



I am delighted to celebrate and to honour all of our audacious and wonderfully talented UUBO ladies, women clients, colleagues and friends of **Udo Udoma & Belo-Osagie** on this International Women's Day (IWD) 2023, the theme for which urges us all to **#EmbraceEquity**.

This **#IWD2023Theme** identifies that because individuals begin from different places, equitable action and equal opportunity may be required to achieve the best possible comparable outcomes and true inclusion.

At UUBO, we passionately believe that **#diversity**, **#equity**, and **#inclusion** are critical drivers for achieving the ultimate goal of an inclusive workplace in which opportunity, evaluation, and reward are based on individual merit - performance, qualifications, skills, and ability- rather than on arbitrary characteristics or circumstances, including **#gender**, which is the focus today.

We are fiercely committed and actively engaged in initiatives that promote gender equity and equality in the legal profession and our communities, and for our clients, friends, and people, including:

- pioneering organically developed maternity and family-friendly policies and structured support that contribute to **#GenderParity** 'wins' across all staff cadres;
- advising and assisting with **#genderlens**-driven investments in female-owned businesses.
- supporting female entrepreneurs and female-owned early-stage and growth businesses as part of the dedicated offerings of our sub-firm, ULaw, which is designed as a one-stop-shop providing high-quality one-on-one support in a simplified and straightforward manner at super competitive prices for all basic business-related legal needs;
- achieving and sustaining global recognition for all of our 7 female partners in diverse international rankings publications across diverse practice areas, with 4 accorded exclusive status as IFLR1000 Women Leaders for Nigeria;
- moderating and driving **#ThoughtLeadership**, actively engaging in public discourse, and **#advocacy** on gender equity and related issues;
- mentoring, training and supporting women-led businesses in Nigeria, including in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and SheTrades Initiative;
- contributing to award-winning pro-bono project initiatives, including 28 Too Many, which conducts research and provides knowledge and tools to those working to end female genital mutilation (FGM) worldwide; and
- organising annual female executive wellbeing and wellness days for busy female **#UUBOExecutiveFriendsAndClients** and **#UUBOWomen** to reconnect, recharge and reset.

While I am immensely proud of these and other internal initiatives that show how UUBO seeks to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for women, I acknowledge that there is still much to be done generally.

In Nigeria and globally, women still face numerous personal and professional inequities, challenges and marginalisation, including gender-based violence, unequal remuneration, and limited access to education and leadership roles.

Women are powerful agents of change and progress. We believe that empowering women is not only the right thing to do but that it is essential for growth and development. On this International Women's Day 2023, let us all renew our commitment to challenging gender biases and promoting gender equity to address systemic and structural barriers that restrict the ability to thrive.

Let us all **#EmbraceEquity. #IWD2023 #UUBOWomen #UUBOClientsAndFriends.**

Aniekan Ukpanah
Managing Partner



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