

# South-South Series:

## Empowering and Growing Women-led Business



### UN Women – COLEAD

#### South-South Series: Empowering and Growing Women-led Business

#### Session n°2: Strategies for effective marketing and branding

Wednesday 9 April 2025 – 14:00-16:00 UTC

[Online \(Zoom\)](#)

Live interpretation in English and French

*The collaboration between UN Women and COLEAD targets entrepreneurs in the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries and beyond. The South-South online series are tailored for women entrepreneurs and business leaders, aiming to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing, enhance business skills and market access, and promote networking.*

### 1. Context

Women entrepreneurs are key drivers of economic growth, innovation, and social change. Yet, they often encounter unique challenges in accessing markets, enhancing brand visibility, and competing in traditionally male-dominated industries. Robust marketing and branding strategies are essential to help women-led businesses thrive, attract loyal customers, and build sustainable competitive advantages.

Overcoming these challenges is essential to unlocking their full potential and ensuring long-term growth.

Entrepreneurship gives women a powerful platform to champion gender equality. By launching women-owned businesses and impactful marketing campaigns, they challenge societal norms and expose barriers like gender bias and unequal funding. Through authentic storytelling, women not only pave their own way but also inspire future generations toward a more inclusive, equitable world.

### 2. Overcoming challenges in marketing and branding

Women entrepreneurs often encounter several challenges which restricts their ability to invest in professional marketing services, advertising campaigns, or high-quality branding materials. With the rapid evolution of digital marketing, women entrepreneurs may struggle to keep pace with the latest available tools. Establishing a strong, recognizable brand that resonates with target audiences can be more difficult when historical biases or underrepresentation have affected the visibility of women-led businesses.



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Women entrepreneurs often need to work harder to distinguish their offerings in saturated markets, where large, established competitors dominate the space.

Deep-rooted stereotypes and gender biases can affect how women-led brands are perceived, potentially diminishing their credibility and market appeal.

Women entrepreneurs may have fewer opportunities to join influential industry networks, which limits their exposure to best practices, collaborative ventures, and key market insights.

Without strong representation in key networking events, women-led businesses may miss out on crucial opportunities to connect with potential partners, investors, and customers.

Women-led businesses often face financial constraints that limit their marketing budgets, hindering their ability to invest in branding and outreach activities. Many lack dedicated marketing teams or the specialized knowledge needed to navigate digital marketing complexities.

Persistent societal stereotypes may influence consumer perceptions and impact how these businesses are positioned in the market.

### **3. Leveraging opportunities through marketing and branding**

#### **Understanding customer needs and preferences**

Understanding customer needs and preferences is key to effective marketing. Various approaches and tools exist linked to market research and customer feedback. Conducting surveys and engaging with customers helps tailor products and services to meet consumer's needs. Customizing marketing messages and product offerings enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty. In certain contexts, word-of-mouth marketing involves encouraging satisfied customers to share their experiences can boost brand credibility and reach.

#### **Building a strong brand identity**

A compelling brand identity is the foundation of a successful business. It helps entrepreneurs communicate their vision, values, and unique selling proposition to customers. To build a strong brand identity, women entrepreneurs need to clearly articulate what the business stands for—whether sustainability, empowerment, or innovation—which helps attract customers who share similar values. Customers connect with brands that have a compelling narrative, are linked to environmental and social impacts in addition to bring economic benefits. Promoting authentic storytelling and brand differentiation

which highlights the unique vision, values, and journey of women-led businesses is important.

#### **Leveraging digital marketing and visibility**

In today's digital age, an online presence is crucial for business success. Women entrepreneurs need to be familiar with digital marketing tools which can enhance marketing and visibility such as social media marketing (like Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook) and content marketing (Blogs, videos, and infographics) to build brand awareness and reach broader audiences without significant upfront costs. E-Commerce and online can expand reach and create new revenue streams. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) allows optimizing websites with relevant keywords which ensures visibility on search engines, making it easier for customers to discover the business. Regular newsletters help nurture relationships with customers and keep them informed about new offerings and promotions.

### Networking and collaboration

Building strategic partnerships and networks can significantly enhance brand exposure. Business associations and networks provide networking and mentorship opportunities. Attendance to industry events and trade shows offer exposure to new customers, investors, and partners.

Collaboration with other women-led businesses through joint ventures or other forms of collaboration can expand reach and create mutually beneficial growth opportunities.

### Capacity building and education

Investing in marketing training, learning new techniques can enhance business success.

There is a need for targeted training programmes which can include workshops, webinars, and training modules focused on digital marketing, branding, and social media strategies tailored for women entrepreneurs.

Establishing mentorship networks where experienced business leaders provide guidance on effective branding and marketing strategies and facilitate peer-to-peer learning to share success stories and lessons learned will empower women-led enterprises.

### Tailored funding opportunities

Working with financial institutions and impact investors to create specialized funding mechanisms—such as microfinance, blended finance, or impact investment schemes—that cater specifically to the needs of women-led businesses may present opportunities for women entrepreneurs.

## 4. Way forward

Effective marketing and branding are essential for levelling the playing field, empowering women entrepreneurs to build strong, distinctive identities that resonate with customers and embody their unique values and visions. In today's competitive and digital marketplace, robust marketing strategies can revolutionize how these businesses connect with and engage their target audiences. Authentic storytelling and a consistent brand voice forge deep emotional connections with consumers, setting women-led enterprises apart in a crowded market.

By investing in tailored educational initiatives, capacity building, and supportive networking, women entrepreneurs gain the tools and knowledge needed to overcome the challenges of marketing and branding. These strategies not only boost brand visibility and foster customer loyalty but also enable women to control their business narratives, drive innovation, and secure a more inclusive and dynamic role in the global economy.

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#### Agenda

**Moderation:** *Isolina Boto, Head of Networks and Alliances, COLEAD*

**14:00-14:10 Introduction to the session**

Overview of objectives and key discussion points. Introduction of panelists.

**14:10-15:10 Panel on experiences from Women Entrepreneurs**

Panelists from the Caribbean and Africa will share how effective strategies for marketing and branding helped their business to grow.

- *Chigozie Bashua, Founder & CEO, The Nut Place, Nigeria*
- *Felizita Frazier, CEO, Mangra Studios, The Bahamas*
- *Rachel Renie, CEO & Co-founder, D Market Movers Group, Trinidad & Tobago*

**15:10-15:50 Q&A:** Open discussion with panelists

**15:50-16:00 Way forward:** Summary of key points of discussion and closure.

## Panelists Biodata

### Chigozie Bashua (Nigeria)

Chigozie Bashua is a highly accomplished and visionary entrepreneur and Business Strategist with a remarkable 15 years' experience in diverse emerging markets across the spectrum of Information Technology and 8 years entrepreneurial experience. With a strong expertise in business analysis, service delivery management, business planning and strategy, Chigozie has consistently led impactful projects in these areas. Additionally, her proficiency extends to business continuity and risk assessment, where she has demonstrated exceptional acumen. She is the Founder of [The Nut Place](#), a food innovation company creating gluten-free, nutrient-dense nut-based products that promote healthier lifestyles and sustainability. She is deeply passionate about addressing global challenges, particularly in the realm of food security. Aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 2, she ardently advocates for the eradication of world hunger by 2030. Chigozie's commitment to sustainable development and entrepreneurship is further underscored by her notable affiliations. She is an esteemed alumna of the Tony Elumelu Foundation, The African Women Entrepreneurship Cooperative (AWEC), an initiative of the Center for Global Enterprise in the United States of America, AWP Network, Impact Hub Lagos and Women Entrepreneurship for Africa, implemented by SAFEEM of The Seedstars Group, Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE), Google Hustle Academy and a 2023 Vital Voices Grow Fellow. Additionally, she actively contributes as a mentor at the Tony Elumelu Foundation and the Lagos State Educational Trust Fund (LSETF). She is also the Chief Business Strategist at CB Business Hub, where she helps entrepreneurs craft strategic business plans for growth. With a background in Electrical/Electronics and Computer Engineering and certifications including ITIL, COBIT 5, PRINCE2, and ISO 22301 Lead Auditor, she blends her technical expertise with business acumen to drive innovation.

### Rachel Renie (Trinidad and Tobago)

Co-Founder & Managing Director of [D'Market Movers](#), Rachel Renie has worked since 2009, closely with over 250 farmers and artisans to transform the local food supply chain, using digital platforms to bridge the gap between producers and consumers. Under her leadership, D'Market Movers has pioneered innovative solutions in food distribution, including market-driven insights for farmers and the introduction of a Click & Collect store to adapt to evolving consumer needs. Beyond food logistics, Rachel is the founder of Farm & Function TT, which processes and exports frozen Caribbean fruits, and Market Movers Design, which supports agripreneurs in branding and market development. Recognized as a 2025 Anthony N. Sabga Laureate for Entrepreneurship, she is passionate about sustainability, branding, and leveraging digital strategies to create impactful businesses.

### Felicia Frazier (Bahamas)

Felicia Frazier is a creative influencer and STEM entrepreneur. As the CEO of [Mangra Studios](#), a brand communications and content marketing firm, Felicia has made a name for herself in the industry by providing services such as web development, marketing, and media production to notable clients such as the Office of the Prime Minister (the Bahamas), Subway (Freeport), and

Disney. Felicia graduated from the College of the Bahamas (now the University of the Bahamas) in 2016 with an AA in Law and Criminal Justice, and prior to starting her entrepreneurial journey, she worked as a full-stack developer at an American Bahamian trading firm. In April 2019, Felicia quit her job to start Mangra Studios, and since then, the company has grown to great heights. One of Felicia's proudest accomplishments is the launch of MangraTv, an entertainment video platform showcasing Bahamian culture and creativity through video production, which has reached over 279.7k people and had 414.4k video views as of February 2022. In January 2022, Felicia started a small business initiative called Better at Business, offering free masterclass webinars to entrepreneurs to help them improve their businesses, with their first event having over three hundred attendees (live and post-event).



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