



I AM NALA FELLOWSHIP

2023-2024

ON WOMEN IN POLITICS

Foster, Enable,
Mobilize for Change

REPORT



Intergenerational Co-leadership

In 2020 1500 young people gathered to demand that young women be in politics.

From this gathering the Africa Young Women Beijing+25 Manifesto was launched.

Later in 2021 the Nala Feminist Collective was created to ensure continued accountability to ensure young women have access to opportunities to lead them into politics, and for young women that are in politics for them to thrive in those spaces.



INTERGENERATIONAL CO-LEADERSHIP DEMAND

We, Africa Young Women, demand:

- Institutionalization of co-leadership for young women's full and effective political participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all decision-making levels in the political, social, cultural, economic and public dimensions of life, while strengthening young women's voices and creating spaces and resources for their agendas
- Enforcement of quotas for young women within women and youth quotas. We do not know where we belong in policy frameworks, the youth quotas and gender parity are unclear about young women's space, rights and involvement
- Appointment of young women technocrats and Special Advisors/Envoys and other positions across industry, institutions and at every level of national, regional and global governance
- Establishment of sustainable intergenerational dialogues platforms to strengthen Pan-African and inclusive networks of young and senior women for generational learning, sharing, mentoring, solidarity and empowerment



Enough is enough!

It's time to co-lead now

Why the Fellowship



It will take until **2100** for African countries to achieve gender parity in their parliaments.

12% to 9%

decline of women's representation in political party leadership.

2.2%

of parliamentarians are **under 30**, and less than **1%** are **young women**.

Why Now?

- Civic spaces within national and multilateral processes are shrinking and young women are pushed further into the margins.
- There is increased violence towards young women in politics
- There is increased push back from anti-rights movements on progress laws

Why Nalafem

- Nalafem has the network of 100 multigenerational and multi stakeholder young women
- Nalafem is small with a focus on building and protecting the relationships it creates. Our Fellows are not numbers.
- Nalafem has the experience of advocacy that leads to adoption of policy at multilateral spaces.
- Nalafem believes that the more young women in leadership positions the greater chances for gender equity

How it helps

- Connect young women with decision making spaces to change and adopt policies for their context
- It's not just about changing policy it's about making the connections and learning the skills and techniques for lasting behavioural and social change.
- No one time courses. This Fellowship will create a holistic intensive experience of research, training, advocacy and community.

I AM NALA FELLOWSHIP

MODEL

It is apparent that a one of course is not enough to see lasting impact. This fellowship is designed using the I AM NALA Fellowship models. This is a two year intensive relationship building and strategy program.

Year 1

Capacity support, mentorship and technical trainings

Year 2

Financial, partnership and technical support

Year 1

3 MODULES



Well-being Module

Fellows joined virtual sessions centered on mental health, focusing on looking inward and building a safe space for the Fellows with the purpose of creating a community of practice. The well-being sessions under this module covered understanding spirituality, exploring how the brain and body are impacted by stress, and developing individual resilience strategies and community care. Additionally, the sessions linked the historical context of the bureaucratic systems in which they operated and provided pathways to healing.



Leadership Module

Fellows were taken through exercises to clearly define their vision and map out a plan to achieve that vision. They unpacked different leadership styles in relation to Afrocentric Feminist Leadership principles of governance, organizational development, and accountability. They also developed a practical understanding of decolonial leadership. Under this module, participants had the opportunity to be mentored by the Nala Council.



Innovation Module

Fellows strategized and reflected on their plans in entering politics from how to fundraise and how does their advocacy and work they do with their organizations feed into their political campaign. They were taken through a hands on communication training, learning how to use social media as a tool and how to create impactful content.

We Called Upon Applicants That Were



Young women aged
between 18-35 years



Leaders of a campaign or
women group



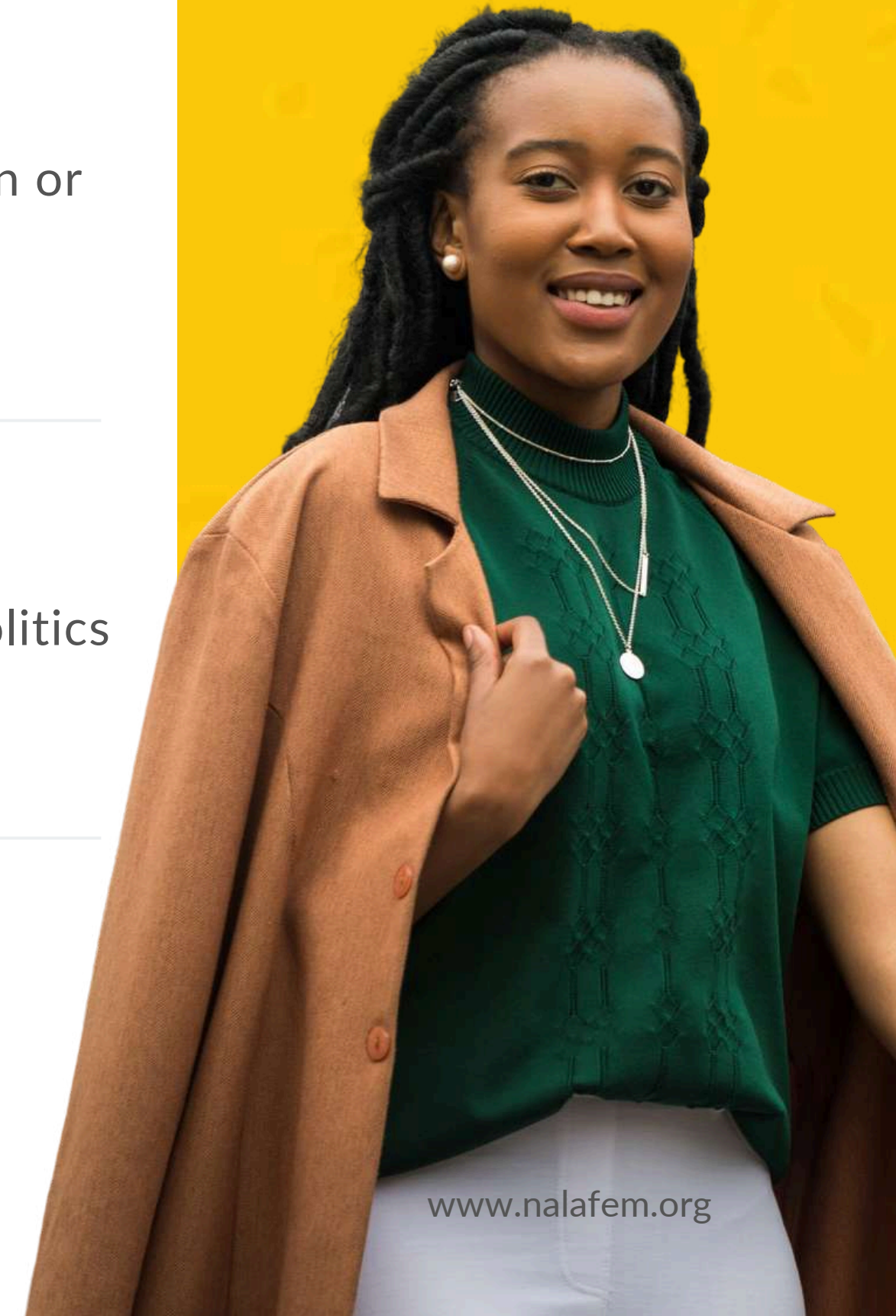
Members of a political
party or in government



Aspiring to run for politics



Leader in one of the Africa
Young Women Beijing +25
Manifesto demands





I AM NALA FELLOWSHIP

AFRICA
YOUNG WOMEN B+25
MANIFESTO

2023-2024 COHORT



AKECH DEBORAH
KUOCNIN MANYIEL

ANITA MYRIAM
EMMA KOUASSI

BETTY CHIHOTA

CHRISTINA EDIFAILO
MWAKISOLE

HON. EVIDENCE
ZANA

JUDY MWANIKI

MEMORY BANDA

NAFISA ATIKU-
ADEJUWON



NANCY IDEHEN

NELLIE CHEPKEMOI

RADWA HOSNY

SERAH WANJIKU
THIGA

SHUKRI MOHAMED
OMAR

TATU MBAMBA

WANJA MAINA

TRAININGS



Rutendo Ngara

Spiritual guide and Chair of the Credo Mutwa Foundation

Rutendo Ngara is an African Indigenous Knowledge Systems practitioner and transdisciplinary researcher



Manuwi C. Tokai

Indigenous Amazonian artist from the Kalinya Terewuyu Nation.

She has a background in grassroots activism as a movement builder in the Netherlands within the anti black racism movement.



Amina A. Soulimani

Research fellow at HUMA – The Institute for Humanities in Africa, and a doctoral candidate in Anthropology at the University of Cape Town in South Africa.

Her current research is at the intersection of STS (science and technology studies) and medical anthropology, investigating human-technology interactions in oncology care, and algorithmic infrastructures within hospitals in Morocco.



Dr Njoki Wamai

Assistant Professor of International Relations at the United States International University-Africa

Njoki is an assistant Professor in International Relations Department at Kenya's oldest private university United States International University-Africa. Her research focus is on the tensions between international and local practices of transitional justice in Kenya.



Ritah Muyambo

Civil Society Division, New York, Eastern & Southern Africa.
UN Women

Program Specialist, Youth and Fatih Engagement Un Women.
Ritah is committed to youth leadership within multilateral spaces.



Shatyam Issur

Shatyam is human rights advocate whose career focuses on harm reduction, social & mental well-being, and HIV prevention & treatment for priority populations. He uses his knowledge of advocacy spaces to work with organizations to plan and find sustainable funding.



Hilina Berhanu Degefa

Hilina is a pan-African feminist advocate and gender policy expert. With technical expertise in women's rights, public policy, and advocacy, Hilina has led gender and inclusion programs in various international organisations and think tanks, including the UN office in Vienna and the European Institute of Peace.



Aisha Yesufu

Masterclass on Pan-African Feminist Sisterhood

In this session you sat in sisterhood and unpacked the power of such spaces for our personal and public lives.



Rana Abdelhamid

Masterclass on Building a Community of Support

In this Masterclass fellows spoke candidly with Nalafem council member on her experience in running for Office and continuing engaging in the political system. Fellows were given tips on how to establish a dynamic team of advisors, volunteers and supporters. As well as how to ensure accountability to their communities.



Hon. Bogolo Kenewendo

Masterclass on Leadership in International and National Spaces

In this session we welcomed Hon. Bogolo Kenewendo to the Nala Fellow space where she shared her experiences of getting into politics. More pointedly she spoke on the importance of relationship building networking and being technically sound on the focus area of your political engagement.



Hon. Joanah Mamombe

Masterclass on Funding and Resource Mobilization for Political Campaigns

In this session, Member of Parliament of Zimbabwe and Nalafem Advisory Council Member Hon. Joanah Mamombe shared her experience and tips into the art and strategy of funding and resource mobilization for political campaigns. The session provided practical knowledge and strategies for securing essential financial support. Drawing on firsthand experience and expertise, the masterclass explored effective methods to optimize campaign resources and drive success.

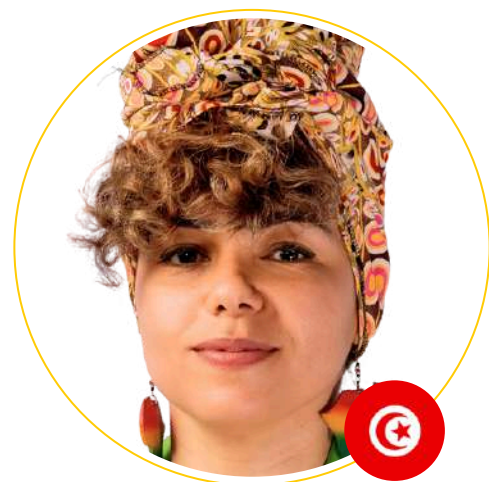


Zulaikha Patel

Masterclass on The power of decolonial storytelling for politics

In this masterclass Fellows explored how narratives rooted in decolonization can challenge dominant historical perspectives and power structures, thereby reshaping political discourse. By centering marginalized voices and histories often overlooked or marginalized by colonial frameworks, decolonial storytelling illuminates diverse experiences and perspectives. Ultimately, the masterclass underscored the potency of decolonial storytelling as a catalyst for social and political transformation, fostering empathy, understanding, and solidarity across diverse populations while advocating for more equitable and inclusive political systems.

Fellows engaged in candid one-on-one mentorship sessions with Nalafem Council Members



Aya Chebbi



Emma Theofelus



Oluwaseun Ayodeji
Osowobi



Hon. Joanah Mamombe



Jokate Mwegelo



Aissata Camara



Rose Wachuka



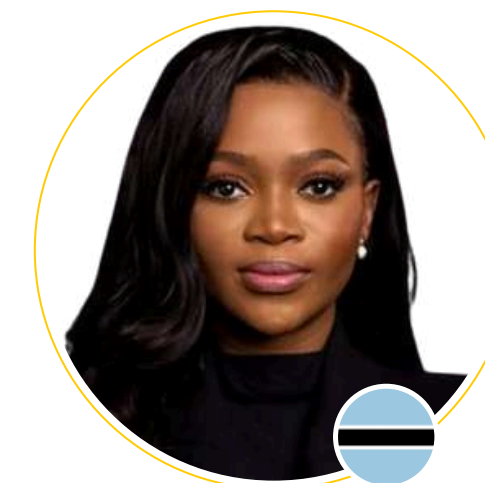
Rana Abdel Hamid



Zulaikha Patel



Aisha Yesufu



Bogolo Kenewendo



Rosebell Kagumire



Session Topics



● Historical Context of the Bureaucratic System

In this session Fellows were provided an overview of the origins of the bureaucratic systems that our countries have adopted. Noting that they find their root in Europe thus their structures, culture and practices are based on white male patriarchy. This session alerted us on the importance of being mindful of the purpose and intention between structure and rules in order for us to purposefully challenge and dismantle them.

● Collective Trauma and Trauma Healing

This session focused on Knowledge around collective trauma and trauma healing and how this stands in relationship to the work that group members are doing.

● African Spirituality Workshop

This session we dove deep into the depth of our beloved continent's spirituality and reconnected to what it means to us as Africans. We celebrated the rich knowledge and power from our pre-colonial societies and as an act of resistance committed ourselves to honor our ancestors as we move forward in this world and our individual missions.

● Who Are We? What Do We Value?

In this session we reconnected after the December break to re-energize into the new year. We used the Afresist Youth Leadership Program toolkit, to unpack your individual mission and vision. We shared our letters to ourselves and connected in groups to find points of connection and sisterhood.

● Afro-Centric Feminism and Understanding of Power

In this session Fellows were introduced to discussions on Gender, African Feminism and how African Feminism helps us understand power.

● Politics 101

Noting that most fellows did not have a background in the theory of political science, this session introduced them to how to analyze the political system and where their entry points are to make policy change.

● UN system & CSW

As part of our objective to situate Fellows within national and international political spaces, this session offered an introductory session on the UN System and the Commission on the Status for Women as well as highlight key advocacy moments this year.

● Crowdfunding & Micro-Donations

In this masterclass Fellows will gain invaluable insights into the art and strategy of Funding and Resource Mobilization for Political Campaigns. Drawing from firsthand experience and expertise, they will explore effective methods for securing financial support crucial to political campaigns.

● Social Media for Political Campaigns

In this session the Nalafem social media team took you through the basics of social media engagement. Covering which platforms are strategic for which purposes as well as how best to take photos and content. In this interactive session fellows were given the opportunity to practice their skills and get immediate feedback from the Nalafem Social Media Manager.

● Africa and AI

In this session Fellows delved into the intersection of artificial intelligence (AI) and the African continent, exploring how AI technologies will shape various sectors across Africa. Fellows interrogated what feminist AI policies look like and additionally gained an understanding of the current and future landscape of AI in Africa, including key trends, opportunities, and challenges.

Fellows Representing Nalafem

Along this one year journey Fellows represented Nalafem at various engagements.

- Kenya Fellows joined the Nalafem Kenya Mission and attend UN Women and Amnesty International solidarity event on Sudan conflict
- Facilitated and rapporteured the co-hosted consultation on the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women
- Co-hosted with their organizations the North Africa Youth Beijing +30 Baraza
- Attended the 3rd Nalafem Summit and spoke at the Award Ceremony
- Represented Nalafem on the UN Women Beijing +30 youth planning committee





Posthumous Award

In memory of the late Similoluwa Olusola we she is awarded her qualification as Nala Fellow. In 2023, Similoluwa Olusola was the candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria for a state legislative office. She ran pregnant. She won the ticket despite being the newcomer, the youngest and going through two primaries because of the stiff opposition. While she did not win the eventual election, she had the second highest votes. Post elections, she focused on supporting women and PWDs in her town alongside contributing to the rebuilding of her party at the state level. She held a B.Sc in Physiology from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria and a MicroMasters in Data, Economics and Development Policy from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Simi will be remember for her strength, kindness and passion for ensuring young women thrive in politics.

MAY YOUR SOUL REST IN ETERNAL PEACE





Fellows Testimonials



NANCY

My fellowship journey with Nala has been transformative and educational. The most valuable skill I gained was networking—building a community of like-minded individuals who support my leadership journey.

A session with Zulaikha Patel resonated deeply, emphasizing the importance of young leaders telling their own stories. She reminded us that no matter how small our stories may seem, it's our duty to shape our narrative and leave a lasting legacy.

The fellowship has greatly influenced my leadership style, teaching me that to be an effective public leader, I must understand the needs of my constituents.



NAFISA

The fellowship taught me to build depth and competence in my advocacy work, enabling me to stand tall and advocate effectively.

A masterclass with Aisha Yesufu on advocacy and solidarity was especially impactful, highlighting the need for collective action on sensitive political issues affecting women across Africa.

The fellowship has shaped my leadership by emphasizing self-care, sisterhood, and solidarity, reminding me that I cannot give what I don't have.



RADWA

I would describe my fellowship journey as life-changing, empowering, and transformative. It has refined my leadership skills and empowered me to make a difference.

A lasting skill I've gained is transformative leadership—learning to lead with impact, inspire others, and create positive change in my community and beyond.

One of the most impactful moments during the follow-up program was the opportunity to share my thoughts and feelings on the ongoing situation in Palestine and Gaza.



EVIDENCE

The fellowship has been a journey of self-discovery and transformation, teaching me that I am unique and special.

A key lesson I learned is the power of networking. Success requires building strong relationships, not just locally but globally, as collaboration amplifies impact.

I've realized that great leadership starts with listening—understanding others' perspectives builds trust and strengthens your vision.



Graduation 2024

On 4th November, 2024 15 Fellows graduated from the I AM NALA Fellowship on Women in Politics. These young women now make up the first cohort of Alumni and have access to the wealth and depth of the Nalafem network (Nala 100). During the 3rd Nalafem Summit they were additionally welcomed into the Nala 100 as influential young women in their respective fields.

The Keynote was delivered by **Dr. Obiageli Ezekwesili, CEO Human Capital Africa, Founder of The School of Policy, Politics and Governance**



“Fixing the politics of our continent requires a new political consciousness and a leadership that understands the problem because it has the capacity to diagnose it accurately and can then fix it.”

DR. OBY EZEKWESILI



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