



PUBLICATION
Mar 2, 2020

25 FOR 25 SERIES

HAFSAT ABIOLA

25 for 25 is an original content series by Gucci and CHIME FOR CHANGE to mark the historic milestone of Beijing +25 in March, as well as Women's History Month. The series will highlight activists, CHIME Advisory Board members, partners and supporters who represent the progress made on gender equality over the past 25 years, as well as the emerging next generation continuing this critical work.



To kickoff the 25 for 25 series, CHIME is honored to feature President of **Women in Africa** and Board President of KIND, **Hafsat Abiola**. Explore her reflections on her work to advance gender equality and leading an initiative dedicated to the economic development and support of high potential African women leaders.

What are your hopes and expectations for gender equality in the next 25 years?

My hope is that my children's destinies will be shaped by their dreams and drive, not by their sex.

What does gender equality mean to you?

It means that the feminine and the masculine are equally valued and that responsibilities now seen as aspects of the feminine – nurturing, caring, rearing – fall on men as they do on women. And the aspects that are seen as part of the masculine – earning, performing, leading – are accomplished by women as they are by men.

What keeps you energized and committed as a leader for gender equality?

The idea that all the freedoms I enjoy today were secured for me by those who came before, and the thought that what I am fighting for today will be my gift for those who come after.

What advice would you give younger generations on how to advocate / work for gender equality as they get older?

I would advise them to not shy away from hard choices as they give you the room Virginia Woolf never had. We will build the way by walking. No matter the distance, we will create a world of partnership between men and women, so long as we don't settle for less.

Who do you look to as an example / role model in the fight for gender equality?

I look up to women like my mother who, armed with little more than her convictions, challenged the military dictatorship that ruled my country [Nigeria] in the 90s. Then, I turn to the millions of women who set up businesses across Africa. They managed to provide for their families and challenge the world of patriarchy that reminds them daily that they can't do what they are already doing: make life possible against all odds.





