

# AMANDLA!

African Women in Law Speaker Series

Vanguard Edition

Vol. 1



Institute for African Women in Law

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# WHY AMANDLA?

Amandla is a word that means "power" among the Nguni languages of South Africa. Amandla became a rallying cry against apartheid in South Africa and continues to be a rallying call for social justice.

The Amandla! African Women in Law Speaker Series is a **global diversity awareness program** that aims to amplify the achievements and stories of African women in law. The Series is a collection of short stories on women's achievements, challenges, resistance, resilience, and solidarity. Through this project, we hope to inspire, encourage, and provide hope for future generations of young women across the globe.

Women across Africa have made remarkable strides in the legal profession, yet these achievements are often hidden in global discourses on the legal profession. As a scholar-activist, I constantly encounter discourses and spaces that attempt to erase or marginalize the voice and agency of the African woman. Whether it is in the telling of our history, in decision-making processes, or in mainstream discussions, this erasure occurs in multiple spaces across the profession. From Algeria to Zimbabwe, women continue to play important roles in the fight for social justice.

However, women's sacrifices, bravery, and contributions to nation-building are frequently relegated to the annals of history, rendering their achievements invisible. The silencing of women's experiences finds expression in the "African" proverb "until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter." The Amandla Series aims to disrupt the "hunter's story" by creating a platform for the "lioness" to be her own historian and tell her own story.

The roadmap to achieving the United Nations and African Union gender equality targets must begin with acknowledging the strength, resilience, and contributions of women. To loosely interpret the Akan Adinkra symbol, Sankofa— we should not forget our past, for it guides our future. Through legal narratives grounded in African storytelling, the series makes visible the professional trajectory of African women in law.

Through legal narratives and storytelling, African women in law **speak truth to power!**

J. Jarpa Dawuni, Ph.D.  
Founder and Executive Director

# Legal Narratives

"If the African woman's life experiences and story could only be told in the context of other people's lives and experiences, and not exclusively through her own voice, then how can she be independent of those external filters? Although her existence itself wouldn't be doubted, the objective reality of her identity would be obscured."

J. Jarpa Dawuni, Esq. Ph.D.

Founder and Executive Director-- Institute for African Women in Law  
Quoted in Introduction to International Courts and the African Woman Judge: Unveiled Narratives (Routledge, 2018)

"Legal narratives are an important tool in telling stories—especially those that would otherwise not get told. Storytelling is a salient part of the African and African-American experience."

Judge Gabrielle Kirk McDonald

Former Judge/President, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

Quoted in Foreword to International Courts and the African Woman Judge: Unveiled Narratives (Routledge, 2018)



## Ade Wede Kekuleh (Liberia)

Gender, Human Rights, Conflict and Peace Specialist.  
Chartered Accountant.

Author.

Member, Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia.

Advocacy for me has always been second nature, my reason for studying law. Working with disadvantaged women and girls, especially women and girls living with HIV, drove home the realization that they needed to be heard. When we started with advocacy for women and girls living with HIV, it dawned on us that they needed someone to speak for them. Many of them were being thrown out of their homes, leaving their children behind, either by their spouses or spouses' family members, because of their HIV status. Sadly, HIV is given the face of a woman. From our advocacy through the courts and with traditional leaders, women living with HIV could remain in their homes with their children, even if they lost their spouses.

As women, let's view whatever comes our way as challenges, not obstacles. We African women did the unthinkable, electing a woman president. There is very little we cannot do, once we set our minds to doing it. Women face anything thrown at us. Despite the entrenched marginalization of the past, we didn't withdraw then; there is absolutely no reason why we should shy away now! You can do this, and anything else!



## Akua Kuenyehia (Ghana)

Former Judge, International Criminal Court.

First woman law Professor and Dean, Faculty of Law, University of Ghana.

When I was young, most courses in the arts prepared people to become teachers, I did not want to become a teacher and, with my good grades, studying the law gave me other options and that was enough for me. Right from the get go, I realized that the perception that the law was gender neutral was not accurate. If the laws were gender neutral, why were there so many discriminatory practices against women? I started to focus on these issues, and that is how my interest in women's rights grew.

One day I came back from work very late; my little girl had left a note on my pillow about waiting for me for a long time and not seeing me. I cried and sat by her bed, and I decided to make time for my children—she was missing out completely. It IS NEVER an easy balance; I suppose you work at it and do the best you can. You lose out a bit, and the children lose too.

Quoted in International Courts and the African Woman Judge: Unveiled Narratives (Routledge, 2018).



## Alero Akeredolu, Ph.D. (Nigeria)

Dean of Law, Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo, Nigeria (2016 - 2018).

Publisher and Editor-in-chief, Supreme Court Monthly. Sub-Dean, Postgraduate, Faculty of Law, University of Ibadan.

Before I was called to the Nigerian Bar in 1988, I never faced any 'serious challenges' nor was I ever conscious of being treated differently because I was a woman. My first confrontation with such limitation/stereotyping on the basis of my gender was when I tried to get a job as a young female lawyer and I heard phrases like, 'we don't like employing ladies, they have too many issues.' Waoh!!! I was taken aback. This experience changed my perspective, and from that moment, I was determined to always look out for other women. As a young female lawyer trying to find my feet in the profession and make a decent living, I did some unusual 'menial' things such as printing and selling law documents like agreement papers, writ of summons and memorandum of appearance. Eventually, I became the first female lawyer to publish a Monthly law report in Nigeria - the Supreme Court Monthly. I veered into academics in 2004, rising through the ranks, to become an Associate Professor at the University of Ibadan in 2015, and in 2017, I became the first female Professor of Law at Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo as well as its first female Dean of law.

My advice to female lawyers is to ascertain very early which aspect of the law/service to focus on in life and pursue that path vigorously. Do not be discouraged if it appears the path to that end is not straight but takes several detours. I always wanted to be a Judge, but while waiting for the appointment, I had the opportunity to start the publishing of law reports and to undertake postgraduate programs. The latter led me into academics, and I ultimately attained the highest rank as a full professor. Imagine if I was stuck on waiting for the appointment as a judge - I would not have made a name in these other areas. I have not lost my dream, and I keep working towards that - so watch out, I just may become one of the first female professors of law to be appointed a judge.



## Aloma Mariam Mukhtar, GCON (Nigeria)

Former Chief Justice of Nigeria (The First Woman Chief Justice)

Currently Member of the National Council of State, Nigeria

When I was nominated for appointment as a Judge, I had just turned thirty-two years of age, but the Judicial Service Commission rejected the nomination because of my age. Barely six months thereafter another nominee was rejected, then my matter resurrected when, it was not even on the agenda, and I was appointed. At this miraculous turn of event I became resolute that my career as a Jurist will be based on “undiluted” Justice, so to speak. Twice it was my turn to head the Kano State Judiciary as the Chief Judge, but I was not given the privilege, as my juniors were appointed over me instead. I remained resilient, and continued to dispense justice diligently and without fear or favour. Unknown to me, Allah in his infinite mercy had far better plans for me to be the Chief Justice of the whole Country.

I was elevated to the Court of Appeal where I spent almost eighteen years adhering to the principles of Justice, and not relenting in my efforts to ensure that all litigants are availed the justice they deserved. In 1998, I was nominated for Nigeria’s merit award of the Commander of the Order of the Niger (CON) but I was denied. Later I was conferred with the award and another higher award. At the end of the day I was conferred with the Second highest award in the Country in 2012. I have no doubt that my past experiences and tribulations have helped to strengthen my resolve to be what people say I am today, although some say it is innate in me.

Whatever situation a woman pursuing any career finds herself she should remain focused and not allow any distraction to hinder her progress. It is important that she abides by her oath of office in the process of dispensing justice if she is a Judge. She should be influenced by what I call my three ‘Fs’, namely ‘Fear’, ‘Faith’, and ‘Fairness’. Whatever you do you should fear God not only by words of mouth or worship, but by adhering to his dictates. If you have faith in him you will practice the above and he will surely guide you through the path of Justice. Finally, be fair and just to litigants who seek redress in your Court, and to your clients if you are a legal practitioner. Fairness should be your watchword as it is synonymous with impartiality. Most importantly you should work hard to justify your earnings.



## Aloysie Cyanzayire (Rwanda)

Former Chief Justice of Rwanda.  
First Woman Chief Justice of Rwanda.

The secondary school I attended was the only science school for girls in the country, with 21 students in a classroom. At that time, people could hardly imagine a girl studying science, even though girls sometimes do better than boys. At the end of high school, my wishes were still to study economics at the university, but I was directed to the faculty of law. Surprisingly, I liked the law, although it was not my first choice. I realized that law is also a science which calls for Cartesian reasoning as the pure sciences. In the first year of study, I did my internship at the Court of Cassation (which no longer exists in our judicial system). I was impressed by these judges in gowns, who discussed laws with confidence. At that time, I never thought I could one day follow their steps because women were few in this profession. Still, this experience made me dream.

When I started my career as a judge, the first challenge I faced was to ensure that justice was done. Law and justice are sometimes two different things; you can be sure that you have applied the law, but you cannot be sure that you have done justice. You are often in front of people who hide the truth from you, and you must try to discover it yourself. Sometimes, I take a long time to think about the decision I am going to make in a case, and to wonder if it is the right one. The principle that guides me in facing this kind of challenge is to do the right thing so that my conscience does not blame me. I always aim to apply the law and rely on the wisdom of God, who always guides me as He is the only one who can know if litigants are not telling the whole truth.

Before I was appointed Chief Justice, I never imagined that a woman could hold the office that had always been the preserve of men. But why not, since our brains work the same way? My biggest challenge as a Chief Justice was to rebuild a totally destroyed post-genocide judicial system, with minimal human and material resources. I did the best I could. It is up to women to believe in, and demonstrate their abilities, and others will no longer have reason to doubt you. For young women lawyers, I urge you to be guided by a spirit of excellence, seek satisfaction in the outcome of your work, and not in the material interests of your job. Your spirit of excellence will see you through every challenge.



## Amsatou Sow Sidibé, Ph.D. (Senegal)

Professor of Law.

First Woman Presidential Candidate, Senegal.

Starting in 1974 at the law school of Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, in an overcrowded amphitheater, I told myself I would never have success in legal studies. But persistence in my efforts permitted me to become a woman. I am the first Senegalese woman who, after the State doctorate in Law at the University of Paris 2 Pantheon Sorbonne, succeeded in the competition for aggregation in legal and political science of the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES). I am a Professeur de Classe Exceptionnelle (Professor of Exceptional class), and I capitalize on 40 years of university career during which I have trained generations of students and senior executives from Senegal, Africa and elsewhere.

Leader of the party Car Leneen and initiator in Senegal of the third political party, I am the first Senegalese woman candidate for the Presidential election in my country. I have served as Advisor to the President of the Republic of Senegal. A legal profession can lead to anything. Women are natural leaders. They are the backbone of families and society. They are therefore useful. Their leadership must be valued by knowledge, know-how, and competence, and guided by values. Let us be aware of our intrinsic values and trust in ourselves to build a fairer, more balanced and more united world.



## Ayotunde A. Phillips (Nigeria)

Chairperson, Lagos State Independent Electoral Commission.

Retired Former Chief Judge, Lagos State Judiciary.

I always told myself that if God grants my prayer to become a Judge of the High Court, I will strive to make a difference. So, in 1994, when I was appointed a Judge of the Lagos State High Court in Nigeria, I set out to do just that. The country was still under Military Rule, so there was the challenge of adjudicating over Military Decrees instead of State Laws or Acts of Parliament. Furthermore, the Constitution had been suspended, which also presented its attendant problems, especially in the area of the enforcement of Fundamental Human Rights. We, however, did our best despite these constraints to protect the rights of litigants.

I did not experience too much interference from the Executive arm of Government. The opinion of the litigants of the Judiciary was very low at that time. Still, I believe we managed to bring a breath of fresh air into the system. With time, the Lagos State Judiciary blossomed. As the years progressed, we had several female appointees. Now two-thirds of the Judges in the Lagos State Judiciary are female.

In 2012 I was appointed the 14th Chief Judge and the 4th Female Chief Judge. During my tenure, I worked to decongest the prisons, which were under the weight of a considerable number of detainees awaiting trial. I also tackled staff welfare, which was at a very low ebb. I finalized the introduction and implementation of IT into our Judicial System, which has become imperative for use now that the Covid-19 pandemic has struck.



## Ayotunde A. Phillips (Nigeria)

Chairperson, Lagos State Independent Electoral Commission.

Retired Former Chief Judge, Lagos State Judiciary.

Most women in law have to juggle the home front with our very demanding profession. I had four children when I started active law practice, and when I was appointed a Judge, I had two teenagers and two very young children. As strong women, we have to do our best, as there will be good days and bad days. With faith in ourselves and some cooperation from our husbands and domestic staff, we succeed in the end.

There are good bosses and horrible bosses at work, but with the benefit of hindsight, I have learned from both. I managed to acquire the skill to work with anyone. I have had bosses who were older than me and bosses who were younger than me, but this did not affect my attitude to work at all. My advice is always to be professional, determine what you want to achieve, and remain focused on achieving that goal. Do not sweat the small stuff, and don't let anything derail you. Pick yourself up when you stumble and keep on going as there is a very bright light at the end of the tunnel.



## Beatrice Duncan, Ph.D. (Ghana)

Rule of Law Advisor, UN Women  
Children and Women's Law Expert

I was named after a paternal great grandmother—Abrekna, who, did not allow illiteracy or other life circumstances to define who she was. As a firm believer in the empowerment of women, Abrekna was a feminist in her own right, planting the seeds of my quest for women's rights and social justice in me at an early age. This era of the Black Lives Matter movement reminds me of a time when I led an amateurish revolt against what I thought was a different treatment of black pupils in my primary school.

During my years in high school, one of my teachers lost her husband, and a few days after his death, she and her children were evicted from the matrimonial home by the family of her deceased husband.

These two examples of racial and gender-based discrimination fueled my passion to become a social activist. When the opportunity came for me to study law, I took full advantage of it. I believed then, as I do now, that law is one of the tools for fighting injustice and discrimination. I eventually narrowed my interest down to the rights of women and children, initially working with civil society and partnering with other actors such as the media.



## Beatrice Duncan, Ph.D. (Ghana)

Rule of Law Advisor, UN Women  
Children and Women's Law Expert

Participating in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and drawing inspiration from other feminist trailblazers was a monumental turning point for me. Working with the United Nations has provided a structured mechanism for continuing this effort. I can state with confidence that the law remains an effective tool for addressing social injustice.

The quest for social justice will remain a struggle across generations as societies are confronted with different social challenges. This current age of technology and social media can either be used or misused through a tweet, blog or hashtag. Young women of this generation have a unique opportunity to demand a gender-equal world through these global platforms as well as by learning from the experiences and lessons of the feminist movement from a historical perspective. As former President Barak Obama stated in his speech to the class of 2020, "...if the world's going to get better, it's going to be up to you."



## Boma Ayomide Alabi (Nigeria)

Founding Partner, Primera Africa legal, Nigeria.

First woman president of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association.

I was not brought up as a girl child, I was simply a child and expected to excel in all aspects of my student life - academics, drama, debate, sports, etc., as were my brothers. Imagine my surprise when I grew from girl child to woman, to find that some actors in society adjudged my gender a disability! I have not allowed this to impact my aspirations and career decisions.

I have equally passed judgment, and in my opinion, they have a problem which has absolutely nothing to do with me! This saying resonates with me as a universal truth, "no one can put you down without your permission." Be professional, focus on your objectives, build your network, and maintain a detachment level to ensure sound judgment in all you do.



## Chafika Bensaoula, Ph.D. (Algeria)

Judge, African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights  
Professor at the National School of the Magistrature  
(Algeria)  
Former Adviser to the Minister of Justice (Algeria)

There are times in our lives that mark us either positively or negatively. But this qualification mixes up in some and forces you to rise stronger and more aware. I remember the day my life as a couple ended and will always remember it because it was above all the beginning of a life as fruitful as it was memorable. As a career judge I recognized the shortcomings of our family code in caring for divorced women and children both materially and legally and I immediately proposed modifications.

My rise toward positions of responsibility had begun! Playing the role of father and mother for my children had fueled in me a desire for perfection and to set an example. Getting my doctorate was a second step and the success of my children and their equilibrium both mentally and professionally ..... the climax!

Being a woman is no small task. Being a woman is a symbol of courage, perseverance, struggle and success. We give life, we fight for the success of this being for which we are responsible; let us persevere in everything we do and never give up because after the rain always comes good weather and each problem has its solution. Our creator made us this way, the most difficult task is to give life (birth), and we assume it! So, how could we not go ahead with anything that requires less effort and less sacrifice?



## Christiana Tah (Liberia)

Former Attorney General, Liberia.

Author of the bestselling book "Listen to the Songs the Children Sing" (LifeRich, 2020).

Historically, Liberia has tended to encourage women to excel professionally. Since the nineteen seventies, women have held high positions in the Liberian judicial system, including the position of Chief Justice and other branches of government. However, after the Liberian civil war broke out in 1990, which lasted for fourteen years, most families (including mine) were displaced and had to start life all over in a foreign country. This situation required balancing my career and family and, consequently, at various times, I had to give priority to one over the other.

Somehow, it appears that the woman is always the one expected to sacrifice career for family. But when I was appointed as Attorney General of Liberia in 2009, my husband volunteered to take full charge of family matters so I could return to Liberia to serve my country.

The position was challenging, but I gave it my utmost, and after five years of service, I stepped aside and moved on. Although Liberian women participate in all three branches of the Liberian government, they continue to be underrepresented in each branch. Any underrepresented group will be, without a doubt, underserved. To counter this, women must work together to increase their numbers in key sectors, especially the legislature. That way, they can influence the enactment of laws that will positively impact women's lives. Most importantly, public awareness and implementation are critical steps to take if women are to benefit from laws enacted to improve their lives.



## Dior Fall Sow (Senegal)

First Woman Prosecutor and Attorney General, Senegal.  
General Counsel at the Prosecutor's Office, at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).  
Senior General Counsel at the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).  
Consultant, International Criminal Court.

I have always felt an uncontrollable urge to react to any injustice or discrimination. At an early age, I was convinced that being a woman, I could aspire like men, to all possible functions, and to participate in the development of my country. These convictions fueled my vocation for the judiciary. I joined this body in 1971 as an examining magistrate in Saint-Louis, the first woman assigned to that region. I was offered the "favor" of staying in Dakar, the capital city because I was a woman, but I refused that offer. After four years spent in education and a year as a Substitute for the Dakar Public Prosecutor, I was the first woman named Public Prosecutor in Senegal in 1976. Through my quest justice and the fight against impunity, I served at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), as a Legal Advisor. I ended my career there as Senior General Counsel in the ICTR Appeals Chamber. As a founding member of the Association of Senegalese Jurists (AJS), I am continuing the fight for the attainment of Gender Equality in Senegal.

By agreeing to put ourselves at the service of the law, we advocate for the respect of the values that allow us to live peacefully together. These objectives will only be achieved if human rights are respected. We must raise awareness that without respect for human rights, there can be no development and no peace. We will have to combat all social inequalities, and discrimination, to ensure social well-being, through solidarity, work and patriotic commitment. We must, for true social justice, promote equal rights in order to establish global peace. We must, with men, continue to defend the human rights of women and vulnerable people. It is at this level that the violations of human rights are most apparent and often the most serious. The challenges to be met remain numerous! Our determination must remain steadfast!



## Dupe Atoki (Nigeria)

Judge, ECOWAS Court of Justice (ECOWAS)

Director General Consumer Protection Council (Nigeria)

Commissioner, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

I qualified to practice law in Nigeria in 1978. Marriage came next, and children followed suit. Opting to teach law while my husband – a lawyer too – carried on with a law practice rated as successful at that time. Unfortunately, shortly after, he passed away and in my mid-thirties, I had three under teen children to nurture, with societal downplay of the capacity of widows to succeed on their own. The challenge can only be imagined. But I approached this bleak situation with great fortitude and faith in God, literally blasting through rocks of challenges while also building my competency. The latter motivated me, and at 54 years of age, I obtained a postgraduate diploma in international humanitarian law in Washington DC, pleasantly sitting in class with students of my children's age.

I served the African Union as a Commissioner of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights for 6 years, the last two as the chairperson, and making history as the first Nigerian woman to head an AU organ. In recognition of my expertise, the government of Nigeria appointed me as a Commissioner of the National Human Rights Commission; the Director General of its Consumer Protection Council and currently a judge of the ECOWAS Court. My maxim is “no excuse for failure, if you believe in it, you can do it.”

The construction of our gender as women presents an inherent bar to success, which is often taken as a given for men. In Africa, traditional practices greet a girl child upon arrival which escalates to socio-political strangulation later in life. To succeed, a woman requires both the uncommon early home support and confidence boosting of an enlightened family or a grasp of the need to wear the breastplate for the battle of survival that lies ahead. To the latter, it requires self-confidence and self-assurance that a woman is a beautiful creation with as great a potential as a man, and capable of reaching any aspired height. The pinnacle of a woman's achievement is determined by the readiness to engage any and all obstacles by either blasting through, climbing over or going around it. Indeed, law practice, considered an otherwise exclusive preserve of men, requires even greater strength of purpose.



## Elizabeth Adu (Ghana/USA)

Former Deputy General Counsel for Operations at the World Bank

Former Board Member, Center for International Forestry Research

Very early in my career at the World Bank, I bonded with the very few African women professionals who were working there. There were about five of us, including Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (now Director-General of the WTO) and Maria Kiwanuka (a former Minister of Finance of Uganda). This group provided mutual support, advice, mentoring and guidance on how to navigate through the World Bank. This group developed into the World Bank's African Women's informal network, which has grown to become a major partner in the discussion on racial discrimination and diversity in the World Bank. It was important to ensure that my voice was not silenced, by insisting even when my advice was being ignored that I wanted my views recorded.

As the first African Woman Deputy General Counsel for Operations at the World Bank, I had oversight over the legal and policy issues with respect to all projects and programs from all the regions that the World Bank operated in. It required interacting with senior management and the members of the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors. One of the highlights was working with an amazing team of operational lawyers in moving forward the World Bank's agenda. For example, working on the approval of the conditional cash transfer program in Brazil (the Bolsa Familia) which has become the model for conditional cash transfer programs not only in Latin America, but also in Africa and Asia.



## Elizabeth Adu (Ghana/USA)

Former Deputy General Counsel for Operations at the World Bank

Former Board Member, Center for International Forestry Research

I ended my career at the World Bank as Director of Operations for Latin America and the Caribbean. Thus, moving to a direct role in the operations of the region and moving much closer to the countries. This period was enlightening about how much Africa has in common with Latin America in terms of culture, cuisine and development challenges. I was humbled by the connections I was able to make with people because of what we had in common. This made achieving our common goals much easier.

My general advise: It is important to constantly reach beyond your comfort zone and undertake challenging assignments. This is what enabled me to thrive at the World Bank and to continue to find the work interesting and fulfilling.

Seek diverse sponsors and mentors to help you in your career. It is also important that as you advance in any institution you also invest in mentoring the next generation.

Continuous learning and development are essential for everyone and that continues to this day.

After I retired from the World Bank, my appointment to the Board of the Center for International Forestry Research, introduced me to the world of forests and their impact on climate change. A new learning opportunity and chance to interact with a group of specialists and to learn from them.



## Elizabeth Ibanda-Nahamya (Uganda)

Judge, Residual Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals

Former Deputy Principal Defender for the Special Court for Sierra Leone

Judge, High Court Uganda (Former Deputy Head of the International Crimes Division)

I was born in an almost all girls family at a time when girls were not considered to be at par with the boys. My father and mother were my pillars as they believed that I could achieve what I wanted in life. Their outlook was crucial in my formative years and later in adulthood. They inculcated in me values such as patience, resilience, working hard, being optimistic, self-confidence and persistence. I was fortunate to have a professional father who fully believed in his daughters. My mother was naturally bright and a determined person who wanted her daughters to have the opportunities that she never had.

The chance to attend one of the best girls' schools in the country positively impacted my life. I studied law at the University at a time when fewer women were admitted to study law. This turned me into a competitive, resilient and confident person. I am an avid researcher and I enjoy mentoring young lawyers. I find satisfaction in seeing a mentee transition into an equal partner. A major challenge in my career was the non-acceptability of my capability by male colleagues. Another was the missed job opportunities owing to the Anglophonic education system.

Every woman should believe in herself. Academically, some women can do more than what men can do. I advise women to focus on their goals. This is a key to success. It is imperative that as one woman progresses, she must find the hand of another woman to lift upwards. Should one experience any setback, count it as a learning process and an opportunity to work hard towards excellence. It is important to realise that if any of us succeed, we all benefit so act in solidarity and build one another. I would also advise that successful women in law should mentor the young ones to ensure that those whom we leave behind will appropriately step into our shoes and carry on the good work started. A legacy left behind is a career catalyst for enhancement of those following in our footsteps.



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