

# Working with Women's Rights Organizations to Develop Equality in the Digital Economy for Women and Girls in Nigeria

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The  
Knowledge  
Society



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## REDESIGNING POLICIES

### Lack of Equality

Women and girls in Nigeria face overwhelming discriminatory laws and cultural stereotypes that are beyond belief, preventing them from being socially accepted and thriving in the digital economy. With a ranking of **128th in 153 countries** on the World Bank's Global Gender Gap Index 2020, it is apparent and imperative for the country to take action in attaining gender equality and equal representation in society, especially as it pertains to the digital economy.

### Redesign Policies

Our goal is to rewrite the "Gender Parity Prohibition of Violence Against Women Bill" which had been previously voted down by the Nigerian Senate (which wasn't a surprise, considering there was only 8 female senators out of 109 in total). **This law aimed to provide women and girls with equal rights in marriage, along with educational and employment opportunities.**

### Larger Economy and Fairer Rights for Women

If women participated in the economy to the same extent as men, **Nigeria's GDP would grow by 23% or 229 billion dollars** by 2025. Social Norms would be broken down and rights for woman and other minorities would be respected again and would achieve fairer rights in all aspects of life.

## Why we Decided to Invest in Nigeria?



**66.7%**

of the country speaks English. That's crucial to establish on the ground and across the world communication networks with local activists and international organizations.

**10%**

of the GDP reported by the Center for Global Development is the fast growing Communication Technology Sector in Africa which includes increasing its current number of tech hubs to 55!

**30%**

of tech firms in Nigeria are owned by women. In these firms the median share of ownership is only 20%.



## EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES FACED IN NIGERIA

One in every five of the world's out-of-school children is in Nigeria. Of these children, about 10.5 million of them ages 5-14 are not in school. These shocking statistics help in explaining just how great of a crisis the Nigerian education system is facing today. A problem the likes of which they have never seen before that just keeps on growing.

In countries like Nigeria, schooling is critical in equipping young children with the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute to society. Yet, if in some places, less than half of the children (most likely girls) are attending school, they are becoming a much greater hindrance towards economic growth.

To further exacerbate the issues faced by the Nigerian education system, girls face even greater obstacles in getting their education. While only 61% of 6-11 year-olds attend primary schools, of that group in the North-east and North-west, only 47.7% and 47.3% respectively are girls.





# SOCIAL CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN

#BEINGFEMALEINNIGERIA



Aitadi  
@Aitadi

[#BeingfemaleinNigeria](#) random dude at a fast food restaurant hassles me for eating take outs. As a woman I should cook my own meals.



Bibiire o se f'owora  
@yew1e

[#BeingFemaleInNigeria](#) "Hey you, please plan the office party. After all you're the only female here, and it is a woman's job".

This online movement was started by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a Nigerian writer, as a way to expose everyday sexism faced by women from all across the country. In 2015, her small Abuja-based book club had a discussion regarding their own experiences of sexism in their personal lives, and, shocked by what they heard, she figured that they had to address these issues through an online platform. Within hours, it became the top Twitter trend in the country with over 17,000 responses, and here of some of the ones we feel need to be highlighted.



Jaruma Magazine  
@jarumamagazine

I should succeed but keep in mind that I cannot be more successful than the man in my life [#BeingFemaleInNigeria](#)

As these testimonials demonstrate, there were clearly additional societal barriers that prevented women from contributing to the same extent as men in the national economy. It was expected of women to serve as the housekeeper, the one who cooked for the rest of the family and looked after the children. Any woman that strayed from the box in which society confined them is subject to ridicule and mockery from their male counterparts. Therefore, women in Nigeria face increased hurdles in contributing towards the digital economy.





# Current Online Presence

As of January 2021, there are 4.66 billion internet users worldwide.

Within Nigeria alone, 96 million (as of 2020) have access to the internet, making it the African country with the most internet users to date.

However, Nigeria also has a population of 98 million women- 49% of its total population.

Even if all women were online, Nigeria would still be missing out on the opportunity and employment of 2 million women.

# Why Should We Care About This?

45.5% of women in Nigeria are employed.

However, these jobs are more labor intensive and stray far from the employment of potential in the digital economy.

Additionally, Nigeria has a 59.4% literacy rate among females.

However, education is seen as a luxury, and many women are dropping out to pursue household responsibilities.

With a new legislation, Nigerian families can make more profit in their households, regardless of whether they have an education or not.



# OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE



## I.T. Sector = 10% of GDP

The Center for Global Development reports that Nigeria shows promising strides in its information and communication technology sector, as it contributes to almost 10% of Africa's GDP and is building upon increasing its current number of 55 tech hubs. This provides a solid foundation to build upon for further growth in the near future.



## Large female presence

A BBC report states that 40% of Nigerian women are entrepreneurs (the highest ratio of female business owners in the world). They are driven, innovative, and passionate about uplifting themselves and others. Women are also running more formal businesses, leveraging technological advancements to build innovative companies.



## Lack of outside barriers

When it comes to changing policies, many outside barriers such as religious divide may prevent these changes from ever occurring. However, particularly in Southern Nigeria, women are more accepted in the social workforce, so the introduction of legislation for more women in tech should not be as shunned upon compared to other more discriminatory places.



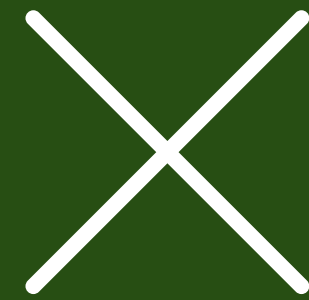
# ONE Campaign Survey

This survey was conducted in Nigeria with a number of tech firms around the issue of women's participation in the fast growing industry.



## % of Internet Users in Africa

The survey showcased the Nigeria as the premier investment destination with largest investment being **94.9M USD**, **23%** of all African internet users, and the largest number of telecommunications subscribers.



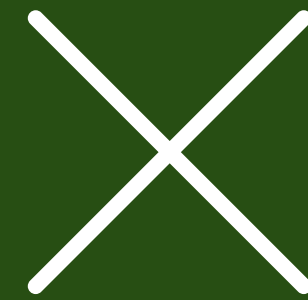
## # Of Women Per Firm

On average with 31 firms surveyed, the median value was **2** female employees per firm.



## # of Women in Managerial Positions

In 93 tech firms surveyed, only **6** had a woman in a top managerial position.



## # of Full-Time Female Employees

In 93 tech firms surveyed, the average number of full-time female employees was **1 to 4**.





# Meet Imani Edo

Imani is a 23 year old woman residing in Lagos, Nigeria. She is the owner of a small business in Lagos and wants to be able to market it to neighboring countries across West Africa.

However, with word that her business is female-owned, she is not getting as much of an audience as she would like to.

With stronger legislation to push women into the digital economy, women like Imani can get a greater audience out of West Africa.



# TechHer

TechHer is a non-profit organization founded by Chioma Agwuegbo aimed at educating women in Nigeria about technology and the digital economy. Turnout rates continue to be extremely low, with only 500 students in three years of operation.



## The Main Reason

Negative cultural stereotypes about women in the tech industry cause many in the older generation to discourage or outright ban younger women from participating in the digital economy.



# Solution Overview

This is overview of our solution and the step-by-step process of how we made our solution!




### Review Failed Policies

Look over failed policies to give us inspiration to rewrite or recreate a new policy.




### Review Successful Policies from other Countries!

Looking into successful policies from different countries will enable us to look at the impact and compare projected results with Nigeria.



### Target a Specific Policy

Target a specific policy to redesign with the help of female activists and politicians. This policy, as mentioned before, is the Gender Parity Prohibition of Violence Against Women Bill.

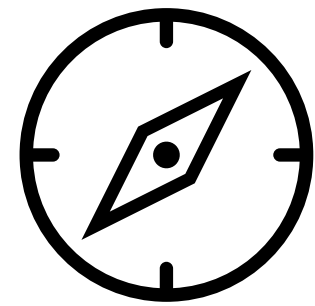


### Establish Connections

Get the help of other organizations and on the ground activists in Nigeria for their feedback on the decision

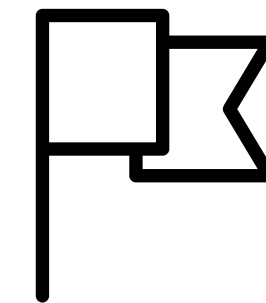


# Solution Overview Continued



## Redesigning the Bill

Redesign the bill with the goal to increase the likelihood of it making it passed the Senate!



## Collaborate with a Senator!

Team up with a woman senator in the Nigerian Senate in order to submit the bill for debate and eventually voting!



# Failed or Ignorant Policies in Nigeria

## Section 55 (1)(d) of the Penal Code

This section allows men to assault woman if they are married if native law or custom recognizes it as lawful and the woman is not grievous hurt.

Section 55. Correction of Child, Pupil, Servant or Wife

1. Nothing is an offence which does not amount to the infliction of grievous hurt upon any persons which is done:
  - A. By a parent or guardian for the purpose of correcting his child or ward.
  - B. By a schoolmaster for the purpose of correcting a child.
  - C. By a master for the purpose of correcting his servant or apprentice.
  - D. By a husband for the purpose of correcting his wife, such husband and wife being subject to any native law or custom in which such correction is recognized as lawful.**

## Gender and Equality Opportunities Bill

This failed bill would have aimed to pass basic women's right to be equal to those of men in different aspects of life. However, the bill was rejected by both Muslim and Christian Senators as it was against their religious beliefs. This bill received the most amount of opposition from senators from the North including Ahmad Rufa'i.

"... is in conflict with the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which enshrines the Freedom of Religion; add that the issue of equitable sharing of inheritance between the male and female is equally in conflict with the provision of the Constitution and the provisions of the Sharia Law."

## Gender Parity and Prohibition of Violence Against Women Bill

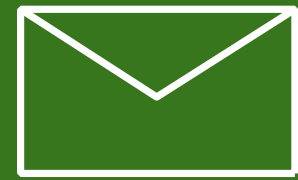
This filed bill would have eliminated all forms of discrimination based on sex in private and public spaces, affirm women's rights to equal opportunities, reaffirm the International Conventions on Human Rights, and the domestication of certain provisions of the Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination.

### 2 Main Reasons Why It was Rejected

1. Cultural Stereotypes: In law in Nigeria, men are still perceived as the dominant figure in the household: Men in the Senate wanted to keep it that way.
2. Religious Norms: Sharia Law is in the Nigerian Constitution, which also limits the rights of woman.

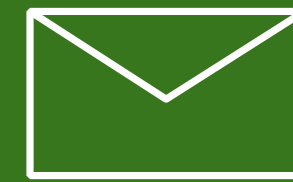


# Organizations and Politicians to Target!



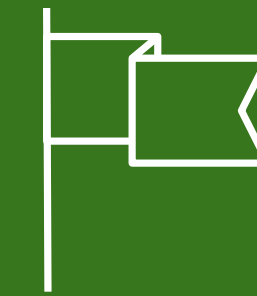
## Women's Rights Advancement and Protection Alternative

An organization designed to seek to advance and protect the rights of women and created national laws and policies defending women on the local, country, and international levels.



## Female In Nigeria

One of the largest Women's Right organizations in Nigeria focused around being a safe space for woman to share their uncomfortable experiences after #BeingFemaleInNigeria trended.



## She Leads Africa

An organization aspiring to empower the next generation of African Women entrepreneurs. Hosts opportunities across Nigeria with competitions and cash prizes as well!



## Uche Ekwunife

Woman senator from Nigeria who is part of the People's Democratic Party. She's an advocate for Woman's Rights as well!



## Nnenna Elendu Ukeje

Woman senator from Nigeria who served as the Chairman House Committee on Foreign Affairs. She's an advocate for Human rights. She's a strong advocate for Human Rights and Gender agenda!



## Binta Masi Garba

Woman senator from Nigeria advocating for Nigerian woman and the oppressed. She's received numerous awards for her role in advocating for women's rights at such a young age!

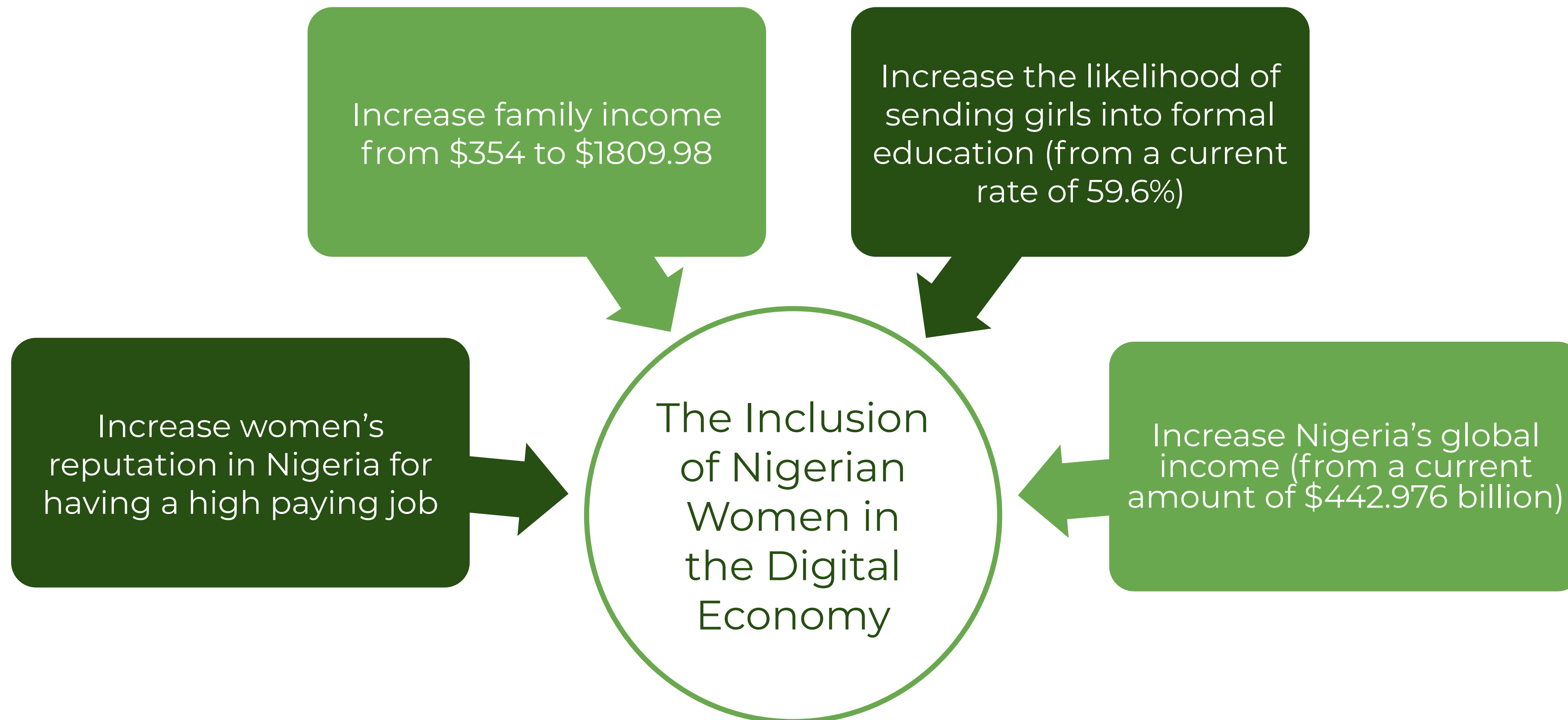
# The Impact

According to McKinsey, by 2030 there will be 390-590 million job openings internationally.

There are approximately 100 million women in Nigeria alone.

Getting even a small fraction of women in Nigeria into the digital economy could boost world employment rates exponentially.

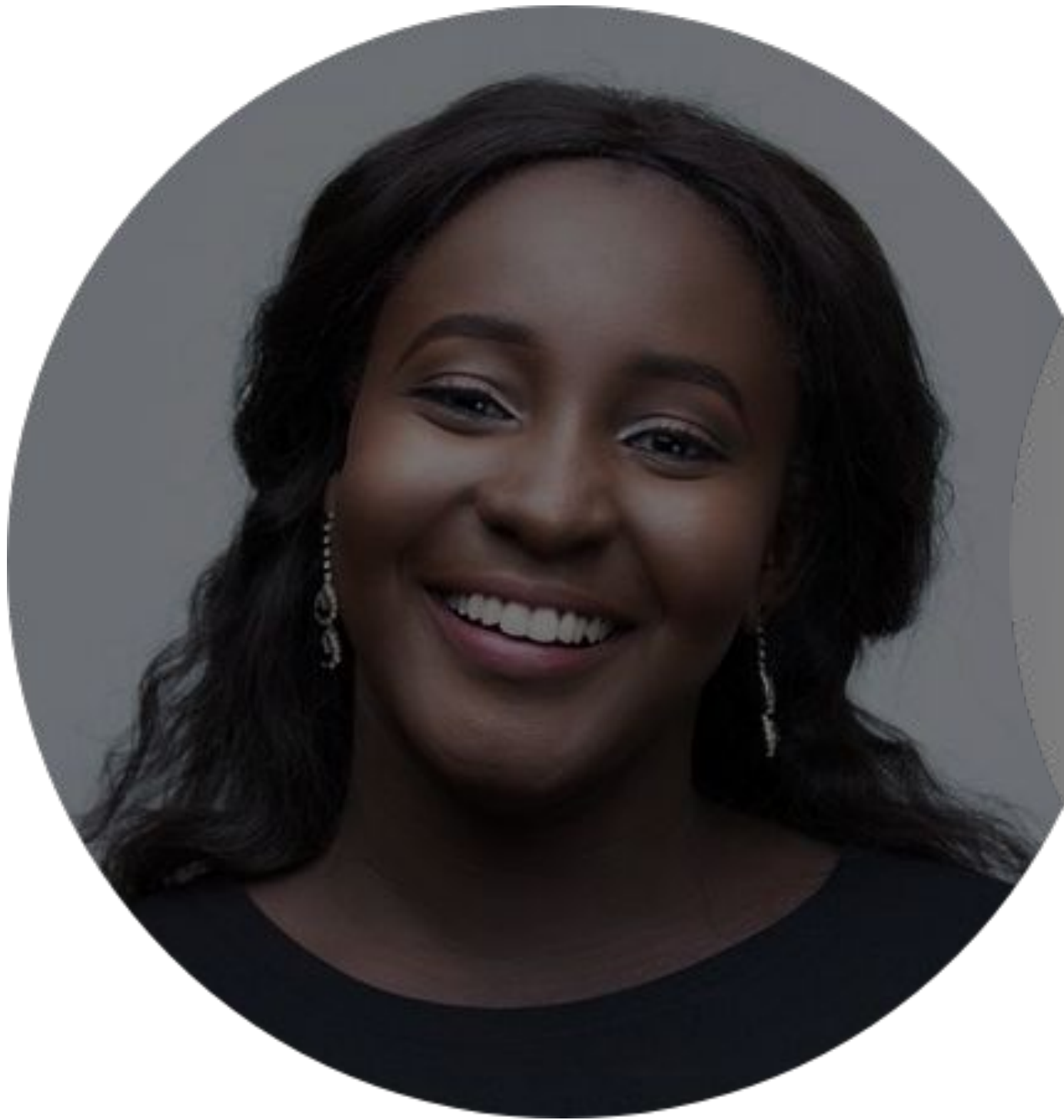
**So what else can Nigeria gain from redesigning their policies?**





# CONTACTS

These are our recommended contacts to touch base with!



**Wadi Ben Hirki**

Activist working in a non-profit organization designed to impact disadvantaged and marginalized people, specifically African women in Northern Nigeria.



**Hafsat Abiola-Costello**

Prominent activist in Nigeria founding the Kudirat Initiative for Democracy with the vision of women as full participants in government.



**Zainab Rahima Amniu**

Sub-Saharan Activist implementing equitable and inclusive programs in national governments.



# MEET OUR TEAM



MILIND KUMAR



CARLOS BELLO



LANI WANG



ASHWIN BARAMA



## On a More Personal Note

Thank you, U.N. and Shaloo!

Thank you for reaching out to TKS and giving us this opportunity to work with an international organization on improving women's rights across the globe in the tech sector. Thank you, for taking the time to speak with us for a couple of hours and giving us guidance on approaching these challenges!

We look forward to seeing the issue faced head on by our peers today and in the future, and we hope this made a lasting impact on the decisions you make moving forwards!

Best regards,  
Ashwin, Lani, Carlos, and Milind