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Abridged Profile



## 100 Most Influential African Women

Monica Geingos is a qualified lawyer with over 20 years of experience in the financial sector, including senior roles in capital markets, corporate finance, and private equity. She was awarded National Honours (Most Distinguished Order of Namibia) by former President Pohamba for her “outstanding contribution to the socio-economic development of Namibia.” She was inducted into the Namibian Business Hall of Fame and received numerous awards, such as the “Namibian Business Personality of the Year” and “Most Innovative Entrepreneur.” During her time in the private sector, Monica was frequently recognised by local and continental media publications as one of the most influential Namibians and was recognised by international media as one of “Africa’s Top 100 Economic Leaders.”

Monica served as the third First Lady of the Republic of Namibia from March 2015 to February 2024. Before assuming the role of First Lady in 2015, she was a co-shareholder and Managing Director of Namibia’s largest private equity fund for over a decade. During this time, she served on the boards of large public and private sector companies as either Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson.

Due to her extensive corporate experience, she was a long-standing member of high-level policy advisory boards, such as the President’s Economic Advisory Council, the ruling Swapo party’s Think Tank, and the National Council of the Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with the mandate to advise on national policy formulation and implementation. She served on boards such as the Association of Unlisted Investment Managers (Chairperson), the Steering Committee for the Namibian Financial Sector Charter (Secretary), the Listings Advisory Board of the Namibian Stock Exchange, and the Public Office Bearers Commission (Vice-Chairperson).



During her tenure as First Lady, Monica combined her high-level corporate expertise with President Geingob’s war on poverty and inequality. Through the launch of the One Economy Foundation (ONE), Monica initiated numerous programmes aimed at bridging Namibia’s formal and informal economies, creating sustainable pathways that enable vulnerable populations to secure long-term economic sustainability. ONE aims to sustainably lift people out of poverty traps and

ensure fair access to opportunities. Over the past nine years, ONE has taken key learnings from its youth empowerment initiative, the #BeFree Movement and institutionalised them into the #BeFree Youth Campus, a one-stop youth centre that provides holistic, youth-friendly healthcare services, including life skills programmes, mental health support, the full spectrum of adolescent-friendly sexual and reproductive health services (including comprehensive sexuality education), skills and leadership development, entrepreneurship development, and adolescent-friendly edutainment.



In addition, the #BeFree Youth Campus has several smart partnerships in the public, private, and non-profit sectors to ensure that the campus closes the mental health and SRH service delivery gaps experienced by young people.

Monica served as the President of the Organisation of African First Ladies for Development (OAFLAD) from June 2022 to February 2024. During her tenure, she spearheaded the inception of the #WeAreEqual campaign aimed at advocating for gender equity in Africa.

Monica Geingos is the Chancellor of Kepler College in Kigali, where she contributes to expanding access to affordable and high-quality tertiary education in Africa. She also serves as a Director of the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development in Monrovia, which works to advance women's political participation and leadership across the continent.

Further underscoring her international influence, Monica was appointed by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres as one of four new United Nations SDG Advocates, a role through which she champions the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, she is a Director of WomenLift Health, a California-based initiative dedicated to advancing women's leadership in global health.

Monica also serves as Co-Chair of the Global Council on Inequality, AIDS, and Pandemics, which

fosters policy solutions to address inequalities linked to AIDS and global health crises. She is a Leadership Council Member of Concordia, a New York-based non-profit that builds global partnerships for social impact and draws its leadership from former heads of state, policy experts, and industry leaders.

As a testament to her leadership at home, Monica has been honoured through the naming of two public landmarks: the Monica Geingos Junior Secondary School and Monica Geingos Street, both located in peri-urban areas. These recognitions highlight her long-standing advocacy for a policy environment focused on uplifting the most vulnerable, championing equal education and decent shelter.

Monica is committed to utilising her institutional and strategic experience in the public and private sectors in Africa to influence institutional change and support women and young people on their leadership paths.





# monica geingos

Monica has received numerous merit awards throughout her professional career. She is the UNAIDS Special Advocate for Young Women and Adolescent Girls, a recipient of the “Change the World Award” from the Professional Speakers Association, and has been awarded an Honorary Doctor of Philosophy from Jharkhand Rai University. She was honoured with the international “World Without AIDS” Award for her advocacy work in the fight against AIDS. She was awarded the annual Concordia Leadership Award for her global leadership and “unique and powerful efforts to lead the way for health and socio-economic empowerment.” Various international organisations and publications have ranked Monica as one of the “100 Most Reputable Africans” and one of the “100 Most Influential African Women”. Monica is a recognised leader whose forthright speaking manner has made her a sought-after speaker, featured in prominent global publications and international news networks.

