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GIRLS & WOMEN

6 female philanthropists you should really know

By **Leila De Bruyne** on May 31, 2016



Noella Coursaris Musunka, courtesy of Malaika

This article was contributed by Leila de Bruyne on behalf of [Flying Kites](#).

Bill Gates, Andrew Carnegie, Warren Buffett - these men have long been household names for their wealth and philanthropic work. But what about all the women working hard to change the world for good? We all need inspiration to dream big. In my work with [Flying Kites](#), a non-profit organisation igniting the potential of orphaned children in Kenya, we try to bring in speakers who will inspire our students- both male and female - to aim high and work hard. In a world where 63 million girls are currently out of school, it's as important as ever that young girls everywhere have powerful female role models to look up to. That's why everyone should know about the game-changing women transforming the world today. Here are 6 inspiring female philanthropists whose work will inspire you.

Noella gives education



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Noella Coursaris Musunka is the founder of [Malaika](#), a non-profit organization that operates a free school for 230 disadvantaged girls in Kalebuka, a village in the Southeastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Noella was born in Congo but left at a young age after her father's death because her mother was unable to provide for her financially. Determined to ensure that other families do not have to be separated because of poverty, Noella has committed her career to helping turn goodwill into action: empowering a generation of young leaders eager to build a bright future for their country.

Carolyn gives bangles



Image: courtesy of Alex and Ani

Carolyn Rafaellan is the founder of [Alex and Ani](#), a jewelry empire that has donated over \$30 million USD to charities around the world. [Charity By Design](#) - the philanthropic arm of the company - works with charities to create one-of-a-kind charms that are incorporated into their bangles and necklaces. We are currently working with Carolyn and her fierce team to create a collection for [Flying Kites](#), to raise funds for a girls' dorm for orphaned and vulnerable children.

Leila gives work



Image: Loic Le Meur

Leila Jannah's non-profit [Samasource](#) is turning the notion of charity on its head by proving that the world's poorest are not passive victims waiting for handouts, but rather, part of a massive, largely untapped and highly-capable workforce, desperate for a chance to work their own way out of poverty. Founded in 2008, Samasource works with companies like eBay and Google to break down large digital tasks into [micro-work](#), enabling workers in developing countries to earn a living wage. Having worked in rural Kenya for the past ten years, I've seen firsthand that more than anything else, people want the opportunity to earn a fair income and support themselves and their families.

Lauren gives meals



Image: courtesy of FEED

Lauren Bush Lauren's social business [FEED](#) makes beautiful bags that fund feeding programs in impoverished communities and schools in America and abroad. While a student at Princeton, Lauren joined the UN World Food Program as a student spokesperson and was inspired to merge her passion for design and flying with her desire to build a purpose-driven business. Hunger is a big deal. At [Flying Kites](#), we added breakfast to our school feeding program because children who come to school hungry cannot be expected to focus on lessons before lunchtime.

Nyla gives advocates



Image: Tom Kubik

Nyla Rodgers is the founder of [Mama Hope](#). Their [Global Advocate Initiative](#) connects people who are interested in social justice projects with community-based organizations through an intensive nine-month training program. This model mitigates many of the inherent risks attached to "outsiders looking to volunteer their time" by equipping Global Advocates with the tools, education and support they need to actually have a meaningful impact. One of the most innovative aspects of Nyla's program is its emphasis on ensuring that visiting advocates support local staff on the ground, rather than imposing an external perspective.

Angie gives goods



Image: Larry Frita

Donors are often keen to give me items for our school in Kenya that prove too difficult to transport there, or which would be better sourced locally. Angie Janssen's new organisation makes it easy to make sure these items get to the people who need them most. A few years ago, she wanted to donate her guestroom bed to someone who might need it - but had no way to find them. She called some women's shelters and group homes to see if they could help connect her to a family in need, but nobody was able to help Angie help her community. So she started [Donii](#), a non-profit organizations that connects goods and gear to the people who really need them.

Philanthropy is a term that is slowly being redefined and these awesome women are leading the way. No longer is your commitment to creating a better world limited to just writing a big cheque: today's philanthropists are both committed and creative. So what are you waiting for?

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Written by [Leila de Bruyne](#) [t](#) [f](#)

Leila de Bruyne is the founder and executive director of [Flying Kites](#), a school for critically-poor students in rural Kenya. Her work is dedicated to helping vulnerable students become leaders by providing them with a competitive education; so that they may build their best lives and positively impact their families, communities and country.

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