

MILLENNIAL

WOMAN

MAGAZINE



**HAPPY
RALINALA**

**WHAT MAKES
A WOMAN
UNAPOLOGETICALLY
BOLD**

A professional headshot of Happy Ralinala, a Black woman with short, curly hair. She is wearing a blue and yellow patterned blouse with a collar and a matching skirt. Her hands are crossed at her waist, and she is wearing a ring on her left hand. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

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HAPPY RALINALA

WHAT MAKES A WOMAN UNAPOLOGETICALLY BOLD

Happy Ralinala is a leader, mentor, and advocate for change who continues to redefine what bold leadership looks like for African women. As a judge for the prestigious Veuve Clicquot Bold Woman Award, Happy brings not just her wealth of experience, but a deep-rooted belief in purpose-led leadership, emotional intelligence, and the transformative power of visibility. In this exclusive Millennial Woman Magazine feature, she opens up about her journey, the bold move that reshaped her career, and the unwavering commitment she holds towards empowering women to challenge norms, lead with intention. Happy's insights illuminate the qualities that make today's female changemakers truly exceptional, and why their stories must be seen and celebrated.

HAPPY RALINALA

WHAT MAKES A WOMAN UNAPOLOGETICALLY BOLD

Q) What does bold leadership mean to you in 2025?

A) Bold leadership in 2025 means having the courage to lead with purpose, authenticity, and a deep sense of responsibility. It's about making tough decisions that balance profit with people and the world. It's about challenging outdated systems, embracing innovation, and creating spaces where diverse voices are heard and valued. For me personally, bold leadership today is deeply rooted in emotional intelligence, the ability to listen with intention, act decisively, and step aside to empower others. It's about creating inclusive legacies rather than personal empires, fostering growth and opportunity for all. In an ever-evolving world, bold leaders do more than just respond to change; they reimagine the future and bring others along on the journey.

Q) What does it mean for you personally to be in a position where you're uplifting and spotlighting women who are challenging the status quo?

A) My dedication to uplifting women is deeply personal and purpose-driven. Raised by strong, pioneering women who quietly defied limitations, I often reflect on how much more they could have achieved with greater opportunities. Their legacy fuels my commitment to empower and support women in their professional and entrepreneurial journeys. I am intentional about creating space, opening doors, and offering guidance to those determined to succeed. Coaching women is especially rewarding, not only do I walk alongside them as they grow, but I also gain invaluable insights. Their courage, resilience, and determination continually inspire me and reinforce the profound significance of this work.

Q) As a judge, what qualities do you believe truly set a Bold Woman Award finalist apart in today's fast-changing business world?

A) In today's fast-evolving and often unpredictable business landscape, being a Veuve Clicquot Bold Woman Award finalist distinguishes one through vision, resilience, and meaningful impact. She is fearless in challenging norms, strategic in creating economic, social, and cultural value, and intentional in driving lasting change. What truly sets her apart is her ability to lead with both head and heart, navigating complexity with clarity, adapting without compromising her values, and building with a purpose that inspires and empowers. Her boldness is not about visibility but about pioneering progress, uplifting communities, championing inclusion, and opening doors for others to follow. These women are catalysts. And that's what makes them exceptional.

Q) What excites you most about this year's cohort of nominees?

A) I am truly energised by this year's cohort of nominees, their forward-thinking leadership and unwavering commitment to inclusivity and social impact stand out. What excites me most is how boldly they tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges through pioneering solutions. From sustainable energy innovations in agriculture and green job creation to redefining wellness and healthcare through accessible products, these women are not just driving business success, they are transforming communities. Their work addresses critical global issues like food security, environmental sustainability, and economic inclusion, all while championing creative, life-changing solutions that uplift others and create lasting impact.

Q) Why is it important for bold women to be seen, not just supported behind the scenes?

A) Because visibility shapes possibility. I often say, "The economy is a woman." Women have always driven value, whether in households, communities, or businesses. Yet too often, their contributions are hidden behind the curtain of support rather than spotlighted as leadership. Bold women must be seen at the forefront, giving others, especially young girls, the confidence to envision themselves in positions of influence. Supporting women isn't enough, we must actively champion their visibility, allowing them to inspire, shape narratives, and redefine leadership. When women lead, their perspectives bring authenticity, inclusivity, and practicality, shifting the focus from survival to growth, from subsistence to significance. More women must step forward to shape the narrative of success, proving that leadership is not a borrowed space, it is a space they rightfully own.

Q) What do you hope young women take away from the finalists and winners of the Bold Woman Award?

A) The message I hope young women embrace is that boldness is not exclusive to the extraordinary, it exists within every woman who believes in herself and takes action. The finalists and winners of the Bold Woman Award serve as proof that leadership, innovation, and impact are achievable at any stage of life, with courage, vision, and resilience as the true cornerstones of success. I want young women to know that their voices matter, their dreams are valid, and their contributions have the power to transform industries and communities. These women are not just receiving accolades, they are redefining what's possible and inspiring others to do the same.

Q) Finally, please tell us about a bold move you are proud of making recently

A) One of the boldest decisions I've made recently was stepping into a consulting role where I could drive meaningful change, not just through shaping strategy, but by influencing culture, governance, and transformation from within. It required leaving the comfort of familiar structures to engage with complex institutions, navigating sensitive dynamics while staying grounded in purpose and impact. I am deeply committed to empowering entrepreneurs, particularly women and youth, helping them turn their visions into reality. Consulting has provided a powerful platform to challenge the status quo and mentor the next generation of bold changemakers. Taking this leap demanded courage, conviction, and clarity, and it has been one of the most fulfilling choices of my career.