



Institute for African Women in Law



The IAWL
**Gender
Scorecard**
2025

Women in Law & Leadership
Bar Association & Law Society Presidents



The Gender Scorecard is freely accessible on the website
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Executive Summary

The Institute for African Women in Law's Gender Scorecard on Women in Law and Leadership presents statistics on the representation of women as Presidents of Bar Associations and Law Societies. Data on women in leadership is crucial for assessing their equitable access to decision-making processes. In several countries across Africa, despite the entry of women into the legal profession in the early to mid-1900s, and the increasing number of women at the bar, women remain underrepresented in the organizations that represent lawyers– the bar associations and law societies.

The legal field has historically been a male-dominated field, with women significantly underrepresented in leadership positions. However, in recent years, many countries have witnessed an increase in the number of women graduating from law schools and a gradual diversification of gender within the legal profession. Nonetheless, women continue to be underrepresented as presidents of bar associations and law societies.

The Institute for African Women in Law has engaged in several advocacy efforts to raise awareness about the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions within the legal profession. Most of these advocacy efforts have taken the form of opinion pieces, such as "*Is the Ghana Bar Association Ready for Women Lawyers?*", which significantly contributed to the election of the first female bar president of Ghana in 2024. Similarly, in Kenya, through an opinion piece and several social media posts, the article "*Is the Law Society of Kenya Ready for Women Leaders?*", significantly contributed to the election of the second female president of the Law Society of Kenya in 2024.

In May 2025, IAWL launched a blog series "*When Women in Law Lead*" to showcase the contributions and impact of women as leaders in bar associations, law societies and leaders of organizations promoting women in law. The Women in Law and Leadership Gender Scorecard represents the first step toward achieving gender equality in leadership positions within the legal field. It will inform future policy interventions aimed at supporting women's advancement in law and leadership.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The information referenced in this edition was gathered at the end of February 2025. As a result, some details may not reflect the most current numbers since the data were obtained. While we strive to ensure accuracy and reliability, we acknowledge that data and insights may evolve over time. We assume no responsibility for outdated websites or sources.

We encourage you to reach out if you have credible updates, corrections, or additional verified information. Your contributions help us maintain accuracy and improve the quality of our content.

For any updates or clarifications, please contact us at info@africanwil.org



WHO

African women as Presidents of Bar Associations and Law Societies.



WHAT

The representation of women as Presidents of Bar Associations and Law Societies.



SOURCE

Publicly available data on the websites of the courts profiled.



RANKS

Presidents of Bar Associations and Law Societies



GENDER

IAWL acknowledges that gender is socially constructed and that the meaning of the term “gender” varies between societies and changes over time. While acknowledging expansive gender identities, this project uses the binary division of male and female to classify the representation of men and women on the scorecards. For this project, we use the visual gender representation of the binary male and female rather than the self-identified gender identity of the individuals.



The Gender Scorecard presents data collected at the end of 2024. As a result, some of the details provided may not reflect the most current numbers since the data were obtained. IAWL assumes no responsibility for outdated websites.

AT A GLANCE



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Countries



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Bar Presidents



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Vice Presidents

Bar Association and Law Society Presidents



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BAR PRESIDENTS



FLORENCE LOAN ÉPSE MESSAN

Country	Start date	End date
Cote d'Ivoire	2023	Present



Neneh M.C Cham

Country	Start date	End date
Gambia	2023	Present



Efua Gharthey

Country	Start date	End date
Ghana	2024	Present

BAR PRESIDENTS



Faith Mony Odhiambo

Country	Start date	End date
Kenya	2024	Present



Célia Posser

Country	Start date	End date
Sao Tome and Principe	2017	Present

FORMER BAR PRESIDENTS

Name	Country	Year bar was established	Start date	End date
Ouafya Sidhoum	Algeria	1848	2014	2021
Hélène Aholou Keke	Benin	1965	1989	N/A
Antoinette Ouédraogo	Burkina Faso	1992	2006	2009
Lígia Lubrino Dias Fonseca	Cabo Verde	2000	2001	2004
Leida Helena Mauricio dos Santos	Cabo Verde	2000	2013	2016
Sofia Helena de Oliveira Lima	Cabo Verde	2000	2016	2019
Atangana Bikouna Claire	Cameroon	1972	2021	2022
Julienne Ondziel Gnelenga	Congo, Republic of the	1992	2009	2011
Fatouma Mahamoud	Djibouti	N/A	2007	N/A
Sinidu Alemu	Ethiopia	2021	2021	N/A
Marlyse Issembe	Gabon	1960	2005	2007
Rachael Yvonne Mendy	Gambia	N/A	1994	N/A

FORMER BAR PRESIDENTS

Name	Country	Year bar was established	Start date	End date
Amie Bensouda	Gambia	N/A	2006	N/A
Raychelle Awuor Omamo	Kenya	1948	2001	2003
Chantal Razafinarivo	Madagascar	1937	2018	2020
Fatoumata Sylla	Mali	1971	1998	2004
Zubeida.I.Salajee	Mauritius	1977	2018	2020
Dya Ghose-Radhakeesoon	Mauritius	1977	2022	2024
Narghis Bundhun	Mauritius	1977	2000 2019 2020	N/A
Lucia da Luz Ribeiro	Mozambique	1994	2003	N/A
Elise Angula	Namibia	1995	2005	2006
Aissatou Zada	Niger		2012	2014
Priscilla Kuye	Nigeria	1960	1991	1992
Celiza de Deus Lima	Sao Tome and Principe	2006	2014	2017
Eddinia Michaela Swallow	Sierra Leone	1904	2020	2025
Esmé du Plessis	South Africa	1998	1995	N/A
Mabaeng Denise Lenyai	South Africa	1998	2022	2023

FORMER BAR PRESIDENTS

Name	Country	Year bar was established	Start date	End date
Joanne Anthony-Gooden	South Africa	1998	2023	2024
Joaquine De Mello	Tanzania	1954	2007	2008
Fatma Karume	Tanzania	1954	2018	2019
Loretta Massa Acouetey	Togo	1930	1998	2005
Dopé Kayo Ekoue-Kouvahey	Togo	1930	2010	2014
Solomy Balungi Bossa	Uganda	1956	1994	1996
Harriet Diana Musoke	Uganda	1956	1998	2000
Ruth Ssebatindira	Uganda	1956	2013	2016
Pheona Nabasa Wall	Uganda	1956	2020	2022
Linda Kasonde	Zambia	1973	2016	2018
Beatrice Mtetwa	Zimbabwe	1981	N/A	N/A
Rumbidzai Matambo	Zimbabwe	1981	2023	2025

Bar Association and Law Society Vice Presidents



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VICE PRESIDENTS



Victoria Barth

Country	Start date	End date
Ghana	2024	Present



F. Juah Lawson

Country	Start date	End date
Liberia	2024	Present



Laetitia Petro Ntagazwa

Country	Start date	End date
Tanzania	2022	Present

VICE PRESIDENTS



Rachel Chibaya

Country	Start date	End date
Zimbabwe	2025	Present

FORMER VICE PRESIDENTS

Name	Country	Year bar was established	Start date	End date
Felicia Gbesemete	Ghana	1958	2004	2007
Lucy Kambuni	Kenya	1948	2003	2005
Daudi Carolyne Kamende	Kenya	1948	2020	2022
Faith Odhiambo	Kenya	1948	2022	2024
Mabaeng Denise Lenyai	South Africa	1998	2021	2022
Ntlai Eunice Masipa	South Africa	1998	2022 2023	2023 2024
Joanne Anthony-Gooden	South Africa	1998	2022	2023
Rumbidzai Matambo	Zimbabwe	1981	2021	2023

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