

TOS
FOUNDATION AFRICA

VOICES OF IMPACT

TOS FOUNDATION AFRICA NEWSLETTER



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Founder's Note



As we reach the midpoint of 2026, June offers a valuable opportunity to pause and reflect. In a world that often celebrates only visible milestones, this month reminds us that sustainable change is built through patience, persistence, and countless small actions that may not always make headlines but steadily move us closer to the future we seek.

The first half of this year has reinforced what we at TOS Foundation Africa have always believed: real impact is built through consistency, not bursts. Across our work in women's leadership, economic empowerment, and community engagement, we have seen that progress is rarely linear but every step forward deepens the foundation for what comes next.

June also marks 27 years of Nigeria's uninterrupted democratic governance. It is a milestone worth celebrating, and equally, worth interrogating. Democracy is only as strong as its inclusivity, and there is still significant ground to cover before every Nigerian especially women and young people can say they are truly represented in the rooms where decisions are made.

Looking ahead, we are encouraged. Across Africa, doors are opening for women and girls in education, digital innovation, and leadership. Our commitment remains the same: to ensure more women are equipped to walk through those doors and lead with confidence.

The second half of 2026 carries special weight. As we prepare to mark ten years of TOS Foundation Africa, we do so with deep gratitude for every partner, community, and changemaker who has been part of this story and with genuine excitement for what the next decade holds.

Thank you for walking this journey with us.

A stylized, handwritten signature in red ink that reads 'Osasu'.

Chief (Mrs.) Osasu Igbinedion Ogwuche
Founder, TOS Foundation Africa

STRENGTHENING PATHWAYS TO POWER:

HerCademy Fellows Meet Swiss Federal Councillor and National Leaders (I)



TOS Foundation Africa hosted a working lunch in honour of Her Excellency, Elisabeth Baume-Schneider, Switzerland Federal Councillor and Minister for Health, Culture, and Gender Equity, who met with Fellows and Alumni of the first cohort of HerCademy Leadership Institute.

The engagement brought together Ambassador Patrick Egloff, the Ambassador of Switzerland in Nigeria, Distinguished Senator Ireti Kingibe (representing the FCT), and Her Excellency Amb. Olufolake Abdulrazaq, First Lady of Kwara State.

Opening the session, the Swiss Ambassador noted that women hold just 4% of parliamentary seats in Nigeria, and reflected on a conversation with the Founder: that opportunity will come, but women must be ready to meet it when it does. He pointed to the networks and role models men have long relied on, and the gap HerCademy was built to close.

In her Opening remarks, Founder, TOS Foundation Africa, Chief Osasu Igbiniedion Ogwuche, represented by Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Moses Agbara, described the programme as proof of concept and called on partners to help scale it into proof of impact, moving the cohort from 25 women to a national pipeline ready for the 2027 elections and beyond. She was clear that investing in women in politics is not charity but nation-building, and issued a direct appeal to donors and institutions in the room to fund the next cohorts.



STRENGTHENING PATHWAYS TO POWER:

HerCademy Fellows Meet Swiss Federal Councillor and National Leaders (II)

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Speaking at the event, Senator representing FCT, Sen. Ireti Kingibe spoke candidly about the realities of elective politics, from the difficulty of getting parties to field women candidates to the personal cost of standing your ground in hostile spaces. She spoke of negotiating with party leadership for more women on the ballot, and challenged the room: women must come forward first before they can be included.



At the event, Kwara state First Lady, Amb. Prof. Olufolake Abdulrazaq shared her own path through diplomacy and public service, and urged the Fellows to seek out mentors and sponsors the way men routinely do for one another.



In her closing remarks, Federal Councillor Baume-Schneider spoke of solidarity between women, describing the room as sisters rather than mentors and mentees, and reaffirmed Switzerland's continued partnership with TOS Foundation Africa in advancing women's political leadership across Nigeria.



STRENGTHENING PATHWAYS TO POWER:

HerCademy Fellows Meet Swiss Federal
Councillor and National Leaders (Photo Gallery)

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MID-YEAR REVIEW:

Six Months of Advancing Women's Leadership and Opportunity (I)



6 Months **in** and the work has not slowed down.

Across our core areas women's leadership, political participation, economic empowerment, and health equity TOS Foundation Africa has spent the first half of 2026 doing what this work demands: showing up consistently, building strategically, and staying the course even in times when progress is hard to see.



One of the defining efforts of the year has been the Reserved Seats for Women Bill campaign. The advocacy has entered a sharper, more deliberate phase, with intensified engagement with key decision-makers and coalition partners to push the bill to a vote on the floor of the National Assembly. This is not just about one piece of legislation it is about establishing a precedent for what inclusive democracy looks like in Nigeria.



Alongside this, our HerCademy Leadership Institute completed its first cohort of



25 high-potential women
DRAWN FROM
25 states across Nigeria

Through practical training in leadership, policy, strategic communication, and governance, these women left the programme not just with skills, but with a network and a mandate to lead in their communities.



Health equity has remained equally central to our work. Through the WAGE Primary Healthcare Equipping Project, the Foundation conducted comprehensive needs assessment audits across



13 Primary
Healthcare
Centres



MID-YEAR REVIEW:

Six Months of Advancing Women's Leadership and Opportunity (II)



These assessments lay the groundwork for targeted investments in facility equipment, infrastructure, and systems strengthening all aimed at improving maternal, newborn, and child health outcomes in underserved communities.

The Foundation's impact has also been amplified through strategic partnerships and collaborations with organisations and institutions working to improve the lives of women and girls.

During this reporting period, TOS Foundation Africa contributed to and partnered with several important initiatives, including the Saving Our Mothers Campaign, the Gender and Development Course facilitated by the Partnership for Innovative Change (PIC), and engagements involving the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, the Office of the Chairperson of the House of Representatives Spouses Association, the Nigeria Governors' Spouses Forum, the Association of Nigerian Female Students, and other stakeholders committed to advancing gender equality and social development. These collaborations have strengthened collective advocacy efforts and expanded opportunities for learning, influence, and impact.

As we move into the second half of the year with our 10th anniversary on the horizon we carry forward the lessons of the last six months and a renewed commitment to the women and girls whose futures this work is for.



REFLECTION:

Democracy Day Celebration '26 and the Question of Inclusion (I)

As Nigeria marks twenty-seven years of uninterrupted democratic rule this June, the nation has earned a rightful moment of celebration. Surviving more than two decades of civilian governance is no small feat given our complex political history, yet longevity alone as yardstick for determining the entrenchment of our democracy is a low bar for a nation of our potential.

True democratic progress is measured not by the mere rhythm of holding elections every four years, but by the depth and quality of representation within the rooms where decisions are made. When evaluated through this lens, a glaring deficit emerges in our democratic journey: the systemic exclusion of women from leadership. A genuine democracy requires that every citizen is meaningfully represented in the policies that shape their lives, yet Nigeria continues to operate at a self-imposed deficit by locking half of its population out of governance.

This representation gap is far more than a matter of fairness or political correctness; it is a structural limitation on the effectiveness of the Nigerian state itself. Women constitute roughly half of Nigeria's population and serve as the primary drivers of its socioeconomic engine, yet their presence in elective and appointive positions remains abysmally low. This exclusion must not be misconstrued as a niche "women's issue" or an appeal for political charity. It is a governance crisis.

When a nation excludes its female intellect, it fundamentally reduces its own brain trust and ensures that its institutions operate at half-capacity. Global evidence consistently demonstrates that when women are present in leadership, governance outcomes shift dramatically toward responsiveness, yielding measurable improvements in healthcare, education, social protection, and sustainable economic development. Inclusion is the catalyst that strengthens institutional legitimacy and deepens accountability.

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



REFLECTION:

Democracy Day Celebration '26 and the Question of Inclusion (II)

Recognizing the urgency of this crisis, the ongoing legislative push for the passage of the Reserved Seats for Women Bill represents a critical turning point for the nation.



As the organization leading the campaign for this pivotal reform,



TOS Foundation Africa views this legislation not as an appeal for political concessions, but as an urgent structural correction.



Special seats are not a favor handed down by the political establishment; they are the necessary scaffolding required to dismantle decades of systemic gatekeeping and to rebuild a democracy that accurately reflects the diversity of the society it serves



By legally anchoring spaces for women in our legislative houses, Nigeria has the opportunity to align its democratic practice with its foundational ideals, transforming governance from an elite monolith into a truly representative body.

However, passing legislation is only the first step in a much larger journey toward systemic equity. True progress requires a profound cultural shift that normalizes female leadership at every level of society, from local councils to national institutions. Political parties must move past cosmetic commitments to inclusion and actively dismantle the patriarchal barriers that restrict ballot access. At TOS Foundation Africa, our leadership of the Reserved Seats campaign is matched by our daily work on the ground, equipping women with the resources, leadership training, and civic networks necessary to contest, win, and govern effectively. We believe that inclusion must move swiftly from an aspiration to an absolute expectation.

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GENDER
EQUALITY



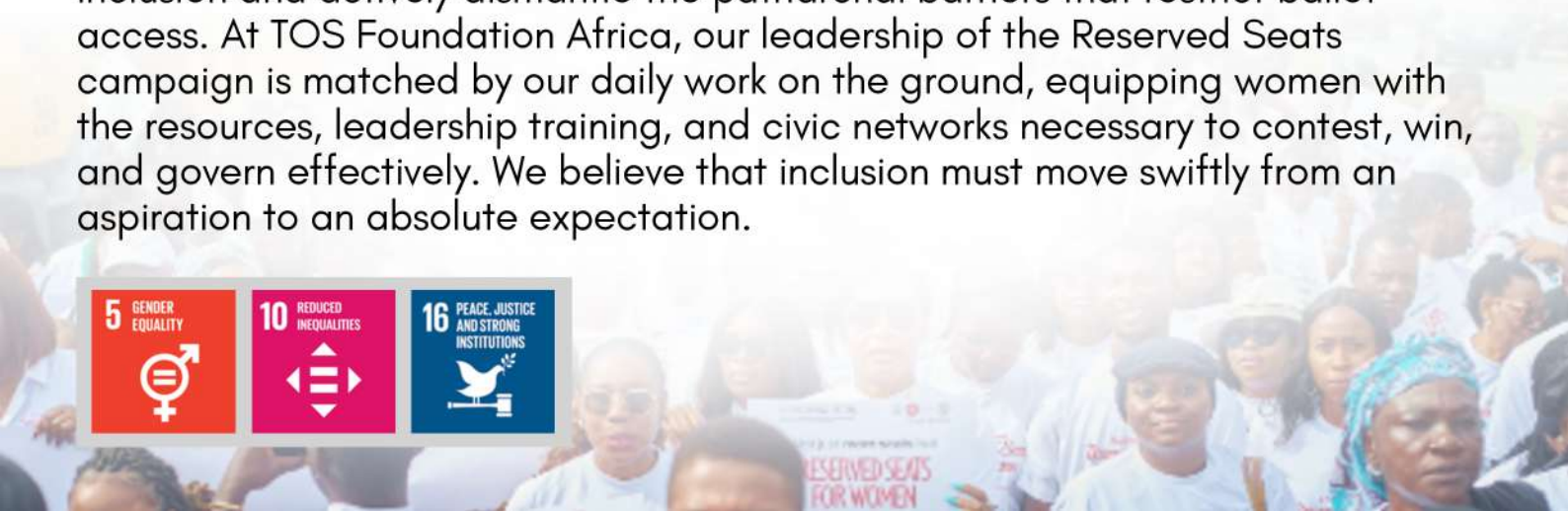
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REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



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PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



IMPACT SPOTLIGHT: THE WOMEN BEHIND THE NUMBERS



Strengthening Women's Voices in Governance:
My Transformative Journey at the HerCademy
Leadership Institute (I)



Before joining the HerCademy Leadership Institute, I was already a passionate advocate for peacebuilding, women's empowerment, and marginalized communities through my roles as a television presenter, Founder of the Pearl Impact Initiative, and Miss Face of Humanity Nigeria. However, I soon realized that lasting social change requires women to actively occupy decision-making spaces and shape the policies affecting their communities. Though I once viewed political leadership as a daunting path restricted by systemic barriers, patriarchal norms, and cultural stereotypes, I chose to join HerCademy to deeply understand governance and the strategic role women must play in national development.

The institute provided a transformative learning experience that fundamentally deepened my grasp of public leadership, policy-making, and inclusive governance. Guided by experienced experts, my greatest takeaway was realizing that women's participation extends far beyond mere representation; it is about ensuring diverse female perspectives directly shape societal decisions. The programme reinforced that intentional leadership, strategic advocacy, and coalition building are the essential tools required for women to effectively influence governance and drive sustainable progress.

Equally enriching was learning alongside an exceptional, diverse cohort of women pursuing public service. This environment of mutual learning, collaboration, and accountability was profoundly empowering. Witnessing so many women boldly challenge barriers, engage in party politics, and secure tickets to run for the 2027 general election ignited my own confidence, proving that we can dismantle long-standing political obstacles together.

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IMPACT SPOTLIGHT: THE WOMEN BEHIND THE NUMBERS



Strengthening Women's Voices in Governance: My Transformative Journey at the HerCademy Leadership Institute (II)

Since completing the programme, I have become intentionally focused on promoting civic engagement and inclusive governance through every platform available to me. Through the media and the Pearl Impact Initiative, I have strengthened my advocacy by convening dialogues and creating opportunities for women and youth. The knowledge and skills gained have enhanced my ability to engage stakeholders, build partnerships, and confidently prepare to vie for office in the next election cycle while inspiring other women to recognize that they belong in decision-making spaces.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the TOS Foundation and the HerCademy Leadership Institute for their unwavering commitment to equipping women leaders, championing the Reserved Seats for Women Bill, and transforming leaders like myself. This experience has reaffirmed my belief that Nigeria's severe female political underrepresentation of less than 4% will soon be history. Empowering women to lead is not merely an investment in gender equality; it is a vital investment in the future of our nation, because when women lead, communities thrive, institutions strengthen, and societies grow more inclusive, peaceful, and equitable.

Ms. Lucy Ojite

HerCademy Leadership Institute Alumna

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



5 GENDER
EQUALITY



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



IMPACT SPOTLIGHT: THE WOMEN BEHIND THE NUMBERS

From Passion to Purpose: How HerCademy Rewrote My Approach to Leadership



Before joining the HerCademy Leadership Institute founded by the TOS Foundation, my passion for governance and women's political participation was strong, but my understanding of actual legislative frameworks was limited. While I knew I wanted to contribute to nation-building and advocate for gender inclusion in leadership, I lacked the practical insights and confidence required to navigate complex political spaces effectively.

The training proved to be a transformative turning point. Through dynamic sessions, expert facilitators, and hands-on exercises, I gained a rigorous understanding of parliamentary systems, legislative advocacy, policy formulation, and public leadership. Beyond the technical knowledge, the program connected me with a powerful network of like-minded peers, all committed to driving institutional change.

Emerging from the program, I carry a renewed sense of clarity, confidence, and competence. I now fundamentally understand how laws are crafted, how policy shapes society, and how civil society can strategically engage with government institutions. This experience has deepened my commitment to advancing women in governance, providing me with the practical toolset needed to champion inclusive leadership and meaningful representation.

Ultimately, the HerCademy Leadership Training did more than educate me. It empowered me. It shifted my perspective from merely desiring change to knowing exactly how to influence it.

Today, I am better prepared to engage stakeholders, champion equitable policies, and mentor the next generation of public servants. I am deeply grateful to the TOS Foundation and the HerCademy team for investing in emerging leaders, and for creating a platform that inspires women to step forward, lead boldly, and leave a lasting impact on our society.

Mrs. Ebimoboere Alaibe Elezieanya
HerCademy Leadership Alumna



BEHIND THE SCENES:

Investing in Our People



Much of what TOS Foundation Africa does is outward-facing projects, partnerships, advocacy. But June offered a deliberate moment to turn inward, and invest in the team that makes all of it possible.

We believe that organisational excellence begins with people. In a development landscape that is constantly shifting, staying relevant means continuously strengthening the skills and thinking of the teams driving the work. With that in mind, June was dedicated to a structured series of on-the-job learning sessions across four key areas: Programme Design, Partnership Development, Monitoring and Evaluation, Media Design and Strategic Communications.

These were not classroom-style training sessions. They were hands-on, grounded in real projects and lived organisational experience, the kind of learning that sticks.

Staff explored evidence-based approaches to programme design, practical tools for building and managing partnerships across government, civil society, and the private sector, and stronger frameworks for measuring results and communicating impact. The communications sessions, in particular, emphasised something we hold close: that storytelling is advocacy, and how we communicate our work shapes how far its influence travels.

Beyond the technical skills, the sessions created something equally valuable space for cross-team reflection, peer learning, and honest conversation about how to do the work better.

Strong organisations are built by strong people. Every investment in our team is ultimately an investment in the communities we serve and June was a reminder of that truth.



PEACE BEGINS WITH INCLUSION:

TOSF Urges at Dialogue on Peace and Sustainable Development



TOS Foundation Africa took part in a high-level dialogue on peace and sustainable development, organized by the office of Miss Face of Humanity Nigeria (MFHN) in conjunction with The Coaches, contributing our voice to a conversation that sits at the core of the Foundation's mission – the belief that lasting development is impossible without safety, inclusion, and the full participation of women.

Representing our Founder, Chief Osasu Igbiniedion Ogwuche, TOS Foundation's Program Officer, Mrs. Blessing Lawrence, reinforced a position TOSF has held for over a decade: that peace is not an abstract ideal but a practical prerequisite. No school runs effectively in a conflict zone. No business survives under sustained insecurity. And no community develops when half its population is kept out of the decisions that shape it.

TOS Foundation's contribution was the case for women as active builders of peace not beneficiaries waiting on the sidelines, but participants whose inclusion in governance, conflict resolution and community leadership produces measurably better outcomes. She also noted that gender equity and peace are not separate agendas. They have the same agenda. And progress on one cannot be separated from progress on the other.

The Foundation used the opportunity provided by the event to reaffirm our commitment to equipping women with the knowledge, platforms, and networks needed to lead. We also call on policymakers and institutions to move beyond symbolic inclusion toward structures that give women genuine decision-making power as we believe that a Nigeria and an Africa where women lead, is one where peace has a real and lasting foundation.



LOOKING AHEAD:

What's on Our Radar for H2 2026



The halfway mark has passed, and the second half of 2026 is already taking shape.

The urgency of the mission has not let up. Driving inclusive development, strengthening systems, and moving the needle for women and girls across the continent is everyday, persistent work and the months ahead will demand exactly that.

Primary healthcare remains a frontline priority. Through the WAGE project, the Foundation will move from assessment to action, supporting facility equipping, infrastructure improvements, and systems strengthening in communities where access to quality maternal and child health services is still far from guaranteed.

The Reserved Seats campaign continues to build momentum. Over the next six months, TOS Foundation Africa will deepen its engagement with policymakers, media, and civil society partners to convert the growing conversation around women's political representation into concrete legislative action. Youth engagement, peacebuilding, and social accountability also feature prominently in our plans alongside the quieter but equally important work of strengthening our own institutional capacity.

And then there is the milestone that sits at the centre of it all: Ten Years of TOS Foundation Africa.

This anniversary is more than a moment to look back. It is a launchpad, an opportunity to honour the communities, partners, and changemakers who have shaped this organisation, and to map out the next decade of innovation and transformation. We are entering H2 2026 with clear eyes, renewed energy, and an unwavering belief in what becomes possible when people, purpose, and partnership align.

We look forward to sharing the rest of the journey with you.

See you in our next edition.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"True democratic progress is measured not by the mere rhythm of holding elections every four years, but by the depth and quality of representation within the rooms where decisions are made."

Chief (Mrs.) Osasu Igbinedion Ogwuche

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