

The logo for African Women in Media 2030 Vision. It features the letters 'AWM' in a stylized, colorful font (purple, green, orange) with a silhouette of a woman in the center. To the right, '2030' is in large green letters and 'VISION' is in orange. Below the logo, the text 'African Women in Media' is written in a smaller font.

AWM 2030 VISION
African Women in Media



WE ARE SHAPING

THE FUTURE OF GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY

IN AND THROUGH MEDIA

www.africanwomeninmedia.com

Foreword

Dear Esteemed Stakeholders,

We stand at a pivotal moment; opportunities beckon, and we must act. The narratives that shape our continent are being constructed afresh. In a world where geopolitical and geoeconomic dynamics are constantly being reconstructed, the voices of African women must be central to this process. No more shall women's perspectives be relegated to the margins as has been the case for too long. No more should their expertise be undervalued, their stories untold.

Our organisation, African Women in Media (AWiM), is dedicated to rectifying this anomaly. We envision a media landscape that reflects the diverse realities of our continent, where women are not just present but are leading the charge in shaping the discourse.

With immense pride and a deep sense of purpose, AWiM has developed a roadmap for the organisation's future. More than being a strategic plan, this document is a compass guiding AWiM into its next phase of impactful work. It is a testament to our unwavering commitment – to amplify the voices of African women in media. We will ensure that the stories of African women are told, their perspectives heard, and their contributions recognised.

This roadmap is a product of deep reflection, extensive consultation, and a clear-eyed assessment of the challenges and opportunities. It outlines our strategic pillars, each designed to foster a more inclusive, equitable, and impactful media ecosystem. Among these are capacity building aimed at equipping African women in media with the skills, knowledge, and resources they need to excel, advocating for policies that promote gender equity, and creating a more inclusive media environment. AWiM is also committed to fostering strategic partnerships and collaborative ventures and building strong networking opportunities for African women in media and others in wider society. Mindful of the deep-seated issues to be addressed, we are committed to sustainability and growth to ensure the long-term viability of AWiM and the expansion of our reach across the continent.

Achieving our vision requires a collective effort. We recognise this and call upon our members, partners, funders, and all those who share our purpose to join us on this journey as we shape a media landscape that reflects Africa's richness, diversity, and dynamism.

The AWiM Board sincerely thanks everyone who contributed to developing this roadmap. Let us embark on this exciting chapter with renewed vigour and a shared commitment to empowering African women in media and those whom they serve.

Prof Oluyinka Esan and Phathiswa Magopeni,
Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, AWiM Board.



A Message from AWiM's Cofounders



As African Women in Media approaches 10 years of redefining the landscape of gender equality in and through media in Africa, we celebrate a decade of success whilst joining the world at a significant crossroads for women's rights. Women's voices and advocacy for their rights continue to galvanise incredible energy in the face of forces threatening to unravel the hard-won progress. The systems that have long dictated resources are evolving, presenting a pivotal moment for us to re-evaluate, reclaim and take bold, decisive action to achieve the social and economic

changes we seek for African women working in media industries.

When we created AWiM as a Facebook group in June 2016, we never envisioned the incredible journey we would take. Over the last nine years, AWiM grew organically, quickly and responsively to opportunities. We kept the lights on through project-by-project funding. Rising to the challenge and learning as we went, we seized opportunities and faced challenges head-on, even when resources were scarce, remaining steadfast in our vision that 'one day African women will have equal opportunities and access in media'. Through it all, however, many lessons were learnt, not least the importance of a clear vision. Nine years later, what began as a digital space for women in media has evolved into a formidable 10,000+ strong movement.



The beauty of learning as you go is that you have already taken the hardest step of getting started. As we step into this next chapter, we do so with the strength of our experience, the power of the AWiM community, and clarity of purpose!

The first AWiM conference in 2017 was a symposium with a budget for 30 people and in attendance were 55. Since then, AWiM has toured four African countries, had two virtual years during the COVID-19 Pandemic, and grown attendance to 250 annually. Achieving this growth was no easy task, and we have enjoyed our adventures touring beautiful African countries. As we enter a new era, the AWiM Conference is evolving to what it was always meant to be: the African Women in Media Global Forum. It is not just a change in name but a transformation that realises the Conference's potential to be a high-impact, industry, knowledge and policy-transforming forum. From the beginning, the vision for AWiM Conferences was clear: it was to be a multistakeholder space bringing together industry, academia, policy actors and civil society because working to achieve social change must always be a collective effort. However, our survey with our community showed a strong call and need for economic empowerment, leadership development and technological preparedness. We have listened and are taking on the challenge over the next five years to explore ways to meaningfully integrate our ambitions for social change with our community's need for economic empowerment and multi-level access to technology. Our multi-stakeholder approach will now include the financial investment and tech communities.



AWiM conferences have been catalysts for forged relationships, collaborations and innovations. As we step into the next chapter, we invite our community, partners and allies to work with us as we build our forum to one that is world leading.



AWiM23 in Kigali was a defining moment in our movement, it birthed the Kigali Declaration on the Elimination of Gender Violence in and through Media in Africa by 2034 (Kigali Declaration). Over 200 delegates and a 15-member committee shaped its vision, exemplifying the power of collaborative and participatory approaches for lasting change. We took a bold step, unsure how well the whole idea would be received, and we are grateful to the committee and our partners, Fojo Media Institute, for their tremendous support. The Kigali Declaration is not just a document but a manifesto and community commitment towards change, born out of urgency and deeply rooted in lived experiences. It is exemplary in its co-creation and revolutionary in its ambitions, and that is why it is central to everything we do over the next five years.

“ *We have not journeyed and achieved all of this alone. AWiM is a testament to collective strengths, allyship and champions who share our vision for inclusive and equitable media industries.* ”

To our partners who believed in us when we were just two women with a vision, to those who joined along the way, and those pathing the way for the next five years – we are in your debt. To the AWiM Board, past and present – you have shown unwavering commitment to our ethos and ensured our governance is on the right path, and you have contributed to this new era of AWiM. We are grateful for your incredible support. To the AWiM Team, past and present – you have been the heartbeat of our journey and remain constant in your tenacity and commitment. We are forever grateful. To our members, participants, speakers, delegates, and everyone who has been a part of AWiM at any point in the last nine years, your voices and stories have shaped what we are today. Your trust in us has been our greatest honour and one that we continue to carry with pride. We will not let you down. And to our families and God Almighty – thank you for your love, trust and guidance. Your unconditional support gives us confidence of an even brighter future.

As you turn these pages, know that the vision within them is informed by our journey so far, our vision for the future, and the steps we must take to reach this ultimate goal. Some steps are small and incremental, while others are bold, transformative, and audacious. Together, we will achieve each and every one of them to make a reality the future we want for generations to come.

Dr Yemisi Akinbobola and Bamidele Ogunleye,
Cofounders, African Women in Media

About AWiM



African Women in Media (AWiM) is an international non-governmental organisation committed to advancing gender equality in and through media. Since its founding in 2016, AWiM has worked to shift media landscapes across Africa through a holistic approach that includes:

- Conducting research that informs evidence-based change
- Implementing capacity-building programmes that support media professionals
- Building strategic partnerships to amplify impact
- Driving policy action that addresses systemic challenges

AWiM's flagship initiative, the African Women in Media Conference, launched in 2017, is the continent's largest gathering focused on the intersection of gender and media. It convenes media practitioners, academics, civil society actors, and policymakers to collaboratively drive change toward inclusive and equitable media environments in Africa.

Our Vision, Mission & Strategic Direction



Our Vision

AWiM envisions a future where African women have equal and equitable access to representation and opportunities in media industries and within media content. This vision is rooted in the belief that transformative change in media systems is essential for achieving gender equality.



Our Mission

To contribute to the creation of enabling environments for African women working in media and to challenge and transform how African women are represented in media content. We pursue this mission through:

- Rigorous research to inform practice and policy.
- Advocacy that amplifies women's voices and rights.
- Partnerships that drive collective action and sustainable change.
- Knowledge exchange and economic empowerment through convenings and learning platforms.

What we will achieve



Impact



Our Vision

A media landscape where African women have equal and equitable access and representation opportunities and influence – both on and off screen



Our Mission

An enabling environment for African Women in Media that transforms how African women are represented in media industries

Outcomes



Enhanced collaboration and evidence-based decision-making among media stakeholders to advance gender equity in media ecosystems.



Sustainable policy and institutional reforms advancing gender equity in media across sectors.



Expanded opportunities for African women to access funding, monetize media content, and scale media ventures.

Outputs



Increased networking to enable predictive action and insights



Increased Knowledge-led Multisectoral action



Increased financial Inclusion and empowerment

AWiM2030 Vision: Strategic Focus

Our 5-year Strategic Plan (2026–2030) charts a clear path toward implementing the Kigali Declaration on the Elimination of Gender Violence in and through Media in Africa by 2034. AWiM will focus on:

- Empowering and mobilising the AWiM community through deeper engagement and shared values
- Promoting a culture of learning and capacity building through accessible training
- Aligning advocacy and programming with the principles of the Kigali Declaration
- Building sustainable structures that connect our social change goals with economic and policy investment opportunities

This strategy is shaped by AWiM's commitment to intersectional feminism, media freedom, and the economic empowerment of African women in media industries.

Realising the AWiM2030 Vision: Events and Activities

To achieve the goals outlined in our 5-year strategic plan, AWiM will strengthen and expand its programming through a series of interconnected events and activities. These are designed to foster multi-stakeholder engagement, support the implementation of the Kigali Declaration, and drive transformative action across the media landscape in Africa.

1. Expanding the AWiM Conference: The AWiM Conference will be scaled to become a pan-African platform for media professionals, academics, policy actors, civil society, financial institutions, and

the tech community. Through this expansion, we aim to promote cross-sectoral collaboration and align social change objectives with economic and policy investments. Future conferences will place a strong emphasis on inclusive participation, especially from underrepresented regions and communities.

2. Institutionalising Conference Outcomes: We will introduce a sustainability framework to ensure recommendations from the annual conference lead to real-world change. This will include the creation of post-conference Working Groups, monitoring mechanisms, and feedback loops that feed into policy and programming cycles.

3. Thematic Relevance and Strategic Alignment: Conference themes will be informed by the Kigali Declaration and shaped by emerging issues and evolving debates at the intersection of gender and media. Themes will also reflect the lived realities of African women and be responsive to global and continental policy agendas.

4. AWiMediapreneur Programme: The existing Pitch Zone will evolve into the AWiMediapreneur Programme, a dynamic space for women in media to: engage directly with funders, grantmakers, and investors, access tailored mentorship and capacity-building resources, and develop sustainable and impactful media ventures. This initiative centres on women's economic empowerment as a vehicle for systemic change.

5. Regional and Localised Events: A series of smaller, in-person events will be hosted in various regions to equip stakeholders with tools and strategies to support the implementation of the

Kigali Declaration, translate conference recommendations into concrete, localised actions and strengthen grassroots engagement and foster regional leadership within the AWiM network.

Through these events and activities, AWiM will deepen its role as a catalyst for change, ensuring that gender equality in and through media becomes a shared, lived reality across the continent.

The AWiMovement: Building a Community of Change-Makers

The AWiMovement is at the heart of AWiM's strategy to deepen community engagement, expand knowledge-sharing, and create a powerful network of individuals and organisations committed to gender equality in and through media. It is a call to action for those who share AWiM's ethos to contribute meaningfully to a more just and inclusive media landscape across Africa.

1. A Global Network for Career Development and Advocacy

By joining the AWiMovement, members become part of a vibrant, global network of professionals and advocates working at the intersection of media, gender, and development. Members gain access to opportunities that support career growth, leadership development, and collective advocacy efforts.

2. Capacity Building Through AWiMLearning

The movement will offer short, open-access courses and certified training programmes through the AWiMLearning platform. Training will be informed by AWiM's ongoing research and events, ensuring content is timely, contextual, and practical. Mentorship initiatives will complement learning pathways, enabling peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and intergenerational support.

3. Upholding Shared Values and the Kigali Declaration

Members commit to AWiM's core ethos of gender equality, particularly in addressing gender violence in media, as set out in the Kigali Declaration. The movement champions greater visibility and representation of African women in media by encouraging the use of SourceHer, AWiM's expert database.

4. Post-Conference Engagement and Recognition

Members will have the opportunity to join post-conference Working Groups that carry forward key recommendations from AWiM events. Active contributors to these initiatives will be eligible for recognition as AWiM Fellows, a designation that acknowledges their leadership and commitment.

5. Building a Strong and Sustainable Community

AWiM will launch an expert database to spotlight members for speaking, consultancy, and media opportunities. A patronage model will enable members and allies to financially support AWiM's work and contribute to long-term sustainability. Through platforms like the HerMediaDiary podcast and other strategic communications, the movement will continue to elevate underrepresented voices and key issues affecting African women in media.

AWiM's Predictive Action Model: **The 3Fs**

At the core of AwiM's strategic approach is a predictive action model built on three interconnected pillars: Foresee, Foster, and Future-Proof. This model enables AwiM to stay ahead of emerging challenges, cultivate collective solutions, and ensure long-term impact through enabling environments for African women in media.

01 **FORESEE**



Anticipating Change Through Research and Insight

02 **FOSTER**



Creating Collaborative Ecosystems for Action

03 **FUTURE-PROOF**



Ensuring Long-Term Impact and Empowerment

Together, these 3Fs position AwiM as a visionary organisation, committed to shaping a media ecosystem where African women are represented, protected, and empowered at every level.

Strategic Direction One: Networking “Enabling Predictive Action and Insights”

Networking has been at the heart of AWiM since its founding as a Facebook group in 2016. Over the years, AWiM's conferences and collaborative initiatives have evolved into Africa's leading spaces for knowledge exchange and partnership-building focused on gender equality in and through media.

Our Journey So Far

Since AWiM's first conference in 2017, we've created dynamic platforms for media professionals, academics, CSOs, and policymakers to connect and share knowledge. Refined conference themes like AWiM23's 'Media and Gender Violence' have sparked

transformative outcomes such as the Kigali Declaration, a landmark initiative setting minimum standards to eliminate gender violence in and through media. Editorial fellowships and trainings have nurtured communities of practice, advancing ethical representation of women in coverage on topics like gender-based violence, women in politics, and labour migration.



Looking Ahead: Our 5-Year Networking Agenda

Over the next five years, AWiM will adopt an insight-led, predictive approach to networking, facilitating inclusive spaces that help stakeholders anticipate trends and shape gender equality agendas.

We commit to:

- **Transforming AWiM Conferences into a Global Forum:** Evolve our annual conferences into truly global platforms featuring forward-looking themes, innovative formats, and actionable insights.
- **Enhancing Accessibility and Partnerships:** Broaden reach and inclusion by cultivating new global, regional, and local partnerships, making conferences accessible to diverse participants.
- **Facilitating Post-Conference Action Dialogues:** Create dynamic dialogue spaces that turn conference discussions into real-world strategies and collaborative actions.
- **Strengthening the AWiMovement:** Continue empowering members through professional development, mentorship, and shared resources, turning networking into a catalyst for change.

Strategic Direction Two: Advocacy and Insights “Fostering Knowledge-led Multisectoral Action”

AWiM is dedicated to fostering environments where African women can thrive in media industries and ensuring their accurate and dignified representation in media content. Over the years, our work has been shaped by groundbreaking initiatives, such as the Kigali Declaration, SourceHer, and ongoing research and training programs. With over 10 research reports guiding our advocacy, AWiM is committed to using knowledge to drive action.

Our Commitment to Action

AWiM is committed to advancing the implementation of the Kigali Declaration, which addresses gender-based violence in and through media. Over the next five years, AWiM will work with diverse stakeholders to ensure accountability and progress. Research remains a cornerstone of AWiM's work, with reports like Barriers for Women Journalists in Sub-Saharan Africa guiding impactful projects across the continent. Additionally, AWiM will expand SourceHer, its expert database platform, to increase global visibility of African women experts in media content.

Looking Ahead: Our 5-Year Advocacy & Insights Agenda

Over the next five years, AWiM will continue to lead advocacy initiatives, generating research-driven insights and fostering multisectoral collaborations to effect meaningful change.

We commit to:

- **Implementing and monitoring the Kigali Declaration** Develop and facilitate resources for Kigali Declaration signatories to take concrete actions and implement the standards.
- **Empowering African Women Experts:** Expand resources for African women experts to overcome visibility barriers in media and increase their representation as authoritative sources in news and content.
- **Research for Policy Change:** Continue producing in-depth research, gather critical data, and partner with organisations to inform policy and push for regulatory changes that support gender equality in media.
- **Raising Awareness:** Continue creating and disseminating impactful content that raises awareness on key issues like gender violence, underrepresentation, and the need for a diverse media landscape.
- **Leading Multisectoral Collaboration:** Facilitate collaborations across media, policy, civil society, and academia to design and implement multilevel interventions that promote gender equality and women's rights in media.

AWiM's advocacy strategy over the next five years will be rooted in research-driven action, empowering women experts, and leading cross-sector collaborations to drive real and sustainable change in the media industry.

Strategic Direction Three: Economic Empowerment “Catalysing Financial Inclusion and Empowerment”

AWiM's commitment to professional development has yielded measurable success. Our Monitoring and Evaluation data confirms that we have fully met our objective of training women journalists to produce high-quality, gender-sensitive content. However, these achievements have not always translated into economic empowerment for our community. At the same time, the gender gap in ownership and leadership of media organisations continues to widen.

A 2025 study by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism underscores this disparity:

“Only 27% of the 171 top editors across 240 media brands are women, despite women comprising 40% of journalists in the studied markets. While this marks a small improvement from 24% in 2024, real structural barriers remain.”

While capacity-building remains crucial, training alone is insufficient to drive significant progress in gender equity in media leadership. Evidence points to the need for bold, multifaceted interventions, including:

- Capital investments in women-led media startups
- Equal opportunity policies in established organisations
- Advocacy by media unions to safeguard women's workplace rights

Where Theme Two focuses on advocacy and policy reform, Theme Three shifts to action-oriented economic empowerment. AwiM will leverage its extensive network and influence to bridge the gap between our community and the resources needed to foster financial inclusion and career advancement.

Looking Ahead: Our 5-Year Economic

Empowerment Agenda

Over the next five years, AwiM will focus on catalysing women's financial empowerment through innovation, entrepreneurship, and direct access to capital and networks.

We commit to:

- **Launch the Mediapreneurship for African Women Programme:** This flagship programme will champion the growth of women-owned and led media businesses, research, and innovative ventures in the media sector. By supporting entrepreneurship, AwiM will help create spaces where African women can lead and thrive on their own terms.
- **Reintroduce the AwiM Pitch Zone:** Relaunching the AwiM Pitch Zone at our conferences will provide an interactive platform for delegates to connect with investors, grantmakers, and development partners. This initiative will foster direct access to financial opportunities and promote the visibility of women-led projects and ideas.

The three themes - Networking, Advocacy & Insights, and Economic Empowerment - capture AwiM's holistic and forward-looking strategy for the next five years. Together, they form a blueprint for transforming the media industry through predictive action, collaborative partnerships, and proactive solutions that amplify the voices and power of African women in media.



CONTACT US

Dr Yemisi Akinbobola
yemisi@africanwomeninmedia.com

Bamidele Ogunleye
dele@africanwomeninmedia.com