

Give to Gain: Women's quiet evolution and what we are afraid to ask

Every year, the world pauses on International Women's Day to celebrate women. Speeches are delivered, statistics are shared, and the language of empowerment fills conference halls, policy papers and social media.

Yet, perhaps the most honest question we should ask is a quieter one: Have we truly understood what women's empowerment means? Or have we merely celebrated the idea of it?

The 2026 theme, *Give to Gain*, appears deceptively simple. It suggests that when societies invest in women, the benefits multiply across families, institutions and economies. But beneath that phrase lies a deeper truth: women have never been passive recipients of opportunity. They have been its most strategic stewards.

Across Africa, women have taken every small opening in law, policy, fintech and economics and transformed it into something far greater than anyone anticipated.

The real story of women's empowerment is therefore not about what governments have given. It is about what women have built with what they were given.

Women rarely announce evolutions. They nurture them.

In Uganda, policy frameworks have gradually opened doors: constitutional protections, parliamentary representation, expanded access to education and economic initiatives led by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.



Deo Kalikumutima

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The writer is a lawyer at Kalikumutima & Co. Advocates**