

A Bold Next Chapter for AFWAG: Sustaining Our Mission, Expanding Our Reach.

Dear Partners and Friends,

When I launched AFWAG, it wasn't just about building an organisation. It was about recognising and resourcing what was already present, the leadership, wisdom, and lived strategies of African women and girls. From the very beginning, AFWAG has been committed to centering those who are too often spoken for, rather than being heard and supported as architects of transformation. Because of your trust and partnership, we've moved from vision to movement, and from belief to measurable impact.

Now, to ensure that AFWAG not only continues but thrives for decades to come, I want to share with you a deliberate, future-facing shift in our leadership structure and sustainability model.

Introducing a Co-Leadership Model at AFWAG

To sustain our momentum and deepen our impact, I'm excited to share that AFWAG is moving into a co-leadership model, one rooted in shared power, long-term thinking, and collective stewardship.

Ms. Abba Kidenda, a deeply respected senior leader within our team and currently Head of Network Growth & Engagement, will step into the role of Interim Co-CEO, leading the day-to-day work of AFWAG. Her portfolio will span operations, program delivery, internal systems, development, ecosystem-level positioning, and partner engagement. Since joining AFWAG, Abba has played a key role in scaling our continental footprint, leading the growth of our network from 0 to nearly 250 members across 23 countries. Under her stewardship, our reach has expanded, our partnerships have deepened, and our infrastructure has become more responsive to the needs of AFWAG network members across diverse contexts. Abba brings more than institutional knowledge; she brings a clear, grounded vision for what it takes to build a movement that is locally rooted, structurally sound, and globally connected.

I will remain as Founder and Co-CEO, with my focus shifting more explicitly toward long-term strategy, board engagement, and capital mobilisation through our new sister organisation, Equinexus Partners. This transition will be phased in between September and November 2025, with Abba gradually assuming approximately 80% of the executive responsibilities. I will retain 20% of my time within AFWAG, continuing to guide the organisation's long-term vision, culture, and external positioning.

“Stepping into this role is both an honour and a responsibility I carry with deep respect. I’ve witnessed firsthand the power and potential of AFWAG. This transition is not about filling shoes, but about walking alongside a legacy while helping to build a sustainable, collective future. I’m committed to leading with clarity, care, and purpose, and to continuing the work of shifting power, centring community, and resourcing the brilliance already within our ecosystem”, says Abba Kidenda

This Co-Leadership Structure Reflects Our Values. This is not about stepping back; it’s about living into the very values we champion. It’s a deliberate move to decentralise power, shift leadership from individuals to institutions, and root decision-making more deeply across the AFWAG ecosystem. We’ve always said that no movement should rise or fall on a single voice, and this transition is us embodying that truth in real time.

What This Means, and Why It Matters

This is not a departure; it’s a design for resilience. We are building an AFWAG that is less founder-dependent, more leader-rich, and structurally prepared to thrive well beyond any one person, a movement that is built to last, and to rise even higher because of it.

This co-leadership transition reflects the best of what we know from across the global social impact and philanthropic sectors:

Organisations that decentralise power, invest in internal leadership, and diversify income are more stable, more scalable, and more trusted over time.

Movements that outlast their founders start preparing for sustainability while they are still strong. The most future-ready leaders plan for succession early, not because they’re stepping away, but because they’re building wisely. AFWAG is choosing to lead with foresight, not hindsight.

If anyone wonders whether two years is too soon, we believe the best time to build for longevity is before a crisis. Designing for sustainability now allows AFWAG to grow from a place of strength, not urgency.

A Thoughtful, Supported Transition

This process has been deliberate, inclusive, and grounded in care. We’ve engaged our team, mapped out what the organisation needs at this stage, and designed a phased transition with clear scaffolding for success, including shared leadership rhythms, structured support, and a formal three-month review process to invite feedback from staff, funders, and partners alike. As Founder, I remain deeply engaged, not just symbolically, but strategically. I will continue to steward AFWAG’s mission, advise the leadership team, and focus on the work that matters most.

“As a Board, we fully endorse this thoughtful and values-aligned transition. It reflects everything AFWAG stands for: courage, care, and a deep belief in shared leadership. We’ve had the privilege of watching Abba grow within this organisation, and we are confident in her ability to co-lead with strength and integrity. We are equally inspired by Vongai’s visionary commitment to sustainability and innovation through Equinexus. Together, this leadership model sets AFWAG on a path of lasting impact and structural resilience, the kind that ensures this movement thrives far into the future”, Dr Aisha Oyebode, AFWAG Board Chair.

How You Can Walk With Us

This moment is more than a change in leadership; it is an expansion of what we believe is possible.

Here’s how you can continue to support us in this exciting new chapter:

Affirm and amplify this co-leadership model as an example of values-led, future-facing leadership.

Connect Equinexus to bold, mission-aligned leaders and organisations exploring new models of resourcing and systems change.

Continue championing AFWAG, not just for what it’s been, but for what it’s becoming.

If we want to build AFWAG to last, we must build beyond a founder, toward a shared, sustainable future, one that doesn’t just carry the flame, but multiplies it. Thank you for standing with us.

Thank you for believing, not just in me, but in what we’re building together.

With gratitude and bold hope,

Vongai Nyahunzvi
Founder & Co-CEO, AFWAG

