

African Diaspora Network Impact and Innovation Forums 2024

Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress

Summary- Highlights - Action Steps



2024 AFRICAN DIASPORA NETWORK
IMPACT AND INNOVATION FORUMS

Webinar: Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress
Thursday, March 28, 9AM PST, 12PM EST, 4PM GMT



Lisa-Marie Misztak
BBC Journalist



Pauline Koelbl
Founder & Managing
Partner/CEO, AfriProspect
and ShEquity



Tochi Ginigeme
Founder,
Mesh Venture Partners



Amma Gyampo
Director of Strategy,
ScaleUp Africa and National
Advisory Board,
Impact Investing Ghana



Rhode Malivert
CEO, K-12
Preparatory Academy

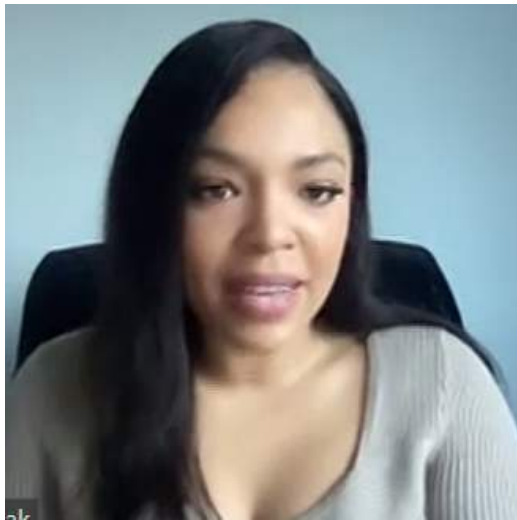


Kelly Bentley
Co-Founder & Group CEO,
dx5



Context:

"Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress" was a vibrant event that underscored the transformative power of investing in women, particularly in the African continent. Investment in women can catalyze economic, political, and social empowerment, bridging gender gaps and fostering inclusive communities.



Moderator Lisa-Marie Misztak, BBC Journalist, opened with a discussion on the persistent systemic barriers that hinder women's full participation across various sectors. Addressing these barriers is crucial for leveraging women's contributions to agriculture, education, healthcare, and more.

Pauline Koelbl, Founder & Managing Partner/CEO of AfriProspect and ShEquity, shared, "We need to see more people that look like us in decision making positions for funding for women. Investing in women leads to economic impact for many. Women re-invest 90% of their revenue. My fellow diasporans, let's work together to close the gap."

Pauline Koelbl,
Founder &
Managing



Tochi Ginigeme, Founder of Mesh Venture Partners, added, "Last year 27% of VC investments were made to organizations who had at least one female founder on the continent. We can invest in women by investing in research. It enables those who mobilize capital to make more informed decisions."

The panelists also discussed the potential for the African diaspora to contribute towards closing the gender funding gap in Africa. Collective remittances from the diaspora could play a pivotal role in achieving gender parity in funding. The diaspora can be a key partner for women-owned businesses. As Rhode Malivert, CEO of K-12 Preparatory Academy shared, “Finding the right partners who share the same values and have no gender or color bias is pivotal to success as a business.”



Women need support beyond funding for their businesses. Social capital is equally important. Kelly Bentley, Co-Founder & Group CEO of dx⁵ shared, “Female entrepreneurs don’t need just funding, they need support and understanding of all that they are handling in other areas of their life.”

Networking is also crucial. Amma

Gyampo, Director of Strategy at ScaleUp Africa and National Advisory Board at Impact Investing Ghana emphasized, “It is important for women to boost their networking game and learn how to advocate for ourselves around the tables we find ourselves.”



Suggested Action Steps:

- Reframe Narratives: Encourage positive storytelling about African women's resilience and success to challenge prevailing stereotypes.

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- Invest in Women-led Initiatives: Promote financial, mentoring, and network support for women entrepreneurs to foster a conducive environment for their businesses.
 - Engage the Diaspora: Mobilize the African diaspora to invest intentionally in women-focused initiatives, enhancing their impact through targeted support.
 - Educate and Advocate: Continuously educate and advocate for policies that support women's economic participation and leadership.

Upcoming ADN Engagement Opportunity:

Save the date for the following convenings:

May 21, 2024: The Role of The Diaspora/Consular

We are pleased to announce that Almaz Negash, our CEO of the African Diaspora Network, has been invited to participate in the panel discussion titled "The Role of the African Diaspora: Promoting Connections & Collaboration." This important event is part of the African Diplomatic Orientation & Engagement Program and will take place on May 21, 2024, from 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM at the Center for American Progress headquarters in Washington, D.C.

May 22, 2024: IOM Event

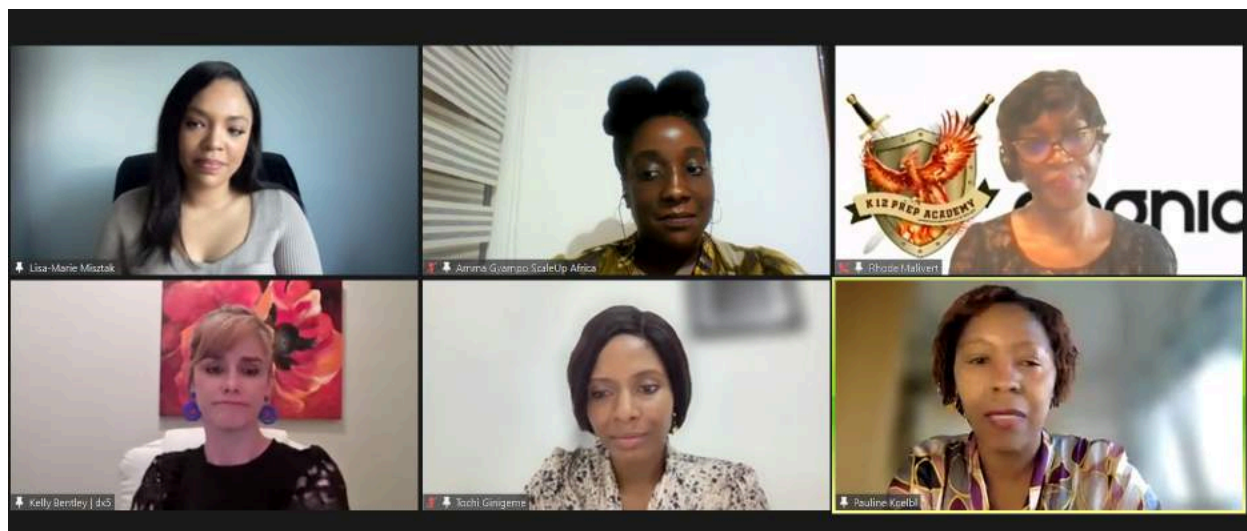
Dr. Josh Ghaim to Moderate at International Dialogue on Migration: Hosted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the "Diaspora Private Sector Conversation" will be moderated by Dr. Josh Ghaim, Chairman of the Board, African Diaspora Network (ADN). This pivotal panel, part of the 2024 International Dialogue on Migration, is scheduled for May 22 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Discussions will focus on the impactful roles diaspora leaders play in shaping migration policies, fostering investments, and ensuring regular migration pathways.

May 24, 2024: Africa Day

Innovations Unleashed: Bridging the Diaspora and African Technological Advancements, May 24, 2024: In observance of Africa Day (officially on May 25), ADN will host a virtual workshop. This event aims to showcase significant advancements in technology and innovation across Africa and explore how the African Diaspora can actively participate and support continued growth and development on the continent. This workshop will highlight

successful case studies, discuss challenges faced by innovators, and foster partnerships between the diaspora and African tech communities.

Learn more on our [website](#) and [subscribe](#) to our newsletter for updates and registration for all African Diaspora Network events!



Highlights

- From Dialogue to Action: The importance of moving beyond dialogue to implement actions that genuinely empower African women was emphasized. Highlighting successful initiatives provides clear evidence of what can be achieved when opportunities are made available.
- Strengthening Local and Diaspora Partnerships: Strengthening ties between African communities and the diaspora ensures that solutions are culturally appropriate, sustainable, and tailored to meet local needs effectively.
- Harnessing Technology for Empowerment: Technology was highlighted as a catalyst for change, providing women with tools for education, business expansion, and networking to access new opportunities.
- Addressing Investment Biases: The challenge of affinity bias in investment was a critical topic. Discussions focused on empowering more female investors and

intentionally directing investments towards women-led ventures to create a more equitable business landscape.

- Improving Women's Access to Capital: Access to capital remains a significant barrier for women entrepreneurs. Innovative financing models such as angel investing, venture capital, and gender-lens investing were explored to make funding more accessible.
- Enhancing Mentorship and Skills Development: Mentorship is crucial for developing leadership and business skills among women. Programs specifically designed for women provide the tools and confidence needed to excel.
- Building Resilience and Advocacy Skills: Equipping women to effectively advocate for themselves and their enterprises through training and community support is vital for navigating the business world.

See the entire session recording [here](#).

Resources:

Click [here](#) to learn more about Impact and Innovation Forums and upcoming sessions.

Get to know the speakers better. Visit their organizations' websites.

- [AfriProspect](#)
- [ShEquity](#)
- [Mesh Venture Partners](#)
- [ScaleUp Africa](#)
- [Impact Investing Ghana](#)

Stay in touch with the panelists:

- [Lisa-Marie Misztak](#), [BBC](#) Journalist
- [Pauline Koelbl](#), Founder & Managing Partner/CEO, [AfriProspect](#) and [ShEquity](#)
- [Tochi Ginigeme](#), Founder, [Mesh Venture Partners](#)
- [Amma Gyampo](#), Director of Strategy, [ScaleUp Africa](#) and National Advisory Board, [Impact Investing Ghana](#)
- [Kelly Bentley](#), Co-Founder & Group CEO, dx⁵
- [Rhode Malivert MBA](#), [LSSGB](#), CEO, K-12 Preparatory Academy

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- Session recording:
https://youtu.be/1Vq_VgO0i8w

Chat Recap:

From **Martin Russell** : Well said @Pauline Koelbl.....this was part of our chat at the philanthropic session at ADIS24 - it is about the "time, talent, and treasure" of the diaspora being intentional and strategic. The blending of philanthropy, impact investment, and other areas ripe to unleash the disruptive power of the African diaspora.

From Martin Russell : In case of interest to participants, a close friend of mine - Melek Pulatkonak - runs one of the most powerful models of a diaspora women's network called TurkishWIN (Turkish Women's International Network) which is doing unbelievable stuff in Türkiye and in their diaspora....happy to connect ADN with Melek if helpful to pick her brains on the opportunities for this in African diaspora context!

From **Pauline Koelbl** : I believe we all here agree that we need to mobilize enough funds to back women-led and owned businesses. We perhaps need to see how us, the women in diaspora can lead this change we want to see. Those in position of power will not change unless they are disrupted or made uncomfortable ! My two cents

From **ellenore angelidis** : Alignment on values is critical. Clarity is required. Thanks for the advice.

From **Amma Gyampo ScaleUp Africa** : There is a lot of talk about 'Localization' from international development financiers. At this stage @Zion Taddese it sounds like it is very early stage in your business so please focus on doing the minimum for the maximum proof of concept, willing and recurring customers etc etc. Build your minimum viable solution to prove people want your product.

Thank You!

African Diaspora Network is grateful to the speakers for sharing their insights on the importance of investing in women. Thank you to everyone who joined!

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