

"Everyone is born for a purpose and with a purpose. I have chosen to leave a lasting legacy on the African Continent by laying a foundation that will continue to empower Africa for generations to come. I have a dream of one day when women of Africa will be economically empowered and free from poverty. I will strive to see the rise of more visionary leaders that will influence the Continent in a whole new way in this century. These goals can never be achieved without your faith in the potential of African women like me. A *lutta Continua!*"



PROFESSIONAL PROFILE



VISIONARY ENTREPRENEUR

Development Consultant

Founder and President: Leading Women of Africa (LWA)

MADELEIN'S HIGHLIGHTS

- *Madelein Mkunu* is a Visionary Entrepreneur whose dream is to shape a new generation of African leaders through various programmes initiated by her. *Madelein Mkunu* has built an unparalleled reputation for her innovative thinking and her strategic approach to women and business development in Africa. Through her genuine leadership, *Madelein* is building global influence, catalysing change and driving innovation.
- In the recent years, Madelein Mkunu has gained experience in Policy recommendations, programme design and implementation, Leadership Training and Women's empowerment strategies
- She is completing her post graduate Degree in Development Studies at University of Western Cape – South Africa
- She has recently completed the **Professional Fellows Programme** with the U.S Department of State at the Michigan State University on Women economic empowerment, Strengthening Leadership Capacity and Professional Skills.
- She is one of the Jury members at *Investment Climate and Business Environment Research Fund (ICBE)*, a special fund to promote enterprise and livelihoods in Africa through research and advocacy at *Trust Africa* in Senegal
- She has seated on the *Strategic Framework Committee on gender and women's economic empowerment* at the Department of Trade and Industry (The Dti) in South Africa and was part of the finalization of the Gender and Economic Empowerment Framework.
- She recently presented policy recommendations on gender and China-Africa Cooperation at China-Africa Think Tanks Forum II, under the topic: "*China-Africa cooperation without meaningful engagement with women will fail*"

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- She has also presented recommendations at Regional Researchers Consultative Workshop on Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) Mid-Term Review workshop organized by Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC)
- She has also contributed with recommendations for the SADC-Gender, at the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development Stakeholders workshop
 - She was invited by *China-Africa Business Council (Hong Kong)* to conduct an open conversation on the theme: *"Creating Win-Win Partnership: A Dialogue between Women Professional & Entrepreneurs in Africa and Asia"*.
- She designed *"Influential Leadership Programme (ILP)*, a Leadership Training programme focusing on raising visionary leaders in Corporate and Public Sector on the Continent.
- She has designed Women in Infrastructure Development in Africa (WIDA), a programme that seeks to ensure that women emerge as successful leaders in industries and sectors in which African women were underrepresented.
- She was mentored by one of the founders of Africa, Dr David Kenneth Kaunda, first president of Zambia

Background

In 2008, after 13 years in the financial administration field with various South African companies such as Sun International SA, Shell Global and Western Province Cricket Club, she decided to embrace Gender and Women's and economic Affairs with a specific focus on Women's Leadership, Governance and women's economic empowerment in Africa and embarked into creation of Leading Women of Africa, a Pan-African Women organisation that has become an icon and symbol of hope for women of Africa.

Policy and Dialogue Achievements

She plays pivotal role on various national, regional and international platforms:

- She has also presented recommendations at Regional Researchers Consultative Workshop on Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) Mid-Term Review workshop organized by Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC)
- She recently presented policy recommendations on gender and China-Africa Cooperation at China-Africa Think Tanks Forum II, under the topic: *"China-Africa cooperation without meaningful engagement with women will fail"*
- She was invited by *China-Africa Business Council (Hong Kong)*, and conducted an open conversation on the theme: *"Creating Win-Win Partnership: A Dialogue between Women Professional & Entrepreneurs in Africa and Asia"*, Hong Kong, 2009.
- She is one of the Jury members at *Investment Climate and Business Environment Research Fund (ICBE)*, a special fund to promote enterprise and livelihoods in Africa through research and advocacy at *Trust Africa* in Senegal

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- Invited by Vital Voices - USA, she was part of the "Think Tank" team that met in Egypt in 2009 to strategize around the formation of the "African Businesswomen's Network".
- She is currently member of the *Strategic Framework Committee on gender and women's economic empowerment* at the Department of Trade and Industry – South Africa.
- She is Board member of SASMEF - *South African Small and Medium Enterprises Federation*
- She is an Advisory committee member of *Christians for Peace in Africa / South Africa*.

Research and Publications

Her footprints are easily found among others, in various publications and contributions:

- "New vision for women of Africa in the 21st Century" which appeared in *Convergence* Vol 6 No 1;
- "The contribution of women in the process of African development and unity", which appeared in *Diversity in Africa, the coming of age of a continent*, edited by the esteemed Professor Kurt April of the famous University of Cape Town/ Graduate School of Business and Marylou Shockley, currently Associate Professor and chair at the School of Business, California State University-Monterey Bay – USA;
- "The role of women in the planning and design of infrastructure in Africa" published by Times Media Group Ltd UK, during The G8 Corporate Africa infrastructure investment conference/ London June 2009 and May 2012.

Her Articles have been published in various economic and gender Magazines such as: Forbes Magazine, MDGs Review Magazine, Business Investment Guide...

She has conducted research and written papers on Gender Issues for the following institutions:

1. **African Development Bank:**

"Gender and Economic Opportunities in Africa, what we know and what the policy Agenda for Africa is?" (March 2012)

2. **Forum for China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)**

"China-Africa cooperation without meaningful engagement with women will fail" (October 2012)

Public and Media Appearances

As an International Speaker, Madelein has participated at various Regional and International events.

She has been featured in many media platforms nationally and internationally on the issues of Gender and Economic Development in Africa.

Academic achievements

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- She is pursuing her post-graduate degree in Development Studies at the University of Western Cape
 - Social Policy
 - Development Management
 - Economics for Development
- She has recently completed the Professional Fellows Programme with the U.S Department of State at the Michigan State University on Women economic empowerment and Strengthening Leadership Capacity and Professional Skills.
- She holds a degree in Accounting, Damelin
- She completed a Diploma in gender and leadership Management, Dale Carnegie
- She holds another Diploma in creative writing and journalism, City Varsity.
- She conducts various surveys on issues of leadership, good governance and women economic empowerment.

Gender and Personal Initiatives

She is the designer and Anchor Facilitator for [Influential Leadership Programme \(ILP\)](#), a Leadership Training programme focusing on raising visionary leaders in Corporate and Public Sector.

She has designed [Women in Infrastructure Development Programme \(WIDA\)](#) aiming at supporting women that emerge as successful leaders in the sectors underrepresented by women.

She has initiated [Women Investors Programme \(WIP\)](#) a continental programme that aims to create business linkages between women in Business in Africa and beyond.

She has also designed Influential Leadership Programme (ILP), designed to develop visionary leaders in public and private sectors on the Continent.

Publisher:

- **President's Journal:** Leadership and Development publication
- **Diaspora Business Magazine:** Trade and Investment promotion Publication

Personal Pursuit

She is currently conducting advocacy in 2 levels: creating Win-Win partnerships between women of Africa and other Partners for Development and lobby for skills transfer and development and Entrepreneurship.

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Madelein's passion is see women contribute in the rebuilding of the Continent through access in the mainstream economy.

Awards

- Named one of the most influential women in Africa by CEO Magazine, August 2015
- First Runner up for mentorship Award by South African Premier Black Business Awards, October 2014
- Selected to receive the prestigious "Women Leadership Award" at World Women Leadership Congress & Award (WWLCA), February 2014
- She is a recipient of Women Advancement Awards, Johannesburg, May 2013
- Madelein was the winner of the International Alliance of Women Award 100, 2011, Washington – USA
- She is recipient of Global Women Inventors and Innovators (GWIIN) Discretionary Award, Nigeria, 2010

Testimonials

Jacqueline Odula – AfDB (Tunisia): "...on behalf of colleagues at the African Development Bank and on my own behalf, permit me to express our sincere gratitude for the excellent work you carried out in December as we look forward to working with you again soon".

Mesfin Zewdie – Ethiopia: "...By the way I appreciate your skills and efforts in facilitating last time workshop organized by ADB, in Pretoria. I came to understand that You have mastered all the arts in public speaking and gaining attention from the audience. Please keep on it".

Contacts

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