts of my journey.

What inspired your founding Impact Sierra Leone?

After my first visit to Sierra Leone, my life forever changed and my passion for international development was born. Although my love for Sierra Leone was not

as strong in my early years, it was the death of my father in 1997 which triggered in me a strong love and desire to do great things for Sierra Leone. I felt a strong sense of duty to honor his memory by impacting and making a difference.

After many years of serving in many nonprofit groups, I decided in 2019 that it was time to leap out on my own so I can serve in a greater capacity, thus Impact Sierra Leone was born. As the founder of this organization, I’ve been able to work with great people to serve orphans, farmers, students, women, and young girls. My journey has also connected me with great people who believe in my mission of reducing socioeconomic challenges in Sierra Leone through empowerment, education, and building strong partnerships with the Diaspora community- this is the mission of Impact Sierra Leone. I believe in the value of





great relationships so networking with the right people, and developing great mentorship relationships has been a major key to my journey in leading Impact Sierra Leone.

Wholistically, it is believed that Sierra Leone is a poor country and many of its people depend on subsistence agriculture. Please talk us through the role Impact Sierra Leone Community Farm is playing in alleviating poverty among the people of Foindu Village Community, and by extension, Sierra Leone and how it is magnifying farming for the people's greater good?

Impact Sierra Leone is working within the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) program and is using it as the overarching theme to guide its programs and initiatives. ISL is committed to specifically

addressing the following SDGs in Sierra Leone: No Poverty. Zero Hunger. Quality Education. Gender Equality.

ISL launched the Seeds of Life initiative in April 2021 and has expanded from one farm site to four farm sites. Our efforts have drastically reduced hunger among students. Through donations and partnerships, the children and staff are able to plant/grow a variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the year allowing us to achieve ISL's Sustainable Development goals including Zero Hunger and Good Health and Well Being.

Through donations from our supporters, we have planted cucumbers, pepper, okra and groundnuts. We hope to plant the following produce: cassava, maize, yams, potatoes, ginger, sweet berries, pineapples and more. ISL donated seedlings, farm





It is undeniably capital-intensive running an NGO where what you get in return is solved problems and smiles on people's faces. How do you get funds to promote all these Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

Currently, most of our projects are self-funded by our board members. We are grateful for the few monthly donors who help sustain our projects, but we hope to increase our capital so that we can do more. We also utilize crowdsource funding for various campaigns that have helped us raise money. Strategic Development alignment and using social media platforms to promote our work has drawn a lot of supporters to our mission. We look forward to more growth as an organization and the ability to obtain grant funding.

Looking at how far you have come, and the tremendous things you have done in your name, would you say there is something you regret and resent yourself for?

I believe wholeheartedly that life is filled with blessings and lessons, so I don't embrace too many thoughts of resentment and regret. I do believe in striving to make each day better than the last. There are moments when I wished I knew the value of networking much earlier in my life. In addition, I often wish I had the confidence I possess now at an earlier age as it would have led me to make smarter business decisions.

How did Save The Young Girls Orphanage in Sierra Leone come about? What moved you to join this great body of humanitarianism?



While in pursuit of discovering my life purpose, I realized how important it was for me to be a strong advocate for women and girls in Sierra Leone. As a young African American woman who is a descendant of Sierra Leone, I always feel a strong urge to encourage young girls, especially those in Sierra Leone. I was introduced to Save The Young Girls via a friend on LinkedIn. At that time, they lacked many resources but most importantly they needed more advocates to help them with basic resources. I was moved by the girls because if my mom never travelled to the US, I would be a girl in Sierra Leone.

Empowering women and young girls can change communities in a great way. I also recognize in many parts of West Africa; women's rights are overshadowed by cultural traditions. Due to my experience of volunteerism, I've felt a great sense of responsibility

and inspiration to become an Ambassador and Agent-of-change for young girls and women in Sierra Leone. Female Empowerment inspires a whole generation of female leaders, what we truly need to make Sierra Leone greater. I feel proud to be a voice and advocate for women and children in Sierra Leone. I chose, as my primary focus, to help support women and girls in rural areas because of their huge lack of resources and access to services.

We see how you selflessly go all out with all you are doing, what are some of the challenges you face?

There are many ups and downs from living a life of service and humanity. Some of the common challenges we face are fundraising, sustaining our programs and time management. Currently, we are short-staffed so that means I wear lots of hats and struggle often with maintaining my work-life



balanced. I am a proud mother of two children, Jonathan and Miriam who are growing up fast. There are challenges that arise in raising children while leading an NGO. But it is my deep passion for my work and for helping people that keeps me going. Most importantly, having a heart of humility and integrity makes it less challenging.

What is your greatest passion in life?

My biggest passions in life are Female Empowerment, Health Promotion, International Development and Community Service- they truly are my life purpose. Other passions include event planning and floral design. My passions all connect to my culture and background. I am most passionate about helping children reach their potential, especially the young girls through empowerment and skills training.



My biggest passions in life are Female Empowerment,

Would you say you are living the life of your dreams now, or you would want your life better?

I appreciate all that I have in my life right now. Every single day of life is a blessing and thus my goal is to live life to the fullest. I have not reached my height of success, so my work is not done, and all of my dreams have not been fulfilled yet. I continue to network, grow in my professional development and strive towards being a successful woman in business. My biggest aspiration is to launch my own Global enterprise business which would leverage my leadership skills and provide economic empowerment.

Right now, how many projects are you working on?

Currently, within Impact Sierra Leone, our active projects include:

- Seeds of Life Community Farming Initiative (Active Project)
- Seeds of Life Women Farming Initiative (Active Project)
- Seeds of Life Healthy Futures Initiative (monthly distribution of fresh produce to 250 children through our National partner, Family Agriculture Resources Management Services (F.A.R.M.S); monthly feeding of over 60 farm volunteers during training.
- Barrels for Sierra Leone Project (Active -ongoing barrels of clothes, shoes, and supplies sent to reduce poverty



What plans does Impact Sierra Leone have for its own people?

Building on the Seeds of Life initiative, we are in the process of implementing a school feeding program, renovating the school, and starting a literacy program that will benefit the students and women of the community. We will also be launching a skills training program for young women and girls soon. We plan to develop empowerment centers in rural areas where people can learn skills like sewing, craftwork, and technology. I hope to collaborate with other Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and International Development Partners to empower women and take Sierra Leone to the next level. I want to promote Female Empowerment throughout Sierra Leone. I believe there is so much power in supporting Sierra Leone as a descendant.





I hope that my efforts will inspire other descendants of Africa to embrace their culture and positively impact their home country. My main theme that drives my community service is “United We Stand, and Together We Rise to Make a Difference”.





My message for the girl child and women who may not be where they are is to never, ever give up on your dreams and goals. If you believe in yourself and have a good heart, there is so much good you can do in the world. I would remind them that they are the following: Bold, Beautiful, Brilliant and Brave.

I would also remind them that they should bloom where they are planted. I would advise them to search their heart for their true purpose. Discover what truly makes you happy. Search for a cause that does not seem like work but drives your passion daily.

My other advice would be to serve without expectations—the reward is in seeing the needs met of the people you are serving. Most importantly is to build great friendships with those who serve with you Great Relationships mean Great Service! One should take things step by step to reach your greatest potential in life. We all have greatness within us and the capacity to succeed beyond our imaginations.

To all of the beautiful women and girls in Sierra Leone, I remind you that you are capable of being great changemakers in your community and inspiring leaders.

*Photo Credit: Oluwaseun Asade for Images by
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Makeup Credit: Ify WhiteCrown*





CONTENT IS KING: HOW TO ENTHRONE AND MAINTAIN ITS KINGSHIP IN YOUR BUSINESS

There was this king Munaga, he was the only surviving male of the dynasty after his father was murdered by his uncle who wanted to be king.

He was hidden from the age of 2 to 16. Now you think he would fight to be king again?

Here is where a good skill trainer & strategist is important before getting enthroned and maintaining the rightful rulership comes to play.

Content can be compared to this young king who has been denied his right and wants to gain rulership.

Back to our story.

In today's world, content is the only surviving medium to gain trust, especially in the new form of digital marketing, just like Munaga is the only surviving true heir to the throne.

Even in traditional marketing, you must tell your customer something to make them buy, what and how you ask them to buy is part of content marketing.

Digital marketing is the use of the internet, social media and emails to sell your goods or services.

If Munaga goes and challenges his uncle directly would that be the solution to get his rulership back?

No!

In the same way, strong competition exists, but challenging the competitor directly won't help much. It will lead to some violence. In content marketing, the other brand can sue you.

So how can Content, our Munaga get back his throne?

He has to gradually gain trust even as a young man and then interact and know the pains of the people in his kingdom.

The same thing, you do if your brand is just starting. Gain trust.

Research the negative reviews of your competitors' products. Then use these negative points to highlight the unique selling point of your product or brand.

The same thing Munaga did. He started visiting the citizens, knowing them, their problems, and their pain even if he never told them he was the rightful king.

Over the months, they began to trust him

The same goes, for when you display Content that shows you care about your ideal customer's problem and you don't sound "sales sales sales", they start trusting you.

After the trust what next?

Watch out for part 2 of this article to know how to sell after you have built a measure of trust.

Joy Eki Omovie.

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