



# HERGENUITYAFRIKA!

Strategy Document to 2025

*This first strategy document is a blueprint for connecting and promoting current and aspiring professional and entrepreneurial women of Afrikan descent. HerGenuityAfrika! is Ireland's first Business and Entrepreneurship network dedicated to the Afrikan woman.*

Dear African Woman  
If I haven't told you that you are beautiful, you are  
If I haven't told you that your smile is lovely, it is  
If I haven't told you that your dark skin  
is more beautiful than the night sky, it is  
Dear African Woman  
Only you can understand  
what it means to be an African queen  
What it means to be black, bold and beautiful  
Dear African Woman  
For centuries you have been told  
that your place is in the kitchen  
You have been boxed to build your world  
right in the shadows of men  
And your gifts, they are buried with the umbilical cords  
of your children yet to be born  
You have worked the fields and cooked the meals  
You have cared for the children and fed the men  
You have been the backbone of this continent  
Yet, my dear African Woman  
you do not know who you are  
You are the light that shines in the darkness  
The beacon that restores hope into our hearts  
The source of strength and courage  
An embodiment of masculinity and femininity  
The perfect being  
You are the home keeper, the nation builder  
the tear wiper, the smile giver  
the support system and lifeline of the continent  
You are more beautiful than a flower in the Savannah  
Your smile is like falling snow on a drought-stricken land  
Your kinky Afro is like the soft cushions of clouds in the sky  
You are goodness  
You are wonder  
You are grace  
You are kindness  
You are fearless  
You are lovely  
All wrapped in one  
Dear African Woman, no matter where you are  
No matter how you think you look  
no matter how you see yourself  
you are a special gift to the world  
Rise up and make that change in the world  
Be that difference  
Lift your head high like the queen you are meant to be  
For you are good enough  
You are strong enough  
You are beautiful enough  
And my dear African Woman  
You are just enough

Excerpt from Dear African Woman by Brenda Dokman Bakomore

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## THE BACKGROUND

For too long, Afrikans have laboured under a narrative and an image that has generally portrayed us negatively, even as the Afrikan continent remains steeped in poverty, political instability and severe economic challenges.

According to [www.un.org, https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/), while “significant progress has been made in many countries within Eastern and Southeastern Asia, ... up to 42% of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa continues to live below the poverty line. In these circumstances, women (and their children) are usually the most affected.

In the diaspora and in Afrika, while we celebrate those Afrikan women doing great things in business and various other fields, the narrative has generally remained the same. Afrikan women, in spite of their ingenuity, resilience, astuteness and resourcefulness, are yet to find their collective voices in business and entrepreneurial leadership. **HerGenuityAfrika!** exists to do our part to change this narrative.

## VISION STATEMENT

***Afrikan women globally repositioned, recognised and rebranded as business leaders, nation builders and agents of positive global transformation.***

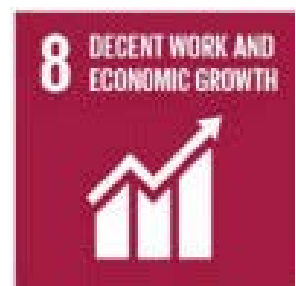
## MISSION STATEMENT

HerGenuityAfrika! exists and seeks to

- Inspire, support, positively influence and motivate women of Afrika descent towards success in life and business
- Inspire and promote an entrepreneurial mind-set among women of Afrika descent
- Promote greater economic participation and business leadership among women of Afrikan descent in the diaspora and on the continent
- Highlight/showcase the ingenious nature of the Afrikan woman
- Engender a community, serving and giving spirit, which also focuses on the Motherland
- Provide a platform for local and global networking
- Create opportunities for business partnerships and strategic collaborations
- Inspire personal growth and transformation
- Encourage and promote a commitment to life-long learning.

## OUR GOALS

In line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals 1, 4, 5, 8;



### our goals are centred on–

1. Poverty eradication and promoting/stimulating economic growth by encouraging entrepreneurship and greater economic participation of women in Afrika and in the diaspora.
2. To promote and invest in the education of women, which would equip them with the tools required for conceiving/driving innovative solutions for change, and which would facilitate greater and better participation in entrepreneurial ventures, collaborations and partnerships. The **Europe 2020 Strategy** highlights the role of education and training in stimulating “smart, sustainable and inclusive growth”.
3. Encourage equal opportunities and full participation of women in leadership and promote the empowerment of women through enabling the use of ICT technology for personal development and business growth.
4. To reduce the rate of employment among women of Afrikan descent by encouraging and promoting entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, the formalisation of business enterprises and providing support for accessing funding.
5. To support and promote the overall wellbeing of female entrepreneurs of Afrikan descent.

## OUR CORE VALUES

### Positive self - concept

Embracing our feminine and Afrikan identity. Confidence in our role in changing the narrative of women of Afrikan decent.

### Mutual respect and support

Creating national and global platforms for ourselves and each other towards greater diversity and inclusivity in business and entrepreneurship.

### Collaborations and partnerships

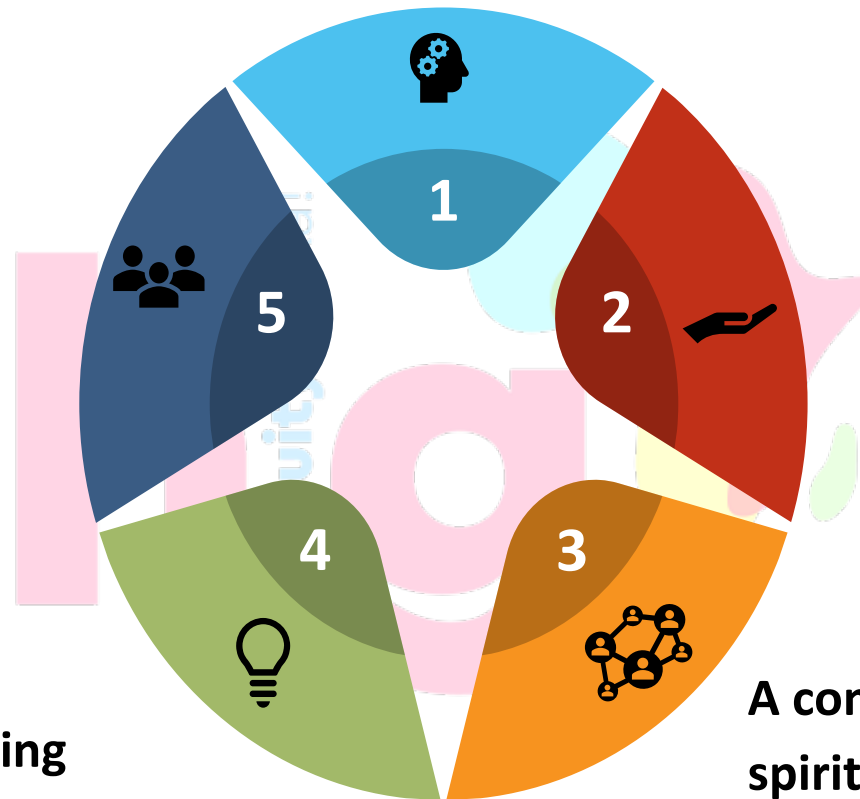
Working alongside our Afrikan community of women and collaborating with female entrepreneurs within our community and around the world.

### Life long learning

Creating pathways and opportunities to teach, learn and explore new talents.

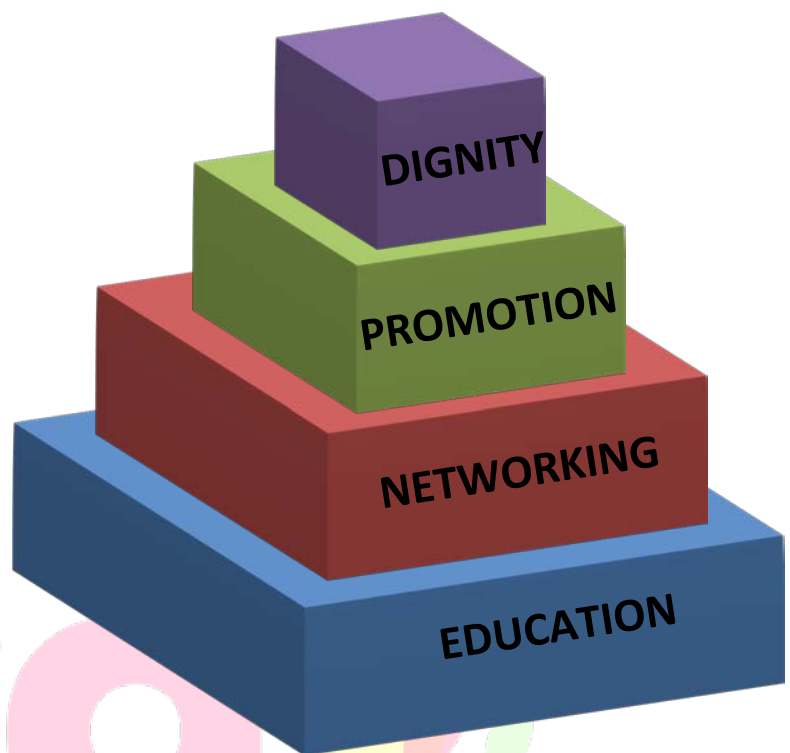
### A community and serving spirit

Supporting our Afrikan and Irish communities



## OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our main objective is to change the narrative and story for the Afrikan woman. By promoting entrepreneurship through support, inspiration and motivation for current and aspiring female entrepreneurs, business owners and professionals of Afrikan descent. We want to be the driver for our Afrikan community in Ireland and around the world to start and grow success for themselves, their families and the wider Afrikan community. We want to develop the dignity of Afrika for those in the diaspora who have no connection to the continent and include them in our network and evolution of the Afrikan woman. This growth, evolution and ownership will be developed through four key building blocks;



These aims ensure that the current and future generations of Afrikan women in Ireland and around the world will have the tools and community necessary to create a sustainable future for themselves and their families, to re-shape the outlook for the Afrikan woman and re-define her position in our Global society.

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WE SEEK TO ADDRESS?

Research indicates that female entrepreneurs from developing countries, such as Afrikan nations, are faced with the *triple disadvantage* of being migrants, female and migrant females from developing countries. Even after arriving into their host countries, the socioeconomic development of migrant women entrepreneurs of Afrikan descent is impinged upon by the challenges of navigating the unfamiliar cultural, social and legal terrain of their environment as well as the institutional framework of these developed economies. There is also anecdotal and research evidence of various barriers connected to their race, gender and ethnicity.

While governments and various stakeholders seek to provide solutions to the challenges highlighted and support for migrant women entrepreneurs, they have often failed to carefully consider the heterogeneity, and by implication, the peculiar

needs of female migrants entrepreneurs of African descent, which would help them to grow successful businesses. It is our desire to take the unique perspective we possess and use it to inform, influence and shape policies pertaining to migrant women and the implementation of the current Programme for Government in Ireland.

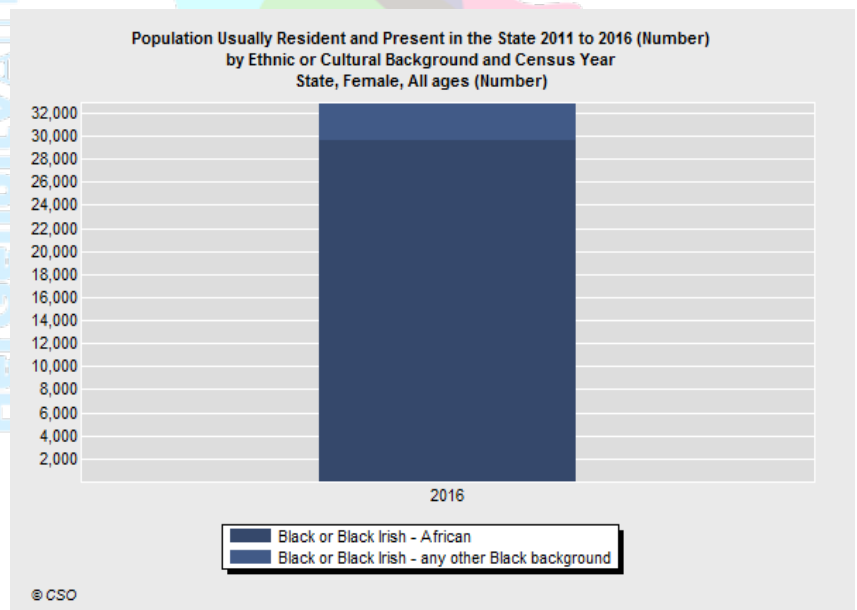
In summary, considering the background set in the introductory paragraphs of this document as well as the points highlighted above, **HerGenuityAfrika!** seeks to promote the socioeconomic development of Afrikan women through entrepreneurship.

To help our women overcome the “Triple Disadvantage” identified by research (Azmat,2014;200)<sup>1</sup>, we seek to instil confidence and provide the right tools and support (education, network and platform) for women of all ages to start, grow and expand their business and professional capabilities. We aim to create the required platform and panel of expertise for ideation, business advisory, entrepreneurship awareness, innovative thinking, development, marketing support, mentorship opportunities, compliance with regulations, etc, which can help in the growth of businesses owned by Afrikan women.

## THE RELEVANCE OF OUR WORK

Ireland is now home to over 32,000 Afrikan women<sup>2</sup>, who are working or struggling towards socio-economic integration and development.

Furthermore, there are a number of women on the Afrikan continent, who are living below their capacity and potentials. This has continued to impact negatively on both Ireland and The Afrikan continent.



We believe that our work will contribute to the holistic development of our women, and to both Ireland and Afrika. This can be achieved in a number of strategic ways, including investing in education and training, particularly personal development, leadership and entrepreneurship capacity building; encouraging, supporting and facilitating their participation in leadership. The increased number of experiences of

<sup>1</sup> Azmat, F 2014, Migrant Women Entrepreneurs: exploring the barriers, in Entrepreneurial Women: New Management and Leadership models [2 volumes] ABC-CLIO, Calif pp199-217

<sup>2</sup> <https://statbank.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/saveselections.asp>



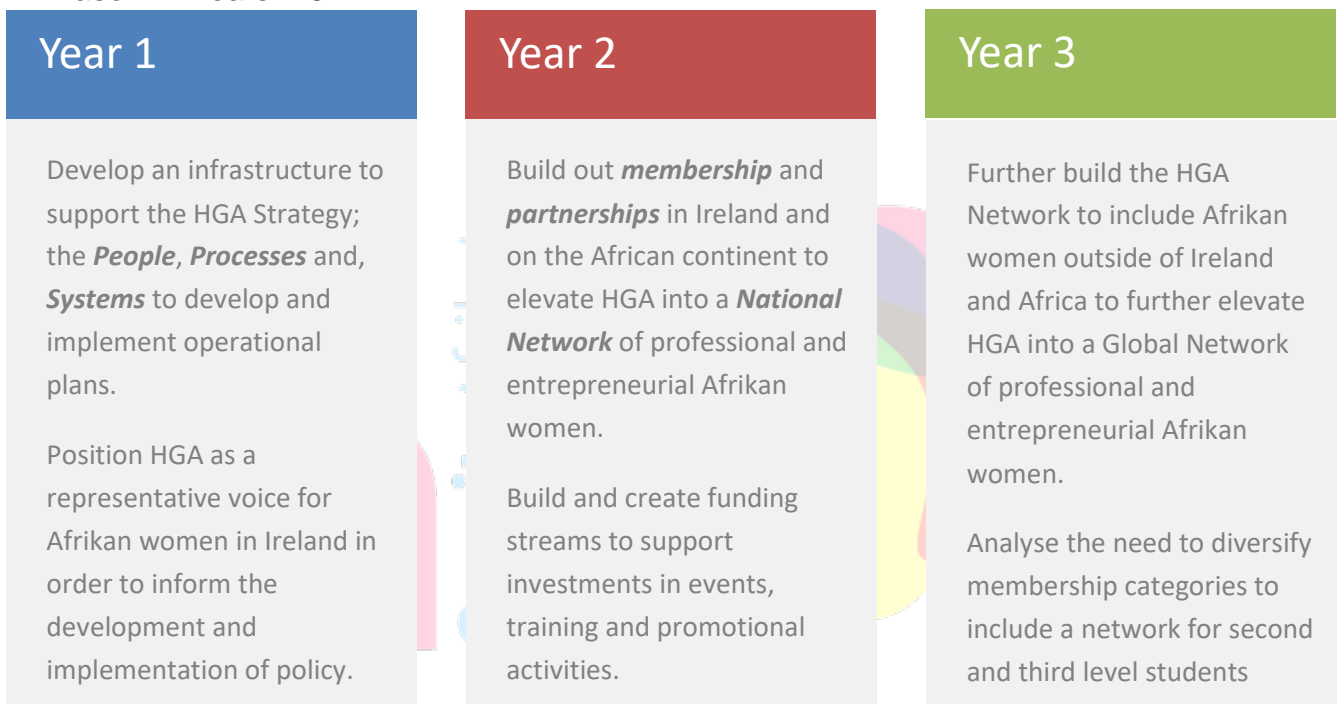
racial injustices or intimidation of Afrikans in Ireland and around the world also shines a light on the need to educate our non-Afrikan community to see the same value in our women and children as they see in their own.

## THE SOLUTION

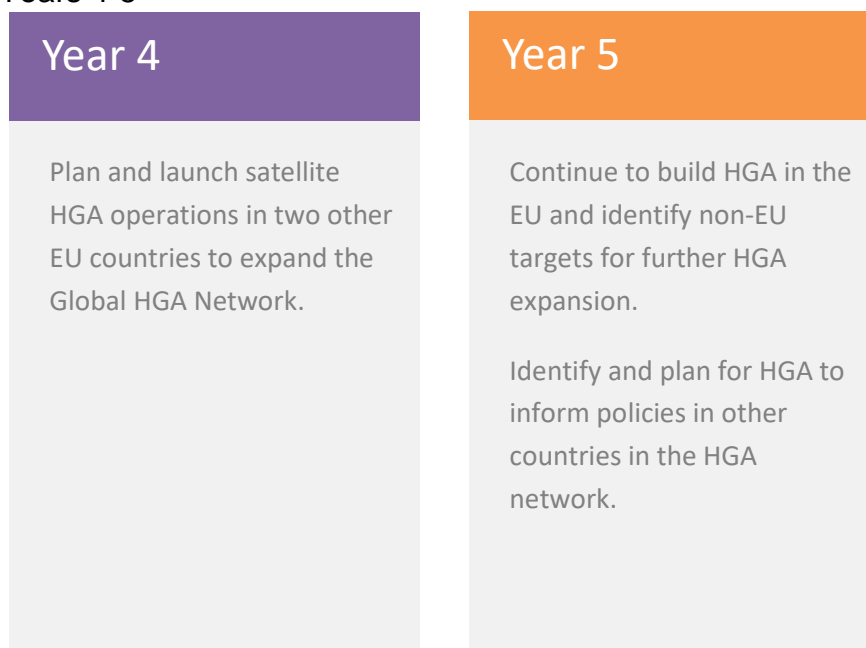
### What work do we have to do?

To develop strategies, programmes, initiatives and activities, with a focus on personal development, leadership and entrepreneurship effectiveness/success, within the 2 phases of our 5-year strategic plan.

#### Phase 1 – Years 1-3



#### Phase 2 – Years 4-5



### What are we hoping to achieve?

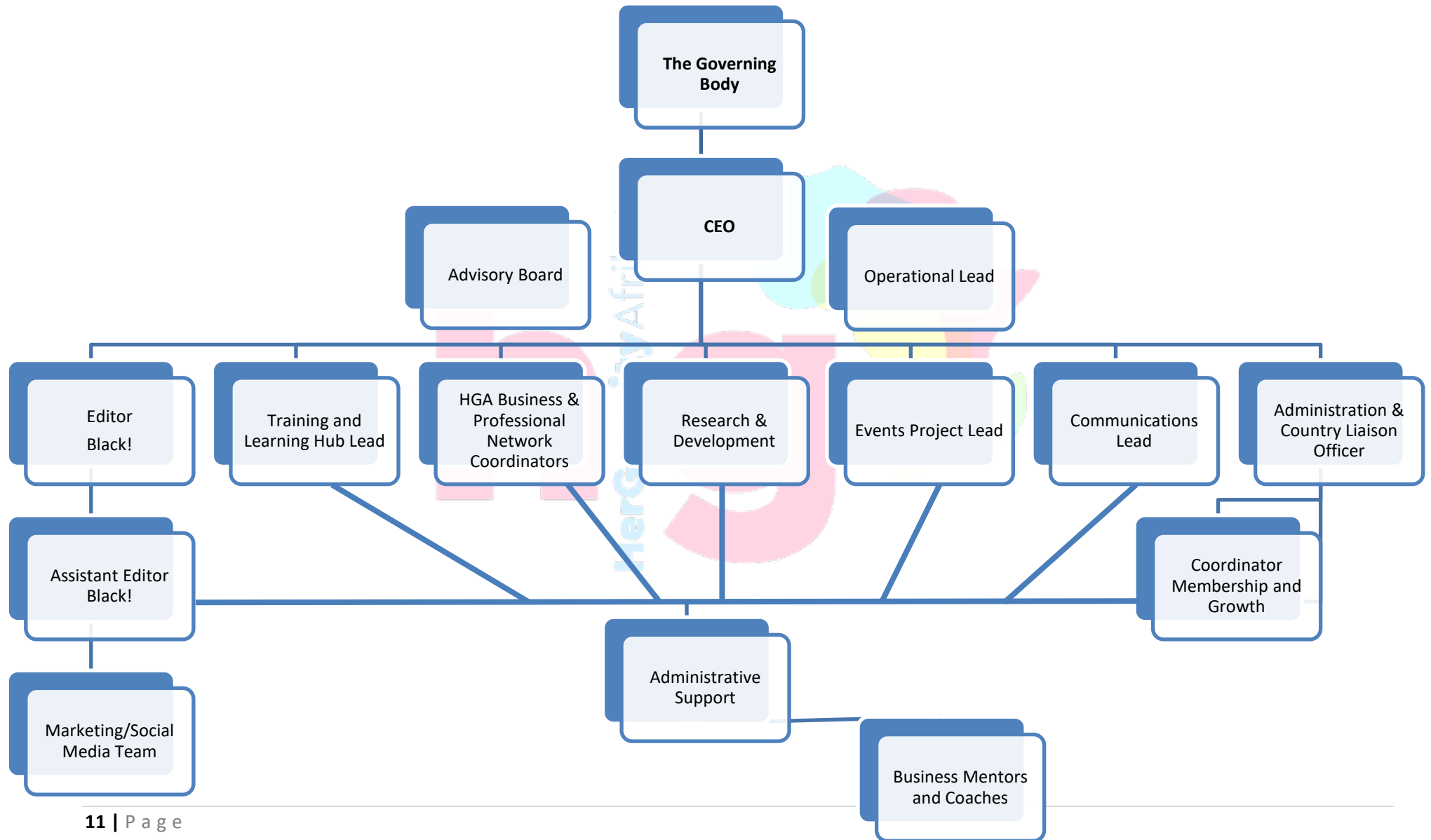
To build a community of Afrikan women in Ireland, on the continent and globally, who are committed to changing the narrative of the Afrikan woman through personal transformation, business leadership and nation-building.

### Action Planning

Once this draft strategy is approved each divisional lead (set out in the Organisational Structure below) will have 2 months to develop a SMART operational workstream to achieve these goals, with a zero budget, to be approved by the CEO. Each plan will be tested for its commitment to the UNSDGs, the promotion of the Mission Vision and Values of HGA and its capacity to drive growth and revenue for HGA. Each Workstream will be reported on bi-monthly at agreed Strategic Development meetings, critically assessed by the CEO with progress reported to the Board of Trustees annually.



# OUR STRUCTURE



## Management Team

<b>Governing Body</b>	Ruth Ncube
	Dolapo Sanusi-Ola
	Atinuke Adegboye
	Toluwani Akaehomen – Founder and Director/Secretary
<b>Advisory Board</b>	Dr David Nyaluke
	Cassandra Corbet – Head of Advisory Board/Operations Team Representative
	Eya Lawani
	Adetokunbo Evans-Emmanuel
	Bassey Duke
<b>Business Mentors &amp; Coaches</b>	Atinuke Adegboye
	Dolapo Sanusi-Ola
	Toluwani Akaehomen
	Alexis Amaye
	Ayoyinka Owairu
	Bassey Duke
<b>Operations Team</b>	Cassandra Corbet – Operational Lead and Advisory Board Representative
	Amanda Nyoni – Administration & Country Liaison Officer
	Gladys-Otono Atsenokhai – Social Media Communications Lead
	Omotayo Ogunleye – Black! Editor
	Thembinkosi Malisa – Black! Assistant Editor
	Toluwani Akaehomen & Alexis Amaye – Research & Development
	Atinuke Adegboye & Nargis Dewji – HGA Business & Professional Network Coordinators
	Dr Alexis Amaye – Training & Learning Hub Lead
	Guy Pascal Mpiana – Events Project Lead
<b>National Coordinators</b>	Hope Okeny – Uganda
	Joseph Eliabson Maniragena – South Africa
	Joseph Eliabson Maniragena - Rwanda

The approved Strategy and Action Plans will be made available on the HGA website and be included in the onboarding pack for each operational lead or coordinator brought on. It is envisioned the HGA will operate at a zero budget until such time as the organisation begins to generate income through donations, memberships, events and other activities in line with the organisational aims and strategic objectives. At this point efforts will be made to provide financial remuneration for the Senior Executive team, including the CEO, create added value for executive memberships, create opportunities for training and to launch a formal marketing campaign for the organisation.