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TOP 40 Under 40 Women 2014

The list of those
who made it to
BD's annual list of
Women to Watch

TOP
40
UNDER
40
Women

BUSINESS DAILY



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TOP 40 UNDER FORTY WOMEN 2014

Hard rules for women enroute to success

BY JENNY LUESBY

Kenya's top young women cite two factors as the most outstanding challenges to their success: corporate politics, and competition in macho all-male environments. They are two factors that researchers suggest are intertwined in one simple reality: the rules at work are not the same for men as for women.

In her book "Play Like a Man, Win Like a Woman", Gail Evans lists things that men do at work, that women just cannot. Men can get away with crying, fidgeting, yelling, and using bad manners, she argues, but if a woman does the same things, the resistance and condemnation will be complete.

Indeed, the differentiating line is so extreme that when a man cries, it is seen as a powerful and moving display of emotion. But when a woman cries, she is seen as weak and unstable.

This sees women repeatedly passed over for promotion, reports management consultant McKinsey in its Centred Leadership research, with managers, both male and female, continuing to take viable female candidates out of the running, often on the assumption that they can't handle certain jobs.

The big no-no, say researchers, in the whole 'it's different for women' rule set is showing emotion. Yet, at the same time, passion comes up as close to a defining feature of all the women now leading in making Kenya and companies and society better.

Take one of this year's Top 40 women, Sylvia Wairimu Mulinge, who has led a three-fold expansion in her Sh10.5 billion business over the last three years at Safaricom, and reports, as do many of the women, that she has been described as a passionate team leader.

Sylvia goes on to spell out how she has also been characterised as "choleric", meaning she is "outgoing, but can leave casualties behind, because of having less empathy and patience".

Jo Miller, CEO of Women's Leadership Coaching in the US, calls this "the confusing world of being a woman in today's workforce".

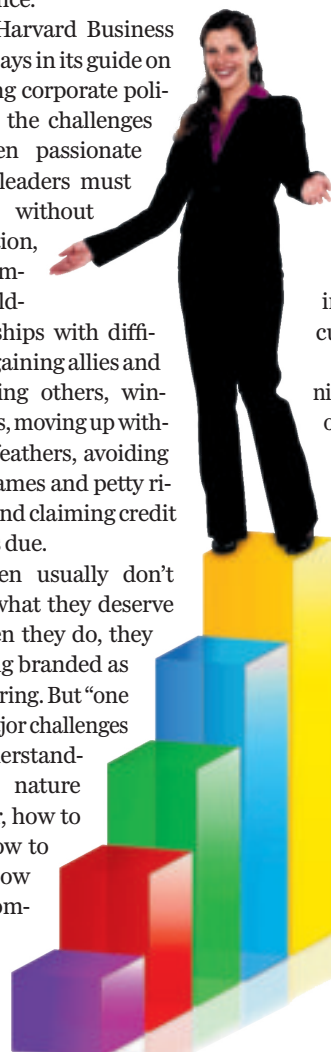
A powerful man is forceful. A powerful woman is choleric.

But, says Miller, "the most successful women I have worked with have a high degree of emotional intelligence, evidenced by qualities like resiliency, grace under fire, tenacity, flexibility, and composure," she says. "For these women, being passionate means having a compelling vision, speaking with conviction, not being afraid to voice opinions, and articulately debating their position."

Moreover, she says: "The higher you rise in an organization, the more of your time will be taken up playing the game of corporate politics — and it pays to understand the unwritten, unspoken rules of the game. One of those rules is that, as a woman, you will be judged not only by your talent and results, but by your emotional intelligence."

The Harvard Business Review says in its guide on mastering corporate politics that the challenges that even passionate women leaders must manage, without emotion, encompass build-relationships with difficult people, gaining allies and influencing others, win-resources, moving up without ruffling feathers, avoiding power games and petty rivalries, and claiming credit when it's due.

Women usually don't ask for what they deserve and when they do, they risk being branded as domineering. But "one of the major challenges ... is understanding the nature of power, how to get it, how to use it, how to feel com-



fortable with the notion of power," says Ron Brown, an organizational and management consultant. This can be a severe test for women who care passionately about the project at hand, including the difficulty of suffering peers or juniors with far less perfectionism or care.

According to McKinsey, women's love for the work itself can even see them elect to remain in jobs and opt out of promotion because of the deep sense of meaning they gain professionally.

More than men, women prize the opportunity to pour their energies into making a difference and working closely with colleagues, says the consultancy. "Women don't want to trade that joy for what they fear will be energy-draining meetings and corporate politics at the next management echelon," it reports.

With 59 per cent of the women who have made it to this year's Top 40 citing office politics as their biggest bugbear, according to Ipsos, Kenya's leading women prove that engaging in the maelstrom that is internal alliances, the building of social capital and networks, and even trading in chips to achieve a desired end, is effort that is part of the set, and simply a requisite of success: a certainty that they all face..

More than 2000 years ago, Greek philosopher Aristotle stated with no conditional exceptions that "man is a political animal." For top women, politics is essential, and the rules are clear: all passion, no emotion, through every difficulty,

It's a point borne out by Kathryn Heath in the *Harvard Business Review*: "In 2013, my partners and I conducted a combination of surveys and interviews with over 270 female managers in Fortune 500 organisations to determine what they liked and disliked about business meetings, and one of the things that repeatedly fell into the dislike column was politics. In the process of coaching and training women leaders over a decade, we've maintained a running list of common threads—and a disdain of office politics is in the top three. In reviewing several thousand 360-degree feedback surveys we found that both women and their managers cite political savvy as an ongoing development need."

Put short: for success, get political, but 'do it nice'.

How the Top 40 Under 40 Women were picked

Every year the top 40 Under 40 list comes with a mixed bag of routine inputs and equal measure of freshness that only shapes up at the tail end of the production process.

As we have done consistently in the past six years, the *Business Daily* invited its readers to nominate women aged under 40 who in their view have made significant achievements in whatever segments of our society and economy. That is then followed by the convening of a panel of judges who do the hard job of sifting through the hundreds of entries and picking out the outstanding nominees for recognition in this annual listing that has become very competitive. In the past, accolades have come our way for recognising these beautiful minds whose efforts and work the media does not ordinarily feature. But we have also had to deal with a measure of criticism on very critical areas such as the age of the candidates and some of the things

they claim to have done. Appearing in the Top 40 Under 40 list has become so critical to hundreds of Kenyan women that some appear to have decided that they would be on it regardless of their qualifications to do so.

So this late there has been a great measure of cutting corners, compression of age, canvassing and misrepresentation of facts to fit the bill.

The BD team has tried the best it can to keep the faith and stay the course to come up with a list that truly has women who represent Kenya's promise in the corporate world, research, science, the arts, theatre, professionalism and entrepreneurs.

In compiling this list of Women to Watch, the *Business Daily* has attempted to go beyond the basic list of fame and influence to interrogating each candidate's ingenuity, performance and staying power in whatever they do. We have then ascertained each candidate's age, and considered data on the size of

the business they do, its scope and complexity (i.e. whether it is a national/multi-national or cross-sectoral operation), and the competitive landscape in the segment of the economy it operates.

Women running or occupying senior positions in companies with a multi-national reach scored higher marks than those in charge of national/local agencies. In this list are also women professionals such as lawyers, architects, and partners in accounting firms, included purely on the basis of the size (value) of the work they have done.

The Top 40 Under 40 project has also awarded high marks to women who have excelled in professions that have been and remain male dominated such as software engineering, aviation and engineering. This is because the newspaper believes there should be no gender-based glass ceiling on any career aspiration.

Ochieng' Rapuro, Managing Editor

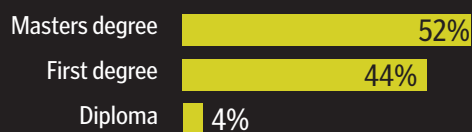


Top 40 Women under 40

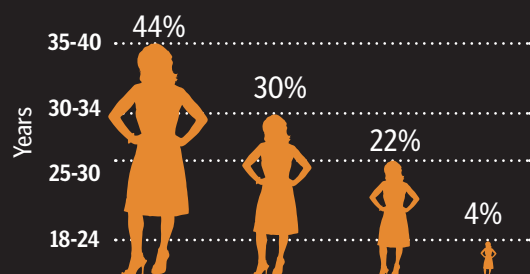
Profile of Success



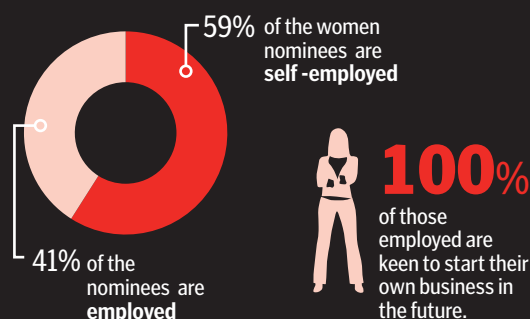
Academic Qualifications



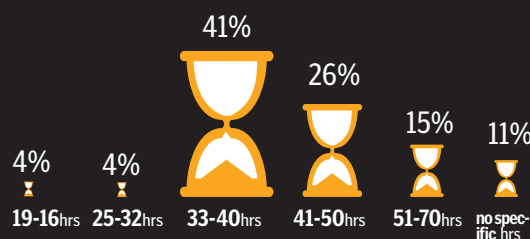
Age



Employment status



Hours per week worked



The nominees work long hours with at least 52% of them working over 40 hours in a given week. There are those that work up to 70 hours in a given week.



Average No. of Staff



SOURCE: IPSOSTOP 40 UNDER 40 WOMEN POLL JUNE 2014 BD INFOGRAPHIC: MILLIE WACHIRA

What women say about careers



Factors leading to success

Women nominees were asked what factors contributed to their success

Focus and determination to succeed

89%



Hard work

44%



Good career mentors

37%



International experience provided a stepping stone

30%



Academic qualifications

30%



Achieving KPI's and excelling

30%



Work experience/ has worked for long on same or similar role

15%



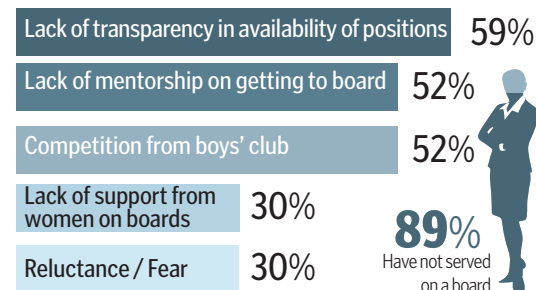
Challenges faced

Nominees were asked what challenges they faced as they climbed the ranks



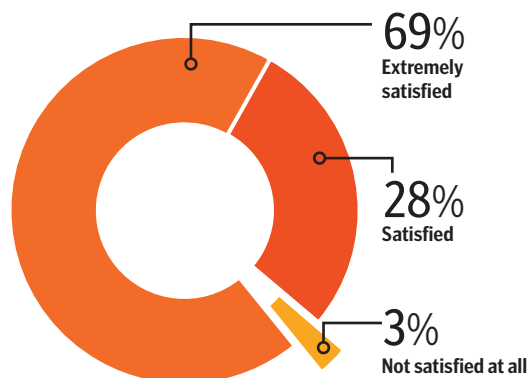
Women on parastatal boards

Nominees were asked reasons why women are generally not on boards



Satisfaction levels with work

Nominees were asked whether they were satisfied with their jobs



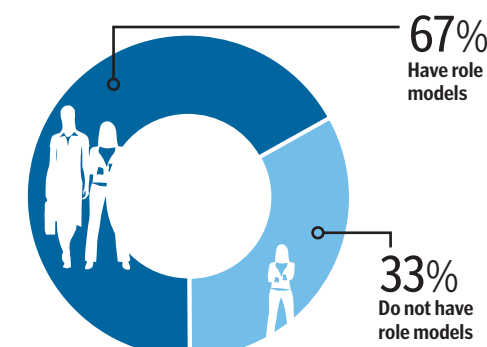
Career aspirations

16 nominees aspire for career progression in the following capacity:



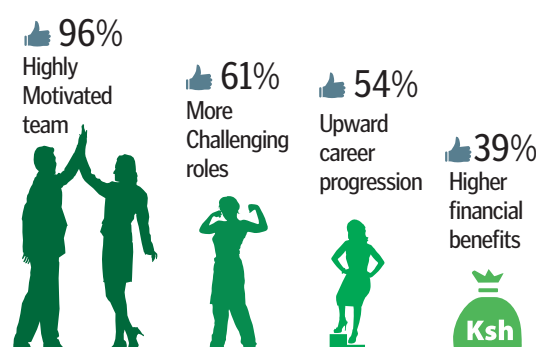
Role models

Nominees were asked whether they had career or role models



Career priorities

Nominees were asked what their priorities at the workplace were.





Boardroom still a strange place for Kenya women

Majority of women have cited lack of transparency as one of the main reasons keeping them out of the boardrooms



Studies show that companies with a high proportion of women board members score higher than their peers in financial performance, innovation and business longevity. FILE

BY BOB KOIGI

The role of women in Kenyan boardrooms is dismally below global standards, standing at less than 15 per cent of board positions, even as women contribute 52 per cent of the country's economy. This, even as numerous studies show that companies with a high proportion of women board members score higher than their peers in financial performance, innovation and business longevity.

However, Kenyan corporates remain closed to recognizing the importance of having women in the boardroom, at least if numbers are anything to go by.

Currently, only three women are chief executive officers in publicly listed companies: Ada Eze of Total Kenya, Maria Msiska of BOC Kenya Limited and Nasim Devji of Diamond Trust Bank.

By 2012, Nelius Kariuki, the current board chairperson of Kenya-Re, was the only woman chair among the 60 companies listed at the NSE.

A survey conducted by Ipsos Synnovate of this year's top 40 under 40 women found that the majority of the women leaders blamed the lack of transparency about the availability of board positions, the lack of mentorship, and competition with the entrenched boys club as the key factors keeping women out of boardrooms.

Some 56 per cent of the women polled also perceive that Kenya is generally a patriarchal society that predominantly favours men. As a result, they have to work harder to succeed.

The survey is corroborated by earlier research by the Kenya Institute of Management that showed women occupy about 12 per cent of board seats in Nairobi-bourse listed companies, compared to 20 per cent among state-owned firms - despite a provision in the constitution that requires boards and management of all government agencies to have 30 per cent women representation.

Another report by a presidential taskforce on parastatal reforms noted that on average, women make up 27 per cent of the board members in the state run agencies, with a number of them having just one or two women on their boards. Only 15 per cent of listed companies, according to the Chartered Institute of Marketing, have crossed the threshold of having 30 per cent women on their boards.

Globally, countries have endeavoured to end the gender inequality in the boardrooms through incentives to companies that recognize women and even quota systems that force companies to incorporate women into their highest echelons of business.

In 2003, Norway mandated a 40 percent quota for female board participation in both public and private companies. And in Finland legislation was passed that requires companies without women on their boards to disclose the reasons in their annual reports. But, while government has been active in pushing for women representation in boardrooms across the globe, company shareholders seem reluctant in appreciating the role of women in top

executive positions. Ironically, the shareholders should be the first to push for more women based on numerous studies on the effect of having women in top business positions.

Recent research from the Credit Suisse Research Institute found that companies with more women on their boards outperform those with fewer or no female directors. Even a single women director appears to mark out a difference, with Credit Suisse finding that net income growth over the past six years averaged 14 per cent for companies with women directors compared to 10 per cent for those with no female board members.

But, according to a study by catering services firm Sodexo, which compiled wide-ranging research on diversity at work, companies where women make up a third of board members made on average 42 per cent more profit, and shareholders received 53 per cent higher returns than those that headed by male peers.

Equality

Catalyst, a US non-profit that focuses on expanding opportunities for women in business, and delivers regular research on the relationship between the representation of women on boards of directors and corporate performance. further corroborates these findings.

In 2011, Catalyst found a 26 per cent difference in return on invested capital between companies with 19 to 44 per cent women board representation, and companies with zero woman directors.

Kenya is, however, now gathering momentum in addressing the issue of women's role on boards. The 30 per cent Club Kenya is a lobby group set up last year to recruit professionals and provide mentorship, training, awareness of the opportunities and networking in the push for more women on corporate boards. It aims to increase the number of women on the boards of private and public entities to at least one third over the next five years and is spearheaded by the East African Chapter of the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM). The club is modelled on similar clubs in the UK and South Africa.

Another initiative is the Federation of Kenyan Employers' Female Future Programme, also started last year. The initiative is a flagship leadership development programme of the FKE, which aims to strengthen gender equality in the workplace as well as draw more women to the top echelons of the private and public sectors. It provides training as three modules lasting three months, in leadership, board competency and rhetoric, with Oslo and Akershus University (HIOA) providing quality assurance and 10 Credit Masters points for the Board Competence Module.

So far, it has trained 20 trainers and targets to have at least 500 graduates by the end of 2017, with the second class, according to FKE, almost full. FKE has also enlisted the support of existing corporate and public sector chief executives and board chairmen to champion the nomination of more women to the programme. **-AFRICAN LAUGHTER**



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NUMBERS

27%

Average percentage of women board members in the State run agencies. A number of them have just one or two women on their boards.



26%

In 2011, Catalyst found a 26 per cent difference in return on invested capital between companies with 19 to 44 per cent women board representation, and companies with zero woman directors.



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THE JUDGES



MARGARET IRERI
MD, Ipsos Synovate

As managing director of Ipsos Synovate, Kenya's premier market research firm and pollster, Margaret knows people, a lot of people in Kenya's corporate and enterprise scene, and also has the data. She has over 13 years' experience in research having worked in eastern, western and southern Africa in various senior management positions and has won the Eddie Shultze Award for contributing to the development of research methodologies in Africa. She is an astute business woman and was instrumental in setting up Ipsos Synovate offices in Zambia, Mozambique and Nigeria. Besides her management responsibilities, Margaret does make time to contribute to industry initiatives - she is an active board member of the Market and Social Research Association of Kenya (MSRA), a council member of the Marketing Society of Kenya (MSK) and the national patron of Research Clubs of Africa.



KAIRO THUO
Partner at Viva Africa Consulting

Kairo Thuo is a partner at Viva Africa Consulting, a specialist legal and financial tax advisory firm. He has vast experience in matters tax and deep insights in the world of deal-making and its key players. He is an accountant and lawyer by training and a non-executive director of NIC Bank.



JENNY LUESBY
Media Consultant

Jenny Luesby is managing director and founder of new media company African Laughter. She is an award-winning ex-*Financial Times*, BBC and EIU journalist, in Kenya since 2006, when she was the launch consultant for Nation Media Group's *Business Daily* newspaper. She was formerly editorial director for online media group DecisionNews in France and winner of more than 17 awards. At AL, she has built an innovative & creative new media and PR operation.



WAKONYO IGERIA
Company Secretary, Consolidated Bank

Wakonyo is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya, a commissioner of oaths and notary public. She is also a certified public secretary and currently the company secretary and the head of legal services at Consolidated Bank of Kenya. She has a good grasp of Kenya's corporate scene and the people who matter in there. Wakonyo spends a significant portion of her off-office time on the motivational talk circuit speaking to students in schools, youth forums, women and Church groups.

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High-powered women and supportive spouses: Who's in charge, and of what?

Women who have really made it big say they could not have gotten to where they are without their supportive husbands

After their daughter Annie was born, Gail McGovern and her husband established what came to be known as the “kitchen calendar rule.” At the time, McGovern worked for AT&T overseeing 10,000 employees; her husband ran a large unit of Hewlett-Packard. They both needed to travel regularly for work, but one of them also needed to be home for Annie.

“We had two monster jobs,” recalls McGovern, who today is CEO of the American Red Cross. “In the beginning, we fought about who got to take a (particular work) trip. Then we instituted the kitchen calendar rule: Whoever booked it first got to take the trip.”

During those years — ones where McGovern recalls her house as “always a mess” and her cooking as “a lot of take-out” — McGovern left the office at 6:30 p.m. to relieve the nanny and spend evenings with Annie. Once Annie was in bed, McGovern was on conference calls until midnight. Despite their demanding jobs, McGovern and her husband never asked the nanny to work overtime, and they never missed one of Annie’s school assemblies, recitals, sporting events or parent-teacher conferences.

McGovern, a former Harvard Business School professor who also held top management jobs at Fidelity Investments, acknowledges that it wasn’t always easy. “You have to love to work, and you have to love to parent.... If you choose your employers wisely and choose your mate wisely, there is no question in my mind you can have it all.”

At a time when issues like gender inequality in the boardroom and the dearth of women in corporate America continue to make headlines, it is worth asking: How important is the role of a supportive spouse in the lives of high-powered female executives? “Those kind of jobs are all consuming. For women who have husbands and kids and lives — how do they manage?” asks Betsy Myers, director of the Centre for Women and Business at Bentley University in Waltham, Massachusetts. “As a woman is climbing up the ladder, how does she figure out her role at home? How does she navigate her marriage? When the woman’s career starts to take off, how does her husband handle it? It’s different for everyone.”

Myers, who leads corporate workshops around the world on the changing nature of women’s leadership roles, adds: “Of the hundreds of women I have spoken to who have really made it big, most tell me they could not have gotten to where they are without their incredibly supportive husband.... At least the ones who are still married say this.”

Yet even with a supportive husband, it has not been easy for today’s C-suite women — those who have been in the workforce for 20 or 30 years and who came of age in the era of second-wave feminism.



Two Jobs

Successful women have to love to work, and love to parent by equal measure. Experts say success comes with choosing both employers and mates wisely.

These women navigated thorny professional paths that involved not only moving up in male-dominated organizations, but also taking on traditional cultural values that place a great emphasis on the role of women as mothers and caregivers.

Attitudes are changing, however. New research from Stewart Friedman Wharton practice professor of management and director of the school’s Work/Life Integration Project, finds that young men and women today have a greater understanding of the challenges associated with juggling work obligations with family life.

Type A Personalities

At a time when women have gained ever more standing in politics and society, they tend to carry additional burdens in terms of family. Some of this is biological. Women are typically pregnant for 40 weeks and then — depending on personal preferences toward breastfeeding — serve as a primary food source for any number of weeks, months or years.

Beyond that, though, women are more likely to manage the daily scrum of life with kids. They take on more domestic chores, including such things as meal preparation, school runs, PTA meetings and doctor’s appointments.

According to the Department of Labour Statistics, the division of domestic duties in American households is far from equal. On an average day, 83 per cent of women and 65 per cent of men spend some time doing activities such as housework, cooking, lawn care or financial and other household management. Women spend an average of 2.6 hours on such activities a day, while men spend 2.1 hours.

But in a marriage where it is the woman who has the higher-powered, higher-paying job — or at least a job that’s as high-profile as her husband’s

— the dynamic changes. Monica McGrath, adjunct professor of management at Wharton and a consultant who specializes in women’s leadership development, says that even women who are in supportive partnerships experience continual strain.

Putting aside the drudgery of housework, there is the simple fact that many women want, and need, to be a regular presence at home in order to be emotionally attentive to their kids and spouses. But the intensity of top-level jobs — which involve travel, round-the-clock meetings and the expectation from colleagues and employees of near-constant online availability — make balancing work, children and spousal obligations very difficult.

Late-bloomers and Power Couples

Women who occupy the C-suite today tend to fit into one of three models, according to Bentley’s Myers. The categories are fluid, but in general, they include: the late-bloomers, whose careers hit their stride later in life after they have taken care of children; the one half of a

power couple, where both part-

“

The intensity of top-level jobs makes balancing work, children and spousal obligations very difficult

ners are in demanding jobs; and the breadwinners, who often have stay-at-home husbands or spouses who work in flexible jobs.

In the first model, “the woman may have stayed home with her kids when they were little, or she worked part-time,” says Myers. “But then when her kids are older or out of the house, her career takes off.”

In these marriages, says Myers, “there is an ebb and flow of careers. One partner may take a back seat for a while, and then get an appealing opportunity. So they move for that person’s job, and the other partner takes a back seat. In these relationships, we see a lot of outsourcing of child-care to nannies and family members.”

Jules Pieri, founder and CEO of the Daily Grommet, a product launch website based outside of Boston with 29 employees, has three sons ages 23, 21 and 17. Her husband specializes in sales and marketing for turnaround companies. When their children were little, she describes their home life as a “ballet.”

Mom: The Anchor Job

Myers nicknames the third model “mom the moneymaker.” “Her career is the anchor job in the family. The dad either doesn’t work at all or works in a job that has more flexibility, such as real estate or consulting. His job takes a backseat. We’re seeing this model more and more.”

Gail Galuppo, COO and co-founder of BankersLab, a Chicago-based company that provides training platforms to retail banks, is a mother of three teenagers. When her kids were little and Galuppo was climbing the ranks at companies from Standard Chartered Bank to Sears Holdings to GE — where she was made a vice president at the age of 31 — she employed a fulltime nanny to handle the childcare.

Her husband worked in sales. While his job was more flexible, they both had significant travel demands. In her role as chief marketing officer at Western Union, for example, Galuppo spent 80 per cent of her time on the road. When one of their children began having difficulty in school, Galuppo and her husband decided to make a change.

1992 versus 2012

There are signs that the next generation of women CEOs and dual-career couples will have a more egalitarian dynamic in the home. Wharton’s Friedman heads a longitudinal research project that surveys the school’s students and alumni on their beliefs and attitudes about two-career relationships.

In 1992, he surveyed more than 450 Wharton undergraduate students as they graduated. This past May, he posed the same set of questions to Wharton undergraduates in the Class of 2012. The survey asked questions such as: “To what extent do you agree that two-career relationships work best when one partner is more advanced than the other?” and “Two-career relationships work best when one partner is less involved in his/her career” (agree or disagree). In 1992, men were much more likely to agree with such statements than women, according to Friedman. But in 2012, there has been a convergence of attitudes about two-career relationships: Men are now less likely to agree, but women are more likely to agree.

“Young men graduating today are more egalitarian in their views and women are, well, more realistic,” he says. “The important point is that men and women today are more likely than the previous generation to share the same values about what it takes to make dual-career relationships work.” Today’s young men have a greater sense of shared responsibility for domestic life, he says.



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It has a 1.6 eco-boost engine that offers better fuel efficiency than the 2,500cc turbo engine of its predecessor. It consumes 6.3 litres of fuel per 100 kilometres or 1 litre for every 16km. The previous model covered 12.5km for each litre of fuel.

The new Ford Kuga's engine is also cleaner and greener, meaning that it has less carbon emissions.

The new Ford Kuga uses an intelligent 4x4, All-Wheel Drive system with the onboard computer able to monitor the traction of each wheel. It comes with traction control. The Intelligent All-Wheel Drive system adapts to terrain and conditions in an instant, Active City Stop automatically applies the brakes at low speed to prevent a collision and Ford SYNC reads out text messages and gives you hands-free control of your music, calls and much more.

“The award-winning New Ford Kuga is five-star rated for safety by Euro NCAP, the European new car assessment programme. It was also voted the 2013 Women's Car of the Year in Europe – by women motoring writers.

Ford is the first to introduce an innovative hands-free tailgate to one of our SUVs. It's so easy to operate, even with your hands full, simply wave your foot under the bumper and the tailgate will open and close.

The award-winning New Ford Kuga is five-star rated for safety by Euro NCAP, the European new car assessment programme. It was also voted the 2013 Women's Car of the Year in Europe – by women motoring writers. The Women's World Car of the Year awards are designed primarily to reflect the preferences of women buyers through the ballot box of women motoring writers.

The 1.6 eco-boost engine won the International Engine of the Year Award, Europe.

“The Ford Kuga,” notes CMC Motors' Robert Gichuki, Sales Manager – Ford, “is a winner that offers real value for money.”

Its other features include leather seats, blue tooth with voice command that uses Ford Sync, foot-activated power lift tail gates.

There is no fumbling with the keys because the All-New Ford Kuga offers keyless start by use of the Ford power button. This is convenience.

CMC made the initial launch for the vehicle towards the end of last year and the market reception, according to Mr. Gichuki, “has been excellent and demand outstrips supply currently. The vehicles have been flying off the shelf even before we fully launch it. This vehicle is ideal for medium corporate executives and business owners who value its off-road capabilities.”

Offering ample sitting

space for five adults, the Ford Kuga has a 174 cubic feet luggage compartment but which can be expanded with the folding of the backseat.

The SUV boasts a generous service interval of 8,000km that is far above the industry average of 5,000km.

Parts are available from

Dubai, making servicing the vehicle easy.

Mr. Gichuki says through CMC's seven-branch network in Kenya, vehicle buyers are

assured of backup service. The motor firm has branches in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kitale, Nanyuki and Meru.

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Kenya's Top 40 Under 40 2014

The profiles of women who have broken the career glass ceiling early enough and are headed for greatness



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Captain Irene Mutungi

PILOT, KENYA AIRWAYS, 38

Captain Irene Mutungi recently moved a notch higher in her flying career when she was named Senior Captain of Boeing 787, or Dreamliner, as the aircraft is popularly known.

The Kenya Airways pilot took up the new position after the airline took delivery of its first Dreamliner this year.

She is now flying one of the most advanced aircraft in the world, tipped to change the face of aviation. The Boeing 787 is less thirsty and noisy than other planes of its size and has been built for long haul flights with a range of 15,200 kilometres.

Irene was thrust into fame a few years ago upon becoming the first female pilot at Kenya Airways and the first woman to earn the title of captain in Africa.

It was initially difficult, but Captain Mutungi says people are now getting used to being flown by women, easing her transition to the larger carrier.

Irene is not new to the Top 40 Under 40

Women's list, but says a fourth time appearance on the platform has enabled her to inspire other women.

The irregular flying times do limit the time she spends with her family. She is frequently out of the country and spends much of her time in the skies and staying in foreign destinations. But her love for flying is closely matched by her love for mentorship.

Despite her busy schedule, she has managed to take on board several mentees.

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Ory Okolloh

DIRECTOR OF INVESTMENTS,
OMIDYAR MEDIA, 36

As far as good timing goes, nature appears to have conspired to put Ory Okolloh in the right place as the Internet revolution began in Africa. Co-founding the crowd-sourcing Ushahidi platform in 2008 was her window of entry into the rapidly changing, but also highly rewarding, global technology enterprise platform, where her star has continued to rise.

A two times past Top 40 Under 40 winner, Ms Okolloh recently left a high profile job as the policy and government relations manager for Google in Africa for Omidyar Media, where she works as director of investments – controlling a budget of more than \$100m (Sh8.8 billion) for social entrepreneurs' Pierre and Pam Omidyar's company. The group's activities have cut across a wide range of social causes, from microfinance and entrepreneurship initiatives to sustainability for Hawaii's food, energy and waste systems in the wake



PHOTO BY AFP

of the deadly earthquake four years ago. A trained lawyer, Ms Okolloh co-founded Ushahidi, which was initially a website developed to map reports of violence in Kenya after the post-election violence at the beginning of 2008, but has since been used to manage crisis across the world. Okolloh is arguably one of the most renowned speakers on citizen journalism and technology in Africa.

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Risper Ohaga

MANAGING DIRECTOR,
BARCLAYS INTERNAL AUDIT, 39

Risper Ohaga has featured twice in the past among the Top 40 under 40 women in Kenya, and this year, she makes a third appearance, but holding a more challenging position as managing director of Barclays Internal Audit. Risper's new role, assumed in January, sees her responsible for internal audit for the retail and business bank, and wealth, investment management and insurance businesses of Barclays Africa Group, continent-wide.

Her work involves making sure the bank follows all regulations and applies industry practice. "It is a complex role that involves deep technical knowledge as well as the confidence and courage to ask tough questions, while maintaining a strong partnership with busi-



PHOTO / COURTESY

ness and leading a team," she says. Risper, who is based in Johannesburg, South Africa, works with regulators, audit committees and staff across all the African countries in which Barclays operates. Before her promotion, she served as head of the retail and business bank business across the continent, a position she had held since 2012.

Her vision is to join Barclays Africa Group Executive Committee, in future, to drive forward the provision of financial services across Africa. She says her experience in audit is a good base for an executive management role.

With a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Nairobi specialising in accounting, Risper is also a Certified Public Accountant of Kenya, and set up the Barclays audit team in Tanzania from scratch. Before joining Barclays, she worked as a financial services auditor and consultant with KPMG Kenya based in Nairobi for nine years, and rose through the ranks from audit assistant to senior manager. She is married to Peter Ohaga and is a mother of three daughters aged between five and 14.



It is a complex role that involves deep technical knowledge as well as the confidence and courage to ask tough questions.

Risper Ohaga





Top 40 Women under 40



PHOTO/COURTESY

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Anne Ncekei MaingiHEAD OF STRATEGIC CAPABILITY
AND MODERN TRADE, UNILEVER
NIGERIA, 39

In rising from a job as a front desk receptionist at a beach hotel in Mombasa to the helm of a multinational in just 14 years, Anne Maingi has a telling dictum for success: "My job is only safe when business under my charge grows by at least 30

per cent year on year." Described as an exceptional performer, Anne joined Procter & Gamble (P&G) in 1999, straight from her job at Nyali Beach Hotel. In just two years, she landed a promotion to Uganda as P&G's business development manager, her first job as an expatriate. "In Uganda, I learnt one of my most important management lessons: that as a manager, you need clarity of vision, a clear understanding of the job and skill sets required, and the best people," she says. After six years at P&G, Anne joined Reckitt Benckiser East Africa, another FMCG giant, as trade marketing manager, overseeing business in Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo markets.

In 2009, Reckitt Benckiser transferred Anne to Lagos, Nigeria - a bigger and a more complex market than East Africa, with 180 million people, compared to East Africa's combined population of about 140 million. Unlike the simpler retail set-up in East Africa, Anne's new market has one million retail outlets in a trade structure she had to quickly understand. "As an expat manager, it is critical to work with local country teams in order to succeed. One has to understand what drives each individual and capture this energy to drive the best performance out of people," she says. "Whenever I go back to countries and see units that I started still flourishing, I feel extremely proud and fulfilled that I have done my part, as others did before me, to ensure that businesses thrive for the generations after us".

In May 2012, she joined Unilever as country programme manager for Nigeria, rising in the same market to become head of Strategic Capability and Modern Trade. Anne, who jogs 10 kilometres every day, was born in Mombasa and attended Loreto Convent in Mombasa before proceeding to Murray Girls High School in Taita Taveta. She's currently studying an MBA in leadership and sustainability.

TECHPRENEUR

Juliana Rotich

FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, USHAHIDI, 38

The number of global honours Ms Rotich has received in the past three years attests to the fact that she holds a prime position on Kenya's list of women



PHOTO BY AFP

to watch. Only recently recognised by *Fortune Magazine* as 2014 50 Global Leaders, Ms Rotich was three years ago named one of the Top 100 women in the world by the UK's *Guardian* newspaper. She has also featured as the World Economic Forum's Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2011.

Appearing in the Top 40 Under 40 list for the second time this year, Ms Rotich co-founded the crowd-sourcing site Ushahidi with compatriot Ory Okolloh seven years ago and has since founded Mobisoko, a mobile marketplace for language and location relevant apps in Africa. The Computer Science graduate from the University of Missouri in the US has worked in the telecoms industry and is chair for the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Data Driven Development.

She is one of the most sought-after experts and commentators on Africa, technology, innovation, mobile technology, open source, data ecosystems, crowd sourcing and participatory systems.

Her mission in life is to make things, fix problems and help others. Wherever technology can help to do these three things, she is happiest figuring out that intersection and is fascinated by technology ecosystems globally.

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PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Sylvia Wairimu Mulinge

GENERAL MANAGER FOR ENTERPRISE BUSINESS, SAFARICOM, 38

As the general manager for the Enterprise Business Unit at regional telecommunications giant Safaricom, Sylvia Wairimu Mulinge has led a three-fold expansion in her Sh10.5 billion business, generating more revenue than many of the listed companies at the Nairobi Securities Exchange.

Her portfolio, which includes innovation, business development, sales and customer experience, sees her engaging with corporates, government and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) on a daily basis.

The Bachelor of Science First Class Honours graduate from the University of Nairobi initially worked for Unilever as a management trainee, rising to the position of brand manager in a span of six years.

She then moved to Safaricom, where she has worked for the past eight years, three of them as the GM. In management and leadership, Sylvia believes in inclusivity and consultation.

"I don't believe in one leadership

style, but I will employ the style that the situation demands. I mentor, coach and direct depending on the situation.

"I encourage people to talk," says Ms Mulinge. She says she has been described by others as a visionary and passionate team leader.

"I have also been described as a choleric in personality assessment. This means that I am outgoing, but can leave casualties behind, because of having less empathy and patience. I have been working on that by trying to slow down a bit and become more conscious of what I am doing," she says.

She wants to continue to expand her experience and hopes to be able to take up expanded roles in the company or within the Vodafone Group and be directly involved in community work.

"I want to have an impact on people. That is what I want to be remembered for." A part-time dairy farmer, with two children, a boy and a girl, Sylvia goes to bed early and rises early too: her secret to cramming so much into her life of impact.

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Alfetta Mungai Koome

COUNTRY MANAGER, FIRSTRAND BANK, 39

A woman of several firsts, Alfetta was in February picked as the Kenya country boss for FirstRand Bank and the only woman to head a Nairobi representative office for a foreign bank.

In 2009, Alfetta was voted Kenya's investment banker of the year, after leading CFC Stanbic Bank in almost every bond issue floated that year.

'Excellence' is her middle name, says Alfetta, who is powered by a curiosity and quest for knowledge that has seen her rise swiftly from analyst to the executive office.

As chief representative officer at the South African bank's Nairobi unit, Alfetta's day-to-day role includes scouting for business opportunities in Kenya in investment banking, global markets and private equity.

After finishing at Kerugoya Girls High School, Alfetta left Kenya to pursue a Bachelor's degree in business administration at Kennesaw State University, Georgia, where she

graduated in 1999. She stayed in the US to work for three years and returned to Kenya in September 2002 to join NIC Bank as corporate credit analyst, before moving to CFC Stanbic in June 2005 as regional head in charge of debt capital markets and syndications (East Africa).

She earned an executive Master's degree in organisational development from the United States International University (USIU) in 2009, and holds professional qualifications from the London-based Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment (CISI).

In September 2010, Alfetta joined Standard Bank as vice president of debt capital markets in Africa before joining FirstRand Bank.

"Previously, my main focus was set on executing the actual transactions. I later moved to the business development side of things and I am enjoying every moment of it."

Alfetta, a wife and mother of two, was this year nominated among

Africa's most influential women in business and government by South Africa's *CEO Magazine*.

She was also ranked among the Top 40 women under 40 years in Kenya in 2010.

“

Previously, my main focus was set on executing the actual transactions. I later moved to the business development side of things and I am enjoying every moment of it.

Alfetta Mungai Koome



PHOTO: COURTESY

CORPORATE HIGHFLIERS

Agatha Gikunda

HEAD OF SOFTWARE AND SERVICES, INTEL CORPORATION, 38

Agatha, who describes herself as an introvert, is a committed disciple of execution, who lives her life ensuring the right things are done within the required time. She moved to Intel Corporation last year, after working for Nokia for 10 years.

"The decision to move was based on the fact that I had gone through the whole journey with Nokia and I needed a new challenge and Intel was a perfect fit," she says. Three months into her current position, she received the Intel Group Recognition Award for her work in developing the strategy and

directing the execution of the Intel developer programmes in East Africa. She has also developed and launched the Intel student programme, designed to increase the ability of student developers globally.

"What I love the most about what I do is being able to help the creative youth, independent software vendors, developers and publishers to optimise their applications so that they make maximum use of the hardware to enrich the user experiences," she says.

Agatha obtained a Bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering from the University

of Victoria in 2001 and an MBA in the Management of Technology at Simon Fraser University, in Canada.

Her career at Nokia began in Canada in 2003 as a design engineer, from where she rose to be the company's head of services, application and content. Apart from her work, she volunteers as a technology advisor for several organisations that address social issues, including Access Afya and Zoe Alexander, facilitating the design of a mobile solution focused on helping Kenya reduce maternal and infant deaths: an application that was awarded \$250,000 in funding by Grand Challenges Canada.

According to Agatha, there is a lack of mentors to excite and inspire students and young employees about the opportunities in technology. This year, she has made it a personal goal to talk to 1,000 young ladies in both high school and tertiary institutions, of which she has reached 450 so far.



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA



CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Caroline Wanja Owesi

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, JUBILEE INSURANCE TANZANIA, 38



PHOTO/COURTESY

For a chief financial officer, Caroline Owesi's sense of humour is exceptional and refreshing. The 38-year-old, married mother of two, is today the CFO of Jubilee Insurance, Tanzania. Early this year, the group, which is the largest insurer in East Africa, recognised her as outstanding, and as the best CFO of 2013 in the Jubilee Holdings Group.

Yet her journey into business started as long ago as Standard Six, with the introduction of business education into the primary school curriculum. She immediately fell in love with

the subject. It was a passion that saw her opt for a Bachelor of Commerce degree after completing high school at Alliance Girls, although the choice did not go well with her late father, a doctor and a strong believer in excelling in education. "My dad wanted me to do medicine, yet I cannot stand the smell of Dettol," says the first born of four children, with a tone of admiration and love for her dad.

Caroline was among the best students at Alliance Girls and had displayed the best science project nationally in 1993, underscoring her father's desire for her to take up medicine. Her mother, herself a nurse and a strong, spiritual disciplinarian, prevailed on the father to let her be. Caroline started working in 1998, while still an undergraduate, at Clarkson Notcutt Insurance Brokers.

In 2001, she moved to Madison Insurance as a treasury accountant, before joining Jubilee in the same capacity in 2004. She has since risen swiftly through the management ranks at Jubilee and, in June 2012, was appointed CFO of the insurer's Tanzanian subsidiary, directly in charge of finance, administration and IT. The job is challenging, involving efficient operations management, timely report delivery and employee empowerment through training and team work. She is also a member of the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK), the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) UK and of the Chartered Insurance Institute (CII)-UK.



PHOTO/COURTESY

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Ann Gitao,
HEAD OF MARKETING FOR
AFRICA, VIVO ENERGY, 39

With a job whose territory covers 16 African countries, Ann Gitao has arguably climbed the corporate lad-

der as high as it could possibly get. But it is a tough job too to develop, grow and position a brand across 16 markets of different legal regimes and consumer preferences.

"Absolute commitment" is how Ann describes the career path that has seen her occupy top leadership positions in a leading advertising agency, East Africa's leading media group and now the male dominated oil sector.

A graduate of Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Ann began her professional journey at Scan Group, which she acknowledges to have shaped her career path.

"The people I interacted with in my initial stage of career were the main cornerstone of what I am today," she says.

At 31, she was appointed general manager of Young & Rubicam Brands (Y&R) advertising, then one of the top three agencies in Kenya.

She then moved to Nation Media Group as head of marketing - Broadcasting & Digital from 2008 before rising to the position of group marketing director, managing the affairs of NMG across East Africa.

In April 2014, Ann's thirst for new challenges saw her move on, to the male dominated oil sector, with her appointment as the head of marketing for Africa for Vivo Energy.

Her new role in one of the most globally respected brands sees her now driving the marketing agenda for Vivo Energy (Shell Licensee) in 16 countries across the continent.

In 2013, she also celebrated yet another achievement, graduating with an MBA from Henley Business School, one of the UK's top five business schools.



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CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Mukami Njeru,

RESIDENT ACTUARY, CIC INSURANCE GROUP, 29



PHOTO/COURTESY

Kenya only has a handful of certified actuaries, and one of the few women in that special list is Mukami Njeru, resident actuary at NSE-listed firm CIC Insurance Group, where she analyses the financial consequences of risk for her employer.

Financial risk, quantitative analysis and modelling are terms that pepper her daily work, which she describes with the fascination that can only come from a boffin in the discipline of calculating conditions such as 'if' and 'should'.

"My days are not routine, but there is a rhythm to them," says Mukami. Her skills are deployed in developing and pricing insurance products and liaising with the necessary industry regulators. This is work she has done for the past six years. The Loreto Limuru alumnus has worked in London and Australia with financial consultancies Deloitte and PwC and is a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries, qualified as a Certified Enterprise Risk Actuary, and a graduate from the University of Nairobi with a BSc in Actuarial Science with First Class honours.

Mukami plans to contribute towards growing the actuarial industry in Kenya and hopes there will be more female actuaries. "I am also passionate about the growth of the profession in Kenya having initiated several actuarial forums since I came back home last year," she says.

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Becky Mungai

HEAD OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, SIGNATURE GROUP, 38



PHOTO/COURTESY

At 38, Becky Mungai is having a striking impact on Kenyan transport, increasing a row of businesses for Signature Group, one of East Africa's leading logistics and transport companies, by three-fold to more than tenfold, over the last three years.

After finishing at Kenya High School, Becky went to Kennesaw University in US where she graduated with a major in finance and a minor in international affairs, and subsequently an MBA

from Devry University in Georgia. On graduating, she joined a specialty property insurance company as a junior accountant, rising to manage its captives reinsurance books, and then to a senior manager in its risk management department.

But she wanted to manage much more than risks, yearning to contribute to transforming companies and see them grow. Nostalgic about her homeland and its untapped potential, she resigned and came back home.

She joined Signature Group in 2011. She worked in various departments, including finance and logistics, before rising to be head of finance and administration, an opportunity she says has allowed her to drive striking turnarounds across a company that was struggling with its fleet management and expansion.

She has so far grown the heavy commercial vehicles from 10 to 33, added 43 vans to the corporate car hire and staff transport portfolio, increased the number of buses from two to 20, and the medium size and large utility vehicles by 40.

She has also overseen the launch of a taxi business unit within the group, which has bought 137 saloon cars, and fuelled the group in expanding into the clearing and forwarding business across the East African Community.

At the same time, she has introduced saving schemes for the employees, organising and negotiating financial terms with banks to offer flexible education loans for the children of Signature Group staff.

Being in the transport industry has meant making sacrifices, however.

"The transport industry doesn't allow for 'hours of operation'. Once a member of the management team, one is presumed to be on call 24-7, all year round. It has been tough in terms of work-life balance, but I'm motivated just from seeing new changes that are not only impacting the company in a big way.

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Esther Macharia Chibesa

DIRECTOR, TREASURY AND TRADE SOLUTIONS, CITIBANK KENYA, 38



Esther Chibesa joined Citibank as a graduate trainee in January 2000. It was the beginning of a 14-year journey that would take her to four African countries handling 'big' money from big clients. The University of Botswana accounts graduate is the Citibank director of treasury and trade solutions for Kenya, a position she has held for only a week now having been transferred from Zambia where she held a similar title since 2011.

Upon finishing her studies in 1999, (she lived in Botswana with her parents) she joined Citibank Kenya as a graduate trainee. She held the position for 18 months, working in different departments such as operations and customer care.

She then moved to Citibank Uganda as a risk analyst and was part of the team that consolidated a new corporate unit that advised companies mainly on credit facilities.

Between January 2004 and September 2008, she was working in Tanzania, Zambia and Uganda as a trade product manager. Ms Chibesa soon became the consummate banker involved in structuring trade services products for clients in the mining, public sector, agribusiness and manufacturing sectors and also identifying supply chain financing opportunities for them.

As the director of treasury and trade solutions, Esther is unmistakably among the few women who are blazing the trail in the male-dominated



PHOTO/COURTESY

financial services industry and a prime candidate in the list of Kenya's Women to Watch. Esther is married to a Zambian banker and has three children.



PHOTO/COURTESY

CORPORATE HIGHFLIER

Magdalene Mulandi

HEAD OF BRAND MANAGEMENT AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS, CHASE BANK, 33



Magdalene Mulandi has built a brand and energy at Chase Bank that has seen the bank named the fastest growth bank in Kenya three times. Deploying

creative events, words, strategy and passion, she has built the bank's reputation as the trendy choice for Kenya's entrepreneurial class, with a profound commitment to supporting SMEs, women and the environment. Her inspiration, she says, is her mother's belief that one must "always do something for someone else and leave the world a better place". Magdalene grew up in Athi River, but went to school at Consolata Primary School in Nairobi.

The daily commute enabled her to develop a love for reading, which led her into a career of marketing and communications. In university, she wrote a lot, and was approached by a friend to handle the public relations for his theatre company, which was running the show "Sarafina". She took to it completely naturally, cementing her career choice in marketing. After some years with a web design company, where she handled Chase Bank's website, she was in 2008 recruited into the bank directly.

She arrived in banking thinking it was a boring and mundane career, but "discovered a whole other ecosystem in the back-end" that she has developed a love affair with. The impact financial services have on people in helping them grow their entrepreneurial dreams has been especially important to her.

Magdalene credits her brand-building success to thinking analytically on the process of the job in order to make for successful end products. But she has also had plenty of fun along the way: including screening the World Cup to clients four years ago.

She confesses to not having mastered the work-life balance but strives to do so, and terms her passion and self-motivation her driving force in life. However, it is her resilience in wanting to make the world better that is the key, so far, to her outstanding achievements.



Top 40 Women under 40



TECHPRENEUR

Dorcas Muthoni

TECHPRENEUR, 34

A seasoned techpreneur with more than 10 years' experience, Dorcas started OpenWorld company when she was just 24. The University of Nairobi computer science graduate is passionate about technology and now with 13 years of experience at her software con-

sulting company has spearheaded mentorship campaigns to draw more women into IT. "From when I left high school, I knew everything would eventually be computer-aided or software-driven. And three years into employment, I felt the need to grow away from the corporate ladder and venture into business," she says.

Dorcas works long hours, on a portfolio that includes systems for business management, feedback and project management for governments, SMEs, corporate and non-profit organisations. "As a software engineer, much of the business is based

on intellectual property as compared to physical structures. All you basically need is a laptop and an internet connection," she says.

In April this year, Dorcas was inducted into the Internet Hall of Fame, an award by the Internet Society that recognizes individual efforts towards the advancement of the internet. In 2013, the World Economic Forum (WEF) named her a Young Global Leader for her professional accomplishments, commitment to society and potential to contribute to shaping the future of the world through inspiring leadership.



PHOTO BY DIANANGILA

ENTREPRENEUR

Mariam Mpaata

FOUNDER, JUNIOR STAR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 36

Perturbed by frequent complaints about her six-year-old son breaking neighbours' windows with his ball, Mariam Mell Osiime Mpaata embarked on a mission to set up a football academy that has since enrolled over 5,000 youngsters, moulding their football talents, instilling morals, and building peace and harmony across the social economic divide at the Kenyan Coast.

Armed with a degree in development studies from Makerere University, and no clue about football, Mpaata, whose family had just moved to Mombasa from Uganda, took two years between 2006-2007 to learn about football, seek partnerships and sell the idea to families and schools in Mombasa.

"It was no mean task for a young woman to venture into this male-dominated

field, especially at a time when the country was healing from political turmoil,' explains the 36-year-old. But Mpaata's efforts paid off, in April 2008, when she recruited the first 15 boys between 4 and 18 to join her son, employed a coach, and began training sessions.

The Junior Star Youth Development Programme has since churned out many talented players, including her own, now 14-year-old son, Imran Mpaata, who plays for Uganda's under-20 team, Uganda Cranes.

Her partnership with corporate entities like Safaricom, Kenya Maritime Authority, Kenya Data Network, Siginon Freight Ltd, Davis & Shirliff, Milele Beach Hotel, Milly Fruits Ltd and local schools has, for the past six years, seen the academy grow into a mentorship centre where youths are taught about social hazards like drug abuse, early pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, and how to live harmoniously in society. The programmes also expose recruits to football activities and forums and connect them to mentors and the world at large.

The institute also runs the Girl Power Mentorship Club, which has a membership of 1,000 girls from Mombasa. It connects them to successful women across the globe who help them nurture their ambitions. Highlight of the programme, however, has been its Watoto Soccer Award, which is the first of its kind in East Africa, and now involves 2,000 boys and girls in football tournaments. This year will see the winning teams represent Mombasa in the Norway Cup 2015. Mpaata is also a board member of various schools, societies and corporate, which include Aga Khan in Mombasa, the Football Kenya Federation South Coast branch and Nyali Primary School.



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ENTREPRENEUR

Christine Khasina Otero

FOUNDER, SUPAMAMAS, 33



PHOTO \ SALATON NJAU

It was during Christine Khasina Otero's first pregnancy that she discovered the lack of information sources or websites dedicated to motherhood and infants: a finding that began her entrepreneurial journey into leadership. She quit a managerial position, started and failed at her first business, and still chose the risk-taking path of starting another one, launching the Supermamas website in 2011, as a platform for Kenyan mothers that she has built as a brand

at the core of a range of services. In a sector that's not easy to commercialise, Christine has drawn top-brand advertisers and sponsors to her site, as a platform around which she organises events to pamper mothers and their children, and to empower women in business.

As a digital platform, Supamamas carries up-to-date information on motherhood, schools and party planning, all tirelessly promoted by the energetic, bubbly and polite Christine.

Her Supamamas events span, additionally, into her Supasisters initiative, where she hosts professional and seasoned women industrialists to encourage the next generation of younger women entrepreneurs. Christine holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from United States International University (USIU) and an MBA from Liverpool University.

She also holds Professional Postgraduate Qualifications in Marketing from the Marketing Society of Kenya and in Total Quality Management from the Kenya Institute of Management. Her awards since starting Supamamas include nomination by South Africa's *CEO Magazine* as one of the Finalists in the Most Influential Women In Business in the Africa SME Category 2013, for which she is currently a finalist again this year.

ENTREPRENEUR

Laura Akunga

FOUNDER, BENCHMARK SOLUTIONS, 28

Laura Akunga's entrepreneurial journey began at 12 years, when, as a young girl growing up in her family farm in Runda, she saw the missed opportunity in selling raw milk, and earning five times more by turning it to sour milk (mala) and yoghurt. Today, she drives businesses across the continent.

While still at United States International University (USIU), where she was taking a course in International Business Administration in Finance and Marketing, she landed a job as a management trainee, but three months later, decided it was not for her and quit. Only 19, but armed with a dream, Laura started her first company. Nine years later, she is a member of the Entrepreneurs Organisation, a membership club for business owners grossing over \$1m in annual revenue.

Although she started Benchmark Solutions as a branding company, three years into the business, she decided to venture into the world of financing. Laura is now the 'go to' person for corporate and banking institutions that need to quietly access quick and cheap funds, especially from China.

On the marketing front, she deals with companies that have high volume or high value goods and are looking for foreign markets. "We help a lot of mining companies in Ghana and Zimbabwe to find markets for



PHOTO BY FILE

gold. In Congo, we help them export metal, and also help a lot of African concession holders export a lot of timber," she says.

Her company operates in Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Ghana, United Arab Emirates and China, which now accounts for 40 per cent of their total business. Besides her high-flying career, Laura also supports 50 orphaned girls, for whom she provides a home and schooling. "I call them my daughters.

I believe that's why God blesses my business. I look at myself as a vessel that God uses to do the things that he wants done. He is my silent business partner," says Laura, who is married to her high school sweetheart.

ENTREPRENEUR

Kate Kibarah

MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CEO, KATE ORGANICS, 33

When the history of the wellness movement that has gripped Kenya in recent years is finally written, Kate Kibarah will definitely have a chapter in it. She is the queen of shock therapy and the nutrition industry's best ambassador who has awakened hundreds of thousands of Kenyans that what they eat matters when it comes to good health. That passion last year saw her make it to the list of South Africa's *CEO Magazine*'s most influential African women (SME segment) earning continental recognition.

Kate studied clinical nutrition at the Caroline Alston Institute through correspondence before studying natural and digestive health in the UK. She is now back in school studying alternative medicine. She is a clinical nutritionist, health coach, and manufacturer of popular local organic foods with a regional market. Early on, she convinced her parents to let her study nutrition, believing healthy living to be cheaper, simple and the key to longevity.

"I grew up as an obese child, changed my lifestyle, acquired shape, and set out to change the eating habits of other Kenyans. Now I'm targeting the rest of Africa," she said. She has shared this message over and over, through the mass media and through the virtual lifestyle health club she founded to reach out to as many people as possible. Her manufacturing company, Kate's Organ-



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

ics, has meanwhile carved out a niche in organic products that is otherwise dominated by foreign brands, with products that include teas and honey with anti-oxidants, with Moringa tea and Moringa oleifera powder her bestsellers.

ENTREPRENEUR

Elizabeth Simiyu

HEALTH & FITNESS ENTREPRENEUR, 34



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

When electrical engineer Elizabeth Simiyu discovered the electro therapy machine that saw her shed weight after her first baby, it was a bonus that completely changed her life, to launch Slim Therapy Limited, a beauty and fitness franchise.

Her launch pad outlet was in Westlands. Five years later, the brand is operating additional franchises in Nairobi's South C and in Mombasa. The spa uses faradic treatments to help clients tone muscles and lose weight.

Elizabeth also uses her position as CEO to empower women to invest in business so they can be, "salary makers and not salary takers", employing women from disadvantaged backgrounds and training them in faradics (a form of electrical stimulation for firming and toning body muscles).

The only qualification she looks for is a certificate or diploma in beauty and cosmetology. Prior to venturing into the beauty industry, Elizabeth, a JKUAT-trained electrical engineer, worked at electricity producer KenGen for six years.

"I struggled with weight after having my first baby and the electro therapy machine gave me a reason to smile again," she says.

Since then, customer referrals have grown her business from a two-bed outlet to a franchise business posting an annual net turnover of Sh10m, despite challenges along the way.

Her immediate plans are to open franchises in Nakuru and Tanzania, with a target presence in Eldoret and Uganda.



Top 40 Women under 40



PHOTO/COURTESY

SCIENTIST

Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg

DOCTOR, 36

At just 36, the grandeur of Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg's resume would leave many envious. Her recent appointment as the director of African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) added shine to an already impressive career. AWARD is a career-development programme that equips top women agricultural scientists across sub-Saharan Africa to accelerate agricultural gains by strengthening their research and leadership skills, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and USAid.

Dr Kamau-Rutenberg's appointment followed an illustrious performance as executive director of Akili Dada - an award-winning leadership incubator investing in high-achieving young women from under-resourced families. Her work at Akili Dada won her recognition from the US President Barack Obama and the White House as a "Champion of Change" in 2012.

She has also been named one of the 100 Most Influential Africans by *New African Magazine*,

a 2012 Ford Foundation Champion of Democracy and in the 2010 United Nations Intercultural Innovation Award. "I am passionate about making this Africa's century. I'm excited about the transformations that are happening across Africa and particularly here in Kenya. I am also keenly aware that African women have a critical role to play if we are to realize our full potential," she says. The mother of a five-year-old son has also served as an assistant professor of Politics at the University of San Francisco and as a lecturer in International Relations at Hekima College, a constituent college of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA).

Her academic research and teaching centre on the politics of philanthropy, gender, Africa, international relations, ethnicity, democratisation, and on the role of technology in social activism. She holds a PhD and a Masters in Political Science from the University of Minnesota and earned a Bachelor of Arts in Politics from Whitman College.

SCIENTIST

Charity Mutegi

AFLATOXIN MAIZE
RESEARCHER, 39

It is perhaps every young scientist's dream to come up with the solution to killer blights. For Dr Charity Mutegi, her work leading a research team at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) has given birth to a biological product, Aflasafe, which is reducing aflatoxin contamination in maize. Aflatoxin is a fungi-based poison that is potentially fatal for humans.

Five years ago, when the people of lower Eastern Kenya got a bumper harvest of maize thanks to more than normal rainfall, most households in the region soon found themselves with more produce than they could process and store. Soon, the produce got contaminated by aflatoxin. Tens of people died after eating the contaminated maize, while hundreds of others were treated for aflatoxin poisoning. Previous studies had long indicated Kenyans consuming maize with aflatoxin contamination levels that exceed safe limits.

Long-term exposure to these poisonous substances can cause liver failure, cancers, and suppressed immunity, creating one further health risk for the millions of Kenyans who rely on maize as a staple food. Dr Mutegi's ground-breaking research raises the hope of safeguarding the country's staple food crop and promoting food security: a contribution that last year saw her selected as the global winner of the prestigious 2013 Norman Borlaug Award for Field Research and Application, awarded yearly by the World Food Prize Foundation.

“

I am passionate about
making this Africa's century

WANJIRU KAMAU- RUTENBERG



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

SCIENTIST

Sheila Ommeh

MEDICAL RESEARCHER, 36

Dr Sheila Ommeh loved everything about science from childhood, and was one of the first graduates in Kenya in Biomedical Science and Technology in 2002. She began work at the Kenri Wellcome Trust Research Centre, on potential compounds for malaria drugs. But her own primary concern lay with communities in her Western Kenya homeland whose livelihoods depended on poultry - especially the indigenous chicken that were dying of disease at an alarming rate.

She thus left her job in pursuit of a Masters in Biotechnology and after her course work, joined the International Livestock

Research Institute (ILRI) to conduct her Masters research. While there, she succeeded in identifying two types of genes found in chicken that offer resistance to deadly viral diseases like Newcastle and Avian flu. In her PhD research, Dr Ommeh went further to compare the genes of commercial chicken with those of indigenous chicken, which seemed to offer more resistance to diseases.

These scientific breakthroughs brought her closer to achieving her dream of developing disease-resistant chicken to address the challenges faced by her community and other poultry farmers in Kenya. In 2008, Dr Ommeh

won the prestigious African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) fellowship. It put her through an intensive mentorship programme that offered training on effective communication, leadership, management and life skills key to a thriving science career.

Upon getting a job as a research fellow in the Institute of Biotechnology at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Science and Technology (JKUAT) in 2012, she fundraised more than \$1m to establish the first ever Animal Biotechnology Research Laboratory at the university, opening the door to entirely new lines of research for the students.



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA



THE FILM, ARTS, FASHION & SPORTS

Lupita Nyong'o

FILM AND FASHION QUEEN, OSCAR AWARD WINNER, 31



PHOTO BY AFP

Oscar-award winning actress and fashion sensation Lupita Nyong'o, 31, got the break of a lifetime when she was chosen from a thousand young women auditioning for the part of Patsy in Steve McQueen's powerful film, based on the book by Solomon Northup, *12 Years a Slave*. McQueen's choice of the Kenyan actress transformed Lupita's life, and also changed the view held by most Kenyans of the ever-impo- verished actor that no parent would want their child to become.

Today, Lupita is one of the wealthiest women in Hollywood, raking in millions for her film roles and fashion modeling contracts. She is also the world's most ac- claimed Kenyan actress, having literally taken the Western film and fashion world by storm for her powerful performance. She has been picked for a major role in one of Hollywood's biggest franchises, the George Lucas blockbuster, *Star Wars: Episode VII*: a franchise bought in 2012 by Walt Disney from Lucasfilm for \$4.05bn.

Lupita has also flagged her own ex- panded role, in acquiring the film rights to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's hugely popular award-winning novel *Africanah*. She is additionally now the brand am- bassador for the international cosmetics firm Lancome, and a model for MiuMiu, the youthful fashion house born from its parent company Prada. Lupita has had to attend more than 40 awards ceremonies across the US and UK in 2014. At every one, she has had her pick of designer fash- ions, most of which pay her thousands of dollars just to wear their gowns, shoes, jewellery and make-up.

Indeed, Lupita has become such a hot pick that she was awarded the best dressed actress by the prestigious *Vogue* magazine and has been crowned the 'Most Beautiful Woman in the World' by the popular American magazine *People*.

“No matter where you are from, your dreams are valid

Lupita Nyong'o

THE FILM, ARTS, FASHION & SPORTS

Alison Ngibuini

FILM AND TV PROGRAMMES PRODUCER, 38



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

Behind a host of international and local awards, a catalogue of riveting tel- evision productions, and a resolve to position Kenya's film industry on the global map, is the tale of a 38-year-old entrepreneur who followed her passion - straight out of a job in advertising and into a business started from her own home with just a mobile phone and computer. Alison Ngibuini set up Al Is On production in 2003. "Every day, I woke up wondering when the phone would ring, was it a good idea to leave employment?" Many of her initial clients were people who knew her from the advertising agency. But she struggled in an industry dominated by European-owned companies that gave work to other Europeans. Ten years down the line, Al Is On production has metamorphosed into a formidable force producing household tel- evision dramas, documentaries, game shows, commercials and feature films. Among its flagships are *Mali*, a Kenyan drama series; *Siri*, an education-entertainment series that

focuses on HIV- related issues and the posi- tion of women in Kenyan society; and Zain Africa Challenge, a continental inter- univer- sity battle of brains. Her concepts have been known to tickle and make people cry at the same time, seeing *Siri* win best TV Drama in the 2011 Kalasha Film and TV awards, *Shuga* win numerous international awards, and *Sh- ida* win best lead actress and best cinema- tography in the Kenya International Film Festival of 2010. Alison worked with Oscar award winner Lupita Nyong'o on the *Shuga* series. "Seeing Lupita receiving an Oscar and the sudden realisation that I was part of her early career when she starred in award win- ning *Shuga* was both emotional and uplifting for me. I knew the Kenyan film industry had come of age," she says. Alison employs 17 full time staff and double that during production, and sees huge potential ahead. "We need to move from just producing to monetising TV content. We need to also learn the ropes of the trade and adapt to changing times.

THE FILM, ARTS, FASHION & SPORTS

Dorothy Ghattuba

MEDIA MOGUL, 35

Kalasha-award winning television and film producer Dorothy Ghet- tuba, 35, came back from Canada four years ago with pennies in her pocket. Today, her Spielworks Media Ltd. has made her millions scripting and producing al- most a dozen TV drama series, nine talk shows, and several documentaries, some of which are screened in South Africa and others in Nigeria.

Dorothy holds the film rights to all her productions, making her one of the leading media women not just in Kenya, but across Africa. In 2011, she won a place among the Top 40 under 40 women in Film in Africa. The same year she also made it to BD's Top 40 women under 40 in Kenya.

Admitting she's a risk taker, her vision and enterprise has now employed hundreds of Kenyan youth in TV series like *Lies that*

Bind, Saints, Higher Learning and *Sumu la Penzi*. She got into film after the Kenyan government mandated broadcasters to air not less than 40 per cent of locally-made content, and initially sought to sell to local stations. But she finally decided to take the advice of American TV filmmaker J.J. Abrams who said, "If you want to make it in life, be in charge".

Taking charge has been a challenge, but the key to running a successful business, she says, is keeping your finances in order. With her documentary films and TV series watched by audiences all over Africa, Dor- othy's profits now run into millions. But she is not sitting on her money. She continues to come up with new series.



PHOTO: FILE



PHOTO \ FILE

THE FILM, ARTS, FASHION

Agnes Muthoni Ndonga

SINGER AND SONGWRITER, 31

Agnes Muthoni Ndonga, popularly known as the Drummer Queen, was 25 when she founded Blankets & Wine, a concert circuit that is now a cultural mainstay, but which was initially the product of her frustration at the limited opportunities to perform in clubs on Saturday nights.

"I had a dream to create world class live music performance for urban African music. Five years on, I feel extremely grateful that we have achieved everything we hoped for and even a lot more than we thought possible," writes Muthoni on her website in a letter to her fans.

Blankets & Wine is a social event that incorporates picnics and open field live music performances. It has become a household name in the region, and given Muthoni the chance to offer dozens of upcoming musicians a platform to make their name.

This is what she takes the most pride in. "For me, knowing that we have contributed to many musicians' dreams, whose only desire is to be able to share their gift of music with you (fans), makes me very satisfied and grateful," she writes.

Muthoni has also promoted African music heavily at her events, shifting Kenyans' minds and earning local music far more airplay by media houses.

Blankets & Wines had earned Sh15m in turnover by last year and has this year been restructured into three tiers to give fans entertainment all year round, across monthly, quarterly and annual music events.

THE FILM, ARTS, FASHION & SPORTS

Lornah Kiplagat

WORLD CLASS ATHLETE, PROPRIETOR OF HIGH ALTITUDE TRAINING CENTRE IN ITEN, 39



PHOTO \ FILE

As a young girl running to and from school in the sleepy village of Kabiemit in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Lornah could barely dream of a quarter of what she has achieved in athletics, business and socially to date. In spite of the tough terrain, drought and harsh traditional myths facing a girl child in her Kalenjin community, Lornah performed well academically and even got a scholarship to study medicine in India, which she turned down, ostensibly to try her hand in athletics.

To escape the scorn of her dismayed

parents and teachers at Kapsoas Secondary School, she sought refuge at her cousin Susan Sirma's home, where she volunteered to work as a house help. It is here that the young Kiplagat honed her athletic skills. An avid believer that "the only person who can pull me down is myself", Kiplagat once spent a night in a Nairobi toilet to attend a cross country race at Nyayo National Stadium.

"Success does not come on a silver platter," says the internationally-acclaimed athlete who won Kenya world championship medals up to 2002,

when she obtained Netherlands' citizenry by marriage and represented the country in track events from 2003. Among her wins were a gold and silver medal in the 2006 and 2007 World Cross Country championships, gold and silver medals in the 2008 and 2005 World Half Marathon Championship, two gold medals in the 2006 and 2007 World Road Running Championship, and a gold medal in the European Cross Country Championship in 2005.

Her spirited efforts saw her named the Netherlands' athlete of the year in 2006. Lornah now lives in the Netherlands, but has set up the High Altitude Training Centre in Iten to give aspiring Kenyan athletes a training atmosphere to grow their careers. "My husband, Peiter Langerhorst, and I are financing this centre as a first step towards the Lornah Kiplagat Sports Academy to help youths in Kenya earn from their talents," she explains.

Lornah's strong personality, punctuated by humility, hard work and enviable resilience, perhaps provide youths in Kenya with the best possible example of how to mould their social and economic lives to prosperity.



PHOTO BY COURTESY

THE FILM, ARTS, FASHION & SPORTS

Esther Kinuthia

BLOGGER, 21

A decision to give a beggar part of the money she had saved to start a business was the inspiration that saw 21-year-old Esther Kinuthia pen her first blog post that marked the beginning of a journey into national leadership. Her message of youth refusing to be average, under the pseudonym of Miss Independent or Miss I. "When I started blogging, I just knew I was on a new journey in my life. I was drawn to blog about what truly matters to me, which is leaving this world a better place than I found it," she says.

"The reason I named my blog Miss Independent is what I stand for - Being the best you can be without having to wait for connections to help you succeed in life." Her blog, now 16 months old, has seen her mentor both her peers and fellow students, with her most memorable moment being a talk at the Research Clubs of Africa event hosted by Ipsos in March this year, where over 500 students stood up and recited her motto

thrice. "I could not believe it. It was so humbling and obviously words can't describe how I felt at that moment. I almost cried," she says. The Bachelor of Commerce student at Strathmore University, who is now a marketing associate intern at Google Kenya, was hosted as a blogger for two years by the co-founders of Odipodev, a digital company, but in September last year, had to stand alone, forcing her into the world of web hosting and creating blogs without any background in IT, and without a business model.

But, she says, "earning from the blog has never been a priority. I do it because I genuinely want the Kenyan and eventually African youth to refuse to be average. Anyone can make money, but not everyone can make people come alive." Esther now hopes to start her own show together with a magazine, which she says she will dedicate entirely to changing mindsets and getting the African youth to go beyond being ordinary.



The reason I named my blog Miss Independent is what I stand for - Being the best you can be without having to wait for connections to help you succeed in life

ESTHER KINUTHIA, Miss Independent



THE FILM, ARTS, FASHION & SPORTS

Malaika Firth,

MODEL, CATWALK QUEEN, 20

Supermodel Malaika Firth moved to the UK and wore legwarmers every day following the teasing from girls at school about her skinny 'chicken legs'. Today, she models for the world's greatest brands like Prada, Burberry and Vogue at every top fashion show from New York and London to Paris and Milan. Born to a Kenyan mother from the Coast and a British dad, Malaika's potential was first spotted by her mother, who took her to Premier Models after watching a British Channel 4 documentary, *The Model Agency*, in 2011. After attending an open-call casting, Malaika was signed on the spot, and began her modelling career, at the age of 17. In her three years of modelling she has graced Victoria's Secret catwalk, the cover of *Vogue's* More Dash Than Cash supplement, Beyoncé's House of Dereon catwalk, and the new Burberry campaign. Her runway takeoff, however, happened during the fashion week for



PHOTO/COURTESY

the Spring/Summer 2014 collections, where she walked more than 40 shows, including shows from respected designers like Jean Paul Gaultier, Bottega Veneta, Marc Jacobs, Kenzo, and

Dolce & Gabbana. When she became the first black model to star in a Prada campaign since Naomi Campbell in 1994, fashion editors, photographers, and model aficionados marked her as a newcomer with serious long-term prospects. The media christened her the next Naomi Campbell. Fashion columnists in various papers hailed the decision by Prada and other fashion houses to use Malaika as symbolic, at a time when racial profiling in the fashion industry is being challenged. Malaika is seen as the face of change. She still has strong attachment with her Kenyan roots.

Whenever on a break from modelling, she visits the Kenyan Coast, where she helps out in her grandmother's hotel, the Boko Boko Porini Restaurant. She believes her mixed colour is important in encouraging everyone, especially black girls struggling to gain entry into the international fashion industry.



PHOTO/COURTESY

PROFESSIONAL

Anne Kiunuhe

PARTNER, ANJARWALLA & KHANNA, 33

Anne Kiunuhe, who reached Standard Four of her village school with her only English sentence 'My name is Anne', is today a partner at leading law firm Anjarwalla and Khanna, driving some of the country's most complex acquisitions and mergers, and regional legislative harmonisation. She credits her move to Madaraka Primary School in Thika and a place at Precious Blood Girls High School as the steps that set her on a path to a law degree from University of Nairobi, along the way studying CPA upto section 4.

"My background in accounts naturally helped in specialising in commercial law with a bias in Mergers and Acquisition, a line that many law students shy away from due to the presence of arithmetic."

In 2004, she began her pupillage

at Anjarwalla and Khanna, where her perfectionist trait coupled with a strong drive and passion saw her rise rapidly, in a job she says brings her joy. "You cannot become the best lawyer by just saying that you are a lawyer.

Rather, the best is brought out through understanding your clients, needs and environment," she says. It's this commitment and hard work that saw her act as the lead counsel advisor for Bharti Airtel on its \$10.7bn acquisition of Zain Africa's assets across 15 African countries, at just 29- years- old.

She also acted as lead Kenyan counsel for Helios Investment Partners and Vitol Group on the acquisition of Shell Royal Dutch's downstream operations in Africa. Deals such as these have seen the firm recently voted the best law firm in Africa, with the soft spoken advocate also overseeing the opening of new branches



PHOTO:FILE

in Mombasa, Tanzania and Dubai.

She is also committed to achieving greater harmonisation of business and investment laws across Africa.

"It is an impediment to investment that each African jurisdiction remains very much distinct with completely different laws and legal systems."

PROFESSIONAL

Lois Muraguri

SCIENTIST AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR, GLOBAL ALLIANCE NETWORK FOR LIVESTOCK AND VETERINARY MEDICINE, UK, 38

Lois holds the distinction of being the youngest Kenyan ever to qualify for a PhD in Intellectual Property Law having been awarded the degree at 31. Still she remains a member of the very special club of five Kenyan women with a PhD in Intellectual Property law.

Sitting at the top of the Global Alliance Network for Livestock and Veterinary Medicine has placed Lois in the unenviable position of having to managing the slippery point where science meets public policy.

Key among her many obligations is advising the governments of Cameroon and Sudan on the development of national legal policies in technology transfer and intellectual property rights.

She has researched and published

extensively on the two subjects in the context of public-private partnerships (PPPs) and was part of the team that successfully negotiated a \$51 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK's Department for International Development for the alliances' second phase of activities from 2012 to 2017.

Lois has previously worked as a Research Fellow at the Innogen ESRC Centre for Innovation in Genomics at the Open University, Milton Keynes, UK before joining GALVmed in 2010. In 2006-7, she worked as a research assistant at Queen Mary Intellectual Research Institute in London where she consulted for top British law firms on intellectual property due diligence and commercialisation of biotechnology.



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

PROFESSIONAL

Sara Koki Kinagwi

MEDICAL DOCTOR, 38

Dr Sara Koki Muli-Kinagwi is a doctor who has deployed the power of poetry to save thousands of lives through spreading the word of preventative healthcare across the length and breadth of Kenya.

Having graduated in medicine from

the University of Nairobi, Sara quickly developed an interest in preventative medicine. "Instead of waiting to treat them when they are already sick, I wanted to meet people outside there and prevent them from getting ill." She pursued a Master's degree in Public Health, and finally, in 2006, quit medical practice in favour of community work.

It was in her next job as a Health Knowledge Management Officer and later the Director of AfriAfya (African Network for Health Knowledge Management and Communication) that she succeeded in breaking down complex

medical communication into simple health messages easily understood by communities in rural and informal settlements. This information reached thousands of marginalised populations through traditional media (drama, songs, poetry and puppetry), resource centres equipped with reading materials, as well as by computer and internet. "Knowledge is power. And when people understand why certain practices – such as not boiling water – are risky, then they will make good choices and prevent diseases like diarrhea that severely affect children."

Sara later joined Amref Health Africa to work as a manager for the CDC-funded 'Kibera HIV Prevention Care and Treatment Project'. Managing a health facility in the heart of the informal settlement, she reached, tested and provided treatment to thousands of HIV-infected people and introduced cervical cancer screening to encourage early diagnosis of a disease that is the silent killer of most Kenyan women.

She is now the director of 'APHIA-plusImarisha' at Amref Health Africa, improving health service delivery in northern Kenya's arid lands.



PHOTO BY SALATON NJAU

PROFESSIONAL

Catherine Syengo Mutisya

PSYCHIATRIST, 39

Catherine Syengo Mutisya is an advocate for change through knowledge, as her work driving forwards the understanding mental illness in Kenya has well proven. Without psychological wellbeing, wealth cannot be created, she argues. As a consultant psychiatrist, the deputy superintendent at Mathari National Teaching and Referral Hospital serves as the head of clinical services, a member of the executive expenditure committee, a member of the hospital management committee and as a senior assistant director of medical services.

It's a set that makes for full days - of meetings, patients, hospital administration, and a family to take care of too. But Catherine has always put her best foot forward in life. Born and brought up in Kitui, she joined Muthale Girls and later University of Nairobi where she pursued a Bachelor's degree in Medicine and Surgery and later a Master's degree in Psychiatry.

The greatest moments in her career, she says, are seeing mentally ill people resume their normal lives, while her purpose in life as a psychiatrist is to bring forward the day when Kenyans will understand mental illness and stop the stigma. Mental illness does not have to be the severe case of madness (dementia): it can be mild anxiety, attention problems, misbehaviour or cases of drug abuse, she says. Through her private practice, Nairobi Parenting Clinic, opened in 2009, she works with urban parents in preventing mental illness in children, and is now running aggressive school programmes trying to prevent mental illness in children.

PROFESSIONALS

Mugure Njendu

ARCHITECT, 33

Mugure Njendu has steered major construction projects as one of Kenya's top architects, as well as serving currently as treasurer at the Architectural Association of Kenya (AAK). Her designs and projects in and outside Kenya include the Sh800m modern Kenyatta University Library, the refurbishment of the Toyota offices and a car sales depot in Miami, the Sh500m KPA pension housing facilities in Mombasa, and the Sh10bn Kenya Railways feasibility studies for the dry port at Voi.

At 33, Magure holds a BA in Architecture from Wentworth Institute of Technology, Boston and an MA in Architecture from the University of Miami, and has managed to rise in a male-dominated industry.

It has not been easy, she says, with the gender imbalance in her profession not a unique scenario to Kenya. In her undergraduate class, out of a class of 50, there were only five women, and Mugure was the only African.

But with her career now well-established, she has a dream to develop affordable housing designs for the country. She laments the skyrocketing land prices in the city as a major hurdle. But, nonetheless, believes she has found a way, which she plans to present during the annual AAK convention later this year.

The theme of the convention is the impact of mobility networks, rail and road links in the city. If there are efficient transport networks, she says, an individual working in the city can acquire an affordable house in the counties neighbouring Nairobi, away from the expensive land prices.

Mugure, a mother of two, together with her eight friends, started an organization called Ex-Bomarian Education Fund in 2003, when she was just 22, that helps pay fees for needy Kenya High School students, her former school. The former Bomarian also runs mentorship programmes at Kenya High each year, inviting key speakers from academia, public service and entrepreneurship to address students.



PHOTO COURTESY



There is no scientific answer for success. You can't define it. You've simply got to live it and do it

ANITA RODDICK,
BODY SHOP FOUNDER



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

ENTREPRENEUR

Joy Mbuthia

ENTREPRENEUR, 38

Joy Mbuthia serves as an example of an entrepreneur hitting the Top 40 at great speed, after a long, slow burn building her career inside corporate Kenya. Joy started an interior design and architectural mouldings company only in February this year, after stepping down from rival Classic Mouldings, where she had worked for 16 years.

She owns half of the start-up, Jelani Designs, which has already hired a total of 21 workers and culled a remarkable range of business and rising reputation.

"I love interior design. That is my background," she says, adding that the company is tapping into the rising demand for bespoke furnishings in homes, offices, and the outdoors.

The company offers special paints and mouldings - shapes and containers carved out of stones, marble or wood - to clients to help them put up unique walls, roof tops, ceilings and backyards.

Joy stepped out into the world of start-ups, betting on her long experience and extensive contacts in the industry to grow the business, in which she has invested millions of shillings.

Her last position at Classic Mouldings was as the marketing manager. She joined the company as an intern in the late 1990s after studying interior design at Evelyn College of Design.



PHOTO \ COURTESY

PROFESSIONALS

Christine Kahema Muthui

LEGAL ENTITY CONTROLLER
FOR EAST, CENTRAL AND WEST
AFRICA, COCA-COLA, 34

Navigating the vast legal and tax regimes in more than 15 African countries to ensure Coca-Cola's compliance is what keeps Christine on the job every day. The 34-year-old is an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, a Certified Public Accountant (CPA K), a Certified Public Secretary (CPS K), whose career is decorated with numerous career awards. Her duties at the world's leading soft drinks company include strategic tax planning, tax risks mitigation & routine tax compliance, financial reporting and analysis, and operational control and compliance in nearly the entire sub-Saharan Africa.

Before joining Coca-Cola, Christine was a tax manager at KPMG Kenya, managing a portfolio of large and medium sized clients as well as co-ordinating tax advisory services, dealing with regulatory bodies including the Kenya Revenue Authority and Treasury, and facilitating training to internal and external clients. She is an accredited international trainer in tax management and has worked as a part-time lecturer at Strathmore University:

"I feel good when I inspire students because it is through that I get a chance to contribute to a great future," she says. The mother of three is also the former chairperson of the Alumni Association of her former School, Ngandu Girls, a member of the Young Professional Group of our lady Queen of Peace, and actively participates in church activities.

“

“I feel good when I inspire students because it is through that I get a chance to contribute to a great future.”

Christine Kahema Muthui

ENTREPRENEUR

Sumra Rehmet

MANAGING DIRECTOR, ROMA
COMPANY LIMITED, 27

Sumra Rehmat spurned the normal life of a well-heeled teenager to plunge into business, from the age of 13, emerging as one of the country's youngest CEOs at 19, in as tough a sector as it comes: scrap metal dealing. Sumra grew up to business, her mother managing Roma Company Ltd, supplying scrap metal to milling firms. "During school holidays, unlike my agetates who fancied a trendy lifestyle, I kept myself busy helping my mother to balance the books of accounts," she says. But she learned far more than bookkeeping.

On finishing school in 2004, Sumra enrolled for a Diploma in International Commerce at the University of Toronto, Canada, aiming to then read for a degree. But when her mother suffered a stroke, Sumra returned, at speed, to manage the family business.

Within two months, she had been made CEO, without a formal handover. Despite the hurdles, Sumra took on the new challenge and introduced reforms that have improved the scrap metal business across the country.

"I introduced education to the people in the sector through strengthening the Kenya Iron and Scrap Metal Association. I cautioned on the dangers, and legal implications of vandalism, consequently reducing the rifts between dealers in the business and the management of national firms, like Kenya Power, Telecom Kenya and



PHOTO BY DIANA NGILA

Kenya Railway, whose properties had suffered vandalism." Her input also saw the drafting of the Scrap Metal Act 2013.

Sumra's proactive polices and thoroughness saw the turnover of the company rise more than ten-fold, from Sh40m a year to over Sh400m. She has expanded the firm to Kisumu and Mombasa, while also graduating from the Catholic University with a degree in political science with a bias in economics.

Last year, Sumra partnered with her husband to open Aayat Enterprises Ltd, a building

and construction firm that aims to empower the youths.

She also last year adopted 15 children with special needs, mainly suffering from cerebral malaria, cancer and brain tumours. "I am always disheartened by the suffering most disadvantaged children are exposed to.

These are kids who are very close to my heart and I believe that as a country, we cannot continue excelling in businesses and having trendy lifestyles while ignoring the plight of less fortunate people in society."

PROFESSIONALS

Josephine Kamanthe Ndambuki

SENIOR ENGINEER, TRANSPORT AND IP
SUPPORT, SAFARICOM, 31

Josephine Ndambuki was just 25 when she launched the now 25,000-member League for Young Professionals, an organisation she has spearheaded whilst also rising to serve as senior engineer transport and IP support at telecoms giant Safaricom.

Josephine, who was last year picked to participate in the US State Department's TechWomen programme, attributes her interest in technology to her father's inspiration.

Her first exposure to a computer was in Form 1 and subsequently upon enrolling for a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science at Egerton University.

Starting out as a graduate management engineer in 2009, Josephine has been able to climb the ranks at Safaricom rapidly to her current position where she ensures the company's core network transport is always working.

The core network ensures Sa-

faricom services are accessible to customers countrywide.

She was also part of the team that delivered the first ever submarine cable to Kenya, TEAMS.

As a commissioning engineer and network administrator of TEAMS, she was responsible for making sure the 1.28Tera capacity network was completed to the specifications and timelines, which it was.

But it was in 2008 that Josephine founded the League of Young Professionals in Kenya.

The league acts as a platform for skilled, talented youth to find a space to use their knowledge practically to ensure development in their professions, with now many thousands of members countrywide, and abroad.

Through her work with the League, Josephine was selected for leadership training at the COADY International Institute of St Francis Xavier University in Canada.



PHOTO \ COURTESY

The programme, sponsored by the Canadian international Development Agency (CIDA), saw Josephine study on campus, network and work for three months with the Enablis Entrepreneurial Development Network in South Africa.

She returned to Kenya with the plan to start an investment company under LYP, which has since

grown. Josephine is also actively involved in the Safaricom Foundation as a trustee and as a volunteer for a 'World of Difference'.

She co-ordinates Safaricom's Women in Technology, a network within the company's technology division, and is active in the Rotary Club and as a mentor in her Nairobi North chapter.



INTERVIEW



PHOTO \ COURTESY

PROFESSIONALS

Lydia Ndirangu,
SENIOR TAX ADVOCATE, KPMG, 29

At just 29 years, Lydia Ndirangu has marked herself out as a woman of influence - as an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, a Certified Public Accountant (CPA K) and a Certified Public Secretary (CPS K).

Since joining KPMG, one of the world's leading consultancies, as an associate Lydia has deployed her sharp mind to work ascending to Senior Tax Advisor position.

She last year won the prestigious Encore Award for her invaluable contribution to the department on transfer pricing. "My work involves strategic tax planning, tax risks mitigation & routine tax compliance, financial reporting and analysis and operational control and compliance," she says.

This has seen her sent to train staff in other KPMG branches, most recently at KPMG Botswana on transfer pricing. Although she is endowed with brilliant skills, the young advocate has remained firmly earthed, a value that enables her to share her knowledge with others.

Lydia believes that everyone is valuable in their own way and brings a different perspective in life: a principle that inspires her to remain humble and challenges her to assist other people in realising their full potential.

She is yet to get married, but talks fondly of her family support, which she credits for her great discipline and successful career. When off duty, the last born in a family of five children spends

her time with her niece and nephews, ostensibly to coach herself on motherly duties.

"To succeed in life is not a one person journey. I have learnt that you need to help others rise in their careers and life if you want true success. Train the team you have, and you will succeed," she says.

“Far away, there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead... I'm not afraid of storms, for I'm learning how to sail my ship.

Louisa May Alcott
Author

‘Work Smarts’: Betty Liu on how to succeed in your career

Bloomberg news anchor Betty Liu has often been asked by young people how she gained such success in her career. In trying to provide answers, she realised she had her own questions about how to continue to advance her career. Those questions ultimately led her to reach out to CEOs from some of the most successful companies for their thoughts on what it takes to succeed. Wharton management professor Adam Grant recently talked with Liu about her new book, which grew out of this process, “Work Smarts: What CEOs say you need to know to get ahead.” In this interview, Liu shares insights from some of those she spoke with, including JPMorgan’s Jamie Dimon, AOL’s Susan Lyne and Berkshire Hathaway’s Warren Buffett.

**What motivated you to write this book?**

When I’ve been at conferences and events, young people (say), “Betty, you’re so successful. Please give me some advice about what I can do with my career.” I got enough of those questions that I started to think to myself, there is this great need. I’m sure you see it all the time, Adam: young people who want to get career advice. They want some direction. But what was funny was that while they were asking me these questions, I kept saying to myself, I have these same questions. I want to know what to do with my career. I don’t feel all that successful. I still want to know these very basic questions: how to make your boss happy, how to ask for a raise, how to stand out and how to shine.

I thought, if I still have these questions in the middle of my career, then other people must have those same questions. So, who do I ask then? I began to think, the best people to ask are the people who are at the very top of their careers.

Those would be the CEOs that I talk to every day on our program on Bloomberg. All of that jelled, and then ... my agent and I put together the proposal and sent it to the publisher. That’s the genesis....

You got to talk to many interesting people in the business world. What were the most surprising insights that you received?

First of all, I was very surprised at the number of people who said yes to the interview. I thought some people might not want to reveal all the dirty secrets of how they got ahead. The second thing was how frank people were about their struggles. Jamie Dimon, the chairman and CEO of JPMorgan, was really open about his fight with Sandy Weill, his mentor at

Citigroup. It got to the point where Sandy eventually fired him. That was a huge controversy during the time when it happened. Enough years have passed that Jamie felt he could talk about it.

He was really very open about that moment in his life. He said he went home and told his daughters, “I got fired.” He said it was really strange to go from 90 miles per hour to zero for the first time. That was the same with other CEOs [who spoke] about the mistakes they made. Susan Lyne at AOL said (she) made the huge mistake (of thinking) just because it was a great idea, it’s a great business....I was just surprised at how people were very honest and genuine about their failures.

Is that easy to do because they are now back on the top, or have they been this way all along?

I think it’s easier because they are back on the top. It’s obviously a lot harder if you’re still in that position, but I also felt that they would have mentioned it anyway; it’s a part of the fabric of who they are. Many of them did feel that the mistakes that they have made were just as important as the successes, and, in fact, probably even more important....

Based on the folks you spoke with, how do you make the mistakes productive or into learning opportunities?

People fail all the time. I can even point to this book project. The number of book proposals I’ve had out there outweighs the number of books that I’ve actually written by ten-fold. For every success, there are about a dozen failures behind that. How do you take that then into your everyday life? What I’ve found is much of it is about attitude. How do you bounce back? How you bounce back is more important than the failure itself.

If you have that positive attitude — Adam, you are a perenni-

al optimist as well — it can mean such a difference to the path of your career versus being taken down by it and wallowing in that mistake....

Is there a counterintuitive piece of advice that you picked up through this process?

I don’t know about counterintuitive, but there was a great piece of insight that Sam Zell, the real estate mogul from Chicago, said to me that really made me rethink what a big organisation is really about. He said, as an entrepreneur, (he needs) as much information as possible. In a big corporation, people use information as currency. So they trade it. The more information a person has, the more power that person has in a big organization.

But, he said, in a small company or an entrepreneurial environment, if you’re keeping a piece of information away from (him), then you’re damaging (his) company because (he needs) to make decisions quickly and (he needs) to make them with as much information as possible.

He told me a story about a woman who he hired from a major corporation. He said she was an overachiever. He said she was a star all the way through her career. Nine months after she joined his organisation, he fired her. He said it was because she used the same practice of using information as currency.

When he told me that, I thought, “Geez, how many big companies have I worked for where I have seen that happen?” I have done the same thing. I have committed the same crime of using information to get information from other people and using information and hoarding it so that I have power over colleagues.

I thought, “That is such a great observation, and I need to check myself....” Organisations talk about transparency, but it’s the execution of it that really matters.



BOOK REVIEW

Two decades of change put women in positions of power

Alison Wolf describes women at the top - why their numbers have grown so fast in recent years and what their lives are like

In just the past two or three decades, women in more than token numbers have taken their place alongside men at the upper levels of government, the professions and business. They now earn more than half of all college degrees, and they will shortly make up a majority of lawyers, doctors and college faculty. While they still account for only a small minority of political and business leaders, that, too, is changing.

The rapid ascension of women to the most influential sectors of society - occurring in all advanced Western countries - is likely to have profound implications for public policy, and perhaps even more for the way families construct their lives and raise their children.

In her remarkably wide-ranging book, Alison Wolf describes these women at the top - why their numbers have grown so fast in recent years and what their lives are like. She estimates they make up roughly 15 to 20 percent of working women in advanced countries, or about 70 million women worldwide. (Whether she is defining them by education or income is not clear, but it doesn't much matter, since the two are so closely correlated.)

She calls them variously "professional women" (an unfortunate choice), "graduates," and the "elite," but none of those terms quite captures the combination of education, ambition and professional commitment that characterizes them.

Clearly, we need a term that refers to something more than just graduating from college, but it's hard to come up with one, as Wolf demonstrates. I'll call them "upper-middle-class," although that is not very precise either. Whatever the term, if you are reading this, the chances are that you are one of these women or living with one.

The book says relatively little about the other 80 to 85 per cent of women, and virtually all Wolf's interviews are with women in the upper-middle class, mainly her friends and colleagues; and, it seems to me, disproportionately women in business or finance. But that is a small cavil (mainly with the subtitle, which seems to promise a focus on all working women) in a book that is so interesting and well documented, drawing on a variety of surveys as well as interviews.

Moreover, the focus on upper-middle-class women seems justified, since their rise to the top is a new and largely unexamined phenomenon. Despite the mountain of data Wolf amasses, however, she does not say very much about what she thinks the reader should conclude from all of it. I will try to draw some conclusions here, based on her book, on other publications and on my own experiences.

Until the 1960s, with few exceptions, the only way even educated women could gain security, let alone status, was to make

as good a marriage as possible as early as possible, leave the workforce (if they were ever in it), and spend the rest of their lives caring for their families and homes. Their social standing was that of their husbands. For practical reasons, sex, marriage and children were tightly bound together, at least in respectable circles.

There was no reliable birth control, the social stigma of extra-marital pregnancy was great, and unmarried men often did not take responsibility for the children they fathered, leaving single mothers barely able to support their children. Smart women made sure not to get pregnant before marriage, and the best way to ensure that was not to have sex.

From earliest history right through the 1950s, there was therefore a transactional element to marriage. In return for the security and protection and social approbation the husband provided, the wife provided sex and children and management of the household. If the man was wealthy and the woman beautiful and charming, so much the better. Of course, there was often love and companionship as well, but throughout history, as Wolf writes, "sex proffered, sex withheld were the main assets that girls possessed."

Society

All that changed almost overnight when the birth control pill hit the market in the early 1960s. Suddenly, premarital sex was no longer risky. Very quickly, the Pill (everyone knew what that capitalized word meant) came into widespread use, and for the first time, both women and men could have sex without fear of pregnancy. That certainly suited the times, and the Woodstock generation enthusiastically embraced free sex - or at least a certain segment of that generation did - and premarital sex generally lost its stigma.

Both women and men often had multiple sex partners before marriage, and began to marry much later. The median age at first marriage for women increased from 21 in 1960 to 27 in 2011. Reliable contraception also made it feasible for women to undertake long years of education and commit to careers in a way that had not been possible before, and they began to be encouraged by, of all people, their fathers - their "besotted" fathers, in Wolf's words.

One reason for the change in the attitudes of fathers is that in the second half of the 20th century, families became smaller; children were no longer economically valuable for the labour they provided on farms and family-owned businesses, and with the rise in the standard of living and improved health care, they were all expected to survive to adulthood.

Jennifer Senior, in her new book, "All Joy and No Fun: The Paradox of Modern Parenthood," refers to the end of World

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Couples at the top lead very different lives, not only from the lower classes, but also from previous generations

Prof. Alison Wolf



War II as the beginning of modern childhood, and quotes Viviana Zelizer as characterising today's child as "economically worthless but emotionally priceless." As families became smaller, fathers became more ambitious on behalf of their daughters, since in a two- or three-child family they might have no sons. By the 1980s, women were entering the upper echelons of society on their own, and many had high enough incomes to have children without marriage and support them, if they had to. Sex, marriage and children no longer had to go together.

Yet in the upper-middle class, they usually do go together. These women rarely go it alone, but instead make what Wolf calls "assortative" marriages; they marry men very much like themselves - well educated and fully engaged in their own high-powered careers.

Assortative mating, of course, greatly increases the family income, and exacerbates the inequality that plagues the US. Even though men and women in all social classes are marrying later, upper-middle-class couples wait to have children until they are married, and their divorce rate is low. In contrast, more than 40 percent of children in the general population are now born to single mothers, and the divorce rate in the lower classes is about double that of upper-middle-class couples.

According to Wolf, couples at the top lead very different lives, not only from the lower classes, but also from previous generations. Within the households, husbands and wives are virtually interchangeable. Both tend to be high earners, and both tend to be equally competent at childcare and household tasks. I say "tend," because she says that some differences remain once children arrive, but the differences are not great.

Women and men function like a team in all parts of their lives, pulling together at their manifold jobs, one stepping in when the other falters. They now have more in common with each other than either has with members of their own sex in the lower classes. What most differentiates them is their total



absorption in two things - their careers and their children. They devote extremely long hours to their professions, which often require them to be electronically available at almost all hours. According to Wolf's data, upper-middle-class couples now work on average more hours per day than the rest of the population, and unlike the lower classes, they have no more leisure time now than they did in the 1960s.

Contrary to what one might expect, upper-middle-class women usually return to work full-time after childbirth, whereas other women more often stop paid work at least temporarily or return only part-time. As Wolf points out, for upper-middle-class women to interrupt their careers means large sacrifices of opportunity. Moreover, their income is usually sufficient to cover the considerable expense of hiring nannies or other forms of child care. But even more important than the money is the fact that for these women, their sense of identity is tied to their professions. They are full participants in what James Surowiecki recently called "the cult of overwork."

The commitment of power couples to their professions is outweighed only by their extraordinary involvement with their children. Wolf titles a section on children "Willing Slaves," and begins with a one-sentence paragraph, "And then there are the children." The next paragraph starts, "Young children dominate the lives of their parents not just emotionally but by completely upturning their lives."

Against all logic, as documented by Wolf, upper-middle-class couples somehow manage to spend more interactive time (not just being in the same room) with their children than any group in history - with or without careers, rich or poor. True, they have fewer children; in fact, their fertility rate is so low that they don't even replace themselves. But the few children they have are at the center of their lives, and fathers are often just as much involved as mothers. They spend enormous



TOP OF THE
PACK: **Upper-
middle-class
couples now
work on av-
erage more
hours per day
than the rest
of the popula-
tion, and un-
like the lower
classes, they
have no more
leisure time
now than
they did in the
1960s.**

FILE

amounts of money on them, and employ a vast network of experts to help - beginning with childbirth classes and lactation consultants, and continuing through tutors to help them get into the best schools, athletic coaches to help the children make the team, teachers to help them develop their musical and dramatic talents, and so forth. Nannies alone cost on the order of tens of thousands of dollars per year.

Children are also incorporated into their parents' social lives, and parents dote on their friends' children as well as their own (or pretend to), sending photos around to one another on Facebook and celebrating their birthdays together with festive parties.

The absorption with children has entered the lower classes, as well, and is reflected and amplified by the media. Anyone who glances at celebrity magazines knows all about Suri Cruise and the Jolie-Pitt brood.

A few generations ago, celebrities kept even the fact of their children quiet, and seldom displayed them, but now children are downright fashionable and nothing melts the hearts of fans more than a picture of, say, Seraphina Affleck in her daddy's arms.

According to Wolf, the total amount of time spent working in the upper-middle class is the same for men and women, if you count both paid work outside the home and childcare and housework, even though it is widely assumed that women work longer hours altogether.

Time studies show that women do more housework, says Wolf, but the men work more hours away from home, so it all comes out even. I'm sceptical about equating another hour at the office (these men are not labourers, remember) with another hour of housework. Wolf acknowledges that women in general are more stressed, which she ascribes to having "more balls in play." Whatever the division of labour, these parents work very hard and very long hours on their twin immersions - career and children.

-- HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW

Many are now shunning employment and plunging into entrepreneurship

There is a silent revolution for women in enterprise in Kenya

BY VICTOR AMADALA AND JULIUS ODERA

A silent revolution is taking shape among young women leaders, who are shunning employment to plunge into the more delicate entrepreneurial world on the promise of social and economic freedom, happiness and satisfaction.

An Ipsos survey of this year's Top 40 under 40 women found that top employed young women in Kenya, invariably, as in a 100 per cent, harbour hopes of owning their own businesses in future.

The Ipsos Synovate's research also reveals a key factor behind the success of women owned enterprises. The research found that 51 per cent of all young women nominated for the annual Top 40 Under 40 Women were entrepreneurs and were found to be extremely satisfied with their work, as opposed to 41 percent who are employed and are less satisfied with their jobs.

Supporting Ipsos Synovate's findings is a study by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor which presents entrepreneurs as the happiest people in the world. Researchers compared the personal well-being and job satisfaction of individuals who manage businesses in 70 economies with that of people who don't engage in entrepreneurial activities and found that the world's entrepreneurs - both male and female - have more life and work satisfaction, as measured by their agreement with statements like 'my life is close to ideal' or '

If I could live my life again, I would not change anything'. The report also concluded that "female entrepreneurs exhibit a higher degree of subjective well-being" than men in innovation-driven economies like the USA and Europe.

The freedom that comes with being at the helm of decision making in one's own entity is viewed as the overriding reason behind the happiness among many women entrepreneurs. The greater ease in juggling motherly duties and business schedules without risking the loss of a job by annoying the boss with frequent off duty requests is what inspires many young women into entrepreneurship. But the greater control, generally, is a key motivation, says Camilla Palmer, Head of the Employment and Discrimination Team at Leigh Day solicitors, who attributes the greater happiness and wellbeing scores of entrepreneurial women to the fact that they're in the driving seat. "Entrepreneurial enterprises offer control over your working life, which many women don't have," said Palmer.

The flexibility that comes with business ownership give young women an

NUMBERS



37%

Current percentage of women-owned enterprises entities in the globally formal sector.



224m

women now impacting the global economy.

opportunity to enjoy their social life, an aspect that keeps them fresh and resourceful. Keryn


Thomson, the author of Women On Business explains that career women, due to job insecurity, tend to overwork to please their bosses, hence disconnecting themselves from the social world. Such women lack room to express themselves and can thus burn out.

Women owned enterprises have additionally contributed immensely towards social economic development. A report from Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) shows that in emerging markets, women reinvest a staggering 90 cents of every additional dollar of income in "human resources" and their families' education, health, and nutrition compared to 30 to 40 per cent for men. Women entrepreneurs are therefore a far faster route to wealth creation and offer a greater multiplier effect in the creation of secondary jobs and incomes.

This is creating a remarkable positive impact on the global economy with statistics from the GEM indicating that women-owned entities in the formal sector now represent some 37 per cent of enterprises globally, with 126 million women starting or running businesses, and 98 million operating established (over three and a half years) businesses: to make a sum of 224 million women now impacting the global economy.

-AFRICAN LAUGHTER



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through the colors of our flag, then we
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