LEADING GLOBAL GROWTH WITH HEART
FROM AFRICA

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According to a recent (2018) World Bank report, “Africa is the only region in the world where more women than men choose to become entrepreneurs, yet data collected in ten African countries indicate that on average, male-owned enterprises have six times more capital than female-owned enterprises.”
Having some awareness of the business terrain for women business owners in Africa, my late partner and I decided that we could create the kind of HR company the industry needed.

This is the story of an African woman leading with heart to grow a people-centred business through resilience.
Having been employed at a total of 10 companies during my 10 year work life and been fired from some of them, I met a woman named Nolundi who shared my dream of opening an HR company that put people at the centre of its operations.

We both resigned from our jobs in 2011 and worked at fulfilling our desire to build an organization that changed lives, made people feel empowered and to make this industry more than just about the pounds and pennies.

My friend, confidant and warrior Nolundi, sadly lost a battle with Leukemia and passed away in our first year of business. I forever dedicate the story of Liyema to her.
LIYEMA LEADERSHIP

- The resilience to keep going, even as a sole leader led me to partner up with incredible companies in the pursuit of growing Liyema and attaining our goals.

- In 2013 one of our first clients, Accenture enabled the acceleration of our growth through their ESD program. They introduced us to an astounding network of women and corporates - WEConnect International.

- WEConnect has opened a countless number of doors for us, greatly contributing to our international growth. I am now also a director in AWIT - African Women in IT through collaboration platforms that WEConnect South Africa coordinated.

- Through WEConnect I was introduced to WPO (Women’s presidents Organisation - a peer to peer group) and the EYWW Global Program where the network of sisterhood grew even more. We have been assisted and supported in forming partnerships to achieve a long standing goal to take our service offerings to the world.
I am standing on the shoulders of others who broke barriers, the glass ceilings. I'm standing on their labour so I have to add my link to the chain. So the women behind me can stand on mine.

- Danai Gurira
THE FOUNDATION

Born in the tumultuous 80’s in a small town of Virginia (not the one in the US) in what was ironically known as the Free State Province in Apartheid South Africa, resilience was needed in infinite quantities.

On the brink of a civil war, dreaming and striving for a better tomorrow was a revolutionary act.

My parents wanted better for us and so got an former nun to teach us English so we could be accepted into better (white) schools.

I was 7 at the time and I now speak 7 languages.

At the end of high school I was accepted into one of the most prestigious universities in Africa - Wits University to study towards my Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Accounting.

At the end of my first year, I was pregnant with my now beautiful, smart 18 year old daughter.

Even though coming home with a baby and not a degree is not a mother’s dream, I was not to be deterred. Like my mother and other women around me, I would figure it out.
Figure it out is what we are able to do.

From working 2 jobs to attempting to complete my studies part time, this is my foundation that informs me as an African business woman today.

I have since had a baby boy and with a supportive partner, I continue to strive for the dream Nolundi and I had.

Liyema Consulting is 100% Women owned with 90% of our employees being Gen Y and Gen Z females and a majority of our supplier being WBEs.

Liyema is a multi-million pound business that quadrupled its revenue in the past 3 years servicing some of the largest Global corporates and multi-nationals in Africa, the UAE and Europe.

Clients include the likes of EY and Accenture, Tier 1 in SA, for which we provide payroll outsourcing services; Ingersoll Rand with staff Mobility and for Sodexo and WSP we fulfill their recruitment/staffing requirements.
Because the dream was always beyond profit margins, we continue to grow our impactful initiatives and projects within South Africa.

Some of these initiatives include the 3TW06 Feeding Scheme for refugee families; the Play for Education Initiative in the townships (Accenture also supports students by taking them through coding programs) and Career Readiness programs for young ambitious ladies that also involves coaching and mentoring from fellow WBEs.

My view of business is my view of people and the world: We are all inter-connected in some form or another we all go through similar challenges. It is in our common threads and our diverse experiences that we bring innovative solutions to genuinely make this world a better place.
LIYEMA’S STORY IS A STORY OF AN AFRICAN BUSINESS WOMAN LEADING WITH HEART TO GROW A GLOBAL BUSINESS.

IT IS ALSO A STORY OF MANY BUSINESS WOMEN WHO:

- ARE RESILIENT
- LEAD WITH HEART
- PUT PEOPLE FIRST
- GROW BUSINESSES

AFRICA IS RICH WITH POSSIBILITIES AND ITS BUSINESS WOMEN ARE READY TO TRADE AND BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY.