

Top 200 most influential African women on Twitter

Women in Africa are a force to be reckoned with - this has been proven once again by the announcement of Smart Data Power and The Women in Africa Initiative's list of the Top 200 most influential African women on Twitter.



There are women from 24 African countries on the list, but most of the women (137 out of 200) are from South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Egypt. South Africa has 58 women in the top 200, including businesswomen, activists, politicians and journalists.

Margaux Birken from Smart Data Power, a French company which detects influencers, trends and insights by analysing data from Twitter, LinkedIn and open data sources, says that there are a few reasons why Twitter was chosen to compile this list. "It's a social media platform, and we can access its data legally. It's also a platform where women, whether they are journalists, businesswomen or politicians, can express themselves freely."

The Top 200 study, co-presented by Julia Rodriguez, also from Smart Data Power, focused on African women currently living on the continent according to their biographies on Twitter. They had to have more than 10,000 followers, and the average was found to be around 200,000 followers. This means that the 200 women combined could reach a potential audience of more than 40 million people on Twitter.

According to Birken, there was no scientific call or purpose for the study, but it is an interesting snapshot of a thriving continent. Smart Data Power's partner in the study, The Women in Africa Initiative (WiA), is a platform dedicated to the economic development and support of leading and high potential African women. More and more women are currently ambassadors for Africa as a continent, and interestingly, women's participation rate in the labour market is 55%, above the

world average of 48%.

“This means that women have and will have a central position in the development of their country,” says Birken.

According to the WiA, women are the backbone of the African economy, and Africa has the highest percentage of female entrepreneurs in the world. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor has found that one in four women from sub-Saharan Africa start, own or manage a business and that they reinvest up to 90% of their income into the wellbeing and support of their families and communities (compared to only 40% by men). This means that investing in women’s businesses can transform society.

Leandri Janse van Vuuren ([@Lean3JvV](#)), the managing director of Social Media 101, a social media company, says she didn’t know the list was being compiled and was pleasantly surprised to find herself at number 28.



Leandri Janse van Vuuren ([@Lean3JvV](#))

“There are very powerful women on the list, like prof. Thuli Madonsela ([@ThuliMadonsela3](#)), so I’m very proud to be on the list as I’m in very good company.”

Other well-known South African women on the list include media personality Pabi Moloi ([@PabiMoloi](#)), former Miss South Africa and entrepreneur Jo-ann Strauss ([@jo_annstrauss](#)), television host Jeannie D ([@Jeannieous](#)), author and journalist Mandy Wiener ([@MandyWiener](#)) and presenter Elana Afrika-Bredenkamp ([@ElanaAfrika](#)).

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