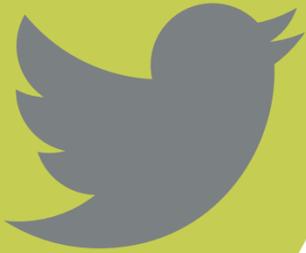


#WOMENINTHR TWITTER CHAT
@AfricaHRA + @alaranaishat



AISHAT ALARAN

FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN THR

Ensuring diversity in the THR SPACE

When: 30th March

Where? @AfricaHRA Twitter
Channel



AHRA.info

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seekers to access high
quality information on
Harm Reduction in Africa

ABOUT ME



Hello Aishat, please can you tell us a bit about yourself? Your background, and how you came to the THR space and became a Board member of a prominent THR African organisation (C.A.S.A)? Can you tell us about C.A.S.A?

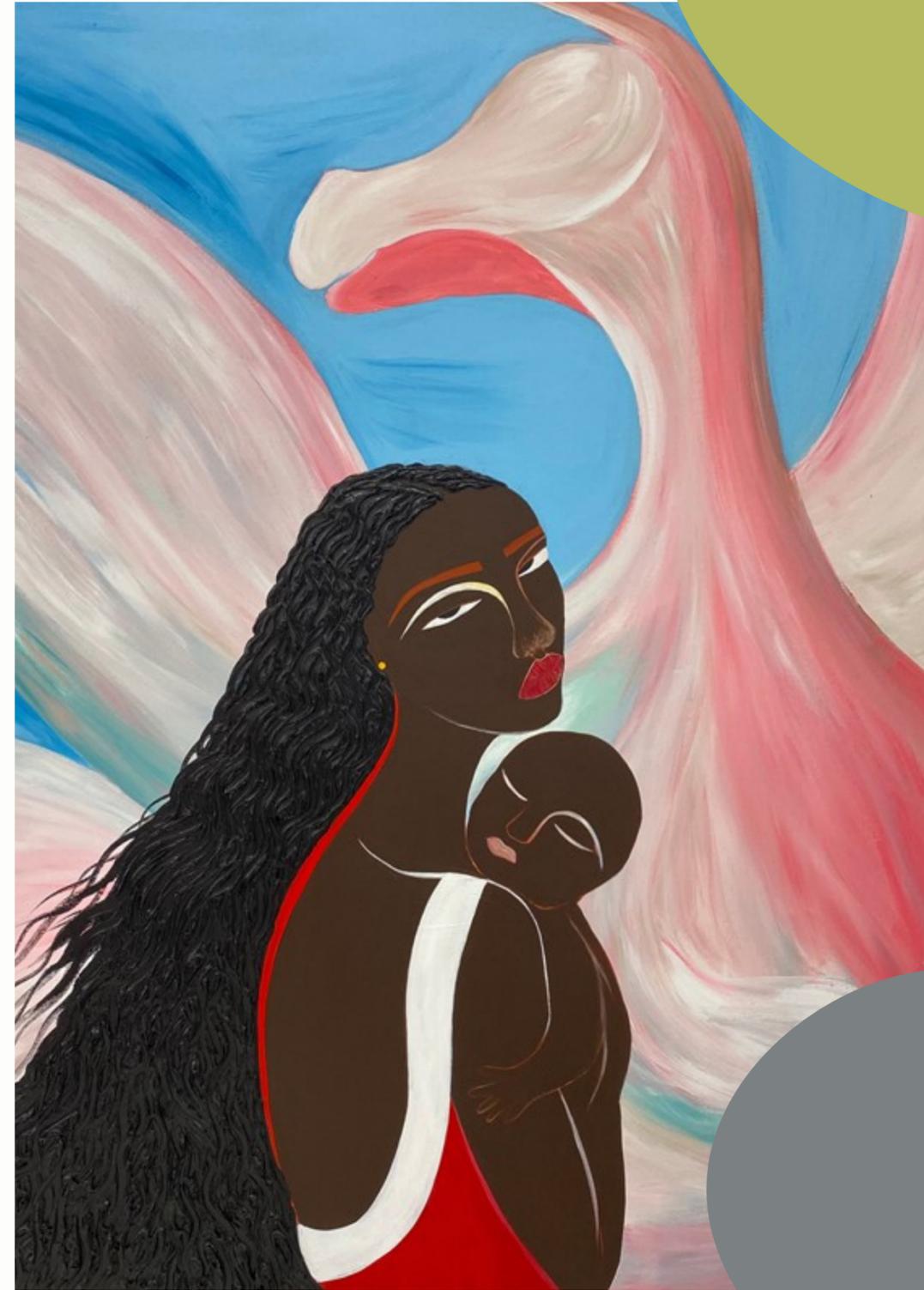
My name is Aishat Alaran. I am a Pharmacist and Public Health Researcher based in Nigeria. I am passionate about helping people quit smoking using safer alternatives as advocated for by Tobacco Harm Reduction.

CASA stands for Campaign for Safer Alternatives. It is an organization dedicated to reducing smoking prevalence in Africa. We aim to do this by promoting innovative solutions to cessations of smoking.

"SHE IS EXCEPTIONAL
AND RELENTLESS IN HER
PERSUIT OF SUCCESS"

**Has anybody in your life inspired you along
your leadership journey? How and why?**

The one person that has constantly been a source of inspiration for me is my mum. She is exceptional and relentless in her pursuit of success. She sets positive examples for me that constantly reminds me to strive to become the best version of myself.



What motivated you to step up and become a leader in the C.A.S.A organisation?

I would say C.A.S.A aims to help people in African countries to stop smoking, which is my motivation. As a scholar of THR, I am fascinated with the amazing work done at C.A.S.A. As we know the smoking rate in Africa is slowly increasing....

...so there is the need for urgent action to curb this rise. This is at the core of what C.A.S.A aims to do in this region. I believe taking up a leadership position at the organisation will afford me the opportunity to achieve this important goal.



HAVING A DIVERSE HARM
REDUCTION WORKFORCE
IS JUST THE FIRST STEP.



What are the benefits to having women in leadership, especially in the THR space?

I believe inclusion of women in spaces is paramount. Smoking is not limited to a particular gender. Just so the fight to reduce smoking should not be restricted to a single gender.

Representation and inclusion yield more robust ideas and innovations. Unfortunately, we have a long way to go to significantly have women occupy leadership positions, within and beyond THR. There is significant gender gap even in the most developed countries.

What benefits have you received from your leadership experiences?

I am still very much early in my career. However, over the past 1-2 years, I have gained immense benefits from being a leader. Most significant to me is it has made me feel more confident about myself and the decisions I make.

I have been able to leverage my leadership position to win grants and scholarships. I have also been invited to seminars, workshops and mentorship programmes.



What has been the most significant barrier in your career?

Well the most significant barrier I think I have experienced is self-doubt.

How do you push for systemic change around ideas that are new or not that popular?

It is never easy to break boundaries or to change the status quo, it constantly requires so much work in terms of consistently advocating for what you believe in and pushing evidence forward to support the belief.

I do believe evidence-based research and advocacy will go a long way in challenging and eventually changing the status quo. I know this cannot happen overnight but it is definitely doable.



And finally, are there any particular female leaders, either within or outside of the THR space, that you particularly admire, and why?

One person that came to mind is Professor Marewa Glover. You see I have had the opportunity to be under her supervision for my Tobacco Harm Reduction Scholarship Project. I feel very privileged to be under her supervision as I have learnt and I am still learning a lot from her.



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